



Shefford Lower School

Nursery Admissions Policy

| Written by | Reviewed & Ratified by Governors | Shared with Staff | Last Updated | Next Review Due |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Lorraine Freeman Deputy Headteacher Stephanie Miller EYFS Phase Leader | April 2025 | April 2025 | April 2025 | March 2026 |

1.0 Aims

- To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high-quality child centered 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 that we make the very best use of our resources.
- To provide high quality child centered nursery education to children and families in our local community.

2.0 Nursery Intake

- The Nursery Class has a yearly intake each September. Children are eligible for a place during the academic year following their third birthday. Please see our website for the qualifying dates for each year group.
- Any spare places will be allocated during the year, as they become available, providing that the child will be 4 during the academic year in which they enter nursery.

3.0 Criteria for Admission to the Nursery

The Nursery Class at Shefford Lower School is a 90 place Nursery based on 2 sessions per day: 45 children in the morning and 45 children in the afternoon.

The government funds all children for 15 hours a week.

In addition, working parents may qualify for an additional 15 hours, giving them a total of 30 funded hours per week.

The Governors of the school will offer children a place in the nursery in the September following their third birthday according to the criteria in the following order of priority:

1. All Looked After children or children in the catchment area that were previously looked after.
2. Children living in the catchment area who are subject to either a Child Protection or Child In Need Plan.

3. Children living in the catchment area with siblings in the school.
4. Children living in the catchment area
5. Other Children with siblings at the school
6. Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school to the child's home address.

4.0 Nursery Session Times

4.1 Children should attend a minimum of 5 sessions, which equates to 15 hours.

4.2 Session times are as follows:

- Morning sessions: 9am – 12pm
- Afternoon sessions 12.00pm – 3.00pm.
- Full day sessions from 9am – 3pm.

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4.3 15 hours of funded sessions in nursery is offered as:

- 5 mornings (9am – 12pm)
- 5 afternoons (12pm – 3pm)
- Monday and Tuesday all day (9am – 3pm) and Wednesday morning (9am – 12pm)
- Wednesday afternoon (12pm – 3pm) and Thursday and Friday all day (9am – 3pm)

4.4 Those children eligible for the 15 hour funding may be able to attend additional sessions, subject to availability. Any additional sessions attended will be at a charge.

4.5 We also offer some 30 hour funded places, allowing children to attend between 5-10 sessions per week, equating to 15-30 hours.

4.6 The 30 hours of funded childcare can be used between up to three different settings. For example, a child could attend 15 sessions with us and 15 with another childcare provider.

5.0 Allocation of preferred sessions

Parents will be asked to give 2 preferences with regards to the session options when they apply for a place. If the preferred session is unavailable, the child will be offered an alternative session.

If there is a situation where a particular option is oversubscribed, then session times will be allocated according to the following criteria:

1. All Looked After children or previously Looked After children.
2. Children who are subject to either a Child Protection or Child In Need Plan and who require a particular session in order to facilitate meetings such as contact arrangements.
3. Children whose parents/carers require a particular session to allow them to continue to work/study or attend training. (Evidence will be required from employers).
4. Following this, places will be allocated by a random generator.

6.0 Decisions on Places

- Decisions will be made by the Nursery Admissions Panel of the School's Governing Body.

- Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admissions policy. Being offered a place does not guarantee first preference with regards to session options.
- Decisions will be final and there is no right of appeal.
- The offer of a nursery place DOES NOT in any way mean automatic entitlement to a place in the main school. Admissions into school are overseen by the local authority, Central Bedfordshire.
- Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the academic year.
- Parents whose children attend all day sessions will need to provide a packed lunch.

7.0 Nursery Open days

- The Nursery Class will hold an Open Evening for parents & an Open Day for parents & children during the summer term each year, prior to children starting the following term.
- Children admitted outside of the termly intakes will be invited to visit the nursery for a play session before they actually start.

8.0 Home Visits

- When possible, 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 first working week of the autumn term.
- The Nursery will be closed to children during the days in which the staff are conducting home visits.
- It may be possible for children who join the Nursery at other points during the year to receive a pre-arranged home visit before they are due to start.
- Home visits help to begin forming relationships between parents, practitioners and children and supports the sharing of key information and the building of secure attachments.

9.0 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, if possible. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open for a trial period and will be automatically made available to allocate to a child on the waiting list. If parents later wish their child to return to the nursery then they will have to re-apply for a place on the waiting list and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with all the other application. The fact that a child has previously been in the nursery class, or any other nursery class, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

10.0 Attendance & Loss of Nursery Place

- If attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the nursery teacher will talk to parents and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual.
- 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.
- 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.

11.0 Transfer from Nursery to School

- All parents and carers must be made aware that a place in the Nursery **does not** guarantee a place in the school and that they must still go through the correct Central Bedfordshire admissions procedure.
- The Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes 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.
- If a child is not offered a place in the school of their choice there will not be an option for children to remain in the nursery for the following academic year.