

Pre-School Admissions Policy 2023

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Procedures

- We ensure that information about our setting is accessible, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, in more than one language.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms of how it treats each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, and ethnicity or from English being a newly acquired additional language.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms of how it enables children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in the life of the setting.
- We make our Equal Opportunities Policy available on the school website.
- We are flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the setting and provides stability for all the children.

In order to achieve this we operate the following Criteria for Admissions:

- Any child seeking a placement at the Pre-School is eligible to start at the beginning of the term in which they turn 2 years and 9 months, providing they are at least 2 years and 6 months on the day they start.
- We will normally arrange our waiting list in birth order, with priority given to ensuring that children who receive nursery education funding are allocated their full entitlement before places are offered to younger children.
- However, in times of increased demand on places children will be allocated places to Pre-School using the following criteria:
 1. All 'looked after' children and all previously 'looked after' children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority of the school) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see definitions);
 2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (villages of Sharnbrook, Souldrop and Knotting);
 3. Other pupils living in the catchment area;
 4. Other siblings;
 5. Children already attending the Pre-School as of the previous July (guaranteed their current sessions as a minimum)
 6. Have a confirmed place at Sharnbrook Primary;
 7. Pupils who live out of the school catchment

If there are more children than places available, then it may be necessary to limit the number of sessions per child per week, but not less than 3 sessions will be offered.

The number of children we can accept at Pre-School is governed by Ofsted regulations and ratios.

Definitions 'Looked after' children

A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

'Looked after' children from Outside of England

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. That sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent / carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents / carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Appeals / Waiting Lists

Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeal Panel. Any child refused a place at the school will be placed on a waiting list which will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria. Waiting lists for the normal year of entry will be maintained until the end of the autumn term.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Applying for a part-time place in the Preschool

A Preschool Deputy will keep a list of children's names and the names and addresses of the parents who have requested a nursery place. The length of time a child's name has been on the admissions list will not be taken in to consideration when allocating a place. The Preschool will inform parents by letter whether it has been possible to allocate their child a place.

Attendance in the reception year group

All children will be considered equally for a funded early year's place, regardless of whether they may eventually apply for a full-time place at our school. Conversely, it needs to be clearly understood that a child attending our school for their preschool entitlement is not given priority admission into our reception class.

Parents will need to apply separately for a full-time reception place. The responsibility for admission into reception rests with the local authority as explained in the Primary School Guide for Parents.

Waiting List

Once places have been allocated, and where it is not possible to offer some children a part-time place at preschool because places are all taken, it will be possible for children's names to be added to a waiting list if parents specifically request it. Any places that then become available will be offered from the waiting list in accordance with the school's criteria for admissions (see above). Places will be offered on a termly basis. Only in exceptional circumstances will children be able to start at nursery in mid-term.

Parents may choose not to accept the offer of a place for their child but they must indicate whether they wish their child's name to remain on the waiting list for admission in the following term. They will then be considered for a nursery place along with any other eligible children. This may mean that a place is no longer available and a place at another setting may need to be sought.