Applecroft School



Admission Arrangements for Applecroft Nursery 2027-2028

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
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Admission Arrangements for Applecroft Nursery for 2027-2028

This policy has been written using guidance from Hertfordshire County Council and their model Admissions Arrangements.

School Vision:
'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:
'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

At Applecroft Nursery we aim to provide a fair and transparent admission system.

We have one intake in September of the academic year when your child turns 4 years old. Children eligible for entry into our Nursey from September 2027, are those born between 1st September 2023 – 31st August 2024.

The responsibility for admission into nursery provision lies with the Board of Trustees of the school.

Our published admission number is up to 60 places, term time only.
Places are offered either as:
- 15-hour places, offered as either 'morning' or 'afternoon' sessions or
- 30-hour places, offered as 'morning & afternoon' session places.

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing boards of all maintained schools to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plans) that names the school. We extend this requirement to our nursery setting.

Criteria for Admissions:
Children will be admitted to the Nursery in the following order:

Rule 1 - Children looked after and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order[1] or a special guardianship order[2].

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

A "child looked after" 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 (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989).

All children adopted from care who are eligible for admission under rule 1 and of nursery school age.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order, and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not "looked after" **immediately** before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

[1]Child arrangements order
Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

[2]Special guardianship order
Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

Children previously looked after abroad and subsequently adopted will be prioritised under Rule 1 if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed by documentation and or Hertfordshire's "Virtual School".

The child's previously looked after status will be decided in accordance with the definition outlined in The Children & Social Work Act 2017:

i. to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
ii. to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

A child is in "state care" if he or she is in the care of, or accommodated by:

1. (a) a public authority,
2. (b) a religious organisation, or
3. (c) any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Rule 2 – Medical or Social.
Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the nursery.

A panel of trustees will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the nursery applied for under

Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only nursery that can meet the child's needs.

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

Nurseries in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However, in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific setting.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

a) Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one nursery can meet a child's individual needs, and/or,

b) Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one nursery can meet the child's needs.

c) If the requested nursery is not the nearest setting to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest nursery is not appropriate.

d) For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific nursery essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. A Rule 2 application will generally not be upheld in cases where more than one school could meet the child's need.

In exceptional cases relating to a disability, where more than one nursery in the county can meet the child's specific needs, a clear and compelling case can be made for the "nearest" nursery with the relevant facilities, environment or location. You must clearly explain why attendance at the "nearest" nursery with these facilities is essential.

Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named nursery can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

Applications for children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted or made the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order may be made under this rule.

Rule 3 - Children of staff on permanent contracts at the Nursery or School.

A member of staff is defined as a person who is directly employed by the Board of Trustees of Applecroft School or Nursery and has a full time or part-time permanent contract at the time of application. The Board of Trustees will give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:

a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two years or more at the time at which the application for admission to the Nursery is made, and/or

b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

Please note: The staff member must be the child's legal parent (by blood, adoption or step-parent) and/or have been living at the same address (for a minimum of 4 nights a week) as the child for a minimum of two years.

Rule 4 - Children taking up a full allocation of 30-funded hours that they are eligible for, at our Nursery.

Should we have more applications than places available then these will be allocated to siblings* of children already at the school first.

Definition of sibling*

For the purpose of nursery admissions, a sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after[1] and in every case living permanently[2] in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts or have been offered and accepted a place.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

[1] Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

[2] A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

In Year admissions: the sibling may be in the school's final year as long as they will still be in attendance at the time of admission.

Rule 5 - Children taking up a full allocation of 15-funded hours (morning or afternoon session) that they are eligible for, at our Nursery.

Should we have more applications than places available then these will be allocated to siblings* of children already at the school first.

Rule 6 - Children living closest distance to the Nursery.

A measurement will be taken using Google maps. The school's address and the house number and street name of the applicant will be entered, and the 'on foot' transport method chosen, to gain the measurement.

Where this distance measurement results in more than one child having an identical claim to the last available place as a result of living in flats, priority will be given to the lowest house number.

Where the distance measurement results in more than one child having an identical claim to the last available place and the children live in different roads, priority will be given to the street name that appears first alphabetically.

Rule 7 - Children who are not eligible for a 30-hour fully funded place, but whose parents/carers require a full-time nursery place for their child and are willing to pay for the additional hours.

Multiple Births:
If a twin or multiple birth child is allocated the final place available, the school will also offer places to the other twin/multiple birth children.

Implementation of this Policy:
Allocation of places will be made using the above criteria. If the Nursery is oversubscribed, all children in the highest priority category will then be considered against the next category below e.g., all children taking up their full allocation of 30 or 15 funded hours will then be considered against closest distance to the Nursery.

Admissions:
Parents/carers may contact the school for more information by telephone or email:
Tel: 01707 323 758
Email: admin@applecroft.herts.sch.uk.

After contacting the school parents/carers will be given all the information necessary to make an informed decision about the Nursery and be offered the opportunity to look around the Nursery on one of our open days or by mutual appointment.
Parents/carers will be advised how to apply and will be informed whether there is a place available for their child within the school's time limits.

In the event of a place being offered parents/carers will be notified in writing and invited to complete and sign all admission forms to confirm the place.

Once admission is agreed in writing, the parent/carer will be contacted to arrange a date for transition visit(s) at the Nursery school and to attend an information session for parents/carers.

A home visit will be arranged to gather information from parent/carer and to answer any queries about Nursery school procedures.

Waiting Lists:
To ensure that admissions to the Nursery are fair and transparent the following procedures will be followed:

- When a parent/carer makes an application to the school and there is not a place available, the school's waiting list procedure will be explained fully
- The waiting list is managed in accordance with the criteria for admissions set out above. The school will advise the parent/carer at the time of application on an approximate timescale before a place becomes available. However, this cannot be guaranteed and does not form a binding agreement
- When a place does become available the parent/carer who is highest on the waiting list will be contacted by telephone and in writing requesting confirmation that the place is still required. If no communication is received from the parent/carer within seven day the next person on the waiting list will be contacted and offered the available place
- If the parent/carer still wishes to take up the place for their child(ren) they will be asked to complete the Admission Form, Emergency Contact and Medical Forms and agree a start date for their child(ren).

Roles and Responsibility of Headteacher, Other Staff and Trustees:

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- Children are admitted in accordance with this policy,
- Where places are available, children are admitted in accordance with the agreed priorities.

All staff will ensure that:

- They follow this policy when advising prospective parents/carers and admitting children.

The Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- The admission arrangements are reviewed annually unless changes occur during this time
- The admission arrangements are made available to parents/carers and potential parents/carers
- An admissions register is kept up to date
- The admission arrangements are consistently and accurately applied.