

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

NURSERY ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY FOR WESTCLIFFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOLS WITH NURSERY CLASSES ONLY

FOR SCHOOLS WITH DELEGATED POWERS

1. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for implementing and adhering to this policy. The policy could be referred to the relevant committee with delegated powers. The terms of reference for governors in applying the admissions policy are:-

- to apply the criteria of the policy in determining the admissions of pupils into the nursery.
- to observe and implement all statutory and early years code of practice requirements.
- to take advice from the head teacher in the exercise of their duties.

2. PRINCIPLES

- The governing body seeks to work in partnership with the local authority and other providers.
- The governing body is committed to this admissions policy, which has been established following consultation, and to its operation in a fair and equitable manner.
- The governing body aims to maintain and improve the quality of early education provided for nursery pupils by having an admissions policy, which supports the school's improvement planning process.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that entry to the nursery is fair to all parents and pupils and not detrimental to other providers in all sectors (maintained, private and voluntary).

3. CONSULTATION AND REVIEW

The governing body will consult with members of staff, parents and other providers and with the local authority (LA) when considering any review of nursery provision. Such consultation will follow the governing body's adopted procedure on consultation.

4. PRINCIPLES OF DELIVERY AS OUTLINED WITH THE STATUTORY CODE OF PRACTICE

- 4.1 From September 2010 all school nurseries or nursery classes are required to deliver 15 hours of flexible free nursery education per week.
- 4.2 Parents must be consulted as to ascertain the degree of flexibility they would need but it is recognised that operational limitations may impact on what can be practically offered by the school.
- 4.3 The flexibility within school has the following restrictions in place:
 - 15 hours over a minimum of three days for 38 weeks of the year
 - no session can be of less than two and a half hours
 - maximum of eight hours in any one day in line with school opening times
 - with a maximum of 12 ½ hours over two days
 - the LA will not fund any hours beyond the 15 hour free entitlement
 - schools cannot charge for additional hours at this present time
- 4.4 After discussion, and once a parent has accepted a place, the school must have a signed contract in place with the parent/carer and is not obliged to change the times of the sessions. A copy of this contract must be sent to the Contract Monitoring Officer of the LA in order to ensure the funding is transferred to the school.
- 4.5 Parents are free to take up as much or as little of the 15 hour entitlement as they wish and have the right to split the entitlement with one other provider. This could be in the maintained, private (day nursery or childminder) or voluntary sector in North Lincolnshire.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES IN THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY PRACTICE

- 5.1 To provide families with a range of high quality, flexible childcare provision and options which enable parents/carers to meet their early learning and care needs for the child.
- 5.2 The quality of nursery provision is based on the government's statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage and the practice guidance which came into effect from September 2008. The framework sets the standards for children from birth to five years copies of which can be accessed www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications.
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/publications/0/1747/>.
- 5.3 The free 15 hour entitlement can include lunchtime as long as this is specifically planned to support the child's overall learning and development. Parents must be given the option to pay for a meal or bring a packed lunch. If a child attends for at least one hour before and one hour after the lunch break there is an entitlement to a free school meal if the child is eligible.
- 5.4 A good quality learning environment based on self initiated play and stimulating learning experiences is expected but there are welfare implications for children. Provision for resting, quiet and relaxation must be available within the nursery area.
- 5.5 Where a child is accessing the entitlement across two settings a formal partnership agreement should be in place which covers sharing information, fees and transportation arrangements. A proforma for this is available from the LA see APPENDIX 2

6. ENTITLEMENT

- 6.1 Children will be admitted to the nursery for free nursery education on the relevant term following their third birthday and will be able to remain until they are of statutory school age. No child under three years will be admitted.
- 6.2 The free entitlement must be completely free with no condition on access e.g. no compulsory uniform costs.

7. ADMISSION DATES

If the child is born between:	he/she is eligible for a free place from:
1 April and 31 August	1 September following third birthday
1 September and 31 December	1 January following third birthday
1 January and 31 March	1 April following third birthday

Mid term admissions can only take place in exceptional circumstances:

- if a child/parent moves house in the claim period
- if the child's primary carer(s) changes in the claim period
- where a sibling moves school and the child is able to attend nearby flexible free entitlement (FFE) provision
- where loss of employment affects the childcare place, including maternity leave
- change in family circumstances e.g. bereavement, separation, new sibling
- critical health and safety issues e.g. safeguarding, domestic violence
- referrals from traveller service
- appropriate consideration will be given to children from forces families

Schools across North Lincolnshire have now implemented a one point entry into reception classes. This entry is in September each year. In order to qualify for a place in a reception class the child must be four years old on 1 September in the year in which they start school.

8. ALLOCATION OF NURSERY PLACES

- 8.1 The policy is designed to work alongside the admissions policy already in place for all stages of education within North Lincolnshire to ensure smooth transition throughout the phases. **It is important to note that the allocation of a nursery place in a school does not automatically guarantee a place in reception.**
- 8.2 **Where schools have more applications than places the following factors will be taken into account in priority order when deciding which pupils will be allocated nursery places.**

Factor 1

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

In accordance with the code of practice for special educational needs, the allocation of nursery places for pupils with a statement of special educational needs will take place before the allocation of other places. Where a school is named in a child's statement the school has a duty to admit the pupil.

Factor 2

Children in care

The definition of a 'child in care' is a person under the age of 18 who is in the care of, or is provided with accommodation by, a local authority, acting in its social services capacity, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, by agreement with the parents or is the subject of a relevant court order under Part IV of the Children Act 1989. Children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements (respite care) are excluded.

Factor 3

Children who live in the school's designated catchment area.

Information about catchment areas can be obtained from the North Lincolnshire website or the family information service telephone 01724 296629. For admission purposes, the home address is where a child usually lives with their parent or carer and this defines the catchment area.

Factor 4

Children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of their admission.

Included in this factor are siblings (step brothers and sisters and half brothers and sisters) living at the same address and who will be attending the school at the expected time of admission.

Factor 5

Date of Birth

Admission will be given to the oldest children requesting places within the catchment area.

Factor 6

Children who live closest to the school.

The distance will be determined by measuring the shortest available route using the public road network from the pupil's home to the main school gate, as determined by the LA. The distance will be measured by using a computerized geographical information system (GIS). Priority will be given to those living nearest to the school using this system. Pupils living in flats where the distance measures the same, priority will be given in ascending order of flat number/letter/floor.

Tie Breakers

Where the offer of a place would lead to oversubscription under any of the above factors, places will be allocated by reference to subsequent factors in order. In exceptional circumstances where it has not been possible to decide between applications, because they have the same distance measurements, the place will be allocated by drawing lots and will be independently verified.

Waiting Lists

A waiting list can be established for all over-subscribed schools. Pupils will automatically be put on the waiting list.

9. PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 9.1 Staffing ratios 1:13 during session times and 1:8 during the lunch periods (see APPENDIX 3 for examples of ratios and qualifications of staff).
- 9.2 Examples of flexibility are:
 - a mixture of morning or afternoon sessions
 - two x six hour days (including lunch) and one additional three hour session
 - one x eight hour day plus two x three and a half hour sessions on different days
 - three x five hour session

These sessions may be created through shared care with Do Re Mi nursery.

- 9.3 Planning for subsequent terms with regard to offering of places, staffing and procedure implications needs to be completed by at least three weeks before the end of term in order for effective transition to be undertaken.
- 9.4 It is good practice to ensure key information is transferred between settings as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance. This would include information related to a child with additional special educational needs.
- 9.5 Home visits and pre-setting visits are actively encouraged.
- 9.6 Schools should minimise the disruption to normal opening periods to ensure that the 38 weeks provision is adhered to. Parents should be given advanced warning of any changes (a minimum of four weeks) to ensure other childcare arrangements can be made.
- 9.7 The continence policy applies to nursery classes and no child can be discriminated against because of continence issues.

10. FUNDING

- 10.1 Funding to schools for the free entitlement is based on the early years single funding formula. Schools will be funded for each hour or half hour that a child attends within the parameters of the flexible framework. The LA funds providers per hour receiving a base rate per hour per child plus supplements for deprivation, flexibility, quality and sufficiency.
- 10.2 Parents are free to take up as much or as little of the 15 hour entitlement as they wish but funding will only be given for the actual hours a child attends.

CHILDCARE ACT 2006

The Childcare Act has four parts: duties on local authorities in England (Part 1), duties on local authorities in Wales (Part 2), regulation and inspection arrangements for childcare providers in England (Part 3) and general provisions (Part 4). Key provisions are as follows.

Sections 1-5 require local authorities and their NHS and Jobcentre Plus partners to work together to improve the outcomes of all children up to five and reduce inequalities between them, by ensuring early childhood services are integrated to maximise access and benefits to families - underpinning a Sure Start Children's Centre for every community

- The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. Sure Start Children's Centres (SSCCs) are now established in law alongside schools and hospitals
- Duties include
 - LAs establishing and running SSCCs
 - PCTs and JCP working together as 'relevant partners' delivering early childhood services through SSCCs
 - This links with their duty to plan and review the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) as partners within the Children's Trust Board

Sections 6, 8-11 & 13 require local authorities to assess the local childcare market and to secure sufficient childcare for working parents. Childcare will only be deemed sufficient if it meets the needs of the community in general and in particular those families on lower incomes and those with disabled children. Local authorities take the strategic lead in their local childcare market, planning, supporting and commissioning childcare. Local authorities will not be expected to provide childcare direct but will be expected to work with local private, voluntary and independent sector providers to meet local need.

Section 7 re-enacts the duty for local authorities to secure a free minimum amount of early learning and care for all three and four year olds whose parents want it.

Section 12 extends the existing duty to provide information to parents, to ensure parents and prospective parents can access the full range of information they may need for their children right through to their 20th birthday. Local authorities will be required to ensure that this service is available to all parents and that it is pro-active in reaching those parents who might otherwise have difficulty accessing the information service.

Sections 39-48 introduce the early years foundation stage, which will build on and bring together the existing birth to three matters, foundation stage and national standards for day care and childminding. This new framework will support providers in delivering quality integrated early education and care for children from birth to age five.

Sections 31-38 & 49-98 reform and simplify the framework for the regulation of childcare and early education to reduce bureaucracy and focus on raising quality and standards. All providers caring for children up to age five will be required to register on the early years register and deliver the early years foundation stage (unless exceptionally exempted). Childcare settings providing for school age children will be judged against a streamlined set of Ofsted childcare register standards. These criteria will be compulsory for all settings caring for children under eight. Other providers may join the register on a voluntary basis.

Sections 99-101 allow for the collection of information about young children to inform funding and support the local authority duties under the act.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

This document provides guidance for providers who are developing a partnership agreement to encourage best practice in transition and joint working around meeting the individual needs and progression of children.

In order to form an agreement there needs to be a recognised commitment to partnership working from the school staff and governing body and the private and voluntary sector staff, managers and committee members.

There are a number of common values on which true partnership is built such as:

- respect
- communication
- understanding
- trust
- equality

The EYFS Statutory Guidance states – ‘Where children receive education and care in more than one setting, practitioners must ensure continuity and coherence by sharing relevant information with each other and parents. This will ensure that the best interests of the child are met’ (p10¹).

A partnership agreement must be in place:

- where providers share the integrated care and early learning of a child
- to support transition between different providers.

Recommended Content

Suggested heading – An agreement between EYFS providers

Purpose of agreement

This agreement sets the parameters for working together in partnership to ensure continuity and coherence in sharing of information to ensure the best interests of the child are met.

Things to consider which would contribute to a stronger more effective partnership:

- agree how (type of format), frequency (weekly/monthly) and who is responsible for the transference of information
- how the EYFS standards will be delivered across the providers to achieve good practice
- consistent assessment procedures
- admission arrangements. In particular, admissions for the subsequent term need to be complete 3 weeks before the end of the previous term
- joint training/planning time
- coordinated home visits
- opportunities to meet children in their current provision
- ‘getting to know you’ sessions for children and staff
- shared special events/trips
- access to ideas, information and resources
- shared policies and procedures
- EYFS profile must be completed by the provider where the child spends the majority of time between 8 am and 6 pm.

¹ Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, May 2008, P.10 1.16 Creating a framework for partnership working

- sharing information to assist in early identification of any issues/concerns or special needs
- shared understanding and awareness about what relevant information about the child should be shared e.g. if a child bumps their head at school. The parent should be informed however if the child attends a subsequent carer after school the carer should be informed
- sharing of nursery/school termly planners to inform both parents and carers of the child's day and to initiate discussion with the child regarding their day
- appropriate written parental permissions in place to enable relevant information sharing
- promotion of partnership working to parents/carers. For example sharing information about each other's provision to meet the child's needs and give parents/carers the opportunity to make an informed choice.
- an understanding of the parameters within which people have to work. For example Ofsted requirements, EYFS and raising of attainment levels as indicated by the FSP results

Parents'/Carers' Responsibilities

Parents should be encouraged to provide details of attendance at more than one setting.

Parents need to agree the transport arrangements between providers and ensure that both parties are fully informed to safeguard the best interests of their child.

Fees are a confidential matter between parents/carers and each individual provider.

Review date:

Provider Name: (Name of provision not individual)

Providers Representatives Signature:

Date:

One agreement can be signed by all partners rather than creating separate agreements for each partner.

STAFFING

Department for Education (DfE) legislation requires that a qualified teacher should be present during the delivery of the Early Years Education entitlement in local authority (LA) nursery classes. A staff ratio of 1:13 needs to be in place at all times, in LA settings, including lunchtimes when this forms part of the entitlement.

If a qualified teacher is not present:

- 1:8 ratio is the ratio
- suitably qualified staff at level three e.g. early years practitioner (EYP) must be present see table below
- a list of valid qualifications has been provided previously but a copy can be obtained from <http://qualificationslist.cwdcouncil.org.uk>

Number of children	Staffing requirements
1-8	• 1 level 3 • Another adult in case of emergencies • Good practice 2 staff members
9-16	• 1 level 3 • 1 level 2
17-24	• 1 level 3 • 1 other (minimum level 2) • 1 other unqualified
25-32	• 1 level 3 • 2 others (minimum level 2) • 1 unqualified
33-41	• 1 level 3 • 2 level 2 • 2 unqualified