

Ashmead Nursery Admissions Policy 2017/18

Approved by Resources Committee
October 2017

Review date: October 2018

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1. Aims

Our aims are:

- 1.1 To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high quality child centred nursery education on a fair and equitable basis
- 1.2 To establish an admissions policy governed by clearly defined criteria that may be articulated to parents and other professionals
- 1.3 To provide high quality child-centred nursery education to children and families in our community

2. Transition in to Ashmead Nursery

- 2.1 All children who intend to take up a place at our nursery will be offered a home visit from two of the nursery staff. These visits (for Autumn term starters) will take place at the end of the Summer term or beginning of the Autumn term. This visit is a chance for parents to find out information and ask any questions regarding this important phase of their child's life. All appropriate forms will usually be completed at this stage too.
- 2.2 To make the transition easier for the children, they will be staggered into the nursery in small groups. Therefore at each intake point (i.e. September or January) there will be a window of 'settling in' time allocated to ensure all new starters (and their parents/carers) are supported in this new and sometimes challenging transition.

3. Nursery Session – timings and options

3.1 Current Nursery Options:

Morning Session: 9:00am – 12:00pm = 15 hours per week

Afternoon Session: 12:30pm – 3:30pm = 15 hours per week

Morning AND Afternoon Sessions: 9.00 – 12.00 and 12.30 – 3.30 = 30 hours nursery provision per week.

Full time: 9:00am – 3:30pm = 32.5 hours nursery provision per week. *See below for full time criteria.*

- 3.2 For families eligible for 30 hours funding, we offer two options: to have both a morning and afternoon place (each 15 hours) and to go home for the lunch period in the middle; or to pay a 'top up' fee for the time spent in nursery not covered by the 30 hour funding (as a full week is 32.5 hours). A full time (32.5 hour) place needs to be secured by paying the top up fee, even if the child does not always stay for lunch, as we will cover staff ratios for the child's full time place even if they are absent.
- 3.3 Families not eligible for the 30 hours funding that wish to pay a top up fee for a full time place will be considered if there are spaces available (**see point 6 below**).

4. Criteria for admission to the nursery

- 4.1 Ashmead Nursery runs for 2 sessions per day: 3 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon. The government funds all children for either a morning or afternoon 15-hour place from the term after their third birthday.
- 4.2 Working parents might be entitled to a 30-hour funded nursery place – see the website 'Childcare Choices' to check eligibility: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>
- 4.3 A period of three terms is regarded as the minimum time that children should spend in nursery, and the maximum is five terms.
- 4.4 Where space is available, pupils will be admitted to the Nursery the term after they become 3.
- 4.5 Pupils born on or before 31st August in the relevant year will be admitted in the Autumn Term. If spaces in nursery become available then the school will offer a January intake for pupils born on or before 31st December.
- 4.6 The school will consider the intake of an Easter cohort of children if 4 or more spaces in the nursery are available at this time. We believe that children need time and space to settle effectively but cannot do this successfully if there is not a sufficiently sized peer group for them to settle with. If we believe that

the drawbacks of starting 3 or fewer children at this point in the academic year outweigh the benefits, we would recommend that the parent apply for a September place to allow their child to start with a larger cohort of children who are at the same stage. This allows the nursery to tailor the settling in period more effectively to the child's individual needs.

4.7 Ashmead will offer children a place in the nursery according to the criteria in the following order of priority (as outlined by LA):

- *Children in the care of a Local Authority (Looked after children)*
- *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.)*
- *Children who have an elder sibling attending Ashmead Primary School in the September of the year of their admission.*
- *Children who live closest to the school.*

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

5. Allocation of preferred sessions

5.1 Parents will be asked to indicate whether a morning or afternoon nursery session is preferred. Account will be taken of any preferences for session options expressed by parents, but preferences will be allocated subject to availability, with consideration taken of the needs of the children, and are not guaranteed. It is at the EYFS phase leader's discretion to allocate places in order to best provide a balance of need and ages within the two sessions to ensure quality provision is maintained.

5.2 At Ashmead we believe in the importance of creating routines that support children to develop to their full potential. It is therefore our policy that once a morning or afternoon place has been offered and accepted, your child will remain part of this session (AM or PM) for the entirety of their time at Ashmead Nursery. Not only does this help build children's confidence in the daily routine but it also allows them to develop strong bonds with the adults and children in their session.

6. 'Topped Up' Nursery Hours

6.1 Children who are entitled to a 30-hour funded place, or whose parents are not entitled to 30 hours but still want to top up a 15-hour place to a full time place, will be considered for a flexible full time place, if there are spaces in nursery at that time. This full time option enables the child to continue to develop within a rich and stimulating school setting that is lead by an experienced qualified teacher.

6.2 There are a limited number of full time places available and they will be allocated according to the following criteria:

- a) Family is eligible for 30 hours funding and chooses to pay the top up fee to cover the lunch period each day. If these places are oversubscribed, places will be allocated according to the criteria in the order of priority shown below.
- b) Family is not eligible for 30 hours but wishes to top up from 15 hours. If these places are oversubscribed, places will be allocated according to the criteria in the order of priority shown below.

Criteria for allocating full time places (in order of priority)

- *Has been settled in a full time place in the previous month (e.g. if a parent is no longer eligible for 30 hours funding but wants to keep the full time place for consistency for the child)*
- *Is in the care of the local authority*
- *Has a particularly compelling educational and/or social or medical need*
- *Has an older sibling who attends Ashmead Primary School*
- *Lives closest to the school*

In the event of more than one child being eligible under a criterion then the next criterion would apply also, for example a child with a compelling need who is also a sibling or a sibling who also lives closest to the school.

- 6.3 Top up sessions will also be allocated based on the **current fees and term and conditions**.
- 6.4 For a child entitled to 15 hours free provision per week/3 hours per day, the top-up costs will include provision for 3 ½ extra hours per day.
- 6.5 For a child entitled to 30 hours free provision per week/6 hours per day, the top up fees will include provision over lunch time, 2 ½ hours per week.
- 6.6 The top up fee is based on the standard rate we currently receive from the local authority. To top up to full time from 15 hours per week will be **£86.45 per week** (even if only two or three of the five days are taken up). To top up to full time from 30 hours per week will be **£12.35 per week**. Top up fees are due termly. *Please note: these fees may change in accordance with any changes imposed or suggested by the LA. Current charges are based on the rate we get from the LA for a funded place (£4.94 per hour).*
- 6.7 In order to provide a flexible top up system, that still ensures a high ratio of adults to children throughout the week, we ask parents to:
- Agree top up sessions in advance on a termly basis.**
 - Pay for the extra sessions in advance (see terms and conditions).**
- 6.8 Each term parents will be **financially responsible** for days booked whether the child attends or not, including any absence because of illness or term time holidays taken. If a child leaves mid term, fees are due until the end of that term.

7. Transition from Nursery to Reception

- 7.1 If you are given a place at Ashmead Nursery it does not mean that you will automatically be allocated a place to our Reception class. The LA manages all Reception admissions and all applications need to be made through Lewisham.
- 7.2 Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes, under the guidance of the EYFS Phase Leader, 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.
- 7.3 For more information regarding transition please see our **EYFS Policy**.