

Policies

In The Setting



All the Policies in this section are related to the setting

Please take the time to read through them so you can understand how Puddle Ducks runs and how we support children and address all children's needs.

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Description:

**Puddle Ducks Nursery Admissions Policy
Admissions Policy**

Puddle Ducks Pre-School & Woodland

Admissions Policy

Policy Statement

Puddle Ducks Pre-School aims to make our provision accessible to children and families from all sections of the community. We are committed to inclusive practice and equality of opportunity and operate within an Equal Opportunities framework. This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or funding guidance changes.

Accessibility & Inclusion

We will:

- Promote awareness of Puddle Ducks within the local community.
- Welcome children and families from all backgrounds and cultures.
- Ensure information about our setting is available in clear written English and, where possible, provide support through spoken explanation, translation or alternative formats when required.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable children and parents with additional needs or disabilities to access our provision.
- Monitor admissions to ensure our intake reflects social diversity and fairness.
- Work in partnership with families and external professionals where required.

Age Range

Puddle Ducks is registered with Ofsted to care for children aged **3 months to 8 years**.

Admissions Procedure

- Places are offered subject to availability.
- Families must complete a **Registration Form** and required consents prior to attendance.
- All personal information is stored and processed in line with **UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation**.
- We aim to be flexible where possible to support family needs, whilst maintaining safe staff ratios.
- A waiting list is maintained and reviewed regularly.

Allocation of Places

Where demand exceeds availability, the following criteria may be considered:

1. Length of time on the waiting list
2. Siblings already attending the setting
3. Proximity of the family home to the setting
4. The ability of the setting to meet individual needs safely and appropriately

Government Funded Places

Puddle Ducks offers funded early education places in accordance with **Local Authority and Government guidance**.

- Funded places are subject to availability.
- Funding can be accessed the term after a child becomes eligible.
- Universal and Extended funding hours may be used within agreed session times.
- Funded hours are delivered across **38 weeks per year**.
- Bank Holidays and closure days are not claimable funded days.

Voluntary Contributions & Additional Services

Puddle Ducks offers enhanced provision including woodland sessions, higher staff ratios, animal care, outdoor learning resources, snacks and specialist activities.

A **voluntary contribution** may be requested to support these additional services. These contributions are **optional**, and parents will always be offered a fully funded

place that meets statutory requirements should they choose not to access additional services.

Woodland / Forest School Provision

Forest School forms part of the Puddle Ducks ethos and supports children's independence, resilience and school readiness.

- Woodland sessions are primarily for children in their pre-school year. (If you do not want your child to be outdoors, then Puddle Ducks is not the setting for you, as this year's group will be outdoors.)
- Parents are informed of woodland expectations before accepting a place.
- Higher staffing ratios are maintained for safety and quality of learning.
- A voluntary charge may apply to support staffing and specialist resources.

Attendance & Holidays

- We encourage families to take holidays during school holiday periods where possible.
- Up to **four weeks' holiday allowance** may be offered for full-year childcare bookings only.
- This does not apply to term-time only pre-school sessions.

Fees & Payment

- Fees are payable **weekly or monthly** via bank transfer, childcare vouchers or approved schemes.
- We recognise that families may occasionally experience financial difficulty and will work sensitively and confidentially to agree payment plans where appropriate.
- Persistent non-payment without communication may result in additional charges or withdrawal of a place.

Illness & Absence

- Fees remain payable during periods of illness or absence as staffing and ratios must still be maintained.
- Exceptional circumstances may be considered at management discretion.
- Sessions cannot usually be swapped due to staffing ratios.

Childcare Vouchers & Tax-Free Childcare

Puddle Ducks is registered to accept **Childcare Vouchers and Tax-Free Childcare Schemes**.

Safeguarding & Data Protection

All admissions operate alongside our Safeguarding, Privacy and Confidentiality policies. Information is stored securely and only used for legitimate childcare and regulatory purposes.

Commitment to Equality

No child or family will be excluded or disadvantaged on the grounds of:

- Age
- Gender or gender identity
- Disability or additional needs
- Ethnicity or culture
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Family structure
- Socio-economic background

Children Act.

Nursery Hours

- Our nursery operates from **7:30 AM to 5:00 PM**, Monday to Friday.
- We are open for 38 weeks of the year, during term time, for Funded Sessions, We are open in the Holidays with the exception of 2 weeks at Christmas and 1 week in August, we are open to all in the holiday.
- Please note that we are also closed on Bank Holidays, and there will be no charges for the days when the nursery is closed.

Admission Options

In the Setting

- Parents can choose between Term-Time Only or Full-Time care.
- Term-Time Only: Families will receive 11 weeks of no nursery costs during the holidays. However, should families require care during holidays, they must book in advance, and places cannot be guaranteed.

Full-Time: Families will receive four weeks of holiday at no cost, provided the holidays are booked four weeks in advance.

Meals and Snacks

- We offer the opportunity to purchase hot meals; however, families are welcome to provide packed lunches.
- Please be advised that we are a nut-aware environment, and all meals must adhere to the dietary restrictions and children's allergies, which will be communicated clearly at enrollment.

Supplies

- Parents are responsible for providing nappies and spare clothes for their children.- Spares are available at our nursery for emergencies, which is part of our nursery's offer.

Learning Experiences

By attending Puddle Ducks, families agree to participate in our ethos, including contributing to Forest School learning and outdoor experiences involving our farm and small animals.

- Learning opportunities may arise **spontaneously**, such as the birth of farm animals, and we cannot provide specific schedules for these experiences.
- Our pre-schoolers in their last year will spend 9 AM to 3 PM in the woods 5 days a week during term time, engaging in Forest School experiences and the funded Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The **Forest and outdoor experience** with animals are at an additional cost. We can support you with any changes in family circumstances regarding payments. When choosing our setting, you must be aware of the costs of these activities, as they are part of its ethos.

Funded Places

As of January 2025, all children 9 months old are entitled to 15 hours of government-funded childcare. For children over 3, this increases to 30 hours of funded childcare, available during term time. There is no cost, and you get these hours as per the Guidelines for Free.

- We accept all childcare vouchers and participate in the Government tax-free childcare scheme.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- We are committed to supporting children with SEND and their families. We understand these can be challenging and are here to support everyone involved.

Non-Discrimination
discrimination.

- If circumstances change and a family cannot contribute financially, we assure you that your child will receive care and support without Payment Fee payment is required monthly in arrears by cash or bank transfer to Puddle Ducks. Puddle Ducks encourages prompt payment but recognises that some parents/carers may sometimes experience financial difficulties. Puddle Ducks Pre-School will ensure that no child/children/families are penalised should this situation arise.

Puddle Ducks Pre-School will endeavour to arrange an acceptable payment plan to both parties, enabling the child/children to continue attending.

All financial matters will be dealt with the utmost sensitivity and consideration and in confidence. In the event of non-payment, and no explanation
Therefore, if payment is not paid and no contact has been made, then a 10% charge will be added to the invoice.

The Manager will liaise with the parent/carer concerned.

- A payment plan will be agreed upon if necessary
- Where unmet payments continue, the owner/ Manager will liaise with the parent/ carer to arrange payment options

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- Where there is no resolution, the child's/children's place may be Withdrawn Cheques should be made payable to (insert as appropriate) Illness Payment Discretion of the manager.

If your child cannot attend Puddle Ducks due to Illness, the fee will still be due. Allowances will be made for extreme circumstances at the

Days Off We cannot swap days for illness or days off, as we have staff ratios to pay. If you choose to have a day off with your child and are on a term-time contract, you will be charged as usual.

Before confirming your place at Puddle Duck, please understand our Forest and Outdoor learning contribution. If this is not for you and you only want the Basic EYFS Childcare, then maybe Puddle Ducks is not for you. When you sign up for Puddle Ducks, you get 100 % of your Funding from the Government. Alongside the Forest School and outdoor experience, we as a setting cannot differentiate between the two, as our curriculum runs side by side and is not separate, to give each child an enriched learning experience, that you cannot get from the Basic EYFS.

Policy - Collection Departure Child Policy

Category: In the Setting

Review Date: N/A

Description:

Collection and Departure Procedure

Parents may collect their child/ren at any time during the session. However, please be considerate for other children's learning when picking up, so as not to disrupt the room.

To ensure the safety of the children in our care, they will only be released to their parent/carer or the person on the permission form unless notified beforehand.

Messages can be left at Puddle Duck's.

Puddle Duck reserves the right not to allow a child to be released from our care, if we are in doubt of the authenticity of the person calling, i.e. if the child appears distressed about leaving with the person or about not knowing them.

All children must be signed out by the person who is collecting them, if not the regular person, and if they have a promotion from the primary caregiver. If, for any reason, a child is late being collected, a charge of £2 for every fifteen minutes will be invoiced, unless previously arranged with the manager.

This policy has been adopted by Victoria & Jacqueline Stratford Management
.....Victoria Stratford.....Miss V Stratford (Management)
.....Jacqueline Stratford..... Miss J Stratford (Management)

Collection and Arrival Procedure

For Breakfast and After School Care

No child shall leave the setting premises without supervision.
Children will be collected using our after-school staff and named escort volunteers.
With a ratio of 1 : 8 children under 8 yrs.

Each day, staff members will meet the children in the playground and record attendance in the register to check for absences. This is also when any queries On absences, etc., can be followed up with the school office.
Collection

Younger children will be collected from their class teacher by our after-school staff. Once the children and escort volunteers are at the designated collection point, the register is taken. If anyone is missing, this will be investigated, firstly checking the child's classroom, teacher and school office, lastly, if not resolved a phone call to the parent.

This policy has been adopted by Victoria & Jacqueline Stratford

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