

Hillside Gems



Admissions, Funding & Fees Policy

How We Offer Places

At Hillside Gems, we aim to offer places in a way that is fair, inclusive, and mindful of the needs of all children and families.

When spaces become available, places are offered based on the following:

- Children in care (looked after children)
- Brothers and sisters of children already attending
- Children with additional needs (where we can best support them)
- Children attending more sessions each week
- Families living locally
- The date the application was received

This approach helps us balance fairness, inclusion and continuity for the children already in our care.

If We Don't Have a Space Right Away

If a space is not currently available, your child will be placed on our waiting list.

- We review our waiting list regularly
- Places are offered as they become available, following the criteria above
- We will keep you informed wherever possible

We understand that waiting can feel uncertain, and we will always aim to communicate clearly and promptly.

Opening Times

Little Waltham, United Reformed Church

Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri	Early Riser 8.30-9.00	AM Session 9.00-12.00	Lunch 12.00-13.00	PM 13.00-15.30
Thurs	Closed			

Terling Village Hall

Mon, Wed, Fri	Early Riser 8.30-9.00	AM Session 9.00-12.00	Lunch 12.00-13.00	PM 13.00-15.30
Tues	9.00-14.00 Outdoor Learning / Forest School			
Thurs	Early Riser 8.30-9.00	AM Session 9.00-12.00	Lunch 12.00-13.00	Closed

The Barn @ St Martin's Church, Little Waltham

Wed, Thurs	9.00-14.00
Closed at all other times	

(Places at The Barn are reserved for existing 3-4 year olds attending either Little Waltham or Terling)

Government Funded Places

We offer government-funded early education places for eligible children, including:

- Early Learning for 2-year-olds (FEEE2 15 hours)
- Universal Entitlement for all 3 & 4-year-olds (FEEE3&4 15 hours)
- Eligible Working Parent Entitlement for 3 & 4-year-olds (FEEE3&4 EFE 30 hours)
- Eligible Working Parent Entitlement for 2 years old (FEEE2W 30 hours)

(FEEE2 can only be claimed by one provider, other entitlements can be split between 2 providers)

Parents/Carers can check their eligibility and apply for government funded childcare support at <https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker/>

Registration and Deposits

- No registration or admin fees apply to funded places.
- No deposit is required for children accessing FEEE2.
- Any deposit for other funded places is refundable and limited to one week's charges.

Please note:

1. Funded hours are fully covered and can be applied to any session, any day of the week, without restriction.
 2. As a term-time only provider, parents can access their full funded entitlement during the 38 weeks Hillside Gems is open.
 3. Families are welcome to book additional sessions or hours over and above their funded hours at our private fee rate (subject to availability).
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Private Fees

For any non-funded hours or additional sessions, we charge:

£6.60 per hour

This flat rate applies across all age groups.

Our fee structure reflects the high-quality care and education we provide and follows Essex County Council requirements.

- Fees are invoiced half-termly in advance
 - Invoices are clear and transparent and will itemise any funded hours at £0 plus any other charges for additional hours, food and consumables.
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Consumables Contribution

We request a **voluntary consumables contribution of 10p per hour attended**.

This helps cover everyday items such as:

- Snacks
- Sun cream

These items are not funded through government entitlements and are not included within the hourly fee. This small contribution supports us in maintaining a high-quality environment while keeping our fees fair and sustainable.

If a parent chooses not to or is unable to pay the voluntary contribution, reasonable alternatives can be arranged such as parents providing their own.

Meals

- **Little Waltham:**
Optional hot meals are available at **£2.55 per meal** (charged on invoices)
 - **Terling and The Barn:**
Children are currently required to bring a packed lunch
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Payment Methods

We accept payment via **bank transfer**.
Full payment details will be included on your invoice.

Late Payment Policy

- Payments must be made by the due date stated on your invoice
- If you are experiencing financial difficulty, please speak to us as early as possible so we can support you

Late payments may incur a charge of:

£5 per day, for each day payment is overdue

We will always aim to work with families where possible, but timely payment is essential to support the running of the setting.

Please note the following information from Essex CC:

Working Parent Entitlements

- Eligible working parents will be able to apply for the Working Parent Entitlement the term after their child turns 9 months
- Working parent funding can be applied for on <https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/>
- It is parents' responsibility to apply for the Working Parent eligibility code before the fixed deadlines 31st March for the summer term, 31st August for the autumn term and 31st December for the spring term and to reconfirm their codes every three months.
- Working parents will remain eligible at a current setting if they fall into their grace period but cannot start with a new setting until their code has been reconfirmed and prior to the cut-off date. New or lapsed codes will show as eligible once confirmed but cannot be claimed for until the next cut-off date. E.g. A new code confirmed on 2nd January may show the child as eligible, but it has missed the cutoff date of 31st December and cannot be used until the summer term.
- Working Parent Entitlement cannot be used once the child has started at reception in school.

Early Learning for 2-year-olds in receipt of government support (FEEE2 15 hours)

- This is not a universal offer; only eligible children can access this funding via an application process. To check for eligibility and apply Parents should go to [Funded childcare for 2-year-olds: Overview | Essex County Council](#). If eligible, a parent will be given a unique reference code starting with TYF which they give to the provider to submit a placement notification. This code does not need to be checked again and remains valid until the term after the child turns three where they will qualify for the universal three-year-old funding of 15 hours.
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Access to Additional Funding Streams

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The DAF is paid once a year per eligible child. To be eligible a child must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. DAF can only be claimed by one provider per year.

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF)

We can apply for SENIF for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities if they need additional support to be included children in activities. SENIF if agreed is paid for FEEE hours attended.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

The deprivation supplement is paid per hour for FEEE3&4 universal and extended hours only and is paid directly to us as providers. This funding is added automatically for children who live in an eligible postcode.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

The EYPP is additional funding paid directly to the setting to improve the development and learning outcomes of eligible children. It is available for children whose families receive certain benefits, such as Universal Credit, or for those who have been in local authority care. Parents must provide their National Insurance number on our registration forms so we can manually check eligibility and claim this support.