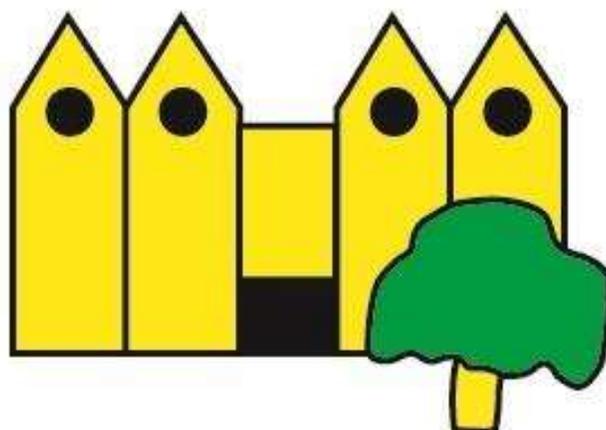


# West Oxford Community Primary School



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## Nursery Admissions Policy

September 2016

This policy is in line with Nursery Admissions in Oxfordshire Policy (Nursery Classes and Attached Nursery Schools) 2013 and Oxfordshire County Councils, Starting school 2016.

## **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. Schools which are their Own Admission Authority are not legally obliged, but are strongly encouraged, to adopt and follow this policy.

When new children join the nursery class or school it is important that parents are made aware that the process of applying for a place at a primary school for the reception year is separate to that of applying for a place in a nursery class or school. Parents, whose children attend the nursery school or class, particularly from outside the designated area of the primary school, should be reminded that their child is not guaranteed a place at the school when he/she reaches the normal school starting age (i.e. the September of the academic year in which the child will be five). They must apply through the normal County Council school admissions procedures.

Schools offer children a full time place for the whole of the reception year. Schools will need to consider this carefully in planning the organisation of the foundation stage, both for admissions to their nursery, and for children who defer entry to school.

## **Terminology**

**Reception** - the year children become 5

**Nursery (N2)** - the year children become 4 and

**Nursery (N1)** - the year children become 3 Nursery – usually it is not necessary to separately identify N2 and N1 groups so this terminology is used.

**Year** – refers to the academic year (September to August)

**Looked After** - Children who are looked after by a local authority within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application and previously looked after children. The term “previously looked after children” refers only to children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

**Siblings/Brother or Sister** - For admission purposes for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools a sibling is defined as a brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step brother or step sister who will be resident at the same address at the time of entry.

**Eligibility Terms Note:** Funding entitlement starts from the term after the child’s 3rd birthday

**Autumn Term:** September 1st -December 31st

**Spring Term:** January 1st -March 31st

**Summer Term:** April 1st -August 31st

## Policy

1. The County Council has devolved rather than delegated the administration of admissions to nursery classes and attached nursery schools. Therefore, in the event of a complaint the final responsibility and decision for admissions to voluntary controlled and community schools rests with the County Council.
2. The designated area (catchment) of our nursery is set out clearly on a map and is available for parents to see on request. It is also available electronically on our school website. The catchment area for the nursery is the same as for that primary school. Although nursery places are prioritised towards children living in the catchment area (see paragraph 10), children living outside of the catchment area will be offered a place if one is available. Please note, children who attend the nursery are not guaranteed a place at the school.
3. We offer nursery places at least up to the published capacity, and staffing provision is in line with the Statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We do not operate the nursery with empty places in any term if we have eligible children on the continued interest list. We have places for up to 52 children at any one time in our setting. There are thirty places in reception. We have a maximum of twenty two places in the nursery in the morning and a further twenty two places in the afternoon.
4. We have a set number of planned places. Any changes to these would be discussed with and agreed by the Admissions & Transport Services Manager.
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). At West Oxford Community Primary School children attend nursery every morning or afternoon. Each session is 3 hours.
6. Admissions are three times a year, for as long as places are available. Funding and entitlement are based on a three-term year, and places therefore start in term 1 (September), term 3 (January) or term 5 (April).
7. Children are eligible for a place from the first day of term (3 term year). To help with the settling in process we offer staggered starts to help children with the transition. Staggered starts are arranged over the first week and are monitored.
8. Parents will be notified that a place is available for their child no later than a term in advance (3 term year). Places offered are for 15 funded hours.

We do NOT allow parents to split their free entitlement with a private or voluntary sector provider. Allowing splits impacts on the school budget.

At West Oxford Community Primary School we recommend that children attend nursery on a full time basis (full 15 hours per week). We aim to promote school readiness. Once a place has been allocated we believe that children are more likely to settle, make friends and achieve more effectively if they attend full time. If parents would like their child to attend on a part time basis, we advise them to increase these hours as we move into the child's second term.

Nursery places at West Oxford Primary School are in high demand and there is often a long waiting list. Therefore, if a child is consistently late or a place is not being used effectively it may result in the child losing his or her place. Decisions of such will be made at the Early Years lead and Head teacher's discretion.

9. Copies of our early years prospectus is available on request to parents and to outside agencies. It can also be found on our school website. The prospectus states the opening times of the nursery and sets out educational aims and provision. The prospectus also sets 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 10).
10. 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. Head teachers 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.
  - 10.1 Children with a statement of special educational need that names the school in part 4 of the statement.
  - 10.2 Looked after children, whom the Corporate Parent agrees should attend the school, and „previously looked after“ children.
  - 10.3 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 Equality Act 2010.
  - 10.4 Children who live in the designated catchment area. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following descending order:
    - Those children who, at the time of entry, have a brother or sister attending the primary school to which the nursery is attached
    - Those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education and Families Geographic Information System.
  - 10.5 Children living outside the designated area who have a brother or sister attending either the foundation stage or the main school at the time of entry. 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, Education and Families Geographic Information System.
  - 10.6 Children who attend day care or a voluntary or private sector preschool 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, Education and Families Geographic Information System.
  - 10.7 Children outside the designated area who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education and Families Geographic Information System Head teachers can seek advice and assistance from the Admissions & Transport Services Manager in applying these criteria.
11. 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.

12. Once a child is admitted to the nursery, the child is entitled to remain in a part time place in the nursery class or nursery school until the term after he/she becomes five\* **However this may not be the most appropriate place for the child if all his/her peers have taken up their reception 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 school reception place by the April before the child's fifth birthday; or else need to **re-apply through the next admission round for a reception place or a year 1 place to start in the September.** This is case dependent. Please see the deferred entry section of this policy.

12.1 A nursery place should cease no later than the term after the child's fifth birthday, that is when they are of statutory school age.

### **Staying in nursery provision**

Nursery education is no longer age appropriate once a child reaches statutory school age. Therefore children who have their fifth birthday between September and December 2016 may only stay in nursery provision up until the end of December 2016 but they need to be in receipt of full time age appropriate education from January 2017. This means that these children need to transfer to primary or infants' school no later than January 2017. The alternative would be suitable age appropriate home education.

Children who have their fifth birthday between January and March 2017 may only stay in nursery provision up until the end of March 2017 but they need to be in receipt of full time age appropriate education from April 2017. This means that these children need to transfer to primary or infants' school no later than April 2017. The alternative would be suitable age appropriate home education.

Children who have their fifth birthday between April and August 2017 may stay in nursery provision up until the end of the 2016/17 academic year but they need to be in receipt of full time age appropriate education from September 2017. This means that these children need to transfer to primary or infants' school no later than September 2017. The alternative would be suitable age appropriate home education.

### **Admission of summer born children outside their normal age group to any mainstream state funded school**

Summer born children are defined as those born from the beginning of April to the end of August and who reach compulsory school age on 31 August 2017.

Where a parent wants to send their summer born child to school in the September after their fifth birthday (September 2017) and requests that they enter the Reception class the admission authority for that school needs to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case. It would be unlawful for an admission authority to have a blanket policy which says that summer born children who start school in the September after their fifth birthday will be admitted to Year 1.

Factors that may be considered by an admission authority are:

- a. The needs of the child and the possible impact on them of entering Year 1 without having first attended the Reception class
- b. In the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth

- c. The extent to which a child's delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school
- d. Any relevant research into the outcomes of summer born and premature children

If a child is educated outside of the normal age group whilst in primary school on applying for a secondary school place it will be for the admission authority of the secondary school to decide whether to admit the child outside of their normal age group. When making this decision the admission authority for the secondary school must make the decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday of June in the school year they become 16. If a child is educated outside of their normal age group (i.e. is in Year 10 when this date is reached) the school will continue to receive funding for that child but the child will no longer be of compulsory school age during the school year in which most children take their GCSE examinations.

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. However, they do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. Nevertheless they may make a complaint. All schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school and must have a published complaints procedure in place. Local authorities also have a complaints procedure.

The parent of a child who is eligible for admission to school in September 2016 but whose child does not have to start full time education until September 2017 and who wants them to start Reception in 2017 rather than Year 1 should make their request as early as possible in the academic year 2016/17.

Requests should be made to the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council using the form "Request for the admission of summer born children outside their normal age group" and attaching any evidence that they believe will be helpful. This form is available on Oxfordshire County Council's public website.

Once the relevant form has been received by the Admissions Team all the admission authorities of the schools listed will be contacted to ask whether they are willing to accept an out of year group application in the next academic year. The parent will then be informed of the outcome of their request.

- 13. 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 Admissions and Transport Services Manager if for a Community or Controlled school. For Aided schools or Academies 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.
- 14. There is no statutory right of appeal.

Contact details Admissions & Transport Services Manager Tel: 01865 815844

admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Senior Officer (Early Years Organisation) Tel 01865 815181

e-mail:propertyassets@oxfordshire.gov.uk (for initial advice regarding the application of this policy, and for requests for home to nursery GIS distance measuring)