**Admissions Policy**

**Policy Statement**

It is our intention to make St Mary’s Playschool genuinely accessible to and inclusive of children and families from all sections of the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

**Key Facts**

* In Essex, an academic year is from September to August. Children usually start Primary School Reception Class in the September of the academic year in which they turn 5.
* St Mary’s Playschool provides care and education for children aged 2years to almost 5.
* The Free Early Years Entitlement (FEEE) is provided by the Government via Essex County Council. Every child is eligible for up to 15 hours funded per week for 38 weeks a year from the term after their child’s third birthday.
* We take children who are eligible for funded 2 year old places (FEEE2). Families can find out if their 2 year old is eligible for funding from the EYCC website.
* Additional hours, above the free entitlement may be accessed and charged at a specific cost per hour.

**Procedures**

* We ensure that the existence of our setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
* We ensure that information about our setting is accessible, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate and if requested, in more than one language.
* We are sympathetic to the need for emergency admissions which may be referred via social care or health visitor, if spaces are available.
* We describe our setting and its practices in inclusive terms that make it clear that it welcomes fathers and mothers, other relatives and carers, including childminders, regardless of their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
* Our waiting list is arranged in birth order within each term. In addition our policy may take into account the following:
* Siblings already attending the setting.
* Referrals from outside agencies
* The vicinity of the home to the setting;
* Children are usually admitted from the age of two years into Red Group in the afternoons, and when there are vacancies, Yellow Group in the mornings, taking into account the balance of the group as a whole.
* Parents are asked to specify their preferred days and when agreed, they are expected to attend those days for the duration of the term.
* We do not normally admit children for less than two sessions per week.
* Parents are encouraged to visit us with their child during the half term before the child starts.
* When places in the morning groups become available, children are moved up through the groups by order of date of birth.
* Attendance patterns are flexible to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing they do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the setting that provides stability for all the children.
* We consult with families about the opening times of the setting to ensure we accommodate a broad range of family need.

**Lunch Club**

1. Lunch club will run according to demand and is entirely optional.

2. Children should bring their own healthy packed lunch. We provide guidance regarding what is meant by a ‘healthy’ lunch. St Mary’s does not provide food for lunch.

3. Lunch club follows a morning session or/and precedes an afternoon session and places are limited.

4. Milk or water is available to the children.

5. The FEEE cannot normally used to pay for lunch club; there is a specified hourly rate.

 6. In special circumstances, and with prior agreement, the FEEE may be used to cover the lunchtime period.

This policy has been reviewed and agreed at a meeting of St Mary’s Playschool Committee

Signed................................................................................................................(Chair)

Date.....................................................................................................................