

BLACK HORSE HILL INFANT SCHOOL



FOUNDATION 1 ADMISSION POLICY

14th November 2024

Approved by Committee _____

28th November 2024

Approved by Full Governing Body _____

J Merrin

Signed _____ (Vice-Chair)

J Morris

Signed _____ (Headteacher)

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Statement of intent

Black Horse Hill Infant School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high-quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class.

The governing board is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the Foundation 1 Admissions Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at Black Horse Hill Infant School.

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 (2023) 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding of providers operational guide 2023 to 2024'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Foundation 1 Admission Fees Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. Application process

Admissions to nursery provision will not in any way increase children's chances of admission to Foundation 2.

Parents choosing to send their child to the nursery will have to register their interest with the school office. Once they have completed the registration forms they will be added to the waiting list. The school office 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 written offer which they will need to accept or decline in writing. After accepting the place, they will need to send in their child's birth certificate and proof of address.

Parents who secure a place will be offered a date to begin the transition programme to ensure they and their child have time to settle.

Parents who would like a part-time place will be asked to state a preference for morning or afternoon, and/or for which days they wish to have the childcare; however, the nursery may need to take account of the balance between morning and afternoon places, so it cannot guarantee all parents' requests will be fulfilled.

More information on fees, charges and free childcare entitlements is outlined in the Foundation 1 Admission Fees Policy.

3. Equal opportunities

The nursery will implement an effective policy that ensures equality of opportunities for all, provides a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity, and is equally accessible to all.

When making decisions about admissions the nursery will ensure that it aims to improve the outcomes of all children and reduce inequalities whilst upholding its duties under the Equality Act to put in place adjustments for children with SEND as required to prevent any disadvantage.

Admissions to the nursery will be open, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

4. Application timetable

A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time during the year following their child's second birthday.

Formal applications for nursery places must be made as follows:

- For places in the spring term – During the Autumn term prior to the admission date
- For places in the autumn term – Up to twelve months in advance of the admission date

Application forms can be obtained from the school office.

Acceptance and non-acceptance letters are sent out on the following dates:

- For places in the spring term – During the second half of the Autumn term prior to the admission date
- For places in the autumn term – At the start of the Summer term prior to the admission date

Where places are remaining, later admissions are possible, up to the agreed admissions limit.

Places offered are available to the child from the date the place is offered, until 31 August following their fourth birthday.

The LA will consider securing additional free hours for parents who have applied or re-confirmed by the deadline, but receive their valid 30 hours eligibility code after the beginning of the term, up to the dates set out below:

- Application/re-confirmation by 31 August – code start date between 1 - 14 September
- Application/re-confirmation by 31 December – code start date between 1 - 14 January
- Application/re-confirmation by 31 March – code start date between 1 - 14 April

The LA is not required to secure additional free hours where the parent has applied after 31 August, 31 December or 31 March, or for any codes issued after the dates outlined above.

5. Additional costs

The nursery is able to charge additional costs as part of a free entitlement place – this includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Meals and snacks
- Nappies
- Sun cream
- School trips

- Specialist tuition

Where charges are made in line with the above, parents are expected to pay for these; however, payments are voluntary. Where parents are not willing to provide costs for the above, they will be permitted to provide their own supplies to the nursery. The nursery may also consider waiving or reducing the costs of meals or snacks, particularly for disadvantaged parents.

6. 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 Headteacher 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
3. Children who will have a sibling attending the nursery or the school at the time of admission
4. Children of staff who have:
 - Been employed at the school for two or more years at time the application for admission is made
 - Been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a skill shortage
5. Children living within the catchment area for the school
6. All other children

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.

Where there is a tiebreak scenario within the criteria, priority will be given firstly to a child who lives closest to the nursery based on a straight-line measurement, then by date of birth, with the older child given priority.

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

8. 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 four 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.

9. 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 must give a minimum of four weeks' notice if they wish to reduce the level of provision their child receives. This requirement applies both before and after provision begins.

10. Refusal of admission

A child is only 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.

11. Admission to Reception

Children reach compulsory school age as follows:

- Children turning five years old between 1 January and 31 March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1 April
- Children turning five years old between 1 April and 31 August are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 September
- Children turning five years old between 1 September and 31 December are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term after 1 January

Parents have the choice of how and when their child starts Reception class until they reach the compulsory age.

If parents wish for their child to remain in a nursery or early years setting until they reach compulsory school age, and access 15 hours of free early learning rather than taking up a place in Reception, they must:

- Discuss their choice with the school.
- Complete a Reception application form by the published January deadline, to ensure their child has an offer of a place in Reception from the following September in case they cannot be re-admitted.
- Complete a nursery re-admission application form and return it to the setting.

12. Transition arrangements

Parents are invited to visit the school prior to the transition, and further visits are arranged according to the child's needs.

During the Summer term, Reception teachers from the primary schools to which the children will transfer come in to meet with the children. During the visit, the child's key worker provides the teacher with information about the child's progress across all the areas of learning and will spend time talking to the teacher about the child's social, health and emotional needs.

Details of children with SEND or particular educational requirements are shared, including their development throughout the year, support given and needed, and details of any other agencies involved. Separate transition meetings are held for children with EHC plans, involving all agencies, including visits to new settings with staff.

13. 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.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn 2025.