

Little Squirrels Community Nursery

Prospectus and Information Documents



Welcome



Little Squirrels Community Nursery is independent and privately run. We are situated in Nicholson Road on Ryde Business Park, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO331BQ

We share resources and liaise on a regular basis with our sister business, St George's Nursery & Pre School at Arreton St George's CE Primary School.

We work closely with all local schools to ensure a smooth transition for the children when they move up to reception class.

A place in our Nursery is NOT dependant on entry to the local primary schools. We welcome all children, and with the help of their parent/carer, we will liaise with whichever school the child will eventually attend and help to support you with the school transition process.

We are regulated by the IW Council Early Years Department and OFSTED, with whose standards we must comply, we are also inspected on a regular basis. Latest inspection reports can be found at:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/CARE/EY235868>

There is an on-going commitment to staff training within the group and we aim to make provision for all staff to upgrade their training as appropriate. We close our premises for one day each summer in order to bring all of our staff together for a training session to share ideas and update our professional development.

The aim of our Nursery is to provide a positive learning environment, in a warm and friendly atmosphere. A wide range of opportunities are made available to the children in the seven recognised areas of development as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage 0 – 5 years.

We ask all children to bring in a named water bottle each day and children who attend over lunchtime will need to bring a packed lunch with a drink.



We promote and follow a 'healthy eating' policy at nursery and we also ask you not to include nut products within their lunch boxes due to allergies. – See healthy lunches leaflet.

We try to operate an 'open door' policy; we are available to discuss your child's day with you at the beginning or end of each session. If you have a concern regarding your child or there is a change of situation that may affect your child in some way, please let us know. If you wish to see someone in private, please make an appointment to see us. A child will probably not tell us about a major event in their life, but it can have a great relevance to their attitude to the Nursery.

Our daily activities are very much 'experienced' based and we promote and encourage 'learning through play'. We include a time for outside play in each session.

We follow our own curriculum and are led by the children, planning our activities around the children's current interests and specific needs.

Don't worry if your child does not bring home something they have made every session, all children are different and your child is getting as much enjoyment and learning through playing as they do from creative activities. We promote 'process not product' and like to encourage the children to explore and experiment artistically instead of enforcing a rigid approach to creating a 'finished product'.

Funding

All funded hours advertised are for only 38 weeks of the year (school term time).

In order to make the funding sustainable we are only able to offer the 'Working Parent Funding' as a 'stretched' entitlement to cover 50 weeks of the year including all school holidays. The hours available will fluctuate on a term by term basis as it depends upon the hours available and the number of unfunded school holiday weeks in each term.

If you are only claiming the universal 15 hours of childcare available to all three and four year olds or the two year old funding based on economic criteria you can choose to either take your funding as term time only over 38 weeks or as 'stretched' to cover the full 50 weeks.

We currently offer our funded hours between 9am and 5pm. You can book hours in to suit your needs on the hour or half hour and with a minimum of three hours per day. Additional hours are available outside these times on a chargeable basis.

All children living in the UK are entitled to the universal 15 funded hours of childcare starting from the term after their 3rd birthday.

All other funding currently being offered is only available if you meet certain criteria as outlined below.

Please see: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk for more information on funding.

Two Year Old Funding (Disadvantage Eligibility):

The government is currently offering 2 year old funding based on economic criteria. This is 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. You need to apply online at <https://www.iow.gov.uk/schools-and-education/early-years-service/information-for-parents/funding-for-two-year-olds/> and you will be issued with a funding code. Please bring this code in to the setting as soon as you receive it so we can confirm your eligibility and book in your spaces. This funding will commence at the start of the term following your child's second birthday and will run continuously until they turn three and qualify for the 15 universal funded hours. You can choose to take this funding as term time only or as stretched to cover the school holidays.

Three Year Old Funding (Universal):

At the start of the term following your child's third birthday they are automatically entitled to universal funding of 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. You do not need to apply for a code for this funding and it will automatically claimed for at the setting.

You can choose to take this funding as term time only or as stretched to cover the school holidays.

Childcare Choices

Funding

Working Parent Funding (9 months - 4 years):

From September 2017 the Government introduced working parents extended entitlement funding of 30 hours per week over 38 weeks for working parents of eligible three and four year olds, subject to meeting the government criteria.

You will receive a code which should be passed to us and this code will need to be reconfirmed every three months to ensure you are still eligible and that there have not been any changes in your circumstances.

If you are claiming the working parents extended entitlement 30 hours funding this can only be taken as 'stretched' funding to cover the full 50 weeks of the year.

From April 2024 the working parents extended entitlement funding was extended to include eligible 2 year-olds for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. You will need to apply online and you will receive a code which will need to be passed to us to verify and confirm when your funding is eligible from. This code will need to be reconfirmed every three months to ensure you are still eligible and that there have not been any changes in your circumstances.

If you are claiming the working parents extended entitlement two year old funding this can only be taken as 'stretched' funding to cover the full 50 weeks of the year.

From September 2024 the Government have further extended this scheme to include all eligible babies from the term after they turn 9 months old. You can apply online for a code from 12th May 2024 and bring it in for us to verify and confirm when your funding will begin.

If you are claiming the working parents extended entitlement funding for babies this can only be taken as 'stretched' funding to cover the full 50 weeks of the year.

If at renewal it is found that your eligibility for working parents extended entitlement has ended you will go into 'Grace Period' with your funding code which will allow you to continue to receive the funding until the end of term. If this happens the manager will discuss your options with you going forward.

From September 2025 the working parents extended entitlement is due to be extended again to cover 30 hours of funding over 38 weeks for all eligible children starting the term after they turn 9 months old. When this change comes into force your code will automatically be rolled into the increased entitlement and the manager will discuss your funding options going forwards.

Fee's and Charges

Our fees scales are reviewed annually and our current fees for this year are shown below.

We no longer require you to pay a deposit for your child at the time of registration. Instead we will issue your initial invoice in advance, upon you signing the registration forms and agreeing your hours/days of attendance. This should be paid promptly please.

Going forward fee invoices will be issued in advance for the following month and we require payment by the 25th of the month of issue.

Any fees not paid by the 25th of the relevant month will be carried forward to the next month's invoice and interest will be charged, this currently standing at 10% (subject to change).

We only accept online BACS payments or cash paid at the setting. Our bank details are shown on your invoices.

We regret that we have to charge you even when your child is absent through illness or personal holidays as we have to maintain statutory levels of staffing ratio's.

If you wish to withdraw your child from Nursery or make changes to their hours or days, 20 working days' notice is required.

Fee's and Extra's From April 2024

Under 2 Years: £9.25 per hour
(Minimum of three consecutive hours to be booked)

2/3 Years: £8.70 per hour
(Minimum of three consecutive hours to be booked)

Pre School (3 Years +): £8.25 per hour
(Minimum of three consecutive hours to be booked)



All government funded hours may only be taken between 9.00am and 5.00pm. A minimum of three hours must be booked per day.

Any bookings required outside of these times will be chargeable as 'sessions' and will not form part of your funded entitlement.

Our 'non funded' morning session, 8.00am – 9.00am, will be charged at a fixed rate of £8.25 (Pre School), £8.70 (Funded 2/3's) & £9.25 (Funded Babies) regardless of your admission time.

Our afternoon 'non funded' session, 5.00pm – 5.45pm will be charged at a fixed rate of £6.20 (Pre School), £6.50 (Funded 2/3's) & £6.95 (Funded Babies) regardless of your collection time.

General Information

Please send your child in with practical clothes and shoes, we play outside daily, ride on bikes and trikes and explore different sensory materials. We like to encourage children to 'Dress for Mess' and ask you not to send them in wearing special clothing.

It is very helpful if you can provide a warm waterproof coat, gloves, welly boots for cold weather. Please make sure that these and other belongings are clearly named.

Because losses happen so easily, please do not let your child wear jewellery to Nursery, except small stud earrings if necessary. For the same reason we do not like children to bring in money, sweets or treasured toys that might get lost/broken and cause upset. Another more important reason not to bring small items to Nursery is that children are inclined to put things in their mouths and they can easily choke on them.

We will ask all new children who register with us to provide their original full birth certificate to us for verification, these details will be recorded on the registration form. Little Squirrels Community Nursery is open 50 weeks a year and operates throughout school holidays, fees are payable during these periods unless you are accessing 'Term Time' only funding.

When your child first joins us we will set up a tapestry account for them which you will be able to view. This will showcase the activities and play opportunities that are on offer for the children through our blogs and also allow you to see their development and progress through the 'wow' moment observations that their key workers will be logging.

We are closed during the Christmas holiday and all Bank Holidays and you will not be charged for these times. We also close periodically for staff training; these days will be set in advance and you will not be charged for these days.

Occasionally we organise Nursery events and we will close earlier than normal, as much notice as possible will be given to all families.

We hope this information has covered most of the things you need to know. Please feel free to see the Manager or any member of staff if you have any questions.

Please can you download and read the policy documents from www.little-squirrels.co.uk and if you would like your child to attend Little Squirrels Community Nursery, please complete the enclosed booking form and return it to us together with the registration form.

We would like to invite you to join our private Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/120562788568755> (search for Little Squirrels Community Nursery).

Please answer the joining questions and let us know who's parents or carers you are as this is a closed group and only available to if your child attends our nursery. We will post updates on activities in the rooms and reminders about upcoming events, such as parents meetings and dress up days.

We hope that you and your child will feel happy and settled within our group and that your child will grow and develop to their full potential.



Financial Support

There are currently several different government schemes on top of the funding to help you with the costs of early years education for your children.

Tax Free Childcare:

We are pleased to announce that we are registered to accept Tax Free Childcare Payments. This scheme allows you to set up and pay into a dedicated account for your child which the government will top up. You can then use this money to make childcare payments to any registered providers.

Tax free childcare is:

For working families, including the self-employed, in the UK

Earning under £100k and an average of £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) each over three months

Who aren't receiving Tax Credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers

With children aged 0-11 (or 0-16 if disabled)

For every £8 you pay into an online account, the government will add an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child per year

You, and any partner, must be over 16 and each expect to earn an average of £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) over three months.

If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.

You can't get Tax-Free Childcare if either you, or your partner, each individually expect to earn £100,000 or more.

If you require more information about the Tax Free Childcare offer please speak with a member of staff who will be able to help you.

Choices

We've signed up for Tax-Free Childcare:
Have you?



Universal Credits:

If you are eligible for and claiming universal credits please speak to them about the childcare element and how to claim it.

Universal credits claims are for:

For working families claiming Universal Credit, in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

With children under 17*

Up to 85% of eligible childcare costs

Who aren't receiving Tax-Free Childcare

Eligible working parents on Universal Credit are now able to receive even more financial help with their childcare costs for children under 17. This can be up to the maximum amount of £951 per month for 1 child or up to £1,630 per month for 2 or more children.

Furthermore, eligible working parents claiming Universal Credit are now able to receive even more financial help with their childcare costs, and additional financial support with upfront payments when moving into paid work or increasing their working hours.

Eligible parents claiming Universal Credit are also able to get additional help paying their childcare costs upfront when moving into paid work or increasing their working hours. Parents who need this help should speak to their Universal Credit work coach who can provide more information.