



Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy

Nursery Admissions Policy

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Statement of intent

Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class. The governing body is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the academy's Nursery Admission Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the academy.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation

Guidance

- DfE (2014) 'Schools Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guide'

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following academy policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Transition Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. Free nursery arrangements

- 2.1. Children are eligible for universal 15 hours free childcare from the beginning of the term after they turn three and no later than the 31st August following their fourth birthday.
- 2.2. The academy also offers a maximum of 30 hours free childcare as an extension to the universal 15 hours free childcare to eligible families.
- 2.3. The academy can accommodate a maximum of 26 children per nursery session of ages three and four.
- 2.4. Parents wanting to access the universal 15 hours free childcare apply at the academy.
- 2.5. Parents wanting to access the 30 hours free childcare entitlement must apply to do so through the digital childcare service.
- 2.6. Parents are able to access the nursery for 38 weeks out of the year, i.e. during term time.
- 2.7. Parents eligible for 30 hours free childcare can find information about their possible eligibility for tax-free childcare through academy holidays from the digital childcare service.
- 2.8. The sessions available for nursery children are as follows:
- Full time places (30 hours):
5 full days per week
 - Part time places (15 hours):
5 mornings per week,
5 afternoons per week

3. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare

- 3.1. Parents of children aged three and four must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare:
- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period – i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they do not need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)
 - The parent should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
 - One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
 - One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
 - If a non-European Economic Area national, the parent has recourse to public funds
- 3.2. Parents should check their own eligibility for the scheme using the government's Childcare Choices website or childcare calculator. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

- 3.3. Parents can only start claiming their 30 hours free childcare the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC. For this reason, parents are urged to apply as soon as possible.
- 3.4. If eligible, parents must provide the academy with their unique code to confirm they are eligible for the scheme, together with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth. As the free childcare cannot be claimed until the code has been verified, parents should provide the academy with this information as soon as possible in order to avoid delay.
- 3.5. Parents will be prompted every three months by HMRC to reconfirm that they remain eligible for free childcare.
- 3.6. The LA will audit the eligibility codes at six points during the year to identify any children who have fallen out of eligibility.
- 3.7. In accordance with 3.6, the LA will notify the academy as soon as possible where parents have fallen out of their eligibility. The academy will then notify parents within five working days.
- 3.8. If a child becomes ineligible for the 30 hours free childcare, they will still be entitled to 15 hours of universal free childcare

4. **Extension of 30 hours to children in foster care and vulnerable pupils**

- 4.1. Children in foster care are also eligible for the additional hours, provided that they meet the following criteria:
 1. Accessing the extended hours is consistent with the child's care plan, placing the child at the centre of the process and decision-making;
 2. That, in single parent foster families, the foster parent engages in paid work outside their role as a foster parent; and
 3. In two parent foster families, both individuals engage in paid work outside their role as a foster parent.
- 4.2. In accordance with criteria 3, if one individual is not a foster parent, then they must be in qualifying paid work and earn a minimum of the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage to be eligible.
- 4.3. There is no requirement on the type of work or number of hours that a foster parent must work in order to access the 30 hours, and there is no minimum earnings limit – although they must be engaging in paid work.
- 4.4. Children in foster care will continue to be eligible for the universal 15 hours regardless of the working status of their foster parents.
- 4.5. There is no requirement to access the full 30 hours if this is not necessary.
- 4.6. To apply for the additional hours, foster parents must apply directly to the LA: there is no requirement to apply via the digital childcare service.
- 4.7. When initiating an application, foster parents are required to inform the child's social worker.
- 4.8. *Should there be spare places available, the Headteacher may suggest an additional 15 hours (unfunded) for those pupils considered to be 'vulnerable' (see criteria below) and not in receipt of the additional 15 hour extended funding. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis after consultation with the Headteacher.*

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

- *have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance. This might include:*
- *children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services or who have previously received support from children's social care services (as identified by local authorities)*
- *adopted children or children on a special guardianship order*
- *those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')*
- *those living in temporary accommodation*
- *those who are young carers*
- *those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)*
- *care leavers*
- *children and young people in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, parental offending, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse*
- *others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health*

Further information is available from the Local Authority.

5. Application timetable

- 5.1. A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday.
- 5.2. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time from birth.
- 5.3. Application forms for 15 hours universal nursery places are available from the academy.
- 5.4. Acceptance letters are sent out on the following dates:
 - For places in the Spring term – November
 - For places in the Summer term – February
 - For places in Autumn term – May
- 5.5. Where places are remaining later admissions are possible, up to the agreed admissions limit.
- 5.6. Places offered are available to the child from the date the place is offered, until 31st August following their fourth birthday.

6. Admission criteria

- 6.1. Admission is by age order **providing: the child would benefit from a placement in our setting; that we are able to meet need; that placement would not be detrimental to the other children within the academy. The following exceptions also apply to the admission by age order criteria:**
 - Children who have an education, health and care plan (EHC) that names the academy are admitted before the oversubscription criteria are applied **providing: the child would benefit from a placement in our setting; that we are able to meet need; that placement would not be detrimental to the other children within the academy.**
 - Children with an EHC plan that does not name the academy can be referred to the headteacher to determine an appropriate place in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol **providing: the child would benefit from a placement in**

our setting; that we are able to meet need; that placement would not be detrimental to the other children within the academy.

- 6.2. The academy must view a child's birth certificate and proof of parental / carer address before admission to the nursery.
- 6.3. Admission to the nursery is arranged by the academy after completion of our application form, which is available from the academy office and on the website.

7. Additional costs

- 7.1. 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
 - Academy trips
 - Specialist tuition
- 7.2. Where charges are made in line with 7.1, parents are expected to pay for these; however, payments are voluntary.
- 7.3. 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.

8. Waiting list

- 8.1. In circumstances where more applications are received than places are available, children will remain on the waiting list **in line with the criteria and circumstances stated in section 6.1 of this policy.**
- 8.2. If a place becomes available, the nursery will contact the parents of the child at the top of the list
- 8.3. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available.

9. Withdrawing offers

- 9.1. 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 four weeks
 - A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education
 - A family registering their child at two maintained settings

10. Refusal of admission

- 10.1. A child is only refused admission if the following criteria are met:
 - The nursery has reached its admissions limit
 - The child is not of the appropriate age
 - Please also refer to criteria in section 6 of this policy

- 10.2. Parents do not have a statutory right to appeal against the academy's refusal to award a place to their child.

11. Admission to Reception

- 11.1. Children who turn four by the 31st August will transfer to the reception year group of a school or academy on the 1st September.
- 11.2. Admission to the reception year in a school or academy is by application to the Local Authority.
- 11.3. Attendance at the nursery of Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy does not guarantee a place in the academy's reception classes.
- 11.4. Parents have the choice of how and when their child starts Reception class until they reach the compulsory age:
- Children turning five-years-old between 1 January and 31 March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1 April
 - Children turning five-years-old between 1 April and 31 August are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 September
 - Children turning five-years-old between 1 September and 31 December are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 January
- 11.5. If parents wish for their child to remain in the nursery until they reach compulsory academy age rather than taking up a place in Reception, they must discuss this with the academy at the earliest opportunity.

12. Transition arrangements

- 12.1. During the term prior to admission to nursery, we invite parents/ carers in for taster sessions for the children starting nursery and liaise with staff from pre-schools that the children have attended.
- 12.2. During the Summer term nursery staff provide reception teachers from the primary schools to which the children will transfer with information about the child's progress across all the areas of learning and will spend time talking to the teacher about the child's social, health and emotional needs.
- 12.3. Details of children with SEND or particular educational requirements are shared including their development throughout the year, support given and needed, and details of any other agencies involved.
- 12.4. Separate transition meetings are held for children with EHC plans, involving all agencies, including visits to new settings with staff.
- 12.5. Further information relating to the transition between nursery and Reception can be found in the academy's Transition Policy.

13. Data protection

- 13.1. When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
- 13.2. The nursery will act in compliance with the Data Protection Policy when processing personal data.

Policy reviewed: May 2023

Approved by the Governing Body on: 11th May 2023

Review date: March 2025