



St Edmund's
Nursery School and
Children's Centre

Admission, Attendance & Transition Policy September 2015

Rationale

At St Edmund's Nursery School & Children's Centre we believe that children benefit from mixing with other children from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, and of different ages and gender. We endeavour to ensure that our classes are always balanced in this way.

Our aim is to make the admissions, attendance and transition policy fair and easily understood. Within the system there must be flexibility to cater for children and families with exceptional circumstances.



We have 12 places for babies, 56 places for 2 to 3 year olds and 76 places for 3 to 4 year olds. There is a mixture of free and paid for provision (see Charging and Cancellation Policy).

St. Edmund's recognises children's well-being and learning are enhanced by a positive experience of transition from home to school/centre and between rooms. All our school/centre community is committed to support children and their families at times of transition having high regard to meeting children's social and emotional needs. This work is reflected in our procedures and practices.

Aims

- To provide high quality integrated education and care for children from birth to five years
- To provide a seamless transition from home to school/centre, from room to room and from nursery to primary school
- To offer flexible arrangements, wherever possible, in order to meet the needs of children and families
- To personalise support for individual children, particularly those who are vulnerable and have special needs
- To ensure that assessment records of children are used effectively at times of transition

Free entitlement

2-3 years

There are a number of free early education places for some two year olds in the two 2/3 rooms (it is not an entitlement for all children as it is for all 3 and 4 year olds). The free entitlement can be taken over five days, term-time only or four days, all-year round, either as morning sessions or afternoon sessions.

All children accessing these places must meet the following Local Authority (LA) criteria:

- Free School Meals
- Child who is Looked After (CLA)
- Low income families and earning no more than £16,190 a year
- Children who have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan
- Disability Living Allowance
- Children who have left care through special guardianship or an adoption or residence order



The school/centre use the LA criteria first then for additional places look at children:

- Living in reach
- With siblings already attending the school/centre

- Who use the centre

A panel comprising family outreach practitioners and a member of the senior leadership team scrutinise proposed allocations to ensure the allocation process is fair. In all cases there is an expectation that the parent/carer will engage in Children's Centre activity.

3-4 years

There are two classes for 3 to 4 year old children.

From the term (January, April or September) after their third birthday all children are entitled to 15 hours of free early education per week, for 38 weeks a year. The free entitlement is usually taken over five days, either a morning session from 8.45-11.45 or an afternoon session 12.30-3.30, or over two-and-a-half days, either Monday and Tuesday 9.00-3.15, Wednesday 9.00-11.15 or Wednesday 1.00-3.15, Thursday and Friday 9.00-3.15. In certain cases it may be taken more flexibly. If a 2½ day place is offered the child will be expected to stay for lunch. Lunchtime is a social experience with children helping to set the tables, sitting in small groups with an adult and serving each other; children are encouraged to try new foods (see Food and Nutrition Policy).



Families complete a waiting list form; this can be done over the phone. Children's names may be put on the waiting list from birth and they may live within any area of Bradford Metropolitan District. Children are normally admitted to 3/4 rooms in the September or January following their third birthday.

The waiting list is organised into terms which reflect the September and January intake and children are added to the waiting list the date the completed form is received.

Places are allocated using the following criteria:

- In order to ensure a seamless experience for very young children priority is given to children who have attended the under three provision for at least 12 weeks
- The remaining places are allocated from the waiting list ensuring that each class has a balance of ages, gender and ethnicity
- Children who have recently moved into the area or who have not had their name down on any waiting list and would otherwise miss out on nursery education may be given special consideration
- Priority may also be given to children with special educational needs or family needs.

Resourced Provision

In addition to our admission numbers we have 4 places for children 2-3 years old and 16 places for children 3-5 years old with substantial and sustained additional needs. These places are allocated through the Early Years Inclusion Panel (see Inclusion Policy).

Paid provision

The Children's Centre is open from 7.45 to 5.45. In addition to Bank Holidays the Centre closes between Christmas and New Year. In order that the whole school and centre can come together for staff development and training we will close for an additional five days throughout the year. Parents will be given a copy of the holiday list at the home visit.

The following paid places are available

Birth to 2: 12 places each session

2 to 3: 28 places each session (these may vary dependent on demand)

3 to 4: 16 places each session

If places are available children can be admitted at any time of year. If places are not available the child will be added to the paid provision waiting list. Children must attend for a minimum of three sessions. Parents/carers will be given a copy of our Charging and Cancellation Policy and must sign a contract when their child is admitted.

Transition

We want children to settle into the provision happily with parents/carer circumstances also being taken into account during the settling in period.

Children thrive in an environment in which they feel safe and secure. Parents/carers must feel confident that their child's experience is as good as it could be. In order to facilitate this all children are allocated a key person. This adult has a special relationship with the child and their family and is the first point of contact.

Families have a home visit prior to starting nursery. Children are also offered the opportunity to visit prior to the official admission date (parents/carers must stay with the child during visits). For children under three it is essential that several visits are made before the child is left for the first time.

- All children should be visited at home by the key-person (and another practitioner if the family is not known to the School/Centre). This is a time to share information about the child and the school/centre. The child's interests should form the first observation for the child's file.
- New children should be admitted gradually. In advance the child's basket/file/coat peg/name card should be ready. The key-person should be there to warmly greet the child (using child's name) and parents/carers. The key-person should then spend some time supporting the child, reassuring parents/carers and organising the settling-in process. Other staff should be introduced to the child and parents/carers.
- The key person and parents/carers work together to decide when a child may be left unaccompanied at the nursery for the first time. Each child is treated individually; his/her particular past experiences (e.g. playgroup attendance) and emotional maturity are taken into account during this important settling in period. Parents/carers are often asked to leave their child for only short periods of time initially.
- All children should be greeted warmly each day. Arrivals and departures are times when information can be shared between home and centre. Information from home can be recorded in the child's file
 - Children should be supported at key transition times during the day. When children need to move from one place to another they should be informed what is happening and why and then helped through the process
- When children are almost ready to move from one room to another parents should be informed. Transition should take place over a period of time. Children should have time to visit the new room with a familiar adult and staff from the new room should visit children in their familiar setting. Information should be passed from the old key-person to the new key-person and parents/carers should be kept informed of the process, taken to the room and introduced to the key-person and any other new practitioners. At these transition times parents/carers should receive a written report to summarise their child's progress to date and children's individual pupil progress profiles should be updated
- Where children transfer settings before reception year the key-person will ensure all relevant information is passed onto the receiving setting
- At the end of Nursery St Edmund's will ensure all children have been allocated a primary school. There will be close liaison with the receiving school to ensure staff have the opportunity to visit children here and dates of visits to primary school can be passed onto parents.
- Teachers will ensure reports are prepared for the child's new school and the admin team will forward children's personal data onto the individual primary schools via a secure Government web link.

Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial for children's achievement; lack of attendance may well indicate a need for family support. These guidelines aim to ensure that the correct support is given in order to encourage good attendance.

- Parents/carers must inform us by phone or other means on the first day of absence, giving reason. Parents/carers should be encouraged to bring their child back as soon as possible
- Where a child is unwell while attending staff should use their discretion as to the appropriateness of attendance. If staff feel a child needs to go home they should seek approval from the senior leadership team
- The administrative team will follow-up any unexplained absences. If a child has not attended after 5 sessions in total and no valid reason for absence has been obtained a home visit should be undertaken. Separate arrangements may be made for families with an intervention plan or where there is social services involvement. Where a child is on the child protection register attendance is checked daily and any absence is followed-up the same day with a telephone call and a home visit if there is no reply
- Where there are persistent concerns about attendance these will be discussed at planning meetings
- The administrative team will provide half-termly reports to the children's rooms and the headteacher about attendance
- Staff should make clear to parents that children should be brought to and collected from the school/centre by a person 16 years of age or over. Where a parent/carer cannot collect their child they must inform a member of staff who will be collecting their child in writing; verbal requests will only be accepted in an emergency.
- If a parent/carer says a child will be absent because of a holiday the form Application for Absence should be completed and signed by the headteacher. A copy is given to the parent/carer, a copy kept in the child's file and a copy kept in the Application for Absence file
- Absence for up to two weeks family holiday is authorised. Four weeks absence can be authorised in exceptional circumstances in the case of extended visits abroad. If the child does not return after four weeks absence his/her name will be removed from the register and the place allocated to someone else.

Late or Non Collection of Children (A copy of this information is given to parents/carers at the home visit)

Parents/carers must ensure that their children are collected promptly at the end of the session. If they are going to be late they must contact the staff at the school/centre, 01274 543282.

In the event of a child not being collected at the end of the session and staff not being informed, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will reassure the child they have not been forgotten
- Staff will try to contact the child's parents/carers
- If unable to contact the parents/carers staff will try to contact the emergency contact numbers
- If unable to contact anyone, staff will continue telephoning at 5 minute intervals
- Staff will not release the child to an unauthorised person

Staff will not take children home

The Social Services department will be contacted on 01274 530434/01274 437500 if the child has not been collected after 45 minutes

Staff will keep a record of all children who are not collected promptly at the end of the session. If children are collected late on a regular basis without a legitimate reason parents/carers will be charged to cover the extra costs incurred in terms of staff wages and premises hire charges at the rate of £10/hour or part thereof.