

Policy:	NURSERY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PANEL PROCEDURE INCLUDING THE ROCKING HORSE CLUB
Reviewed:	February 2013
Next Review:	3 years or as legislation may require
Responsibility:	Nursery School Teacher / Children's Centre Teacher / Dep. Head of Centre
Category:	Childcare Policies

(Taken from Lancashire County Council Nursery Admissions Policy)

SECTION ONE **Nursery Admissions Policy**

Lancashire County Council Providers

The nursery schools and classes listed in Section 5 fall into two categories.

For those nursery schools that are designated as community or voluntary controlled (C or VC) Lancashire County Council determines the admission arrangements. For voluntary aided and foundation (VA and F) nursery schools and classes it is the individual Governing Bodies which set the admission arrangements.

Admission Policy for Maintained Nursery Schools and Nursery Classes within Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

- a) Children in public care (looked after children) or those children at risk of becoming looked after.
- b) Children with statements for special educational needs (SEN) and those with exceptional/strong SEN reasons for attending a particular school/setting.
- c) Exceptional/strong medical, social, welfare reasons (associated with the child and/or the family) for attending a particular school/setting.
- d) Children who will have a sibling in attendance at the time of their admission.
- e) Parents/carers who provide evidence of training/education at a local establishment, working locally or established local childcare arrangements (at the time of the child's admission).
- f) Those living nearest the school/setting.

Notes

- In relation to a), b), c), d) and e) parents must provide the necessary evidence and contact names/e-mail/telephone numbers with their application.
- For criteria d) siblings are defined as brothers, sisters, step-brothers, step-sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, adopted and fostered children living with the same family at the same address.
- In relation to f) measures will be in a straight line (centre of building to centre of building).
- Criteria f) will be used as a tie break should there be oversubscription within any of the stated admission criteria.

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In most cases, children will be admitted to the nursery school or class of their parents' preference. Occasionally however, a school or class will receive more applications than there are available places. Parents will be able to seek provision elsewhere and can also request that their child's name be placed on a waiting list for places at their preferred school or class. Should places become available, then these will be offered in accordance with the published admission criteria **and not on a first come first served basis.**

Medical, Social and Welfare Reasons

If you feel that there are exceptional medical, social or welfare reasons associated with your child and/or family which support admission to a particular nursery you must indicate that this is the case on your application. These may include serious medical or psychological needs or disabilities which make travel more difficult.

Please bear in mind that all nurseries can make provision for special educational needs and can also manage common conditions eg asthma, epilepsy, diabetes.

Where exceptional medical, social or welfare reasons are identified supporting evidence will be required. This may be from whatever source(s) the applicant feels are most appropriate. Examples of providers' evidence are doctors, health visitors, social workers. Only exceptional reasons relevant to a particular school or class will normally be considered.

If you do not provide supporting evidence, then it will not be possible to consider the application under the medical, social and welfare criteria.

Parents may apply for nursery places and send supporting evidence at a later date. It is strongly recommended that this is submitted by the closing date for applications.

After the closing date, during the early stages of the allocation process, all claims of exceptional medical, social and welfare reasons are considered. Where the reasons claimed are not considered exceptional, the application will then be dealt with under the other admission criteria for the nursery school/class.

All information which is submitted will be considered as being confidential.

Training, education, local work or local established childcare.

If you require that an application for a nursery place be considered under this criteria then you must provide evidence to support your application. This may include:

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- Written confirmation from a college/training provider of your future enrolment or current participation. This should confirm the start and end dates of any programme and the day and hours per week of your participation.
- Written confirmation from an employer of your place/address of work and the days/hours per week involved.
- Written confirmation from a childminder about an existing or ongoing childcare arrangements, including the date on which they started and the address where the child is situated under the arrangement.

Single Remaining Place – Additional Tie Break

If a single place remains available at a nursery school or class and the next application is for twins/triplets etc then flexibility will be exercised wherever possible to allocate places for both/all of the children. Individual nursery schools and classes must liaise with the Local Authority if this situation arises.

Where a single place remains and there is more than one remaining applicant, an additional tie break may occasionally be required eg where there are two identical measures for the single remaining place. In these circumstances, a random draw will determine which child will be offered the place.

ACCURACY OF APPLICATIONS

In relation to all applications, individual nurseries and the Local Authority or the Governing Body of a voluntary aided or funded school/class will investigate the accuracy of any information that is provided. Places may be withdrawn if they have been offered based on inaccurate information.

VOLUNTARY AIDED, FOUNDATION, ACADEMY OR FREE SCHOOL NURSERIES

Please note that the Governing Bodies of these nursery schools and classes determine their own admission arrangements and the criteria for admission may therefore be different from those detailed above. You are advised to contact an individual nursery school or class if you wish to clarify its admission criteria.

ENTITLEMENT TO FREE PROVISION

Please note that if you have access to 15 hpw of free provision at a maintained* nursery school or class then you cannot also have free provision at a private, voluntary or independent nursery.

(*Maintained means funded via the Local Authority)

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SECTION TWO Eligibility and How to Apply

Who is eligible for free nursery provision?

All children who are 3 years old by 31 August 2012 (prior to starting at a nursery school or class in September 2012) will be considered for admission.

Applications should be completed and returned to individual nurseries by **Friday 27 January 2012**.

How do I/We apply?

- You may place your child's name on the list held by a nursery school or class of those interested in a place in the future. This can be done when the child is 2 years old (or earlier if you wish). This is only a list of interest and you must still formally apply on the nursery application form at the appropriate time to have the child considered for admission in accordance with the specified criteria (see Section One, Page 1).
- Information about nursery schools and classes is available from individual schools and settings (as listed in the Nursery Schools Admissions 2012/13 Booklet and on the list of other providers available from the Family Information Service). Information and advice is also available from other contact points as listed in Section 6, Page 21 of the Nursery Schools Admissions Booklet.
- An application form will be available from the nursery school or class between September and December in the year prior to the child requiring a place. The closing date for applications is normally set around mid-January (prior to the September start date). **Please ensure that you submit your application by the stipulated closing date.**

There is no guarantee that late applications will be considered along with those received on time. Parents may be asked to provide evidence of the reasons for a late application in order that individual schools or classes can decide whether to accept it along with applications received by the closing date.

- Please provide as much relevant information as possible with your application. You may provide additional supporting evidence yourself or via relevant professionals (eg health visitors, social worker, doctors, educational psychologists etc). If you think that direct contact with a third party may be helpful, then please do provide the name and contact details of the relevant professional.

Walton Lane Nursery School & Children's Centre

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- **If your circumstances are likely to change during the application period or after the offer date (but ahead of the September 2012 start date) please give details on your application. This could include address changes or changes in your work, childcare or education/training which may affect the priority of your application.**

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

If you require assistance or advice in relation to completing a nursery school or class application, then this is available at your preferred school or setting. Please contact them and ask when it would be convenient to visit. You may also seek information and advice from the various contacts listed in the Nursery Schools Admissions Booklet (Section 6, Page 21).

CHARGING PARENTS FOR PLACES

The Governing Bodies of Lancashire's maintained* nursery schools and classes must not charge parents for available places.

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SECTION THREE Offers of places – September 2012

1. After the closing date (**Friday 27 January 2012 for places starting in September 2012**) the nursery school or class admissions committee will meet. This will be during Spring term and they will agree admissions and / or apply the oversubscription criteria where there are more applications than available places.
2. Around Easter 2012 you will receive an offer letter from the school or class offering a place for your child. This will include an acceptance form which must be completed and returned.
3. If you do not confirm acceptance the school/class may remind you with a deadline date for your response. After that date, the place offered will usually be withdrawn.
4. Prior to accepting the offer you should be committed to your child regularly attending. **Places may be withdrawn where attendance is unsatisfactory.**
5. You should check that the hours and pattern of provision offered is acceptable. **A commitment to regular attendance is essential as places may be withdrawn if this is unsatisfactory.**
6. If you are not offered a place, your child's name will be placed on the school or class waiting list. If places become available these will be offered in accordance with the admission criteria (Section One, Page 1).
7. Places are offered to commence at the beginning of the school year (September 2012). Most schools and classes will invite you and your child to visit during the Summer term.
8. If you do not require an offered place, or if there will be a delay in a place being taken up, you **must** inform the school or class immediately.

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HOURS AND PATTERN OF PROVISION

There may in some instances be the need for prior contact from the nursery school/class with individual applicants about their requested hours and/or pattern of provision. This may lead to negotiation and agreement about what is available at that setting. Referrals to other local providers as possible options may also be an outcome. In addition, shared provision may be suggested as a possible consideration in certain circumstances. Any discussions which are necessary will be aimed at meeting the needs of applicants by signposting provision at that setting and in the area as a whole and highlighting the overall strategy of flexibility.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU ACCESS THE MAXIMUM 15 HPW OF FREE PROVISION AT A MAINTAINED* NURSERY SCHOOL OR CLASS THEN YOU CANNOT ALSO HAVE FREE PROVISION AT A PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY OR INDEPENDENT NURSERY.

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OFFERS OF PLACES AT OTHER TIMES OF THE YEAR

Available places will remain at some nursery schools and classes throughout the year or may become available during the year. These can be filled during the year and places must be offered to children from the first day of term after their 3rd birthday (not immediately the child reaches age 3). Parents may contact individual nursery schools and classes at any time to enquire about available places.

Where the demand for places exceeds availability during the year, the admission criteria given in this policy and the Nursery School Admissions booklet will be used to allocate. Parents will also be asked to complete the application form. Filling places other than at the main September intake date is often referred to as 'topping up'.

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SECTION FOUR The Rocking Horse Club – Pendle Ltd

Reservation of a childcare place

A waiting list system will operate if childcare needs cannot be met immediately.

Where the places are oversubscribed and a known place will become available, and the parents / carers request to reserve the place, a retainer payment of half the weekly childcare costs will secure that placement i.e.

A deposit of 4 weeks $\frac{1}{2}$ payment will secure a childcare place – this will be deducted from the first 4 weeks payment once care has commenced.

This deposit is non-returnable if the childcare place is cancelled prior to uptake.

Allocation of places will be made in accordance with OFSTED full day care regulations regarding child staff ratios.

Prior to taking up a childcare place, the following documents are required by Walton Lane Nursery School and Children's Centre:

- Registration form parts 1 & 2
- Contract - see Appendices.
- Passport
- Utilities Bill
- Birth Certificate