

City of Bradford
Metropolitan
District Council

Nursery Admissions Policy

Introduction

Good quality pre-school experiences are directly related to the better cognitive, social and behavioural development of young children.

The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities, health agencies and other partners to work together to tackle childhood poverty and reduce inequalities between young children aged 0-5. Local authorities are required to take the lead in ensuring sufficiency of childcare and ensure information on early childhood services reaches all parents, especially those who may find it difficult to access them.

The Family Information Service can provide information for families through a helpline, around Early Years Education providers, Children's Centres and a range of outreach activities.

All registered early year's education providers work within the framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Bradford the delivery of a range of national initiatives to support improve outcomes is focussing on supporting and improving links between schools and settings and sharing practice to benefit children's learning opportunities.

The types of settings providing early years foundation stage provision includes:

- Nursery schools
- Nursery classes in primary schools
- Day nurseries
- Pre-schools
- Childminders
- Independent schools

This policy applies to maintained nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools. The Local Authority is responsible for admission to nursery classes in community and voluntary controlled schools and community and voluntary controlled nursery schools. Following the principle of community provision, both Catholic and Church of England Diocesan Authorities advise voluntary aided, and foundation primary schools to operate the Council's admission policy.

Entitlement

1. Every 3 and 4 year old child is entitled to 15 hours free early years education in the term following their 3rd birthday.
2. Parents/carers can be offered some flexibility in how they take up the 15 hours per week but this may depend on agreement, ability and arrangements made with providers. Parents are allowed to split their entitlement between different settings. Parents do not have a right and so will not be allowed to defer allocation of sessions to following weeks or terms.
3. Children will take up places at the start of the term, moving children from one nursery setting to another mid term is not recommended unless there is evidence of exceptional circumstances for doing so, or if the family have moved into the area.
For admission purposes the start of the term is defined as 1st September, 1st January and 1st April
4. Children will be able to purchase extra sessions in the private or voluntary sector once they have taken up the full 15 hour entitlement.

Allocation of Places

If there are more applications for a nursery setting than there are places available, see published list in appendix A, an oversubscription criteria will be used to allocate places.

Children are normally admitted to a nursery class in the academic year following their 3rd birthday. Priority will be given to children that have their 4th birthday between 1st September and 31st August of the academic year of which they are applying for a place.

For primary or all through schools 2 year old Early Years provision, children in this provision will be given priority into the 3/4 year old nursery classes to ensure continuity in their nursery education.

Oversubscription Criteria:

Places in a nursery class will be allocated to children in the following priority order:

1. Looked after children – a child who is looked after by a local authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) at the time an application is made.
2. Children with exceptional grounds, such as special educational, social or emotional needs, as evidenced by a professional from health, social services or education – for example, children:
 - who have a significant medical condition and the child's consultant or paediatrician says they must go to a particular nursery;
 - who have social reasons supported by a relevant professional, for them to attend a particular school nursery class; or
 - children in lone parent families who have no other local family support.
3. Entitled children aged 2 currently in 2 year old Early Years provision within the school.
4. For primary schools with an admission priority area with a nursery class attached, children who already have an older sibling who will be attending the school at the point of admittance and live within the priority area – 'sibling' includes biological brothers and sisters, as well as stepchildren and fostered children who are part of the same family living at the same address, but does **not** include cousins or children from different families sharing the same house. ***Where a family of twins or triplet request admission and there is only one place available, the remaining sibling(s) will also be offered a place above the admission number.***
5. For primary schools with an admission priority area children living within the priority area.
6. Other children living closest to the school's main entrance – this will be determined using the Authority's Graphical Information System process and will be the distance between the child's home address and the school's main entrance measured in a straight line. A child "home address" is the address at which they live permanently. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the parents must decide which address to use for the allocation process. We cannot use the address of a relative or childminder.

Notes:

- (a) **The offer of a place at a nursery class attached to a primary school does not guarantee the child a place in the reception class at the same school. A fresh application will be required in accordance with the criteria for admission to reception classes.**
- (b) A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday. Generally children leave nursery to enter reception in the school year in which they have their fifth birthday and commence full time education before reaching compulsory school age. Only in exceptional circumstances can children remain in the nursery beyond the normal admission date for reception classes, however where a

parent insists, a child may remain in nursery class until the end of the term in which they have their fifth birthday, **however for summer born children doing so will mean parents will need to apply for a year 1 place, rather than reception class, in order to keep the child with their chronological age group.**

- (c) Schools must ensure continuity of provision for any child remaining in their nursery until entering another school at a later date. As some primary schools operate a 2 point entry into reception it should not be assumed that the child will be leaving nursery at the end of the summer term.
- (d) Not all primary schools have a nursery class.
- (e) Due regard must be made to the Council's Continence Guidance 'Promoting Personal Care and Inclusive Practice' in line Equalities Act 2010 when admitting children to a nursery setting.
- (f) Induction and attendance arrangements for a nursery class in a primary school are at the discretion of and decided by each school.
- (g) Transport may only be provided where a child has been directed to a placement as part of an SEN assessment or statement.
- (h) Regular attendance is required to maintain a place in a nursery class, close liaison should take place with health visitors or social workers if there are concerns regarding a child's attendance.
- (i) No place will be allocated without the completion of a Nursery Admission Form. See Appendix B.
- (j) Vacancies arising during a school year should be filled from the school waiting list using the published criteria. Please also refer to point 3 of the 'Entitlement' section page 2.
- (k) If a chosen nursery has no vacancies parents should be advised to contact the Families Information Service for advice on other early years providers and settings.
- (l) There are no statutory appeal entitlements for parents/carers refused a nursery place at a school with a nursery class. Parents should follow the following procedure if they have cause to complain:
 - put their concerns in writing to the school's governing body who will consider the complaint in accordance with their complaints procedure. They will however need to comply with the published rules for admitting children to their nursery class;
 - if not satisfied they should write to Local Authority's Early Years manager who will investigate the complaint;
 - where parents/carers are still not satisfied with the decision they can then
 - complain through the courts or the Local Government Ombudsman.

Nursery Application Form

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| Child Details: | | | |
| First Name(s) | | Surname | |
| Date of Birth | | Gender | |
| Address | | | |
| Postcode | | Telephone No. | |
| Pre School currently attending (if any): | | | |
| Is the child a Looked After Child by the Local Authority? | | Yes/No | If so please attach details/evidence |
| Does the child have a statement of special needs? | | Yes/No | If so please attach details/evidence |
| Does the child have a sibling already attending the nursery or school? | | Yes/No | If so please list sibling(s) names and dates of birth: |

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|---|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Name of Parent/Guardian at home address: | | | |
| Relationship: | | Title: | |
| First Name | | Surname | |
| Home telephone number | | Mobile/work telephone number | |
| Preferred Sessions: | | | |
| Day(s) | Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/ no preference | Hours | Hours per day required: |

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|-------------------------------|--|-------|
| Signature of Parent/Guardian: | | Date: |
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Once you have fully completed this form please hand it in to the school nursery class you require

The information on this form will be used only for the purposes of allocating nursery places. The data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Please note: The offer of a place at a nursery class attached to a primary school does not guarantee the child a place in the reception class at the same school.

A fresh application will be required in accordance with the criteria for admission to reception classes.