



Admissions, Attendance and Payment Policy

Little Otters

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Contents

Contents	2
1. Aims and scope	2
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Attendance Expectations	3
5. Fees	4
6. Settling in and transition	4
7. Withdrawing a place	4
8. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion	4
9. Review and Monitoring	5
10. Links with other policies	5

1. Aims and scope

This policy sets out the principles and procedures for admissions and attendance at Little Otters nursery, which operates on the site of Slimbridge Primary School and is run by the school leadership team and governing body, alongside the nursery manager. Our nursery provides high-quality early years education for children aged 2 years and 9 months to 4 years, and aims to offer a welcoming, inclusive environment where all children can thrive.

We are committed to ensuring fairness, transparency, and consistency in the admission process and to supporting regular attendance as a foundation for positive learning outcomes.

It is the aim of Little Otters nursery to provide high quality pre-school education and to help children settle into Class 1 of Slimbridge Primary School as easily as possible. It is the intention of Little Otters nursery to make our provision accessible to children and families from all sections of the community. Our admissions policy operates within an equal opportunities framework and is regularly reviewed.

1. To provide clear guidelines for nursery admissions
2. To promote regular and punctual attendance
3. To ensure equality of access and opportunity for all children.
4. To support children and families to engage fully in the early years education experience.
5. We will ensure that the existence of Little Otters is widely known in local communities.
6. Advertising notices will be placed in accessible areas.
7. We will describe practices in terms which make it clear that all sections of the community are welcomed.
8. We will ensure that Little Otters enables children and/or parents with additional needs to take part in all the activities of the setting.
9. We will ensure that information about our setting is accessible in written form to all. Where necessary we will try to provide information in spoken form, Braille, in more than one language, through signing or an interpreter.
10. Children will be admitted from the start of the term in which they are three.

2. Legislation and guidance

Eligibility:

Children are eligible to start nursery the term after their second or third birthday, depending on funding, eligibility and availability.

Places will be offered to children who are rising 3's using the following criteria:

1. Children likely (in line with LA School Admission criteria) to start Slimbridge School in the next academic year.
2. Children who live under 2 miles of Slimbridge Primary School
3. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already attending Slimbridge School and who are living with that pupil will be given priority over others.
4. Children of staff working at School/Little Otters
5. Other children i.e.. places will be offered in accordance with the Code of Practice for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 & 4 year olds (September 2010).

Prioritisation

Where applications exceed the number of places available, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the nursery.
2. Looked-after children and those previously looked after.
3. Children eligible for 2-year-old funded places.
4. Children with siblings attending Slimbridge Primary School
5. Children living closest to the nursery, measured in a straight line from the school
6. Children of staff members working at the school or nursery

3. Roles and responsibilities

Allocation of sessions

We will work with parents to allocate suitable sessions to Little Otters children. Our principles for the allocation of session places, is to ensure the best pre-school provision for all Little Otters:

1. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis, paying attention to the previous admissions criteria
2. 5 sessions will be given as a priority to children starting school the following year.
3. Additional sessions (over 5) can be made available once all children have been allocated their preferred sessions up to a maximum of 5, as far as is practicable and reasonable.
4. Children under 3 in their first term will not be accepted for full days unless in exceptional circumstances

4. Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance is crucial for children's development and helps them to settle, build relationships, and engage in learning.

- Parents/carers are expected to bring children on time and collect them promptly.
- Absences must be reported to the nursery on the day, stating the reason for absence.
- Persistent or unexplained absences will be followed up, and support may be offered to families where attendance is an issue.

If a child is unwell or unable to attend nursery, parents should ring the school office by 9.00 am (on 01453 890216). If children do not attend their allocated sessions on a regular basis the parent/carer will be called into school for a meeting to discuss the situation. Following this meeting, if children still do not attend sessions these will be withdrawn and offered to other children.

5. Fees

We offer both 15 and 30-hour funded places under the government's early education funding schemes. Eligibility will be confirmed through the appropriate local authority checking process. For children not yet receiving Nursery Education Funding, sessions are charged at the advertised rate. Fees are payable termly in advance via Parent pay. Funding is available from the term after the child reaches 3 years of age, however, there is funding available for some 2 year olds, please enquire with staff. Where capacity allows, additional paid sessions may be available. Fees are reviewed annually and a term's notice is required for any changes.

1. Little Otters encourages prompt payment but recognises that at times some parents/carers may experience financial difficulties. Little Otters will ensure that no child/children/families are penalised should this situation arise. Little Otters will endeavour to arrange a payment plan that is acceptable to both parties, enabling the child/children to continue to attend.
2. If the payment plan is not honoured attendance will be suspended until a resolution is found. Any sessions which must be paid for by parents will be paid for in advance. In the event of non-payment places will be allocated elsewhere.

6. Settling In and Transition

We provide a flexible settling-in period tailored to individual children's needs. This includes:

- Initial parent/carer meeting
- Gradual increase in session time to support confident separation
- Regular communication and updates to support transition into the nursery and eventually into Reception

7. Withdrawing a Place

The nursery reserves the right to withdraw a place in the following circumstances:

- Persistent non-attendance without valid reason
- Persistent non-collection at time of closure of nursery
- Failure to adhere to nursery policies (e.g., non-payment of fees).
- If a child's needs cannot be met within the nursery setting, a review with the SENCO and relevant professionals will be held

8. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We welcome children from all backgrounds and with a wide range of needs. We strive to ensure our provision is inclusive and sensitive to the individual needs of children and families, in line with our Equality and SEND policies.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Debtors Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) policy
- Equality objectives
- Accessibility plan

