



Thornton Heath Nursery School

Admissions Policy

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Head of Nursery

Review date: As required

Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the core admission arrangements to Thornton Heath Nursery School. These arrangements seek to comply with Croydon Council community schools admission criteria, the Local Conditions of Funding and the Statutory Guidance for the Delivery of Free Early Education for Two, Three and Four Year Olds.

- 1.1** The school Governing Body has a responsibility for applying the Local Authority's admission arrangements for nursery education in accordance with the set criteria.
- 1.2** The nursery is registered to admit two year olds who are eligible for the free 15 hours entitlement, either through the working families funding code or the RAS (Receiving Additional Support) code.
- 1.3** Two year olds can also get free childcare if they are looked after by a local authority, have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, get [Disability Living Allowance](#) or have left care under an adoption order, special guardianship order or a child arrangements order
- 1.4** Working parents may be entitled to an additional 15 hours (funded) of childcare for their 2 year olds. Eligibility for these additional funded hours is means tested according to the Government's funding criteria.
- 1.5** All three and four year olds are entitled to receive 15 hours free early years education.
- 1.6** Working parents may be entitled to an additional 15 hours (funded) of childcare for their 3 and 4 year olds. Eligibility for these additional funded hours is means tested according to the Government's funding criteria.
- 1.7** Places offered under this policy will be available to;
 - Parents/carers of children aged two who are eligible for the funded 15 hours entitlement
 - Parents/carers of children aged two who are eligible for the funded 30 hours entitlement
 - Parents and carers of all three and four year olds as they are all entitled to receive 15 hours free early years education;
 - Parents and carers of all three and four year olds entitled to receive an additional 15 hours extended funded early years education;
 - Parents/carers of children aged three and four who opt to pay for extended hours.
- 1.8** Parents and carers of children in receipt of the free entitlement may choose to take up additional hours, chargeable at the applicable fee rate.
- 1.9** The nursery has an agreed admissions limit. Parents and carers will be advised if the admissions limit has been reached.

2. Free Nursery Early Education places for three and four year-olds

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year in their local area in the term following their third birthday. This applies until they reach compulsory¹ school age the term following their fifth birthday.

2.1Places are made available from the start of the term beginning on or following the dates set out below:

- Children born in the period 1st January to 31st March: **1st April** following the child's third birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st April to 31st August: **1st September** following the child's third birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st September to 31st December: **1st January** following the child's third birthday.

3. Free Nursery Early Education places for two year-olds

3.1The majority of two year olds are now entitled to 15 hours of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year in their local area in the term following their second birthday (since funding reform April 2023)

3.2Working parents may also be entitled to 15 hours a week (30 hours a week from September 2025) of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year for their 9 month to 2 year old child. From April 2025 THNS is able to offer an education from the date of a child's second birthday, as long as they have an eligible 9 month to 2 year funding code.

3.3For the majority of children, places are made available from the start of the term beginning on or following the dates set out below:

- Children born in the period 1st January to 31st March: **1st April** following the child's second birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st April to 31st August: **1st September** following the child's second birthday;
- Children born in the period 1st September to 31st December: **1st January** following the child's second birthday.

3.4THNS must have confirmation of a child's funding eligibility before they are allocated a place.

3.5If a child is not eligible for a funded two year old place, THNS will signpost the applicant to services who may be able to provide additional support.

¹ Compulsory School Age is defined at Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 together with the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998 (SI 1998: 1607).

A child reaches compulsory school age either on or after their 5th birthday, on whichever of the following dates is either on, or the first to follow, their birthday: 31st August, 31st December or 31st March.

3.6 The child will then become eligible for their early education entitlement at age three. The term after their third birthday and will automatically move into the next nursery room. Should the nursery not have any available three year old funded places parents and carers will be informed in advance. The child will remain in the two year old setting until a space becomes available. Two year olds in our setting will have priority over other children when a place for the Nursery setting is requested.

4. Admissions Criteria

4.1 The School Governing body will consider all applications in accordance with the following criteria, set out in priority order:

- Children eligible for the RAS two year old free entitlement will take priority over those that are entitled through the working parents free entitlement;
- Looked-after children and previously looked after children (*note 1*);
- Children who have a sibling (defined as half/step/foster/adopted sibling) whose main residence is the same address and will be attending the school at the time of admission;
- Where there are serious medical grounds (supported by documentation from a registered medical practitioner) and/or special educational/ social need for admitting the child (*note 2*);
- Children eligible through the working parents free entitlement;
- Date of application as noted on our application form;
- Distance- proximity of the child's home to the school, with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority (*note 3*).

If the nursery is oversubscribed, children in the year before they start in reception will be given priority.

Note 1

Looked after children are defined as children in public care at the date on which the application is made. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately after being looked after. If an application is made under the 'looked after' criterion, it must be supported by a letter from the relevant Local Authority Children's Services Department and/or relevant document.

Note 2

The medical reasons must be verified by a doctor or consultant and declared at the time of application if known at the time. Claims for priority of admission on medical grounds will not be considered if submitted after a decision on the original applications has been made.

Children for whom there is a recommendation for nursery education by a health professional, social worker, educational psychologist, outreach worker or education welfare officer on the basis of the child's special educational needs. Examples of special educational or social needs, in no order of priority, might include:

- Identified emotional and behavioural difficulties;

Reviewed January 2020 (JI), reviewed May 2021 (JI), reviewed September 2022 (JI), reviewed September 2024 (JI), April 2025 (JI)

- Lack of personal interaction and stimulation;
- Identified social communication difficulties;
- Identified speech and language difficulties;
- A registered disability.

Note 3

Distance will be measured as a straight line drawn on a map from the front gate of the school to the front door of the home at which the child normally resides. For flats, the centre point will be taken from the centre of the building. Home is defined as the address where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Parents/ carers are always asked to provide documentary evidence to confirm an address and parental responsibility. Child minding factors cannot be taken into account when allocating places at over-subscribed schools.

Shared Custody - If parents share custody of the child, the address given should be that of the parent with whom the child spends most of the school week, which will be the address where Child Benefit is payable. Only one application per child can be accepted. If the address of the parent differs from that of the child, a written explanation must be submitted with the application. Custody issues cannot be resolved by the LA.

5. Procedure for Admission

5.1 Thornton Heath Nursery School (THNS) can accommodate a maximum of 104 places for three to four year olds and 40 places for two year olds. Parents and carers who are interested in making an application to the nursery will need to complete the relevant application form and return it to the school.

5.2 As soon as a place has been offered, parents/ carers will need to sign the Croydon Free Entitlement Parental/Carer Agreement and staff must see the child's full, original birth certificate and proof of address. THNS does not keep photocopies of these documents for more than 3 months due to data protection.

5.3 Parents/carers must give 4 weeks' notice in writing if they no longer wish their child to attend THNS. As THNS is a term time only setting, notice to leave must be received during term time. Should notice be received during a holiday period the actual notice will not start until the first day of the term / half term following the holiday. In line with Local Authority protocol holiday periods are not included within the four week notice period. During this time an alternative setting is not able to claim funding for your child and therefore there is likely to be a delay in your child starting elsewhere. Fees are still applicable for those children who are privately funded during the four week notice period.

5.4 Please note that because education for pre-school children is not required by law, THNS reserves the right, after working with a family to try to improve matters, to withdraw a child's place for reasons of poor attendance below 95%. Places at our school are in high demand and another family may be able to better benefit from the offer of a place.

6. Patterns of Attendance

6.1 Available attendance patterns for our two year olds are:

- Morning sessions (8.30-11.30, Monday to Friday); or
- Afternoon sessions (12.30-3.30, Monday to Friday)

6.2 Available attendance patterns for our two year olds (from September 2025) are:

- 30 hour funded sessions (8.30-11.30 then 12.30-3.30, Monday to Friday)

6.3 Available attendance patterns for our three and four year olds are:

- Morning sessions (8.30-11.30, Monday to Friday); or
- Afternoon sessions (12.30-3.30, Monday to Friday); or
- 30 hour funded sessions (8.30-11.30 then 12.30-3.30, Monday to Friday)

6.4 Please note attendance at THNS is five days a week and the 15hrs free entitlement can not be amalgamated to fund a condensed number of days.

7. Extended services

7.1 Extended services available for our two year olds (if appropriate) are:

- Additional 15 hours per week (Monday to Friday charged at £185 incl lunch cover)

7.2 Extended services available for our three and four year olds (if appropriate) are:

- Lunchtime sessions (11.30-12.30 Monday to Friday charged at £40 per week); and/or
- Full-time paid sessions (8.30-3.30 Monday to Friday charged at £140 per week incl lunch cover)

7.3 Extended services available are:

- Early drop off sessions (8.00 – 8.30 daily, charged at £4 per session)
- After school club: 15.30 – 16.00 daily, charged at £5 per session
15.30 – 17.00 daily, charged at £10 per session (includes a snack)
15.30 – 18.00 daily, charged at £15 per session (includes a light “tea”)

7.4 Please note that there is a limited number of places in our extended services and for full-time places. Extended services must be booked in advance unless in the case of an emergency when there has to be an agreement made with the Head of Nursery.

7.5 Parents must provide an appropriate packed lunch for their child if they are attending a lunchtime session.

7.6 Payment for extended services is made online via ‘Magic Booking’ and families will be supported in setting up their account. **Please note that THNS reserves the right to withdraw places within extended services if payment is not made promptly and in advance.**