



Simonside Primary School

Nursery Admissions Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Simonside Primary School Nursery aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is high-quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the nursery. This nursery caters for Children aged between three and four.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2024) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2024) 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2024 to 2025'.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- SEND Policy.

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The nursery will implement an effective policy that ensures equality of opportunities for all, provides a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity and is equally accessible to all.

When making decisions about admissions the nursery will ensure that it aims to improve the outcomes of all children and reduce inequalities whilst upholding its duties under the Equality Act to put in place adjustments for children with SEND as required to prevent any disadvantage.

Admissions to the nursery will be open, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

2. APPLICATION PROCESS

We offer Nursery places to start in the term after your child turns 3 years old - either September, January or after the Easter holiday break.

We offer 15 or 30 hours per week places in our Nursery. Applications for places in Nursery can be made at any time by contacting the school office for the application pack. Once applications are returned the school office will inform you of availability and possible start date for your child.

15 hour places are either:

Full days Monday and Tuesday plus Wednesday morning

OR

Wednesday afternoon and full days on Thursday and Friday.

Working parents are entitled to 30 hours of funded education and the school will ask you to complete an online registration process and pass on the 12 digit code that you will be provided with. This will allow the school to claim funding for 30 hours.

30-hour places are 5 full days of Nursery education 9am until 3pm.

We may be able to offer 15 hour mornings-only or afternoons-only places but these will only be considered on a 1-1 basis depending on the child's needs and space we have available in Nursery.

To find out further information about your eligibility for childcare and Nursery provision, please contact the school office on 0191 2860776, via email at admin@simonside.newcastle.sch.uk or by visiting the school office in person.

Please also see the below Newcastle City Council guide.

<https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Free%20early%20years%20childcare%20brochure%202024.pdf>

Admissions to nursery provision will not in any way increase children's chances of admission to primary school; primary schools have their own admissions policies.

Applications for places in Nursery should be made via the School Office. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a FSM+ Eligibility Checker Form which will enable the School Office to check with Newcastle City Council to determine if the child will qualify for Free School Meals or Early Years Pupil Premium. All children are entitled to 15 hours free childcare, however eligible parents can use their 30 hour codes to pay for full days of Nursery education at Simonside. Parents/carers will be asked to use the Gov.uk website to check to see if they qualify for 30 hours funding.

3. APPLICATION TIMETABLE

A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time leading up to the child's third Birthday.

Application forms can be obtained via the school office.

Acceptance and non-acceptance letters are sent out on the following dates:

- For places in the autumn term – first week in June
- For places in the spring term – last week in October
- For places in the summer term – first week in March

Where places are remaining, later admissions are possible up to the agreed admissions limit.

4. OVERSUBSCRIPTION

Children who have an EHC plan that names the nursery are admitted before the oversubscription criteria is applied. Children with an EHC plan that does not name the nursery will be referred to the nursery's admissions manager to determine an appropriate place in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol.

The Local Governing Board (LGB) may increase the priority of an application where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be appropriately met by the nursery.

If Simonside Primary School has had to refuse a place in Nursery because there are more applications than places available, we will keep a waiting list of applicants. If a place becomes available it will be offered to the applicant on the waiting list who ranks highest in accordance with the published admission rules.

As nursery provision is non-statutory the school's decision will be final and there is no formal right of appeal. However, the Admissions Panel will be happy to discuss any concerns parents may have about the allocation of places in our Nursery class.

5. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The school seeks to ensure a fair and transparent process in the offer of places in Nursery and we have an admissions panel who will ensure this. If there are fewer applications than places available then every child will be offered a place. If there are more applications than places available, then the following over subscription rules are applied and places are offered to children who are ranked highest.

The admission criteria are set out in priority order below:

1. Looked after children in the care of a local authority or children that were looked after by the local authority and immediately after that became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order (see definitions). Evidence of the appropriate order must be submitted.
2. Children with a social or medical need who have been referred by a social worker, health professional, educational psychologist, outreach worker or education welfare officer
3. Children with a sibling currently in Simonside Primary School.
4. Children who qualify for the thirty-hours of funding for 3 and 4 year olds.
5. Children living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line distance from a single fixed central point at the school to a point in the centre of the home address of the child, using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and British National Grid Easting and Northing co-ordinates.
6. Older children. This means that if there is one space left and two children meet all of the other admissions criteria, the older of the two will be given priority.

All applications are considered at regular admissions panel meetings. Following a meeting of the admissions panel, parents/carers will be informed of the outcome.

If an offer is made the parents/carers will receive an offer letter and will be given a deadline for accepting the place. The deadline date will be specified in the letter.

If there is not a space available, the parent/carer will receive a letter stating that their child is on our waiting list.

Where there is a tiebreak scenario within the criteria, priority will be given firstly to a child who lives closest to the nursery based on a straight-line measurement, then by date of birth, with the older child given priority.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFERS

In order to formally accept an offer, the parent/carer must submit the following documents by the specified deadline:

- proof of Date of Birth (birth certificate or passport)

- proof of child's address
- Pupil Application Pack including the following essential information

Medical Information Form

Photograph Permission Form

Home School Agreement

Acceptable Use Agreement

- FSM+ Eligibility Checker Form (paper form available from the School Office) – this form collects information to assess whether your child is eligible for Free School Meals, Early Years Pupil Premium.

If these documents are not received by the school by the specified deadline, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list who meets the criteria as stated above.

7. WITHDRAWING OFFERS

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 the deadline
- a child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education
- a family registering their child at two maintained settings.

8. DELAYED STARTS AND WITHDRAWN PLACES

Following receipt of a registration form, the start date can only be delayed once, and only be delayed by one month, before the child's reserved place will be open to others and the child's name added back onto the waiting list.

9. ATTENDANCE

Parents must inform the nursery as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend for the whole or part of a day when they are due to attend.

Parents/carers who accept an offer of a place in our Nursery class are advised that attendance at all sessions is expected and persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) can lead to the withdrawal of the place and that place being offered to a child on the waiting list.

10. REFUSAL OF ADMISSION

A child will only be refused admission if one of the following criteria are met:

- The nursery has reached its admissions limit
- The child is not of the appropriate age

As nursery education is not compulsory, parents do not have a statutory right to appeal against the admission authority's refusal to award a place to their child.

Parents may appeal to the SEND tribunal against the provision named by the authority in the EHC plan.

11. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Parents will be invited to visit the school prior to the transition and further visits are arranged according to the child's needs.

During the Summer term, Reception teachers from the primary schools to which the children are transferring to will come in to meet with the children. During the visit, the child's teacher will provide the teacher 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.

Details of children with SEND or particular educational requirements will be shared, including their development throughout the year, support given and needed, and details of any other agencies involved. Separate transition meetings will be held for children with EHC plans, involving all agencies, including visits to new settings with staff.

12. DATA PROTECTION

The nursery will act in compliance with the Data Protection Policy when processing personal data.

When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Where personal information is processed, the nursery will ensure it is kept up-to-date and the LA will ensure that the rights of data subjects are reserved at all times.

13. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually by the LGB and Headteacher.