



Holly Park School

Nursery & Reception Admissions Policy

Links with UN Rights of the Child

Article 15

Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 28

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

I Nursery Intake Plan

Children can begin nursery the term after their third birthday. We do not admit new children into our nursery who are of school age (of an age to be in the Reception Class) as they should be in fulltime education in a Reception class. We have three main points of intake – September, April and January.

NURSERY START DATE	NUMBER OF TERMS IN NURSERY
January	5
April	4
September	3

2 Nursery Admissions Criteria in order of Priority

30 hour pupils will be given priority over 15 hour children. Those wishing to purchase extra hours will then be prioritised over those just doing 15 hours.

- 2.1 Children applying who are in the care of a local authority
- 2.2 Other children whom the Director of Children's Service accepts have an exceptional medical, social or other need that the school is particularly able to meet. Applications in this category will be considered only if they are supported by an attached written statement from a doctor, social worker or other appropriate professional. Parents must demonstrate that there is a

very specific connection between the child's need and the school. Difficulties with child care arrangements because of work or other commitments would not be grounds for priority under this category. Information not provided at the time the application is submitted may not be considered at a later date

- 2.3 Children who, at the time of admission, have a sibling living at the same address who already attends the school. Siblings would include half, step, adoptive and foster siblings provided they also live at the same address as the applicant
- 2.4 Children living within the school's defined area, with priority given to those who live closest to the school when measuring distance in a straight line between the front door of the child's home and the main school gate
- 2.5 Applications made on behalf of twins or triplets – when the over-subscription criteria are applied to applications made on behalf of twins or triplets, they will be selected in random order and places will be offered accordingly. This could result in one (or two) children in a family being offered a place but not the other(s). Where relevant, the remaining child(ren) would be retained automatically on the school's waiting list and would have priority should any vacancies arise at the school.
- 2.6 Tie Breaker situations:
 - 2.6.1 Tie Breaker – distance will be used as a tie-breaker within each category.
 - 2.6.2 Final Tie Breaker – applicants from the same block of flats, or applicants who live the same distance from the school will be selected in random order and places will be offered accordingly.
- 2.7 If a particular session is oversubscribed then the admissions criteria will be applied. If there is space available in another session then this will be offered.

3 Nursery Applications

- 3.1 Application forms are available from the school, or can be downloaded off the website, and should be sent directly to the school.
- 3.2 Applications received after this date will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis once places have been allocated.
- 3.3 There are three intakes for nursery – one in September one in January and the other in March/April.
- 3.4 If a family move into the local area and request a place in nursery and have an older sibling in the school then a place will be given (at any time of year) only if there is a space available.

4 Nursery Sessions

- 4.1 Children are allocated to morning or afternoon sessions of 3 hours, and these allocations follow the same criteria as for admissions, although current members of the school's staff will have some priority. Parents are invited to state a preference for morning and afternoon sessions, but this cannot be guaranteed as the number of places is dictated by statutory ratios
- 4.2 Morning sessions run from 8.45-11.45am, and for afternoon sessions run from 12.45 – 3.45pm.

- 4.3 Additional sessions are available at a cost to parents who wish to purchase additional time in the Nursery (please see the Policy for Charging for Extended Nursery Provision). As the number of places is dictated by statutory ratios, they are allocated according to the same criteria as for Nursery sessions.
- 4.4 For most children of Nursery age, consistency and familiarity with routines and settings is incredibly important, and once they are settled, it is of overriding importance to protect their learning and security. Requests to move children from one session to another for non-priority reasons (parents' work or training; ease of childcare; parent friendships; etc) are generally refused.
- 4.5 Priority requests for session changes will only be considered where there is an external agency involved in the request, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Social Services or the Barnet Inclusion Advisory Team.
5. 30 Hours
- 5.1 If parents believe that their child is eligible for 30 hours free childcare they need to act swiftly to get their code and bring it in to the school office so we can confirm the child's place in nursery as soon as possible. *Delay in applying for the code and presenting it to the school could result in a child not getting the 30 hours as we may be full.
- 5.2 The application process for receiving the extended entitlement is through the digital childcare service. Parents can check whether they could be eligible for a range of government childcare offers, including 30 hours, via Childcare Choices at: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk> or the Childcare Calculator at: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>. Those who could be eligible for 30 hours and/or Tax-Free Childcare will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply. Parents will be able to apply for both 30 hours and Tax-Free Childcare at the same time by entering their details once. HMRC will check parents' eligibility for both schemes at the same time. Parents will be able to apply for Tax-Free Childcare and the extended entitlement through the digital childcare service.
- 5.3 Parents may receive eligibility codes before their child is three but they can only start claiming their 30 hours place the term following the child's third birthday or the term following the date the eligibility code was issued (whichever is the later).
Parents cannot claim 30 hours free childcare once their child has reached compulsory school age (the term following their fifth birthday).
- 5.4 Parents need to bring their eligibility code, along with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth, into the school to verify their code and offer a place.
The school will get written consent from the parent for the school to validate the Code. Only once a code has been successfully verified, can a parent reserve a place for their child with their provider
- 5.5 Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or optional activities.
- 5.6 Children should be able to take up their free hours as part of continuous provision and providers should avoid artificial breaks in the day wherever possible. However at Holly Park – in order to work our school day in line with the rest of the school day and because we offer both a morning and an afternoon nursery session (which can be used as separate entities) it is necessary to have a lunch break in the middle of the day – separate to the 30 hours free

entitlement

- 5.7 If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' of four weeks – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a period of four weeks. 4
- 5.8. A child who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will be funded until the end of that following funding block or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.
- 5.9 The school uses the 30 hours over 5 days. At Holly Park this is 6 hours per day. We do not offer more than 6 hours free entitlement per day. Free entitlement hours cannot be swapped from one day and used on another day.
- 5.10 The free entitlement is not used over the lunch hour. The lunch hour is childcare where the 30 hours free entitlement is for EYFS education.
The free entitlement cannot be used for breakfast club or after school club. Breakfast and after school club are also childcare.
The school is not funded for lunch staffing or extended day staffing – therefore this does not form part of the free entitlement and parents are charged for these times.

6 Starting in Nursery

- 6.1 All parents are invited to a meeting where they will meet staff and be given key information about the school. Attendance at this meeting is strongly encouraged.
- 6.2 Children are invited to an Open afternoon at the school prior to starting. This helps them familiarise themselves with the Nursery building and outdoor area, as well as meeting the staff and some of their peers.
- 6.3 All new starters at Holly Park are offered a 'Home Visit'. This is a meeting at the child's home, attended by the child's planned key worker and another member of the Nursery staff, it is the key starting point in a partnership between home and school that should last for the rest of the child's education. Parents are encouraged to make this visit a priority.
- 6.4 The settling period is unique to each child, and for some children can be almost totally unnecessary, while for others it can last for several weeks and even longer. The Nursery staff place the needs of the child at the centre of any decisions about settling, and parents are closely involved as partners in this process.
- 6.5 Parents should be aware however that an offer of a nursery place does NOT mean that the child will automatically be doing the hours offered. Once the nursery staff have got to know a child during the settling in process, then decisions will be made by the staff about what hours are appropriate for the needs of the child. If children have social and emotional difficulties, behavioural issues or SEN needs, then 15 or 30 hours may not be appropriate. The settling in process may take a very long time and will be constantly evaluated and adjusted slowly as necessary. Whilst we have great sympathy with working parents, our main concern is the wellbeing and safety of the children. Parents should be aware that nursery education is not statutory.
Just because a child has been offered a certain amount of hours – it does not mean that they will be able to do this immediately if they are not developmentally ready for it in our setting and with our staff.

7. Staying on in Nursery Beyond the Nursery Age

- 7.1 Sometimes parents approach the school to ask if their children could stay on in our nursery for a while longer than they should. These children should be moving in to a Reception class. These children have been allocated a school place in other schools in Barnet but parents do not wish to take the place on offer. Some do not have a school place at all.
- 7.2 Children are statutorily required to be in school the term after their fifth birthday.
- 7.3 The school would not particularly advise staying on in nursery when a child should be in a Reception class, however if we do have some spaces we would be able to make a very limited offer and the offer would be made available to all of our nursery children. The school does not openly make this offer but a parent may make a request. We would not make this offer available to any child who was not in our current nursery class.
- 7.4 Parents need to be aware that children staying on in a nursery class, although they would be doing the EYFS curriculum, they would not be receiving the same curriculum or challenge as children in Reception our Reception Class and we would not be able to provide this in our nursery. They would be doing the nursery element of the EYFS curriculum. Any request by a parent for a child to remain in Nursery after the normal transfer to reception will be considered individually, taking into account the reasons for the request, the best interests of the child and of the school
- 7.5 Any offer would only be available with the following conditions:
- We can only offer a guaranteed place until the end of the Autumn Term because we will have already made offers to children to start in nursery in January.
 - We would only offer afternoon places as these tend to be quieter.
 - We can only offer 15 hours of nursery a week.
 - If there were more people wanting the places than there were spaces available, we would have to apply our nursery admissions criteria to allocate places fairly.

8. Reception places

- 8.1 Parents need to be aware that admission to nursery does not lead on to admission to the Reception Class and main school. Parents who want a place in the main school must apply to Barnet LA for a place. Having attended the nursery does not give any preference when allocating Reception Class places.
- 8.2 The process
Applications open in September. You will need an email address to register and create a new Account. You will then be ready to login to your account and start your application. Go to www.eadmissions.org.uk. You will need to create an account and then add your child's details, your school preferences in the order that you want them and submit your application by the deadline which is usually a date in January. You will be asked to attach key documents including proof of address and a birth certificate.
- 8.3 Criteria for all Barnet Community Schools
The following criteria is applied to all applications in this order:
SEN
Child in care
Exceptional needs (medical)
Siblings
Child of a member of staff at the school
Distance

Our admissions number is 60 places
There is a single intake into Reception in September

8.4 Being Offered a place at Holly Park

If you are offered a place at Holly Park you will be informed by Barnet in April.
Parents will be invited to a meeting at the end of June for key information
Parents will be given a booklet with key information including start dates
Children will be invited in to school for a stay and play session
There will be a home visit arranged before the child begins if they did not attend our nursery.
At this visit, parents are invited to share information about their child. The information gathered during these meetings is used by teachers to plan activities that are relevant, interesting and reassuring to children.

8.5 The settling Process

Not all children start school on the same date. Children start Reception and for the first couple of days and go home before lunchtime. They will then stay for lunch and then will start full time. The settling in process is flexible and meets the needs of the children. We have to do what is in their best interest. This can be frustrating for parents who may want to get back to work but our primary concern is making a safe, happy and successful start for all of the children that is in line with their developmental needs – physically, socially, emotionally and behaviourally.

For various reasons, some children may take a long time to settle. The school may feel that it is not in their best interest to stay all day for quite a long period of time. In exceptional circumstances a child may not do a full day until they reach compulsory school age if this is deemed appropriate. A child is of compulsory school age the 1st term after their 5th birthday. In this situation the school would be having ongoing discussions with the parents and would undoubtedly be looking to make various assessments and get some extra support for the child during this time period.

9 Monitoring

9.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about its effectiveness. This responsibility has been delegated to the Staffing and Pupil Welfare Committee

9.2 This policy will be reviewed annually.

Document Control

Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Revision
1.0	Autumn 2013	Full Govs	Updated
1.1	Autumn 2014	Full Govs	Updated
1.2	Autumn 2015	Full Govs	Updated
1.3	Nov 2016	Full govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.4	Nov 2017	Full govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.5	Nov 2018	Full govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.6	Nov 2019	Full govs	Updated & Reviewed

1.7	Dec 2020	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.8	Dec 2021	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.9	Dec 2022	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
2.0	Dec 2023	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
2.1	Dec 2024	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
2.2	Dec 2025	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed

Signed by

	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	Ann Pelham		December 2025
Chair of Governors	Clare Hegarty		December 2025

Distribution

Shared with
• Staff via school server • Parents via Website • Governors via full governing body meetings

Date for next review
Autumn 2026