




Admissions Policy

September 2025

Signed (Chair of Governing Body):	
Date:	September 2025
Date of Review:	September 2026

As part of a formal Service Level agreement between the Local Authority, Arbor Academy Trust and the Acacia Nursery School Governing Body, the Governing Body has adopted this policy. The Governing Body reviews this policy annually.

The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Office and is displayed on the school's website.

1. The Admission Authority

- 1.1 Voluntary Aided nursery schools are their own admissions authority. The admission authority sets the overall policy, procedures and admission criteria for all admissions.
- 1.2 The authority has delegated the day-to-day administration and operation of the admission policy to individual governing bodies. There must be no change to the admission policy without the approval of the admission authority.
- 1.3 Admission to nursery school and nursery classes must meet the standards set in the DfE School Admissions Code 2012.

2. Admission Age

- 2.1 The age at admission must not be below two years. Parents have the right to request a place and should not be refused admission because the requested admission does not begin at a particular age.
- 2.2 Parents' requests for admission for periods such as the final term only, two terms, one year etc. should be considered and met wherever possible.

3. Leaving Age

- 3.1 Children should transfer to a reception class at the start of the term relating to their planned admission except for where transfer may be delayed on the basis of identified special educational needs provision.

Birth-date range	Last term in Nursery	Expected admission to school
1 September to 31 August	Summer term before fifth birthday	Autumn term

4. Published Admission Number

- 4.1 The school must publish the admission number in the School Prospectus annually along with the admissions criteria (as agreed by the LA in the case of community schools and the governing body in the case of voluntary-aided schools).
- 4.2 Schools must not refuse admission if the admission limit has not been reached.

5. Basis of admission

- 5.1 Places are normally offered to parents on a part-time basis for five sessions each week. Children will be offered either a morning or afternoon place. It is expected that children will usually remain in the same session (i.e. morning or afternoon) offered throughout their time in the nursery.

6. Part-time and Full-time places

- 6.1 All children are eligible for 15 hours of funded childcare per week. Parents who meet the following criteria may be eligible for 30 hours funded childcare:
 - 6.1.1 Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family)
 - 6.1.2 Each parent earns on average a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum wage or 16 hours at National Living wage
 - 6.1.3 Neither parent has an income of more than £100,000 per year
 - 6.1.4 Both parents are employed but one or both parents is temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity or paternity leave, adoption leave or get statutory sick pay

6.1.5 One parent is employed, and one parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring, or is disabled/ incapacitated based on receipt of specific benefits

6.2 Occasionally nursery schools and classes have offered an emergency funded full-time place to support a child with an immediate short-term need. In such cases, the Trust will provide parents with written details that specify the start and end of the arrangement and any mechanism for extending the full-time place. Headteachers/ Head of school must make it clear if the arrangement is fixed and there will be no possibility of extending the full-time placement.

6.3 The Local Authority funds the part-time free education element, and the parent/carer will meet the cost of any provision over this free part-time entitlement. For these children, Local Authority funding will be provided from the term that they commence attendance.

6.4 Nursery schools and Schools with nursery classes are funded on the basis of the number of pupils on roll in the January preceding the next financial year.

6.5 In accordance with the above the LA will not fund full-time placements in nursery schools or nursery classes for those not eligible for the 30 hour funding and full-time places should not be granted unless such admissions have been agreed prior to admission. This applies equally to community, voluntary controlled and voluntary aided schools.

6.6 Schools will be able to consider offering full-time placements to those not eligible for the 30 hour funding, without referral to the LA, where the additional sessions are funded from other sources (e.g. privately by parents directly, or other funding initiatives as appropriate) and where no other child is denied a part-time place who otherwise would have had a part-time place offered in accordance with the admissions policy and criteria.

7. Transfer between settings

7.1 There may be circumstances that force parents to consider seeking a transfer to another setting. Usually this will be because the family have moved and they can no longer attend their current school.

7.2 Parents should contact the head teacher/ head of school of the school that is closest to their new address and they will join the waiting list. The head teacher/ head of school will apply the criteria when they consider the application.

8. Admission Criteria

The Local Authority has established a policy governing admission to nursery school. The implementation of the policy has been delegated to the Governing Body. The Headteacher/ Head of school will consider the following admission criteria that have equal importance in the allocation of part-time places. If necessary, decisions will take account of advice given from other professional sources. This also applies to requests for full-time placements.

a. Individual needs of children and their families

This will cover special educational need, physical, medical, social and emotional concerns that affect the child's progress. The needs of the parent may also be considered.

The following categories of child will receive higher priority for admission.

- Those children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Children in Public Care
- Children, or the parent/carer, with a medical condition affecting mobility and this is the closest setting to the family home or place of long-term medical treatment.

For some children, there will be strong educational reasons why a full-time place may be offered.

b. Children with a sibling attending the school, linked school or other local infant or primary school which does not have a nursery class attached to it:

The Headteacher/ Head of School should consider the implications for both the family and for the school of sibling connections.

c. Nearness to the school

The Headteacher/ Head of school will consider the home address and may also take into account the childminding arrangements.

d. Continuity and progression

Nursery schools:

Consideration will be given to the importance of family links with the nursery school and other local infant and primary schools.

Nursery classes:

Consideration will be given if a sister/brother is already on roll in the nursery class, linked infant, junior of primary school.

Note:

Headteachers/ Head of Schools should avoid creating expectations for parents who live a long way from a school (although this may be a legitimate factor to consider in respect of childminding arrangements). They also need to be aware that the parent/carer may believe that by getting a place in the nursery for their child the chances of a reception place may be improved. Headteachers/ Head of Schools should therefore remind parents/carers of the admissions criteria and the likelihood, on past experience of a place being available in the reception class.

9. A place for every child

Waltham Forest LA cannot guarantee a nursery place for every child at the school preferred by a parent. Nor can they offer the same number of terms for each child, although every effort will be made to offer at least 3 terms. Places in nursery schools and classes are primarily for residents of the London Borough of Waltham Forest. However, applications cannot be refused if received from residents of other boroughs. The basis for refusal of an out-borough request is that the nursery is full or that places have all been offered to children living closer to the school and there are no remaining places to offer.

Voluntary Aided Schools:

Voluntary Aided Schools control their own admissions to attached nursery classes. Individual schools will provide information on their admission policies.

Complaints:

There is no formal appeal for refusal to offer a part-time place at a nursery school or class. A parental request for a review of a decision not to offer a part-time place should be managed as a complaint, the response should be according to the school's published complaints procedure. Where the complaint is against the refusal by the LA to offer a full-time place, the parent / carer should complain to the School Admissions team, who manages admissions to schools.