

# Rising Stars Romford



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## Rising stars Romford – Parent handbook

*“We aim to provide the highest standard of childcare within a stimulating, fun environment. Every child will be encouraged to blossom to their full potential.”*

### Introduction

- A well presented and secure nursery with CCTV across the building
- 3 large stimulating garden areas
- Flexibility to meet family’s needs
- Nutritious, freshly prepared meals cooked daily
- Deliver Early years curriculum through play

### Welcome to Rising Stars Romford

Thank you for your childcare enquiry at Rising Stars Romford. We know that your priority is to find a nursery that offers the right setting for your child and one that understands the importance of earning the trust and confidence from the parent/carer.

At Rising Stars Romford, we devote our efforts to create a fun and loving environment whilst delivering the best in childcare and education. Our goal is to create a positive and motivating experience that will in turn, play a major role in your child’s future learning and development.

We aim for our nursery to be the best and regularly invest in resources to meet the needs of the individual children. Our friendly, trained staff are focused on providing fun filled learning and education. Our activities are planned to ensure your child develops as an individual whilst helping to nurture and encourage learning through discovery and enjoyment.

We strive to provide a positive experience to our children through learning and a developing programme that is second to none. We specialise in giving individual care and attention in an unrivalled environment. We have invested resources into supporting wide and varied opportunities for creativity. We are intent in promoting independence through a nursery experience that will make a significance difference to your child’s future development. The formative years of your child’s life are key to their ongoing education, physical and social development. It is of the utmost importance to us to give them the best beginning.

We believe that we provide the children with the right environment, support and experience to stimulate their curiosity, imagination and creativity. We continuously evaluate the opportunities that we can offer your child to ensure they are always learning and developing.

To achieve this, not only do we need to make sure that we attract and retain committed staff, but we also ensure that we stimulate your child emotionally and intellectually by providing the best circumstances to promote active learning.

### **Settling In**

We aim to support parents and other carers to help their children settle quickly and easily by giving consideration to the individual needs and circumstances of every child and their families. Our aim is for children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the setting and to feel secure and comfortable with all staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's continued well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the nursery has to offer. All our staff are aware about the importance of building strong relationships with children. They are trained to recognise the different stages of development and use this knowledge to support children and families settling into the Setting.

Our Setting will work in partnership with parents to settle their child into the setting environment by:

- Planning settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one-week period, dependent on individual needs and age and stage of development.
- Allocating a key person to each child and their family, before they attend. The key person welcomes and looks after the child ensuring that their care is tailored to meet their individual needs. He/she offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with his/her parents during the settling in period and throughout his/her time at the setting, to ensure the family has a familiar contact person to assist with the settling in process.
- Reviewing the nominated key person if the child is bonding with another member of staff to ensure the child's needs are supported.
- Providing parents with relevant information about the policies and procedures of the setting.
- Welcoming parents to stay with their child during the first settling session, to support the child in feeling settled and the parents feeling comfortable about leaving their child.
- Settling in visits and introductory sessions are key to a smooth transition and to ensure good communication and information sharing between staff and parents.
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the setting and developing a plan with them.
- Encouraging parents, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer periods.
- Assigning a buddy/back-up key person to each child in case the key person is not available. Parents will be made aware of this to support the settling process and attachment.
- Respecting the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the setting and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in over the phone.
- Not taking a child on an outing from the setting until they are completely settled.

- During the settling in sessions, your child's key person will discuss with you your child's needs, likes/dislikes, favourite foods, sleep patterns, routines, etc. This information will enable us to cater for your child's individual needs and assist in the settling in process.

### **Child's First Day**

The nursery provides all educational materials, linen, refreshments, snacks, breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. You only need to bring with you a spare set of clothes (or more if your child is toilet training) and any personal items, such as a comforter or favourite teddy, which your child may require. Parents with very young children will also need to provide nappies, wipes, nappy creams and formula/breast milk.

Children will regularly take part in messy activities involving paint, glue, and will also spend time in the garden so suitable seasonal clothing is essential, for example, a warm coat, hat and gloves in the winter months, and a sun hat in the summer months. The nursery provides a bottle of Nivea Sensitive Sun kids factor 50 sun cream. All items must be clearly marked with your child's name. Unfortunately, we cannot take responsibility for lost personal items.

### **Staff Training**

Staff development is paramount, we intend to offer the best training opportunities to support the Foundation Stage Curriculum. We want parents and Ofsted to see us as the leading provider of high-quality childcare and education. We take nothing for granted and are committed to constantly monitoring and evaluating our standard of care.

### **Communication**

We recognise how important it is to keep parents and nursery staff informed as much as possible and communicate our news and views to parents via our newsletters, notice boards and website. We also have a suggestion box in the nursery.

Daily feedback about your child's day at nursery is provided through daily diaries, feedback sheets and/or verbal feedback, depending on your child's age. Please feel free to discuss any issues with your child's key person at any time.

A concern can often be easily resolved by talking about it at an early stage. In addition, the nursery manager should be able to address any concerns that you may have.

### **Email and Website**

We will endeavour to contact you updates about nursery events and what the children have been up to at the nursery. You can find further details of nursery news updates and nursery calendars on our website.

## **Nursery Events**

We hold regular events at the nursery such as open days, fun days, charity days and seasonal events. All parents and children are welcome at these events and we welcome help from parents in organising activities.

## **Parent Meetings**

We hold regular meetings with you to discuss your child's progress. Appointments will be made with you for a convenient date and time.

## **Sleep times**

Children who sleep during the day have their own bed sheet, blankets and mats. They have their own sleep mats that are clearly labelled with the child's name and how they like to sleep, e.g. with a comforter.

## **Our care**

Our aim is to provide excellent nursery care and education. We want you to be happy with what we do and how we do it. After all, our collective aim is for happy and contented children who enjoy living in a culture that nurtures and values the importance of childhood.

We know that choosing the right nursery for your child is of paramount importance to you and share priority which is to give them the best possible start. Our aim is to understand and accommodate to meet your child's needs. We offer unrivalled attention to ensure that you feel secure in the knowledge that your child is cared for safe and enjoyable surroundings. They will flourish in our loving home from home environment that encourages exploration and investigation through play.

## **Key Person**

We take great care to help babies and toddlers settle into the nursery. To assist this, we allocate a member of staff or key person to your child. The key person will build a special relationship with them and help to meet their needs while they are in our care.

They will offer security, reassurance and continuity (they will often be the one to feed, change and sooth your child) and are in the best position to understand individual needs.

We focus on working in partnership with parents and carers

The key person will be someone for you to share information with about your child's time in the nursery. They will help them to develop relationships with other members of staff. When they are ready to move into the next room for instance from the baby room to toddler room, their key person will be there to help the child and you develop a relationship with, and in confidence in their new key person.

## **Observations/Tapestry**

Our skilful and perceptive staff members take the time to observe and understand your child's individual needs and interests so that play opportunities, resources and interactions can be planned and provided appropriately for their stage of development. We use a fantastic online system called Tapestry to record and store all our daily observations and assessments relating to each child. The staff and our parents absolutely love Tapestry and we are sure you will too.

## **Play and Learning**

We use the Early Years' Foundation Stage framework to guide what we provide for your child so that they will become strong, healthy children who are competent learners and skilful communicators. We foster your child's curiosity about their environment. We have a sensory room to help develop fine motor skills and refine touch activities as well as explore sounds, sights and mechanisms. In our care your child will learn through interaction with people and active exploration of the world around them through touch, sight, sound, smell, and movement. They will develop confidence, skills, knowledge and discover that learning is interesting and fun.

## **Environment**

We have designed our environments to be both cosy and stimulating. The resources, furniture and equipment we provide have been carefully chosen to ensure that they are of the highest quality. We offer a wide range of experiences in clearly defined areas of the nursery including sand, water and paint to stimulate their creativity and develop independence.

Cosy areas of the nursery are reserved for stories, rhymes and songs. Carpet, mirrors, wooden toys enhance tactile and visual stimulation. Our environment is designed to encourage physical skills such as crawling, sitting, standing and walking.

The babies in our care are introduced to discover play including treasure baskets that contain a mixture of natural materials that differ in feel and texture.

## **Partnership with Parents**

Throughout your child's time with us, we will document their journey of learning and development. We will discuss our observations with you and offer you the opportunity to give us feedback on how your child is developing. Sharing such information is useful for parents and staff as it provides a complete picture of your child's learning and helping us to tailor our nursery programme to the best effect.

## **Joint Parental Responsibility**

In the event of a family dispute between parents, there are clear legal procedures that childcare providers must follow. Parents who are married have equal rights over their child (joint parental responsibility), unless we are informed otherwise by way of a court order or through social services. To avoid aggravating a dispute further, we will always remain neutral unless specifically ordered otherwise by way of a court order or by social services.

## Information For Parents

Copies of our policies and procedures are available in the nursery and on our website. The nursery will normally be inspected by Ofsted every three years. Extracts from our most recent inspection report can be found downloaded from the Ofsted website, [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). Alternatively, we will be happy to provide you with a copy if required. You will also find the latest report on display in the nursery.

We aim to give parents as much information about the nursery as possible. You will find various information boards in the nursery, such as 'parents' information', 'policies and procedures' and 'our team'.

## The Early Years Foundation

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is how the Government and early years professionals describe the time in your child's life between birth and the age of 5. This is a very important stage as it helps your child get ready for school, as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes.

From when your child is born up until the age of 5, their early years experiences should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure and support their development, care and learning needs.

Nurseries, pre-schools, school reception classes and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

The EYFS framework exists to support all professionals working in early years and was developed through consultation with a number of early year's experts and parents. In 2012, the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework also has a greater emphasis on your role in helping your child develop.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through seven areas of learning and development. Children will mostly develop the three prime areas first:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas are the most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

These seven areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is similar to a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it is suitable for very young children, and is designed to be extremely flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

With the EYFS, children learn through playing, exploring and being active, and through creative and critical thinking, which takes place both indoors and outside.

#### **Apple Room – Aged 3 months to 1 year**

- Apple room has babies from three months to one year
- Babies' curiosity of colours, patterns, people, toys and noises around them are explored
- Relationship with the staffing in the setting stage is bonded
- We value home routines and encourage this whilst also introducing new things to the babies
- During the first eight months young babies react to people and situations with their whole bodies
- They are also competent in observing and responding to the immediate environment and communicating with those around them

#### **Pear Room- Aged 1 year to 2 years**

- In Pear room the children are aged one year to two years.
- The children in the room are learning very quickly at this stage, and try to say their first words, we encourage further language development
- In Pear room the children are encouraged to start feeding themselves at mealtimes especially finger foods. During this stage exploration of the environment becomes intentional, increasing mobility and language development enables the children to discover more and understand the world

#### **Plum Room-Aged 2 years to 3 years**

- In Plum room the children are aged from two to three years old
- In this room the children are very active, adventurous, mobile and curious
- They begin to be more independent
- Children can sometimes start toilet training
- They begin to develop friendships with other children begin to show increasing independence, pleasure in moving communication and learning through play.

#### **Cherry Room- Aged 3 years to 4 years**

- Cherry room has children from three years to four years old
- The children are preparing for pre-schooling and so their studies are more focused on preschool activities.
- From the term after a child's third birthday, all children will be entitled to the FNEG (Free Nursery Education Grant) given by the government.
- The children are encouraged to develop personal hygiene skills for example, washing hands before & after meals, toileting, and potty training

- The children are preparing for pre-school and so their learning is more focused on preschool activities
- To create close links with between the home and the nursery.
- Children can practice and develop ideas, concepts and skills in a unique way without fear of failure.
- Children begin to show awareness of similarities between themselves and their friends; they form special bonds with both their peers and carers.

#### **Orange Room- Aged 4 years to 5 years**

- Children deepen their understanding by playing, talking, observing, planning and questioning. An important element of our childcare and education philosophy is the role play of our staff and their relationship with you and your child.
- We follow the foundation stage curriculum and children aged three months to five years we, follow a broad play based foundation stage curriculum that allows your child to progress at his or her own rate.
- Children in the preschool room encounter new experiences and seeking to understand more in order to extend skills, develop confidence and build on what they already know.
- They will begin to be more independent

#### **Security Policy**

Our policy on security is highlighted in our parent agreement. Access to the nursery must be controlled and only known parents or their identified emergency contacts are allowed to pick up. Any change in the person whom is to pick up the child has to be confirmed by the parent/s and a password is to be given.

You must adhere to the policy that only known, or visitor have been authorised by the manager are allowed into your nursery and that no visitor is left unattended. All visitors to the nursery should complete the visitors signing in book.

Access doors to the nursery must be secure both for child safety and unwelcomed visitors. Entrance door to the nursery has secured phone entry system.

In the interest of children, and staff safety in the nursery, there are CCTV cameras installed in the premises. The nursery also assures that children and staff are safe within the nursery by having cameras in the different areas of the nursery.

#### **Meal Times**

Meal times are a special time of the day and should be an enjoyable social occasion. The food our children eat affects every aspect of their lives behaviour growth even their ability to concentrate. Good nutrition is vital to a child health from building strong bones and teeth to the healthy development of internal organs and general growth. Children given high sugar content foods can become less focused and experience more mood swings.

When children are given a balanced diet they become more eager to learn, appear happier and sleep better. We limit the sugar content in all our recipes and do not add salt to any of our meals. We are committed to using quality products with low in E numbers salt and sugar.

Babies in our care will be fed with the milk parents provide and their meal times dictated by their routine at home. There will be cuddles while they are fed as would be at home. At weaning stage we feed freshly pureed food. We tell you what they eat and how much again keeping to the routine they have at home. Older children sit and eat together. They learn necessary skills for social eating on how to use cutlery, share food and are encouraged to try new things. Our staff takes part in meal times and talk with the children as they feed them helping them to differentiate between healthy and not so healthy foods. As well as main meals we provide snacks of fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the day. By becoming involved children are more likely to taste new foods and quickly begin to recognise different fruit and vegetables.

New recipes are trailed at our nurseries before inclusion on the menu. We are always happy to discuss your child's eating habits with you whether it's their individual needs or special dietary requirements.

### **Food Allergies And Intolerances**

If your child suffers from a severe allergy, the nursery manager and the key person will carry out a risk assessment during the settling in visits. A care plan and emergency procedures will be agreed with you, based on the information provided to us. If required, we will work with health visitors and other medical professionals to ensure that we are able to meet your child's needs. The nursery cook will always provide a suitable alternative, as similar to the original meal as possible.

Unfortunately, due to allergies and intolerances, we are unable to accept any foods, pre-packed or otherwise, including children's birthday cakes, at the nursery. However, the nursery cook is able to make a cake for your child's birthday for a small charge. Please give us at least one week's notice to allow our cook time to purchase any necessary ingredients and prepare the cake.

We do not use nuts or nut products in our foods.

### **Vegetarian And Preferred Options**

For our vegetarian children, we will provide a vegetarian alternative to all meals and snacks. If you have a preferred choice due to religious beliefs, we will always provide an alternative, again making this as similar to the original meal as possible. A Halal menu may also be available.

### **Accidents And Incidents**

As children develop physically, particularly in the early stages of walking, accidents can occasionally happen. If your child has an accident at the nursery, you will be informed upon collection and asked to sign an accident form. In the event of a bump to the head, you will be informed immediately by telephone. Your child will be monitored and, in most cases, will be able to continue with their day as normal. In the event of an accident causing concern, you will be asked to collect your child and a visit to your GP recommended.

Should your child have an accident that requires further medical support, you will be contacted immediately and any necessary action taken. In extreme cases, this could involve calling for the support of paramedics.

### **Illnesses**

From time to time, children may become unwell whilst at the nursery. If this should happen, we will inform you immediately and agree a course of action. We generally follow the guidance for schools and nurseries issued by the Health Protection Agency, although we may take a company view and extend the exclusion periods for certain illnesses. Children may not attend nursery whilst infectious and, in the event of sickness and diarrhoea, may not be admitted for 48 hours after the last bout of illness.

For a detailed list of exclusion periods, please check the policies and procedures board in the nursery. For further information about childhood illnesses and the signs and symptoms that accompany these, please visit the NHS website, [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

### **Medicines**

We are happy to administer prescription medication (and long term medication, such as an inhaler or eczema cream) at the nursery, provided your child is well enough to attend nursery and the staff team have sufficient information and training to do so.

All medicines brought into nursery will need to be recorded and we will require your signature to authorise the administration. All medicines must be in the original container, labelled with your child's name, the dosage required and the date that it was prescribed. Any medicines not meeting these criteria cannot be administered. We are not able to administer the first dose of a prescribed medicine. Therefore, children must have had the first dose at home a minimum of twenty four hours prior to coming to nursery.

The nursery provides Calpol, a temperature reducing medicine, which will be given as per the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations, provided you have given your written consent on the nursery contract. We will contact you by telephone prior to the medicine being administered. We will only administer one dose per day for a maximum of two consecutive days. If your child's temperature does not reduce, or rises again later in the day, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child from nursery.

### **Vaccinations**

We would recommend that children are fully vaccinated for their own protection and for the protection of those that cannot be vaccinated due to their age or for other reasons.

Please note, however, that vaccination is not a condition of admission to the nursery and thus there may be children attending that have not been fully vaccinated.

## **Safeguarding Children**

Safeguarding the children in our care is of paramount importance to us. More detailed information can be found in our safeguarding children policies, procedures and guidelines. However, we would like to draw your attention to our responsibilities within this.

All children have the right to grow up in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. They should feel comfortable that their individual needs will be met and not live in fear of harm or neglect.

In the event that we have concerns regarding your child, we will act upon them. Any staff member who has a concern will raise it with the DSL. Wherever possible, the concern will then be discussed with you. From this discussion, a decision will be made as to whether further action should be taken.

Where it is decided further action is necessary, this may be to seek advice or make a referral to social services, the designated social worker or, if appropriate, the police. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. However, the degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect your child.

All staff in the nursery are aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children and receive regular training in safeguarding children policies and procedures.

To ensure that our staff are suitable to care for your child, they all undergo disclosure and barring service checks prior to being allowed unsupervised access to the children. These checks are updated every three years. In addition, no member of staff is permitted to commence employment until two satisfactory written references have been obtained.

### **Special Educational And Additional Needs**

Working so closely with your child from such a young age and from making detailed observations and assessments, we are well placed to observe a child who may need additional support in one or more areas.

Any member of staff who has a concern regarding your child's development will raise this with the nursery special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who will then discuss this with you. Between you, the SENCO and your child's key person, a course of action will be agreed.

If following this course of action, it is felt it may be necessary to seek further advice and assistance from outside professionals, we will obtain your consent to do so. In this eventuality, we respectfully request that you seriously consider this input, as we are all working towards supporting and encouraging your child to allow them to reach their full potential.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and no decisions will be made without your prior consent.

More detailed information can be found in our special and additional needs policies and procedures, available at the nursery.

## **Behaviour Management**

We believe that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave, and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else. We aim to encourage acceptable behaviour whereby children learn to respect themselves and others.

We have a named person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour management. We require all staff, parents, volunteers, students and visitors to provide a positive role model of behaviour by treating the children and one another with friendliness, care, respect and courtesy. We expect all adults to apply these rules consistently.

We use positive strategies for managing any conflicts by helping children find solutions in ways that are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development, for example, discussion, distraction and praise. We praise and endorse desirable behaviour, such as kindness and willingness to share. We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

When children display unwanted behaviour, we help them to see why their behaviour was unwanted and how to cope more appropriately. We manage children's unwanted behaviour in ways that are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. For example by distraction, discussion or by withdrawing the child from the situation. In cases of serious unwanted behaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make it clear that this behaviour and attitude is unacceptable by means of explanations, rather than personal blame.

We never use, or threaten a child with the use of punishment. We will not single out children, humiliate or embarrass them. We will not shout at children or raise our voices in a threatening way in response to their behaviour.

We work in partnership with all parents. You will be regularly informed about your child's behaviour by the key person. We will work with you to address recurring unwanted or unacceptable behaviour, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately. With your consent, we may engage the assistance of outside agencies.

## **Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and all children in our care are treated with equal respect, regardless of ethnic origin, gender, disability, race or religion. Wherever possible, those designated disabled or disadvantaged will be considered for a place at the nursery, taking into account their individual circumstances and the ability of the nursery to provide the necessary standard of care.

## **Collection of Children**

A child will only be released into the care of their parents or other authorised persons. If you wish to authorise others to collect your child from nursery, you must name the individual on your nursery contract and a password will be required.

If an unauthorised person comes to collect your child, we will endeavour to contact you. If we have any doubts, then your child will not be released. Please note that only senior nursery staff are

permitted to open the nursery door to allow access to others into the building. We would kindly request that you refrain from opening the nursery door for others, including parents that you may recognise.

In the unlikely event of a child becoming lost or unaccounted for whilst in our care, we will carry out an immediate and thorough search of the area. If the child is not located, the police and parents will be informed immediately.

### **Late Collection of a child**

If you are going to be late collecting your child, please let us know as soon as possible.

In the event that you do not collect your child by the normal closing time, two members of staff will remain with your child. After thirty minutes, if we have been unable to contact you or any of the authorised persons named in your nursery contact, the nursery manager and/or the senior manager will assess the situation and contact social services.

### **Nursery Contract**

Please ensure that you have fully read and understood the terms and conditions of your nursery contract. Please speak to the nursery manager if you have any questions. The terms and conditions are not negotiable and we would draw your attention to the following key points.

#### **FEES**

Fees are invoiced monthly in advance and are due for payment by the first of the month. Late payments will be subject to a charge.

You will be charged for each session that you have booked, regardless of whether your child attends. Refunds or replacement sessions cannot be given for unattended sessions and booked sessions cannot be swapped for alternative sessions.

The nursery is closed on all bank holidays and for the three business days between Christmas and New Year. Fees are also payable if the nursery is closed for any event beyond our reasonable control, including, but not limited to, lack of essential services or weather conditions.

#### **Payment Terms**

The required method of payment is standing order. Your registration pack contains a standing order form that should be completed and returned to the nursery manager. Additional forms are available at the nursery if required.

Invoices may also be settled by the first of the month by debit or credit card by telephoning on 01708-756-714 during office hours. Please note that a 2.5% surcharge will be made for credit card payments.

Fees are reviewed and you will receive at least one month's notice of a change in fees.

## **Notice Period**

One month's written notice is required to cancel your child's nursery place or reduce sessions. If insufficient notice is given, you will be liable to pay fees in lieu of notice.

## **Nursery Staff**

To avoid any conflict of interest, nursery staff are strictly prohibited from providing any babysitting or childminding services to parents outside of nursery operating hours, or take children to/from the nursery on your behalf.

If a member of staff leaves our employment and is subsequently employed by you as a nanny, childminder, babysitter, etc., within six months of their leave date, you will be charged a recruitment fee of £2,000, which will be due for payment immediately on request.

## **Child Tax Credits**

Nine out of ten families are eligible for some financial assistance through Child Tax Credits. The amount of the benefit is dependent on a family's household circumstances and factors such as how many children you have, whether you work, how many hours you work and if you pay for childcare.

## **Childcare Grant**

Full time students with dependent children may be eligible for a childcare grant, subject to income. For further details, please visit [www.gov.uk/childcare-grant](http://www.gov.uk/childcare-grant) or, if you are aged under 20.

## **Childcare Vouchers**

Your employer can provide you with childcare vouchers which can be used towards the cost of qualifying childcare. The amount you can receive in childcare vouchers without having to pay tax or NICs will depend on when you joined your employer's scheme and on the level of pay you receive from your employer.

Further information about childcare vouchers can be found at [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

When you pay for some of your childcare with vouchers, it may take some time for the payment to be made by your employer or your childcare voucher provider. Therefore, you need to authorise payment of the voucher before your childcare payment is due. Usually five working days is sufficient, but this will depend on the particular voucher scheme. Contact your employer or the voucher provider for more information.

Please ensure that your child's name and unique nursery reference number are quoted by the voucher company to enable us to allocate the payments correctly to your account.

Please note that regardless of whether your fees are paid in full or in part using childcare vouchers, they are still due in full by the first of the month. Vouchers received late will be put towards the following month's fees and any unpaid amounts remaining on your account on the first of the month will be subject to late payment charges.

We accept electronic vouchers from most voucher scheme operators, including Edenred, Busy Bees, Computershare, Sodexo, Care4 and Fidelity. If your employer's chosen voucher scheme is not listed above, then please contact us to find out if we can accept your vouchers before setting up any payments.

### Free Early Education

All three and four year olds are entitled up to 30 hours from 1st September 2017 of free early education for 38 weeks of the year. This applies until they reach compulsory school age (the term following their fifth birthday). This will be delivered flexibly over a minimum of three days

The table below shows when your child will become eligible for their free early learning place.

If your child is born between:	They are eligible for a free place from:
1 April and 31 August	1 September following their third birthday until statutory school age
1 September and 31 December	1 January following their third birthday until statutory school age
1 January and 31 March	1 April following their third birthday until statutory school age

Below are the criteria for these places:

- 1) Free School Meals eligibility criteria:
- 2) A Child is entitled to 570 hours if his/her family gets any of the following benefits:
- 3) Income Support
- 4) Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)
- 5) Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- 6) Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit and have an annual income £16,190
- 7) Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- 8) The Guarantee Credit element of State Pension Credit
- 9) The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

10) Universal Credit

Or a child:

- 1) Has a current statement of special educational need (SEN) or an education health and care plan
- 2) Gets Disability Living Allowance
- 3) Is looked after by a Local Authority
- 4) Has left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

