



# **GLOUCESTER NURSERY SCHOOL**

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**Devised January 2016**

**Reviewed and Revised: January 2017 and April 2019**

# Gloucester Nursery School

## Admissions Policy

This policy aims to ensure that at Gloucester Nursery School we provide:

- high quality education and care for all children;
- equal opportunities to all children and their parents/carers, regardless of race, gender, religion, culture, sexual orientation, class or disability;
- continuity of experience for all children and their parents/carers.

Gloucester Nursery School uses guidance from the Local Authority Early Years County Provider Guide to Free Entitlement where appropriate for admissions of children. Prospective parents can make an appointment to look around and talk to staff before they complete admission forms.

### **Statement**

Since September 2004 there is no catchment area for Gloucester Nursery School. The waiting list is open to all.

### **General Principles Relating to the Admissions of Children Seeking to Access the Free Entitlement – ref The Free Entitlement to Early Learning and Childcare – Northamptonshire County Council.**

- Families should have access to the provision they want for children, where their child can be happy, safe and reach their full potential in order to get the best start in life and remain engaged in education or training until at least the age of 18;
- In all cases, children and families should be at the heart of the admissions process to achieve fair access for all. Best practice is for providers to consult regularly with families to ensure that their arrangements meet the needs of all parents and children;
- Providers must ensure that their admissions arrangements are fair and do not unfairly disadvantage, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs;
- Every setting should have a written admissions policy that is easily accessible to families;
- Providers must make every effort to ensure that all parents are able to understand their admissions process. In this respect, admissions procedures and administrative processes should be clear, objective and fair;
- Providers must not ask for any form of payment or voluntary contribution, donations or deposits (even, if refundable) as part the admissions process relating to the Free Entitlement;

- Providers should not refuse to admit children on the basis of their behaviour elsewhere or because the child is thought to be potentially disruptive or to exhibit challenging behaviour.

### **Applications and offering of Nursery Places at Gloucester Nursery School**

#### **Registration:**

- The Administrative Assistant keeps waiting lists of children requiring nursery places;
- Applications will be dated as they are submitted;
- Any parent or carer may register a child's name;
- Names may be registered at any time when the nursery is open (names are accepted from birth). Telephone applications are not accepted – application forms need to be completed and signed by the parent/ carer before the child's name is added to the waiting list;
- Gloucester Nursery School welcomes all children of different cultures, faiths and ethnic origins and seeks to support children with special educational needs wherever possible;
- G2 and G3 provision have the following admissions categories:  
90% of children with no additional needs;  
10% of children with Special Educational Needs, including priority referrals from other professionals such as Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers (see later section entitled Priority Admissions);
- Initial offers of places will be sent out in the term before the child is expected to start. Offers of places will be made in order of registration except when the nursery identifies a specific need for a priority admission;
- Every effort is made to accommodate the parental preference of morning/afternoon/split places/over 15 hours of education and childcare;
- Morning places are offered to those higher up the list first;
- If places are declined then the next child on the list is offered a place;
- When a child cannot immediately take up a place offered there must be a clear agreement, preferably in writing, between parents and school indicating for how long the place will be kept open.

#### **Nursery Provision:**

G2 (provision for 2 and 3 year olds and G3 (provision 3 and 4 year olds)

- Gloucester Nursery School is open during normal school term times.
- For children accessing the 15 hours of free entitlement, places offered are either 5 morning sessions or 5 afternoon sessions, each of 3 hours, totalling 15 hours a week, 38 weeks per year or else split places (2.5 days) are available
- As a large Nursery School, priority is given to parents wanting the 15 hours of Free Entitlement at the Nursery;

- Parents can apply for a place using part of their free entitlement (15 hours) e.g. splitting the child's hours between 2 providers. Each application will be decided upon by the Headteacher. Parents can only split the 15 hours between 2 providers. Gloucester Nursery will accept a minimum of 9 hours Free Entitlement per week. This must be taken in 3 hour slots;
- Gloucester Nursery School provides up to 30 hours of free entitlement to eligible families of children in the G3 provision (refer to details of eligibility on schools' website);
- Extended school provision ie breakfast/lunch and tea clubs are NOT part of the free entitlement for either 15 or 30 hours and parents are requested to pay for such sessions;
- The Authority can provide for the translation of any information leaflet into a number of languages for the benefit of parents from ethnic groups;

### **Admissions:**

- We are flexible about attendance patterns and offer both full and part-time places to accommodate the needs of individual children and families;
- Home visits are an entitlement of every child;
- Children who already attend the G2 provision will normally transfer to the G3 provision;
- Children will almost always leave the nursery for primary education at the end of the summer term. Discretion exists to retain children in nursery education to the age of 4+. There would need to be clear professional judgement for specific reasons that this would be in the child's best educational interests (provided that the nursery has the place);
- No preference is given to sibling links.
- Parents/carers will be informed as to whether there is a place available in either G2 or G3 as follows:

<b>For start date</b>	<b>Parents/carers informed of place</b>
In September	February/March
In January	October/November
After Easter	January

### **Funded 2 Year Old Places For Eligible Children:**

- Places in the G2 provision are either fee paying or funded;
- Funded places are available when the child turns 2. The funding is for 570 hours a year and is divided into 3 funding blocks
- Parents/carers need to check their eligibility for funded places using the on-line eligibility checker. If successful, the reference number issued will be given to the Administrative Assistant for confirmation.

### **Priority Admissions:**

- Priority admissions will normally be from those children referred by official agencies, for example, Educational Psychologists, Doctors, Health Visitors, Portage Workers and Social Workers;
- A referral form should be completed by the referring agency;
- At the Headteacher's discretion, where there is adequate information as a result of meetings or correspondence, a priority place may be allocated. Usually, the maximum number of priority cases will not exceed 10% of the total intake.
- We make reasonable adjustments for children identified with SEND in our admissions arrangements and in every aspect of school life. We plan ahead, making adjustments to prevent any disadvantage that might arise at any stage of the admission process;
- Such children may justify admission on a priority basis, on account of medical, developmental, emotional, behavioural or social factors. The following considerations may also be important when determining which children should be offered priority admission:
  1. A need to prevent children being taken into care;
  2. Very marked under-stimulation in the home;
  3. Family crisis;
  4. Alcoholism in the family;
  5. Parent in prison;
  6. Families in bed and breakfast accommodation;
  7. Illness of parent;
  8. Child's health problems;
  9. Extreme poverty;
  10. Traveller families;
  11. Refugees and asylum seeker families;
  12. Developmental delays, significant behavioural or emotional difficulties.
- In the Spring Term of each year, the priority forms will be considered with sympathy by the Headteacher, another member of staff and a governor;
- If more children are referred for priority admission than the maximum number of 10% of the total intake, the Headteacher must consult with other professionals as to which children are to be offered a place. If there are particular difficulties in catering for an individual child's needs, the Area Education Officer will need to be consulted. Copies of the form from their referring agencies and any other information should be available;
- All priority forms must be accompanied by a normal application form to ensure that parents actually want his/her child to have a place if one is offered;
- When the child starts nursery, copies will be taken of: birth certificate/passport and proof of address which will be held on file whilst the child attends the nursery and for 6 months after.

### **Appeals:**

- Where a child is declined access to any part of their Free Entitlement, parents have the right to appeal against the provider's decision. If the provider's own appeal procedures are exhausted the appeals will be directed to Northamptonshire County Council Early Years and Childcare Service as the body accountable for the delivery of the Free Entitlement in Northamptonshire;
- Where a parent's appeal is upheld, Northamptonshire County Council may insist that a child is granted admission to a setting to access their Free Entitlement. Failure to grant admission at the insistence of Northamptonshire County Council may result in the setting being removed from the Authority's Directory of Providers and thus losing the right to claim funding for any child attending their provision.

### **Withdrawing Offers of Places:**

- If parents do not take up the place offered to them by a given date without contacting the school, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.
- Places are expected to be utilised fully and if a child is absent the school should be notified;
- If a child's attendance falls below 75%, parents/carers will be expected to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to explain the reasons for non-attendance and discuss how it can be improved. After 4 weeks, if attendance has not improved, it will be withdrawn (if there are no extenuating circumstances) and re-allocated to a child on the waiting list.

### **Induction:**

- Children and parents are invited to visit the nursery on a specified date in July or December for a play session. Each child will be allocated a Family Worker and the induction programme will be explained in full. With parent's permission, this Family worker will make a home visit, during the first few days of term. Parents can refuse a home visit;
- The nursery operates a staggered entry system so each child will receive individual attention upon entry. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children and play alongside until the child is settled, recognising that some children take longer to settle than others. Family workers will continue to use their discretion as to whether short periods of attendance are to be initially recommended for certain children, these periods being gradually lengthened until children are attending for a full session;
- Children are expected to attend regularly and persistent non-attendance could result in withdrawal of the place;
- Parents must provide a telephone number of someone who can collect their child from nursery in an emergency when the parents/carers cannot be contacted;
- Parents have the right to appeal to the Governors if they feel the nursery has not adhered to the registration admission procedures outlined above.

### **Payment for additional sessions in G2 and G3:**

- Parents can purchase additional nursery sessions and extended school provision at a charge. For more details see **The Charging Policy**.
- Additional staff might be needed to help support children with SEND during extended school sessions. In these situations, Disability Access Funding could be used to pay for the additional staffing or else parents will be asked for a 'top up.'

### **Staff Ratios:**

- 1:8 for 3 and 4 year olds, unless there is a qualified teacher with the children, in which case it is 1:13;
- 1:4 for 2 year olds.

### **Monitoring Occupancy:**

- Information on current occupancy will be shared at every full Governors Meeting.

### **Transfer between G2 and G3:**

- For children in G2, places **may be** available in the 3 and 4 year old provision (G3 in September, January or Easter after their third birthday);
- Transition visits will take place approximately four weeks prior to their transition;
- Home visits will also be arranged.

### **Transfer between settings:**

- Where a space is available children can transfer from another setting;
- A transition report will be completed by the Family Worker and will include the voice of the child and parent/carer.

### **Transfers to Schools (at age of 4 and 5) including Delays and Deferments**

Best practice in relation to transfers from early years and childcare settings to schools is set out in the Good Practice Guidance in the County Transition Document;

- It is the family's responsibility to ensure that any child actually obtains a primary school place;
- Attendance at a nursery does not guarantee admission to a particular school. A separate application must be made to transfer from any early years setting to a primary school;
- Northamptonshire County Council funds a place in Reception class for children from the September after the child's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday but there is no obligation on families to accept the place and entry to school can be deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches statutory school age;
- Families considering deferring entry are strongly advised to discuss the needs of their child with the school;

- Families are encouraged to liaise with the Local Authority's Admission Team in the county council where problems arise about the transfer of children to school

The policy will be reviewed annually.