**Admissions Policy**

This policy is for the centrally managed (by Bristol City Council Early Years Service) early education and childcare provision in our Children’s Centres.

**Rationale**

All young children should have an equal opportunity to access Early Years Education provision. We want to ensure parents and stakeholders understand our commitment to equalities and fairness and that the priorities, criteria and procedures for admission to all centrally managed Children’s Centres are clearly understood by all.

**Aims**

* To have a fair and consistent process of allocating places.
* To maintain an environment in which all children benefit and thrive whilst upholding equal opportunities.
* To ensure all applicants are equally valued and that families are able to express their and their children’s needs.

**Places**

The table below shows the current offer at each of the Children’s Centres.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Offer** |  | **Children’s Centre** |
| Working parent funding for children from 9 months old 12 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Working parent funding for children from 9 months old 12 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | Term Time Only | Southmead |
| Free Early Education places for Eligible 2 year olds 12 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Free Early Education places for Eligible 2 year olds 15 hours a week over 38 weeks a year | Term Time Only | AvonmouthBannermanSouthmead |
| Working parent funding for 2 year olds 12 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Working parent funding for 2 year olds 15 hours a week over 38 weeks a year | Term Time Only | AvonmouthBannermanSouthmead |
| Universal Free Early Education places for 3&4 year olds 12 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Universal Free Early Education places for 3&4 year olds 15 hours a week over 38 weeks a year | Term Time Only  | AvonmouthBannermanSouthmead |
| Extended Free Early Education places for 3&4 year olds 24 hours a week over 48 weeks a year | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Extended Free Early Education places for 3&4 year olds 30 hours a week over 38 weeks a year | Term Time Only  | AvonmouthBannermanSouthmead |
| Paying Childcare for children from 6 months old | All Year Round | Southmead |
| Paying Childcare for children from 6 months old | Term Time Only  | Southmead |
| Paying Childcare for children from 2 years old | Term Time Only | AvonmouthBannerman |

**Admissions Order of Priority**

Where places are oversubscribed; priority for allocating places will be as follows:

1. Children Looked After, Children in Need; children involved with Social Care or children with SEND.
2. Children who live in the local community of the Children’s Centre.
3. Children with siblings attending the centre.
4. Children who live in the wider community within Bristol.
5. Children who live in the neighbouring Local Authority.

**Applying for a Place**

Prospective parents/carers are encouraged to visit the centre they are applying for a place at.

Parent/carers will be asked to complete an Expression of Interest form to register their interest. These are available on the centre’s websites and can be submitted online or paper copies can be collected from the individual centres. As far as possible we aim to match the relevant sessions requested on the expression of interest form.

Before a place can be offered we require proof of age for all children. We accept a child’s original birth certificate or an original UK Passport (this does not need to be valid for travel). We are unable to accept foreign passports as proof of age as the processes in obtaining them differ from country to country.

All children will receive a home visit from two members of staff before beginning their settling visits to the room. Please see the Settling in Policy for more detail.

**Early Education for Eligible 2 year olds** istargeted at the city’s most vulnerable 2 year old children, and children might be eligible if families claim any of the following means tested benefits:

* Income Support
* Income based Jobseeker’s Allowance
* Income related Employment and Support Allowance
* Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
* Tax credits and have an annual income under £16,190 before tax
* The Working Tax Credit 4-week ‘run-on’ (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
* Universal Credit and have an annual income under £15,400 before tax.

Place are available from the term after the child’s 2nd birthday. Terms begin on September 1st, January 1st and April 1st.

Parents/Carers of children who wish to access a free 2 year old place should apply to the Local Authority at [www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-early-education-for-two-years](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-early-education-for-two-years)

If the child is eligible the Local Authority will share the application details with the relevant centres, we will then make contact with the parent/carer to discuss and offer places if available.

**Free 12/15 hour Working Parent Funding**

Is available for children from 9 months old whose parents meet the following criteria:

* **Both** parents must be working – or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family
* Each parent must earn, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage
* Each parent must have an annual income of less than £100,000
* Parents are still eligible if one/both parent(s) is away on leave (parental, maternal etc.) or one/both parent(s) is on Statutory sick pay
* Parents on zero-hours contracts will be eligible, as are those who are registered as self-employed
* One parent is employed and the other parent has either: substantial caring responsibilities and/or disability; is a foster carer with their own three-and four-year-old children

To register eligibility for a Nursery Place parents must register on-line at [childcareworks.gov.uk](https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/applynow)

**Free Early Education Entitlement for 3&4 year olds** is a universal offer for all children and places are available the term after the child’s 3rd birthday. Terms begin on September 1st, January 1st and April 1st. Parent/carers do not need to apply online and can apply for a place – see procedure on page 2.

**Free Extended Early Education Entitlement** **for 3&4 year olds** is only available for working families who meet the following criteria:

* **Both** parents must be working – or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family
* Each parent must earn, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage
* Each parent must have an annual income of less than £100,000
* Parents are still eligible if one/both parent(s) is away on leave (parental, maternal etc.) or one/both parent(s) is on Statutory sick pay
* Parents on zero-hours contracts will be eligible, as are those who are registered as self-employed
* One parent is employed and the other parent has either: substantial caring responsibilities and/or disability; is a foster carer with their own three-and four-year-old children

To register eligibility for a 30hr Nursery Place parents must register on-line at [childcareworks.gov.uk](https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/applynow)

**30 Hours Code**

Eligible parents will be issued with an 11 digit code by HRMC. The code is valid for approximately 3 months. Parents will be prompted every 3 months to reconfirm their details with HMRC; however the code remains the same. It is the parent’s responsibility to maintain a valid code. If a parent misses the deadline their child’s code becomes ineligible the ‘grace period’ will come into effect. Claims for Extended Free Hours are still permitted during the grace period as long as the claim was first made before the code ‘fell into grace’. Once the grace period expires, the child will no longer be eligible for Extended Free Hours and will be required to amend their session times to using only their Universal Free Hours.

**Paying Childcare**

There are currently a number of paying childcare places available at Southmead Children’s Centres for children from 6 months old, and at Avonmouth and Bannerman Road from 2 years old.

Parents can register their child for a day care space after visiting the centre and completing a Day Care Registration Form.

All registrations are considered and places offered to children following the criteria in the admissions policy. Theallocation of places is dependent on availability at any given time.

Any place offered may be subject to a debtors check through Bristol City Council.

We recommend a minimum of two core sessions are purchased each week (subject to the terms of the Day Care Contract) to ensure your child’s progress and development.

Charges for Paid Childcare are available from the reception of all Centres or from the Centres websites.

Ad hoc sessions can be booked subject to availability and must be paid in advance once agreed by the Manager/Team Leader.

**Invoicing for Paid Childcare**

* Invoices are generated on the 15th of each month for paying childcare
* Payment must be made within 14 days of the date of the invoice

**Payments for Childcare**

* Local Authority Children’s Centres are registered with the Tax-Free Childcare scheme.
* To pay for childcare using Tax-Free Childcare, please register with HMRC at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)
* Payment can be made by cash, cheque, debit/credit card at the centre and also Childcare Vouchers through your childcare provider
* Sessions are invoiced on a calendar month basis.

**Late Collection Fees**

* If a child is collected more than 15 minutes later than the contracted collection time, there will be a fine of £10 plus the session fee. A further fine of £5.00 will be applied for every subsequent 15 minutes until the child is collected.
* This will be invoiced a week in arrears.

**Notice Period for the Free Early Education Entitlement**

* We ask parents to make a termly commitment to the Children’s Centre as declared in the EYR1 declaration form.

**Notice Period for Paying Childcare**

* The notice period for changes to contract or termination of contract is one calendar month and must be put in writing to the Daycare Manager.

**Bank Holidays**

* Bank Holidays are not funded as part of the Free Entitlement for children of any age.
* If your child’s usual free session falls on a bank holiday we are not able to swap the day for the day missed.

**Snacks**

* During the morning and afternoon sessions a snack is provided for all children, which is no extra charge.

**Meals**

* The cost of a lunchtime meal is not covered in the free hourly funding from Bristol City Council. If you choose a session that covers a lunch time, you will need to either bring a healthy packed lunch or buy a lunch (Southmead Children’s Centre Only. Currently charged at £2.00 – August 2024)

**Nappies**

* Parents are expected to bring in nappies and any associated products as they will not be provided by the Centre.

**Trips**

* Throughout the year there may be trips, for which we may ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

**Complaints**

If you are unsatisfied with any decision made has been made through this Admissions Policy, please contact the Children’s Centre Day Care Manager to make an appointment.

**Appeals**

If a parent has a complaint about any aspect of the delivery of the free hours, they should contact Bristol City Council. In the first instance please email the Family Information Service on askcyps@bristol.gov.uk or phone on 0117 3574192