

Admissions Policy

General

Children are admitted to Little Barn Owls Ltd on a non-discriminatory basis. The Nursery accepts parents/carers and children regardless of gender, race, cultural background, religion, physical or mental ability or disability, health or social class. Staff members are aware of and sensitive to each child's needs, level of development and background.

In the event of there being a limited number of vacancies for any one session, children are admitted in the following order of priority:

1. a child who is currently in attendance at the nursery;
2. a child who has a sibling already in attendance at the nursery;
3. a child transferring from another Little Barn Owls setting;
4. bookings of two or more days;
5. the date of enquiry.

Full day bookings will be prioritised over sessional bookings. Full Package bookings are prioritised over EYFE-only bookings, including where a parent of a currently attending child requests to change from Full Package to EYFE-only.

Admissions Process

1. After enquiring with us, you will be advised of potentially where and when we can offer a space to your child. If this does not match your requirements, we will offer to add you to our waiting list (see below).
2. If we have availability that matches your requirements, we will offer you a nursery tour – the admissions team will advise on the next available dates/times for a tour.
3. Once you have decided to register your child with us, reconfirm the availability by emailing admissions@littlebarnowls.co.uk.
4. We will send you a blank Registration Form, Terms and Conditions and Parent Information Pack via email.
5. Within 72 hours of having the availability reconfirmed, send the completed registration form (signed on pages 2 & 7) either by email to admissions@littlebarnowls.co.uk or handed to one of the nurseries. Additionally, you must pay the registration fee and deposit. For EYFE-only, no registration fee is required. For LA-issued EYFE-only, no deposit or registration fee are required.
6. If you are unable to complete step 5 within 72 hours, please re-visit step 3 to check availability. **We cannot hold a space that we have offered for longer than 72 hours.**
7. Once we have received the form, registration fee and deposit, you will receive a confirmation email of your child's space.

Admissions Policy

Funding Packages

For children receiving funded hours, we will provide details of the options available at the point of enquiry. At this point, parents must indicate their preferred package enabling our Admissions Team to provide the relevant documentation. Please refer to our 'Funding Options Booklet' for a breakdown of what is included under each package option.

Fees Payable at Registration

A non-returnable/refundable registration fee of £100 plus a deposit of £200 must be paid via BACS for each child being registered. The details of the account to pay are on the registration form. The deposit is refundable once your child's final months' fees have been fully paid.

For EYFE-only, only the deposit is required and this will be refunded after 'Headcount Day' in the first term of attendance. With an LA-issued code (EYFE-only), no deposit or fee is charged.

Should you decide to withdraw your child from LBO before they start, giving us less than three months' notice, the deposit will not be returned to you.

Intake window

Our intake window is **August to January** each year. Your child can start with us any time within that period, pending availability.

Should you wish your child to start nursery outside of this period, a retainer fee will be due each month past the end of the intake window that we have to reserve your child's space.

For families who are eligible for funding, the retainer fee will be 10% of unfunded monthly fees; for families who are not eligible for funding, the retainer fee will be 20% of monthly fees.

See below for further explanation.

Example Scenario 1: you register your child in May 2026 to start with us March 2027. You will be eligible for funding when your child starts nursery. Monthly fees (without funding) are £800. Prior to starting you will need to pay a 10% retainer fee and will be billed as follows:

January 2027 - £80

February 2027 - £80

Admissions Policy

Example Scenario 2: you register your child in December 2026 to start with us in May 2027. You will not be eligible for funding when your child starts nursery. Monthly fees are £800. Prior to starting you will need to pay a 20% retainer and will be billed as follows:

February 2027 - £160

March 2027 - £160

April 2027 - £160

Example Scenario 3: you register your child in March 2026 to start with us in October 2026 – the start is within the intake window so no retainer is due, and your first invoice will be for October 2026.

Mid-Term New-Starter Discount

If you are eligible for funding, but you are unable to start at the beginning of a term (January, April, September) we will discount your child's fees by 15% in the period between them starting and the beginning of the following term. The discount will be applied once we have proof of funding eligibility (generally, this is code provided by HMRC, your NI number and your child's date of birth OR proof of a 2-year-old code issued by your Local Authority).

Minimum Booking

We will take bookings of one day/week on our lowest occupancy days. Generally, our lowest occupancy days are Mondays and/or Fridays, but you can check this when enquiring about availability. All bookings are for 51 weeks of the year.

Start Dates

In the interests of making the transition to nursery easier, we limit how many children will start in each room per day/week. We do not offer start dates in the two weeks leading up to Christmas or in the first full week after New Year's Day. In the first three weeks of each term funded children are given priority when we assign start dates.

Admissions Policy

Notice Required for Changes to Booking

Prior to your child starting nursery, three calendar months' notice is required for any cancellation, reduction in the booked days, or deferral of start date.

There is no penalty for deferring a start date within the same intake window. If deferring outside of the intake window, the monthly retainer fee of up to 20% will be charged. Please note that a start date can only be deferred once.

Once your child has started, two calendar months' notice (or payment in lieu) is required for you to withdraw your child from nursery. For the transfer of EYFE hours, four weeks' notice is required. Two calendar months' notice is required to reduce the number or length of sessions that your child attends nursery. If less than two months' notice is given, in the first month where the reduced hours are in effect, your invoice will not change. From month two of the new booking plan, your invoice will reflect the reduction in days.

Admissions Policy

The Waiting List

If you are unable to register your child for the days / start date you require, we will ask you if you'd like to be added to our waiting list. Please be aware that addition to the waiting list does not guarantee a nursery space for your child.

If a space becomes available which may suit your requirements, we will email to ask if you would like to take it up. This may take the form of a bulk email, in which case spaces will be offered to those who respond first.

Please let us know if you no longer want your details to be held on the waiting list.

What To Expect Prior To Your Child's Start Date

Three to four months prior to your child's start date, we will get in touch to confirm that your original booking still suits your requirements. We will provide you with information on what your fees will be on starting, and we will send you an invitation to logon to our nursery system.

Around one month prior to your child's start date, a member of staff from the nursery will call you to book in a welcome call OR introductory meeting and some settling-in sessions for your child. These are great opportunities for you to ask any questions you have prior to the start date. We try to arrange settling-in sessions as close to your child's start date as possible, so please bear this in mind if booking a holiday around that time.

Notice on Nursery Placement

The nursery reserves the right to terminate a child's place at nursery should the relationship with the family not be working and/or jeopardising the safety or quality of experience for other children attending; but **only** after all other reasonable attempts to solve problems has been exhausted. For example, for a child where behavioural issues are having an effect on other children, our behaviour policy and procedure will be followed. This includes (but not limited too) meeting with parents, creating and implementing support plans with additional resources and review meetings, and using external agencies such as Targeted Setting Support (TSS) where required. Only after all options have been exhausted will the nursery serve notice of the child's placement.

Parents and carers can view Little Barn Owls Ltd policies and procedures within the setting by making an appointment via email or via telephone.