

# **HUNTINGTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**



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## **Nursery Admissions Policy**

2021

## **Introduction**

The school takes into account the guidance from Cheshire West and Chester Council but formulates its own Admission Policy.

We use the terms 'parent' and 'parents' as defined in the Education Acts (i.e. all natural parents whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has *parental responsibility* for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, *has care* of a child or young person).

## **Procedures for Huntington CP School Nursery**

The Nursery can accommodate a maximum of 26 children in each session. The pattern of attendance available is Monday to Friday, from 8:50 to 14:50, for the 38 weeks during which the primary school is open. Morning sessions will run from 8:50 to 11:50, and afternoon sessions from 11:50 to 14:50, with lunch taken by those attending the afternoon session early in that session. Parents who wish their child to attend the Nursery class must complete an application form and ensure it reaches the school before the annual deadline. The final decision as to whether and when a child is admitted, the number of hours a child is able to attend and their pattern of attendance, rests with the headteacher.

A child is eligible for admission to Huntington CP School Nursery for the year (1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August) within which their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday falls. The actual offer of a place will be dependent on places being available at the school.

The main intake will take place in September - if the Nursery is not full in September, places may be offered to children for admission at later dates.

School will offer a child a maximum placement of three terms at Huntington CP Nursery. Children may not remain in the Nursery class beyond the normal admission date for Reception classes (i.e. the September of the school year concerned).

Huntington CP School Nursery operates as part of the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with the primary school Reception class: some facilities are shared, and staff work in close co-operation to provide progressive learning experiences for all the children.

**Parents should be aware that the offer of a place in the Nursery class does not ensure a place in the Reception class at Huntington CP School – normal admissions procedures, as determined and managed by Cheshire West and Chester Council, will apply for Reception class places.**

## **Payment for additional hours provision (between 15 and 30 hours)**

While all children are entitled to 15 hours free provision, many will also be eligible for 30 hours free provision (see Appendix 2 for eligibility criteria). If a child attends the Nursery for more than 15 hours, but is not eligible for free 30 hour provision, a charge of £12 per 3-hour session will be made by the school. Payment will still be required for sessions booked but not attended (due to illness or holiday, for example).

If your child is eligible for 30 hours free provision, you need to provide evidence that your 30 hour eligibility code is valid **before** 1<sup>st</sup> September of the same year your child commences Nursery, otherwise payment will be requested for the additional 15 hours until the following term. Included with your application forms for Nursery will be a *Parental Agreement for 3 /4 Year Funding Claim*, which you will be requested to complete and return to school with the admission documents.

If your child joins the Nursery during a later term, the deadline for return of this parental agreement, together with the eligibility code, will be the last day of the previous term.

## **A. Priority for admissions**

The admissions panel will consider all applications in accordance with the following criteria, set out in priority order. Length of time on *any* waiting list will not be taken into account.

- (i) Children in need, as defined by the Children Act 1989. These children will either be referred to the school through Social Services or through the Health Authority (usually through CDC or other health agencies). This includes Children in Care.
- (ii) Children with special educational needs as determined by the Education Act 1996.
- (iii) Children for whom exceptional personal/domestic circumstances (whether presented by the parents or otherwise) justify, in the Headteacher's view, admission to Nursery education. Such applications may be referred by either the Headteacher or parents to the Local Authority.
- (iv) Children who have siblings on the school roll (and whose siblings will still be attending the school in the following academic year).
- (v) Other children living in Cheshire West & Chester
- (vi) Children living outside Cheshire West & Chester

## **B. Prioritising in the event of oversubscription**

The school has adopted the following policy to provide clarity to parents on how places will be offered if the school is oversubscribed at any particular intake.

In the event of the school being oversubscribed the priority for admission will be applied as in paragraph A above. Each category will be looked at in turn as listed. If there are not enough places to meet demand for any of the above categories the following factors will be taken into account, set out in priority order.

- 1. The number of sessions requested.**
- 2. The age of the child.**
- 3. The proximity of the child's home to the school.**

### ***First determinant: The number of days/sessions requested***

A parent may request fewer than 5 full days per week in blocks of 1 session (of duration three hours, morning or afternoon). The school will match these requests to any available places. However, **priority will be given to those parents wishing to take up a full 30 hour (5 day) place at Huntington CP.** Once these children have been allocated places, any remaining places will be offered to those wishing to take up less than the maximum (priority being given to those opting for the greatest number of sessions – until the remaining places are filled).

### ***Second determinant: The age of the child***

The age of the child shall be determined by the date of birth supplied to the school on the application form (and evidenced by a birth certificate or passport). The offer of a place will be determined by the chronological age of the child, with older children taking priority over younger children.

### ***Third determinant: Proximity of the child's home to the school***

In cases where this determinant needs to be used the addresses of the families concerned will be referred to the Local Authority Admissions Officer to determine the distances. Places will then be offered to pupils living nearest the school, measured using an Ordnance Survey 'address-point' system which measures straight line distances in miles from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of residence.

### ***Twins, triplets etc:***

The school will treat applications from parents with twins, triplets etc., that fall outside A (iii), as individual applications.

If only one place is available and, by using the above determinants, one child from a set of twins, triplets etc. is the next child to be offered a place, the parents will be contacted and given first refusal for the place. If they accept one place the second twin, triplet etc. will automatically be the next in line to be offered a place. However, if a place is accepted for one twin or triplet there is no guarantee that a place will be available for the second or succeeding twin or triplet.

If the place is declined we cannot hold vacant places open and must offer it to the next child in line.

## **C. The Application Process**

Parents are encouraged to visit the school before putting in an application for a place. This gives the parent the opportunity to view the school and to ask any questions they may have about the school, the admission policy or the admission process. While visiting the school is strongly recommended, it is not compulsory. If a parent wishes, the application form and prospectus may be sent out by post.

The headteacher and the school bursar form the admissions panel. To avoid any misunderstandings, other school staff will direct any questions or queries concerning admissions or the admissions process to the admissions panel.

For contact details, see section G.

### ***Application Form***

- A separate application form must be completed for each child applying for a place at the school.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the information required to enable the school to determine admissions.
- Help with completing the application form is available from the school office, if required.
- The school can only act upon the information contained in the application form (or any updating thereof).
- Applicants must fill in all sections of the application form.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the school of any changes to their circumstances that may affect their application for a place.
- Application forms can be updated only at the request of the applicant, and only prior to the closing date for applications.
- The applicant may telephone the school office, e-mail the school at the admin address, write to the school bursar or personally call in to the school office to update their application.

### ***Timing of the Applications and Admissions***

The Governing Body and the Headteacher have the responsibility to ensure that the school achieves the maximum take-up of the places at the school. With full regard to our Admissions Policy, the following will apply.

1. All initial expressions of interest in a Nursery place should be made in writing via the school office.
2. At the end of the April preceding entry (in September) the school will write to all families who have registered an initial interest, asking them to confirm this interest in writing within two

weeks, using the school's Nursery application form, and to indicate how many sessions they wish to be allocated. This letter will clearly indicate that:

- preference will be given to families wishing to be allocated the full 5 days.
- the admission policy will be used to determine the final offer of places should there be oversubscription.
- firm offers of places will be confirmed in writing by the school once the due date for replies has passed.

3. All applications received by the school office will be dated on receipt.
4. Once the due date for return of applications has passed, the headteacher and school bursar will determine the allocation of Nursery places by reference to the admissions policy.
5. Written offers will then be forwarded to applicants who have been allocated places, within two weeks of the due date for return of applications.

### ***Late Applications***

- Late applications will be considered once the above procedure has been followed.
- If the Nursery is full, parents of children eligible for entry will be informed that the likelihood of a place is limited to a place being turned down by another child.
- If the Nursery has not filled all its vacancies by the end of the admissions process, any new applications from eligible children will be processed and places offered by date of receipt of the application (the criteria for oversubscription being applied if necessary).

### ***The offer of places***

- The offer of a place for a child at the Nursery is made in writing to the parent.
- The school does not offer or confirm places in any other way.
- No guarantee of a place is made to parents until the official offer is made in writing

### ***Notification of no place being available***

Once we have completed the application process, and acceptance of all places has been confirmed, the school will write to the parent of any eligible child who has not been offered a place. They will be informed that no place is currently available, but that the school will keep the child's name on file and inform them if a place does become available.

### ***Requests for information regarding the admission of individual children***

On submission of an application, parents sometimes request information as to when their child will be offered a place. The headteacher or bursar will offer a conditional response explaining what **may** happen but also informing the parent that no place is **guaranteed** until a **written offer** has been made.

Similar requests may be received at any time by the headteacher or bursar, who will offer a conditional response explaining what may happen but also informing the parent that no place is guaranteed until a written offer has been made.

## **D. Acceptance of Places**

- Written confirmation of the acceptance of a place is required by the school.
- Once a place has been offered by the school the parent must return the *Parent Contract* to the school by post, or deliver it directly to the school office.
- Acceptances hand delivered to school should be placed in a sealed envelope addressed to the bursar and handed into the school office. No responsibility will be taken for lost communication if not delivered in the correct manner.
- The offer of a place is time dependent: **two weeks will be allowed for a response.**
- A deadline for responding will be included on the offer letter.



# Appendix One

## Flexibility and Hours of attendance

The Local Authority has the responsibility to ensure that the needs of families regarding attendance at an Early Years Setting are met. This responsibility is met by ensuring that, within the locality, providers are able to meet the needs of parents. No individual setting is expected to be totally flexible, having to meet all parental requests, but the Local Authority has the responsibility to try to ensure that those requests are met somewhere in the locality.

The main purpose of Huntington CP School Nursery is to provide a high quality early years education for the children of our community.

There are 260 sessional places available at the school each week. The Governing Body and Headteacher have a responsibility to provide a mode of attendance at our school that is in the best interests of the children of our community and financially sustainable for our school.

Staff and Governors at Huntington CP School strongly believe that the best mode of attendance for children aged 3 to 4 years old is full time over a full five days.

This mode of attendance provides:

- Consistency – one of the most important aspects in supporting a child to make and maintain progress, to settle and flourish and to achieve highly.
- The best model for settling into the school at the start of a child's time here, allowing them to settle quickly, feeling safe and secure.
- The best opportunity for a child to quickly become familiar with the physical environment, routines, rules and boundaries.
- The best opportunity for a child to develop good working relationships with their peers and the adults supporting them.
- The best opportunity for a child to access a curriculum planned to meet individual needs where progress can be built on daily.
- The best opportunity to achieve their full potential.

It is our strong belief that this mode of attendance best meets the needs of the children in our community, and therefore we will prioritise applications to attend for five full days of six hours each.

## Appendix Two

### Eligibility for free 30-hour provision

You will be eligible for the 30-hour funded childcare offer if you (and your partner, if you have one):

**expect to earn, over the next 3 months, the equivalent of 16 hours a week on average at the national minimum wage or living wage: for example, over the next 3 months you expect to earn at least £1,813.76 if you are over 25.**

*If you or your partner are temporarily earning less than this amount because of coronavirus, you may still be eligible. You must be furloughed through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme or claiming a Self Employment Income Support Scheme grant to qualify.*

There is no requirement to work a certain amount of hours per week – it is all about how much you earn. Apprentices are also eligible as long as they earn the equivalent to 16 hours at the apprentice minimum wage.

AND

**You (and your partner if you have one) earn less than £100,000 per year (*less than £150,000 if you are a critical worker and have worked extra hours because of Coronavirus*).**

This applies if you are self-employed or on a zero-hours contract and expect to meet the earning criteria on average over the three months after you have applied for the 30-hours. HMRC will look at data such as your previous earnings to consider whether you are likely to meet the criteria and may contact you for further information if they are unsure.

If you are starting up your own business, you will not be expected to meet the minimum earning criteria in your first year of trading. You will need to provide a Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number to HMRC so that they can check your income at the end of the tax year.

If you are not working but you expect to take up paid work within 14 days, you can still apply for 30 hours, as long as you expect to meet the income criteria over the coming three months.

If you are a single parent and meet the above criteria, you will be eligible for the 30 hours. If you live with a partner, you both must meet the above criteria. This still applies if one of you is not the child's parent – for example, if you have remarried or have started living with a new partner. If you are separated/divorced from your child's parent, the eligibility rules will only apply to the parent that the child normally lives with (and their new partner if they are part of the same household).

### Exceptions

You will not have to meet the minimum earnings criteria if:

You and your partner are employed but one or both of you is temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity or paternity, adoption leave, or on statutory sick pay

You are employed but your partner either has substantial caring responsibilities, or is disabled or incapacitated, or vice versa (i.e. your partner is employed but you have caring responsibilities or are disabled or incapacitated). This is dependent on you or your partner being entitled to specific disability or caring benefits.