



## Early Education & Childcare

### Admissions, Bookings & Free Early Education Entitlement Policy

#### Aims

- To ensure BS3 Community's Early Education & Childcare Services are accessible to the local community and that places are allocated in-line with the Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy.
- To communicate the procedures for offering and managing places (fee paying and free entitlement), and the rationale behind these to families.
- To promote smooth and stress-free transitions to the setting, ensuring children are secure and thriving in our setting and parents/ carers are fully informed in this process.

#### Accessibility

BS3 Community Development aims to ensure all services are accessible to all sections of the local community as per the 'Equal Opportunities Policy'. The organisation aims to communicate about its services across the local area and admissions are managed in-line with our charitable objectives and related statutory requirements, outlined by the Early Years Foundation Stage and Bristol City Council's Free Early Education Entitlement information (as applicable).

BS3 Community exists as a charity to improve the lives and wellbeing of people living and working in the BS3 postcode and surrounding area. We are committed to identifying the level of need for specific services in the local area and to continually evaluating need and opportunity to adapt and evolve our existing provision. This includes consultation with stakeholders including our Board-of-Trustees, our staff, our parents/ carers, the local authority, schools, and other local early years provisions.

#### Sessions & Options

BS3 Community provides early education and childcare for 1-5 year olds at the Southville Centre and Chessel Centre. Both sites provide an All Year Round provision, offering full-day and half-day sessions. These sessions are:

| Full day   | Morning    | Afternoon  |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 8am to 6pm | 8am to 1pm | 1pm to 6pm |

The All Year Round provisions are open for 49.7 weeks of the year (closed during Christmas period and on Bank Holidays). We require that children do a minimum of 1 full-day or 2 half-day sessions (10 hours a week). These sessions are offered in the following rooms:

| Centre            | Room           | Number of full time places available | Age range     |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Southville Centre | Beauley Room   | 15 places                            | 1-2 years old |
|                   | Leighton Room  | 24 places                            | 2-3 years old |
|                   | Stackpool Room | 32 places                            | 3-5 years old |
| Chessel Centre    | Pearl Room     | 24 places                            | 1-3 years old |
|                   | Ruby Room      | 32 places                            | 3-5 years old |

The Southville Centre also has Term-Time Only nursery provision. Please note, parents/ carers must provide a packed lunch for the Term-Time Only provision. This service is delivered in the Raleigh Room, with 30 full-time places available for children aged 3-5 years old on receipt of their Free Early Education Entitlement.

There are two attendance options for Term-Time Only provision (subject to availability):

Group One - Monday and Tuesday, 9am to 3pm, and Wednesday 9am to 12noon

Group Two - Wednesday, 12noon to 3pm, Thursday and Friday, 9am to 3pm

We also have limited availability for children to attend for 30 hours, subject to eligibility for extended funding– Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm

Children attending the Term-Time Only nursery are able to access funding between the hours of 9am and 3pm. We also offer wraparound sessions outside of these core funded hours, which can be paid for privately:

| Session   | Times         | Price              |
|---|---------------|--------------------|
| Morning wraparound with breakfast (toast, fruit etc)                            | 8am to 9am    | £6.25 per session  |
| Morning wraparound without breakfast  | 8.30am to 9am | £3.00 per session  |
| Afternoon wraparound with extra-curricular activities (Monday to Thursday only) | 3pm to 5pm    | £12.50 per session |

Wraparound sessions can be booked as a regular pattern or ad hoc sessions, subject to availability and prior booking.

### All Year Round Fee Paying Spaces

For the period 1 September 2021 – 31 August 2022 the following fees apply for BS3 Community Early Education & Childcare sessions:

| Family Services Session Costs |         |         |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
|                               | 1-2 yrs | 2-3 yrs | 3-4 yrs |
| <b>Morning</b>                | £40.45  | £38.40  | £36.45  |
| <b>Afternoon</b>              | £39.20  | £37.15  | £35.20  |
| <b>Full Day</b>               | £70.80  | £67.00  | £64.50  |

All session fees, with the exception of breakfast, include snacks and meals.

Parents are required to provide nappies/ pull-ups and wipes for their child(ren), where these are required.

Invoices are issued on a monthly basis and payment is required within 30 days. For fee-paying sessions (and additional hours above and beyond funded entitlements) we are able to accept childcare vouchers or tax-free childcare payments. Our unique reference numbers for tax free childcare are as follows:

The Southville Centre nursery  
50027860825

The Chessel Centre nursery  
50027860841

Where other funded schemes, or third-party payments may apply, we may require advance written confirmation.

Bank holidays, and closure dates (Christmas week) are not charged or funded by Free Entitlement. All other sessions will be charged (or funding allocated against them) regardless of whether a child does attend. Sessions, whether fee-paying or funding, cannot be swapped or re-allocated.

The notice period for cancelling fee-paying sessions is 30 days. Cancellation should be submitted in writing, via email to [family.services@bs3community.org.uk](mailto:family.services@bs3community.org.uk)

### **Two-Year Funded Entitlement**

Families who are awarded two-year funding from Bristol City Council can claim up to 570 hours per year. Over our 49.7 week opening period, this equates to 11.5 hours per week, meaning that 2-year funders can access ten hours fully funded and 1.5 hours of an additional session (where part-payment would be required).

Where children are accessing fully funded sessions through two-year funding, no Voluntary Contributions will apply. Please note that when two-year funders move into Universal or Extended Entitlement (from the first full term after their third birthday), we will ask for Voluntary Contributions on fully funded sessions (see below for more details).

Families must apply for 2-year funding directly with Bristol City Council but can be supported in their application by emailing [family.services@bs3community.org.uk](mailto:family.services@bs3community.org.uk) or calling 0117 923 1039.

### **Free Early Education Entitlement – Universal Entitlement (15 hours)**

All children aged 3 or 4 years old are entitled to the 'universal' funding (15 hours, over 38 weeks of the year) from the first full term after their third birthday. Terms run from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1<sup>st</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Subject to availability, families can access their 15 hours free entitlement in both our Term-Time Only (Southville Centre) and All Year Round provisions (Southville Centre or Chessel Centre). Sessions must be within the options listed above under 'Sessions & Options'.

In the Term Time Only nursery, children entitled to the 15 universal hours can attend either Group 1 or 2; these options cannot be mixed.

In the All Year Round provision, the universal 15 hours entitlement (570 hours per year) is 'stretched' over a 49.7 week year giving a weekly entitlement of 11.5 hours. Any

combination of sessions can be requested, and hours attended in addition to the 11.5 funded hours will be charged as per the fees above.

The funding received from the Council is significantly less than the true cost of caring for and educating a child to a high standard and so we ask that families attending in the All Year Round provision pay a Voluntary Contribution on fully funded sessions to cover non-educational costs and also to help make up this shortfall in funding. Contributions are not required for part-funded sessions. More details can be found in the Voluntary Contribution section below.

To access universal entitlement, parents are required to complete a Bristol City Council EYR1 form and to provide a passport or birth certificate to verify eligibility. Signing the EYR1 form constitutes a contract of one funded term, meaning that you are committing to a full-term of funding allocation with BS3 Community. There is no entitlement to reclaim or reallocate this funding if the space is no-longer required, or you choose to leave our service part-way through a term. However, where exceptional circumstances apply, please contact us and we will discuss this with you.

### **Free Early Education Entitlement – Extended Entitlement (30 hours)**

An additional 15 hours 'extended' entitlement over 38 weeks of the year (making 30 hours in total) is available to parents who meet the government's eligibility criteria. If eligible, these hours effectively double the entitlements and options above. For our Term-Time Only provision, this means that families can combine Group 1 and Group 2 (30 hours) subject to availability. In our All Year Round provision this means families can access 23 free hours per week across 49.7 weeks.

Parents need to apply via HMRC for the extended 15 free hours and can check eligibility via [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk). If eligible parents will receive an 11-digit code, which is valid for 3 months. After 3 months parents should receive a prompt from HMRC to renew this code, if the code is not reviewed it will become ineligible and a grace period will come into effect. Once this has expired, funding will cease. BS3 Community is not involved in the generation or renewal of this code and cannot issue reminders or contact HMRC on behalf of parents. Details of grace periods can be found on Bristol City Council's website

In the event that a child is no-longer eligible for the extended entitlement, parents have the option to either pay for these hours or reduce the number of sessions the child attends.

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## **Voluntary Contribution towards Non-Educational Costs**

As stated above, the funding received from the Council is significantly less than the true cost of caring for and educating a child to a high standard and so we ask that families attending in the All Year Round provision pay a Voluntary Contribution on fully funded sessions to cover non-educational costs and also to help make up this shortfall in funding. Contributions are not required for part-funded sessions.

From September 2021, Voluntary Contributions are:

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Full day (ten hours)  | £12 |
| Half day (five hours) | £6  |

The contribution goes towards non-educational items that we are unable to allocate funding against, including but not limited to:

- Meals
- Snacks and refreshments
- Items essential for personal hygiene including gloves, aprons and sick bags – please note that we will still require parents/ carers to provide nappies/ pull-ups and wipes as per our Terms & Conditions
- Non-educational resources
- Staff training and development
- Cleaning and maintenance
- Hidden on-costs that support the provision, such as, contributions towards utilities, insurances, and security (to name a few).

We are required by local government to term these contributions as “Voluntary”, but the reality is that the level of funding we receive from government, without those Voluntary Contributions, would render our provision unsustainable. For this reason, contributions will be shown as a separate line item on invoices each month.

### *Families who are unable or unwilling to pay Voluntary Contributions*

Families who are living in economic hardship (e.g. families with 2-year means assessed funding); families with vulnerable or looked after children, or children who are not living with their biological parents; families who experience a sudden and unavoidable change in circumstance, e.g. homelessness) will be able to discuss their personal circumstances with us for individual assessment regarding the Voluntary Contribution. If you believe your family falls into this category, we will ask that you identify yourself to us by emailing [family.services@bs3community.org.uk](mailto:family.services@bs3community.org.uk) or calling us on 0117 923 1039 to arrange a meeting. Due to the large numbers of families with siblings registered with us, we are unable to include families accessing maternity or paternity leave in this category.

Families who would prefer not to pay the Voluntary Contribution will be expected to move their child(ren) to our Term-Time Only nursery based at the Southville Centre as soon as the space is available, where they will be able to access their funded hours without the requirement to pay any Voluntary Contribution. Details about sessions and hours in the Term-Time Only nursery can be found above.

## **Waiting List Communication**

### *BS3 Community*

Families who wish to join the All Year Round nursery waiting list will be asked to complete a Waiting List Form and to pay a non-refundable administration fee of £15. Please note that this fee is not a deposit and does not guarantee sessions at our nurseries, rather it goes some way to helping the charity to finance the administration of the waiting list. Families who wish to join the Term-Time Only nursery waiting list will not be asked to pay an administration fee and can join for the relevant intake by emailing [family.services@bs3community.org.uk](mailto:family.services@bs3community.org.uk).

Families who join the nursery waiting list should expect confirmation by email that their application has been received and processed. Parents/ carers are always welcome to contact us to discuss the progress of their application. In most cases we aim to allocate new All Year Round nursery spaces approximately 2-3 months ahead, new Term-Time Only spaces one term ahead.

### *Parents*

In order to manage the waiting list effectively we request that parents contact us via email or telephone the nursery if any information relating to an application changes – including where a space is no longer required.

### **Allocation of Places**

Where services are over-subscribed for All Year Round spaces at the Southville Centre and Chessel Centre nurseries, the charity has agreed the following priority for admissions:

- 1 – Children of employees of BS3 Community (to facilitate working)
- 2 – Looked after or vulnerable children
- 3 – Internal Waiting List (for children already registered with us) and places for siblings of registered children, whilst they are attending with us (historical sibling priority does not apply)
- 4 – Families living within the BS3 postcode area
- 5 – Families living outside of the BS3 postcode area

Where services are over-subscribed for Term-Time Only, free entitlement funded spaces at the Southville Centre nursery, the charity has an agreement with Bristol City Council to apply the following priority for admissions:

- 1 - Children already attending and not starting school in Sept (returners)
- 2 - Looked after or vulnerable children
- 3 - Siblings of children at Ashton Gate Primary
- 4 - Families living within in the BS3 postcode area
- 5 - Families living outside of the BS3 postcode area

Within these priority groups, places are offered on a first-come first-serve basis. Places will always be confirmed by us in writing.

### **Retainers**

In order to ensure our services are financially sustainable, for fee paying spaces, it is the policy of the charity to ask for a Nursery Retainer equivalent to one month's fees; this equates to 1/12<sup>th</sup> of what we would anticipate you would pay annually. This retainer supports the organisation in ensuring families who reserve places are committed to

using them and protects against unpaid fees. We are always happy to discuss alternative arrangements with families who feel unable to pay the Nursery retainer in the time frame given. A Nursery Retainer will be returned to families when a child leaves the nursery, providing any outstanding fees have been paid in full. In the event of a nursery place being cancelled prior to a child starting at the nursery, this retainer is non-refundable and will be used to cover the first month's fees for the reserved place. Retainers will not be charged for free entitlement only spaces.

On receipt of payment, the charity designates Nursery Retainers to a 'Retainer Account' which is audited externally, and funds held are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. The charity does not accrue interest on retainer.

Regardless of a family's position on the waiting list, we cannot hold spaces open where there are others actively waiting to access them. This includes where families have registered for free entitlement and spaces are available in advance of the start of term.

### **'Settling Sessions'**

#### *All Year Round Nursery*

Once a place has been offered each child is assigned an Early Years Practitioner to act as a Key Person. This person will take responsibility for contacting families and arranging appropriate settling-in sessions. The first of the settling-in sessions (The First Meeting) will always require parents/ carers to stay with their child to allow their child an informal introduction to the nursery and for parents and the Key Person to have time to communicate about specific needs and personalities. During this visit a 'Starting Nursery Form' will be completed with parents: information from this will be used to ensure children are provided with the most appropriate nursery experiences.

Subsequent settling-in sessions will be organised to meet the needs of the specific child, this process usually takes approximately two weeks, but it is important that child, parent and practitioners are confident before a child attends their full sessions. Individual Key People keep records of their Key Children's progress during this period.

The settling process is viewed as an essential part of ensuring children have a positive time at nursery and we will be flexible in extending this period and offering families additional support if needed. Parents are expected to respect the professional judgment of nursery staff if they feel a child needs additional settling sessions before their official start date.

In some situations, home visits, or an informal meeting within the centre, may also be organised. For example, this may be considered beneficial if a child has special educational needs, if there is anxiety around attachments, or if a child has been struggling with the settling-in process.

#### *Term-Time Only Nursery*

Settling sessions for the Term-Time Only group take place for new children over the first 2-3 weeks of term. In September, when the group has the biggest intake, the class is divided into smaller groups to allow Practitioners to provide more support to individual children. Parents are always invited to attend the first session with their child and are given key information about the nursery day during this session. Please note that BS3 Community reserves the right to schedule up to five inset days a year.

## **Appeals**

If you have a concern or complaint about any aspect of your delivery of the free hours, you may either refer to our Complaints Policy or contact Bristol City Council to discuss your complaint further. The contact information for Bristol City Council Family Information Service is: [askcyps@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:askcyps@bristol.gov.uk) / 0117 357 4192.

Reviewed: August 2021

Next date for review: June 2022

### ***Related documentation:***

- *Information Pack*
- <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-early-education-for-two-years>
- <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/15-and-30-hours-free-childcare-for-three-and-four-year-olds>
- <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
- 13. *Equal Opportunities Policy*
- 18. *SEND Policy*