***Sessions September 2023 to July 2024***

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| **DAY** | **TIMES** |
| MONDAY | 9am – 12 noon |
| 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| TUESDAY | 9am – 12 noon |
| 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| WEDNESDAY | 9am – 12 noon |
| 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| THURSDAY | 9am – 12 noon |
| 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| FRIDAY | 9am – 12 noon |
| 12.30pm – 3.30pm |
| Every Day | 8.15am - 9am | Early Start session (with or without breakfast) |
| 12 noon - 12.30pm | Lunch Club |

**The Sessions**

Stratton Playgroup runs in line with the Stratton Primary School term dates; these are on display on the notice board. We have a Late / Non-collection of children policy and procedure.

The sessions are planned to give a balanced structure of physical, quiet, free play and adult led activities, both indoor and out. Our carefully planned activities ensure that every child can progress with confidence through the 7 areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We plan for each child’s individual developmental needs & interests; and keep the curriculum aimed at their level of ability. Some of the activities your child will experience throughout all our sessions are: arts & crafts, a variety of role play, sensory play, messy play, cooking, gardening, singing and physical games.

We ask that all 2-year-olds attend a minimum of TWO 3 hour sessions per week; and the term after the child turns 3, that they attend a minimum of THREE 3 hours sessions per week.

This is to ensure that the child settles, and benefits as much as possible from their time with us.

Early Start

We offer an Early Start every morning.

The children will be offered a range of fruits, cereals, yogurts and toast (waffles, and pancakes may also be offered on occasions, we will take part in some voting with the children to see their preferences).

The early starts open from 8.15am and all children who are attending must be in the playgroup by 8.30am at the latest. The cost will be the same with or without breakfast, the cost of early starts can be covered by your funding - one early start will use ¾ hour of your funding.

We would appreciate it if these sessions can be booked in advance, but we do have some flexibility if you need to book in at the last minute.

Lunch Club

We offer a lunch club every day, from 12 noon to 12.30pm. Parents are required to provide a named nutritionally balanced packed lunch for their child, in an easy wipeable lunch box. At the lunch club all children sit down to eat together, with staff; followed by a quiet activity.

**Daily Sessions**

Many of the activities can be messy so we ask parents to dress their child appropriately! Children are encouraged to practice skills to help them gain independence, so clothing they can handle easily when going to the toilet is advised. We take the children outside as much as possible so ask parents to provide appropriate weather wear; coats, hats, etc.

We ask that all children have named wellies, which can be left at playgroup; and a change of clothes brought with them each session. We do not have enough pegs to allocate each child their own peg; therefore, we ask children to choose a peg each day. However, children do have individual drawers, where their work and newsletters are put. The children check these at the end of each session.

We have some Stratton Playgroup children’s t-shirts available to purchase, these are not compulsory but may help prevent spoiling other clothes.

Children are welcome to bring a comforter, toy or object from home but we do request these items do not promote violence in any way. Although staff do their best to ensure toys and objects are returned safely, they cannot be responsible for them. We do recommend that all toys / objects from home are clearly marked with the child’s name.

During the session we provide a snack where we offer a variety of different things. On special occasions and celebrations different foods may be offered. The weekly content of the snack is displayed in the playroom.

Parents receive monthly newsletters to keep them up to date of Playgroup events and activities.

To ensure Playgroup is a happy, healthy environment we have golden rules: Children are asked to be kind and gentle, use walking legs, use indoor voices, use listening ears, take turns & share with our friends, help each other, remember to say please & thank you, and to help tidy away.

**Fees & Funding**

The fees are payable weekly, monthly or termly ***in advance***. Please note that fees must still be paid for absences, holidays or illness. Long term absences may be negotiated with the committee. Each child’s attendance is conditional upon fee payment. If your child is leaving before the end of a school year, Playgroup requires two weeks written notice.

Fees can be paid by Cash, Cheque (made payable to Stratton Playgroup) or by Bank’s Online Payment System - our details can be obtained from a member of staff.

There is a concessionary rate available for families with more than 1 fee paying (unfunded) child attending at one time - details can be obtained from a member of staff.

Under the flexible funding entitlement, parents with funded children can use the Early Start and Lunch Club as part of their funded hours and therefore not have to pay for them. But if they intend to use their full entitlement of funding on normal playgroup sessions, the fee for the Early Start and/or Lunch Club will be payable.

2-year-old funding

Some children may be entitled to 2-year-old funding; applications need to be made via Cornwall Council’s Early Years Portal, they will then approve up to 15 hours of funded childcare per week if the family or child meet the criteria.

**Note –** The government has confirmed that from **April 2024**, all eligible working parents of **two-year-olds** will be able to access funding for **15 hours per week** of education and care.

The government has confirmed that the new offers are for working families only and that the eligibility criteria will be the same as for the existing 30-hour for three- and four-year-olds (see below).

This means that parents or carers will need to earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours at the minimum or living wage but no more than £100,000. This applies to each parent in dual-parent households, though there are exceptions where one parent is in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer’s Allowance, Limited Capability for Work Benefit or contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance and their partner is working.

15 hours Funding for all 3-4-year-olds

The term after a child turns 3 years old, they are entitled to Early Years Education Funding, which covers fees up to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of every academic year. This must be taken over a minimum of 2 days in sessions no longer than 10 hours in any one day, and taken between a maximum of 2 childcare providers. Forms for this as well as entitlement dates are given out at the beginning of term - applications are made by completing the required information on the Parent Declaration Forms - which we will pass on to the parents when their child starts, or whenever there are any changes to their funding requirements.

EYPP Funding for 3-4-year-olds

Some 3-4-year-old children may be entitled to Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding; applications are made by completing the required information on the Parent Declaration Forms - which we will pass on to the parents when their child starts, or whenever there are any changes to their funding requirements.

This is a valuable additional source of funding to us (it is worth up to £342 per child per year)- this additional money could make a significant difference to a child’s learning outcomes. Any parent, who thinks their child may be eligible, can have the appropriate details checked by Cornwall Council’s Early Years Finance Team; again, applications are made by completing the required information on the Parent Declaration Forms - which we will pass on to the parents when their child starts, or whenever there are any changes to their funding requirements.

30 hours Funding for Working Parents

If a child turns 3 years old on or before 31st August, and the parents would like to claim up to an additional 15 hours free childcare, called the 30 hours extended entitlement (this is on top of the 15 hours universal funding that all 3 & 4 year olds can receive), between Stratton Playgroup and two other childcare provisions, they will be required to apply on or before **31st August**, this can be done on <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

Every three months, they will need to reconfirm that they are still eligible for additional 15 hours free childcare. They will receive an email from the government, prompting them to reconfirm, about a month before.

For children turning 3 years old, or for parents becoming eligible between 1st September and 31st December, they will be required to apply before **31st December**, to receive the funding for the spring term.

The same applies from 1st January to 31st March, they will be required to apply before **31st March**, to receive the funding for the summer term.

*Eligibility*

In order to be eligible for the additional 15 hours free childcare, called the 30 hours extended entitlement, parents will need to meet the following criteria:

* They earn or expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum or Living Wage over the coming three months.
  + This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on zero hours contract.
* The parent (and their partner where applicable) should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
* Where one or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or if they are on statutory sick leave.
* Where one parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assess as having limited capability to work.
* Where a parent is in a “start-up period” (i.e. they are newly self-employed) they do not need to demonstrate that they meet the income criteria for 12 months.
* If a non-EEA national, the parent must have recourse to public funds.

Parents eligible for the extended entitlement are not obliged to take up the maximum 30 hours.

If a parent becomes ineligible, there will be a “grace period”, in which we will continue to receive funding for a newly ineligible child until the end of the relevant funding period. If they are no longer eligible, a child can still access the 15 hours universal funding for all 3 & 4 years olds.

**Tax-Free Childcare**

At the same time, parents can also apply for a Tax-Free Childcare account: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>