



Cherry Tree Hill Primary School

# **NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**Data will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set  
out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation**

**Cherry Tree Hill Primary School  
Admissions Policy for Nursery Children**

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## **Statement of intent**

Cherry Tree Hill Primary School operates a nursery for three and four year olds. The Nursery aims to provide a high quality nursery experience for all children that aids a smooth transition into the next phase of education. The governing board is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the nursery's Nursery Admissions Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the nursery.

## **SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

At Cherry Tree Hill Primary School, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our pupils. We believe that every child has the right to learn and thrive in a safe and secure environment. Our school policies and procedures are designed to promote the welfare of our pupils and protect them from harm.

We follow the statutory guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023, as well as any other relevant legislation and local safeguarding arrangements. Our staff receive regular training on safeguarding practises and are aware of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting any concerns.

Our school has designated safeguarding leads who are responsible for coordinating safeguarding efforts, providing support and advice to staff, and liaising with external agencies when necessary. They are the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

We have robust procedures in place for handling safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors. All allegations are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated in accordance with our safeguarding policies and procedures.

We promote a culture of openness and encourage pupils and parents to speak up if they have any concerns about their safety or the well-being of others. We have clear reporting systems in place to ensure that all concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation and emerging safeguarding issues. They are easily accessible to all staff, pupils, parents, and carers, and are available on our school website.

We work under the guidance of Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and liaise closely with a range of specialist and locality services to ensure the best and safest outcomes for our families.

We work in partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all our pupils. Together, we strive to protect our pupils and families from harm and provide them with the best possible opportunities to succeed. If you have any safeguarding concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact our designated safeguarding leads or any member of our staff. Together, we can ensure the well-being and safety of all our pupils.

## 1. Legal framework

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

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2021) 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2022 to 2023'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Primary Transition Policy
- Data Protection Policy

## 2. Application process

### 2.1. Waiting List

Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time following their child's birth, either by contacting the school office or completing an online interest form found on our website. These children will be entered on a waiting list to be considered for a place when they reach the appropriate age. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available for the child. The date on which a child was added to the waiting list will not be taken into consideration when places are offered.

### 2.2. Offering Places

The point of entry to the nursery will be in September each year. Places for the September entry will be offered during the preceding Summer term to children who will be three by 31st August of that year. If there are more children on the waiting list than places available, priority will be given by the Governors in line with the Oversubscription Criteria – see section 2.3. Places will be offered by contacting parents by letter or telephone using the contact details provided. If no response is received within 4 weeks of making the offer, the place may be offered to another child on the waiting list.

### 2.3. Oversubscription Criteria for Three and Four Year Olds

1. *Children who are 'Looked after' in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989.*
2. *Children who are on the Child Protection Register and live in the normal area served by the school.*
3. *Children who are living in the normal catchment area of the school and have siblings of compulsory school age attending the school at the time of admission.*

*4. Children where there is outside agency involvement and live in the normal catchment area served by the school.*

*5. Children from the normal catchment area of the school.*

*6. Children from the wider area of the school order who have siblings attending school at the time of admission.*

*7. Children from the wider area of the school.*

If there are more children within a category when there are places available, places will be allocated in date of birth order, starting with the oldest child.

Children who have an EHC plan that names the nursery are admitted before the oversubscription criteria is applied. Children with an EHC plan that does not name the nursery will be referred to the nursery's admissions manager to determine an appropriate place, in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol.

### 3. Eligibility for 30 hours childcare

Parents of children aged three and four must meet one of the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare:

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period – i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they do not need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)
- The parent is seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
- One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
- One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
- If a non-European Economic Area national, the parent has recourse to public funds

Parents should check their own eligibility for the scheme using the government's [Childcare Choices](#) website or [childcare calculator](#). If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

Parents can only start claiming their 30 hours funded childcare the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC. For this reason, parents are urged to apply as soon as possible. If eligible, parents must provide the nursery with their unique code to confirm they are eligible for the scheme, together with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth. As the free childcare cannot be claimed until the code has been verified, parents should provide the nursery with this information as soon as possible in order to avoid delay. Parents will be prompted every three months by HMRC to reconfirm that they remain eligible for free childcare.

The LA will audit the eligibility codes at six points during the year to identify any parents who have fallen out of free childcare eligibility. The LA will notify the nursery as soon as possible where parents have fallen out of their eligibility. The nursery will then notify parents.

If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a short period of time. If a parent falls into their grace period before their child has started a 30-hour place, they should not take up their 30-hour place. The grace period will not continue once a child has reached compulsory school age. Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.

A parent who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will have their free childcare funded until the end of that funding block (i.e. 31 March, 31 August, 31 December) or for as long as their child remains under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. A parent who becomes ineligible in the latter half of the funding block (i.e. up to the last day of the funding block) will be funded until the end of the following funding block or for as long as their child remains under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. If a parent becomes ineligible for the 30 hours free childcare, they will still be entitled to 15 hours of funded care for their child.

Other information related to the 30 hours free childcare scheme can be found in the nursery's Nursery Fees Policy.

#### **4. Extension of 30 hours to children in foster care**

Children in foster care are also eligible for the additional hours, provided that they meet all of the following criteria:

1. Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision-making;
2. That, in single parent foster families, the foster parent engages in paid work outside their role as a foster parent; and
3. In two parent foster families, both individuals engage in paid work outside their role as a foster parent

In accordance with criteria 3, if one individual is not a foster parent, then they must be in qualifying paid work and earn a minimum of the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage to be eligible. There is no requirement on the type of work or number of hours that a foster parent must work in order to access the 30 hours, and there is no minimum earnings limit – although they must be engaging in paid work. Children in foster care will continue to be eligible for the universal 15 hours regardless of the working status of their foster parents. There is no requirement to access the full 30 hours if this is not necessary.

To apply for the additional hours, foster parents must apply directly to the LA – there is no requirement to apply via the childcare service. When initiating an application, foster parents are required to inform the child's social worker. A designated individual, as determined by the LA, will counter-sign the foster parent's application to confirm eligibility. This may be, for example:

- The child's social worker
- Supervising social worker
- An independent reviewing officer appointed by the LA to protect the child's interests throughout the care planning process.

In some cases, the LA may deem it appropriate for the application not to have a second signature – this will be agreed between the LA and foster parent before the application is made. The signed form (by the parent only) will be sent directly to the contact within the LA who is responsible for issuing codes.

The LA has the flexibility to develop a policy and procedure for establishing the eligibility of children in foster care. Any process developed will be proportionate, flexible and aligned with existing process as far as possible, with the focus being ensuring consistency with a child's specific care plan.

All foster parents will have access to the LA's locally agreed policies and procedures for determining eligibility. In particular, foster parents will be provided with the following:

- The role of the designated person
- Who the designated person is and how to contact them
- What evidence the foster parents should be expected to provide
- How the foster parent should pass the form to the LA
- How/if the evidence will be stored once the form is completed and approved
- The timeframe by which the designated person will response to any application – this will be no later than four weeks from the receipt of the application

Where the LA determines that an application for the additional hours is not consistent with a child's care plan, they will not be eligible, regardless of whether parents satisfy the other criteria outlined at the start of this section.

Where an application is approved, details will be entered onto the eligibility checking system where a record will be created for the child. Once the code is generated, this will be sent to parents via email and the child's social worker will be informed that the code has been issued. Once foster parents have received the code, the process is the same as that outlined in the [Eligibility for 30 hours childcare](#) section of this policy.

Foster parents will be required to re-confirm their eligibility every three months and will be prompted in advance of the deadline. The LA is free to determine the exact evidence required from foster parents to re-confirm eligibility, which will be made clear to parents during the initial application. At a minimum, the LA will be satisfied that:

- The placement is still ongoing;
- Accessing the additional hours is still consistent with the child's care plan; and
- The foster parents are still engaging in paid work outside their role as a foster parent.

If a foster parent is unhappy about the decision made by the LA, they should follow the LA's complaints process and contact the child's social worker.

## 5. Application timetable

A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time using the online form.

Formal applications for nursery places must be made as follows:

- For places in the Autumn term – 28/03/2024

Acceptance and non-acceptance letters are sent out during the Summer term via email.

Where places are remaining, later admissions are possible, up to the agreed admissions limit.

Places offered are available to the child from the date the place is offered, until 31 August following their fourth birthday.

The LA will consider securing additional free hours for parents who have applied or re-confirmed by the deadline, but receive their valid 30 hours eligibility code after the beginning of the term, up to the dates set out below:

- Application/re-confirmation by 31 August – code start date between 1 - 14 September
- Application/re-confirmation by 31 December – code start date between 1 - 14 January
- Application/re-confirmation by 31 March – code start date between 1 - 14 April

The LA is not required to secure additional free hours where the parent has applied after 31 August, 31 December or 31 March, or for any codes issued after the dates outlined above.

## 6. 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
- A family registering their child at two maintained settings

## 7. Delayed starts and withdrawn places

Following receipt of a registration form, the start date can only be delayed once, and only be delayed by one month, before the child's reserved place will be open to others and the child's name added back onto the waiting list.

## 8. Non-attendance

Parents must inform the nursery as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend for the whole or part of a day when they are due to attend. All parents sign a contract when offered a place to state that they will bring their children for the agreed hours.

## 9. 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.

Parents may appeal to the SEND tribunal against the provision named by the authority in the EHC plan.

## 10. Admission to Reception

Children who attend the Nursery do not have an automatic place in the Reception classes at Cherry Tree Hill Primary School and should apply through Derby City central admissions. The application period for reception admissions is normally during the Autumn term following the child's 3rd birthday. It is the responsibility of the parents to apply for a school place. See the School Admission Policy for more details.

## 11. Transition arrangements

Cherry Tree Hill Primary School aim to ensure a smooth transition between Nurseries, or between Nursery and Reception class, whichever nursery or school the child attends. Parents are invited to visit the school / nursery prior to the transition. Nursery children and their parents will be invited to visit the nursery during the summer term before they start in September. Reception children will be invited to attend transition visits with their class teacher during the summer term. A photograph book displaying aspects of the school is used to prepare children for their transition. During the Summer term, many transition activities take place, including home visits, Nursery visits and professional discussions with key workers. 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. Separate transition meetings are held for children with EHC plans, involving all agencies, including visits to new settings with staff.

## 12. Data protection

The nursery will act in compliance with the Data Protection Policy when processing personal data.

When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Where personal information is processed, the nursery will ensure it is kept up-to-date and the LA will ensure that the rights of data subjects are reserved at all times.