



Ditton Church Pre-School Admissions Policy

Early Years Foundation Stage Links:

Statutory Framework: Section 3 - The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Legislation Links:

- Equalities Act 2010
- Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Education for Two Three- and Four-Year-Olds and Securing Sufficient Childcare in conjunction with Kent's Provider Agreement.

Introduction

Ditton Church Pre-School aims to accommodate children and families from all sections of the local community and the policy is agreed by the Management Committee.

Principles

- Ditton Church Pre-School seeks to ensure that the existence of the Pre-School is widely known in all local communities. We will ensure information is kept up to date on our website and for our social media group.
- Ditton Church Pre-School seeks to ensure that information about our Pre-School is accessible, in written and spoken form. If appropriate, we would aim to provide it in more than one language. Where necessary, and possible we will try to provide information in Braille, or through signing or an interpreter.
- Ditton Church Pre-School is registered with KCC to participate in the 'Free for Twos Scheme' and will seek to accommodate any child eligible for this scheme as a priority and based upon sufficient staff being available.
- From September 2024 the Government plan to offer 15 hours of funded childcare per week for children aged 9 months and up with eligible working parents. At Ditton Church Pre-School we take children from around the age of two and a half, but no younger than two years and four months. We operate two intakes per year, one in September and one in January. Children will be invited to join us at whichever intake is closer to them being two and a half.
- Fees are chargeable until the child receives funding from the KCC (please see our Fees Policy)
- We also charge a sessional fee towards consumables and a lunch time fee for children who attend all day - for more detail please see our Funding and Fees policy).
- We will work in partnership with parents and other carers, including child minders or where a child attends more than 1 setting, as well as with other professionals. (please also see Partnership with Parents, SEND and Equal Opportunities Policies)
- We will allow children to arrive and depart within our session hours according to family needs.

To view all of Ditton Church Pre-School's policies; please visit our website:
www.dittonchurchpreschool.org

Policy

- Each year Ditton Church Pre-School seeks to accommodate a maximum of 50 children. This would include a maximum of 20 two year olds. Two year olds can attend on any session (subject to spaces) except for Monday and Wednesday afternoons, which are reserved for preparing our older children for the transition to Infant school. The precise number varies from year-to-year based upon demand and our ability to provide the required number of staff. We reserve the right to vary the number of children admitted from year-to-year and term-to-term.
- If we are undersubscribed with two year olds by the May preceding the next intake, we may fill those spaces with additional three and four year olds.
- Parents wishing to register their child should do so by completing the registration form and submitting this, if possible, by no later than 31st December in the year prior to the academic year in which they would like their child to commence Pre-School attendance.
- The Admissions Team will meet in January of each year and determine the capacity for spaces in the following academic year and will inform parents by 1st March whether their child has a place for the following academic year or whether they have been added to the waiting list. Dependent on numbers of older children, the new intake may be staggered in age order between September and February.
- Parents of two year olds: We offer three sessions per week in the first year at Pre-School, unless there are vacancies later in the year in which case it may be possible to increase.
- We ask that funded two year olds accept three sessions per week. Fee paying two year olds must accept at least two sessions per week.
- Parents of three and four year olds: For children due to start Infant school the following September they must accept at least three sessions per week, however we strongly recommend that they attend at least four sessions per week to ensure continuity of care and education as they prepare for the transition to Infant school. They must accept a Monday and Wednesday afternoon as two of their sessions.
- Children will usually be offered a maximum of two years at Pre-School. Most children will be offered a place when they reach two and a half years of age, unless this means they would exceed two years at Pre-School in which case they will be invited to join in the September of the next academic year.

- If a place is offered when a child turns two and a half and parents then wish to delay their start it is likely they will have to wait until the following academic year and therefore would only have one year at Pre-School.
- If the Pre-School has not reached capacity at the time of the January admissions meeting applicants will be granted a place subject to a place for their age band being available; further applications will then be allocated places on a first come first served basis, until the Pre-School is full.
- In the event of Pre-School being over-subscribed at the time of the January admissions meeting we will operate a waiting list. Should a place become available, the waiting list will be operated in the following order:
 - Priority will be given to children in care and those claiming Free for Two funding.
 - In the next instance places will be offered to a sibling of a current Pre-School attendee or the child of a current employee.
 - Places will then be confirmed based upon the distance a child lives from the Pre-School. This will be calculated using a reputable on-line map such as Google Maps, with the child's postcode being used to determine their distance from the school.
- Subject to this being financially viable, the Pre-School will seek to maintain one place available for emergency admission. For example; a child on the 'Free for Two's' scheme, a child in care or a child with an Education Health and Care Plan.
- Once sessions have been allocated, and if the Pre-School is at full capacity, it will not be possible to increase them. You can ask for your child's name to be added to a waiting list for extra sessions and should these become available these will be allocated as per our procedures set out below.
- The Admissions Team reserve the right to deviate from the above policy should it be necessary to manage the number of 2 year-old children admitted, either to reflect staff resourcing levels (2 year olds require higher levels of supervision) or to ensure the sustainability of the Pre-School from year-to-year (if all children in attendance leave for Primary School at the same time this might destabilise the school and present resourcing and funding issues).
- The Pre-School also reserve the right to deviate from the policy by accepting limited numbers of children who are accessing more than 15 hours childcare. By creating this balance of fee paying and funded children, the Pre-School's income via fees is at a



maximum amount to ensure all outgoing costs for that academic year (staff, resources, snacks, building maintenance etc.) are covered.

- Once communicated, the decision of the Admissions Team may be appealed to the Management Committee who will consider the appeal at the next scheduled Committee Meeting. The decision of this meeting will be communicated to the parent(s) within two weeks of the meeting and shall be regarded as final.
- For sustainability purposes we aim to maintain a viable balance between age groups.
- A £25 'holding fee' will be charged by Ditton Church Pre-School, when parents confirm that they wish to accept the offer of a place. This will be deducted from the first term's invoice or in the case of funded children will be returned within the first half term.
- If a parent/carer later chooses to withdraw from the offer the holding fee is not refundable.
- If your child's eligibility for Free For Two funding has been confirmed at the time the offer is made, the holding fee will not apply.

Procedures

Our funded hours are between 9am to 12am and 12:30pm and 3:30pm only. Children attending mid-day care between 12:00pm and 12:30pm will be charged for this time (please see our Fees Policy). Children will only be invited to attend Pre-School all day (between 9am and 3:30pm) once they are in their final year at Pre-School (the year before they are due to start Infant school) unless spaces remain, at which time we may invite other three year olds to attend all day.

- 1) We will start by initially offering all funded children who are in their last year at Pre-School the opportunity to have 15 hours of funded care per week. **We will expect at least two of these to be Monday and Wednesday afternoon sessions**, which are generally more focussed on the Rising Stars. These children may be able to do full days on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Each full day will incur a fee (see fees policy) to cover the mid-day care offered between 12.00 and 12.30. This period each full day is not included in our funding pattern and therefore a charge is applicable. Alternatively, you can choose to collect your child at the end of the morning session (12 mid-day) and bring them back at 12.30pm for the start of the afternoon session if you do not want to pay for the mid-day care.
- 2) Then we will offer up to three sessions per week to each fee-paying child of those under funding age and to funded two year olds. This is important for the sustainability of the Pre-School in future years. At least two sessions must be accepted, however we recommend



three sessions to ensure continuity of care and aid the child’s transition eventually to Infant school.

- 3) Once the above sessions have been offered and accepted, the remainder will be offered on a first come first served basis and three and four year old children would be expected to take up an afternoon session before extra morning sessions. It is at this point that children eligible for 30 hours funding would be able to claim extra funded hours above the 15 universal hours which all 3 year olds are entitled to. Extra sessions for those not eligible for the extra hours and for those not yet funded, would be chargeable at our current rate.
- 4) In exceptional circumstances or when we are the child’s second and not main setting, we may agree to remove some of the stipulations above to enable children to access their full funding entitlement.

If additional sessions then become available later in the year

- 1) If additional sessions become available later in the year we will allocate from our ‘sessions waiting list’. Morning spaces will be offered to children on the ‘Free for Twos’ scheme first and then other two year olds and newly funded three year olds first, subject to numbers not exceeding eight two year olds per session. Afternoons will initially be offered to children due to start Infant school the following September, (Rising Stars), followed by three year olds, not starting school the following September.
- 2) If at this stage any available sessions are left we will allow funded children eligible for the 30 hours funding to access additional sessions.

Please note:

Children who are eligible for 30 hours funding:

This funding can be split between other childcare providers, with a maximum of two providers being used in one day. Although Ditton Church Pre-School cannot offer the 30 hours, we will be happy to provide contact details for reputable childminders and other settings in the area.

This policy was adopted by the Ditton Church Pre-School Management Committee

Date: January 2024

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

.....

Role of Signatory: Chair of Management Committee

Next Review Date: January 2025

