

# WODEN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

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Dear Families,

On Friday 31 July we sent an e-mail letter to parents asking for feedback on our proposal to change the days of the week on which care would be offered to children enrolling in the Centre.

The new arrangements were proposed mainly as it is in the interests of the children, also to reduce the number of unused places on some days and to enable the staff to continue to raise the quality of care and education for children in the Centre.

At its meeting on 26 August 2009, the Committee, consisting of parents elected to the Committee and other interested parents, decided to go ahead with the new arrangements after having considered all the feedback received.

This means that, starting at the beginning of 2010, children starting new at the Centre can generally enrol only for five days a week or the following days:

For families who need care for two days a week:  
Monday and Tuesday, or  
Thursday and Friday

For families who need care for three days a week:  
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday or  
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Or full –time care.

For families who have a child or children currently receiving care at the Centre on days different from those set out above, and who cannot vary the days, we will try to meet your needs for the child or children already at the Centre. If you are in this situation please contact Reesha.

For families who have a child or children currently receiving care at the Centre and will have a sibling or siblings starting at the Centre in 2010 or later, we ask you to make arrangements for care for all children as set out above. If this is not possible, please contact Reesha to discuss the options.

As always we will endeavour to assist families with their care needs and address issues on a case by case situation. However, from a financial point of view it is important to have a high utilisation in order to ensure we are able to keep fees as low as we can.

We appreciate that families have work demands and other pressures or factors in their lives which may make the new arrangements difficult. We will do everything we can to assist in this regard, but it is not feasible to generally “grandfather” siblings into existing one day/ four day / split weeks as this would

result in phasing of the new arrangements taking a much longer time, with resulting confusion and possible conflicts.

At the end of this letter we have re-stated the reasons for moving to the new arrangements. To assist you in considering how the new arrangements will work, we have set out some scenarios below.

## **SCENARIOS**

### **Scenario 1**

You currently have your child in care and they access care on Monday and Wednesday. What will happen in 2010?

If you are able to change days we would ask you to consider Monday and Tuesday  
If you are unable to change days we will provide care on Monday and Wednesday for your child.

### **Scenario 2**

You currently have your child in care and they access care on Monday and Wednesday. You also have a baby who will need care in the Nursery and had hoped for the same days as child 1  
What will happen in 2010?

We would be offering care on either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Fridays, for both children. We won't split the days for any new children therefore you would need to consider the new categories of care for both children.

Alternatively the child who is currently enrolled at the Centre could continue on Monday and Wednesday (if you are unable to change his/her days) and the child coming into the Nursery could access care on Monday and Tuesday or Monday Tuesday and Wednesday

### **Scenario 3**

You have care on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday but have been asked to work an additional day on Friday as a one off.  
What will happen?

If we have a place available for your child on the Friday we would be more than happy to help out.

## **REASONS FOR THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Having care one day a week is not good for the child or the other children at the Centre**

In general having care one day stresses the child much more than having two or more successive days, which is harmful for the child and results in the child spending a considerable part of the day settling in before he or she can participate in activities that help him or her develop. The child is far more

dependent on a primary staff member which makes it hard for the child if that staff member is away. There is a higher chance that the child's overall experience for the day is adverse.

A child having only one day therefore needs much more support from the staff, which reduces the care they can give the other children in the group.

### **Split weeks are not good for the child**

Having a day away from the Centre in between days at the Centre means that activities following on from previous days are missed. Such activities are important in supporting the child's development – for example in assisting the child to follow up her or his interests and discoveries.

Split weeks also mean that the child has to settle in to the Centre twice a week instead of once a week, which can also be stressful.

Interruptions also hamper the child in developing and maintaining their friendship group/s at the Centre since the child misses out on shared activities.

### **Four days a week care creates unfilled vacancies at the Centre which raises costs and undermines the viability of the Centre**

If a child receives care for four days a week, this leaves a vacancy on the remaining day, often a Friday, which is difficult for the Centre to fill. Staff hours cannot be adjusted to fit this. This means that the Centre has to bear the costs of the staff time without it being covered by fees. Ultimately this translates to higher fees for all parents.

We recognise that some families may find these changes difficult but we are willing to work with and support each family in order to make these new arrangements as workable as possible.

We appreciate your support in continuing to improve the Centre and the care it provides to your children. Please do not hesitate to discuss any concerns you may have with Reesha.