



Admissions Policy

Whitsers is open to every family in the community. In order to encourage children and families from all sections of the community we ensure that Whitsers is advertised by various means throughout the village and community. A waiting list is kept and each half-term where spaces are available, children are selected from the waiting list. We use the following criteria for accepting children from the waiting list, subject to the availability of places (which is dependent upon legal restrictions regarding adult-child ratios and available space):

- SEN (Special Educational needs) and looked after children
- Where the child lives – children living in Whittlesford will have priority
- Age – based on academic year
- Time spent on waiting list
- Whether Whitsers is the child's main pre-school setting
- How many days a child attends a pre-school other than Whitsers
- Whether siblings attend (or have attended) Whitsers

Children who are already at Whitsers and wish to increase sessions are subject to the same criteria.

Children for whom there is no spare place in their earliest qualifying half-term will be added to the top of the next term's waiting list.

Whitsers currently take 28 children per session as long as there is sufficient staffing per session. Our staff to child ratios are at least 1:3 for under 3s and 1:7 for over 3s.

In order to make Whitsers genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community we:

- Welcome both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities;
- Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining Whitsers to ensure that equality of opportunity is provided.

Session Requirements

Whitsers is currently open Monday to Friday morning sessions (9-12), Monday to Friday lunch clubs (12-1) and Tuesday to Thursday afternoon sessions (12-3 including lunch)

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subject to sufficient demand, with Wednesday morning being allocated as a special pre-school year only session.

All children must attend at least 2 sessions a week (morning and/or afternoon) with no maximum number of sessions, space permitting. A minimum number of sessions is stipulated as it is important for the child's keyworker to get to know the child and to make sure they are prepared for starting school. Although this is not always possible, it is strongly recommended that preschool children attend sessions spread over more than one day a week in order to truly benefit from the Whitsers experience.

Confirmation of your child's place will be given where possible at the beginning of the half term before he or she is due to start. Parents will be asked to pay a non-refundable admin fee (currently £30) when a place is offered. This fee may be waived if you are only accessing funded hours. Please inform the Admissions Secretary or our Administrator if you intend to cover all of your child's sessions at Whitsers with funded hours.

There will initially be a three week settling-in period after which, under extenuating circumstances (chiefly if a child isn't settling as well as hoped) and in consultation with staff, hours maybe adjusted at short notice.

Six weeks notice (or the general equivalent of half a term) must be given to amend sessions, whether reducing or changing days/session times. If you wish to simply increase sessions these will be accepted where and when possible, subject to staffing levels.

Payment of fees

Fees for sessions attended are payable in accordance with the invoices raised each half term which are emailed to parents/carers. Where payment is due in addition to any funding received, this payment will be made within 21 calendar days from the date of the invoice.

If payment is not received within 21 days, a further copy of the invoice will be sent by email requesting payment within seven days from the date of the further email. If payment is still not forthcoming, a hard copy of the invoice will be posted by recorded delivery to the address held giving a further seven days to pay the overdue invoice. This letter will also include warning that the child/ren subject to the outstanding fees will have their places suspended if the invoices are not addressed.

The Committee may at their discretion, permit bespoke arrangements for fees to be paid in instalments. Any difficulties in paying invoices promptly can be discussed in confidence with the Play Leader, Administrator or a Member of the Committee. Contact details are available on the Whitsers website.

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Where payment is still outstanding, the Committee may, at their discretion, consider pursuing outstanding fees via a claim made through the small claims court.

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