



Admissions Policy

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a fair, open, transparent and inclusive admissions procedure is in place, enabling access for children under the age of 12 years to a place in the nursery or before and after school club. The policy also seeks to ensure that vacant places are filled quickly and efficiently and that where possible availability of places is matched appropriately to the individual needs and requirements of children and their families and/or carers.

Principles

The Nursery adheres to and has its own Equality and Diversity Policy for all Nursery users, which is available on request from the Nursery office.

How to Obtain a Place

Children obtain a place at Sandytots Nursery through one of six routes:

1. Universal nursery education for 3 and 4year olds for 15 hours up to 30 (if eligible via childcare choices) for 38 weeks of the year. Stretched places can also be claimed.
2. Early Education Funding (EEF) can be obtained by the parent creating a government gateway account via Childcare Choices at: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>
3. 'Think 2 funded place' that can be obtained through income related benefits via www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. (Income support, Jobseekers (JSA), Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, child has SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan, child attracts Disability Living Allowance, income related employment and support (ESA), state pension and part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, Looked after child by the LA, child has left care through special guardianship, adoption or residence order (Stretched places are also available)
4. Vulnerable Children's Division within the Staffordshire County Council
5. Daycare, which is obtained and paid for by the children's families and/or carers
6. Through before and after school care requirements.
7. Full time University/College places.

The Nursery has a total of 122 full time places per day, which are made up of full-time and part-time places. All places are allocated on a 'needs' basis. We also have places for daycare requirements.

Group 1

Funded places for 3-5 year old's

All 3 - 5-year-old children in England are entitled to funded nursery education for 15/30 hours for 38 weeks per year. The children are admitted in the academic year, the term after they turn three. The Nursery Manager and Office Manager work together to allocate places.

Sandy Tots Admissions Policy states that children's entitlement to fifteen hours funding can be taken in the following listed sessions that include a consumable charge subject to availability:

- 3 x am/pm sessions per week
- 1 x Full day plus ½ day
- 2 x Short day sessions



5 x Session of 3 hours either a 9-12 or 1-4
2 x Session of 6 hours 9-3 over a stretched place

These hours are flexible and can be taken as parents choose (subject to availability as children already at the Nursery will be allocated sessions or days, which meets the needs of them and their families). This is intended to enhance flexibility for working parents. Meals are included depending on the session time.

To obtain a place, parents need to ring or visit the nursery office. Parents will then be contacted and offered a time that is convenient to come and look around the nursery. All admissions forms and terms and conditions will be given out at the end of the show-round. If parents are happy to take up a place these forms should be returned to the Nursery at the earliest opportunity so availability can be considered by the office Manager and the Nursery Manager. When at all possible, the wishes and needs of children and parents and/or carers will be considered as to how they would like to access their entitlement. However, our high demand for places necessitates some flexibility by all.

If a place is allocated at Sandy Tots Nursery, parents will be contacted by the Office Manager to arrange a Care Plan visit. Parents can then meet the relevant managers, room leaders and the children's future key persons. Dates are then arranged for further visits by parents/carers and children prior to the children starting at the nursery.

The minimum placement is 2 days (Minimum 3 hours session)

Group 2 & 3 Think 2/ Vulnerable Children's Division
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Children under 3 years (and in some situations over 3) can be referred for a place by one of the following:

- The family
- Social worker
- Health visitor/General Practitioner or other medical professional
- Housing Departments and Associations
- Family support worker
- Other professionals working with a family
- Think 2 Funding allocated by the government (Parents to bring the letter confirming funding to the nursery)

A request for a place needs to be made via the Staffordshire County Council's First Response Team or a request made from the panel or district lead as well as the child's social worker, who will ensure that the needs of the child or children, family and/or carers are assessed. If that assessment indicates that a place is likely to help meet the identified needs, the Team Manager will contact the Nursery to ascertain if a suitable place is available. If so a place is allocated, and the days and hours agreed, subject to discussion with the parents/carers. If a suitable place is not available, the Nursery Manager and the Team Manager will collaborate to ensure that alternative and suitable arrangements are made.

It is important to note that a place at the Nursery usually represents one part of an overall support package, and that other activities, which may include the active participation of parents/carers, could be recommended. This could for example be attendance at group sessions that focus on children's learning and play, or on parenting, etc.



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Once a place has been allocated by the Nursery Manager and agreed by the parents/carers, the allocated Social Worker or Family Support Worker will contact the Nursery Manager to discuss an admissions plan. This will usually include a visit to the Nursery by the child/children and parents/carers, accompanied by the Social Worker or Family Support/Engagement Worker if/as required. Collation and completion of relevant documentation will be done, and visits before the commencement of the place will also be arranged.

Reviews of the child's/children's progress take place after three months and then six monthly. Review meetings include the parents/carers, Health Visitor, Social Worker/Family Support Worker, the child's key person, the Nursery Manager and other professionals as appropriate to the circumstances.

Termination of a place is considered if children attend inconsistently. In such circumstances, the Nursery Manager will ensure that the child's social worker is contacted. This is so that a Social Worker or a Family Support Worker can re-assess the need for – and the use of – the place. The Nursery Manager will be informed of the outcome, and a plan of action agreed.

Social Workers from the Safeguarding or panel member may request additional hours/days for children via their own Team Manager in the first instance, who will then contact the Nursery Manager to determine availability.

As is the case in the group above, the minimum placement is 2 day with a minimum 3 hour session.

Group 4 Daycare for Children Aged 12 Weeks to 5 Years

Sandy Tots Nursery provides daycare for children from when they are 12 weeks of age until they are eight (Before and After school club).

Parents/carers who require daycare need to contact the Nursery to request a place. The Office Manager will take the child's or children's details who will then look at availability. Parents will be contacted within two weeks of the request being made. If appropriate places are unavailable at that time, the child's details will be kept on the waiting list held by the Office Manager and updated weekly to check availability. All parents of children awaiting a place will be updated routinely about present and likely future availability every two weeks.

If a child or children attend the Nursery, priority for additional daycare is given to:

- children accessing paid care
- siblings of children accessing nursery and/or daycare
- children who live within the Sandy Tots boundary/post coded, within close proximity to the Centre
- working parents
- parents accessing training and/or education

Names and contact details will be held on the waiting list until such a time as parent's state that they no longer wish to be considered for childcare. Every effort will be made to contact parent and/or carers when a suitable place becomes available for their child, i.e. twice by phone. If parents/carers have not responded to such communication within 13 working days, the child's name will be removed from the waiting list and the place allocated to the next child, whose needs match the available hours.

Once a place has been allocated, parents/carers will be asked to:

- complete the relevant documentation and registration form



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- pay a non-refundable Administration fee and a refunded deposit which secures their place
- Think 2 funded places require a deposit that is refunded the following term
- EEF places require a deposit only that is refunded when the place has been closed
- No deposit or administration fee is required our before and after school club

After the care plan visit the room manager will arrange a settle visit, parents/carers can arrange the care plan and visit to coincide with each if they feel the child/children are settled. This can be booked for a maximum of two hours before commencement of the paid contract.

The minimum placement is 2 day (Minimum of 5hours) 0-2's

The minimum placement is 2 day (Minimum of 3 hours) for 2 years plus

Group 5 Before and After school club (until the age of 12)

Parents/Carers can obtain before and after school club care if their child attends John Wheeldon School which is situated next door to the Nursery. Parents can obtain a place by phoning or coming into the nursery office where the appropriate forms and terms and conditions will be given. Parents will also be offered the chance to come and see the nursery and the provisions in place for the older children attending the before and after school club provision.

Terminating a nursery place

We require 4 weeks notice of termination if you want to withdraw your child from the nursery, during that notice period full payment of nursery fees will be required.

We reserve the right to terminate this agreement immediately if you have failed to pay your fees by the due date or you behave in an unacceptable manner. In particular we will not tolerate any physical or verbal abuse towards staff, children or visitors in the nursery.

Signed:

Managing director: **Julie Wetton**

Nursery Manager: **Michelle Lindley**

Deputy manager: **Catherine Barrett**

Review Date: January 2023

Reviewed on: January 2024