

# **EARLY YEARS PART-TIME ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**NURSERY SCHOOLS AND  
SCHOOLS WITH NURSERY CLASSES**

## INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the arrangements to be followed for part-time admissions to a designated nursery school or for schools with a nursery class.

All children are entitled to a part-time nursery place the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and local authority policy is that they transfer to full-time schooling during the academic year of their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday (see part-time and full-time admission dates).

For nursery places, each school and their Governing Body is responsible for part-time admissions (non-statutory schooling). However, each school is requested to adhere to this part-time admissions policy. This is to allow schools to carry out their duty to admit part-time children on a consistent and fair basis with other schools and to support the Local Authority to carry out its duty regarding the sufficiency and sustainability of all providers across all sectors.

Admission to full-time schooling is managed by the admissions policy for statutory aged pupils. This policy will either be set by the Local Authority for community/voluntary controlled schools or the Governing Body for voluntary aided/foundation schools.

Below is a brief explanation of the context in which nursery schools and nursery classes operate:

- **Designated Nursery Schools** – they offer part-time education only and admit children from the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The nursery schools have defined catchment areas.
- **Schools with a Nursery Class** – they can admit children from the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday until they reach full-time school age. A nursery class will include only part-time children. Some schools operate a Foundation Stage Unit where both part-time and full-time children are based together.

This policy covers the following:

- Entitlement to a part-time nursery place
- Part-time and full-time admission dates
- Process for allocating part-time places
- Part-time admissions criteria to be applied when there are more applications than places available
- The purpose of a school's designated nursery number
- Funding for part-time admissions

- Compliance with the Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage.

**Any school that operates a part-time policy outside of this policy must have written exemption from Wakefield Local Authority's Childcare and Market Development Programme.**

## **ENTITLEMENT TO A PART-TIME NURSERY PLACE**

The Local Authority guarantees a part-time place for all 3 and 4 year olds within the District. This place will not always be within the maintained sector and it may not always be at the local school or a parent's preferred choice. Where a place is not available at the chosen school, parents should be directed to contact the Local Authority's Families Information Service by telephoning 0800 5878042 or email [FIS@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:FIS@wakefield.gov.uk)

The free part-time entitlement is for 12 ½ hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. By September 2010, parents will be entitled to 15 hours per week and in some cases the free entitlement could be available flexibly over a minimum of 3 days per week.

Parents must be made aware that there is no guarantee that a child, who is admitted to a school's nursery class, will be admitted to the school full-time. Parents of children in nursery classes must complete an Admissions Preference Form in order to request a full-time place in school, because the admissions criteria have to be applied afresh to determine which school has places. Schools must not put pressure on parents for their child to attend nursery, in order to gain a full-time place at the school.

## **PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME ADMISSION DATES**

The earliest a child can be admitted to nursery education is the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

No child should ever be admitted prior to the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday unless there are very exceptional circumstances, which must be discussed with the Childcare and Market Development Programme Manager, initially. Each case would be considered on its own merit taking into account the views of the appropriate professionals, such as the Educational Psychology Service, Social Workers etc and a decision would be made by the Local Authority as to whether it would be appropriate to admit the child prior to the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

Examples of exceptional circumstances are:

- A child with a complex disability;
- A child involved in an active Child Protection Plan where there is no suitable age appropriate provision within the local area that could be accessed.

The part-time admission dates are:

<b>Three Year Olds Born Between</b>	<b>Month of Part-time Admission</b>	<b>Term of Part-time Admission</b>
1 April - 31 August	September	Autumn
1 Sept - 31 Dec	January	Spring
1 Jan - 31 March	after Easter	Summer

April-born children must be admitted part-time in the following September and not after Easter regardless of when Easter falls.

For each date of birth range the table below states the term each child becomes eligible for nursery education (term after 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday) and at what age they are deemed to be for each term until they reach the end of the reception year.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date of Birth Range</b>		
	<b>1 Sept to 31 Dec</b>	<b>1 Jan to 31 March</b>	<b>1 April to 31 Aug</b>
<b>Autumn</b>			
<b>Spring</b>	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)		
<b>Summer</b>	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)	
<b>Autumn</b>	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)
<b>Spring</b>	Age 4 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)
<b>Summer</b>	Age 4 – P/T (nursery)	Age 4 – P/T (nursery)	Age 3 – P/T (nursery)
<b>Autumn</b>	Age 4 – F/T (reception)	Age 4 - F/T (reception)	Age 4 – P/T (nursery)
<b>Spring</b>	Age 5 – STAT (reception)	Age 4 – F/T (reception)	Age 4 – F/T (reception)
<b>Summer</b>	Age 5 – STAT (reception)	Age 5 – STAT (reception)	Age 4 – F/T (reception)

**P/T = part-time      F/T = full-time      STAT = statutory school age**

- Children born between 1 September and 31 December receive 5 terms part-time and 1 term full-time prior to reaching statutory school age.
- Children born between 1 January and 31 March receive 4 terms part-time and 2 terms full-time prior to reaching statutory school age.
- Children born between 1 April and 31 August receive 4 terms part-time and 2 terms full-time prior to reaching statutory school age.

## **ALLOCATING PART-TIME PLACES**

Schools that are eligible to admit children on a part-time basis are responsible for administering part-time admissions. Parents must contact schools directly when applying for a part-time nursery place. Each school should then allocate places in accordance with the Local Authority's part-time admission criteria.

Each school should have their own application form for part-time admissions, which all parents applying for a part-time place at the school must complete and sign.

Schools must identify a date, each term, when part-time admissions for the following term will be allocated. Parents should be notified in writing when a part-time place will be available. Parents should be requested to confirm that they accept the offer of a part-time place. Following notification that a place is available, a child should be expected to take up the place within 2 weeks of the expected start date. If the child has not taken up the place after 2 weeks and a satisfactory explanation has not been provided to the Headteacher then the offer of a part-time place can be removed.

It is considered good practice for each school to record evidence to verify a child's date of birth and identity. Examples are a birth certificate, or passport. Parents should also be asked to provide valid proof that the address given for the child is the address at which they are ordinarily resident. Parents should be asked to sign the application form stating that all of the information provided is correct.

The home address for each child is the permanent address of the parents/carers and their child. That is taken to be the address of the parent/carer who receives child benefit for the child and is assumed to be the address where the child spends the majority of the time, even if he or she lives at a different address for some days of the week.

If a child is refused a part-time nursery place then the parent/carer may appeal to a committee of governors. Governors should adhere to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and they cannot admit children over their designated nursery number. Therefore, the only grounds for upholding an appeal should be where a parent demonstrates that an error has been made by the school, when processing the application that may have resulted in a place being offered to another child.

## **PART-TIME ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

Where a school receives more applications than places available then children should be admitted in the following order:

- 1 Children under special educational needs statutory assessment or with a statement of special educational needs (which names the school);
- 2 Children in public care (Looked After Children);
- 3 Children who live in the school's catchment area or parish area, who have brothers or sisters attending the school at the time of admission;
- 4 Other children who live in the school's catchment area;
- 5 Children who live outside the school's catchment area but have brothers or sisters in attendance at the school;

## 6 Other children by age order (admitting eldest first).

Brothers and sisters are defined as children with brothers or sisters (including step-brothers or sisters) living at the same address, in attendance at the same school or a school on the same site, on the date of admission.

Where any criterion category is over subscribed then children within that category should be admitted in an age order basis (eldest first).

All voluntary aided and foundation (trust) schools should admit part-time children following their own full-time admissions criteria as in the published Primary Guide for Parents.

Children who reside outside of the Wakefield District should be considered alongside all other children.

A school providing wrap-around-care must not include this in the admissions criteria. A parent must not be expected to purchase additional services in order to gain a part-time place at the school.

Where required the local authority will provide support to a school in applying the part-time admissions criteria.

## **NURSERY NUMBER**

Each school has a designated nursery number, which must be agreed by the Local Authority and must meet standards as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework. The nursery number is based on available space and facilities. Requests for a change to a school's designated nursery number will be considered by the Local Authority's School Place Planning Group, which will take into account issues relating to the Local Authority's duty to manage the sufficiency and sustainability of the childcare market.

Where a school exceeds this limit they are in breach of health and safety and Ofsted regulations.

Most schools' nursery numbers are based on multiples of 1:13 in line with the staffing ratios. Therefore, if a school has a nursery number of 26 fte (full-time equivalent) then a school can admit a maximum of 52 children and this would be 26 in the morning and 26 in the afternoon session.

Once a designated nursery number has been reached, only a child that has a statement of special educational needs that names the school or is under statutory assessment can be admitted - thus exceeding the school's nursery size. Where this occurs, the school must contact the Local Authority immediately to discuss ways to resolve issues relating to Ofsted regulations and compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

## **FUNDING FOR PART-TIME ADMISSIONS**

Funding for children to access their free nursery entitlement (prior to reaching statutory school age) is based on the factors and criteria set out in the Wakefield Local Funding Formula. This is reviewed on an annual basis prior to the April of each year.

Where children being admitted to nursery prior to the term following their 3rd birthday are agreed by the Local Authority due to there being exceptional circumstances then funding will be identified within the existing children's budget.

## **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

Each school and their Governing Body must adhere to the Government's Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and The Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which came into affect from 1 September 2008.

This statutory framework sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) or [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/eyfs](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/eyfs)