

<b>ADMISSIONS POLICY</b>	
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## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**Windmill Hill City Farm Children and Family Services aim to ensure our services are available to all members of our community and that we have in place a fair process for the allocation of places within our Nursery and Farm Adventurers.**

### Applying for our waiting list

To ensure places are allocated through a fair system, we have a waiting list and point system in place for all families applying for place with us, in Nursery and/or Farm Adventurers.

- Each service (Nursery and Farm Adventurers) operates their own waiting list and is broken down into child/ren’s ages, requested start date, date applied and allocated points.
  
- A £20.00 administration fee is charged for every waiting list application, this is non-refundable and is used to help cover the administration costs of managing the waiting lists; it should not be seen as a guarantee of, or a deposit on, a place.
  
- For both Nursery and Farm Adventurers there is a minimum requirement of three sessions (1 session = 1 half day) per week. Please note that the three sessions cannot be mixed between the Nursery and Farm Adventurers.

### Nursery Allocations – point system criteria for children aged 9 months - 5 years.

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- We will give priority to any child/family that has come through a referral system, and which has been recognised by another professional from a recognised agency as needing a service. (20 points)
- Priority will be given to families that require fuller sessions in the Nursery (8 hours or more per day) for 3 or more days per week. i.e., 8.00am/9.00am– 5.00pm/6.00pm. (10 points)
- Priority will be given if a child is a registered user currently accessing Farm Adventurers sessions and is also on the waiting list for nursery (10 points)
- If a family currently has a sibling in the setting, that is accessing either Nursery or Farm Adventurers we will endeavour to offer a place to their other child/ren. (5 points)
- We will aim to support Windmill Hill City Farm staff in accommodating their childcare needs to allow them to continue in their work commitments on the Farm. (5 points)
- It is our aim to support families in the local community who are living or working within our area of benefit (please see map on p.16). (5 points)

Farm Adventurers Allocations – point system criteria for children aged 2 - 5 years.

- We will give priority to any child/family that has come through a referral system, and which has been recognised by another professional from a recognised agency as needing a service. (20 points)
- Priority will be given to families that require four or more Farm Adventurers sessions or more per week.

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- Priority will be given if a child is a registered user currently accessing Nursery sessions and is also on the waiting list for Farm Adventurers (10 points)
- If a family currently has a sibling in the setting, that is currently accessing any of the Children and Family Services we will endeavour to offer a place to their other child/ren. (5 points)
- We will aim to support all Windmill Hill City Farm staff in accommodating their childcare needs to allow them to continue in their work commitments on the Farm. (5 points)
- It is our aim to support families in the local community who are living or working within our area of benefit (please see map on p.16). (5 points)

Please note, on occasions exceptional circumstances may arise with regards to the organisation's operational needs, because of this, priorities may need to be adjusted to support key staff with their childcare needs.

### Allocations of places

#### Offering of places

When offering a place in Nursery and/or Farm Adventurers, we will follow the process below:

- When allocating places in either Nursery or Farm Adventurers, child/ren's ages, requested start date, date applied and allocated points will be taken into consideration.
- If we can offer you a place, we will contact you, usually by email, using the details that you have provided on the waiting list application. We

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will inform you we are able to offer you a place and when from with a cut-off date to respond and inform us that you are either interested in place, are declining the place and would like to come off the waiting list or are declining the place and would like to stay on the waiting list.

- If we do not hear from you by the cut-off date, we will make further contact by email and/or phone.
- We will keep a record of all attempts to contact you. If you have made no contact with us by the time specified following the messages left and/or the e-mails sent, the place will be allocated to the next family on the waiting list.
- If we do make contact and you are interested in the place, we will confirm availability of sessions and a provisional start date.
- The maximum time that we can hold an offered place for any new family joining us is eight weeks, providing a deposit is paid to secure the place within two weeks of the written offer being made. Non-payment of the deposit within the required timescale will result in the offer being withdrawn.
- If at any point your circumstances change, and this affects the points that were originally allocated to you, the changes will have to be taken into consideration and the points adjusted accordingly. This may affect the offer of a place if sessions have been reduced.

### Confirmation of place

Our responsibilities when confirming a place:

We will send you an email confirming your place, this will include:

- Agreed sessions and start date.

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- Calculation of the deposit amount, payment details and deadline to pay.
- Link to the admissions form, with a deadline to complete and return to us.
- Information about Farm membership. Farm membership is free, and it is compulsory, on the offer of a place, the family becomes a member of the Farm and remains a member for the duration their child attends our setting.

### Deposits

- Any fee paying or part fee paying family accepting a place will be required to pay a deposit, the deposit will include:
  - Any sessions where you will be paying full fees.
  - Any funded sessions, except those covered by Universal funding for three- and four-year-olds (max 12 hours) and Free Early Education funding for two-year-olds (max 12 hours). Please see a definition of all funding on page. 5.

### Consumables charges.

- The deposit will be equivalent to four weeks fees of the booked sessions and must be paid within two weeks of a place being accepted.

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- Our preference is that deposits are paid via bank transfer, however we can accept cash or cheque deposits.
  
- We cannot accept deposits paid via childcare vouchers schemes or the Tax-Free Childcare scheme as due to the tax relief received, we are unable to refund the deposit directly back to you.
  
- The deposit cannot be used for and is not a payment towards your first invoice.
  
- Your deposit is held for you until your child leaves us, upon which it is refunded back to you providing your account is fully settled.
  
- The deposit will not be refunded if you:
  - Leave with a balance owing on your account.
  - Leave without notice.
  - Decide to decline a place that has previously been accepted.

Settling in sessions

- In **Nursery** we offer a maximum of three free settling in sessions per child accumulating to no more than five hours. We expect the parent to stay with their child for the first half an hour in the first session. The times of these will be agreed by the Room Leader and the parent/carer.

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- In **Farm Adventurers** we will offer four hours of free settling in sessions; these will be split over two sessions. We expect the parent to stay with their child for the first half an hour in the first session. The dates of these will be agreed by the Farm Adventurers Leader and the parent/carer.

### Changes to sessions

- As we allocate places based on a points system determined by how many sessions you have requested, sessions cannot be reduced in the first three months.
- If after the three months you would like to reduce sessions, four weeks' notice is required, and you will need to complete a permanent change of sessions form.
  - Please see the fee-paying policy for full details on changing sessions and requesting additional sessions.

### Early Years Funding

#### Funding for eligible nine-month-olds:

- From September 2024 funding will be available for working families with children aged nine months and upwards from the term after their nine-month birthday
- Families in receipt of this funding will receive up to 12 non-chargeable hours for 47.5 weeks of the year.

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<b>Under 2's birth month</b>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9 <sup>th</sup> month "birthday"	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Eligible from	January			April			September					

- The 12 hours of funding can be used:
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-1.00pm and 1.00-5.00pm in Nursery
- You can subscribe for updates through the Childcare Choices website:

[Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)

### Funding for eligible two-year-olds:

- From April 2024 funding will be available for working families for children aged two years and upwards the term after their second birthday (see table below).
- Families in receipt of this funding will receive up to 12 non-chargeable hours of funding for 47.5 weeks of the year.
- The 12 hours of funding can be used:
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-1.00pm and 1.00-5.00pm in Nursery
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-12.00pm in Farm Adventurers



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- More information can be found on the Childcare Choices website:  
  
[Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)
- A deposit will be required for all booked sessions, whether funded or non-funded.

#### Free Early Education for two-year-olds:

- Free Early Education funding is available for two-year-olds the term after their second birthday (see table below)
- Families in receipt of this funding will receive up to 12 non-chargeable hours of funding for 47.5 weeks of the year.
- The 12 hours of funding can be used:
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-1.00pm and 1.00-5.00pm in Nursery
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-12.00pm in Farm Adventurers
- More information can be found through the Bristol City Council website:  
  
[Free early education for two year olds \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#)
- We do not take a deposit for sessions covered by the 12 funded hours.

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Flexible Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) for three- and four-year-olds:

- All children aged three and four years are eligible for universal FEEE funding the term after their third birthday (see table below).
- Families in receipt of this funding will receive up to 12 non-chargeable hours of funding for 47.5 weeks of the year.
- Working families can also apply for extended funding for three- and four-year-olds, if eligible you would receive an additional 12 non-chargeable hours of funding for 47.5 weeks of the year.
- More information can be found on the Childcare Choices website:
  - [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)
- Funding can be used:
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-1.00pm and 1.00-5.00pm in Nursery
  - Monday – Friday 9.00-12.00pm & Tuesday-Thursday 1.00-4.00pm in Farm Adventurers
- We do not take a deposit for any universally funded hours but do take a deposit for any sessions funded by the extended funding, any sessions that are not funded, and the consumables charge.

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- If your child is accessing two settings, you may choose to split the funding. If so, you will need to inform us where the funding is being used and how much so we can ensure we claim the correct amount of funding.

<b>2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> birthday</b>	<b>1 Jan – 31 Mar</b>	<b>1 Apr – 31 Aug</b>	<b>1 Sep – 31<sup>st</sup> Dec</b>
Eligible from	April	September	January

### Eligibility Codes (for working families)

- Eligibility codes need to be reconfirmed every 3 months. The eligibility code will remain the same after reconfirmation. It is the parent/carer’s responsibility to ensure their eligibility code is valid.
- Verification checks will be made on Bristol City Council’s Provider Portal, using the following data:
  - Your 11-digit eligibility code
  - Your National Insurance Number(s)
  - Your child’s date of birth
  - Your written consent(s) from your signed EYR1 Parental Declaration Form to verify eligibility.
- If you do not reconfirm the eligibility code and the code becomes invalid, the ‘grace period’ begins. The grace period is a short period of

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time where a child can continue to access their extended/free hours.

Once the grace period has expired:

- Under two's from working families will have to pay for all childcare provision privately.
  - Two-year-olds from working families will have to pay for all childcare provision privately but may be eligible to apply for an Eligible two-year-old place if they meet the criteria (see above for the weblink).
  - Three- and Four-year-olds from working families will only be able to access their universal free hours and must pay for any additional childcare provision.
- If this happens, we will discuss what to do about the sessions you have lost. Codes which are already in their grace period must be reconfirmed before claims can be made for expanded or extended free hours.
  - Bank Holidays are not funded by Bristol City Council. If your free hours fall on a bank holiday, the free session will not be rescheduled.

### Consumables Charges

- Any child receiving funding will be invoiced for the consumables charge.
- The consumables charge covers:

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- Meals and snacks (for health and safety reasons we do not offer the option of providing a packed lunch)
  - Trips and outings – additional resources and staff outside the recommended ratios
  - Spare clothing
  - Nursery trips to Farm Adventurers
  - Special events
  - Sun cream
  - ‘Forest School’ type activities, such as woodworking or building fires.
- Consumables charges are applied to every session you receive funding.

### Exemption from Consumables Charges

- Families entitled to Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and will be exempt from the consumables charge once your eligibility has been confirmed.
- To be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium you need to be receiving the following:
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

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- Support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – your household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax including any benefits you get.

You may also get Early Years Pupil Premium if your child is currently being looked after by a local authority in England or Wales or if your child has left care in England or Wales through:

- Adoption
  - Special guardianship order
  - A child arrangements order
- We will need you to provide proof of your eligibility for Early Years Pupil Premium.

### Transition to school

- If your child is leaving us to move onto school, they can continue to use their Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) funding until the end of August (except for any non-funded days/periods). After this time our priority will be to accommodate the new intake of children starting with us.

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- If you require sessions for your child after the end of August (for example, due to a staggered intake or late start into school) you should make a written request one month ahead of the sessions you are requesting. Where possible we will accommodate your request.
- Where we are unable to accommodate your child, we will let you know as soon as we can to support you in making alternative childcare arrangements.
- If we can accommodate you and your child in accessing sessions to support the staggered school intake you will not receive the FEEE funding after 31<sup>st</sup> August as this will be allocated to the school that your child will be attending, therefore you will be required to pay the current session rates in full.
- If your child is leaving us to go to Nursery School/Pre-school before they start school, you will need to notify us at which setting you will be using the funding. If you wish to split the funding, you will need to inform us so that you can be advised accordingly of how this works and what paperwork needs to be filled in so we can ensure the correct amount of funding is claimed. Please note that changes to funding can only be made at the start of each term.
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): GDPR puts in place safeguards regarding the use of personal data by organisations. The

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Act gives rights to those about whom data is held. This includes the right to know the types of data being held, why it is being held, and to whom it may be communicated. Please refer to our Data Protection and Information Management Policy for further detail.

### Appeals Process

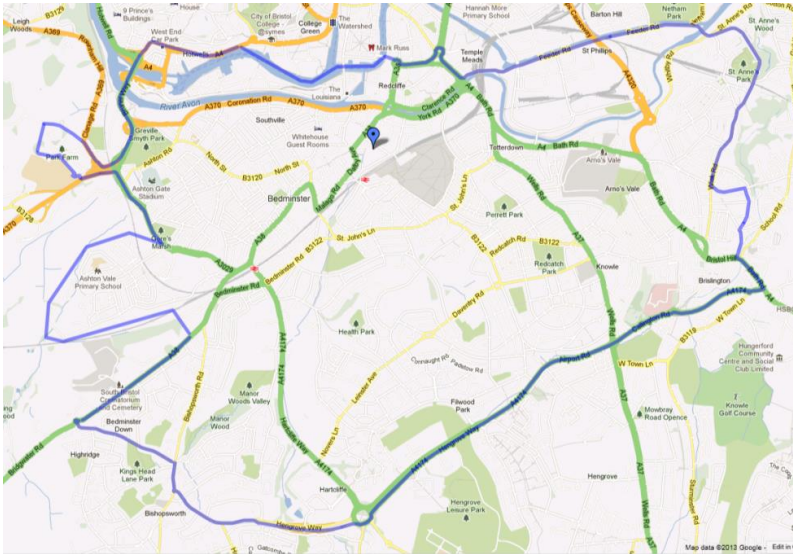
- If you have any complaints about any aspect of the delivery of free hours, please contact Bristol City Council to discuss your questions and concerns. Please email the Family Information Service, [askcyps@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:askcyps@bristol.gov.uk) or call 0117 357 4192.

### **Windmill Hill City Farm Area of Benefit**



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This map can also be viewed online: <http://tinyurl.com/nyownur>



**This policy works in partnership with the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and the Fee Paying Policy**