Clarecroft Day Nursery is a private day nursery, which is open 52 weeks of the year, excluding Bank Holidays and is accessible to all, regardless of job location or address.

Children can join our Nursery from the age of 3 months, and can stay with us until they are 11 years old.  Clarecroft Day Nursery can take a maximum of 63 children - 15 in the Sun group, 24 in the Moon group, and 24 in the Star group.  We are restricted to these numbers under Ofsted regulations, but will do all that we can to meet your requirements.  In order to deliver consistency for your child's education and care we generally expect children to attend a minimum of 2 sessions per week (a session is made up of a morning or afternoon slot).

Clarecroft Day Nursery does not come under the umbrella of Northamptonshire County Schools Admissions Policy, but our policies are in line with anti-discriminatory practice, equal opportunities and are inclusive to all.  We do not discriminate against any child on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour or creed. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 lays down a legal obligation on us to consider those identified as disabled or disadvantaged, using as far as possible the same criteria as for all other children.

We ensure that the existence of the nursery is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community, including the internet, local telephone directory and local village newsletters.

We ensure that information about our nursery is accessible - in written and spoken form - and, if required, in different languages. If necessary, we will try to provide information in Braille, or through signing or an interpreter. We will also contact the Local authorities for any additional support that they could offer.

We describe our nursery and its practices in terms, which make it clear that it welcomes fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders. We will however carry out an additional review to assess our ability at Clarecroft to meet individual needs. This is necessary to fulfill our main goal, which is to provide a consistent standard of care that ensures the welfare of all children. We use the EAL tool to assess all children’s starting points and learning throughout for those who do not have English as their first language. We will also contact our local Authorities for any additional support that they can offer. We will work closely alongside parents to support children to be comfortable in the environment and to make good progress from their starting points.

**Allocation of Places**

When allocating places, priority will be given in descending order to those seeking:

* Full time places
* Looked after children
* A child known by the local authority to have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) and whose needs can be best met at the preferred nursery
* A vulnerable child with either a Child Protection or a Child in Need Plan, or in receipt of other local authority support
* Children who have siblings who are already with us
* Children whose parents live within the area.
* Sessional places (sessions are defined in our Prospectus)
* Funded Hours only (see ‘Funded sessions discretionary places only’ within this policy)

Where necessary we will operate a waiting list where priority will be given in the same descending order as above and places will be offered and confirmed during the last week before the beginning of a new term (as per the Northamptonshire County Council School Term Dates).

**Funded Early Learning for 2 year olds**

Northamptonshire County Council introduced this in April 2013 for all eligible families with a 2 year old and who live in Northamptonshire.

To be eligible a parent / carer must have an income below £16,190 and be claiming the one of the following state benefits:

* Income Support
* Income based Job Seekers’ Allowance
* Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
* Support under Part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* Guaranteed Element of the State Pension Credit
* Child Tax Credit, provided you have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs

You **cannot** be in receipt of Working Tax Credit (except during the four-week period immediately after the employment ceases, or after you start to work fewer than 16 hours per week.

Further information can be found on the website of Northamptonshire County Council ([www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk)). They have an Online Eligibility Checker that can be used. This will provide a Reference Number that we will require in order to confirm the eligibility for this funding. The successful Reference Number will expire after 6 weeks. If a place has not been taken up before the end of the 6 weeks, the Online Eligibility Checker can be used again to obtain a new number.

The Funded Early Learning for 2 year olds entitles eligible children to 570 hours a year of Funded Early Learning. The 570 hours will be split by the Authority into three funding blocks. The maximum amount of hours that can be taken in a week is 15 hours.

The Funded Early Learning place can start from the funding block following your child's 2nd Birthday.

In order to use the funding at Clarecroft, you will need to complete the Northamptonshire County Council Funding Request Form, which is available at the nursery, stating how many hours you wish to claim at Clarecroft. In addition your child must be registered with us, and we will need to see the child’s birth certificate and proof of address. This needs to be done by Funding Headcount date and the proof of address needs to be within the last 3 months of the funding claim.

If a child wishes to register with us to access the funded hours only **after** headcount date, then we will only provide the free sessions if there is a space available within the child staff ratio that we currently have in the relevant room.

**Free Entitlement for all 3 - 4 year olds**

Funded childcare places otherwise known as 'The Free Entitlement' offers all 3 - 4 year olds 570 hours of free childcare per year. This is spread across three funding blocks, with a maximum of 15 hours a week. Children are eligible the first full funding block following their 3rd Birthday.

Further information can be found on the website of Northamptonshire County Council ([www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk)). They have a Free Entitlement Start Calculator that will tell you when the free entitlement will commence for your child.

For those children taking up full time or sessional places with us, the equivalent amount of free entitlement funding will be deducted from the monthly invoice.

In order to use the funding at Clarecroft, you will need to complete the Northamptonshire County Council Funding Request Form, which is available at the nursery, stating how many hours you wish to claim at Clarecroft. In addition your child must be registered with us, and we will need to see the child’s birth certificate and proof of address. This needs to be done by Funding Headcount date and the proof of address needs to be within the last 3 months of the funding claim.

If a child wishes to register with us to access the funded hours **after** headcount date, then we will only provide the free sessions if there is a space available within the child staff ratio that we currently have in the relevant room and the timeframe for the completion of forms and checks can be met.

**Additional 3 and 4 year old funding up to 30 hours**

The additional hours will be available to families where:

* Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family); 'Both parents are working' includes circumstances where;
	+ One or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on parental, adoption, maternity or paternity leave;
	+ One or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on statutory sick pay;
	+ One parent is employed and one parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring; or
	+ One parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits.
* Each parent has a weekly minimum income equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage; (parents do not necessarily need to actually work 16 hours a week, but rather their earnings must reflect at least 16 hours of work at national minimum wage or national living wage, which is £107 a week at the current national minimum wage rate)
* Neither parent has an income of more than £100,000 per year.
* Parents must live in England
* If unemployed, both parents must become employed within 14 days of applying unless one of the above applies
* Once your child is attending school, they are no longer eligible for free childcare including this offer

If you are a sole parent then all the conditions above just apply to you.

The 30 hours free childcare is subject to an eligibility criteria. Further information is available on the Government's childcare choices website at: https://www.chilcarechioces.gov.uk. In order to check whether or not you are eligible for the 30 hours of free childcare, the Government have set up the Childcare Calculator which can be accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator.

Please note that the universal 15 hours of childcare is not changing and that all 3 and 4 year olds are eligible to claim this the term after their third birthday. An additional 15 hours can be claimed by working parents who meet the eligibility criteria.

In line with the universal offer that all 3 and 4 year olds are eligible to claim, the additional 15 hours can be used term time only or all year round. If your child attends the nursery term time only, then a maximum of 30 hours can be claimed in total for working parents. If your child attends nursery all year round, then a maximum of 21 hours can be claimed per week for working parents. If you are claiming the additional funded hours here with us you will need to pay a £100 refundable deposit at registration to secure your place. Once all information has been checked along with eligibility a confirmation will be sent to confirm your place is successful.

Please note that it is your responsibility to provide us with a valid eligibility code at least 5 working days before the end of the term in order for your child to claim the funding from the following term. If your eligibility code is not received in time, then we cannot guarantee that a funded place will be offered. If you wish to change any funded sessions or your child is leaving us, then we require a minimum of 28 days notice for all funded sessions.

Your eligibility code must be validated every 3 months and it is your responsibility to do this. If your code has not been validated and expires and you have received funded sessions from us, then you will be charged for these sessions.

In each of the funding blocks, we will require you to complete and sign the Parental Contract issued Clarecroft along with the Parental Contract issued by the Local Authority. You must complete this in full and return the form to us by the stated deadline. If the fully completed and signed form is not returned to us by the stated deadline, then we may not be able to claim the funding and therefore will charge for these sessions.

* **All funded sessions will be offered between the hours of 8am - 6pm.**
* **Funded sessions only can be claimed term time only**
* **No other discounts (excluding sibling discount) will be available once funding entitlement is received**

**Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)**

Children who are currently claiming the Free Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in Northamptonshire, who meet certain eligibility criteria, could be eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). The EYPP is a premium available to the childcare provider your child attends for their Free Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. The premium will be used to improve the facilities, equipment and learning experiences to benefit the growth and development of your child.

Children will be eligible if:

* they are 3 or 4 years old and receiving Government funded Free Entitlement in any OFSTED registered childcare provider and their parents are in receipt of one or more of the benefits used to access eligibility for free school meals:
	+ Income Support
	+ Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
	+ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
	+ Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
	+ The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
	+ Child Tax Credit **(provided you’re not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)**
	+ Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
* or if they have been:
	+ looked after by Northamptonshire County Council for at least one day.
	+ have been adopted from care in Northamptonshire.
	+ have left care through special guardianship; and subject to a child arrangement order setting out with whom the child is to live (formerly known as residence orders) in Northamptonshire.

Check your children eligibility by visiting the EYPP Online Eligibility Checker on Northamptonshire County Council website. Further information is available on the Government's childcare choices website at: https://www.chilcarechioces.gov.uk. In order to check whether or not you are eligible for the 30 hours of free childcare, the Government have set up the Childcare Calculator which can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>.

**Funded sessions discretionary places only**

We hold 3 places for children to access funded sessions with no services charge. This discretionary priority is for those who have been granted 2 year funding, are a looked after child or have confirmed Special educational needs. **This is given out at the discretion of the managers.**

Sessions used still must fall within the set session structure above but no services charge will be applied.

Further information can be found on the website of Northamptonshire County Council ([www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonsnhire.gov.uk)).

In order to qualify for the funding at Clarecroft, the child must be registered with us. We will also need to see the child’s birth certificate and proof of address.

**Please note- If your child receives any of the above funding and does not attend the sessions allocated without reason you may be liable to pay the cost of the missed sessions to Northamptonshire County Council. This may also result in the reserved place being forfeited**.

**Tax free Childcare**

**Tax free childcare is a new government scheme to help working parents with the cost of childcare that they pay for. (Please note that it is completely separate to the scheme to increase the amount of funded childcare to 30 hours).**

Under this scheme parents will open a special online account to use to pay for registered childcare and the government will top up the amount in their account by 20%. This will be launched from early 2017.

For further information and to check eligibility for Tax free childcare please visit <https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk>

**Attendance**

We believe good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Also we believe regular attendance at nursery can set good practice for school.

We collate and monitor attendance information for all children in line with safeguarding good practice. All parents are made aware of the expectation that they inform the nursery by telephone or email on the first day of absence during the initial show round and settling in process. If a child is absent for a third day without notification we will contact the family by telephone to find out the reason for the absence. If the child is known to Social Services they will be informed of the unauthorised absence. If after one week there has been no contact Clarecroft Day Nursery will send a letter/email to the family. If there is still no response after a further week we will inform the MASH hub. If after one month there has been no contact the child's name will be removed from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list. The Local Authority will be informed that the child has left the nursery.

If you have told us that your child will not be attending the nursery for a given period for any reason, then we will record this as a pre-informed absence and therefore your child will not be counted in our ratios for that period. If you need to change the dates of absence and your child will be returning earlier from their pre-informed absence, then we require a minimum of 48 hours’ notice, in writing before your child is able to return to nursery. We cannot guarantee that your child will be able to return to the nursery earlier but will apply our best endeavours to facilitate their early return

**Registering your child**

You must register your child with us before they can start any sessions at the setting, including settling in sessions. A registration form must be filled in fully with as much detail as possible.

**Legal Responsibility**

On the registration form we are obliged to ask who has legal responsibility for the child. Legal responsibility for a child is defined by the Children Act 1989 as being the person / people who “have all the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities which a parent of a child has, in relation to the child and his or her property”. It includes rights and duties with regard to education, choice of religion, administration of a child’s property and choice of residence.

Biological mothers always have parental responsibility for their child. All other
parents /guardians can acquire parental responsibility in various ways:

* Where the parents are married at the time of the birth the father will automatically have parental responsibility.
* In the case of children born after 1 December 2003, where the father’s details are registered on the birth certificate the father will also have parental responsibility.
* If the parents are unmarried and the father is not named on the birth certificate a father can acquire parental responsibility by entering into a formal agreement with the mother, by subsequent marriage to the mother, by order of the Court or by obtaining a residence order (which governs where a child is to live) in relation to the child.

**Emergency Closure**

In the event of the breakdown of essential services including but not limited to heating failure, loss of water supply, severe weather conditions or due to an illness epidemic, the nursery may have to close or partially close. In the event of this the nursery may not be open at 7.30am. However we will endeavour to open as soon as possible and resume normal opening hours. Parents will be kept updated by email and/or Facebook page. All nursery fees will remain payable and no refund of fees will be offered.

Please see the Emergency Closure Policy for more information.

**Other Sources of Information**

We understand that starting your child at a new setting can be stressful and both you and your child can become anxious. We are always here if you would like to ask any questions, or have any comments or queries.

**All of our information is available online at our website www.clarecroft.com along with information found on our Facebook and Instagram page Clarecroft Day Nursery**

Please find below details of some websites that you may find useful for advice and opportunities to chat to other parents:

* [www.netmums.com](http://www.netmums.com)
* [www.babyworld.co.uk](http://www.babyworld.co.uk)
* [www.babycentre.co.uk](http://www.babycentre.co.uk)

**Data Privacy**

The Data Protection Act 1998 puts in place certain safeguards regarding the use of personal data by organisations, including the Department for Education (DfE), local authorities and schools. The Act gives rights to those (known as data subjects) about whom data is held, such as pupils, their parents and teachers. This includes:

* The right to know the types of data being held
* Why it is being held and
* To whom it may be communicated

A ‘privacy notice’ is a good way to be able to meet data subjects’ rights and therefore DfE recommend they are used to explain to parents, pupils and staff how their data is being used. This is displayed in the main entrance for parents viewing.