



## NURSERY ADMISSIONS – September 2021

### Aims

Our aims are:

- To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high quality child centred nursery education on a fair and equitable basis.
- To establish an admissions policy governed by clearly defined criteria that may be articulated to parents and other professionals.
- To ensure, as far as possible, that all children who gain a place will fully benefit from nursery education and so we will make the very best of our resources.
- To provide high quality child centred nursery education to children and families in our local community.

### Introduction

Swindon Borough Council will fund the provision of early year's education and childcare to Ferndale Nursery, and all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to free learning and care in an early years setting from the start of the term following their third birthday, for 38 weeks in a full year.

Some 3 year olds will also have entitlement to 30 hour funding from September 2021. To qualify for the full 30 hours of free childcare, each parent (or the sole parent in a single parent family) will need to earn, on average, the equivalent of 16 hours on the national minimum wage per week (currently £107 per week), and no more than £100,000 per year. A family with an annual household income of £199,998 would be eligible if each parent earns just under £100,000. Self-employed parents and parents on zero-hours contracts will be eligible if they meet the average earnings threshold. This funding can be used in the Little Ferns room and in the Tiny Acorns room once your child turns 3, and is eligible for 30 hours. You must notify us as soon as you have your 30 hour code.

Some 2 year olds also have entitlement if their parent/carer are receiving one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit or both and have a gross household income of £16,190 a year or less

This is a non-statutory phase of education. Admission to a school nursery class is outside of the statutory framework for admissions.

- Swindon Borough Council is not the admissions authority for nursery classes.

- There is no Swindon Borough Council policy for nursery class admissions, and nursery classes are not encompassed by the Local Authority's Primary Admissions Policy.
- There is no statutory framework for appeals against an admission decision.
- The responsibility for agreeing and implementing an admissions policy for a school nursery class lies with the individual school.
- Throughout this policy, nursery class refers to 2 year olds and preschool class refers to 3 and 4 year olds.

### **Application Process**

- Parents requiring a place for their child should complete the nursery school application form.
- Nursery school application forms will be available to any parent on request.
- Parents will be informed of the success of the application after the application deadline.
- Parents will be expected to confirm their acceptance of their child's place in writing within two weeks of the offer of a place.
- Parents will be offered those sessions which are available for that particular curriculum year
- Once funded places have been accepted, spare places will be made available for parents to purchase in addition to their funded place.
- 30 hour funded children will be offered places on a first-come first-serve basis with a maximum of 16 spaces available and will be offered morning sessions as a priority.

### **30 hour Funding Process**

30 hour places are offered on a first come-first served basis and immediate notification of eligibility is needed to secure your child's place.

Parents must apply online at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) and you will be given a unique code; you must inform the school of this code, along with your national insurance number and child's date of birth, so that we can confirm with the local authority or a provider portal that it is a valid code. If you are eligible, you will receive a 30 hours eligibility code.

You will be asked by the Department of Working Pensions (DWP) to update your eligibility 3 times a year and they will contact you direct to do this.

### **Age of Admission**

- Children will be admitted to the **Little Ferns** class at the beginning of term 1, 3 or 5. It must be the term after their third birthday with birthdays falling between 1st Sept 2017 - 31st Aug 2018 who are due to start school in Sep 2022.
- Children will be admitted to the **Tiny Acorns** class at the beginning of term 1, 3 or 5. Birthdays must fall between 1st Jan 2019 - 31st Aug 2019 and due to start school in Sep 2023
- Children will be admitted to the **Tiny Acorn Rising 3's** class at the beginning of term 1, 3 or 5. Birthdays must fall between 1st Sept 2018 - 31st Dec 2018 and due to start school in Sep 2023.
- Admissions will be at the start of terms 1, 3 or 5 (sept/jan/april) to allow for an appropriate settling in process.

## **Criteria for admission to the School Nursery**

The nursery classes at Ferndale Primary and Nursery School have a total number of places based on the criteria below:

- **Tiny Acorns** - 8 places with each child being offered between 3 and 5 AM sessions only, unless eligible for 30 hour funding once the child turns 3
- **Rising 3's** - 16 places with each child being offered between 3 and 5 PM sessions only
- **Little Ferns** - 50 places with each child being offered 5 AM or 5 PM sessions, no mixed sessions will be offered.

16 spaces will be available for those children who are eligible for the 30 hour funding, and this will be offered on a first-come first-serve basis. These 16 children will be automatically offered 5 AM sessions in Little Ferns, where their progress and educational needs will be met. The additional 15 hours will then take place across in the Rising 3's or Little Ferns room and will run as a childcare facility. If you decide not to take up the 30 hours funding, then you will be given 5 PM sessions in its place.

The Governors of the school will offer children a place in the Tiny Acorns, Rising 3's or Little Ferns class in the term following their second or third birthday if there is space available, according to the criteria in the following order of priority.

- 1 Children in the care of a Local Authority (Looked After Children).
- 2 Children with a particular compelling educational and/or social or medical need as referred by a professional (e.g. social worker, speech therapist, health visitor, doctor etc.)
- 3 Children who already have an elder sibling currently attending Ferndale Primary & Nursery School in the September of the year of their admission.
- 4 Those children who will have an older sibling attending Ferndale Primary & Nursery School in the September of the year of their admission.
- 5 The position of the child's home address in relation to the school.
- 6 None of the above criteria met but child currently attends Nursery
- 7 None of the above criteria met

Within the above criteria, each application is always considered very carefully on its individual needs.

In the event that there are more applications than spaces that meet the same criteria, places will be allocated based on the date that the form is returned to the office.

### **The Nursery waiting list**

A waiting list will be kept by the school of names, addresses, D.O.B., telephone number and date registered of children who are interested.

Children wishing to attend the school nursery can be placed on the waiting list after they have reached their first birthday.

The waiting list will not operate places on a "first come, first served" basis. The length of time children are on the waiting list in no way influences the decisions about places.

Parents will be sent an application form accompanied by an information letter. Completed forms should be returned to the school by the specified date.

Parents will be offered the opportunity to visit the school nursery, prior to submitting a completed application.

### **Ferndale Nursery Catchment Area**

The following list of streets are streets that are included in our catchment area, and children living at these addresses will have priority to a place at our school nursery if spaces are available.

Beatrice Street (1-47 and 137 on)	Kitchener Street
Bessemer Close	Little Avenue
Bessemer Road East	Lynton Road
Bessemer Road West (1-15 odd & 22-44 even)	Manor Gardens
Brooklands Avenue	North Star Avenue
Brunel Crescent	Northbrook Road
Cheney Manor Road (61-221 odd & 106-284 even) & Steam Train P.H.	Northern Road (1-97 odd & 2-100 even)
Churchward Avenue	Omdurman Street
Collett Avenue	Osborne Street
Cornwall Avenue	Pinehurst Rd (1-51 odd & 2-48 even)
Devon Road	Rayfield Grove
Ferndale Road (115-515 odd)	Richmond Road
Ferndale Road (66-420 even)	Silto Court
Harvey Close	Somerset Road
Harvey Grove	Southbrook Street
Howse Garden	St Marys Grove
Hunters Grove	Surrey Road
Ipswich Street	The Ferns
Kitchener Street	Vicarage Road
Little Avenue	Westbrook Road
Lynton Road	Whitby Grove
Manor Gardens	Whitehouse Road
	Wiltshire Avenue

### **Decisions on Places**

Decisions will be made by the Nursery Admissions Panel of the School's Governing Body. Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admission policy. Being offered a place does not guarantee first preference with regards to session options.

Decisions will be final and there is no right of appeal.

Parents will be informed of offer of a place by letter, and where possible at least half a term before admission, ordinarily this will be by the end of October, February and May. If your child is offered a place, you must confirm your acceptance to the nursery school within two weeks using the reply slip, otherwise the school may have to refuse places for other children unnecessarily.

The offer of a nursery or pre-school place DOES NOT in any way mean automatic entitlement to the main school. You must apply for a school place through Swindon Borough Council using this link

[www.swindon.gov.uk](http://www.swindon.gov.uk)

### **Nursery Open Days**

The nursery class will hold a Stay & Play Session in the term before the child is due to start\*\*. Each child will be offered a personalised induction into nursery which is based on the individual child's needs.

### **Home Visits**

All children who have accepted places will be visited at home by 2 members of the nursery staff\*\*, at a pre-arranged time in the term before they are due to start.

### **Leavers during the year**

If a child is withdrawn by their parents from nursery during the school year, parents must give the school a **minimum** of 4 weeks' notice. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open for a trial period and will be automatically made available to allocate to a child on the waiting list. If parents later wish their child to return to the nursery then they will have to re-apply for a place on the waiting list and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with all the other applications, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has previously been in the nursery or pre-school class, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

### **Attendance and Loss of a place**

If attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the nursery teacher will talk to parents and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual due to the great demand for places. This conversation should be recorded and dated in the child's folder.

If after a period of two weeks, attendance and punctuality remain poor, a letter will be sent to the parents inviting them to meet with the Headteacher/Nursery Manager.

If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance within an agreed period, then the child may lose their place. Parents will be notified of the loss of place in writing.

If a child is absent for a period of three weeks without any contact from the parents and the school has been unable to make contact within this time, the child may lose their place and it may be offered to someone else. This will be decided by the Headteacher, and a letter explaining the situation will be sent to the parents.

### **Leave Request in term time**

Guidance issued by the Local Authority is that holidays in term time should be discouraged. Parents are required to complete a leave of absence form when requesting any type of time off from Nursery.

Leave of absence for longer than 4 weeks will not be permitted and the local authority will only fund a maximum of 4 weeks leave, after this point the funding will cease and your child will lose their place and removed from the Nursery roll. If you require a space once you return from leave, you must reapply to be added on to the waiting list.

### **Transfer from Nursery into School**

A place in the nursery or pre-school class does not guarantee a place in the primary school and parents and carers must still go through the correct Swindon Borough Council admissions procedure.

The school nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes to plan for a smooth transition to their chosen or allocated school. Nursery staff will send on reports and other agreed records to the school admitting the pupil as appropriate.

### **Appeals Process**

There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision with regard to admission to a nursery class. Parents wishing to object to a decision concerning their application should in the first instance put their concerns to the Headteacher.

### **Paid Sessions & Extra Fees**

Those children starting in our Tiny Acorns room who are still 2 and are not entitled to 2 year old funding, will be asked to pay for their sessions.

The cost of these sessions is £16.00 per 3-hour session and these are invoiced termly **in advance** by the end of the previous term (e.g. invoiced in August ready for a September start) with payment due before the new term starts. If the invoices fall in to arrears and no payment is made, you will risk losing your child's place for the following term.

If children do not attend booked sessions including holiday and sickness, parents will still be charged.

If your child is 30 hour funded, you will be required to pay £2 per day to cover the lunch supervision and this will be invoiced termly **in advance** by the end of the previous term. If the invoices fall in to arrears and no payment is made, you will risk losing your child's place for the following term.

Late collection fees - if you are persistently late collecting your child after their nursery session has finished, you will be charged for this to cover for the extra staff needed to care for your child. This will be charged at £5 per 15 minutes that you are late.