



## Admissions Policy

2024- 2025

### **Admissions Policy**

This policy should be read in conjunction with Surrey County Council's admission arrangements for maintained nursery schools and classes.

The Wharf is a local authority Nursery School for children aged 2 to 5 years maintained and funded primarily by Surrey County Council. Children would normally leave to start school in the September following their fourth birthday.

The local authority has delegated children's admission to the Wharf Nursery School Governing Body. The Admissions Committee will work with the Headteacher to allocate places following the admissions criteria set out below.

For the purposes of admissions, *parent* will refer to any person who has parental responsibility for a child. This may be a carer or guardian.

Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child, must complete the application form by the start of February 2024 and submit it directly to the school. The allocation of places starts at the end of February. Once a child has been offered a place, the parent must return a signed confirmation to accept the place.

Places at The Wharf Nursery School are prioritised for children living in the Borough of Waverley. Any applications outside of this area will be considered after all other places are allocated in accordance with the criteria below.

We offer universal entitlement for eligible two, three and four year olds subject to space being available. This includes funded entitlement for eligible two year olds, the new entitlement for working families of two year olds, universal funding entitlement for three and four year olds as well as the additional entitlement for working families, where space allows.

### **Allocation of places for children aged 2-3 (Little Stars)**

A maximum of twelve children can attend, in each session.

Children may be admitted in the term after their second birthday, if places are available. Priority for a set number of places will be given to children who are eligible for Funded Early Education for Two year olds (FEET) with the remaining places funded by the new entitlement for working families or self-funded by families themselves. Children must attend for a minimum of two sessions up to the maximum allocation of 15 hours (as available). Children with complex special educational needs will be considered on an individual basis.

Children will not automatically transfer to 15 hours when they are eligible, as this will depend on spaces available and individual need. However, in the September following their third birthday children will be automatically entitled to take up a 3 year old place in the Nursery Rocket group.

Oversubscription criteria will be followed in the same way as the Nursery Rockets, if applications exceed the number of places.

### **Group for children aged 3-4 (Rockets)**

The maximum number of children in a session would not normally exceed 48.

All children attend for a minimum of 15 hours a week (two six-hour days and one three-hour day on a Wednesday). If possible, the Nursery will try to accommodate the parent's preference for either end of the week, but the oversubscription criteria will be followed, once all places have been allocated.

30 (15+15) hour places are available for families who meet the criteria set by the Government (see online information provided by Surrey County Council or Gov.uk) or who wish to pay for the additional hours. Parents will need to re-confirm their eligibility every 3 months for the extended 15 hours. If a parent chooses to split this funding between two Nurseries, The Wharf Nursery school must receive the 15 hours universal entitlement.

Children are normally eligible for a place in the Nursery Rocket group, the term after their third birthday. Admission will be subject to an application being received; places being available and if appropriate, an agreement that the setting can cater for a child's needs (see 'priority need').

Children who meet the criteria for FEET funding or who are self-funded can be admitted in the term in which they are three if there are spaces (see criteria for 'children without priority need'). All rising threes must attend for a minimum of two sessions.

### **The Application Process**

Names are accepted onto the 'expression of interest' list at any time, but most children start in September and these places are usually allocated by the end of the Spring term. If there are spaces, children may start as soon as they are eligible.

Parents/carers are encouraged to make an appointment to visit the nursery and complete an application form. Families are asked to contact the nursery again before their child is two to share any additional information and confirm that they would still like a place.

When the demand for places exceeds the number available, the priority for admission is given according to the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Discussions with professionals involved and representatives from Surrey may form part of this process where there are family or individual needs.

We have provision to offer 8 places of a 15 hour equivalent for children who have varying and complex needs: For example, speech, language and communication needs; Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Global Developmental Delay or physical/ sensory needs. These places are funded via Early Intervention Funding. The Wharf works closely with parents/carers and other professionals before deciding if an individual child's needs can be met and a place offered. Early Intervention Funding applications are made to the Local Authority before the end of the summer term to confirm funding arrangements for the following September. Applications for these places are considered in line with criteria 2 of this policy (below) exceptional social/ medical need. Resources available and the number of children already accessing additional support will be considered.

### **Oversubscription**

Applications will be ranked according to the following criteria.

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
  - a. Children who are registered as being in the care of a Local Authority
  - b. Children who have previously been in the care of a Local Authority

2. Children with an exceptional social/medical need for a place.

There should be documentary evidence to support this claim such as a doctor, paediatrician, consultant, therapist such as a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police, family centre practitioner, Home Start.

3. Children of staff.
4. Children who have a sibling expected to be attending the nursery on the date of admission.

- a. A sibling is considered to be a brother or sister (that is, another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), a half-brother or half-sister or a stepbrother or stepsister or an adoptive or foster sibling, living at the same address.
5. Children who will be 4 years old between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 as they are likely to have only one year at Nursery.
6. Younger siblings of children who have attended in the last three years.

Where any category is oversubscribed, applications will be ranked according to the straight-line distance that children live from the school with priority being given to those who live closest to the school. The home address must be supplied, which is the child's normal place of residence, not a relative or childminder. In the case of shared custody, it will be up to the parents to agree which address to use. We will not accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is available to that child.

Where two or more children share priority for a place (and are at the same point on the 'expression of interest list', including date of application) lots will be drawn to determine which child should be offered the place.

Agreed and Signed off by	FGB
Policy Type	Statutory