

ECCC Admissions Policy 2026

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Approved by: Henri Owen (Co-Director; Operations)

1. Introduction and About ECCC

This Admissions Policy outlines all of the information you need to know before you accept a place for your child at Easton Community Children's Centre (ECCC). By accepting your offer of a nursery place, you agree to the terms of our Admissions Policy and our Fees and Funding Policy, which provides vital information and should be read alongside this policy.

ECCC reserves the right to review and update this policy at any time, and we'll communicate with you when that happens. Please keep a copy for your future reference.

This policy has been written in conjunction with Bristol City Council and B.A.N.D.

1.1 About ECCC

Easton Community Children's Centre (ECCC) is an independent charity that provides early years care and education for families in our community. We offer nursery and pre-school places for children aged 6 months to school-age.

We've been serving our community for over 40 years, and we're proudly run purely for the benefit of the community, not for profit. All of our income goes straight back into our charitable activities. You can find out more about how we work and what makes us different **on our website:** www.eastonccc.org.uk

We relate to each child as a unique individual and tailor our care and teaching to their specific needs in order to equip them with a love of learning that will help them to flourish and reach their full potential.

Our vision is to provide **a sense of belonging, not just fitting in**. As soon as you walk through the door we hope that you feel welcome.

We work in partnership with parents, carers, children, staff, volunteers, Trustees, funders and the wider community to realise our vision. This commitment is underpinned by the charities values:

- Connectedness – 'To love and be loved'
- Innovation – 'Be curious'
- Environmental Accountability – 'Preparing for life in the changing world'
- Communication – 'Express Yourself'
- Physical Health – 'Leading a healthy lifestyle'
- Emotional Well-being – 'The freedom to be your true self'

Anti-racist practice and trauma informed approaches are at the heart of everything we do, from our curriculum and learning environment all the way through to our policies, leadership approaches and staff wellbeing commitments.

1.2 What do we offer?

We welcome children from the age of six months until the September after their fourth birthday.

Places are only offered on a year-round, on-going basis (not Term-Time only or for short periods e.g. during the summer holidays).

We have four carefully designed, homely, childcare rooms together offering 80 childcare spaces every day:

- Bumblebees maximum 9 children at a time
- Butterflies maximum 15 children at a time
- Sunshine maximum 24 children at a time
- Rainbow maximum 32 children at a time

We have a yearly transition, where all children move up to their next room at the start of September. (There are some occasional exceptions to this based on the needs of specific children). This is different to how most nurseries operate. **It means we usually take new children each September/October/November only**, but there are exceptions to this where spaces are not filled at the start of the academic year. Please talk to our office team if you think you may want your child to join at a different time of year to find out what's possible.

1.3 Why Choose ECCC?

We strive to ensure that all families are reflected and celebrated within our curriculum offer. We work with you to get to know your family and your child's interests and needs.

Finding the right nursery is a big decision, we strongly suggest that you think about what it is that you want for your child and consider the setting's size, opening times and educational offer. Look at as many settings as possible to see where you feel most 'at home'. When possible, we will hold periodic 'open evenings' or tours for prospective parents, carers and key family members to view the Centre, meet the staff and ask questions ahead of being offered a place. These open evenings or tours will be advertised online and to our waiting list in advance.

1.4 Opening Times & When We're Closed

Monday – Thursday we are open from 8am to 5.50pm

On Fridays we are open from Friday from 8 am – 1.30 pm

See the [section on sessions below](#), for what we offer specifically.

However, we are closed on Bank Holidays and for a 2 week period around Christmas in December/January. We also close for two or three 'inset days' each year, which are days when our whole staff team can come together for training and other activities that improve our work. Parents and carers are notified of a minimum of 3 months in advance of these 'inset days'.

We don't charge fees the days we are closed, unless a bank holiday is an exceptional 'one-off' holiday for national events. If you're accessing funded hours on a bank holiday, these will not be rearranged to another day.

1.5 Your Holidays

We don't offer any holiday entitlements; therefore, if the nursery is open (with the exception of national 'one-off' events mentioned above), you'll be charged at the full rate. If your child doesn't attend their scheduled sessions for any reason, you'll still be charged, and/or any funded sessions will not be rescheduled. See also our section below on [Sickness](#); you will also still be charged for any periods of sickness/exclusion around sickness.

2. Admissions

2.1 About our admissions

ECCC is committed to doing what we can to tackle injustices in our community.

We recognise that in our diverse community there are large differences in the life experiences of children and families. Our part of East Bristol is changing quite fast, with gentrification and housing costs rising, new housing being built, and new waves of migration bringing new people into our community.

In line with our purpose and values, we are committed to prioritising access to ECCC to the families and children who can benefit most from our work, and otherwise may not be able to access the support, care and learning environment we provide.

As our work providing early years care and education is chronically underfunded, we must also make difficult decisions about what to charge for and how much to charge. See our Fees and Funding Policy for more information about this.

We are committed to continuing to review and update our approaches to admissions, fees and funding to keep our focus on tackling inequality and injustice through our work.

2.2 Criteria and prioritisation

We believe that building a strong sense of community is essential for children's development and therefore, places are allocated first to children whose parents or carers live or work within our **catchment area** (see below). We recognise the value of continuity of care, so exceptions are made for families who move out of the catchment area after taking up a place and families outside the catchment area with an older child already attending the Centre.

Parents and carers can add their child to the **waiting list** from 12 weeks before their due date. Families on the waiting list are asked to detail the sessions they are looking for and if possible, any alternative patterns they may be able to accept.

Due to consistently high demand, allocation of places is partly based on the earliest 'waiting list application' sent.

However, we will also be considering the following priorities when allocating places, subject to availability:

- A) Children in care, children previously in care and children subject to a special guardianship order.
- B) For sustainability purposes, as a registered charity we must prioritise families who agree to pay our additional charges for funded hours (as set out in our Fees and Funding Policy).
- C) Children from minoritised or disadvantaged groups (including those in care or with SEND)
- D) Children in need, including those with a disability, special educational need or those at significant risk of under-achievement (as determined by the Centre's Senior Management Team).
- E) Children who are eligible to receive Free Early Education for 2 Year Olds or Early Years Pupil Premium
- F) Children who already have a sibling attending the Centre at the point of admission – but please see '**siblings**' below.
- G) Children of Centre staff who are employed at the point of admission.

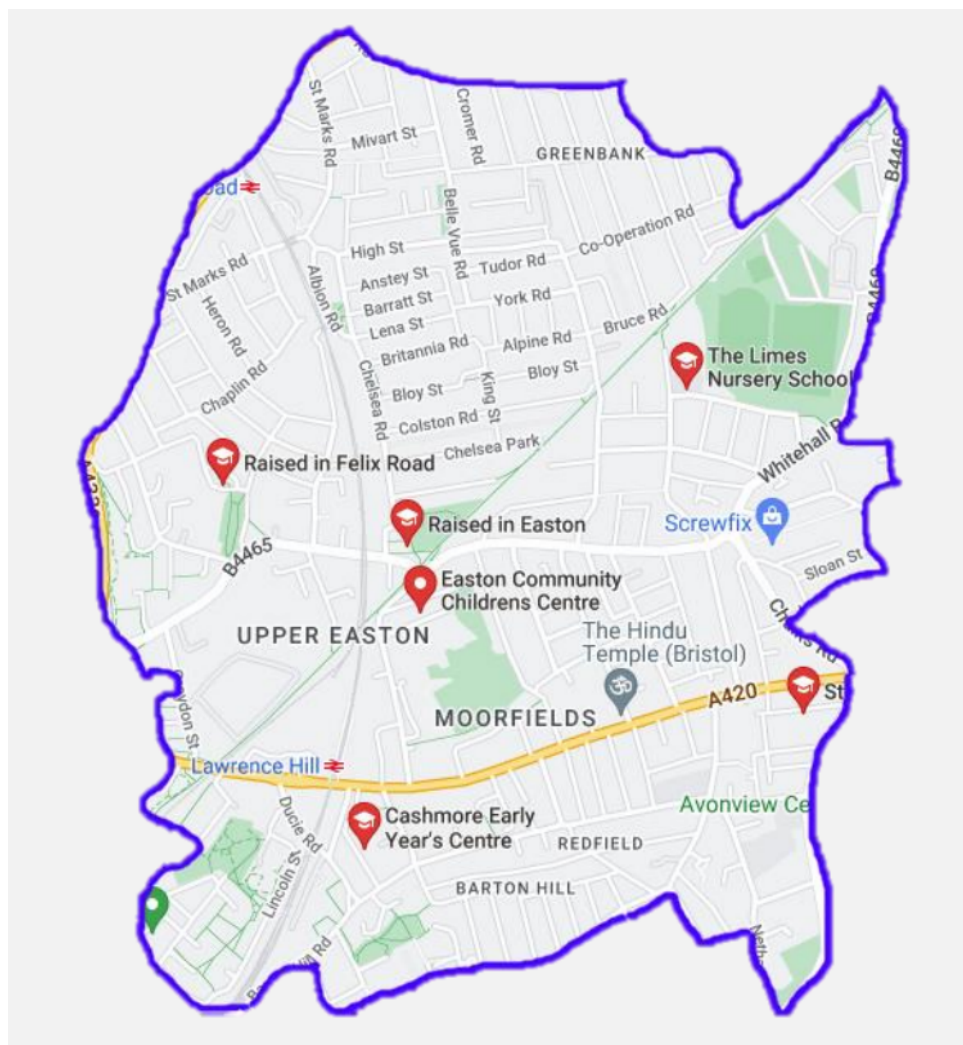
2.3 Siblings

Places for siblings of a child already attending ECCC will be prioritised, subject to availability and alongside our other priorities outlined above. Places will be offered as soon as they are available (typically in either September or October each year, depending on the room the child is entering).

If the parent or carer wishes to defer the uptake of the place, we may allow this up until mid January (allowing for settling in after our December closure). However, this will be on the condition that the parent/carers pays 50% off the session costs from the start of October to the child's start date. This cost will be based on our private fees, as we will not receive any funding until the child takes up the place. We regret not being able to be more flexible, but the costs of holding empty spaces is prohibitive for us. We are able to offer payment plans to support parents in being able to do this; payments can be spread over 3, 6, or 12 months.

Alternatively, we will again aim to prioritise the child for a place the following year (alongside our other priorities as set out above).

2.4 ECCC Catchment Area



3. Enquiring about a nursery place

To register your interest in a place at ECCC, you'll be asked to complete an [online enquiry form](#) with your details and preferences. Please note, this **does not** guarantee your child a place at ECCC.

After you've submitted the form, a member of our team (probably our Office Manager, Naomi) will contact you to confirm your needs, to discuss current availability. If you haven't already visited the Centre then we will arrange a tour.

We have a significant waiting list for certain ages on certain days, but don't let that put you off asking. We'll do our best to find a solution that works.

To complete an enquiry form: [click here](#)

4. The Offer Process and Registration

Your child's place will be offered in writing by email and will contain your offer letter, with details about the place we are offering, and our settling in process and costs.

Please note that your place is not confirmed until we have received your completed registration form and your Settling-In fee* has been paid.

At this point we will need to gather more detailed information about your child and family. There are a range of forms to confirm children's personal information, family details and any medical requirements. We'll also need to take copies of the full birth certificate, two documents demonstrating the parent or carer's current address and check that the NHS vaccination schedule has been completed appropriately for the child's age. This is to ensure safe access to Early Years education and care. We require all attending children to be vaccinated. Exceptions can only be granted where a formal medical exemption is provided.

Lastly, signing two copies of the Contract ensures that our terms and conditions are known and understood by families, as well as making it clear what parents can expect from ECCC.

*Note: We do not charge a registration fee, but we do charge a settling in fee to cover the visits and sessions. We have kept this as low as possible – see section 4.2 below for more information.

4.1 Visits and settling in

Once Registration is complete, an Induction is booked in the child's room. This session allows parents and carers to talk to their child's key person, view the room's routine and complete an "All About Me" form to tell us the child's likes, dislikes, and any other personal information. The key person will also explain our requirements with regards to the supply of nappies, wipes, creams, and clothing – as appropriate to the age group.

At the Induction, a series of settling-in visits will be arranged to lead up to the child's start date. Children adjust to nursery at their own pace so it can be hard to predict exactly how many settling in visits each child will need. As such, we offer as many settling-in visits as needed within the transition period.

The settling in process and minimum visits/timeframe is different for each room and age group, with the **minimum** of 4 visits over 2 weeks in Rainbow/Sunshine, 5 visits over 2 weeks in Butterflies, and 8 visits over 3 weeks in Bumblebees.

Depending on how your child is settling, the team will discuss and agree with you whether additional settling in sessions are needed before your start date. We know that parents are juggling many time and logistical pressures, but we ask you to be mindful that getting your child settled properly will always be our top priority and we ask that you work with us to help complete this process as smoothly as possible.

Things to be aware of:

- A parent/carer is to remain on site for all visits under two hours – The Lounge upstairs is usually available to use, with Wi-Fi access. For visits of 2 hours or more, the parent/carer is not required to remain on site.
- Visits will be divided as equally as possible over each week to build consistency for the child
- The settling in period must be adjacent to when the child will start, with no breaks (e.g. no holidays)
- We ask parents/carers to try and avoid any holidays of more than a few days for the first 6 weeks of a child's nursery journey to avoid unsettling them.

Our team will discuss the process with you in more detail nearer to your start date. Please contact us with any questions you may have.

4.2 Charges for settling in:

A flat fee is applied for the entire settling-in process to ensure that each child gets the right number of induction sessions to meet their needs during the transition period (and not penalise any families for whom settling in takes longer).

Room	Private (no funding currently)	Able to use funded hours
Bumblebees and Butterflies	£120	£60
Sunshine and Rainbow	£100	£40

As per our Fees and Funding Policy children that receive 'eligible two's' funding or are in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) will not pay any charges for settling in.

5. Invoicing & Payment

Invoicing

At the start of each month, you'll receive an invoice via the Famly app showing a breakdown of your schedule, including any funded hours, additional charges for funded hours, and privately paid hours.

Your invoice will also clearly show when the invoice needs to be paid by. We typically require payment by 22nd of each month. Your invoice will clearly show your payment due date.

Please make sure that every payment is clearly marked with either your invoice number or reference.

Fees that are overdue at the time of the next issued invoice may incur a late payment charge added to the next subsequent invoice. Your child's place at the nursery could be withdrawn if you fail to make payment according to our terms. We'll always do our best to work with families who may be experiencing challenges paying their invoices on time. Please speak to our team in the office at the earliest opportunity - you can call, pop in, or email. If we don't know, we can't try to help!

Parents or carers eligible for **Universal Credit** may be able to claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs. Speak to your work coach about this or read the information on the government website [here](#).

Payment

We accept the following methods of payment:

- Online bank transfer/BACS
- Tax-Free Childcare (our provider number is 500001867679). This effectively saves families up to 20% on their nursery fees, as the government 'tops up' your Tax-Free Childcare account with £2 for every £8 you pay in, up to a maximum of £2000 per year for each child. Check your eligibility [here](#).

If you wish to use childcare vouchers from your employer please speak to us about what we are able to accept.

6. Our sessions and Booking Patterns

The sessions we currently offer are:

Monday	8 – 9am 'Wraparound'	9am – 12.50pm	1pm – 4.50pm	4.50pm–5.50p m 'Wraparound'
Tuesday	8 – 9am 'Wraparound'	9am – 12.50pm	1pm – 4.50pm	4.50pm–5.50p m 'Wraparound'
Wednesday	8 – 9am 'Wraparound'	9am – 12.50pm	1pm – 4.50pm	4.50pm–5.50p m 'Wraparound'
Thursday	8 – 9am 'Wraparound'	9am – 12.50pm	1pm – 4.50pm	4.50pm–5.50p m 'Wraparound'
Friday	8 – 9am 'Wraparound'	9am – 12.50pm	Closed	Closed

Sessions are booked to a regular, weekly pattern and all booked sessions will be charged regardless of attendance. Sessions cannot be swapped or reimbursed. Funded hours can only be used for our core sessions of 9am – 12.50pm and 1pm – 4.50pm.

To ensure continuity and consistency for children a minimum of 3 sessions must be booked. This is based on research and best practice to ensure high-quality education, positive attachments and child welfare.

If you are only accessing funded hours only then we are not allowed to require a minimum booking pattern, however, all sessions are strictly subject to availability and we will prioritise families who book at least 3 sessions.

All enquiries about bookings should be made to the office in writing (by email is best). Room staff cannot advise about availability, arrange additional sessions or make booking variations.

6.1 Limits on bookings for children in Bumblebees Room

Please note for children in Bumblebees Room the maximum weekly attendance is **4 days per week (8 half-day sessions)**, and you are only able to book **either** the morning or afternoon wrap-around session each day for these children.

These limits have been put in place based on our understanding of child development and what helps children to thrive. The limits don't benefit the Centre – they're there as part of our commitment to centring the needs of the child.

Extra ad-hoc sessions may be approved by senior members of staff in extenuating circumstances but will not be approved on an ongoing basis until the child is old enough.

6.2 Ad hoc additional sessions

We may be able to accommodate an ad hoc additional session or multiple sessions to your normal booking pattern. These sessions might be available for a one off, or for longer periods of time. They are offered subject to availability.

These additional sessions will be charged at the private fee rate, you are unable to add additional funded sessions once your termly booking has been made.

If you'd like to find out about what sessions are available at the moment please get in touch with the office to see what we have available. Wrap around sessions are very often available, even at short notice.

6.3 Attendance

We acknowledge that there are a number of reasons why children might not attend our setting when they are expected e.g. illness, holidays, religious/cultural observance. Parents/carers must inform us of any instances when a child might not be attending. If you do not let us know, it takes our staff away from their interactions with the children to spend time following up with you on the phone.

We have procedures in place around attendance and absence as part of our safeguarding responsibilities – set out in our Attendance and Absence Policy.

7. Fees and funding

See our separate Fees and Funding policy here:

 [ECCC Fees and Funding Policy.docx](#)

8. Notice Periods

Where there is availability, families can vary their regular booking pattern (whilst keeping the total hours the same) or increase the number of sessions that their child is attending. This can be done as soon as is practical.

Minimum commitments

As a minimum, parents and carers are asked to make a termly commitment to their booking pattern. This means that once parents or carers sign the EYR01 Parent/Carer Declaration Form a contract is made. If parents or carers then decide to transfer to another provider, funding will not always be re-directed to your new childcare provider until the start of the following term (September, January, April).

The only group who can give a shorter notice period will be 'Eligible 2 year olds' - receiving specific from [Bristol City Council](#) based on being in receipt of certain government benefit - who only need to give 1 months' notice. For additional non-funded (private) hours or extra charges our notice period of 6 weeks will still apply.

Due to contractual agreements with Bristol City Council, there is no mandatory minimum notice period for a family accessing a funded hours-only place to relinquish their space, but we ask for as much notice to be given as possible so we can offer the place to another child.

Please note that Bristol City Council asks for a commitment of a school term's notice before transferring or ending funded hours. If you transfer your child from ECCC part way through a term, the funding will not be transferred to a new nursery until the beginning of the next term.

Reducing sessions or canceling a place

If you are not in receipt of funding, or if you purchase any additional hours beyond your funding entitlement, then sessions can only be given up or reduced with 6 weeks' notice (and only if you will still meet the minimum booking pattern). You cannot 'pause' a booking and sessions can only be held open with the full fees or additional charges being paid, and if sessions are cancelled they may not become available again.

If you need to cancel your child's nursery place once they have started at ECCC, you must give at least six weeks' notice in writing. If your child stops attending nursery before the six-week notice period is concluded, you'll still be liable for any fees due.

If you decide to cancel your child's nursery place with less than 12 weeks' written notice before their start date, any fees paid are non-refundable. Please note that if you cancel your child's place, we cannot guarantee that there will be a place for your child if you want them to return at a later date.

Start dates

Places at ECCC are offered with specific start dates. You can request a change to your start date by contacting the office, but any changes are unlikely to be approved. This is

due to the financial impacts on the Centre, how we arrange settling in sessions, and the need to ensure appropriate staffing levels. See section 4.1 on Settling In.

Delays to start dates are very unlikely to be approved. We may be able to move your child's start date forward, depending on availability, but this is also subject to our capacity and Settling In plans.

9. Sickness

Please don't bring your child to the nursery if they are unwell, have a raised temperature, infection, vomiting or diarrhoea, or they're generally not well enough to join in with regular nursery activities. The Department of Health guidelines provide advice about exclusion times for different illnesses here [Infection prevention tools and resources for children and young people's settings - GOV.UK](#). Children should be fully recovered before they return.

Please ensure children have not vomited or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours before returning to the nursery.

If your child has any childhood vaccinations, for example, MMR, they may return to their nursery session on the same day provided they feel well enough to attend.

Please see our [Child Sickness Policy](#) for more information.

You'll still be charged when your child is absent, and any funded hours will not be rescheduled.

10. Late collections

Late fees of £1 per minute are charged when a child is collected after their designated session end time (12:50 or 16:50). We ask that parents/carers contact the Centre before collection time to advise that they will be or might be late and make arrangements for someone else to collect their child wherever possible. If a parent/carer is persistently late in collecting their child, this information will be passed onto the Senior Management team and services may be withdrawn.

If the person collecting the child has informed the Centre that they will be late and it is outside of normal operating hours, the child will be looked after by at least 2 members of staff until they are collected and the late fee will be applied. During normal operating hours, the Centre will make plans to meet the required staff:child ratios, where possible.

Further details are available in our [Arrivals and Departure Policy](#).

11. When we might withdraw your place

ECCC reserves the right to terminate this contract and cancel a child's place with immediate effect or with reasonable notice under the following circumstances:

1. Fees are not paid

If fees (including any agreed additional charges linked to funded hours) remain unpaid beyond the agreed due date and reasonable attempts to resolve the matter have been unsuccessful, ECCC may terminate your contract and withdraw your child's place. This step will only be taken as a last resort once all other avenues to recover payment have been exhausted, and/or if the parent is unwilling to work with ECCC to establish a mutually agreeable payment plan. If you are struggling with paying your bill at any time, please talk to us as soon as possible so that we can try to agree on a payment plan that makes this easier for you to manage.

2. Aggressive, Threatening, or Inappropriate Behaviour

ECCC has a zero-tolerance approach to aggressive, abusive, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate behaviour from parents, carers, or other people associated with their child. Any such conduct, whether directed at staff, other children, or other families, may result in immediate termination of the contract. More info can be found in our [Zero Tolerance Policy](#).

3. Best Interests of the Child and/or Other Children

ECCC reserves the right to cancel a child's place if, in our professional judgment, it is deemed that the child's continued attendance is not in their best interests and/or in the best interests of other children at the setting. This may include, but is not limited to, situations where the child's needs cannot be adequately met by the nursery.

4. Breach of Contractual Terms

Repeated or serious breaches of the terms set out in this agreement by a parent/carers may result in the termination of the contract. Where appropriate and possible, ECCC will make reasonable efforts to work with the family/carers to resolve issues prior to termination, and will, wherever possible, give at least one month's notice of any termination of contract. In cases of immediate risk or serious misconduct, ECCC reserves the right to terminate the contract without notice. In such cases, funding will be released at the end of that term, and can be transferred to any new setting from the following term.

12. Process for questions, complaints, or appeals

This information and the processes (especially around funding) are very complicated. We've done our best to lay it out clearly here and link to the relevant government

guidance and information about funding. If anything is unclear or you still have questions, you can contact us by emailing enquiries@eastonccc.org.uk or calling 01179 392550.

If you have a complaint please speak to our Co-Director Henri in the first instance: howen@eastonccc.org.uk

If you want to appeal or have a complaint about any aspect of the delivery of the government funded hours, please contact Bristol City Council.
Family Information Service (Bristol City Council) 0117 357 4192 // askcyps@bristol.gov.uk

13. Data protection

ECCC takes our responsibility to protect your family's privacy and data very seriously, and we comply with Data Protection law.

Links to Bristol City Council's relevant Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice will be shared via the EYR01 Parent/Carer Declaration form as part of the admissions process for any families accessing funded hours.