

HARDMOOR EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Admissions/Attendance Policy for Sessional Nursery

Responsible Person: Head of Centre
The Governing Body of Hardmoor Early Years Centre

Introduction

This policy is for sessional nursery spaces for 2,3 and 4 year olds which are funded by the Local Authority via the Nursery Education Fund.

All 3 to 4-year-olds in England can get 570 hours of free early education or childcare per year. This is usually taken as 15 hours each week for 38 weeks of the year. Some 2-year-olds are also eligible.

3 to 4-year-olds - You can start claiming free childcare after your child turns 3. The date you can claim will depend on when their birthday is.

Child's birthday	When you can claim
1 January to 31 March	the beginning of term on or after 1 April
1 April to 31 August	the beginning of term on or after 1 September
1 September to 31 December	the beginning of term on or after 1 January

2 year olds

Many two-year-old children in Southampton are entitled to free childcare and education for up to 15 hours a week in the term after their second birthday.

To be eligible, the parents of the child must be in receipt of and able to provide proof of one of the following benefits:

Income Support

Income-based Jobseekers Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit Child tax credit or Working tax credit with an annual gross income into the household that is no more than £16,190
- Universal Credit

Also eligible are children who:

- are looked after by a local council
- have left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order
- have an Education, Health and Care plan
- receive Disability Living Allowance.

Procedures for Hardmoor Early Years Centre

(sessional nursery, term time only, not Day Care provision which is all year round)

Children aged 3 - 4 years

Hardmoor Early Years Centre can accommodate a maximum of 32 children per Base (classroom) 64 across the 2 large Bases. The patterns of attendance available at Hardmoor are:

- Five morning sessions: 9.00 am – 12.00 pm
- Five afternoon sessions: 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm
- 30hrs free childcare : 9.00 am – 3.00 pm

Children entitled to 2 year funding

The Centre has up to 32 places for sessional 2 year olds. Patterns of attendance available are:

- Five morning sessions: 8.55 am – 11.55 am
- Five afternoon sessions: 12.55 pm – 3.55 pm
- Some flexible places are available subject to availability.

If a parent /carer would like their child to attend the Centre, it is advisable to apply when the child is 2 years old, or as soon as possible after that.

The Centre will consider applications in accordance with the admission criteria. Parents will be informed of the decision where possible at least half a term before possible admission. Generally this will be by the end of October, February and May. If a child is offered a place, confirmation of acceptance is requested from the parent/ carer within two weeks to prevent the Centre refusing to offer places to other children unnecessarily.

In the event of more children than places being available, the Admissions Panel, consisting of Governors and the Head of Centre will meet and the admission criteria will be applied.

The final decision on when a child is admitted, the number of hours a child is able to attend and their pattern of attendance, rests with the Head of Centre.

If the preferred session e.g. morning or afternoon is full when the child starts nursery, there may be an opportunity to change sessions the following September.

Admission criteria

The governors will consider all applications in accordance with the following criteria, set out in priority order. Length of time since application will not be taken into account.

- A. Children for whom there is a recommendation for nursery education by a health professional, social worker, educational psychologist, area Inco, outreach worker or education welfare officer on the basis of the child's special educational needs.

Examples of special educational needs, in no order of priority, might include:

- emotional and behavioural problems
- hearing difficulties
- lack of personal interaction and stimulation
- physical disabilities
- speech and language problems

- visual difficulties
- B. A child who is “looked after” by the Children’s Services Department (in accordance with Section 22 of the Children’s Act 1989)
- C. Child subject to Child Protection plan
- D. Children who already attend Day Care
- E. Children with a brother or sister already attending Nursery
- F. Children with social needs, based on information gained by the Head of Centre as part of the application procedure.

Examples of social needs, in no order of priority, might include:

- children who were multiple births (twins, triplets)
- a child with confined play space
- a child in a large family (four or more children)
- a child with parents under 20 years of age
- a child in sole care of grandparents
- a child who has two or more siblings under four years of age
- a child of parents with disabilities

G. Other children

Tiebreaker

If the nursery is over subscribed **within** any of the above categories (A-G), priority will be given to children in the year before they are eligible to start school. Then preference will be given to children who live closest to the school based on the shortest practical walking distance using public roads and footpaths.

Late Applications

- **Autumn 1 for January**
- **Autumn 2 from April**
- **Spring 2 for September**

Applications received after the closing date (term before admission eg. **Autumn 2 for April**) will be dealt with after all ‘on time’ applications have been processed.

In the event of the Centre being full, a waiting list will be produced using the above criteria where more than one child is affected.

Vacant places arising through the year will be offered according to the admission criteria.

Implementation

Office staff will record enquiries and take details in order to send out application forms at the appropriate time.

Parents will be invited to view the nursery and may ask for support in applying for nursery places.

Parents and children will be invited to attend a group pre-placement visit to the nursery and staff will undertake home visits.

Parents will be asked to sign an agreement form confirming that no more than 15 hours free nursery provision is being accessed.

A flexible induction programme may be offered according to children's individual needs, for a period of up to half a term.

Flexible Places

A few flexible places are available for children unable to attend the full 30 hours. Subject to availability.

Special Cases

In exceptional circumstances the Governing Body may grant permission for a child to stay on in nursery for an agreed period of time, until they reach statutory school age (i.e. Term after 5th birthday) following consultation with the Local Authority and named school.

Attendance

Parents are required to inform the Centre if their child is to be absent from Nursery. A holiday form will need to be completed in advance for absence due to holiday taken during term time. A maximum of 2 weeks may be approved by the Head of Centre.

The Centre recognises the role it plays in safeguarding children. This includes monitoring attendance of children which, while not a statutory requirement, could indicate the needs of a child are not being met.

Room leaders keep a record of children's absence over the year. Absence without notification will be followed up initially by the child's key person. A child who has frequent absences will be discussed with the room leader and parents. A record of discussions and actions will be reviewed by the Head of Centre and the case will be reviewed over an agreed time frame. (Appendix A)

Absence, other than sickness of a child, for a period in excess of 2 weeks may result in loss of nursery place.

Reporting

The Local Authority requires data regarding the number of children attending the nursery and the number of hours accessed by each child, each term.

This policy was reviewed at the Resources committee of Hardmoor Early Years Centre, held on: 27th February 2020

Date to be reviewed: Spring 2022

*Signed: _____
(Chair of Governors)*

Print Name: Vikki Maxwell

Hardmoor Early Years Centre

Appendix A

Absence Review: Children

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Key person: _____ Room leader: _____

Date: _____

Absence dates (from- to)	Reason given

Does this child have any additional needs / vulnerabilities:

Information about child's development and progress since coming to the centre

Notes from discussion with room leader and plan for discussion with parent / carer (*what's stopping the child from attending? What steps can be taken to improve this? Would the family benefit from some additional support?*)

Notes from discussion with parent / carer

Follow up actions

Review Date: (within 1 term)

Head of Centre Review date: _____ Sign: _____