Whitecross Nursery School Admissions Policy

Reviewed by	Claire FitzPatrick
Date of last review	June 2026
Date of next review	June 2027
Ratified by the Governing Body	July2026

This policy will be reviewed sooner if there is a change to legislation or guidance that may affect it. Any changes will be communicated to all stakeholders.

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Statement of intent

Whitecross Nursery School aims to provide a happy and nurturing nursery educational experience for younger children that is high-quality, funded 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.

Whitecross nursery caters for the following age ranges:

- Children aged two to three years, our Caterpillars
- Children aged three and four years, our Butterflies

1. 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 Whitecross Nursery School policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Charging & Remissions Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- New Starter Induction Procedures

Further related Guidance:
Delayed School Admissions for Summer Born Children (DfE, 2023)

Whitecross Nursery School is responsible for its own admissions. We do not have a defined catchment area and all parents or carers are eligible to register their child's name on our waiting list. Children can be registered at any time from birth. To register please log on the website or email the school office on admin@whitecross.derby.sch.uk

2. Equal Opportunities

Our school is fully inclusive and our policies and environment promote equality of opportunity for all children. We are pleased to offer any child with any individual, SEND, disability or medical needs a place at Whitecross Nursery School, provided that any necessary supporting agencies feel that it is an appropriate placement.

Emergency admissions will be considered if places are available and where requests are made from social workers, health visitors or other professionals involved with the family. Places will begiven at the discretion of the Headteacher in consultation with Governors and may need to take priority.

3. Application process

Admissions to nursery provision will not in any way increase or decrease any child's chances of admission to any primary school; all primary schools, including academies, have their own admissions policies for admitting children in their reception year. Children **do not** have to attend the nursery attached to any school to ensure a school place in reception. Children can attend **any** nursery provision prior to reception.

Parents choosing to send their child to Whitecross Nursery School will have to register their interest for our nursery either on-line through the contact us link on the website or email the school office on admin@whitecross.derby.sch.uk .

Once they have completed the online registration they will be added to the waiting list. The nursery will be in regular contact with those on the waiting list to keep them updated and to formally offer them a place if and when one is available.

Once a place is available, parents will receive a formal offer which they will need to accept or decline in within two weeks. After accepting the place, they will need to bring in their child's birth certificate and proof address to the school office.

4. Our nursery intake & offer of places

In our Caterpillars (our two to three year provision), we have three termly intakes in September, January and April, subject to availability.

In our Butterflies (our three and four year provision), our main intake is in September of each year. However, if we have spaces available we can admit children the term after the have turned three in either January or April.

Also in our Butterfly (our three and four year provision), we can offer 8 spaces for rising 3 year olds (children who will turn 3 during their first term in the butterfly class). These spaces are offered out to the waiting list at the termly intake time, only if the spare spaces are not needed for our current two year olds to move into.

The offer of places for September will take place in the preceding spring term.

The offer of places for January (should there be spaces available) will take place in October.

The offer of places for the April (should there be spaces available), term are offered in February. All sessions are agreed in advance and cannot be swapped due to absence or closure days.

Parents may request to permanently change sessions, this will be actioned as soon as possible depending on spaces available.

Whitecross Nursery School will close for Derby City school holidays, bank/public holidays and five inset staff training days each year. These dates will be published in advance on the school website.

5. Criteria for admission

For our two year old provision

Criteria for allocation of funded education places for two year olds

Children will be given priority according to the following criteria:

a) Children with educational, medical or social needs including looked after and previously looked after children. Applications on these grounds will have to be supported in writing by the relevant professional involved, such as Social Worker or GP etc.
b) Priority will be given to children who require 12 or more hours (4 or more sessions) per week excluding wrap around care hours. Priority does not increase with the number of hours required over the 12 stated.
c) How long the child has been on the waiting list, however the need to balance the number of children moving into three-to-four-year old places within nursery each term will need to be considered. Therefore, maintaining a strict 'time on waiting list' criteria for eligibility may not always be possible for allocating two year old places.

If children are not allocated a funded education place the term after their second birthday they will remain on the waiting list and be considered for a three year old funded education place (see below for eligibility criteria).

For our three years provision

Criteria for allocation of funded education (including extended entitlement) places for three- and four-year-olds

Children will be given priority according to the following criteria:

a) Children who are already attending Nursery. All children who attend Whitecross Nursery school from the age of two will be offered a place, enabling them to continue in nursery from the term after their third birthday or during if there is space within our rising three provision.
b) Children with educational, medical or social needs including looked after and previously looked after children. Applications on these grounds will have to be supported in writing by the relevant professional involved, such as Social Worker or GP etc.
c) Priority will be given to children who require 12 hours or more (4 or more sessions) per week, excluding wrap around care hours. Priority does not increase with the number of hours required over the 12 stated.
d) How long the child's name has been on the waiting list.

6. Funded places for two year olds

We offer 15 funded hours for up to 8 two year old children per session, who are eligible for government funded places.

We also offer the extended 30 funded hours again for those who are eligible to claim it.

We can also offer extended hours or sessions on a self-funded (payment) basis for those using their 15 funded hours but who are not eligible to the 30 extended hours.

We have the following places available daily:-

- 5 places each morning at Breakfast Club
- 8 places each morning
- 8 places each afternoon
- 8 places at lunchtime for school lunches
- 5 places each evening at After School Club

(Wrap around care places can be increased if more children require it by increasing the number of staff needed)

7. Funded places for three and four year olds

We offer funded places for 52 three and four year old children per session, taking up the free 15 funded hours as well as those eligible for the extended 30 funded hours. We can also offer extended sessions on a self-funded (payment) basis for those who are using their 15 funded hours, but who are not eligible to the 30 extended hours.

We have the following places for three and four year olds available daily:-

- 16 places each morning at Breakfast Club
- 52 places each morning (Up to 8 rising 3 places)
- 52 places each afternoon (Up to 8 rising 3 places)
- Up to 52 places at lunchtime for school lunches
- 16 places each evening at After School Club

(Wrap around care places can be increased if more children require it by increasing the number of staff needed)

All children will need to have completed a Free Early Education Funding contract detailing their eligibility.

8. Allocation of Sessions

Prior to taking up their place at our school, parents are asked to advise us of the preferred sessions for their child. Sessions will be allocated dependent on the same criteria used for allocation of places. We do our best to meet the session preferences of all our families, however we do take into account the balance of numbers of children across the day (i.e. those having part-time / full-time places and numbers of children at lunchtime) and this could impact on availability. Parents will be sent an offer letter advising them of their sessions as soon as all sessions have been allocated.

Nursery Sessions

Eligible hours are offered in a flexible manner that include:

- 5 mornings or 5 afternoons (or a combination of both)
- Full days
- Full days and a combination of mornings or afternoons

- Breakfast Club
- After School Club

We take into account the balance of numbers of children across the day (i.e. those having part-time places, full-time places and numbers of children at lunchtime) which could impact on availability.

Our nursery session times are:-

Sessions	Times	No of hours	Available for two year olds	Available for three and four year olds
Breakfast Club	7.30am – 9.00am	1.5 hours	✓	✓
Morning Session	9.00am – 12.00pm	3 hours	✓	✓
Afternoon Session	1.00pm – 4.00pm	3 hours	✓	✓
Lunchtime	12.00pm – 1.00pm	1 hour	✓	✓
Full day	9.00am – 3.00pm	6 hours	✓	✓
Full day	9.00am – 4.00pm	7 hours	✓	✓
After School Club	4.00pm – 5.00pm	1 hour	✓	✓
After School Club	4.00pm – 5.45pm	1.75 hours	✓	✓

All full days at nursery include a lunchtime at school for all children. Children will need to provide a packed lunch. Children in receipt of free school meals are entitled to receive a packed lunch provided at school.

9. 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 governing board 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.

The oversubscription criteria, set out in priority order, are as follows:

1. LAC or children who were previously looked after but have subsequently been adopted or become subject to a residence or special guardianship order
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

The governing board may also give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium, or the service premium. The nursery must be named in the admission arrangements, and its selection will be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

10. 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 four weeks
- A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education
- A family registering their child at two maintained settings

11. 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.

If parents decide to withdraw their child from the nursery after being offered a place, they must give the nursery at least two weeks' notice. Parents may be charged for this period, or it may come out of their nursery entitlement.

Notice of a delayed start or withdrawal must be in writing.

12. Non-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 will be required to pay the full cost of the care, regardless of whether or not their child attends nursery that day e.g. sickness or holiday.

Nursery and parents/carers will together assess on an individual basis a child needs to reduce the level of provision.

Please see our school Attendance Policy for further information in the event of non-attendance.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. Monitoring and review

This policy has been drawn up with the agreement of the Governing Body of Whitecross Nursery School and will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually.