



**Admissions policy for Leeds community school  
nursery classes for entry in September 2014  
(onwards)**



Agreed By Governing Body Autumn 2014

## Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to inform parents about fair allocation of school nursery class places and to provide clear information on how we prioritise children's needs when allocating places.

We have tried to mirror the school admissions policy as far as possible to smooth transitions to school. **However, please note the allocation of a nursery class place in school does not guarantee a reception class place. There is a separate admissions policy for school places.**

### 1. Aims

Our aims are:

- 1.1 To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high quality, child-centred nursery education on a fair and equitable basis.
- 1.2 To establish an admissions policy governed by clearly defined criteria that may be articulated to parents and other professionals.
- 1.3 To ensure, as far as possible, that all children who gain a place will fully benefit from nursery education and so we will make the very best of our resources.
- 1.4 To provide high quality, child centred nursery education to children in our local community.

### 2. Nursery Session Options

Options 1 – Mornings 15 hours free (08.45-11.45)

Option 2 – Afternoons 15 hours free (12.30-15.30)

Gildersome Primary School does not currently offer provision outside of these sessions.

### 3. Basic Eligibility criteria

The age of the child. Children will be admitted to a school nursery for free nursery education on the relevant term following their third birthday. Children below eligible age will not be admitted.	<b>They are eligible for a free place from:</b>
<b>If your child is born between:</b>	
<b>1st April and 31st August</b>	1st September following their third birthday until statutory school age.
<b>1st September and 31st December</b>	1st January following their third birthday until statutory school age.
<b>1st January and 31st March</b>	1st April following their third birthday until statutory school age.

Once the age priority is established we will then offer places to children taking into account the additional priorities below.

## **Priority 1**

- a Children in public care or fostered under an arrangement made by the local authority (see note 1).
- b Children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- c Children with or without a statement but who have Special Educational Needs, or with exceptional medical or mobility needs (see note 2).

## **Priority 2**

Children with brothers or sisters who will be at school at the start of the academic year and are living at the same address (see note 3).

## **Priority 3**

Children of parents who live nearest school nursery (see note 5). This does not include any voluntary-aided schools which act as their own admission authorities. Neither does it include single-sex schools.

If we have more applications than there are places, we will offer places first to children living nearest to the school nursery (measured in a straight line) (see note 4).

## **Priority 4**

We will give priority to parents who choose a Leeds school nursery, which is not the one nearest to their home address (see note 5).

If we have more applications than there are places, we will offer places first to children living nearest to the school (measured in a straight line) (see note 4).

If we cannot offer children a place at this school nursery we will endeavour to give them details of other school nurseries or voluntary, private, child minder or Independent sector nurseries that have places available in the immediate area. We will also add their details to our waiting list with the aim to allocating a place at the next intake.

## **Flexible provision.**

From September 2010 all school nurseries are required to deliver flexible 15 hours of free nursery education where there is demand. School nurseries must assess parental demand for flexibility on a regular basis and make flexible places available.

In Leeds we use a number of models to define flexibility. These are:

1. 3 hours a day over 5 days a week - Sessional.
2. Between 3 and 6 hours a day over two and a half days, offered at the beginning or the end of the week – Partially Flexible.
3. Between 3 and six hours a day according to parental demand – Fully flexible.

School nurseries should make every effort to offer places as flexibly as possible provided it does not impact on the quality of the provision. However not all school nurseries will be able to offer fully flexible places because of operational limitations. Flexible places are offered primarily in order to meet the needs of working parents.

When organising admission School nurseries **should not** give preference to children who rank highly on admission criteria and choose to take the full 15 hours entitlement over those who rank on the same level but choose to take fewer hours.

Furthermore School nurseries **should not** give preference to children who rank highly on admission criteria and choose to take a sessional or less flexible over those who rank on the same level but choose to take the full 15 hours entitlement flexibly. That is unless these are the only particular sessions available because the others are full.

Where demand for flexible places exceeds availability then places will be offered to working parents. Should this not resolve the allocation then flexible places will be offered in date of birth order.

At Gildersome Primary School we review the parent demand for flexible provision each year. Currently for entry into nursery from September 2014 we not offering any of the Leeds flexible models, are nursery session are mornings or afternoons as defined in section 2. With the above criteria, each application is always considered very carefully on its individual needs.

#### **4. Admission of children after term start date**

Children may be offered a place at any time during the term; however, schools will not admit children after the beginning of the term if they are already settled at another setting to ensure smooth and consistent transitions. Specifically children will not be admitted to the school at short notice to ensure their presence on the day of the headcount.

#### **5. Admission of children still in Nappies**

Children who still have continence issues at nursery admissions age will not be refused entry to the school nursery.

##### **Note 1**

Children who have been adopted from local authority care within the twelve months prior to applying for a school nursery place will also be included within the higher priority for looked after children.

##### **Note 2**

Applications in this category must be supported by a statement in writing from a doctor or other relevant professional. This is necessary because you will be asking the Authority to assess your child as having a stronger case than other children. Each case will be considered on its merits in consultation with the school concerned. To receive this assistance you must contact the SEN Assessment and Provision Service on 3951035.

##### **Note 3**

For these purposes, brothers and sisters must be living at the same address as your child. Siblings refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister. The definition does not include cousins or other family members sharing a house.

#### **Note 4**

In Leeds we use a straight-line distance system.

We use a national computer system to run our school-admission system and the same programme will be used to assess eligibility for a nursery place. **This does not mean, however that if you get a nursery school place, you will get a reception class place.** As part of this system there is a program that measures the 'straight-line' distance from the centre of the main school building to your home address. The point we measure to at your home address is determined by the Royal Mail Postcode Address File. This information provides us with coordinates for every dwelling. If we are not able to match your address with the Postcode Address File then we will use the centre of your dwelling.

In the unlikely event there are insufficient places for two (or more) children living in the same building (e.g. flats) or otherwise equidistant from the school, then any final place will be allocated by the drawing of lots.

#### **Note 5**

##### **If you live in Leeds**

If you live in Leeds and your nearest school is a school in another local authority, then your nearest Leeds school by straight-line distance will be your nearest eligible school. You can apply for any school but the nearest priority only applies to Leeds schools.

##### **If you don't live in Leeds**

If you live in another local authority and the nearest school to your home in a straight line is a Leeds community school nursery, we will give you the relevant priority under our admissions policy but initial priority will be given to those children living in Leeds.

If you live in another local authority and the nearest school to your home, by straight line, is a school not in Leeds you are still able to apply for a Leeds School but priority 4 will not apply.

When we say the 'nearest' school, we do not include voluntary-aided (faith based) schools. This is because they apply their own admissions policies and, if they are oversubscribed, they mainly offer places based on the religion practised by the child and family. We do not include single sex schools as nearest schools.

##### **Address**

For admission purposes, the home address is where the child usually lives with their parent or carer. You must not give the address of a childminder or relative. We will investigate any queries about addresses and, depending on what we find; we may change the school nursery we offer your child. When we make an offer, we assume your address will be the same in the following September as we have on record. If you plan to move house, you must still give your current address.

##### **Allocation of preferred sessions**

Parents will be asked to give a preference with regards to the session options when they apply for a place. Account will be taken of any preference expressed by parents but preferences will be allocated subject to availability and are not guaranteed. If the preferred session is unavailable, the children will be offered an alternative session. If no alternative session is available, the child will be kept on the waiting list until a place is available.

## **6. NURSERY INTAKE**

6.1 The nursery class has a major intake in September of children who will be 4 years old during that academic year.

6.2 Any spare places will be allocated during the year, as they become available, providing that the child has already passed his/her third birthday.

## **7. DECISIONS ON PLACES**

7.1 Decisions will be made by the Nursery Sub-Committee of the School's Governing Body. Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admissions policy. Being offered a place does not guarantee first preference with regards to session options. If any information submitted on the application is subsequently found to be incorrect, the place offered in the nursery could be withdrawn.

7.2 Any appeals need to be addressed to the Chair of Governors. Decisions will be final with no opportunity for further appeal.

7.3 The offer of a nursery place DOES NOT in any way mean an automatic entitlement to a reception class place at Gildersome Primary School. Parents must follow LEA guidelines and apply for Reception places via the authority.

7.4 Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the academic year.

## **8. LEAVERS DURING THE YEAR**

8.1 If a child is withdrawn by their parents from nursery during the school year, parents must give the school a minimum of 4 weeks' notice if possible. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open for a trial period and will be automatically made available to allocate to a child on the waiting list. If parents later wish their child to return to the nursery then they will have to re-apply for a place on the waiting list and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with all the other applications, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has previously been in the nursery class or any other nursery class will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

## **9. ATTENDANCE AND LOSS OF NURSERY PLACE**

9.1 If attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the nursery teacher will talk to parent and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual due to the great demand for places. This conversation should be recorded and dated in the child's folder.

9.2 If after a period of two weeks, attendance and punctuality remain poor a letter will be sent to the parents inviting them to meet the head teacher.

- 9.3 If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance within an agreed period then the child may lose the place. Parents will be notified of the loss of place in writing.
- 9.4 If a child is absent for a period of three weeks without any contact from the parents and the school has been unable to make contact with in this time, the child may lose the place and it may be offered to someone else. This will be decided by the Head Teacher and a letter explaining the situation will be sent.
- 9.5 In line with the school, requests for holiday will not be authorised, despite the children being below statutory school age. This follows the policy for unauthorised absence. (See attendance policy)

### **Temporary School Site**

If a school has to move to a temporary site for any reason, such as the building being damaged by a fire, we will base our distance measurements on the school nursery's permanent site.

### **Starting Reception Age**

The School admissions policy has been amended to allow all children to start full time reception education in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday. You must ensure your child receives an appropriate full time education from the term following their fifth birthday. Almost all children start school in Leeds in the September following their fourth birthday. If you want a later start date within the academic year you should discuss this with the school. The child will then be eligible to attend extended free nursery education until the summer term when they must take up their place within the school reception class. If you wish the child to start in the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday then your child will enter in year one instead of reception unless there are exceptional circumstances requiring them to undertake a reception year.