

## St Margaret's C of E Primary School Nursery Admissions Policy

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### Introduction to Foundation Stage

Our school's nursery staff, who care for the foundation stage, are committed to providing a high quality of teaching, and learning to our youngest pupils - and importantly, to giving them a happy start to their school life. We believe that the foundation stage should allow pupils to develop their creative and investigative skills in a way that is enjoyable, stimulating and challenging. Through nursery and reception years, play activities are carefully planned and resourced in an engaging environment to provide the best learning experience for all our pupils. The curriculum is focused on supporting and promoting pupils' all-round development - in areas ranging from personal, social and emotional wellbeing to mathematics, language and communication.

In this way, the nursery aims to ensure that all pupils are well prepared for their transition to reception and that ultimately our pupils will leave the foundation stage confident, independent and ready to take on the world that awaits them.

### Priorities for Admissions

Parents/carers will be clearly informed in the admissions process that places are allocated for the complete academic year. Places will be allocated to pupils who will be aged 3 prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> August each September. No places will be available for a deferred start if we are oversubscribed with pupils in the correct age group. If places are available we will offer further places in January for pupils who have turned 3 between September and December.

A full term's notice will be required from any parent wishing to withdraw their child from any nursery place.

We will use these priorities for and they will be *applied to ensure that the nursery is full* (parents/carers should note however that admission to nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school).

These are:

- 1** Siblings of pupils who already attend St Margaret's CE and who are living at the same address
- 2** Pupils of staff who have 2 years continuous service
- 3** Distance from the school as measured by the DFE distance tool.

We offer full time or part time places in our Nursery. Full time places are 30 hours and part time places are 15 hours. Part time places can either be morning or afternoon sessions.

### **Full time places**

For a full time/30 hours place you will either need to qualify for a code from the Government or pay the top up fee each month. To check if you qualify for a code and apply please visit this website: <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>. In addition to having a 30 hour code or paying the top up the school may offer a full-time place at their discretion based on individual circumstances. Full time places are from 8.45am- 3.15pm

### **Part time places**

Part time places will be offered for 15 hours per week. Part time places will be either morning 8.45am – 11.45am or afternoon 12.15pm – 3.15pm. Parents may request alternative timings for part time places and these requests will be considered by the school.

### **Costs to parents/carers who want a full time place but do not receive a free place**

- For all pupils, the first 15 hours per week are free of charge.
- The additional 3 hours per day will be charged at a rate set each year to cover the gap between LA funding and the costs of a full-time place, this is payable for all 38 weeks of the academic year regardless of start dates/settling in periods.
- Fees must be paid to the school monthly or half-termly in advance, the dates on which payment is due to be advised by the school.
- No refunds will be made in the case of an individual child's absence, but full refunds will be made where the school is closed for exceptional reasons (eg severe weather conditions or strike action).
- Places will be withdrawn and re-allocated to pupils on the waiting list if fees are not paid by the agreed date and/or attendance is not consistent.

### **Transition**

The school recognises that for young pupils and their parents or carers, the transition to the new environment is a significant and often challenging time. For this reason, our nursery staff will work with all parents to ensure that an appropriately structured settling-in period is established for each child. It is expected that most pupils will be happily settled on a full-time basis by the beginning of October for September entry and beginning of February for January entry. Our staff will take every care to identify early on individual pupils who may need a longer period to adapt to the change in environment. They will work closely with parents or carers to understand the needs of the pupils and agree a suitable transition programme for them.

### **Inclusion**

We recognise that each pupil comes to school from home with different experiences, that no pupil is like another and that each pupil in our nursery and reception class needs to be valued and respected in her or his own right. Foundation stage staff will work to identify and meet, where

possible, the special and additional needs of individual pupils through the settling-in period and throughout the early years.

## **Attendance**

The school offers full-time and part time places for nursery pupils to enable them to benefit as much as possible from the full range of curriculum activities, a regular routine and the consistent, focused attention of nursery staff. We have also found that, in our nursery staff's experience, pupils attending on a regular full-time basis are better able to settle, integrate and thrive in the nursery environment. Pupils are therefore expected to attend punctually and regularly and parents or carers should give early notice to staff if pupils are going to be absent. If nursery staff become concerned about the level of a child's attendance, this will be discussed with parents or carers. In the case of prolonged or regular absence not resulting from special needs or agreed with the Headteacher, the place may be offered to another child.

## **Communication**

The school strongly encourages the involvement of parents and carers in their pupils' education and school life and seeks opportunities to work in partnership with them for the benefit of the pupils. A successful working partnership is particularly important for ensuring proper support for our youngest pupils as they establish themselves in the nursery. Parents and carers will be given opportunities for regular informal and formal communication with nursery staff and should feel welcome at any stage to discuss specific issues or questions with year group leader for nursery. The school welcomes help from any parents or carers who would like to offer their skills or experience for the benefit of nursery pupils. DBS clearance would be required for all regular volunteers.

## **Applications**

- Application forms are available from the school office or the school website, the deadline for completed applications is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Parents/carers will be informed at the latest by 10<sup>th</sup> May if their application has been successful.
- Parents/carers applying for a full-time place will be informed at the same time whether they qualify for a free full-time place or if they need to pay the top-up fee.

All parents must submit an application form, even if the child already has a sibling in the school.

- If a parent/carer believes that the treatment of their application has not been in accordance with this policy, they are entitled to use the school's Complaints Procedure.
- *Please note that a successful Nursery application does NOT guarantee a place in the main school. This can only be secured by a successful application to the Local Authority at the appropriate time. The Governing Body is NOT the admissions agent for places in the main school.*

FOOTNOTES FOR GOVERNORS (not to be included in the policy document)

<sup>1</sup> This wording is the same as in the current MCC school admissions policy. The explanation reads: 'If you have chosen a particular school because your child has social or medical circumstances or you are disabled, please indicate the reasons for choosing your preferred school. You must also provide a letter from your doctor or social worker to support your evidence. We will then send you a category 2 application form allowing you to state in full the exceptional social/medical reasons why your child should attend your preferred school.' Suggested this is reworded to say: *'If your child has social or medical circumstances or you are disabled, please provide us with appropriate evidence. This might be a letter from your doctor or social worker.'*