



Preschool Policy

(applies to all TPLT schools offering Early Childhood Education for children aged 2 - 4 years)

Admissions

The Nursery/Preschool delivers flexible Early Education in a way which supports all parents/carers. The school has a primary focus on providing Early Education while assisting those who work and those seeking to work (i.e. providing childcare).

When offering places, the school will;

- Offers places for children to start from the age of two years old
- Will admit children for places on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Will operate a waiting list if a place/session is not available.
- Will ensure the Manager/Leader regularly monitors the waiting list and informs parents/carers of any changes.
- Provide regular open days and events, held throughout the year to provide prospective parents/carers with opportunities to see the classroom environments.

If interested in a place at the school, parents/carers should;

- Express interest to the Nursery/Preschool via email, phone or visiting the school in person. Applications for places must be made electronically via eyMan. A link can be found on each school website.
- Adhere to the Terms and Conditions (available on school website).
- Note that there is no statutory appeal process for Nursery/Preschool places. If parents/carers have concerns they must put them in writing to the Principal who will consider the complaint in accordance with their complaints procedure.

Statutory Primary Education

Attendance at the Nursery/Preschool **does not** qualify children a place in the Reception Class at the chosen school. Parents/carers must apply for a Reception Class school place through their Local Authority.

- If a parent/carer chooses, due to the child's age, to delay their child's date of entry to a Reception Class until the child is of statutory school age, the Nursery/Preschool place for that child will not normally continue unless it is recognised that the child has exceptional circumstances and the Local Authority recommends that the delay is in the best interests of the child.
- Regular attendance is required to maintain a place at the Nursery/Preschool. Close liaison should take place with parents/carers and other agencies as appropriate if there are concerns regarding the child's attendance.

Attendance

It is recognised that attending Nursery/Preschool is not statutory although good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. A good attendance routine at Nursery/Preschool sets the pattern for when they move into their statutory Primary education.

To encourage good attendance, the school will;

- Ensure the Nursery/Preschool is welcoming and every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Ensure the school site is open at the stated times.
- Ensure the regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance is completed by the Nursery/Preschool team. This further supports our approach to safeguarding within the school.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in newsletters.
- Ensure all term dates including INSET days are clearly marked and displayed on the school website.
- Follow up with non-attendance. Safeguarding is taken seriously and the school will always contact home if contact has not been made regarding a child's absence.

Partnership with parents

Poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life and their lived experience. This may be related to problems at home or in Nursery/Preschool. Parents/carers should inform the preschool of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in Nursery/Preschool, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional early help that may be required.

- Safeguarding is a priority, concerns for any child at any time will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Some children are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, children who are vulnerable, have a medical need or EHCP plan will be monitored and supported in the classroom. The Preschool will proactively identify and follow up on a child's non-attendance and gather information about the child. This will result in taking early action to prevent non-attendance developing and monitoring the impact of targeted support.

Absence reporting

Absence reporting involves a parent/carer informing the school of a child's absence, with a specific reason and by a certain time, and the school maintaining detailed, accurate records and investigating any unexplained absences.

To ensure the safety of all children, the school will;

- Maintain thorough and accurate records of all absences, reasons provided, and any actions taken, using either manual or electronic registers.
- Be rigorous in seeking explanations for absences and investigate all individual cases and any patterns of absence.
- Contact parents/carers (including emergency contacts if required) to obtain an explanation for unexplained absences and to check on the child's welfare, following the Safeguarding Policy if there are concerns about the child's welfare.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance data to identify children who may need support and to inform strategies for improvement.
- If concerns arise at any time or absence falls below expected levels, consider offering support to families and, if necessary, working with the local authority to refer to other services as per the Safeguarding Policy.

To comply, parents/carers must;

- Notify the school as soon as possible *before* the child's session start time if a child will be absent via an in person visit, the eyParent app, or phone call (an answer phone is available to leave a message if required)
- State the reason for the absence (e.g., illness, medical appointment) and, if possible, how long the child will be away.
- Be aware that the school will monitor attendance and will follow up on unexplained absences, potentially requiring further action to ensure the child's safety.

Food and drink facilities

The school prioritise safety and promote healthy eating habits. Ensuring a focus on continuous supervision to prevent choking, proper food preparation (e.g. cutting tomatoes into quarters), and responsive feeding that respects a child's hunger and fullness cues. Key elements include thorough handwashing for practitioners and children, managing allergies and dietary needs, creating a positive and social mealtime environment.

To ensure children's safe eating at all times, the school will ensure;

- Practitioners will always supervise eating, being within sight and hearing of children to prevent choking and food sharing.
- Ensure the schools catering partner meals are prepared appropriately, for example, spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes are cut into quarters or segments, and cylindrical foods like carrots and cocktail sausages are cut lengthways into thin batons.
- Collect detailed information during registration on allergies and if required, perform risk assessments, and create individual plans to prevent cross-contamination and ensure safety.
- All qualified practitioners members are paediatric first aid trained and at least one should be least present during all snack and mealtimes.
- Practitioners recognize hunger and fullness cues, feeding children at their own pace and never forcing them to finish a meal.
- Meal and snack times are social occasions where practitioners sit with children, set a good example with table manners, and offer encouragement where required.
- Menus (as offered by the schools catering partner) provide a wide variety of nutritious foods from the four main food groups to encourage children to try new dishes.
- Practitioners and children must wash and dry their hands thoroughly before mealtimes.
- Surfaces are cleaned and disinfected, and dishes are washed and sterilized after each meal.

To support children's safe eating at all times, parents/carers will;

- Follow the NHS Healthy Lunchbox guidance.
- Ensure packed lunch items are prepared in a way that helps prevent choking (i.e. spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes are cut into quarters or segments, and cylindrical foods like carrots and cocktail sausages are cut lengthways into thin batons.
- Provide ice packs in packed lunch boxes where required

Toilet and intimate hygiene

Children can attend preschool at any stage of their toilet training journey. Children may, for any reason, not yet be fully toilet trained or who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent when they join the school. Nursery/Preschool practitioners will work with parents to support their child with their toileting needs as and when developmentally appropriate for their child. Toilet training is seen as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn, where appropriate, with the full support and non-judgemental support of adults.

To support all children, the school will ensure;

- Children's nappies/pull ups are checked and changed at least once per three hour session, more often as required and these times are recorded on eyLog. Families can access this information via the eyParent app.
- Children are encouraged to use the toilet regularly throughout the day and supported if needed.
- Changing mats/stations are provided in children's toilets. These provide safe areas to lay young children if they need to be changed.
- Appropriate PPE is used by practitioners (i.e. aprons and gloves). Practitioners members thoroughly wash their hands after each change.
- All practitioners are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing children.
- Practitioners ensure that changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Children are required to wash their hands with soap and water after being changed or using the toilet.
- Children who are toilet trained can access the toilet when they have the need to and are encouraged to be independent.
- Children should have spare supplies in their school bag suitable for the length of their session. After each change, nappies and pull ups pants are disposed of in the nappy disposal bin. Reusable underwear that has been wet/soiled can be bagged and sent home at the end of the child's session. Heavily soiled/offensive underwear may be disposed of by practitioners in the nappy disposable bin.

Sleep and rest

The school recognise that children can become very tired during the day and that it is necessary to provide all children with the opportunity to rest during their session. The school believes that every child's needs are different and this is why we aim to provide flexibility and opportunities for children to take rests and naps as they need and desire. Practitioners will ensure that all children receive the rest that they need during their day and regard it to be a highly important part of their personal and developmental needs.

To support all children, the school will ensure;

- During visits and stay and play sessions, practitioners explain to parents that the classrooms do not have specific sleep facilities i.e a sleep room. If a child falls asleep during their session practitioners will make the child safe and comfortable in an appropriate space. On the rare occasion that children arrive at school asleep parents will need to wake their child briefly before handing to a member of the team.
- Within the classroom there are quiet rest areas which contains lots of cushions, soft toys and books where children can go if they wish to rest and relax at any time of the day.
- Parents are permitted to bring in a comforter which will be stored in the children's bags until needed.
- Practitioners are fully aware of the fact that children need rest and appreciate that children have individual needs and routines which vary as they grow and develop.
- The preferences and wishes of parents are always valued and practitioners work closely with them to ensure each child's individual needs are carefully met.