



# Ashlands Primary School Nursery

## Terms and Conditions.

*"Where every child has the chance to shine"*

**This policy embodies our Ethos Statement – Safe Children at Ashlands**

### **1. About our nursery.**

Ashlands Nursery provides a steppingstone to help children make the transition to school. Children can join at the beginning of the term after their third birthday.

We are open Monday to Friday term time and can accommodate a maximum of 30 children per session.

Ashlands Holiday Club is open to Nursery children allowing parents to access 50 weeks childcare.

There is a before and after school club, known as Saplings, which Nursery children may attend should longer childcare hours be required. See Saplings Terms and Conditions for hours of operation.

We recommend that children attend a minimum of 3 sessions per week, as we feel that this is the minimum number of sessions needed for children to settle with us and establish a routine. However, in our experience children who attend 5 sessions or more, quickly adapt to the routines and boundaries and are more confident with their peers. Children who attend on a regular basis make consistent friendships, which in turn increases their self-esteem and supports their independence.

### **2. Admissions to nursery**

Children are admitted at the start of the term unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example if a family have just moved into the area.

As our nursery can only accommodate a maximum of 30 children per session, in some years it may not be possible to admit children in January and April. This will apply if we have insufficient space or feel that we cannot offer enough sessions per child to allow them to settle in and establish a routine. Where this is the case, we will notify parents and ask them if they would like their application to be allocated to September intake. Children affected by this policy will have priority at the September intake; for the sessions originally requested in January / April.

Letters will be sent out, by post or email, at the beginning of the half term prior to entry, to parents who have filled in a Nursery Waiting List Application Form. For September intake only this letter will also be sent to parents whose children who are in nursery already and will be staying on in September i.e children who will not be going into a reception class in the September.

The letter will contain:

- Session availability and charging information.
- A Preferred Sessions Form.
- A closing date for all applications.
- Parents of children already in nursery and staying-on will also be sent a letter stating the sessions that they currently attend and asking them to confirm whether they wish to continue or vary these sessions.

Completed forms should be returned to the school office and marked **Nursery Application Form**.

**Please note that by completing and returning this form you are NOT guaranteed these sessions.**

Once the closing date has passed, all envelopes will be opened, and places will be allocated as per the Admissions Policy in section 3.

If your application has been successful, we will contact you by letter.

This letter will:

- Confirm the sessions your child has been allocated.
- Enclose a Funded Hours Agreement Form for you to complete and return.
- Enclose an Acceptance Form for you to sign and return.
- Enclose an invoice for hours requested.
- Invite you and your child to come to a settling-in session.

If we are unable to accommodate your request, we will contact you to discuss other options or availability.

The Funded Hours Agreement Form and Acceptance Form must be completed and returned to the school office to secure your nursery place.

All parents are required to complete a Funded Hours Agreement stating where funding is being taken and details of 30-hours eligibility. You should supply your 30-hours eligibility code details even if you are taking these hours with another provider.

### **3. Allocation of Places.**

Places are allocated using the following criteria and in the following order:

- a. Looked after children – a child who is looked after by the local authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) at the time an application is made.
- b. Children with exceptional grounds, such as special educational, social or emotional needs, as evidenced by a professional from health, social services or education – for example, children:
  - o having a significant medical condition and the child's consultant or paediatrician says that they must go to a particular nursery.

- having social reasons supported by a relevant professional, for them to attend a particular nursery.
- c. Children who would be due to start in a reception class the following September. In this instance places will be allocated in the following order:
1. Children who have an older sibling attending Ashlands Primary School at the point of admittance and who live within the priority catchment area.
  2. Children who live within the priority catchment area.
  3. Other children due to start Reception in September at Ashlands.
- Within each of the above criteria nursery places will then be allocated based on the proximity of the child's home address to the school's main entrance.
- d. Children who already have an older sibling attending Ashlands Primary School at the point of admittance and live within the priority catchment area. Places will be allocated based on the proximity of the child's home address to the school's main entrance.
- e. All other children. Places will be then be allocated based on the proximity of the child's home address to the school's main entrance.

**Definitions:**

**Sibling:** 'Sibling' includes biological brothers and sisters, as well as stepchildren and fostered children who are part of the same family living at the same address but does **not** include cousins or children from different families sharing the same house. Every effort will be made to ensure that twins, triplets or children from other multiple births are able to attend the same nursery class. If this is not possible every effort will be made to support the family to gain places at another nursery. If demand from children with older siblings currently attending Ashlands Primary School exceeds the number of places available, then children will be considered by proximity to the school's main entrance.

**Home address:** A child's home address is the address at which they live permanently. Where the child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the parents must decide which address to use for the allocation process. We cannot use the address of a relative or child minder. If demand exceeds the number of places available, then children will be considered by proximity to the school's main entrance. - this will be determined using the Authority's Graphical Information System process and will be the distance between the child's home address and the school's main entrance measured in a straight line.

**Priority Catchment Area:** This is defined as the LS29 postcode.

**The offer of a place at Ashlands Nursery does not guarantee a child a place in the reception class at Ashlands Primary School. A fresh application will be required in accordance with the criteria for admissions to reception class.**

Proof of residency at time of application is required. This can be in the form of a utility or council tax bill or child benefit document. We have been advised that we

should only accept completed admission forms if the name and address on the form agrees with the name and address on the evidence of residency provided.

#### **4. Children who already attend Ashlands Nursery and who will stay on in the following September.**

Children who have started nursery in January or Easter and will stay in nursery in the following September will be guaranteed the sessions that they currently attend. They will be required to submit a fresh application for any extra sessions / changes that they require, and these will be allocated using the criteria set out in section 3.

#### **5. Requests for changes to nursery sessions.**

Any requests for changes to nursery sessions should be put in writing to the school office. If we have space to accommodate the change then this will happen from the beginning of the next half term. Changes are permitted once per term; however we reserve the right to charge an admin fee if additional changes are requested. One month's written notice is required for the removal of a child from nursery or for a change in nursery hours. Where no notice is given, **one month's fees will be charged.**

Sessions cannot be 'swapped' within the week as the session is allocated to the child and cannot be re-allocated to another, and because staff ratios are set for the number of children expected to attend.

#### **6. Nursery Funding Information**

All children are eligible for 15 free statutory hours, from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Some children are eligible for an additional 15 hours, known as 30 hours entitlement.

In some instances, children are able to start nursery before they qualify for 15 hours free childcare. This is at the discretion of the school and is normally only permitted when the child is born just after the cut-off date. The child must be age 3, as school are not insured for children under this age, and in this instance, you will be charged for all hours taken until they are eligible for funding.

Nursery sessions options are as follows:

<b>Morning session</b>	9.00am to 12.00pm	3 hours
<b>Afternoon session</b>	12.30pm to 3.30pm	3 hours
<b>All day</b>	9.00am – 3.30pm	6.5 hours

Nursery fees and lunch costs are reviewed annually. Please contact the school office for further information or see our website.

Cut off dates for eligibility and free early years education provision are:

**Autumn Term:** your child must have turned 3 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> August.

**Spring Term:** your child must have turned 3 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December.

**Summer Term:** your child must have turned 3 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## **Allocation of Nursery Funding**

- Parents can use their funding across nursery, including the ½ hour lunch care, and Saplings.
- When a child joins Ashlands Primary School the parent is required to complete a Funded Hours Agreement Form which details how they wish to allocate their child's statutory and extended hours. This information is returned to Bradford on a termly basis via the School Census and determines how much funding the school receives.
- If a parent wishes to make any changes to how they wish to allocate their hours a new Funded Hours Agreement Form must be completed and returned to the school office. Changes will be active from the beginning of the following term.

## **How funding will be allocated.**

- Funding will initially be allocated against 3-hour nursery sessions.
- Any remaining hours can be used for lunch care, Saplings and holiday club care.
- Hours need to be taken within the term and cannot be banked and carried over to the next term.
- Parents are able split their funding across more than one provider for childcare provision. This information should be recorded on the Funded Hours Agreement Form.
- Parents are able stretch funding over 50 weeks
- Applications for a 30 hours place will not be considered without both a completed Funded Hours Agreement Form and a valid eligibility code.

Further information about 15 / 30 hours funding can be found here:

[Help paying for childcare: 15 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/childcare)

## **Eligibility checks / parents who fall out of eligibility.**

The LA will complete audit checks on the validity of eligibility codes at 6 fixed points in the year, both half-term and at the end of the term across the year. It is the LA's responsibility to notify school where a parent has fallen out of eligibility and to inform them of the grace period. Check points and grace period dates are shown below:

<b>Date parent receives ineligibility decision on reconfirmation</b>	<b>LA audit date</b>	<b>Grace period end date</b>
1 Jan – 10 Feb	11 February	31 March
11 Feb – 31 March	1 April	31 August
1 April – 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September – 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	1 January	31 March

Where a parent's 30-hour entitlement ends, school will contact the parent to discuss what the parent wishes to do. Once the grace period (see above chart) has ended the parent will no longer be entitled to the free additional 15 hours and school reserves the right to remove the offer and re-allocate the place to another child.

Where the parent is no longer entitled to the additional 15 free hours school reserves the right to reduce the child's hours to the statutory 15 hours. If the parent wishes to retain 30 hours childcare (or any hours over the statutory 15) school reserves the right to put a payment plan in place so that these hours are paid for in advance of the sessions being taken.

## **7. Fees and payments.**

### **Fees.**

Nursery Fees are reviewed annually. Please contact the school office for more information.

- Any hours attended over the 15 statutory hours per week will incur a fee (for those pupils without a 30-hours place)
- Children are not charged for a school meal, however you are able to send your child with a packed lunch if you would prefer.
- Sessions are chargeable even if a child is absent through illness, holiday (both authorised and unauthorised) or any other reason. Sessions are allocated to the child and cannot be re-allocated to another and because staff ratios are set for the number of children expected to attend.

All financial matters – bills, invoices, receipts etc are dealt with by the school office, please contact the office if you have any queries regarding these matters.

### **Payments.**

Payment can be made via Arbor, childcare or Government vouchers or by card machine at the school office. We do not accept cash or cheque.

**Please note that the Local Authority checks funding status for all children at set points throughout the school year.**

Invoices for any hours over the 15/30 statutory hours per week are raised in the previous term as detailed in the below example:

Spring Term Invoice (January to April)

Half payment due by break up for Christmas holiday

Half payment due by February half term.

Parents who would like to discuss an alternative payment plan, for example a monthly payment plan, are requested to contact the school office.

Any outstanding balance must be settled by the end of the term the bill relates to and cannot be carried over to the following term. Failure to settle your bill may result in hours being reduced to the statutory 15 hours.

## **8. Early Years Pupil Premium and Free School Meals.**

Children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and / or Free School Meals (FSM) will not be charged the ½ hour care cost if they stay for lunch.

This information should be returned on the Funded Hours Agreement Form when your child starts in nursery.

If you need any help applying for this, or any further information, please ask at the school office.

## **9. Non-payment of Invoices.**

If fees are not paid on time, we will write to the parent requesting payment. Where payment is not made, we will contact the parent to arrange a meeting to discuss the payment of the outstanding invoice. At this meeting we will discuss:

- a. Arrangements to be made to pay the outstanding debt in full.
- b. Reduce further debt occurring by reducing meals / sessions. In the case of a parent not paying the care hours / lunch for a 30 hours place school will ask that the child if taken home at the end of the morning session and returned to school for the afternoon session so that no further debt is incurred.
- c. Arrangement of a payment plan i.e. an agreed amount to be paid at set times.
- d. Withdrawal of all sessions until debt is either cleared or to an acceptable level agreed by parents and school.

Where there is no explanation for repeated late payment and/or telephone calls / letters are not responded to Ashlands reserves the right to reduce the child's sessions to the statutory 15 hours / 30 hours. In the event of hours being reduced to the statutory 15 hours the new reduced hours format will be decided by the school based on what they feel is appropriate for the child. In the event of hours being reduced the school reserves the right to offer the remaining hours to other parents who may be on their waiting list.

If parents are having difficulty making a payment and would like to discuss a payment plan, we ask that they contact the school office to arrange a meeting as soon as possible. At this meeting we will endeavour to agree a payment plan that

the parent can adhere to that will clear the outstanding debt whilst not accruing further debt.

**10. Withdrawal from Nursery.**

Four weeks written notice is required to remove the child from Ashlands Nursery. If written notice has been given any fees paid to school for sessions that fall after the four-week notice period will be refunded to the parent (excluding statutory hours).

**11. Complaints procedure for admissions.**

In the event of Ashlands Nursery being full and therefore being unable to accommodate a request, parents should contact the Children’s Information Link for advice on early years providers and settings in the area.

There are no statutory appeal entitlements for parents / carers refused a nursery place at a school with a nursery class.

Should parents wish to make a complaint they should follow the complaints procedure. A copy of this is available from the school office or can be downloaded from the school website.

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