

## 1. Introduction

Willow Tree Childcare is committed to offering high-quality early years education and care for children aged 2 to 5 years, in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We offer both:

- Government-funded places (including 15- and 30-hour entitlements), and
- Privately funded places on a fee-paying basis.

Due to the limited size of our setting, we operate with a limited number of spaces. This Admissions Policy outlines the procedures and terms of enrolment.

## 2. Admissions Principles

We are an inclusive setting and do not discriminate based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or any other protected characteristic in line with the Equality Act 2010.

However, admission to the nursery is not guaranteed and is subject to:

- Availability of places
- Suitability of provision for the child's individual needs
- Our right to decline an application without obligation to provide a reason

## 3. Admissions Process

To apply for a place, families must:

1. Arrange a meeting with the Nursery Manager (by appointment only).
2. Attend in person with the child for an informal initial assessment of developmental needs and nursery readiness.
3. Provide required documentation, which includes (but is not limited to):
  - Proof of identity and age of the child
  - Proof of parental responsibility
  - Proof of address
  - Relevant medical or special educational needs (SEN) information
4. Receive and complete the Registration Form provided at the initial meeting.

## 4. Privately Funded Admissions: Fees and Terms

Parents applying for a privately funded place are required to pay the following upon registration:

### *a) Refundable Deposit*

- This is held as security and will be deducted from the final invoice upon proper termination of the place, provided two weeks' written notice is given.
- The deposit is forfeited if the family withdraws before starting without adequate notice or fails to comply with notice terms.

### *b) Non-refundable Administrative Fee*

- Covers administrative and onboarding costs, including:
  - Processing of documents
  - Induction arrangements
  - Financial planning for staff and sessions

Amounts for both the deposit and fee are stated clearly in the Registration Form and are reviewed annually.

### *c) Minimum Attendance Contract*

- A minimum contractual commitment of two calendar months, with at least three days per week attendance, applies to all privately funded places.

## 5. Government-Funded Places

We accept eligible children entitled to:

- 15 hours funded early education (universal offer)
- 30 hours funded childcare (extended offer, subject to eligibility)

Places are allocated based on:

- Available funding
- Session availability
- Age group and staffing ratio requirements

## Withdrawal and Late Cancellations

If a parent decides not to take up a government-funded place after confirming their intent, they must:

- Notify us as soon as they become aware, and
- Before the child's funded place commences

If notice is given after the funded attendance period has started, we reserve the right to claim two weeks' worth of funding to cover loss of income and operational planning, provided this condition is clearly disclosed in the Registration Agreement.

*Legal basis: While publicly funded hours cannot be charged to parents, settings are permitted to retain pro-rata funding for non-attendance or short-notice withdrawal, as long as it is clearly stated in writing and in accordance with Local Authority funding terms.*

## 6. Allocation and Priority Criteria

Where places are limited, priority may be given to:

- Children already attending the nursery (e.g., rising from toddler to preschool room)
- Siblings of current or former children
- Full-time or higher-attending children (if privately funded)
- Children referred by professionals (e.g., via Early Help or SEN pathway)

Final decisions remain at the discretion of the Nursery Management.

## 7. Refusal and Withdrawal of Places

We reserve the right to:

- Refuse admission based on capacity, child safety, or non-compliance with procedures
- Withdraw a confirmed place in cases of:
  - Failure to attend scheduled induction/assessment
  - Non-payment or late payment of fees
  - Misrepresentation or non-disclosure of relevant information
  - Unsafe behaviour or failure to follow nursery policies

Any such decisions will be documented and, where appropriate, communicated in writing.

## 8. Safeguarding and Welfare

All admissions are subject to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. If during or after admission we identify concerns that raise safeguarding issues, we will act in accordance with our legal duty to safeguard the welfare of the child.

## 9. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance. A copy is available to all parents upon request and provided at the point of registration.