

Truro Nursery School

Admissions Policy – Agreed by governors March 2022

To be reviewed by March 2024

Introduction

At Truro Nursery School (TNS) we recognise how important it is for children to have access to high quality nursery school experience. Involvement in high quality early education has been proven to lead to better outcomes for children both educationally and socially and enable children to have the best possible start in life and fulfil their potential.

We recognise that parents have to judge what their family needs and we try to support these needs of families through our policy for admissions.

We currently offer places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Rationale for admissions

We are respectful of equality and diversity and this is reflected in our policy for admissions. See also our equality duty statement. We welcome diversity and all children have equal opportunity to admission regardless of gender, religion or ethnicity with exception of children eligible for priority 1 waiting list.

We offer a priority 1 waiting list; these children are prioritised for a place when they are eligible where possible. Children eligible to be placed on the priority 1 waiting list can be found on the attached appendix 1.

All other places will be allocated on first come first served basis. Consideration will be given for places to be kept open in the Autumn term for children whose parents have decided to defer or delay their reception year place and **keep their child with us**. Governors also endeavour to accommodate vulnerable children should they need a place at any time throughout the year.

Parents can register their child on the waiting list at any time after their child is born. Families will be offered one of the following:

1. A two year old place for their child as soon as their child has had their 2nd birthday or anytime after
2. A rising 3 place for their child for the term during which they are 3
3. A place for their child the term after they are 3

Once a place is offered a parent may choose to defer entry until a later date. In such a case we will not keep the place available for this child (as it will take up the place from which another child could benefit). In this instance, the child's application would be put back onto

our waiting list to be considered for a place for the term of choice. A place would only be offered at a later date if there were places available.

Rising 3 places

15 hours of funded childcare is available to all families the term after their 3rd birthday. However, we also offer rising 3 places if we have them available. This means we offer children who are 3 *during* the term a place e.g. for the autumn term this would be for children who are 3 between September 1st and December 31st. These rising 3 places are chargeable (with the exception of funded 2 year olds) as we do not receive any other funding for them.

2 year old places

TNS operate a small nurturing 2 year old group. Children will be able to take up a place anytime after their 2nd birthday. These sessions are chargeable with the exception of funded 2 year old places.

Funded childcare

Currently all parents can access the free entitlement to early years provision which is at present for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. This is available for all 3 and 4 year olds and can last up to two years until the child reaches statutory school age. Some families will be entitled to 30 hours for 3 and 4 year olds again over 38 weeks per year. Some families are entitled to funded 2 year old places.

At TNS it is our opinion that children have a greater chance of success if they take all or at least most of their hours in one provision and take these hours regularly over 5 days for example 5 mornings or 5 afternoons. We try our best to offer parents the choice of hours they request. However, this is not always possible. Parents can elect to change their hours at the next available point subject to availability. We reserve the right to make changes to sessions at half termly points only but will endeavour to make changes sooner if possible.

Attendance – minimum sessions

Our data and observations show us that children who attend for less than their 15 hours or share their provision with another setting usually make considerably less progress than their peers who take the full entitlement. Furthermore, children who have in the past attended for only 1 or 2 sessions per week (3 or 6 hours per week) have found it very difficult to settle and make friends. Therefore, the school and governors have decided to operate a minimum session policy for some (age dependant) children unless there are exceptional (at headteacher's discretion) circumstances. Children will only be accepted for a place if they attend for a minimum of 3 sessions per week (9 hours per week) if they are entitled to 15 funded hours or will only be able to continue with their place if they attend for a minimum of 3 sessions per week (9 hours per week) once they are entitled to 15 funded hours if they started earlier and was attending for less sessions before this point.

If children are entitled to 30 funded hours a week a minimum of 3 sessions (9 hours per week) must be attended but if 15 hours or less is taken in session a maximum number of 15 hours would be claimed. There are no minimum session requirements for 2 year olds or rising 3's but again we would encourage families to still only use one or two settings if suitable arrangements can be made.

If we are unable to give parents their choice of sessions to enable them to take their full 15 or 30 hours we may offer them the opportunity to take fewer sessions during term time and use some of their sessions in the holiday **clubs and wraparound**. This means **they 'bank'** hours to use later. This is an agreement between the school and the parent. The school has to claim the hours as normal and then agrees **with the parents** which hours will be taken in the holiday club. Parents/carers may choose to **bank some hours** as long as minimum session requirements is met.

Ad hoc Additional hours

TNS will offer ad hoc additional hours to parents for their child if they are available when requested. These are chargeable (see charging policy). If the child has accumulated banked hours (see above) **these can also be used towards ad hoc sessions in agreement with the school.** We recognise that parents have to make decisions about care based on the needs of the family. However, we advise parents with regards to the suitability of their choices.

Retaining nursery provision in preference to taking up a school place

Currently parents/carers have a choice to retain their nursery place into the child's reception year until statutory school age (the term after the child is 5) or to delay their school place entirely by 12 months if their child is summer born. Parents will need to give notice of this intention to TNS before the end of April prior to the September reception class start date. We will ensure that parents who choose to do this are able to maintain their allocated hours and are given appropriate information and guidance. On the rare occasion that a parent/carer wishes to take up a nursery place for part or all of their child's reception year but are not currently on roll, the Headteacher and governors will consider the application and **only** make the exception if they consider this to be in the best interests of the child and the other children in the Nursery in accordance to our waiting list and admissions criteria (these places will not be given priority over other applications on our waiting list).

Admission dates

We have three main points of admission:

September

January

April

Children are admitted at these points in the year only if there is an available space. Families requiring a place between these points will be offered a place wherever possible at our discretion.

Appendix 1 - Admissions Policy November 2020 – Review November 2021

The governors at Truro Nursery School have identified the following groups (using children's centre criteria as a basis) who may be considered vulnerable for priority admission. For the identified groups below, the application must be supported by evidence that the child meets the criteria outlined, this could be a doctors letter, Social Worker referral, professional report etc.

- children living with domestic abuse, adult mental health issues and substance abuse
- children 'in need' or with a child protection plan
- children of offenders and/or those in custody
- Parents, particularly those with any other identified need, for example, teenage parents and those in custody
- those with some protected characteristics¹, as defined by the Equality Act 2010 – see below
- children who are permanently being cared for by members of their extended family such as a grandparent, aunt or older sibling
- families identified by the local authority as 'troubled families' who have children under five
- families who move into and out of the area relatively quickly (transient families), such as asylum seekers, and those who are living in a refuge.
- Families where an older sibling is acting as a carer

In addition to the above priority places will also be considered for:

- children with a sibling that will still be attending Truro Nursery School at the time of entry. Siblings are defined as children with at least one natural or adoptive parent in common, living at the same or a different address. Children living in the same household at the same address would also be counted as siblings, regardless of their actual relationship to each other.
- SEN children who have an EHC plan in place
- Children in receipt of disability living allowance
- Looked after child or previously looked after child as defined by the Children's Act 1989 Section 22 e.g. foster placement, adopted, child in care of the local authority
- children of multiple births where the first child on the list would be offered a place but there would be no further place available for the second child
- children of members of staff

¹ Children and families with protected characteristics may include:; those from minority ethnic groups; those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families; those from lesbian, gay and transgender families, children from gender reassignment families.

The list is not exhaustive and does not imply that young children or families in any of these categories require additional support. The governors and headteacher will need to judge the level of additional support required given the information they have.