



Nursery Admissions Policy 2020

Ratified and Adopted by the Strategic Development Committee on
Wednesday 1st July 2020

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Statement of Intent

John Clifford School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is, high-quality and geared towards a smooth transition into Reception class.

The Governing Body of John Clifford School is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the school's Nursery Admissions Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the school.

1. Legal Framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation

Guidance

- DfE (2014) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guide'

- 1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- GDPR Policy

2. Free Childcare Arrangements

- 2.1. The Local Authority (LA) is required to secure free places offering 570 hours childcare a year, over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year, for every eligible child in the LA from the relevant dates outlined at 2.3.
- 2.2. Children are eligible for free childcare from the relevant dates (outlined at paragraph 2.3) up until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.
- 2.3. With regards to the age criteria, pupils will be eligible as follows:
 - Born between 1 January-31 March: eligible from the start of term beginning on, or following, 1 April after the child's third birthday
 - Born between 1 April-31 August: eligible from the start of term beginning on, or following 1 September after the child's third birthday
 - Born between 1 September-31 December: eligible from the start of term beginning on or following 1 January after the child's third birthday
- 2.4. The John Clifford School Foundation Unit can accommodate a maximum of 16 nursery children per session.
- 2.5. The John Clifford School Foundation Unit offers 30 hours free childcare as an extension to the universal 15 hours free childcare.
- 2.6. Parents wanting to access the 30 hours free childcare entitlement must apply to do so through the digital childcare choices.
- 2.7. Parents are able to access the 30 hours of free childcare for 38 weeks out of the year – i.e. during term time.
- 2.8. The sessions offered to nursery children are as follows:
 - For children eligible for 30 hours free childcare – six hours daily (plus supervision at an additional cost) (see **section 8**), between the hours of 8:50am-3:25pm

- All other children – three hours free childcare daily, between the hours of 8:50am-11:50am (AM session) and 12:25PM-3:25PM (PM session).

3. Eligibility for 30 Hours Free Childcare

3.1. Parents of children aged three and four must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare:

- Each parent earns, or is expected to earn, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage (unless in a 'start up' period – i.e. newly self-employed – in which case they do not need to meet the income criteria for 12 months)
- The parent should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work
- One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or are on statutory sick leave
- One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work
- If a non-European Economic Area national, the parent has recourse to public funds

3.2 Parents should check their own eligibility for the scheme using the government's Childcare Choices website or childcare calculator. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

3.3 Parents can only start claiming their 30 hours free childcare the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC. For this reason, parents are urged to apply as soon as possible.

3.4 If eligible, parents must provide the school with their unique code to confirm they are eligible for the scheme, together with their National Insurance number and child's date of birth. As the free childcare cannot

be claimed until the code has been verified, parents should provide the school with this information as soon as possible in order to avoid delay.

- 3.5 Parents will be prompted every three months by HMRC to reconfirm that they remain eligible for free childcare.
- 3.6 The LA will audit the eligibility codes at six points during the year to identify any children who have fallen out of eligibility.
- 3.7 In accordance with 3.6, the LA will notify the school as soon as possible where parents have fallen out of their eligibility. The school will then notify parents within five working days.
- 3.8 If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a short period of time.
- 3.9 If a parent falls into their grace period before their child has started a 30 hours place, they should not take up their 30 hours place.
- 3.10 The grace period will not continue once a child has reached compulsory school age.
- 3.11 A child who becomes ineligible during the first half of a funding block will be funded until the end of that funding block (i.e. 31 March, 31 August, 31 December) or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.
- 3.12 A child who becomes ineligible in the latter half of the funding block (i.e. up to the last day of the funding block) will be funded until the end of the following funding block or for as long as they remain under the compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.
- 3.13 If a child becomes ineligible for the 30 hours free childcare, they will still be entitled to 15 hours of free care.
- 3.14 Consideration to extend the grace period will be taken in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a parent has been forced to leave their home and paid employment.

4. Application Timetable

- 4.1. A child is deemed to be of nursery-age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday.
- 4.2. Parents may register their interest in a place at the nursery at any time.
- 4.3. Application forms can be obtained from the School Office and School Website.
- 4.4. Acceptance and non-acceptance letters are sent out on the following dates:
 - For places in the Spring term (Jan-March) – November
 - For places in the Summer term (April-July) – February
 - For places in Autumn term (Sept-Dec) – June

5. Additional Costs

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

6. Oversubscription

- 6.1. Children who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan that names the school are admitted before the oversubscription criteria is applied.
- 6.2. Children with an EHC plan that does not name the school will be referred to the school's admissions team to determine an appropriate place, in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol.
- 6.3. The Governing Body 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 school.
- 6.4. The oversubscription criteria, set out in priority order, are as follows:

- LAC or children who were previously looked after but have subsequently been adopted or become subject to a residence or special guardianship order
 - 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
 - Children who will have a sibling attending the nursery or the main school at the time of admission
 - Children of staff who have:
 - Been employed at the school for two or more years at time the application for admission is made.
 - Children living within the catchment area for the nursery school
 - All other children
- 6.5. Where there is a tiebreak scenario within the criteria, priority will be given firstly to a child who lives closest to the school based on a straight-line measurement, then by date of birth, with the older child given priority.

7. Reserve List

- 7.1. In circumstances where more applications are received than places are available, and where the oversubscription priority criteria has been applied, children who are not offered places will be added to a reserve list in order of the criteria and not by date of application.
- 7.2. If a place becomes available, the nursery will contact the parents of the child at the top of the list.
- 7.3. The reserve list is not a waiting list – if a request is made by a parent whose child has higher priority according to the admissions criteria, other children are moved down the list.
- 7.4. Placing a child's name on the reserve list does not guarantee that a place will become available.

8. Withdrawing Offers

8.1. Once a written offer has been made, there are limited circumstances in which an offer can be withdrawn – these are as follows:

- 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

9. Refusal of Admission

9.1. 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

9.2. Parents do not have a statutory right to appeal against the admission authority's refusal to award a place to their child.

9.3. Parents may appeal to the SEND tribunal against the provision named by the authority in the EHC plan.

10. Admission to Reception

10.1. 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

- 10.2. Parents have the choice of how and when their child starts Reception class until they reach the compulsory age.
- 10.3. 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 the statutory First Admissions application form from their local authority by the closing date, 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 by **1 January**.

11. Transition Arrangements

- 11.1. Parents are invited to visit the school prior to the transition.
- 11.2. Further visits are arranged according to the child's needs.
- 11.3. A photograph book displaying aspects of the school is used to prepare children for their transition.
- 11.4. During the **Summer** term, Reception teachers from the primary schools to which the children will transfer come in to meet with the children.
- 11.5. 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.
- 11.6. 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.

- 11.7. Separate transition meetings are held for children with EHC plans, involving all agencies, including visits to new settings with staff.

12. Data Protection

- 12.1. When processing and publishing information, the nursery will ensure it meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. The Nursery will act in compliance with the GDPR Policy when processing personal data.

13. Policy Review

- 13.1. This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Board and Headteacher.
- 13.2. The scheduled review date for this policy is June 2021.