



# POLICY FOR ADMISSION TO WILLOW NURSERY CLASS 2025/26

Benson C of E Primary School

Approval date: March 2025

**Benson C of E Primary School**

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## **Introduction**

There is a countywide admissions policy for community and voluntary controlled nursery schools and classes. This policy was determined by the County Council and is administered by schools. This ensures that admissions are based on common principles. As an academy we are not legally obliged, but choose, to adopt and follow this policy.

When new children join the nursery class **it is important that parents/carers are made aware that the process of applying for place at a primary school for the reception year is separate to that of applying for a place in a nursery class.** Parents/carers whose children attend the nursery class, particularly from outside the designated area of the primary school, are reminded that their child is **not guaranteed** a place at the school when s/he reaches the normal school starting age (i.e. the September of the academic year in which the child will be five). They must apply through the normal school admissions procedures as set out in the school's Admissions Policy.

## **Terminology**

**Reception** - the year children become five.

**Year** – refers to the academic year (September to August)

**Own Admission Authority** – e.g. Voluntary Aided, Academy, Studio, Free and Foundation Trust Schools.

**Looked After (LAC)** - children who are looked after by a local authority within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application.

**Previously Looked After Child (PLAC)** - children who were "looked after" but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order). Evidence of previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested. Where such evidence is not available, a pragmatic decision will be made based on the information available so that there is a local consistent approach.

**Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Child (IAPLAC)** - children 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. The 2021 School Admissions Code regards a child as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

**Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)** – a plan made by the LA under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special education provision, health and social care required for that child. *Therefore, this is not an oversubscription criterion.*

**Siblings/Brother or Sister** - For admission purposes a sibling is defined as a brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step- brother or step-sister who will be resident at the same address at the time of entry.

**Published Admission Number** – The number of places, in part time equivalents (15hrs) agreed each year with the County Council, and published in the Council's Pupil Place Plan.

**Universal Entitlement** – 15 hours per week, term time only, to which every child is entitled from the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

**Working Parent Entitlement** – 30 hours per week, term-time only, for 3 and 4 year olds from working families, according to specific eligibility criteria.

**Grace period** – when a child’s eligibility for the working parent entitlement ceases, the government allows the funded place to continue for a specified time period.

## **Eligibility Terms**

**Universal Early Education Funding entitlement starts from the term after the child’s third birthday.**

Autumn Term:       September 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>

Spring Term:       January 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>

Summer Term:      April 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup>

## **30 Hours Working Parent Childcare Entitlement**

Families meeting certain eligibility criteria are legally entitled to a funded Early Years place of 30 hours a week. Information on this entitlement is available at [www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/overview](http://www.childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/par/app/overview)

Parents/carers cannot insist on accessing their child’s working parent entitlement at any particular provision. We offer the universal entitlement of 15 hours and we also offer the working parent entitlement of 30 hours for those who qualify, subject to availability.

Children may become ineligible for the working parent entitlement. Where this happens there is a **grace period** during which the child may still attend free of charge. When the grace period expires, the place should revert to a universal 15 hour place unless the parent/carer is prepared and able to pay for the working parent hours.

POLICY FOR NURSERY ADMISSIONS IN OXFORDSHIRE  
(Nursery Classes)

1. The County Council has devolved rather than delegated the administration of admissions to nursery classes. Therefore, in the event of a complaint the final responsibility and decision for admissions rests with the Local Governing Body of Benson C of E Primary School.
2. **The designated area** (catchment) of each nursery class or attached nursery school should be set out clearly on a map and be available for parents to see on request. It should also be made available electronically. The catchment area for the nursery is the same as for the main school.
3. Published admission numbers will be stated in part time equivalent (p.t.e.) places. One p.t.e place is 15 hours per week, term time only. Our published nursery admission number is 32.
4. A 30-hour place is deemed to represent 2 p.t.e. places.
5. Schools must not operate the nursery with empty places in any term if they have eligible children on the continued interest list. The exception is where a set limit within the published admission number has been advertised for places for funded 2 year olds or 30 hours, and those places have been filled. A school would not then be obliged to admit, for example, an eligible funded 2 year old to an unfilled universal entitlement place.
6. The minimum **universal entitlement** to funded nursery education is 15 hours per week, term time only, from the term after the child's third birthday.
7. Where capacity against the published admission number exists, places should always be offered for at least 15 hours a week.
8. Schools are permitted to agree take up of fewer hours to meet parental request but are not obliged to. Places will be funded on actual take-up of hours. Schools may set a minimum take up requirement when offering places.

**Benson CE Primary School Nursery class has a minimum 15-hour requirement to be offered a place.** Requests for places for fewer than 15 hours will only be considered after any normal admissions process has been concluded and allocated if capacity allows.

9. Schools may also offer the **working parent entitlement**, of up to 30 hours per week, term time only. This should be decided in advance of the academic year and publicised to parents/carers on the school website. Schools are not obliged to offer the working parent entitlement.
10. **Main admissions are three times a year**, for as long as places are available. Funding

and entitlement are based on a three-term year, with children starting in September, January and April.

11. Children are entitled to a place from the first day of term and offers of a place must always give this as an option even if the school offers 'staggered starts' to help children with the transition. Staggered starts should not be arranged over more than a week or two.
12. Parents/carers will be notified that a funded place is available for their child no later than half a term in advance. Schools will set, and advertise on the school website, a termly deadline for considering applications for admission in the following term.

Intake	Application deadline	School to issue offer letters by
September	30 <sup>th</sup> April	May half term holiday
January	30 <sup>th</sup> September	October half term holiday
April	31 <sup>st</sup> January	February half term holiday

13. Schools may choose to allow parents to split their free universal entitlement (where offered) with another provider but are not obliged to.
14. **Flexibility.** Schools may offer their nursery places in several ways. These include half or full day sessions and extra sessions covering lunchtimes (lunch sessions are chargeable).
15. The school website states the opening times of the nursery and the nursery provision. The website also sets out the school's policy for allocating nursery places when more applications are received than there are places available, as stated in this document (paragraph 16).
16. When more applications are received than there are places available, the following criteria must be applied. These closely follow the admissions criteria for entry to St Nicholas CE Infants' School. The Local Governing Body should apply the criteria by considering all eligible children from each priority category in turn until all the available places have been allocated. **Other criteria (such as date of birth) cannot be used.**
  - 16.1 Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school.
  - 16.2 Children who are "Looked After" by a Local Authority (LAC); "Previously Looked After" (PLAC), or "Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children" (IAPLAC)
  - 16.3 Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equality Act 2010.
  - 16.4 Children who live in the designated catchment area. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following descending order:
    - Those children who, at the time of entry, have a brother or sister attending the school to which the nursery is attached.

- Those children who live closest to the school by the straight line distance as defined on the LA's Geographic Information System

16.5 Children living outside the designated area who have a brother or sister attending either the foundation stage or the main school at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given within this group to children who live closest to the school by the straight line distance as defined by the LA's Geographic Information System.

16.6 Those children who do not meet any of the above criteria. Priority for any remaining places will be given to those who live closest to the school by the straight line distance as defined by the LA's Geographical Information System.

17. If there are more children than places, any child who is not offered a place can only be reconsidered and admitted at a later point if the parents/carers have put the child's name on the school's continued interest list.
18. Once a child is admitted to the nursery, the child is entitled to remain in a universal part time place in the nursery class until the term after he/she becomes five.\* **However this may not be the most appropriate place for the child if all his/her peers have taken up their reception place in a separate class within the school or another primary school.**

\*N.B. In the case of a summer born child, parents/carers must either take up the school reception place by the April before the child's fifth birthday; or else need to re-apply through the next admission round for a place to start in the September, usually as a year one child. See the main school's Admissions Policy for more detail on deferring entry.

19. Where a family ceases to be eligible for the working parent entitlement, the place should return to the universal entitlement level when the grace period expires, unless the parent/carer is prepared and able to pay for the working parent hours. Schools offering the working parent entitlement should explain this possibility in writing when offering the working parent entitlement place. **Parents/Carers must be allowed to keep the child in their universal entitlement place even if they cease to be eligible for the working parent entitlement.**
20. A Universal entitlement nursery place should cease no later than the term after the child's fifth birthday, that is, when they are of statutory school age.
21. Any complaint about the operation of this admissions policy, for example in the case of a child who has been refused admission, should be directed to the Headteacher and then to the Local Governing Body, as they have the ultimate decision regarding admissions to the nursery.
22. There is no statutory right of appeal.