

**Policy for Admission  
To  
Local Authority  
Nursery Schools  
2011/12**

## **Introduction**

Since September 1997 there has been a countywide admissions policy for community nursery schools and classes. This policy was determined by the County Council and is administered by schools. This has ensured that admissions are based on common principles. Following consultation in 2010 with Headteachers of Freestanding Nursery Schools, it was agreed that from 2011/12 a separate policy would be produced for these establishments. This new policy is the same as the admissions policy for nursery classes and attached nursery schools in every way except that it removes the requirement for a catchment area. Criteria for allocating places are therefore slightly different.

Oxfordshire community and voluntary controlled schools offer F1 children a full time place for the whole of the reception year. Nursery Schools will need to consider this carefully in planning the organisation of their admissions, and for children who defer entry to school.

## **Terminology**

There are 3 years of funded early education entitlement in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

Reception    The year children become 5 (**F1**)

Nursery        (**F2** – the year children become 4 and **F3** the year children become 3)

‘Year’ – refers to the academic year (September to August)

## **Eligibility Terms**

**Note: Funding entitlement starts from the term after the child’s 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday**

Autumn Term: September 1<sup>st</sup>-December 31<sup>st</sup>

Spring Term: January 1<sup>st</sup>-March 31<sup>st</sup>

Summer Term: April 1<sup>st</sup>-August 31<sup>st</sup>

# **POLICY FOR NURSERY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS IN OXFORDSHIRE**

## **(Freestanding Nursery Schools)**

1. The County Council has devolved rather than delegated the administration of admissions to Nursery Schools. Therefore, in the event of a complaint the final responsibility and decision for admissions to voluntary controlled and community Nursery Schools rests with the County Council.
2. Nursery Schools must offer places at least up to the published capacity, and in so doing must take account of County Council guidance on curriculum quality and staffing ratios. Nursery Schools must not operate with empty places in any term if they have eligible children on the continued interest list.
3. Admissions will normally be three times a year (September, January, April) as long as places are available.
4. Nursery Schools have a set number of planned places. Any changes to these should be discussed with and agreed by the Service Manager for Admissions. Requests will be considered in the context of the development of children's centres and extended services, including integrated childcare. Those offering childcare to younger children should develop their overall admissions policies with regard to the criteria in this policy to ensure maximum coherence and continuity for children attending this provision.
5. The minimum entitlement to funded nursery education is 15 hours per week, from the term after the child's third birthday (based on a 3-term year). Nursery Schools may offer the 15 hours in a number of ways and should explore and work towards a more flexible offer in consultation with parents.
6. Parents should be notified that a place is available for their child no later than a term in advance (3 term year). They should be reminded that acceptance of a place will represent the child's full early education entitlement and the free hours cannot be split with a private or voluntary sector provider. This will be reviewed in the next policy.
7. Copies of the Nursery School's prospectus should be available on request to parents and to outside agencies. The prospectus should state the opening times of the nursery and set out its educational aims and provision. The prospectus should also set out the County Council's criteria for allocating nursery places when more applications are received than there are places available, as set out in this document (paragraph 8).

8. When more applications are received than there are places available, the following County Council criteria must be applied. These closely follow the admissions criteria for entry to County primary schools. Headteachers should apply the criteria by considering all eligible children from each priority category in turn until all the available places have been allocated. **Other criteria (such as date of birth) cannot be used.**
- (i) Children with a statement of special educational need that names the school in part 4 of the statement
  - (ii) Looked after children whom the Corporate Parent agrees should attend the school
  - (iii) Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Disability Discrimination Act as amended
  - (iv) Those children who have a brother or sister already at the nursery school, who will be attending the preferred school at the time of entry.
  - (v) Those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Young People and Families Geographic Information System.
  - (vi) Children who attend day care or a voluntary or private sector pre-school on site at the school. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given within this group to children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Young People and Families Geographic Information System.

**Headteachers can seek advice and assistance from the Service Manager for Admissions in applying these criteria.**

9. If there are more children than places, any child who is not offered a place can only be reconsidered and admitted at a later point if the parents have put the child's name on the school's continued interest list.
10. Once a child is admitted to the Nursery School the child is entitled to remain until the term after he/she becomes five\* Nursery Schools will be fully funded for full time F1 children who defer entry into school. **However this may not be the most appropriate place for the child**

**if all his/her peers have taken up their reception (F1) place in a separate class within the school or another primary school.**

\*N.B. In the case of a summer born child, parents must either take up the reception place by the April before the child's fifth birthday; or else need to re-apply through the next admission round for a place to start in the September as a year one child. See the Primary School admissions policy for more detail on deferring entry.

10. Any complaint about the operation of this admissions policy, for example in the case of a particular child who has been refused admission, should be directed to the Head of the school in the first instance and then to the Service Manager for Admissions if for a Community or Controlled school. For Aided schools the complaint should be directed to the Head of the school and then to the School Governors, as they have the ultimate decision regarding admissions to these schools.
11. There is no statutory right of appeal.

**Contact details**

**Service Manager for Admissions, County Hall, New Road, Oxford,  
OX1 1ND Tel: 01865 815844  
e-mail:- admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

**Principal Officer (Early Years Organisation)**

**Tel 01865 815181 e-mail:propertyassets@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

For initial guidance on the admissions policy for Community or Voluntary Controlled schools, as set out in this document .