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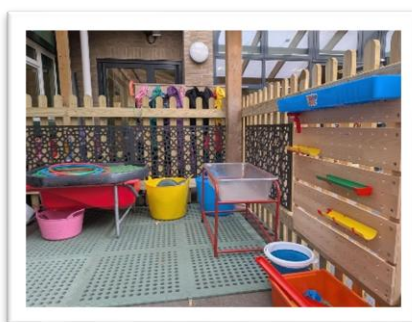
Welcome to Elmtree Preschool

Introduction

Founded in 2023 by Becky Meaham and Caroline Marchant, Elmtree Preschool is a small, not-for-profit charity (CIO), with a strong sense of community, creativity, and holistic child-led learning at its heart. Becky and Caroline both volunteer as Trustees of the charity, and alongside this, they each play an active role in the day-to-day running of the preschool as co-managers, with a team of Early Years Practitioners, volunteers and trustees. Our aim is to create an environment where children can explore, express themselves, and celebrate their individuality and creativity. Sparking curiosity and a love for learning and discovery. We both love the close-knit community feel that a preschool setting naturally nurtures - it's what makes it such a unique and special place for children to begin their learning journey.

Our Pedagogy

At Elmtree Preschool our approach is rooted in child-led, play-based learning. We value a calm, nurturing and engaging environment where children are free to explore through open-ended, free-flow play. Our planning is guided by the children's interests and developmental needs, allowing learning to unfold naturally and meaningfully. We see the *enabling environment* as a key part of teaching – with thoughtfully set up spaces, both indoors and outdoors, to invite curiosity, independence, and creativity. Outdoor play is a daily part of our routine, whatever the weather, as we believe nature offers endless opportunities for discovery, wellbeing, and connection. Click the link for more information [Enabling environments | early years alliance](#) We place great importance on personal, social and emotional development, ensuring each child feels seen, heard, and supported. Our team builds warm, respectful relationships with children, families and each other, and supports learning by observing, listening, and gently guiding - always placing the child's voice and choices at the heart of everything we do. We feel this approach best supports confidence, wellbeing, and overall development. More information about Elmtree's Ethos and Curriculum can be found on our website, please click on this link; [Ethos & Curriculum](#)



Elmtree Preschool at Cotham Gardens Primary School

As of September 2025, Elmtree Preschool will be based at Cotham Gardens Primary School, with a Licence to Occupy part of 19 Elmgrove Road. Cotham Gardens Primary School Ltd being the Licensor, and Elmtree Preschool being the Licensee. We will remain an independent not for profit charity (CIO).

As we are sharing the same premises, we will naturally be part of the whole school community, and we will work in collaboration with Cotham Gardens Primary School. Cotham Gardens and Elmtree Preschool will also collaborate on, and share certain policies, procedures and documents, and Code of Conduct.

All Elmtree Preschool's Policies and procedures are based on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), associated Early Years guidance and best practice.

A copy of all our policies and procedures and accompanying documents can be found in the Policy and Procedure folder, which is available electronically via the FAMILY App, or printed copies can be made available on request. (We aim to minimise printing on cost and environmental grounds).

Session options

Elmtree Preschool is open MONDAY – THURSDAY

Term time only

Morning: 8.40.am - 12.15.pm

Full day: 8.40am – 3.15pm

Drop off:

The school gates open at 8.40.am and close at 9.00am.

Enter the playground, we are based on the ground floor, you will see our banner and little fenced garden. If you are late, please go via reception (through the glass doors) and ring the numbers on the Elmtree Preschool notice.

Pick up:

If collecting your child at **12.15.pm**; please wait out by the main school gates. We will meet you there.

If collecting your child at **3.15.pm**; please pick up from inside the school playground by our fenced garden.

What to bring each day

- A water bottle.
- A bag with a spare pair of clothes (or two!) For toileting accidents and changes after water play.
- A rain coat.
- Welly boots (we have spare boots you are welcome to borrow!)
- Indoor shoes or slippers (nonslip) to change in to from welly boots.
- Something that comforts your child; a favourite book, blanket or soft toy.
- A healthy packed lunch, if your child is staying for lunch.

Elmtree Preschool's daily routine

At Elmtree Preschool, our daily routine provides a calm and predictable rhythm to the day, while remaining flexible to meet the needs of each child. We recognise that young children's energy levels and interests ebb and flow, and our approach allows time for both lively play and quieter moments of rest or reflection. We adjust timings and activities in response to the children, ensuring that transitions are smooth and unhurried. This flexibility supports their well-being, engagement and independence, in line with the EYFS 2025 principles of putting children's needs and interests at the heart of practice.

Throughout the day, children experience a balance of:

- **Free-flow play indoors and outdoors**, with continuous provision carefully planned to support all areas of learning and development.
- **Small group times**, offering opportunities for focused learning, stories, songs and conversations.
- **Care routines**, such as snack, lunch and personal care, which are valued as important learning opportunities.

Elmtree Preschool's Daily Routine

Time	Activity	Notes
8.40 – 9.30	Arrival – settle and indoor free play	Ensure gate is secure Parent/carers to leave by 9.am Elmtree phone is on for late arrival calls
9.30 – 10.00	Playground	Lower garden
10.00 – 10.20	Wash hands followed by morning snack	Check allergies & dietary list Always sit with & supervise children At least one first aider supervising
10.20 – 11.45 (11.40 – 11.55)	Free flow play - indoors & Elmtree garden “Five more minutes” followed by “Ten-minute tidy”	Ensure there are also opportunities for quiet/rest time 11.am Nappies & toilet checks/cleaning <i>Ensure a positive approach</i> <i>Promote team spirit</i> <i>Use “Tickle the ceiling” to gain attention of group</i>
11.55 – 12.10	Morning Group time & Review	Stories, songs, activities & review of our morning
12.10 – 12.15	Get ready for home time / wash hands for lunch	Remember: Bags, clothes, water bottles, lunch boxes, comfort items (soft toys etc)
12.15 – 12.45	Lunch time	Check allergies & dietary list Always sit with & supervise children At least one first aider supervising
12.45 – 1.15	Playground	Lower garden
1.15 – 2.30 (2.25 – 2.40)	Free flow play – indoors & Elmtree garden “Five more minutes” followed by “Ten-minute tidy”	Ensure there are also opportunities for quiet/rest time 2.15.pm Nappies & Toilet checks/cleaning <i>Ensure a positive approach</i> <i>Promote team spirit</i> <i>Use “Tickle the ceiling” to gain attention of group</i>
2.40 – 3.00	Wash hands followed by afternoon snack	Check allergies & dietary list Always sit with & supervise children At least one first aider supervising
3.00 – 3.15	Afternoon Group time and Review	Stories, songs, activities & review of our afternoon
3.15	Home time	Remember: Bags, clothes, water bottles, lunch boxes, comfort items (soft toys etc)

Funding, Fees, Donation and Payment Policy

Elmtree Preschool is a registered not-for-profit Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and one of our financial aims is to ensure we do not make a loss at the end of the year, any surplus of funds is directly put back into the preschool, for the benefit of the children and families.

Each year the budget is carefully planned to ensure we remain a sustainable preschool and are able to cover all expenditure.

The aim of Elmtree Preschool is to provide a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing preschool community to children and families.

- We purposely keep our sessions small to further support this ethos.
- We structure our fees accordingly.
- As a registered charity we actively encourage Gift Aid donations, and would also welcome small termly voluntary donations, if you are able to do so.
- As mentioned above, everything we make is put back into the **preschool for the benefit of the children and their families**, and to ensure we remain a high quality and sustainable preschool.
- Fundraising, Donations and Gift Aid make a huge difference to us - the difference between providing the basic care requirement that the government funds, and providing the high quality care you expect for your child, and what every child should receive.

Eligibility for Funding

The full funding term after a child's third birthday (beginning of Sept, January and April), every child automatically receives 15 hours per week funded Childcare Entitlement. For example, if your child's birthday is in October, funding will become available in the January funded term.

There is up to 30 hours' funding available for two, three and four year olds who are eligible.

To claim 30 hours funding at Elmtree Preschool parents need to apply via this website [Free Childcare for Working Parents: Check if you're eligible - GOV.UK](#)

Following successful application, you will need to provide us with an eligibility code, along with the entitlement letter. A parent/provider agreement form from Bristol City Council must be signed to claim Funded Entitlement. If funding is split between other providers, details must be completed on the parent/provider agreement form.

Minimum number of sessions

Elmtree Preschool requires parents to book a minimum of two sessions per week. This minimum is in place to support children to settle into the preschool routine well, make positive relationships with other children and the team, and give them the best opportunity to reach their full potential. This can be two morning sessions, two full day sessions, or a mix between the two session options – over 2 days minimum.

Opening Hours

MONDAY – THURSDAY TERM TIME ONLY

Sessions, Fees and Charges

Sessions	Timings	Cost if paying fees	Hours if funded	Consumable charge
FULL DAY	8.40.am – 3.15. pm	£49.40	6 hours 35 mins	£2.00 for all consumables (inclusive of snacks)
MORNING	8.40. am – 12.15.pm	£27	3 hours 35 mins	£1.00 for all consumables (inclusive of snacks)
Hourly cost for hours attended outside of claimed funding: £7.50 per hour				

Consumable charge refers to a charge to families that covers the cost of additional resources and items that are provided outside the basic session and funded rates we receive. Examples of consumables in an Early Years setting are; wet wipes, sun cream, nappy cream, tissues. To keep extra costs to our families as low as possible, our reasonable consumable charge is also inclusive of morning and afternoon snacks. It applies to all children.

A flexible and fair approach

At Elmtree Preschool we offer;

- Various session options to best suit your family's lifestyle, this can also help maximise your use of the funded 15 and 30 hours entitlement.
- No limit of use for funding entitlement per session.
- Add extra sessions outside of your funding entitlement to suit your family's needs (where ratio/availability allows)
- Book ad-hoc/casual extras and swap sessions (where ratio/availability allows)
- All consumable charges are detailed and inclusive of snacks, so no surprises.
- Pay you go settling in sessions, with a review after two weeks. *Subject to availability and fees if applicable.
- Flexibility with session choices

When you apply to join Elmtree Preschool you will be asked what sessions you wish your child to attend. We aim to be flexible to suit the needs of your family and have put a lot of thought into the sessions we offer.

Session options

Morning: 8.40.am - 12.15.pm

Full day: 8.40am – 3.15pm

Drop off: The school gates open at 8.40.am and close at 9.00am. Enter the playground, we are based on the ground floor, you will see our banner and little fenced garden. If you are late, please go via reception (through the glass doors) and ring the numbers on the Elmtree Preschool notice.

If collecting your child at 12.15.pm; please wait by the main school gates. We will meet you there.

If collecting your child at 3.15.pm; please pick up from inside the school playground by our fenced garden.

Making best use of your funding

If you are entitled to 15 hours free childcare, to maximise your use of funding, you might like your child to attend:

- FOUR mornings per week  Covered by 15 hours funding
- TWO full days per week  Covered by 15 hours funding

In addition, it is possible to pay to add more sessions on to your funded hours, for example

- TWO full day sessions and a morning session per week  Covered by 15 hours funding
plus approx. £13.12 per week fee
- THREE full day sessions per week  Covered by 15 hours funding
plus approx. £35.62 per week fee

If you are entitled to 30 hours funded childcare, to maximise the use of funding, you might like your child to attend:

- FOUR full day sessions  Covered by 30 hours funding

N.B The above doesn't include the consumables charge which is:

£1 per morning session, and £2 per full day session

As far as possible, if we have the spaces available, we will be as flexible with our offer of places as we can be. If, once your child has settled in, you wish to change, top-up or add-on to your child's sessions we will try to accommodate this, if session places are available and funding rules allow.

To help the children with their preschool routine, we ask that you drop off and pick up your child promptly at the session start and finish times. This also allows for us to plan trips to the park or walks in the area. We also need to be mindful of sharing the whole school premises.

Additional Fees/Charges

As mentioned, the small consumable charge (inclusive of snacks) is applied to each session, these will be included on your invoice. This charge is not included within the 15 or 30 entitlement funding received; therefore, the consumable charge is payable for every child whether in receipt of funded hours or not.

If you receive certain benefits these charges will be labelled as voluntary on your invoice, please get in touch with us if this is the case, likewise if you are facing financial difficulty, please do let us know. As always, everything discussed remains confidential.

Consumables charges are:

£1.00 per morning session £1.00 per morning

£2.00 per full day session

The charge is inclusive of; snacks and usable resources/planned activities outside or above of the basic EYFS funding requirements.

Morning and afternoon snack

We provide a healthy snacks of fruit, vegetable/salad and a choice of carbohydrate - pitta bread, bread sticks, crackers, toast for example.

Children will be offered milk or water to drink.

- We provide dairy milk (cows) via the government free milk scheme
- We also provide oat milk, which is from Elmtree Preschool's budget, as this is currently not part of the government free milk scheme, however we feel it forms part of our inclusive ethos and practice to offer a dairy free alternative.
- If your child requires an alternative from the above options, please get in touch.

- Please provide your child with a filled water bottle (labelled with their name) for each session.
- All children are encouraged to have a drink of water from their water bottles throughout the day.

Packed Lunch

Please provide a healthy and balanced packed lunch for your child. As standard Elmtree Preschool operates a **NO NUT policy**.

A healthy packed lunch for preschool aged children may include.

- A small sandwich, or a pot of rice, pasta, noodles etc
- A piece of fruit (we can chop this for your child if needed)
- A small pot of chopped vegetables/salad
- A yogurt

We encourage healthy eating at preschool, and staff also act as role models at lunch time, eating with the children. We encourage children to eat their savoury items first, i.e. sandwich, rice, pasta.

Please do not include confectionery such as chocolate bars and sweets in your child's lunchbox. (A small 'pudding' such as a yogurt or small biscuit/flapjack for example is acceptable).

For more information on healthy eating and healthy packed lunch ideas please click here -

[Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS](#)

PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD'S ALLERGY AND DIETARY PREFERENCES ARE KEPT UPTO DATE ON THEIR FAMILY PROFILE.

Speak to a member of staff if you have any questions or concerns.

Provision of trips, activities and experiences

- Where an extra cost is incurred for trips, activities and experiences our families will be notified in advance.
- We will try to keep the cost of trips to parents to a minimum, as mentioned above, if on certain benefits or facing financial difficulty, please do let us know.

Registration and Admin fee

To cover administration costs there is a one-off, non-refundable Registration and Admin fee.

This is £40. We do offer a 50% discount on this fee for siblings.

Late fees

Late Payment of invoice

The team will be sympathetic to parents/carers who are having, or who anticipate having difficulty in paying fees, and it may be possible to arrange an individual payment plan. Any family in this situation should contact Elmtree Preschool at the earliest opportunity to arrange a meeting. Any information shared will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Unless otherwise agreed with the setting manager, if payment of fees is not received by the due date indicated on the invoices, a 1st reminder email will be sent to the parent identified as bill

payer on the Registration form. It will detail when the fee payment was due, and the total fee amount overdue.

If fees remain outstanding after this time and no individual payment plan has been arranged and agreed by the setting manager, Elmtree Preschool will reserve the right to add up to a £20.00 charge per month, for late payments.

If payment is still not received within a further 7 days from the 1st reminder and the parent/carer has not discussed payment of the outstanding amount, we will send a 2nd reminder and arrange a meeting to discuss how we can help.

If fees remain outstanding after the above has taken place, it may result in you forfeiting your child's place at Elmtree Preschool, and the place will go to another child on our waiting list.

As a last resort, if the fees due remains outstanding for a further 14 days after the 2nd reminder has been sent and all other approaches have been tried, a recorded delivery letter will be sent to the designated parent/carer advising that legal action will be taken, and collection of the fees may be pursued through the small claims court procedure or by other litigation.

Late collection of your child

Please contact Elmtree Preschool as soon as you know you will be late collecting your child. We understand that this happens from time to time, but it is helpful if we have notice so that we can explain to your child and plan for the delay in collecting them.

Late collection fees may apply for regular late collections and/or late collection without notifying us. If regular lateness or lateness without notifying us occurs, we reserve the right to charge up to £10 for every 10 minutes you are late. This is to help cover extra staffing costs incurred.

Absence / Illness

Fees are not refunded for any booked sessions missed due to holidays or any absence for other reasons during term time. We may be able to look into swapping or replacing missed sessions, if your child's attendance pattern allows. This will depend on circumstances, our current availability and ratio.

Reducing sessions

As standard please provide us with one full month's notice if you wish to reduce your weekly sessions/hours your child attends. This provides us with time to offer the sessions your child will no longer attend to those families on our waiting list or prospective families. Charges will apply if you do not provide this notice.

Cancellation of reserved place

If you wish to cancel your child's place at Elmtree Preschool after it has been offered and accepted, or while they are attending, please give us a minimum of one preschool term notice, our terms are usually 6 - 7 weeks in length. Please note that the half term and summer holidays are not included within a notice period.

This provides us with time to offer the sessions your child will no longer attend to those on our waiting list or offer to prospective parents who visit us. Charges will apply if you do not provide this notice.

Inset Days

Elmtree Preschool is required, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, to be closed for one week statutory days during the year and in term time for staff training, continued professional development and meetings. We will publish our term dates calendar as soon as possible, and usually preplan our INSET days, or we hold them on Fridays when we are closed to families. We will ensure all parents have at least one month's notice of closure for inset days.

Staffing costs for inset days are not funded by the government, as these days do not form any part of the 15 hours or 30 hours funding entitlement. In short, we are funded for 38 weeks, INSET days make up a 39th week of an academic year.

Fee-paying parents will not be charged for these days.

If we are closed for an inset day on the day your child usually attends, we are unable to provide a funded swap/alternative session for your child on another day. However, you may choose to book an extra session for your child if we have availability. You will be charged at the usual session rate.

Closures

Our policy regarding closures due to situations which are out of our control i.e. inclement weather conditions will be made available to you. We aim to keep open as long as it is safe to do so, and we aim to keep disruption to your childcare to a minimum.

Ad-hoc/casual bookings

We are very happy to consider requests for ad-hoc or casual extra sessions for your child once they are settled into Elmtree Preschool and will do our best to accommodate them.

If you'd like to request session times outside of our standard session options, please do get in touch, we value feedback, and will look into requests.

If your child usually regularly attends preschool for less than the 15 or 30 hours funding entitlement, you are unable to claim more funded hours for any ad-hoc/casual extra sessions until the next relevant term. This is because, once we have submitted our termly funding data to Bristol City Council, we cannot claim funding for any ad-hoc/extra hours. In this case we would charge you at our usual fee rates for any extra hours. More permanent changes to your child's sessions may be claimed for by Elmtree Preschool at certain points during the academic year; you will be given notice of when you can request changes to your child's attendance pattern.

Therefore, all ad-hoc or extra sessions are charged at the usual session rate (see above).

Voluntary Donations

Elmtree Preschool is a registered charity, set up in August 2022 for the purposes of providing high quality affordable childcare and early years education for the local community.

We successfully registered with Ofsted at The Elmgrove Centre in March 2023 and we later had our new premises at Cotham Gardens approved by Ofsted in September 2025.

We are a not-for-profit, Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

As a charity we can claim 25% Gift Aid on all your donations, provided you are a UK taxpayer who has paid tax in the same financial year.

From time to time we may have fundraising activities, which the children are involved in, and we will invite you to contribute a voluntary donation, we may also have a fundraising stall at a local fair/market, and will invite families to come along.

We ask you to kindly consider paying a small voluntary donation of £30 per half term to Elmtree Preschool. This voluntary donation will be added on to the invoices. This donation makes a huge difference to us - the difference between providing the basic care that the government funds and providing the high-quality care you expect for your child. All income, including all our donations, goes to providing the childcare and early years education that your child receives at Elmtree Preschool, and our budget is formed with a clear focus: the benefits of the children.

Not all our donations are monetary, sometimes we may put out a request for you to volunteer your time: to help at a fundraising event; to come in to share your expertise or hobbies/ interests with the children, or to come along on a trip. Please give what you can, it is all very much appreciated.

Payment Procedure

Invoices will be created based on your child's usual attendance pattern and any extra sessions you have secured for your child.

Invoices will be sent to the Parent identified on the Registration form as the bill payer. Invoices are provided via the FAMLY app and are usually sent out during the first couple of weeks of each half term.

The payment each half term (as detailed on your invoice) is usually required within 2 - 3 weeks of receiving the invoice. Fees are preferred in full but please do speak to us if you'd like to split the payment over two dates.

Any extra sessions above those normally attended will be invoiced at the end of the term in which they occurred, unless paid on the day. (We do have a Sumup card reader for such payments, you may incur a small processing charge.)

Those eligible for the 15 or 30 hours Funded Entitlement will receive an invoice detailing the funded entitlement hours used, any extra sessions/hours attended outside of the entitlement, the consumables charge and any other fee relevant to the child in the time period.

We will provide details on each invoice of how you can make a voluntary termly donation to Elmtree Preschool (Reg. Charity 1200160), to cover the costs not included in your child's government funding. We can claim Gift Aid on these donations.

Payment methods

Our preferred method of payment is via BACS Transfer:

Account Name: Elmtree Preschool

Bank Sort Code: 51-70-08

Bank Account No: 77190785

We do have a Sumup card reader in the preschool if required, you may incur a small processing charge. We are looking into setting up payments via the FAMLY app. This is new software for September 2025, so we will keep you updated.

We are investigating other payment options, such as through the Childcare Vouchers or through the government tax-free childcare scheme. (We are currently set up for TEDS).

We do not accept cheques or cash.

Famly App

Once you have registered your child at Elmtree Preschool you will need to [Download the Famly App](#) which you can do by clicking the link, or searching for it within your mobile app store.

This is our main form of communication. We use FAMLY for registration, important information, news, children's profiles, learning journals, accident and incident forms. It also has a language translation tool. Please speak to a member of staff if you have any questions.

Useful Contact Details

You can find out more information about the whole team at Elmtree Preschool by clicking the link below

 [Meet The Team](#)

Becky Meacham

- Co-Manager and Curriculum Lead, Level 7 Early Years Teacher Status
 - Ofsted Responsible Person and Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Usual working days: Monday mornings, Tuesdays and Thursdays
- o Work mobile: 07519165172
 - o Email: becky.elmtree@gmail.com

Caroline Marchant

- Co-Manager and SENDco, Level 3 Early Years Practitioner
 - Deputy Safeguarding Lead
 - Usual working days: Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- o Work mobile: 07354753387
 - o Email: caroline.elmtree@gmail.com

Elmtree Preschool's main email address: hello@elmtreepreschool.org.uk