

# Hillshott Infant School and Nursery



## Policy for Nursery Admissions

**October 2024**

The persons responsible for this policy are:

Melissa Peacock – Headteacher
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Chris Bassett – Chair of Governors
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This policy is subject to annual review by the Governing body.

This policy states our approach to providing Nursery education in our school.

There are **26** Nursery places (PAN) available to children who celebrate their fourth birthday during the academic year (1st September – 31<sup>st</sup> August). These places are offered as a mix of sessions allowing up to 52 sessions within our Nursery.

The offers meet the needs of the local community, allowing as many families as possible to benefit from Nursery education at Hillshott.

**Our Offers** (see 'Appendix 1 – Offer Conditions')

- **Offer 1** - 15-hours Free Early Education

Children receive high quality education as half-day sessions across five mornings **OR** afternoons, Monday to Friday during term time. Half-day sessions are equal to 3 hours. Morning sessions are 8.30am - 11.30am and afternoon sessions are 12.10pm - 3.10pm each day.

- **Offer 2** - 30-hours Free Extended Childcare

Children receive high quality early education as full-day sessions Monday to Friday during term time. The full-day session is equal to 6 hours. Sessions are offered as continuous blocks of time from 8.30am to 2.30pm each day.

### **Buy-in Session Options**

Two 'buy-in' session options support our two offers. These are:

#### **1. Extended Childcare sessions**

Available to **15-hours Free Early Education** pupils, allowing parents to buy-in extended hours as appropriate.

#### **2. End of day session**

Available to **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** families allowing for a 3.10pm pick up. This mirrors the afternoon finish time for **15-hours Free Early Education** children.

These options are chargeable - please see the 'Charges & Invoicing' section for cost detail.

### **Charges and Invoicing**

The following costs apply, payable directly to school:

<b>Session Type</b>	<b>Session Cost</b>
Extended Childcare session	£17.50 per session – pick up is 3.10pm
End of day session	£5.00 per session

Consideration will include similar provisions offered locally to ensure value for money for both families and the school. Any changes will be communicated half termly in advance.

Invoices are issued via email within the first week of each half term and are payable within 10 working days. This allows us to offer unutilised sessions to other families.

Non-payment of invoices will result in the child being withdrawn from their Nursery session until the balance has been settled in full. These sessions will be offered to other children after a full half term of non-payment.

Payment is required directly to the school's bank account via bank transfer or Tax Free Childcare Vouchers.

**30-hours Free Extended Childcare** funding is paid directly to school. Parents are responsible for checking their eligibility with HMRC and sharing that information with the school office. Eligibility is to be reconfirmed termly and is explained within 'Appendix 1 – Offer Conditions'.

## Admissions

The school's governing board are responsible in law for the admission of Nursery pupils. By agreement, governors will apply the admissions criteria to all applications they receive.

The administration of Nursery places is completed by the School Business Manager. Places are allocated according to the following policy and priority order;

**1. Child Looked After (CLA) or with Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP).** The school does not have any specific units or facilities for pupils with physical disabilities. As far as possible we will ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as other pupils.

**2. Medical or Social Needs**

**3. Siblings**

**4. Child's nearest Nursery**

**5. Children of Staff.**

Please see 'Appendix 2 – Admissions Criteria Definitions' section for detail on all of the above criteria.

Where the application of the above criteria results in a situation where there are more children with an equal right to Nursery admission than the number of available places, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured using Google maps.

Where the distance measurement results in more than one child having an identical claim to the last available place (families residing in flats) priority will be given to the lowest house number.

### Please note

- Attendance at the Nursery does not guarantee admission to the main school. You will need to apply separately for admission to Hillshott Infant School via Hertfordshire County Council
- If you have more than one child going through the application process at the same time, you must make a separate application for each child
- The school will only admit over the Published Admission Number (PAN) when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at a school
- If parents are unsuccessful in securing a Nursery place, there is no appeals process. A continuing interest list will be maintained until the end of the summer term with places being allocated on proximity to school.

The admission application form is available for parents to download via the website or by requesting a paper copy from the school office.

Completed forms should be submitted before the closing date either via email, post or in person to the school office. Please see the 'Application Timeline' section for key dates within the admissions process.

## Admission Key Dates

Please note the key dates in the admissions process to ensure your child is considered for a place within our Nursery. The admission timeline can be found on the school website and will change annually in consultation with local Letchworth schools.

- 04/11/2024 - Applications open
- 03/03/2025 - Application deadline
- 17/03/2025 - Offers made by email
- 04/04/2025 - Deadline for parents to accept/decline offers

## Curriculum

Education during morning and afternoon sessions is compliant with the Early Years and Foundation Stage curriculum. The morning session will be repeated in the afternoon session to ensure a consistent education for **15 Hours Free Early Education** children. **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** children will continue with child-initiated learning and Teacher led sessions during the afternoon. Children will have access to a quiet area for rest or sleep. This is to satisfy **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** guidelines set by central Government.

## Appendix 1 – Offer Conditions

Conditions applicable to **ALL** Nursery children

1. Any changes to sessions are required half termly in advance. During this term they may still be chargeable
2. All charges/costs are non-refundable as the school will have made provision for staffing which happens regardless of children being able to attend
3. Where the school day ends earlier than 3.10pm, no refunds or banking of time is allowed e.g. school trips, early closure at the end of term or bad weather. Children will require collection from school at the revised earlier time in these instances.

Conditions applicable to **15 Hours Free Early Education** provision only

1. If the preferred session is not offered in the first instance, names will be kept on a continuing interest list. Should the preferred session time subsequently become available, then contact will be made to offer a session swap. Priority will be given on a child's date of birth, eldest first
2. Sessions are only offered over 5 morning sessions or afternoon sessions per week. The School is unable to accommodate any other configuration of hours (i.e. 2 ½ days per week).

**30-hours Free Extended Childcare** provision only

1. The School expects parents eligible for **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** to book their child into the entire 30 hours entitled.
2. **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** guidelines state daily sessions can only be taken as continuous blocks of time. This is administered via the detail outlined in the 'Our Offers' section. The school offers an additional End of Day session – please see 'Charges & Invoice' section for cost detail
3. Sessions are only offered over 5 days per week. The School is not able to accommodate any other configuration or compression of hours
4. As sessions are offered as 6 continuous hours per day, there is no provision for 'banking' unused time. For example: children not staying every afternoon, cannot bank unused time to pay for additional sessions on other afternoons
5. Parents are responsible for ensuring their eligibility for **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** on a termly basis **before the end of term** via the HMRC website. If parents are eligible then HMRC will provide a code. This should be passed to the school office with at least a half terms notice in advance (or as soon as possible) to allow for continuous funding
6. Where families are no longer eligible for **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** they will be offered one of two options:

**Option 1** - to buy in additional hours as explained in 'Our Offers' section. Please see 'Charges & Invoice' section for cost detail.

**Option 2** - a **15 Hours Free Early Education** afternoon session. The School reserves the right to offer an afternoon session for staffing / operational reasons. This also ensures enough morning sessions for those families eligible for **30-hours Free Extended Childcare** funding.

## **Appendix 2 – Admission Criteria Definitions**

These admissions rules are based on those used by Hertfordshire County Council for school admissions.

### **Rule 1 – Children Looked After**

Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.

Children who were not looked after immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, will not be prioritised under this rule.

Please include a letter or document from your child's social worker, advisory teacher or other professional as evidence.

### **Rule 2 - Medical or Social Needs**

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. All Hertfordshire schools can support children with a wide range of additional needs and are expected to accommodate severe medical needs.

An application made under this rule should clearly demonstrate why the school applied for is the **only one** that can meet your child's need in a way that no other school can.

### **Rule 3 – Siblings (including at the linked junior school)**

Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school (or linked school) at the time of application. This means we will consider siblings either attending Hillshott school or Pixmore school. 'Sibling' definition:

- Brother or sister
- Half brother or sister
- Adopted brother or sister
- Child of the parent / carer or partner

Children looked after or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same house. For example, a looked after child in a short term foster or bridging placement.

In every case, the sibling must be living permanently in the same family home (at least Monday to Friday).

### **Rule 4 – Child's Nearest Nursery (distance)**

Children who live closest to the Nursery are given priority. This will be measured using Google maps mapping system.

### **Rule 5 - Staff**

Anyone employed by the school at the time of admission, where the school holds the contract. Parent must be the biological or adoptive parent or have other legal responsibility for that child or have been cohabiting with the parent of the child. The child must reside at the same permanent address of the staff member at the time of application. Clarification evidence will be requested.

## **Tiebreak**

A tiebreak will be used if 2 applications have addresses that measure the same distance from a school. For example, if 2 applications had identical home to school distance measurements, a tiebreak would be used to decide which applicant is offered a place.

If 2 applications were received from the same block of flats, the applicant with the lower door number would be classed as nearest and offered a place because they are likely to be closer to the ground floor and, therefore, the school.

## **Fraudulent applications**

The school will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses. If any doubt exists over address detail, evidence will be requested, monitored and checked. Nursery places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided with action taken in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school / setting
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility
- When a family move shortly after the closing date of application