



Nursery Admissions Policy

Agreed by Governing Body: Autumn 2025

To be reviewed: Autumn 2026

Group Responsible: Full Governors

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Statement of intent

The CARE Federation aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high-quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the nursery.

This nursery caters for the following age ranges:

- Children aged between three and four.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2024 to 2025'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Nursery Fees Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy

2. Equal opportunities

The nursery will implement an effective policy that ensures equality of opportunities for all, provides a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity, and is equally accessible to all.

When making decisions about admissions the nursery will ensure that it aims to improve the outcomes of all children and reduce inequalities whilst upholding its duties under the Equality Act to put in place adjustments for children with SEND as required to prevent any disadvantage.

Admissions to the nursery will be open, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

3. Application process

Admissions to nursery provision will not in any way increase children's chances of admission to the infant school; the infant school have their own admissions policy.

Parents choosing to send their child to the nursery will need to complete an admissions form and return this to the nursery or school office. Once they have completed the admission form and paid the registration fee of £75.00, they will be added to the waiting list. The nursery will be in regular contact with those on the waiting list to keep them updated and to formally offer them a place if and when one is available.

Once a place is available, parents will receive a formal written offer which they will need to accept or decline in writing. After accepting the place, they will need to send in their child's birth certificate and proof address.

The nursery may ask parents to complete a form to help us ensure they receive any free childcare hours, Early Years Pupil Premium or Disability Access Funding to which they may be eligible.

Parents who secure a place will be offered a date to begin the transition programme to ensure they and their child have time to settle.

More information on fees, charges and free childcare entitlements is outlined in the Nursery Fees Policy.

4. Application timetable

A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time before their child's third birthday.

Application forms can be obtained from the nursery managers or main school office.

Places offered are available to the child from the date the place is offered, until 31 August following their fourth birthday.

The LA will consider securing additional free hours for parents who have applied or re-confirmed by the deadline, but receive their valid 30 hours eligibility code after the beginning of the term, up to the dates set out below:

- Application/re-confirmation by 31 August – code start date between 1 - 14 September

- Application/re-confirmation by 31 December – code start date between 1 – 14 January
- Application/re-confirmation by 31 March – code start date between 1 – 14 April

The LA is not required to secure additional free hours where the parent has applied after 31 August, 31 December or 31 March, or for any codes issued after the dates outlined above.

5. Additional costs

The nursery is able to charge additional costs as part of a free entitlement place – this includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Meals and snacks
- Nappies
- Sun cream
- School trips
- Specialist tuition

Where charges are made in line with the above, parents are expected to pay for these; however, payments are voluntary. Where parents are not willing to provide costs for the above, they will be permitted to provide their own supplies to the nursery. The nursery may also consider waiving or reducing the costs of meals or snacks, particularly for disadvantaged parents.

6. Oversubscription

Children who have an EHC plan that names the nursery are admitted before the oversubscription criteria is applied. Children with an EHC plan that does not name the nursery will be referred to the nursery's admissions manager to determine an appropriate place, in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol.

The governing board may increase the priority of an application where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child, which can be appropriately met by the nursery.

The oversubscription criteria, set out in priority order, are as follows:

1. LAC or children who were previously looked after but have subsequently been adopted or become subject to a residence or special guardianship order

2. Children with a social or medical need who have been referred by another professional service, those entitled to the early years pupil premium or services premium
3. Children who will have a sibling attending the nursery or the main school at the time of admission
4. Children of staff who have:
 - Been employed at the nursery or school for two or more years at time the application for admission is made
 - Been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a skill shortage
5. Children living within the catchment area for the nursery
6. All other children, oldest first

Where there is a tiebreak scenario within the criteria, priority will be given firstly to a child who lives closest to the nursery based on a straight-line measurement, then by date of birth, with the older child given priority.

7. Withdrawing offers

Once a written offer has been made, there are limited circumstances in which an offer can be withdrawn – these are as follows:

- Offers made in error
- Offers made on the basis of fraudulent applications
- Offers made on the basis of intentionally misleading applications
- Parents not responding to an offer within six weeks
- A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education
- A family registering their child at two maintained settings

8. Delayed starts and withdrawn places

Following receipt of a registration form, the start date can only be delayed once, and only be delayed by one month, before the child's reserved place will be open to others and the child's name added back onto the waiting list.

If parents decide to withdraw their child from the nursery after being offered a place, they must give the nursery at least one month's notice. Parents may be charged for this period, or it may come out of their nursery entitlement.

Notice of a delayed start or withdrawal must be in writing.

9. Non-attendance

Parents must inform the nursery as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend for the whole or part of a day when they are due to attend.

Parents must give a minimum of one month's notice if they wish to reduce the level of provision their child receives. This requirement applies both before and after provision begins.

Attendance and absence will be monitored in accordance with the Attendance and Absence Policy

10. Refusal of admission

A child is only refused admission if one of the following criteria are met:

- The nursery has reached its admissions limit
- The child is not of the appropriate age

As nursery education is not compulsory, parents do not have a statutory right to appeal against the admission authority's refusal to award a place to their child.

Parents may appeal to the SEND tribunal against the provision named by the authority in the EHC plan.

11. Transition arrangements

- Parents/carers are invited to visit the nursery prior to the transition
- We will agree how we will introduce and settle your child into our setting to ensure individual needs are met
- We will allocate a key person appropriate to your child's needs
- We will provide induction sessions, encouraging parents/carers with their child to visit our setting on at least three occasions before their child is due to start attending full sessions alone. Unless authorised for exceptional circumstances, this is expected to be: first session for 1.5

hours, second session for 3 hours and third session for up to 6 hours. This will be extended or adjusted where necessary in response to the child's needs.

- We will welcome parents/carers at our sessions until they feel confident their child has settled and no longer needs them to stay.
- We will reassure parents/carers when they leave their child by sharing photographs and/or giving them information about their child's activities and welfare while attending our setting. Parents/carers are always welcome to phone the nursery for a brief check-in if they are concerned when first leaving their child.
- We will introduce new starters into our setting in small numbers over a planned period of time to allow each child the time and support needed to settle.

12. Data protection

The nursery will act in compliance with the Data Protection Policy when processing personal data.

When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Where personal information is processed, the nursery will ensure it is kept up-to-date and the LA will ensure that the rights of data subjects are reserved at all times.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn 2026.