



Sudbourne Primary School

Nursery Admissions Policy

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Statement of intent

Sudbourne Primary School Nursery aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high-quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class.

The governing board is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the nursery's Nursery Admissions Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the nursery.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2021) 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2022 to 2023'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. Application process

Parents choosing to send their child to the nursery will have to register their interest online. Once they have completed the online registration, they will be added to the waiting list. The nursery will be in regular contact with those on the waiting list to keep them updated and to formally offer them a place if and when one is available.

Once a place is available, parents will receive a formal written offer which they will need to accept or decline in writing. After accepting the place, they will need to send in their child's birth certificate and proof address.

Parents who secure a place will be offered a date to begin the transition programme to ensure they and their child have time to settle.

Parents who would like a part-time place will be asked to state a preference for morning or afternoon, and/or for which days they wish to have the childcare; however, the nursery may need to take account of the balance between morning and afternoon places, so it cannot guarantee all parents' requests will be fulfilled.

3. Equal opportunities

The nursery will implement an effective policy that ensures equality of opportunities for all, provides a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity, and is equally accessible to all.

Admissions to the nursery will be open, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

4. Free childcare arrangements

The LA is required to secure free places offering 570 hours childcare a year, over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year, and up to 52 weeks of the year, for every eligible child in the LA from the relevant dates outlined below.

Children are eligible for free childcare from the relevant dates outlined below up until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

With regards to the age criteria, children will be eligible as follows:

- Born between 1 January - 31 March: eligible from the start of term beginning on, or following, 1 April after the child's third birthday
- Born between 1 April - 31 August: eligible from the start of term beginning on, or following 1 September after the child's third birthday
- Born between 1 September - 31 December: eligible from the start of term beginning on or following 1 January after the child's third birthday

The nursery can accommodate a maximum of 26 nursery children in the morning and 26 nursery children in the afternoon.

Parents wishing to access the universal 15 hours free childcare for three- and four-year-olds do not need to apply for this through the digital childcare service.

For children who take up their place later in the year or have moved to the LA part-way through the year, the LA will secure a prorated number of free hours. The total number of hours will be adjusted to reflect the portion of the year remaining.

The LA will ensure that any three- or four-year-olds moving to England from another country can access their free place on the same basis as other children.

The nursery offers 30 hours free childcare as an extension to the universal 15 hours free childcare. Parents wanting to access the 30 hours free childcare entitlement must apply to do so through the [digital childcare service](#). Parents are able to access the 30 hours of free childcare for 38 weeks out of the year – i.e. during term time – or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year, e.g. 22 hours a week for 52 weeks. Parents will also be reminded of their possible eligibility for tax-free childcare through the digital childcare service to cover additional childcare costs, e.g. school holidays.

The sessions offered to nursery children are as follows:

- For children eligible for 30 hours free childcare – six hours daily (plus lunch at an additional cost) (see the [Additional costs](#) section of this policy), between the hours of 9:00am-3:30pm
- All other children – three hours free childcare daily, between the hours of 9:00am-midday (mornings) or 12:30pm-3:30pm (afternoons)

5. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare

Parents of children aged three and four must meet one of the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare:

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period – i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they do not need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)
- The parent is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
- One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
- One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
- If a non-European Economic Area national, the parent has recourse to public funds

Parents should check their own eligibility for the scheme using the government's [Childcare Choices](#) website or [childcare calculator](#). If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

Parents can only start claiming their 30 hours free childcare the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC. For this reason, parents are urged to apply as soon as possible. If eligible, parents must provide the nursery with their unique code to confirm they are eligible for the scheme, together with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth. As the free childcare cannot be claimed until the code has been verified, parents should provide the nursery with this information as soon as possible in order to avoid delay. Parents will be prompted every three months by HMRC to reconfirm that they remain eligible for free childcare.

The LA will audit the eligibility codes at six points during the year to identify any parents who have fallen out of free childcare eligibility. The LA will notify the nursery as soon as possible where parents have fallen out of their eligibility. The nursery will then notify parents within five working days.

If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a short period of time. If a parent falls into their grace period before their child has started a 30-hour place, they should not take up their 30-hour place. The grace period will not continue once a child has reached compulsory school age. Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.

A parent who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will have their free childcare funded until the end of that funding block (i.e. 31 March, 31 August, 31 December) or for as long as their child remains under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. A parent who becomes ineligible in the latter half of the funding block (i.e. up to the last day of the funding block) will be funded until the end of the following funding block or for as long as their child remains under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. If a parent becomes ineligible for the 30 hours free childcare, they will still be entitled to 15 hours of free care for their child.

Other information related to the 30 hours free childcare scheme can be found in the nursery's Nursery Fees Policy.

6. Extension of 30 hours to children in foster care

Children in foster care are also eligible for the additional hours, provided that they meet all of the following criteria:

1. Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision-making;
2. That, in single parent foster families, the foster parent engages in paid work outside their role as a foster parent; and
3. In two parent foster families, both individuals engage in paid work outside their role as a foster parent

In accordance with criteria 3, if one individual is not a foster parent, then they must be in qualifying paid work and earn a minimum of the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage to be eligible. There is no requirement on the type of work or number of hours that a foster parent must work in order to access the 30 hours, and there is no minimum earnings limit – although they must be engaging in paid work. Children in foster care will continue to be eligible for the universal 15 hours regardless of the working status of their foster parents. There is no requirement to access the full 30 hours if this is not necessary.

To apply for the additional hours, foster parents must apply directly to the LA – there is no requirement to apply via the childcare service. When initiating an application, foster parents are required to inform the child's social worker. A designated individual, as determined by the LA, will counter-sign the foster parent's application to confirm eligibility. This may be, for example:

- The child's social worker; or
- A supervising social worker; or
- An independent reviewing officer appointed by the LA to protect the child's interests throughout the care planning process.

In some cases, the LA may deem it appropriate for the application not to have a second signature – this will be agreed between the LA and foster parent before the application is made. The signed form (by the parent only) will be sent directly to the contact within the LA who is responsible for issuing codes.

The LA has the flexibility to develop a policy and procedure for establishing the eligibility of children in foster care. Any process developed will be proportionate, flexible and aligned with existing process as far as possible, with the focus being ensuring consistency with a child's specific care plan.

All foster parents will have access to the LA's locally agreed policies and procedures for determining eligibility. In particular, foster parents will be provided with the following:

- The role of the designated person
- Who the designated person is and how to contact them
- What evidence the foster parents should be expected to provide
- How the foster parent should pass the form to the LA
- How/if the evidence will be stored once the form is completed and approved

- The timeframe by which the designated person will response to any application – this will be no later than four weeks from the receipt of the application

Where the LA determines that an application for the additional hours is not consistent with a child's care plan, they will not be eligible, regardless of whether parents satisfy the other criteria outlined at the start of this section.

Where an application is approved, details will be entered onto the eligibility checking system where a record will be created for the child. Once the code is generated, this will be sent to parents via email and the child's social worker will be informed that the code has been issued. Once foster parents have received the code, the process is the same as that outlined in the [Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare](#) section of this policy.

Foster parents will be required to re-confirm their eligibility every three months and will be prompted in advance of the deadline. The LA is free to determine the exact evidence required from foster parents to re-confirm eligibility, which will be made clear to parents during the initial application. At a minimum, the LA will be satisfied that:

- The placement is still ongoing;
- Accessing the additional hours is still consistent with the child's care plan; and
- The foster parents are still engaging in paid work outside their role as a foster parent.

If a foster parent is unhappy about the decision made by the LA, they should follow the LA's complaints process and contact the child's social worker.

7. Application timetable

A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday, or second birthday, where eligible. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time during the year following their child's third birthday, or second birthday, where eligible.

Formal applications for nursery places must be made as follows:

- For places in the Spring term – September 15th
- For places in the Summer term – January 15th
- For places in the Autumn term – April 15th

Application forms can be obtained from the main office.

You can apply after these dates but your application may not be considered until after the on time applications have been processed.

Where places are remaining, later admissions are possible, up to the agreed admissions limit.

Places offered are available to the child from the date the place is offered, until 31 August following their fourth birthday.

8. Additional costs

We offer a fee-paying 'top-up hours' option, for families who are eligible for 15 funded hours and would like to extend their child's hours to full time. There is an additional charge for 'top-up' hours as follows:

- **£30** per additional session

Fees are payable monthly in advance and are due on or before the 1st day of each month against issued invoices.

Fees are payable either by direct debit or through Arbor, our online payment service provider. We also accept payment or part payment of fees by all voucher payment schemes.

Additional hours and flexibility of days offered are subject to availability.

Please note that we are unable to offer refunds for any days lost due to absence, including sickness and family holidays.

For **all** children attending the Nursery for a full day, there is an additional charge for lunch as follows:

- **£3** for each lunch provided

Meals are payable in advance through Arbor, our online payment service provider.

Wrap Around/ Extended Day Care

We offer a flexible range of **Wrap Around/ Extended Day Care** options, to suit the needs of working parents, via our partner provider The Play Professionals as follows:

- Breakfast Club - 7:45am to 8:50am
- After School Club – 3:30pm to 6:00pm

For further information or to book a place please visit the [Extended Day Care Webpage](#) on our website: Alternatively you can telephone 020 8678 5959/5968 between 9:30 and 15:30.

9. Deposits

Parents are required to pay a refundable deposit worth one week's childcare to secure any additional 'top-up' hours requested.

The deposit is refundable at the end of the placement except where:

- There are fees still outstanding or
- The Nursery has not received the correct notice to terminate the place

In both cases, the Nursery reserves the right to offset the deposit against any fees that are outstanding or would have been payable in the notice period.

10. Oversubscription

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in the nursery, the Governing Body will use the following oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications for both funded and bought hours:

The oversubscription criteria, set out in priority order, are as follows:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children: a 'looked after child' is a child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority – according to section 20 of the Children Act 1989.
2. Children with a brother or sister living at the same address, who already attends the school or nursery and would not have left the school or nursery at the time of admission. A sibling is defined as a full/half/step brother or sister, living at the same address, a child who is living as part of the family by reason of a court order, or a child who has been placed with foster carers at that address as a result of being looked after by the Local Authority.
3. Children with a professionally supported medical or social need that the nursery is especially able to meet. Letters from an appropriate professional must support these applications although these will not always be conclusive.
4. Priority will be given on the basis of distance, between the child's home and the school, measured by a straight-line.
5. Children living within the catchment area for the nursery
6. All other children

The governing board may also give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium, or the service premium. The nursery must be named in the admission arrangements, and its selection will be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

Where there is a tiebreak scenario within the criteria, priority will be given firstly to a child who lives closest to the nursery based on a straight-line measurement, then by date of birth, with the older child given priority.

Following the allocation of nursery places, the school will retain a waiting list. Waiting lists will be kept in order of oversubscription criteria listed above. Places on lists will not be prioritised according to how long a child's name has been on that list or, by the age of the child or, by whether the sessions are funded or bought. It is possible that a child's name could go up or down on the list.

11. Withdrawing offers

Once a written offer has been made, there are limited circumstances in which an offer can be withdrawn – these are as follows:

- Offers made in error
- Offers made on the basis of fraudulent applications

- Offers made on the basis of intentionally misleading applications
- Parents not responding to an offer within six weeks
- A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education
- A family registering their child at two maintained settings

12. Delayed starts and withdrawn places

Following receipt of a registration form, the start date can only be delayed once, and only by one month, before the child's reserved place will be open to others and the child's name added back onto the waiting list.

If parents decide to withdraw their child from the nursery after being offered a place, they must give the nursery at least four weeks' notice. Parents may be charged for this period, or it may come out of their nursery entitlement.

Notice of a delayed start or withdrawal must be in writing.

13. Changes to attendance and notice to terminate

It is expected that parents will ensure that their child will attend at the times agreed so that children can establish a routine and be ready to start school.

In cases where the parents of a child who already attends the nursery wish to either take up additional funded hours and/or buy extra hours they should contact the school office. If the nursery is full the child's name will be added to the waiting list, any such requests will be given priority. In cases where there are more than one child who already attends the nursery on the waiting list for additional hours, the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

Changes to the times when a child is attending will generally only be agreed to take effect from the start of a term.

Parents may reduce the number of hours or terminate their child's place by giving not less than four weeks' notice in writing via the school office. This requirement applies both before and after provision begins.

14. Refusal of admission

A child is only refused admission if one of the following criteria are met:

- The nursery has reached its admissions limit
- The child is not of the appropriate age

As nursery education is not compulsory, parents do not have a statutory right to appeal against the admission authority's refusal to award a place to their child.

Parents may appeal to the SEND tribunal against the provision named by the authority in the EHC plan.

15. Admission to Reception

Children reach compulsory school age as follows:

- Children turning five years old between 1 January and 31 March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1 April
- Children turning five years old between 1 April and 31 August are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 September
- Children turning five years old between 1 September and 31 December are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 January

Admissions to our nursery provision will not in any way increase children's chances of admission to our Primary School. There is **no** automatic admission into the Reception Classes of the School for children attending the nursery. Parents will need to **reapply** for a place in Reception when their child reaches statutory school age.

16. Force Majeure

The Nursery will not be liable if it is delayed or prevented from performing its obligations under this Policy due to force majeure, provided that:

- The Nursery promptly notifies parents in writing of the Force Majeure and its expected duration; and
- The Nursery uses all reasonable endeavours to minimise the effects of that event.

Force Majeure meaning; An event or sequence of events which the Nursery cannot influence or control and which prevent or delay the Nursery from performing its obligations under this policy. These events can include acts of God, war, riot, civil commotion, terrorist attack, compliance with any law or government order (local and/or national), fire or a pandemic of any disease.

17. Data protection

The nursery will act in compliance with the Data Protection Policy when processing personal data.

When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Where personal information is processed, the nursery will ensure it is kept up-to-date and the rights of data subjects are reserved at all times.

18. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Full Governing Board at least annually.