



Admissions, attendance and transition Policy

Review date: November 2023
Next review: September 2024

Rationale

We believe that all children will greatly benefit from mixing with other children from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, ages and gender therefore we actively endeavour to ensure that our classes are always balanced in this way. Our aim is to make the admissions, attendance and transition policy fair and easily understood. Within the system there must be flexibility to cater for children and families with exceptional circumstances. We have places for 3 to 4-year olds. There is a mixture of free and paid for provision (see Charging and Remissions Policy).

Hirst Wood Nursery School recognises children's well-being and learning are enhanced by a positive experience of transition from home to school and our community is committed to support children and their families at times of transition having high regard to meeting children's social and emotional needs. This work is reflected in our procedures and practices.

Aims

- To provide high quality integrated education and care for children from three to five years
- To provide a seamless transition from home to school and from nursery to primary school
- To offer flexible arrangements, wherever possible, in order to meet the needs of children and families
- To personalise support for individual children, particularly those who are vulnerable and have special needs
- To ensure that assessment records of children are used effectively at times of transition

Families complete a waiting list form; this can be done over the phone or via an electronic form submission on our website www.hirstwoodnsc.co.uk. Children's names may be put on the waiting list from birth and they may live within any area of Bradford Metropolitan District. Children are normally admitted September, January or March following their third birthday.

The waiting list is organised into terms which reflect the three intakes and children are added to the waiting list the date the completed form is received.

Places are allocated using the following criteria:

- From the waiting list, ensuring that each class has a balance of ages, gender and ethnicity
- Children who have recently moved into the area or who have not had their name down on any waiting list and would otherwise miss out on nursery education may be given special consideration
- Priority may also be given to children with special educational needs or family needs.
- Priority may also be given to children who are looked after or previously looked after by the Local Authority

Oversubscription criteria

In the rare event that the School is full and there are multiple requests for places then priority will be placed on the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the school is named in the Plan, or those who have identified special educational needs.

Priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

- (1) A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear [to the admission authority] to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
- (2) Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of application. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

Free entitlement (NEF – Nursery Education Funded place @ 15 hours per week)

3-4 years

There are two classes for 3 to 4-year-old children – N1/2 Maple and N3 Chestnut.

From the term (January, April or September) after their third birthday all children are entitled to 15 hours of free early education per week, for 38 weeks a year. The free entitlement is usually taken over two-and-a-half days, either Monday and Tuesday 9.00 – 3.15 and Wednesday 9.00 – 11.30 or Wednesday 12.45 – 3.15, Thursday and Friday 9.00 – 3.15.

In certain cases, it may be taken more flexibly but this is at the discretion of the Headteacher and dependant on family circumstances and numbers of children on roll. If a 2½ day place is offered the child will be expected to stay for lunch. Lunchtime is a social experience with children sitting in small groups with an adult where they eat a healthy lunch cooked on site. Conversation and good manners are supported and encouraged. All lunchtime sessions include a hot meal, with before school providing breakfast and after school providing another hot vegetarian meal.

30 hours extended offer

Hirst Wood Nursery School also offers the **free 30 hours** entitlement for 3 to 4-year-old children. Where children are eligible for a free 30-hour nursery place these sessions are offered either 5 days per week (Monday to Friday) 9.00 to 3.15 or 3 days (Monday to Wednesday / Wednesday to Friday) from 7.45 to 5.45.

Children accessing 30-hour places must meet the following HMRC criteria:

- Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family); each expect to earn at least £115 a week or work more than 16 hours at the National Living Wage (unless you became self-employed less than 12 months ago), or

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each expect to earn at least £61.92 a week if you are under 18, £84.80 a week if you are aged 18-20 or £52.80 a week if you are an apprentice (either under 19 or in the first year of your apprenticeship), or
- Both parents are employed but one or both parents is temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity or paternity leave, adoption leave or receiving statutory sick pay, or
- One parent is employed & the other parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring, or one parent is employed & one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits.
- You, and your partner, must also both live in England and neither parent must have an income of more than £100,000 per year. *(Covid 19 addendum - this maximum earnings figure has been increased to £150,000)*

Paid for provision

- Paid for provision is available in the Nursery classrooms for 3 to 5 year olds, either to top up a free early education place (half day or full day), add on a before or after school session or stand alone for children as soon as they reach their 3rd birthday but before they are eligible for the Nursery Education Funded places.
- We do accept children who are eligible for the free education and childcare for 2-year-olds when they reach 3 years of age (the term before they are eligible for Nursery Education Funded place – the term after their third birthday).

- If places are available, children can be admitted at any time of year. If places are not available, the child will be added to the paid provision waiting list for the next admission.
- Paid for provision is also available for children who are registered at Saltaire Primary School and attend our before and after school provision 'The Sunshine Club'.

The Nursery School is open from 07.45 to 17.45 from Monday to Friday during term time. In order that the whole school can come together for staff development and training we will also close for an additional five days throughout the year. Holiday and Training Day dates are available on the website or you may request a paper copy from the office.

Transition

We want children to settle into the provision happily, children thrive in an environment in which they feel safe and secure. Parents/carers must feel confident that their child's experience is as good as it can be. In order to facilitate this, all children are allocated a key person. This adult has a special relationship with the child and their family and is the first point of contact. Families will be advised of their child's key person before they start with us and each child is sent a CHIP (Children's Information Pack) detailing the classroom, the staff, and the wide range of areas of provision.

Children and families are also invited to attend a weekly stay and play session for new starters which runs for the 6 weeks prior to their admission date. This is an ideal way of familiarising children and families with the setting, the staff and each other.

Families are offered a 'getting to know you' appointment prior to children starting nursery.

- During the getting to know you session with the class teacher there is an opportunity to share information about the child and the school. This is the time to complete any medical care plans, share sensitive information and ask /answer any questions.
- New children will be admitted gradually to support a positive and secure transition. In advance the child's basket/ROA/coat peg/name card will be ready. The teaching team will be there to greet the child (using child's name) and parents/carers and will then spend some time supporting the child, reassuring parents/carers and organising the settling-in process. Other staff should be introduced to the child and parents/carers.
- The key person and parents/carers work together to decide when a child may be left unaccompanied for the first time. Each child is treated individually; his/her particular past experiences (e.g. playgroup attendance) and emotional maturity are considered during this important settling in period. Parents/carers are often asked to leave their child for only short periods of time initially.
- All children will be greeted warmly each day. Arrivals and departures are times when information can be shared between home and school. Information from home can be recorded in the child's ROA/file/online learning profile
- Children will be supported at key transition times during the day. When children need to move from one place to another they should be informed what is happening and why and then helped through the process, either verbally or through visual timetables and symbols
- Where children transfer settings before reception year the key-person will ensure all relevant information is passed onto the receiving setting
- At the appropriate time, we will ensure all children have been allocated a primary school. There will be close liaison with the receiving school to ensure staff have the opportunity to visit children here and dates of visits to primary school can be passed onto parents. This is particularly important for children with additional needs and this process will be enhanced,
- Teachers will ensure reports are prepared for the child's new school and the admin team will forward children's personal data onto the individual primary schools via a secure Government web link.

Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial for a child to build relationships, feel happy and secure and make progress in their early education; lack of attendance may well indicate a need for extra support for a family. These guidelines aim to ensure that the correct support is given in order to encourage good attendance.

- Parents/carers must inform us by phone or other means on the first day of absence, giving the reason for absence. If we do not receive a phone call / message on the first day of absence, we will contact you to ascertain the reason for non-attendance.
- Where a child is unwell whilst attending nursery, staff should use their discretion as to the appropriateness of attendance. If staff feel a child needs to go home they should seek approval from the Headteacher (or designate in her absence).
- Teaching teams and admin staff will follow-up any unexplained absences (see Absence Process). If a child has not attended after 4 sessions in total and no valid reason for absence has been obtained a home visit should be undertaken. Separate arrangements may be made for families with an intervention plan or where Children's Social Care are involved. Where a child is on the child protection register attendance is checked daily and any absence is followed-up the same day with a telephone call and a home visit if there is no reply. The social worker will also be informed.
- Where there are persistent concerns about attendance these will be discussed with the Headteacher and the family
- The administrative team will provide half-termly reports to the Headteacher with attendance figures for each class and each child
- Staff should make clear to parents that children should be brought to and collected from the school, by a person 16 years of age or over. If you are happy for a person under 16 years of age, we would ask for your written authorisation. Where a parent/carer cannot collect their child, they must inform a member of staff who will be collecting them and give this person the password stated on a child's admission form. Ideally, persons who will be picking up a child from Nursery will be introduced to their key person in advance.
- If a parent/carer says a child will be absent because of a holiday, the form 'Request for Holiday Absence' should be completed and authorised by the Headteacher. We would ask that these requests are kept to a minimum to ensure consistency of attendance.

For further details on how we support attendance, please refer to our Policy for Children's Attendance, November 2023.