

Hampshire County Council: Nursery Admissions Policy September 2012

Introduction

The Local Authority is responsible for admissions to nursery classes in community and voluntary controlled schools and to community and voluntary controlled nursery schools.

This policy should be used to determine admissions to nursery schools and units. Parents do not have a statutory right to appeal to an independent appeal panel in relation to nursery admissions so it is essential, therefore, that all admissions decisions can be justified by reference to the following criteria, taking into account the particular circumstances of individual schools and units.

A child is entitled to 15 hours a week, free learning and care in an early years setting from the start of the term following their third birthday, for 38 weeks in a full year. The key dates are 1 January, 1 April and 1 September. This entitlement will be offered to parents on a flexible basis and the nursery school or unit will advise parents of the patterns of attendance they can offer. Our offer will be **[insert offer]**.

Procedures for **[insert name of nursery]**

The **[insert name]** nursery can accommodate a maximum of **[insert admission number]** children. The patterns of attendance available are **[insert attendance options]**.

If you would like your child to come to this nursery, you must complete an application form and send or bring it to this school when your child is 2 years old, or as soon as possible after that.

The governors will consider applications in accordance with the admission criteria. They will let parents know by letter of their decision where possible at least half a term before admission, ordinarily this will be by the end of October, February and May. If your child is offered a place, you must confirm your acceptance to the school within two weeks otherwise the school may have to refuse places for other children unnecessarily.

The final decision on when a child is admitted, the number of hours a child is able to attend and his or her pattern of attendance, rests with the headteacher.

Admission criteria

The governors will consider all applications in accordance with the following criteria, set out in priority order. Length of time on *any* waiting list will not be taken into account.

Categories B & C contain examples of both special educational and social need.

- A** A child who is “looked after” by the Children’s Services Department (in accordance with Section 22 of the Children’s Act 1989)
- B** Children for whom there is a recommendation for nursery education by a health professional, social worker, educational psychologist, area Inco, outreach worker or education welfare officer on the basis of the child’s special educational needs.

Examples of special educational needs, in no order of priority, might include:

- emotional and behavioural problems
- hearing difficulties
- lack of personal interaction and stimulation
- physical disabilities
- speech and language problems
- visual difficulties

- C** Children with social needs, based on information gained by the headteacher as part of the application procedure.

Examples of social needs, in no order of priority, might include:

- children who were multiple births (twins, triplets)
- a child with a confined play space
- a child from a one parent family
- a child in a large family (four or more children)
- a child with parents under 20 years of age
- a child in sole care of grandparents
- a child who has two or more siblings under four years of age
- a child on the child protection register
- a child of parents with disabilities
- a child with English as an additional language

- D** Children with a brother or sister (including children living as siblings in the same family unit) with disabilities (as in A) that require a significant amount of additional support.
- E** Children who have a brother or sister (including children living as siblings in the same family unit) on the school roll who will still be attending (insert name) School, or a linked junior school, the following academic year.
- F** Other children.

Tiebreaker

If the nursery is oversubscribed **within** any of the above categories (A –F), children in the year before they may start school will be given priority. Then preference will be given to children who live closest to the school based on a straight line measurement from school to the entrance of the property. Hampshire County Council's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will be used to confirm the order of applicants.

Other information

1. Applying for a place in Year R (FS2)

Admission to a reception class will be in accordance with the County Council's Admissions Policy for community and controlled infant and primary schools. **Admission to a nursery unit/school does not constitute any right of entry to the nearest local school, and places will be allocated according to that school's admissions policy.** Parents have the right not to send their children to school until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Only in exceptional circumstances can children remain in the nursery beyond the normal admission date for reception classes (i.e. the September of the school year concerned).

2. Transport

Transport from home to the unit/school will only be provided where the child has been directed to the placement as part of an SEN assessment or statement against agreed criteria. In such circumstances, transport can only be recommended following an assessment of individual need by the Inclusion Branch of the Children Services Department.

3. Schools and those with parental responsibility for a child: (Guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families)

The definition of a *parent* in the Education Acts includes:

- all natural parents whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has *parental responsibility* for a child or young person; and

- any person who, although not a natural parent, *has care* of a child or young person.

Having *parental responsibility* means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent of a child has by law. It is defined by the Children Act 1989. It gives parents the legal right to make decisions and choices, such as where the child will live or go to school etc. If the parents were married to each other at the time of a child's birth, or if they have been married to each other at any time since the child's conception, they each have parental responsibility.

Having *care* of a child or young person means that a person who the child lives with, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.