

## **Nursery Admissions Policy for September 2017**

### **Background Information**

Prior to compulsory education, every child is entitled to receive 15 hours free education from the start of the term following his or her third birthday. This can be in a private nursery, independent school, child minder, preschool or maintained school setting of the parent's choice. Depending on a family's circumstances some children are eligible to receive 15 hours free education from the start of the term following his or her second birthday.

There are two types of maintained early years provision in Buckinghamshire schools at present. These are:

- Nursery schools
- Nursery classes in schools

All children will be offered a school place in a reception class from the September following their fourth birthday. This offer is a full time offer, it can be accepted on a full or part time basis, or admission can be deferred within that academic year.

### **Nursery Classes**

There is no automatic admission into main school from nursery classes and this is stated in the letter offering a place in the nursery. Nursery classes may accommodate 2, 3 and/or 4 year-old children. Nursery age children do not count as part of the roll for the school and children will not be guaranteed a place in the main school. They must apply for a school place in accordance with the coordinated scheme and places are then allocated in line with the admissions rules for the school.

Parents can register their child with the school for consideration for a place in the nursery from 6 months after their second birthday (2 year old admission) once the child has reached 2 years of age. Places are not allocated, however, on the basis of when the registrations were made.

Parents must apply for places in the main school under the co-ordinated arrangements. Therefore, until the allocation is public (after 18 April 2017) parents could not be assured of a continuing place at the school.

Once parents are offered a place under the co-ordinated scheme they have the right to defer entry for their child. This deferment can be up to the point at which the child is legally required to start school (i.e. the start of the term after the child's fifth birthday) and cannot be beyond the end of the normal academic year of entry for the child (i.e. the latest any child could start is during the summer term of reception/foundation 2) otherwise they must re-apply for admission to year 1.

Where schools admit at a point before September of reception year the children will be admitted to a nursery class. The Local Authority has delegated admission arrangements to the governing bodies of those schools that have a nursery admission. Governing Bodies have the delegated responsibility for applying the following rules:

### **Nursery Class Admission Rules**

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places then once children who already hold a statement of special educational need or Education, Health and Care Plan have been allocated places the remaining places will be allocated in the following order:

1. Looked after children (*see note 1*)
2. Children who have exceptional medical, or social needs supported by written evidence from an appropriate professional (*see note 2*)
3. Children living within the catchment area of the school (*see note 3*)
4. Siblings of children who are attending the school at the time allocations are made or attend a linked primary school at the time allocations are made (*see note 4*)
5. Once the above rules have been applied then any further places will be offered in distance order; using the distance between the child's Normal Home Address and the school's nearest open entrance gate offering the closest first. We use a straight line distance.

The **straight line distance definition**: is 'the distance from the address point of the pupil's house, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest school gate available for pupils to use'.

6. Where one place remains and the next two applicants are equal distance from the school in all cases, including flats and apartments, where addresses are equidistant a random allocation will made.

The terms used in these rules are as defined in the primary rules above. The catchment area used is also as defined in the primary rules.

## **Nursery Schools**

There are 2 schools - Bowerdean (who also operate Mapledean Nursery) and Henry Allen. They take children on a part time basis and the following admission rules apply. Once children who already hold a statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care Plan have been allocated places the remaining places will be allocated in the following order:

1. Looked after children (*see note 1*)
2. Children who have exceptional medical or social needs, which can only be met at that nursery school, supported by written evidence from an appropriate professional person. (*See Note 2*)
3. Children living within two miles of the school according to the distance between the family's normal home address and the school's nearest entrance gate.
4. Any remaining places will be allocated on the basis of the child's date of birth, oldest first. If there is only one place left, and there is more than one child with the same birthday, the place will be allocated to the child living nearest to the school according to the straight line distance between the child's normal home address and the school's nearest entrance gate.

### **Note 1 Definition of Looked after children**

For admissions purposes a 'looked after child' is a child who is a) in the care of a local authority, or b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989). This covers accommodated children and those who are in care under a Care Order/interim order. This can include: living with family or friends, in foster care, a children's home, residential school, special school or in supported lodgings.

This includes children who were previously looked after and immediately after being looked after became the subject of an adoption, residence order or special guardianship order as set out below.

Other definitions:

residence order: is an order setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the children's Act 1989

special guardianship order: 'an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians) under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989

### **Note 2 Exceptional Social and Medical process for nursery admissions**

The governing body of the school/nursery school will consider the applications under this rule on receipt of information from the parent to indicate strong reasons for the child attending a particular nursery/school. When making an application parents should send evidence from an independent professional person (this might be a doctor, health visitor, or Education Welfare Officer, for example) who knows about the child and supports the application to the school. They must also provide

evidence that they are entitled to receive Free School Meals or Disability Living Allowance. It must clearly show why the school is the most suitable and any difficulties if alternate schools were offered.

**Note 3: Primary School Catchment Areas**

The primary school catchments can be viewed at:

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/schooladmission/>

**Note 4: Definition of sibling**

A sibling is a brother or sister. For admission purposes we mean one of two or more individuals who have one or more parent in common, or any other child (including an adopted or fostered child) who lives at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility or, (in the case of a fostered child) delegated authority. .