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
* Sessional places (sessions are defined in our Prospectus)
* Children who have siblings who are already with us
* Children whose parents live within the area.
* 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
* Looked after children
* 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).

**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 for each child to use to pay for registered childcare and the government will top up the amount in their account at the prevailing rate.

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.

**Funding**

**Early Years Funding**

Early Years Funding is a national scheme, administered by local authorities, which offers funded childcare hours with an Ofsted registered provider. A variety of funded hours are available depending on the child’s age and the family’s situation. Childcare providers can choose how to offer the Early Years Funding as long as the following parameters are met: -

* Funded childcare cannot be longer than 10 hours in a single day;
* Funded childcare is available at a maximum of two childcare sites in a single day.

**How we offer Early Years Funding**

We want to make sure that families use their funding to its full potential.

At our nursery families are able to maximise their funded childcare by using up to 10 hours of funding a day before purchasing additional hours and without any artificial break in the day.

As an all-year-round childcare provider we stretch the early years Funding across 51 weeks instead of limiting it to 38 weeks of term time, enabling families whose child is registered part time to access more of the funded hours than they would otherwise be able to if we used the restricted term time structure.

**Stretched funding (all year round)**

* 15 hours of funded childcare over 38 weeks (term time) equates to 570 funded childcare hours a year. Under the stretched offer this equates to 11 hours of funded childcare a week over 51 weeks of the year.
* 30 hours of funded childcare over 38 weeks (term time) equates to 1,140 funded childcare hours a year. The stretched offer this equates to 22 hours of funded childcare a week over 51 weeks of the year.

We reserve the right to make exceptions to our funding framework on a case-by-case basis at our sole discretion.

We offer places, including funded places on an all year round basis and do not offer term time only places.

Information on all the Early Years Funding eligibility criteria can be found here: [http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/)

**Essentials and Extras**

Early Years Funding is intended to cover the delivery of childcare only. It does not cover the cost of meals and snacks, consumables, additional services, or additional hours. To cover costs not included in the Early Years Funding we charge a service charge for every funded session booked. The Service Charges is detailed on our fees list.

We are mindful of the potential impact of the Services charge on parents. This will be optional only for those parents whose child is attending funded hours only. Parents will be able to supply their own consumables where the service charge is waived. Service charge is charged to ensure the sustainability of quality provision and without this service charge, the sustainability of the nursery would be at risk.

We do not allow families to bring their own food (such as packed lunches) into the nursery to avoid allergen risks and storage/handling issues.

We will not exclude children who want to participate in group activities.

**Types of Early Years Funding**

**Supported Two-year-old funding**

A child will be entitled to 570 funded hours a year from the term after both the child has attained the age of two and the child or parent meets the eligibility criteria.

Where a child is in receipt of Supported Two-year-old funding they will continue to receive their funded place until the point when the child becomes eligible for the Universal Funding, even if the child or parent ceases to meet the eligibility criteria during this time.

Only one type of Two-year-old funding can be claimed at a time.

**Universal Three- and- Four-year-old Funding**

All three- and four-year-olds are entitled to 570 funded childcare hours a year. Regulation requires us to validate a child’s age. Parents will need to provide evidence of a child’s birth date (normally a passport or birth certificate) and copies will be taken and retained as evidence of compliance.

**Extended 3 and 4 year funding**

In addition to the universal funding, working families who qualify for an additional 570 hours of funding pr yar for children the term after their 3rd birthday. To qualify for the extended funding, the eligibility criteria, set by the government, has to be met.

Parents must apply for a positive determination of eligibility from HMRC via Childcare Service Account i.e. a valid eligibility code. This eligibility code must be provided to us before the Early Years Funding can be claimed. The parent is responsible for re-validating the eligibility code every three months when reminded by HMRC. Failure to do so may result in the Working Families Funding being withdrawn.

**Working Families Funding**

Working Families Funding is for qualifying working parents with a child aged 9 months up to the age of 3 years. A child will be entitled to 570 funded hours a year from the term after they have attained the relevant age and the eligibility criteria, set by the government, has been met.

Parents must apply for a positive determination of eligibility from HMRC via Childcare Service Account i.e. a valid eligibility code. This eligibility code must be provided to us before the Early Years Funding can be claimed. The parent is responsible for re-validating the eligibility code every three months when reminded by HMRC. Failure to do so may result in the Working Families Funding being withdrawn. From September 2025, qualifying parents will be entitled to an additional 570 hours per year.

**Parent Declaration Form**

Regulation requires childcare providers to enter into a separate funding agreement with parents, called the Parent Declaration Form.

Local authorities require parents to enter into a Parent Declaration Form covering the Early Years Funding. The local authority Parent Declaration form must be signed each term. If the local authority Parent Declaration Form is not signed and returned to us Early Years Funding cannot be claimed and the full fees (without the Early Years Funding applied) will be charged to you.

**Required documentation**

Regulation requires childcare providers to obtain documentation to evidence eligibility for the Early Years Funding as per below:

* Supported Two-year old Funded Childcare: Child’s birth certificate or passport, confirmation of eligibility (e.g. local authority confirmation letter/email or code);
* Universal Funded Childcare: Child’s birth certificate or passport; and
* Working Families Funding: Child’s birth certificate or passport, Parent’s full name, date of birth, eligibility Code issued by HMRC, and national insurance number.

Additional documentation may be needed depending on local authority requirements.

**Settling Fee**

The settling fee is charged to all parents accessing both funded and private sessions.

**Child absences**

Each local authority has its own policy on child absences during Funded Childcare. We must keep the local authorities informed of child absences and the local authority has the right to recover funding payments made during periods of absences. Parents are responsible for paying the nursery for any funding payments reclaimed by the local authority due to a child’s absence.

**Booking pattern**

We require parents to confirm their booking pattern before the start of a new term. We are unable to apply Funded Childcare to any ad-hoc sessions booked outside of the confirmed booking pattern at the beginning of the term.

We are able to make permanent changes to booking patterns in accordance with the terms of the Parent Agreement.

**Local authority role**

Each childcare provider enters into an agreement with the local authority to provide the Early Years Funding. The local authority pays the childcare provider directly for the Funded Childcare it provides to the eligible children. The parents of the eligible children do not have access to, or the right to access, the Early Years Funding paid by the local authority.

**Other types of funding**

**Special Educational Needs (SEND) Funding**

Every local authority has a SEND fund to support providers in meeting the needs of individual child with SEN. SEN funding is paid directly to the provider by the local authority. When deciding on the value of SEN funding, the Local authority must consider the number of children with SEN in the local area, their level of need, and the overall capacity of the local childcare market to support these children.

We will use SEND funding to support the child with any learning and developmental delay or special educational needs or disability by accessing specialist resource and equipment.

**Disability Access Funding (DAF)**

DAF is available to support 3- and 4-year-olds in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and Universal Funding. Local authorities are responsible for checking that the DAF eligibility criteria are met. It is a one-off annual payment directly to the provider. If the child changes provider during the year, the DAF will remain with the original provider. If a child attends more than one provider, then the parent must allocate the DAF to one provider. This funding cannot be shared across providers.

We will use any DAF to support making reasonable adjustments/adaptations to enable the child to have equal access to the provision in the same way as any other child or for resource that will be beneficial to the child.

We will liaise with the child’s parents and engage with any relevant professionals to ensure that DAF is spent appropriately.

Where we have more than one child accessing DAF we may use the money for all children to support an adjustment or purchase resource that will benefit more than one child.

Any resources purchased as part of DAF remain the property of the nursery and can be used to support future children to access the provision. If a child moves provision, it is the nursery’s discretion whether to transfer any resource purchased using DAF to the new provider.

**Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)**

EYPP is additional funding that the nursery can claim to help improve outcomes of eligible children. The local authority pays the EYPP directly to the provider.

EYPP is available to support funded children whose parents meet the eligibility criteria. Local authorities are responsible for checking that the EYPP eligibility criteria are met.

Eligibility criteria can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding>

We will use EYPP funding to support positive impacts on the child’s development.

**Deprivation Funding**

Deprivation Funding is paid directly to the nursery by the local authority. Payment is made based on a child’s postcode taking into account: -

* Deprivation (mandatory)
* Rurality/Sparsity (discretionary)
* Flexibility (discretionary)
* Quality (discretionary)
* Language (discretionary)

Deprivation Funding is not child specific and can be used to support all children within the setting.

We will use Deprivation Funding to close the gap in attainment of children in the nursery.