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Admissions Policy

Current version: Adopted April 2025 **Next review due:** March 2026

Reviewed by:

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Please note:

This document applies to all nurseries within Little Dukes, part of the Dukes Education Group, including:

- Hove Village Day Nurseries
- Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nurseries
- Miss Daisy's Nursery Schools
- The Kindergartens Nursery Schools
- Reflections Nursery and Forest School
- Riverside Nursery Schools
- Pippa Pop-ins Nursery Schools
- Sancton Wood Nursery and Preschool

Any reference to 'the nursery' applies to the nursery named above to which you are applying for a place for your child.

Introduction:

We know that starting nursery is an exciting, key moment in a child's life that can also feel daunting. We understand that you will have many questions about nursery processes, values and about how your child will be spending their time with us. We will always endeavour to answer your questions fully.

The aim of this policy is to help you understand our admissions process and criteria, fee payments, cancellations and notice periods.

This policy is linked to the Little Dukes set of group policies, which you can find on the website of the nursery you are considering.

Application process:

You can apply to one of our nurseries by telephone or email, or by filling in a contact form on the website of the nursery you are considering.


Your enquiry will be passed to the Admissions Manager who will respond and advise you about our process for booking a tour and joining any waiting lists for places.

The capacity for every nursery varies depending on location and the number of places available in each of the nursery rooms.

Our nurseries are registered with Ofsted and the local authority, with care provision applying to children aged 3 months to 5 years old or 2 to 5 years old.

We generally have a larger intake to nurseries in January and September, but we can offer places all year round. Our nursery opening hours vary – some operate for 51 weeks of the year, some for 48 weeks of the year, and some for term-time (38 weeks or less) only.

Daily opening hours will also vary. Please ask at the nursery of your choice for opening time details.

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Once you have expressed your interest, we will get in touch to arrange a visit. Visits can be made individually, in small groups, or as part of an Open Day tour which also gives you the chance to meet the wider team and ask any questions about the nursery.

We will ask you for some details about your child including their date of birth and medical conditions; the month and year you would like them to start and how many days a week you would like them to attend. Once we have received these details, we can begin the process of securing a place for your child.

Please note: The nursery will hold the details you supply securely for up to six years. We may use them to talk to you about future school options within the group and we may refer to them should you wish to have another child join us in the future. You can let us know in writing should you wish for us to not hold or use your details in this way.

We will ask for a registration fee to secure you to the waiting list of your chosen nursery, and once offered a place, a deposit to hold it for you until your child's start date.

Details of all fees can be found on the nursery website or can be provided to you by the Admissions Manager.

For nursery places where you are accessing fully funded Government entitlement, a registration fee is not required. Please speak to the Admissions Manager to confirm any fees payable, or not required, to access your child's place.

Deposits are refundable after your child leaves the nursery (provided you have given the nursery appropriate notice in writing to terminate their place). This is to allow us to reconcile any charges which may remain unpaid after your last invoice is generated, such as extra sessions, activities and trips. You do not need to give us notice if your child is leaving to go to school in their Reception year.

Criteria for admissions:

Where there are fewer applicants than the number of places available, we can usually offer a place for your child. The nursery must admit all children who have an EHC plan where the provider is named.

Children with SEND who do not have an EHC plan will be treated equally to all other applicants in the admissions process. This includes children who may need extra support or reasonable adjustments to be made. The details of our nursery SEND provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy on the website for the nursery you are considering.

Our nurseries do not unfairly disadvantage, whether directly or indirectly, any child based on a protected characteristic or economic disadvantage.

Where there are more applications than places available, the nursery will apply the following oversubscription criteria, in this order:

Siblings:

Siblings of children who currently attend or previously attended the nursery, or another location/setting within the group. Priority extends initially to the location, then the nursery group, and finally to other nurseries within the Little Dukes group.

Children who are twins, triplets or from multiple births:

Same-age siblings who have not previously been at the nursery. In cases where we aren't able to offer a place to both/all children from multiple births, their application will take priority to ensure they can access the same nursery.

Children of nursery employees:

Children who live with parents who are employees of the nursery, provided they have been employed by the nursery for a minimum of 12 months at the date of application or to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable shortage and have a permanent contract. This criteria is a suggestion, and actual priority/terms applied to employees of the nursery will be made at the discretion of the Principal.

Distance:

Children living closest to the nursery, based on most appropriate method of transport/commute.

Offer of a place:

Once you have made your enquiry, visited your chosen nursery, completed the registration form and paid the relevant registration fee, we will make you an offer of a place for your child, subject to availability and our criteria for admissions.

This offer will be based on the discussions we will have had with you about the days and times that you wish your child to attend, their anticipated start date and the length of time they will be with us (if applicable). It will also include information on fees and the deposit amount you will be expected to pay to secure their place.

Returning the signed admissions policy and nursery terms and conditions, along with payment of the deposit (usually required within seven days) will constitute your acceptance of the place we have offered, and of these terms and conditions.

To accept an offer, we must receive from you:

- Acknowledgement of this admissions policy and return of signed nursery terms and conditions.
- In cleared funds, the deposit as set out in the offer of a place letter/email.

These requirements are without prejudice to the terms set out in this policy.

Your child cannot be transferred from one location to another after an offer is accepted, except at the sole discretion of the Principal.

For a drop-in or short-term place, please see the section “Drop-in places only” in our Nursery Parent Terms and Conditions.

I/WE HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THIS ADMISSIONS POLICY:

The admissions policy must be signed by both parents or guardians of your child, except where your child has one parent or guardian.

Child's Name:

Child's Date of Birth: _____

Nursery Name:

Start Date at Nursery: _____

Parent or Guardian 1 Print Name:

Parent or Guardian 1 Signature:

Date: _____

Parent or Guardian 2 Print Name:

Parent or Guardian 2 Signature:

Date: _____