Admissions Policy for Shakespeare Nursery

Policy agreed by staff & HR Committee on 14th April 2016
Review due in 2019

Rationale:

This policy has been written to ensure that there is a fair and equitable system for allocating places for nursery-aged children within our Foundation Unit. The Nursery is currently over-subscribed and it is therefore essential that we have clear and well-structured guidelines so that parents have a good understanding of the process, and so that all relevant staff can respond to parental queries with confidence and consistency.

Aims:

- To ensure that our nursery admissions process is fair and equitable.
- To ensure that parents understand how to apply for a place at our Nursery and ensure that they understand that a place at Nursery does not guarantee a place within our reception classes.
- To provide school staff with clear guidelines on their roles and responsibilities in the nursery admissions process.
- To enable Shakespeare Nursery to meet the needs of the local community.

Implementation of Practice:

Entitlement

Shakespeare Nursery currently is able to provide 36 places in the morning from 8.45am – 11.45am and 36 places in the afternoon from 12.15pm – 3.15pm. There is lunch club provision available for 18 children each day from 11.45am -12.15pm at a cost of £1.50 per session.

A child can be considered for a place within Shakespeare Nursery from the start of the term following their third birthday. Each child is entitled to five 3 hour sessions (15 hours) during a week funded by the Local Authority; these sessions must be spread across at least three days.

Parents have the right to apply for a nursery place for their child regardless of where they live, however, no child is guaranteed a place in our reception classes even if they attend the nursery.

Applying for a place in nursery

Parents should contact the school and complete a ‘Request for a place at Nursery’ form as soon as possible after their child’s 2nd birthday. Their child’s name will then be added to a waiting list for the nursery. At this time, parents can request a tour of the school and Foundation Unit from the Head Teacher.
In the term prior to admission, the Nursery Teacher allocates places to children using the ‘Request for a place at Nursery’ forms. The dates for allocation each term are: **October 31st, January 31st and May 31st** each year.

To support our induction process, parents are invited to a parent’s meeting so that relevant information is provided and paperwork completed. At this meeting they also have the opportunity to meet the Parent Support Advisor who can provide confidential parenting support. We also offer a ‘Home Visit’ where the Nursery Teacher and Teaching Assistant visit children at home so that parents can discuss their child in more detail. The week before starting nursery, the children have the opportunity to attend two one hour induction sessions so that they can familiarise themselves with staff and setting.

### Late ‘Requests for a place at nursery’

At the start of each term the Nursery Teacher reviews places allocated, and deals with any late requests for children who are entitled to a place within nursery. Parents are informed if there are any places left, are given the opportunity to attend a parents’ meeting, and two induction sessions are made available for the children as required. Unfortunately, there is not the opportunity for a ‘Home Visit’ for late allocations unless there is a specific educational or welfare need.

Dependent upon available space, parents who request a place mid-term, will be invited to an individual parents meeting with the Nursery Teacher, and their child will have the opportunity for two induction sessions prior to admission.

### Shortage of nursery places

Where there is a shortage of nursery places, places will be allocated according to the following criteria:

- **Priority 1**: Looked after children and all previously looked after children
- **Priority 2**: Children with exceptional medical or social grounds
- **Priority 3**: Children with a sibling already attending the school at the time of admission
- **Priority 4**: Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff employed at the school
- **Priority 5**: Other children – priority is given to children living closest to the school

Where there is more than one child in any priority grouping using the above criteria, priority will be given to the eldest children first. (See Appendix 1)

### Purchasing additional sessions

In the Autumn and Spring term, there are usually some unfilled nursery sessions. These are available to parents, whose children have reached their third birthday, and are chargeable. The session will be charged in line with the Early Years Single Funding Formula, which is currently £13.89 per session (correct as at 01.01.2016). If parents are interested in these additional places they need to approach the Foundation Stage Leader or Nursery Teacher. These will be billed in advance every term. If there is competition for these places, they will be allocated to the eldest child first.
Applying for a place at school

During the Autumn term of the year before a child is due to start school all parents must apply for a school place through the Local Authority – even if their child already attends the nursery. **Attendance at nursery does not guarantee a place in the reception classes.**

Applications can be completed in two ways. Parents can:
- apply on-line at: [www.plymouth.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/primaryadmissions)
- complete an application form in the 'Starting School in Plymouth' booklet which is available from school.

Applications for place must be completed by 15th January each year, and Plymouth City Council will then notify parents of places for their child in late March before the class opens in September.

Support for parents is available in school through the Foundation Stage Leader, Parent Support Advisor or Nursery Teachers (see Appendix 2)

**Success Criteria:**

We will know if this policy is implemented when:
- There is a fair and equitable admissions process in place.
- Parents understand how to apply for a place at nursery and know that this place does not guarantee their child a place within our reception classes.
- School staff understand their roles in the nursery admissions process.
- Shakespeare Nursery is able to serve the needs of the local community.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:**

There are plans in place to monitor regularly the work of the school and to evaluate how effective the teaching and learning is in raising standards (see Policy for Monitoring, Evaluation and Review).

The Head Teacher and Foundation Stage Leader will review procedures regularly to evaluate effectiveness using attached checklist (Appendix 3).
Appendix 1

Admission Criteria Definitions

Priority 1: Looked after children and all previously looked after children

- A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of the Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions

Priority 2: Children with exceptional medical or social grounds

- Applicants will only be considered under this heading if the parent/carer or their representative can demonstrate that only the preferred school can meet the exceptional medical or social needs of the child. This can be in the form of a testimony from a medical practitioner; social worker or other professional who can support the application on an ‘exceptional basis’. Exceptional medical or social grounds could include:
  - a serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence;
  - a significant caring role for the child which can be supported by evidence from social services.

Priority 3: Children with a sibling already attending the school at the time of admission

- Children are siblings if they are a full, half, step or adoptive brother or sister, and live in the same family unit and household.

Priority 4: Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff employed at the school

- The staff member has to be employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage evidenced by completion of the Plymouth Supplementary Information Form.

Priority 5: Other children – priority is given to children living closest to the school

- The distance from school is measured by a straight line on the map. The shorter the distance, the higher the priority. Measurement points will be from an internal point of the building concerned. Flats are therefore taken to be the same measurement point regardless of floor on location.
Appendix 2

Support for Parents re. School admissions

- Parents are informed at Nursery Parent’s Induction meetings that their child is not guaranteed a place in the Reception class and that parents will need to apply for a primary school place with the local authority.
- Letter to parents whose children are due to start school the following year sent out in September reminding them that they are not guaranteed a place in school and need to complete an application for starting school (stressing dead-line date), either on-line at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/primaryadmissions) or using a booklet ‘Starting School in Plymouth’ that they can collect from us, offer a parent’s meeting with Parent Support Advisor, Foundation Stage Leader and Nursery Teachers for support in completing application.
- Information session(s) provided to inform parents about procedures in term 1.
- During ‘funding declaration’ week ascertain which parents have applied for a school place, and offer support to those who have not yet done so.
- At the start of term 2, check whether parents who had not completed the application, have now done so. If not, invite to an individual parent’s meeting to support application process.
- At the beginning of December contact admissions to obtain list of received applications for school, and check against Nursery list. Contact and support parents who have not yet applied for a place.
- When admitting new nursery children, ascertain each parent’s primary school preference, and ensure that they have completed an application form, and that they contact school admissions if they wish to change their first choice.
Appendix 3

Checklist for Induction Procedures for Nursery Children into Shakespeare Primary School Foundation Unit

As part of a systematic and effective induction process, the following must be carried out:

**Prior to child’s third Birthday:**
- Complete ‘Request form for Nursery Place’ ~ request is stored in admissions folder in school office
- Tour of unit and school as requested

**During the term prior to admission:**
- Nursery teacher checks which children are eligible for a place in the following term, and inform administrator
- Letter sent informing parents of induction arrangements
- Induction meeting organised for parents ~ ensuring all parents understand that a place at Nursery does not mean their child has a place in school
- Home visit organised for parents who would like one
- Parents provided with Nursery Handbook and school prospectus
- Collection of S11, Birth Certificate, Parent Agreement Booklets

**Week before admission:**
- Nursery children have the opportunity to attend two induction sessions in the unit
- Foundation Stage Leader reviews allocated places and deals with any late requests, contacting parents and inviting them and their child to an induction visit

**Admission Week**
- Parents informed about how child is settling in

**End of first term**
- Formal parent’s meeting to review progress

**End of year**
- Summary report of attainment

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