

# **FERNDALE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**



## **Nursery Admissions Policy**

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## 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

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.

## Age of Admission

- Children will be admitted to the **Tiny Acorns** class at the beginning of term 1, 3 or 5. It must be the term after their second birthday must fall between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 - 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2021 and due to start school in Sep 2025
- 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 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2023 - 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2024 who are due to start school in Sep 2025.
- Admissions will be at the start of terms 1, 3 or 5 (September 2024/January 2025/April 2025) to allow for an appropriate settling in process.

### **Tiny Acorns (2 and 3 year olds)**

<b>Childs 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday</b>	<b>Start date into nursery</b>	<b>Deadline for application</b>	<b>Parents notified of place</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Beginning of term 3 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> April	By 1 <sup>st</sup> January	February Half Term

1 <sup>st</sup> April – 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Beginning of term 1 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> September	By 1 <sup>st</sup> April	May Half Term
1 <sup>st</sup> September – 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Beginning of term 2 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> January	By 1 <sup>st</sup> September	October Half Term

Little Ferns (3 and 4 year olds)

<b>Childs 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday</b>	<b>Start date into nursery</b>	<b>Deadline for application</b>	<b>Parents notified of place</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Beginning of term 3 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> April	By 1 <sup>st</sup> January	February Half Term
1 <sup>st</sup> April – 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Beginning of term 1 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> September	By 1 <sup>st</sup> April	May Half Term
1 <sup>st</sup> September – 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Beginning of term 2 or after 1 <sup>st</sup> January	By 1 <sup>st</sup> September	October Half Term

### **Application Process**

Before parents apply for a place at any setting it is recommended that they visit as many as possible; this will ensure that they see the differences between each provision and can make the best choice for their child.

There are 3 open days each academic year where parents are able to visit Ferndale Primary School and Nursery and meet with staff in order to help them find out as much as possible.

To find out about these open days please visit our website:

<https://www.ferndaleprimaryschool.co.uk/>

Or you can email the school on [admin@ferndale.bluekitretrust.org](mailto:admin@ferndale.bluekitretrust.org)

- 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.

## **Funding**

### **2 year old funding**

From April 2024, all eligible working parents of two-year-olds will be able to access funding for 15 hours per week of education and care for 38 weeks of the year.

#### **Am I eligible?**

Please check here for full eligibility - <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

This funding can be used in the Tiny Acorns room the term after your child turns 2, and is eligible for 15 hours. You must notify us as soon as you have your 15 hour code.

### **3 year old funding**

All families in England with Children aged 3- 4 years are eligible for 15 hours of childcare of early education for 38 weeks.

Some 3 year olds will also have entitlement to 30 hour funding. To check if you are eligible for this please visit: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>

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.

### **30 hour Funding Process**

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.

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

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.

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

The nursery and preschool 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 mornings or afternoon sessions only, unless eligible for 30 hour funding once the child turns 3
- **Little Ferns** – 50 places with each child being offered 5 morning or 5 afternoon sessions, no mixed sessions will be offered.

Some of these 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.

The school will offer children a place in the Tiny Acorns 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.

**Please note:** Due to government legislation, admission to the school nursery does NOT guarantee admission to the primary school, nor does attendance in the nursery give priority to admission to the primary school.

**The Nursery and Pre School waiting list**

A waiting list will be kept by the school of names, addresses, D.O.B., telephone number and the date application was received 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.

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 and Pre-School 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 onwards)	Kitchener Street
Bessemer Close	Little Avenue
Bessemer Road East	Lynton Road
Bessemer Road West	Manor Gardens

(1-15 odd & 22-44 even)	
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
Wiltshire Avenue	Vicarage Road
Little Avenue	Westbrook Road
Lynton Road	Whitby Grove
Manor Gardens	Whitehouse Road

### **Decisions on Places**

The decision to offer a place will be made by the Nursery Admissions Panel, this decision is final and there is no right of appeal. This decision 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.

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

### **Nursery Open Days**

The nursery will hold three open days per academic year. Once your child has been offered a place at the nursery they will be invited to a Stay and Play session so they can get to know the nursery and you can ask the staff any questions you might have. This will be in the term before they are 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 and will be automatically made available to a child on the waiting list. If parents later wish for their child to return to the nursery then they will have to re-apply and be placed on the waiting list. This will be considered a new application and will be assessed 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/pre school teacher will talk to parents and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery/pre school 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 record.

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/Pre school.

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 be 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 Pre School 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 which can be found here:

[https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20071/school\\_places\\_and\\_admissions/427/primary\\_school\\_places\\_and\\_admissions](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20071/school_places_and_admissions/427/primary_school_places_and_admissions)

The school pre school staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes to plan for a smooth transition to their chosen or allocated school. Pre school 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 or pre school class. Parents wishing to object to a decision concerning their application should in the first instance put their concerns to the Headteacher.

### **Paid Sessions and Extra Fees**

Depending on availability there may be the opportunity for the parents of children who are in receipt of 15 hours funding to pay for additional 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.

For children who attend all day, you will be required to pay £2.50 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.