



Admissions Policy

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St Francis Nursery is committed to providing high-quality childcare and early education to children in Tower Hamlets. This policy outlines the procedures and criteria for admitting children to our nursery, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with all relevant legislation.

1. Aims and Objectives

- To provide clear and transparent procedures for admission to St Francis Nursery.
- To ensure fair and equitable access to our services for all children, regardless of background, ethnicity, religion, disability, or socio-economic status.
- To comply with all statutory requirements, including the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014, and the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) frameworks.
- To manage our waiting list effectively and efficiently.
- To promote diversity and inclusion within our nursery community.

2. Eligibility Criteria

- **Age:** St Francis nursery admits children from 9 months up until they start school.
- **Location:** While we prioritise families living or working within Tower Hamlets, we welcome applications from families outside the borough if spaces are available.
- **Funding:** We accept various forms of funding, including:
 - Government-funded places
 - Childcare vouchers.
 - Tax-Free Childcare.
 - Privately funded.

3. Application Process

- **Enquiry:** Prospective parents are encouraged to contact the nursery by phone, email, or through our website to express interest and ask initial questions.
- **Visit:** We strongly recommend parents visit the nursery for a tour to see our facilities, meet our staff, and understand our approach to early years education.
- **Application:** To apply for a place, parents must complete our application form, which can be obtained from the nursery office or downloaded from our website.

4. Waiting List

- Upon receipt of a complete application, the child will be placed on our waiting list.
- Prioritisation Criteria:
 - Children residing within the borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children: As defined by the Children Act 1989.
 - Children referred from Early Help services.
 - Children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans or significant Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): Where our nursery is deemed by the Local Authority or professional assessment to be the most appropriate setting to meet their needs.
 - Siblings of children currently attending .
 - Children residing within the borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - Date of application: For all other applicants, places will be offered in the order their completed application was received.
- Parents will be notified of their child's position on the waiting list upon request.
- It is the parents' responsibility to inform the nursery of any changes to their contact details or circumstances that may affect their application.

5. Offer of a Place

- When a suitable place becomes available, the Nursery Manager will contact the first eligible family on the waiting list by telephone and email.
- Parents will typically be given 5 working days to accept or decline the offer. To accept the offer, parents must confirm their acceptance in writing (email is acceptable) and sign the enrolment agreement, providing all necessary documentation. If the offer is declined or no response is received within the specified timeframe, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list, and the original application will be removed from the waiting list. Parents may reapply if they wish.

6. Settling-In Period

- Once a place has been accepted, we will arrange a series of free settling-in sessions for the child and their parents/carers. This helps the child become familiar with the nursery environment, staff, and routines, ensuring a smooth transition. The duration and structure of settling-in sessions will be agreed upon with parents.

7. Withdrawal of a Place

- St Francis Nursery reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place or terminate a child's enrolment in exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - Failure to provide accurate or complete information during the application process.
 - Non-payment of any fees.
 - Persistent breaches of the Nursery's terms and conditions.
 - Where, despite all reasonable efforts, the nursery is unable to meet the child's individual needs. In such cases, we will work closely with parents and relevant external agencies to find alternative suitable provision.

8. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- St Francis Nursery is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children. We welcome applications from children with SEND and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure their needs are met, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.
- Parents are encouraged to disclose any known SEND at the application stage so that we can assess our ability to meet the child's needs and plan appropriate support.
- Our SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) will work collaboratively with parents, external professionals, and the Local Authority to ensure the best possible outcomes for children with SEND.

9. Complaints

- Any complaints regarding the admissions process should be directed in writing to the Nursery Manager in the first instance.
- If the matter is not resolved, parents may follow the Nursery's formal Complaints Policy, which is available upon request.