

Watford Field School Infant & Nursery



*Being Kind, Confident Minds,
Ready for Life Long Learning*

Nursery Admissions Policy 2022-23

Arrangements for Local Schools

Date agreed: October 2021

Review date: March 2022

Provision

Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) has a nursery admissions number of 61.

For children accessing the 15 Hours Free Early Education and Childcare entitlement we offer 22 morning nursery places from 8.30am – 11.30am and 16 afternoon nursery places from 12.30pm-3.30pm. We also offer up to 17 places from 8.30am-3.30pm for 30 Hours Free Early Education and Childcare entitlement.

Process of Applying for a nursery place at Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery).

- Please complete an online application form by Friday 25th February 2022.
- All applications received will be processed by each school during the week beginning 28th February and the over subscription admission rules will be applied if necessary.
- Parents will be notified by the school if they have been offered a place via email on Monday 7th March 2022.
- Parents have until Friday 18th March 2022 to accept the offered place. If they have not been offered a place in any of the nurseries they applied to, they will need to phone all nearby nurseries to see which ones have space.

In partnership with local Nursery classes, Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) will adhere to the following timetable when dealing with admissions.

Deadline to apply to your chosen school/s	9am Friday 25th February 2022
Offer letters sent by schools to parents/carers	Monday 7th March 2022 (via email)
Deadline to accept place and return paperwork to chosen school	9am Friday 18th March 2022

Admission Rules for applying for a nursery place. The rules will be applied in order.

Parents must apply direct to the school office for a place and places will be allocated following the school's criteria.

Rule 1: EHC (Education, Health and Care)

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs that names their school. Schools must also admit children with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school.

Rule 2: Children Looked After

Children who are looked after by the local authority, including children who were previously looked after but were then adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).

Rule 3: Medical or Social

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

A panel of officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

Rule 4: Sibling Children

Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school or linked school at the time of application. This applies to Reception through to Year 5 in infant, junior and primary schools.

Rule 5: Nearest School

Children for whom it is their nearest community or voluntary-controlled school or an own admitting school or academy

Rule 6: Distance

Children who live nearest to the school. This measure will be obtained using Google Maps, walking details will be used. The route with less miles will be used. Children not considered under rule 4 will be considered under Rule 5.

These rules are applied in the order they are printed above. If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

Parents may state their preference as to which nursery class, school or centre they would like their child to attend in the years leading up to the child's fourth birthday. If there are fewer applications than places available at a school all applicants will be admitted. If there are not enough places available, places will be allocated in the following order of priority.

Oversubscription Criteria**Rule 1: EHC (Education, Health and Care)**

Children with a statement of Special Educational Needs which names the schools will be allocated a place in accordance with Section 324 of the Education Act 1996. Also children with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school.

Rule 2: Children Looked After

Children who are looked after by the local authority, including children who were previously looked after but were then adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).

Rule 3: Medical or Social

Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

A panel of officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Rule 2 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

Rule 4: Sibling Children

Children who have a sibling on the roll of the school or linked school at the time of application. This applies to reception through to Year 5. This will be applied to twins even if this takes the intake over number.

Rule 5: A child 'at risk'

A child 'at risk' (or the sibling of a child 'at risk') who is the subject of an inter-agency Child Protection Plan.

Rule 6: Nearest School

Children for whom it is their nearest community or voluntary-controlled school or an own admitting school or academy.

Rule 7: Distance

Children who live nearest to the school. This measure will be obtained using google maps, walking details will be used. The route with less miles will be used. *Children not considered under Rule 6 will be considered under Rule 7.*

Rule 8: Any other children

If more children qualify under a particular rule than there are places available, a tie break will be used by applying the next rule to those children.

Tie Break

When there is a need for a tie break where two different addresses are the same distance from a school, in the case of a block of flats for example, the lower door number will be deemed nearest as logically this will be on the ground floor and therefore closer.

Continuing Interest

After places have been offered, Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) school will maintain a continuing interest (waiting) list. A child's position on a continuing interest list will be determined by the admission criteria outlined above and a child's place on the list can change as other children join or leave it.

Explanatory notes and definitions 2022/23

The following definitions apply to terms used in the admissions criteria:

Rule 1: Children Looked After and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order¹ or a special guardianship order²)

Places are allocated to children in Public Care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

These children will be prioritised under Rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a Child Arrangement Order or a Special Guardianship Order.

A "Child Looked After" is a child who is:

- a) In the care of a Local Authority, or
- b) Being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services function (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under Rule 1.³

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as Children Looked After providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not "looked after" **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order, **will not** be prioritised under Rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

¹ Child Arrangement Order

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, Residence Orders have now been replaced by Child Arrangement Orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

² Special Guardianship Order

Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

³ This definition has been amended in accordance with paragraph 1.7 (footnote 17) of the School Admissions Code that came into force on 19 December 2014.

Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school.

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under Rule 2 are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a. Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b. Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs.
- c. If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate.
- d. For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child. Applications for children previously "looked after" but not meeting the specific criteria outlined in Rule 1, may be made under this rule.

Further details on the Rule 2 process can be found in the "Rule 2 protocol" available at: <https://beta.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/schools-and-education/admissions/admissions-rule-2-process-document.pdf>

Definition of sibling

For applications to schools using Hertfordshire County Council's admission criteria, a sibling is defined as: the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or partner or a child looked after or previously looked after¹ and in every case living permanently² in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application.

A sibling must be on the roll of the named school at the time the younger child starts.

If a place is obtained for an older child using fraudulent information, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

¹ Children previously looked after are those children adopted or with a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order. This definition was amended following a determination by the OSA in August 2014.

² A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a Looked After Child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.

Home address

The address provided must be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications. "Permanent" means that the child has lived at that address for at least a year and/or the family own the property or have a tenancy agreement for a minimum of 12 months.

The application can only be processed using one address. If a child lives at more than one address (for example due to a separation) the address used will be the one which the child lives at for the majority of the time. If a child lives at two addresses equally, the address of the parent/carer that claims Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit will be considered as the child's main residence.

If a family is not in receipt of Child Benefit/Tax Credit alternative documentation will be requested.

If a child's residence is in dispute, parents/carers should provide court documentation to evidence the address that should be used for admission allocation purposes.

Fraudulent applications

Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) will do as much as possible to prevent applications being made from fraudulent addresses.

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and school places will be withdrawn when false information is deliberately provided. Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) will take action in the following circumstances:

- When a child's application address does not match the address of that child at their current school;
- When a child lives at a different address to the applicant;
- When the applicant does not have parental responsibility;
- When a family move shortly after the closing date of applications when one or more of the following applies:
 - The family has moved to a property from which their application was less likely to be successful;
 - The family has returned to an existing property;
 - The family lived in rented accommodation for a short period of time (anything less than a year) over the application period;
 - Council tax information shows a different residence at the time of application.
 - When a child starts at the allocated school and their address is different from the address used at the time of application.

Definition of "nearest school"

For coeducational community schools, the "nearest school" definition for rule 5 is "the nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith, co-educational, and non-partially selective.

Note – non-partially selective means that the school does not offer any places based on academic ability.

Age of Admission and Deferral of Places

Hertfordshire County Council's policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2022. All Hertfordshire infant, first and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. If a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Summer born children are only able to "defer" entry to Reception class until the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children can attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Any parents wishing to take up a part-time place or deferred entry should contact the individual school(s) to discuss their child's requirements.

Summer born children (1st April – 31st August) – Entry to Reception

Legally, a child does not have to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Following guidance issued by the Department for Education on 8 September 2015 the County Council has amended its policy for summer born children. Children born between 1 April 2017 and 31 August 2018 are categorised as "summer born" and if parents/carers do not believe that their summer born child is ready to join Reception in 2022 they may delay their application until 2023.

These applications will be processed in exactly the same way as all other reception applications received at that time; there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at a child's preferred school.

If parents wish to delay their application for a Reception place they are advised to discuss their child's needs /development with their current early years or nursery provider. If parents wish their child to remain in their

existing nursery school or class for a further year (rather than moving into the Reception year group) they must let their current school know before the Nursery admission deadline date of 1st March 2022.



30 Hours Free Childcare Offer

We are open 8.30-3.30pm = 35 hours a week, term time only, 38 weeks per year.

Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) can offer your child 30 Hours Free Education and Childcare in the following ways:

- Your child will have their core entitlement of 15 hours with their Key Person. This will either be 5 mornings (8.30am-11.30am) or 5 afternoons (12.30pm-3.30pm). (When parents have accepted a place at our school you will be asked whether you would prefer mornings or afternoons, but this cannot be guaranteed).
- Your child will have lunch club between 11.30-12.30 (they need to bring a packed lunch)
- Your child will have their extended hours (either 4 mornings or 4 afternoons) Monday to Thursday in their wraparound group. The staff that support the children during the wraparound time plan for stimulating complimentary activities to their Key Person time. For the majority of the session the children are all playing together and share the resources.
- The hours described above = 31 hours per week.
- If you would like to send your child for an additional session on a Friday (either morning or afternoon) this will be at a cost of £20.
- Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) also works in partnership with other providers on the 30 hour scheme e.g. childminders and we are happy to share the 30 hours entitlement with them.
- For up to date information for the 30 Hour Free Childcare offer and to check you are eligible please visit: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/parents

Lunch Club

Watford Field School (Infant & Nursery) also offer nursery children the option of attending the nursery lunch club (for children accessing the 30 Hours Free Early Education and Childcare offer this forms part of the offer).

If your child is accessing the 15 Hours Free Early Education and Childcare offer parents may choose for their child to attend the lunch club from 11.30am-12.30pm at a cost of £5.00 per session. Children must bring a healthy packed lunch as no meals will be provided by school.

Places for Lunch Club are limited and will be offered on a first come first served basis.