



Laugh and Learn Pre-School

Admissions/Settling In/Attendance Policy

General Welfare Requirements in accordance with the EYFS

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Policy Statement

At Laugh and Learn Pre-School we feel it is essential to plan ahead with parents, guardians and carers to ensure that the experiences we provide are as appropriate and inclusive as possible in meeting young children's individual needs *prior* to them starting at our setting. We believe that the best way to achieve this is for us to work in close partnership with parents and to offer an open and accessible admissions/settling in procedure. We hope that by doing this we will be able to provide an environment that meets both the needs of the individual child and their parents as fully as possible, and also promotes equality of opportunity. With this aim in mind the following procedure will be followed:

Procedures

Initial Enquiry Procedure

- ❖ Upon initial enquiry prospective parents will be invited to arrange a suitable appointment to visit the premises during opening hours when they will be given a prospectus and application form. Parents are encouraged to attend with their children and will be provided with a tour of the setting both inside and out, information about our provision, hours and fees, and be given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. In addition, this visit will provide an invaluable opportunity for both parents and staff to observe how comfortable the individual child is emotionally and physically within the setting, as not all settings suit all children.
- ❖ During this visit parents are encouraged to inform us of any additional physical, emotional, religious, cultural, or lingual needs their child may have in order for us to discuss how we can accommodate/adapt to meet these within the setting.
- ❖ Once both ourselves and the prospective parents are satisfied that we are able to provide a suitable environment to meet the individual child's needs we will require the completion and return of an application form, along with a £35 refundable registration fee to secure their place. Once we are in receipt of this, we will confirm in writing the timetable of sessions which have been reserved for the duration of the child's time with us up until their transition to school. The registration fee will be returned once the child has taken up their place with us by way of a credit against any fees due.
- ❖ If you are in receipt of the 2 Year Funding or 30 hours Free Entitlement you will need to provide us with the appropriate reference/claim number before we can reserve any spaces. If you provide the reference/claim number for the 2 Year Funding we will then waive the registration fee (only applicable in respect of the 2 Year Funding).

Starting Pre-School Procedure

In the term prior to starting at our pre-school both parent and child will be invited to one of our taster sessions. These sessions are very important as they provide a chance for parent, child and key worker to meet each other and observe, plan and discuss individual routines, like and dislikes to ensure a smooth transition. During this visit parents will also receive a 'Welcome Pack' containing useful information

about the pre-school, along with various forms for completion and return which will help in the sharing of important background information to ensure we understand the child's individual needs as fully as possible. At the time of the visit, we ask that you complete the emergency contact details form and our Tapestry online learning journals forms from the welcome pack but the rest can be completed later and returned on their first day.

- ❖ Should your child experience difficulties in separating from you then we will be able to discuss the options to stagger their starting and attendance times to aid transition but this will be arranged based on the individual child's needs. We want **every child and parent** to have a positive experience starting preschool so will arrange each child's start at preschool in a way to best support them.
- ❖ During the child's first week with us we may ask for their arrival times to be staggered to ensure avoidance of our busiest pick up and drop off times. This will help the child and parent to separate in a more relaxed and less intimidating atmosphere, and in turn will help with a smoother transition for all concerned.
- ❖ We ask all parents to ensure that each child arrives at the beginning of each session with a clearly named water bottle and a named bag containing a change of named clothes, and where appropriate a supply of nappies and wipes. Accidents happen whether it is a toilet mishap or just messy play and we only have a very limited amount of 'spare' clothes. In addition, we are more than happy to change soiled nappies but only where a supply has been provided by the parent.
- ❖ We ask all parents to consider carefully the suitability of the type of clothing their child wears when attending the pre-school. It is very important that we encourage independence not only in toileting and personal hygiene but also when accessing the activities available. Children can often become distressed if they are unable to manage tricky buttons and clips themselves, or are worried about getting their clothes dirty. The children should only wear old clothes and items that can easily be pulled up and down, such as trousers with elasticated waists etc.
- ❖ We will always provide verbal feedback to the parent about how their child is settling in and, where necessary, suggest various strategies to aid the process (for example, initial shorter sessions building up slowly to a full session). If a child becomes inconsolably distressed, we will ring the parent immediately to inform them and discuss the most appropriate strategy for going forward.
- ❖ All professionals who care for individual children are required to work together in partnership with each other and parents to ensure the best provision is made available, and that any learning or emotional difficulties are identified quickly. It is therefore very important that we are made aware of the involvement of any other settings or health professionals, or the possible effects of significant changes in personal circumstances (for example, divorce, birth of additional siblings, death or hospitalisation of a loved one etc.). This will allow us to respond quickly and appropriately for the individual needs of the child.
- ❖ We ask all parents to ensure we hold the correct emergency contact details at all times and that we are informed as quickly as possible of any alterations or amendments.
- ❖ We also ask parents to understand and respect that key workers and staff have private lives outside their employment within the pre-school. Should a parent wish to discuss an urgent or sensitive matter out of opening hours they can contact the Pre-School Owner/Manager Sharon Bennett by email/or telephone and full contact details are in the welcome pack.

Fees Procedure

- ❖ Fees and voluntary consumable charges are paid every half term in advance and payment must be received by the first working day of each half term. A breakdown of costs is included in your invoice. Payment can be made by bacs which can be easily arranged through your bank. Our bacs details appear on every invoice, or we can provide the relevant bank account details upon request.
- ❖ A £10 administration fee will be charged for any late payments.
- ❖ Non-payment could result in your child losing their place; the final decision will be at the discretion of the owner Pre-School Owner/Manager (Sharon Bennett).

- ❖ Fees and voluntary consumable charges are reviewed on an annual basis and increases may be applied.
- ❖ Fees and voluntary consumable charges will still be payable in the event of any absences, such as Bank Holidays, holidays or sickness.
- ❖ Fees and voluntary consumable charges will still be payable in event of the pre-school having to close due to unforeseen circumstances that are beyond our control (for example, lack of staff due to illness such as COVID-19, extreme weather conditions, damage to the premises causing it to be unsafe or unfit for use by the pre-school such as physical damage to its fabric or heating failure or flood etc).
- ❖ In the term after a child is three, they will become eligible to claim 15 hours of Universal Free Entitlement from the Government, and we will ask you to complete the necessary forms and will arrange for the claim to be processed. Working parents who meet the criteria will also be eligible to claim the Additional free Entitlement totaling up to 30 hours a week and will need to supply us with the eligibility code to enable us to claim this element of the funding. It is essential that we are made aware of the details of any other setting that the child attends where a claim for Free Entitlement may also have been requested, as this may affect the proportion of hours we can be allocated.
- ❖ We require 12 weeks' notice in writing (one term) should a parent wish to withdraw their child.

Attendance

- ❖ We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.
- ❖ Parents/carers must report children's absences to us in a timely manner (please either email laughandlearnbennett@yahoo.co.uk, or txt or call the Preschool Mobile on 07568443352) on the day of absence or in advance for any planned time off.
- ❖ If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents/carers, or if the child is absent for a prolonged period of time the designated safeguarding lead, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- ❖ Attempts to contact the child's parents/carers or other named carers continue throughout the day on the first day of absence.
- ❖ If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
- ❖ If contact has not been made, and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
- ❖ All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- ❖ Absence records will be monitored to identify patterns and trends in children's attendance. An understanding of the child's and family's individual circumstances will inform the setting's judgement in determining what constitutes a 'prolonged period of absence'.
- ❖ Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.
- ❖ If a child is absent without notification for a prolonged period of time then you would be at risk of losing your child's place.
- ❖ Where possible we must hold more than two emergency contacts for each child.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- ❖ The designated safeguarding lead or key person will attempt to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.
- ❖ If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.

Safeguarding

- ❖ If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised. Contact with Social Care may be made sooner if there are concerns for a child's wellbeing or welfare.
- ❖ If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- ❖ In the first instance the setting manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.
- ❖ If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
- ❖ Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.

General Data Protection

We will adhere to the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) when collecting and processing information about you and your child. We explain how your data is processed, collected, kept up-to-date in our Privacy Notice which is given to you in our Welcome Pack or upon request.

Monitoring and Review

It is the role of the Owner/Manager and all Staff to ensure that this policy is fully implemented.

This policy was written and effected by Sharon Bennett, Owner of Laugh and Learn Pre-School after discussion and review with staff and parents in the Autumn term of 2025.

Signed: *Sharon Bennett* Dated: September 2025
of 2027.

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term