

**Admissions, Attendance & Transition Policy**

Review date: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

**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 children aged 2 to 5 years. 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. This policy is designed to promote fairness and equality for all children starting their educational journey at the nursery

**Aims**

* To make explicit our application process for admission
* To encourage consistent attendance for all children and establish procedures for reporting absence
* To ensure compliance with safeguarding and welfare requirements as outlined in the EYFS framework
* To support positive transition, both to and from Hirst Wood Nursery School
* To explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

**Legal framework**

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

* [Childcare Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21)
* [Childcare Act 2016](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/5)
* [Data Protection Act 2018](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents)
* [The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)](https://www.gov.uk/data-protection)
* [DfE (2021) ‘School Admissions Code’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2)
* [DfE (2022) ‘School Admission Appeals Code’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2)
* [DfE (2025) ‘Early education and childcare’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2/early-education-and-childcare-effective-from-1-april-2025)

**Application process**

The nursery is a Local Authority maintained nursery School. Admissions to nursery provision will not in any way increase children’s chances of admission to any particular primary school; primary schools have their own admissions policies. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time during the year. After completing the registration process, their child will be added to the waiting list. The nursery will maintain regular communication with families on the waiting list, providing updates and formally offering a place as soon as one becomes available. When a place becomes available, parents will receive a formal written offer, which they must either accept or decline. Upon accepting the offer, parents will be required to provide their child’s birth certificate and proof of address. Parents who secure a place will be given a start date for the transition program, allowing both them and their child ample time to settle into the nursery environment. Parents seeking a part-time place will be asked to indicate their preference of attendance, however the School must consider the balance of sessions, so it may not be possible to accommodate all requests. Where places are remaining, later admissions are possible, up to the agreed admissions limit. More information on fees and charges is outlined in the Charging and Remissions Policy.

**Equal opportunities**

The School is committed to implementing a policy that ensures equality of opportunity for all. It aims to create a welcoming and caring environment that embraces and reflects cultural and social diversity, making it accessible to everyone. Admissions to the nursery will be conducted in an open, fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory

manner.

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.

We participate in Bradford’s Fair Access Protocol; 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. 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).

1. 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.

**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.

**Paid for provision**

* Paid for provision is available in the Nursery classrooms for 2 to 5 year olds, either to top up a free early education place (half day or full day), add on additional full or half days, before or after school session.
* If paid for 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.

**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 four weeks
* A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education

**Attendance expectations**

* Whilst attendance at the setting is not mandatory, the School will work closely with parents to promote children’s attendance to ensure that children form good habits for future learning.
* The School will communicate its attendance expectations to parents and ensure that parents are fully informed of why it is important for their child to regularly attend nursery.
* Parents will be encouraged to bring their child to School on a daily basis to ensure that their child has a maintained and consistent routine.
* Parents will be informed that attendance hours should align with their child’s booked sessions unless this has been otherwise agreed.

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.

* 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).
* 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.

**Reporting absences**

For short term absences, parents will be expected to notify School immediately if their child will not be in attendance and provide a reason for this, e.g. illness or family emergency, prior to the commencement of their child’s scheduled attendance. There are various ways to report absence, listed below

1. Ring us on 01274 584368 to speak with a member of staff

2. Email office@hirstwoodnscc.co.uk to let us know that your child is absent & the reason

3. Send a message via the EYLog app to let us know that your child won’t be in School & the reason

Please note that it is our policy to contact parents if you have not advised us that your child will not be attending - we will do this on the first day of unexplained absence. This is not about checking up on families but we have a duty of care to ensure that children are safe. If your child is well enough to return to school, but with prescribed medication from the Doctor we will ask you to complete a Medicines Agreement on EYLog and we will record administration dosages. For prolonged absences, i.e. absences longer than a week, parents will be expected to keep the School updated regularly and may be asked to provide additional information, e.g. a doctor’s note for illness.

If there are periods of prolonged absence with no contact from you, we will ring you daily. If we don’t receive a reply, we will ring your alternative emergency contacts. If we still have no explanation for absence, we will visit you at home - please keep in touch so that this can be avoided.

Teaching teams and admin staff will follow-up any unexplained absences. 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.

**Managing unexplained absences**

In circumstances where a child is not at School and no explanation has been provided, the Headteacher will attempt to contact the child’s parents. If no contact has been made, the nursery may escalate the matter by

contacting the other emergency contacts listed. If an explanation of absence has not been received within 48 hours by phone or mail, the Children’s Service may need to be contacted in accordance with the Children’s Act 2004 and the nursery’s duty to report concerns about a child’s welfare.

The School will always follow up any absences in order to:

* Ascertain the reason for the absence.
* Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
* Identify whether the absence is expected or not.
* Identify whether parents could be offered any support to help them get their child to attend.

If the DSL deems that unexplained prolonged absences or patterns of absence are a safeguarding concern, they will refer the issue to local children’s services or other relevant authorities. In circumstances where a child does not attend their scheduled sessions for a prolonged period of time without good reason, the School may remove the child from the admissions register. Taking such action will be considered on a case-by-case basis and only carried forward when all other options have been exhausted. The School will liaise with parents of children with SEND and make any reasonable adjustments to the setting and the child’s scheduled timetable to ensure their child can safely attend. Hirst Wood Nursery School will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be expected between nursery staff and parents and the nursery will ensure that parents are regularly updated about their child’s early education and development.

**Planned absences**

Parents will be expected to request permission for planned absences, e.g. holidays, by completing an absence notification form or informing the School office. As children in attendance are below the compulsory School age, planned absences will not be formally authorised, however we would ask that you request permission from the Headteacher. If it has been deemed that a parent has not provided a satisfactory reason for their child’s absence, the Headteacher will remind parents of the importance of consistent attendance for their child’s development and request that their child does attend.

Parents will be notified that any extended period of absence may impact their eligibility for government funding.

Parents will be informed well in advance of any planned nursery closures to ensure that alternative childcare arrangements can be made where necessary. For paid for provision, the School will require a minimum of four weeks’ notice, for a holiday during term – a holiday authorisation form must be agreed by the Headteacher. If parents have paid for provision in the period in which they take a holiday, they must give a minimum of four weeks’ notice if they wish to reduce the level of provision their child receives. This requirement applies both before and after provision begins – there is no guarantee that once a paid for place is cancelled by the parent, that it can be reinstated.

**Late arrivals**

Parents will be expected to adhere to drop-off and pick-up times and will be advised that late arrivals can disrupt their child’s routine and group activities. Repeated lateness will be discussed with parents to look at ways in which punctuality could be improved and to put in place the appropriate support to facilitate this. Late pick-ups may incur an additional charge in accordance with the Charging & Remissions Policy.

**Record keeping**

Attendance registers will be maintained accurately and will include:

• Each child’s full name.

• Dates and times of attendance.

• Reasons for absence.

Records will be stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR and will only be retained for the required period.

Records will only be accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. The Headteacher will closely monitor attendance registers and investigate any patterns of unexpected absence and follow this up with parents to seek an explanation.

**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 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 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 “All About Me” 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.
* During the Summer term, Reception teachers from the primary schools to which the children will transfer come in to meet with the children. During the visit, the child’s key worker provides the teacher with information about the child’s progress across all the areas of learning and will spend time talking to the teacher about the child’s social, health and emotional needs.
* Details of children with SEND or particular educational requirements are shared, including their development throughout the year, support given and needed, and details of any other agencies involved. Enhanced transition arrangements are in place for Woodlands children