The Nest
CARE & HOLIDAY CLUB

**Admissions, Capacity and Waiting List Policy**

**Statement of Intent**

The Nest is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and high-quality wraparound care provision for children attending our pre-school and Potton Primary school. We recognise the important role wraparound childcare plays in supporting working families and those engaged in education or training.

All admissions decisions are made fairly, consistently and transparently, with the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children being our primary consideration. Places are allocated in accordance with this policy, taking account of safeguarding responsibilities, operational capacity and the needs of individual children.

**Aim**

The aim of this policy is to:

- provide a fair, transparent and consistent admissions process;
- support families requiring wraparound childcare to enable employment, education or approved training;
- ensure admissions decisions prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all children;
- ensure staffing, capacity and safeguarding requirements are always maintained;
- explain how waiting lists are managed when demand exceeds capacity.

**Admissions Principles**

- Places are available to children attending Potton Pre-School and Potton Primary School.
- A completed registration form must be submitted before an application can be considered.
- Submission of a registration form does not guarantee a place.
- Applications are assessed individually and are subject to availability.
- Where demand exceeds capacity, places are allocated in accordance with this policy.
- The Nest will periodically review the use of existing places to ensure that spaces continue to support the intended purpose of the provision and are being used in accordance with this policy.

**Registration Requirements**

Parents and carers are required to complete registration forms providing details including:

- emergency contacts;
- medical conditions;
- allergies;
- dietary requirements;
- SEND information;
- collection arrangements;
- any other information necessary to safeguard the child.

Registration forms should be returned securely to The Nest office or via email.

Where priority is requested based on employment, education or approved training, parents may be asked to provide employer or educational establishment details to verify eligibility. This information will be processed in accordance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation.

**Admissions Criteria**
Where demand exceeds available places, applications are assessed using the following criteria:

**1. Need for Wraparound Care**
Priority is given to families requiring childcare to support employment, education or approved training.

**2. Session Availability**
Applications are considered against:

- availability of requested days and sessions;
- existing occupancy levels;
- staffing ratios;
- dining capacity where meals are required;
- the ability to accommodate the requested attendance pattern.

**3. Periodic Review of Existing Places**

- The Nest's wraparound care provision is intended to support families to access and remain in employment, undertake education or training, and manage the childcare commitments associated with these activities.
- We operate with limited capacity and experience significant demand for places, with a substantial waiting list of families seeking childcare to support their working, educational or training commitments. We recognise that wraparound care can also provide convenience and flexibility for families; however, where places are limited and demand exceeds availability, it is important that spaces continue to be used for their intended purpose.
- The management team will periodically review the use of existing places to ensure that attendance arrangements remain consistent with the aims of the provision and the admissions criteria set out in thispolicy.
- Where a family's circumstances or childcare requirements have changed, the management team may contact the family to discuss their current needs and whether their existing booking continues to meet the intended purpose of the provision. Families may be asked to confirm relevant employment, education or training arrangements where appropriate.
- Any review will be undertaken fairly and consistently, taking account of individual family circumstances, the needs of children and the availability of alternative childcare arrangements. Where a review identifies that an existing booking may no longer meet the purpose of the provision, the management team will discuss this with the family before determining whether any changes to the booking are necessary.
- The purpose of these reviews is to ensure that limited places are used appropriately and that The Nest continues to fulfil its role in supporting families who require wraparound childcare to enable them to work, study or undertake training.

**4. Staffing, Capacity and Safeguarding**
The safety and welfare of children is our primary consideration.

When allocating places we consider:

- staffing levels;
- required staff-to-child ratios;
- the number and needs of children already attending;
- health and safety requirements;
- room capacity;
- supervision requirements;
- evacuation procedures;
- risk assessments.

Capacity may be reduced where children require additional supervision or support.

**5. Individual Needs**
We are committed to inclusion and welcome applications from all children.
Admissions decisions consider:

- emotional wellbeing;
- developmental stage;
- SEND;
- medical needs;
- behavioural needs;
- ability to safely access the provision;
- reasonable adjustments required.

Where appropriate, a pre-admission meeting and/or individual risk assessment may be completed before confirming a place.

**6. Priority Groups**
During periods of over-subscription priority for spaces will be given in the following order:

- children already attending The Nest who require additional sessions
- siblings of children already attending
- children already attending the pre-school
- new registrations

**Capacity and Operational Considerations**
The Nest operates from a single-room environment.

To maintain children's safety, sufficient space must always be available for:

- free play
- meals
- movement throughout the setting
- access to resources
- emergency evacuation

Capacity may be reduced where children require enhanced supervision, including those with:

- SEND;
- medical needs;
- behavioural needs;
- additional transition support from home to Nest, school to Nest

Appropriate staffing ratios will always be maintained.

**Waiting List**

Where requested sessions are unavailable, families will be offered alternative sessions where possible. If suitable sessions are unavailable, children may be placed on the waiting list.

The waiting list is not operated on a simple first-come, first-served or numbered basis.

Places are allocated as they become available, considering:

- the sessions available
- the family's requested attendance pattern
- staffing ratios
- operational capacity
- safeguarding considerations
- the individual needs of children attending
- the admissions criteria contained within this policy

Because availability rarely matches families requested attendance patterns exactly, a numerical waiting list position would not accurately indicate when a place may become available and could create unrealistic expectations. For this reason, The Nest does not provide families with a waiting list number.

Families are welcome to contact us for updates and should notify us if their childcare requirements change, as increased flexibility may allow a place to be offered sooner.

Children will be removed from the waiting list where no contact has been received from the family during one full academic year.

**Confidentiality**

Admissions decisions are based solely on the needs of the individual child, the needs of the existing group and our ability to safely meet those needs.

To protect the privacy of all children and families, The Nest cannot disclose information about other children attending the provision or explain how another family's circumstances have influenced admissions decisions.

**Session Bookings**

- Children must be fully registered before attending.
- Sessions are booked on a regular contracted basis.
- Ad hoc bookings are not offered.
- Sessions may be amended at the end of each half-term, subject to availability.
- One half-term's written notice is required to reduce or cancel contracted sessions.
- Bookings continue into the following half-term unless notice is received.

**Fees**

- Fees are reviewed annually.
- Fees are payable half-termly in advance.
- Payment is due within two weeks of the invoice date unless otherwise agreed.
- Booked sessions remain payable if a child is absent.
- Payment must be maintained to secure future bookings.
- Families experiencing financial difficulties should contact the Manager as soon as possible.

**Equality and Inclusion**

The Nest is committed to equality of opportunity and inclusion.
Reasonable adjustments will be made wherever practicable in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Every application is considered individually to ensure children can participate safely whilst maintaining the welfare of the whole group.

**Decision-Making**

All admissions decisions are made by the management team using professional judgement and in accordance with this policy.
The management team reserves the right to refuse, defer or amend an application where this is necessary to:

- safeguard children;
- comply with statutory duties;
- maintain safe staffing ratios;
- ensure the safe and effective operation of the provision.

All decisions will be recorded.

**Respectful Conduct Towards Staff**

The Nest is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and professional environment for children, families and staff. We ask that all parents, carers and visitors always communicate with staff in a respectful and courteous manner.
The following behaviours will not be tolerated:

- abusive, aggressive or threatening language or behaviour towards staff, volunteers or committee members;
- harassment, intimidation or bullying of staff, whether in person, by telephone, email, social media or any other form of communication;
- discriminatory, offensive or defamatory comments;

- the publication of false, misleading or malicious statements about The Nest, policies, its staff, committee members or children on social media or other public platforms;
- behaviour that undermines the safe and effective operation or reputation of the setting.

Concerns or complaints should be raised through The Nest's Complaints Policy so they can be investigated fairly and appropriately.

Where a parent, carer or any person with parental responsibility engages in any of the above behaviour that is abusive, threatening, harassing or defamatory towards the setting or its staff whether via email, telephone, face to face or on social media, The Nest reserves the right to:

- immediately suspend communication other than in writing;
- withdraw an offer of a place;
- remove a child from the waiting list;
- terminate a child's place at The Nest with immediate effect where necessary to protect the safety, wellbeing or welfare of staff and children.

Any such decision will be made by the management team and will be proportionate to the circumstances, considering safeguarding responsibilities towards both the children and staff, the welfare of children and staff, and the impact on the operation of the provision.

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or operational requirements change.

Signed on behalf of The Nest _____

Date Signed: _____

Date to be reviewed: _____