

Admission Policy for Willow Nursery School

Willow Nursery School accepts children onto our contact list from Central Bedfordshire and surrounding areas.

To add your child's name to our contact list, please get in touch with our staff either by telephone on 01582 662600 or by email office@willownursery.co.uk or by coming to the school office in person.

The school is committed to providing a high quality curriculum to all children, regardless of disability. The governors and staff will make whatever reasonable adjustments are necessary, in order that any child with a disability is not at a disadvantage within the nursery setting.

Contact List:

Children's names can be taken onto our contact list from birth. Our contact list is split into termly cohorts. Within each school year we have 3 cohorts:

Autumn born children born between 1st September and 31st December,

Spring born children born between 1st January and 31st March and

Summer born children born between 1st April and 31st August.

Keeping Parents Updated

We aim to send out an email at least once per term to all families on our contact list.

This email will advise families of our open evenings where prospective families can come and look around our school and meet staff. We encourage families to visit our school if they are on our contact list. We aim to offer one open evening per term.

Minimum Attendance Requirement

Our minimum attendance requirement will be 15 hours per week.- within the attendance patterns offered.

Unfortunately, we can no longer afford to offer fewer weekly sessions, or random attendance patterns. To be financially viable we must fill pupil places evenly across the week.

When will children be offered a place?

We will focus on enrolling children into the 2+ Little Nursery in the term after they turn two years old.

We will focus on enrolling children into the 3+ Big Nursery in the term after they turn three years old.

We will enrol some children every term, but our plan is that each termly cohort will have two points of entry, one 2+ and one 3+ where families are asked in turn if they would like a space.

Admissions for 2+ Little Nursery

Children are to be admitted to the 2+ Little Nursery in accordance with the following criteria:

1) Looked After Children.

Children become “Looked After” either if they have been taken into care by the Local Authority or have been accommodated by the Local Authority. Most Looked After Children will be living in Foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children’s home, living with a relative or even placed back at home with their natural parents. This includes children under a special guardianship order (SGO)

To be considered a priority above other children, Looked After Children must be on our contact list **one full term** before their age group is due to start.

2) Children whose names have been on our contact list for the longest time.

How will we manage enrolment for 2+ Little Nursery?

We admit children to 2+ Little Nursery the term after they turn two. Each term we will work on the cohort of children that are turning 2 years old, to enrol children to join the school at the beginning of the term after they turn two.

We will have a specific number of spaces to fill in each termly cohort, as our numbers are capped due to Ofsted requirements for available floor space per pupil and staffing numbers. We will contact families to offer spaces in the order that they appear on our contact list. Those parents who have been on our contact list longest are asked first. We then work down our contact list, offering spaces until we are full.

We will aim to offer families a choice of 15 hour or 30 hour attendance patterns as follows: Parents may choose a 30 hour option:

Children attend **Monday to Friday from 8:45am to 2:45pm.**

Parents may choose a 15 hour option:

Children attend: Beginning of the week ,

Monday 8:45am to 2:45pm,

Tuesday 8:45am to 2:45pm,

Wednesday 8:45am to 11:45am. OR

End of the week,

Wednesday 11:45am to 2:45pm,

Thursday 8:45am to 2:45pm,

Friday 8:45am to 2:45pm.

As spaces begin to fill, we may not be able to offer all the options above.

So to costs:

Parents entitled to ‘30 hours funding for working families for Two Year olds’ or ‘15 hours funding for underprivileged Two year olds’ can use their funding here.

Parents may choose to pay for a space for their child.

We have brought our fees in line with what the government pays to our setting for funded spaces.

The cost of 15 hours attendance pattern will be £118.20 per week.

The cost of 30 hours attendance pattern will be £236.40 per week.

Once booked, the particular sessions are allocated to that child every week. These sessions must be paid for in advance.

The government reviews these rates on an annual basis. The fees charged to parents will increase annually on 1st April.

Will further spaces become available within the school year?

To be financially viable, we must endeavour to fill any empty spaces we may have. There may be times when we return to a particular termly cohort to offer spaces to families on our contact list. We will try to do this fairly, following our process of working down the contact list.

Admissions for 3+ Big Nursery

Children are to be admitted to the Big Nursery (3+) in accordance with the following criteria:

1) Children who currently attend our two year old provision.

2) Looked After Children.

Children become "Looked After" either if they have been taken into care by the Local Authority or have been accommodated by the Local Authority. Most Looked After Children will be living in Foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back at home with their natural parents. This includes children under a special guardianship order (SGO)

To be considered a priority above other children, Looked After Children must be on our contact list **one full term** before their age group is due to start.

3) Children whose names have been on our contact list for the longest time.

How do we manage enrolment for 3+ Big Nursery, for children who already attend 2+ Little Nursery?

Children enrolled in our 2+ Nursery automatically continue on into 3+Nursery. We ask parents to think carefully about whether they would like a 15 hour or 30 hour place when they begin 2+Nursery. Whatever the attendance pattern you choose for your child for 2+ Nursery, will be the attendance pattern your child will continue with in 3+ Nursery.

For families entitled to 'Funding for Working Families' they will continue to be entitled to 30 funded hours per week in the 3+Nursery.

At 3+ all children are entitled to 15 hours per week of free Universal Funding.

We add the 2+ children's choice of attendance patterns to our pupil numbers 3+Yearly Plan. Children are considered as 3+children the term after their 3rd birthday.

How will we manage enrolment for 3+ Big Nursery, for children who do not attend 2+ Little Nursery?

We admit children to 3+ Big Nursery the term after they turn three.

Each termly cohort has a specific number of spaces available.

If, after planning for the attendance pattern of the 2+ Nursery children on our 3+Yearly Plan, we have spaces left for additional children, we look to offer spaces to children on our contact list. Each term we will work on the cohort of children that are turning 3 years old, to enrol children to join the school at the beginning of the term after they turn three.

We will contact families to offer spaces in the order that they appear on the contact list. Those parents who have been on our contact list longest are asked first. We then work down our contact list, offering spaces until we are full.

At 3+ all children are entitled to 15 hours of free Universal Funding.

Children joining the school at age 3+ will be offered 15 hours only, with a choice of two attendance patterns:

Children attend: Beginning of the week ,

Monday 8:50am to 2:50pm,

Tuesday 8:50am to 2:50pm,

Wednesday 8:50am to 11:50am. OR

End of the week,

Wednesday 11:50am to 2:50pm,

Thursday 8:50am to 2:50pm,

Friday 8:50am to 2:50pm.

As spaces begin to fill, we may not be able to offer all the options above.

Morning spaces are offered to parents if the parent, or school staff feel that a child could not cope with a 2 ½ day space, or has a special educational need, or a medical need where a morning space would be more appropriate.

Our Expectation of Parents:

Parents must be prepared for our phone call.

We expect parents to have:

- checked to see if they are eligible for two year old funding. (This check can now be done from 9 months of age).
- already been to visit the nursery at an open event
- decided that they are a firm yes for a space at Willow Nursery school, should it be offered
- decided which attendance pattern they are looking for.

Further points to consider:

- We believe that spaces for each termly group will fill at age 2.
- If you take a space at age 2 you are guaranteed your space will continue all the way through the nursery, until children leave to join reception class.
- We can no longer give siblings (of previous pupils) a priority over other children on our contact list. We will enrol purely upon length of time on the contact list
- If a termly age group fills at age two we may not be able to offer any further spaces in that termly age group at age three.
- Spaces cannot be held for a child.

What happens if I accept a place for my child, complete a new starter form, arrange a start date and then fail to turn up at the beginning of term?

Office staff will make every effort to contact the family by telephone and email.

Any child who fails to take up their place at the beginning of term will lose their place. Their name will be re-entered at the bottom of that termly cohorts contact list at that time.

What happens if my child has a place in Willow Nursery School and I choose to withdraw them?

Any child who is withdrawn from Willow Nursery School will remain on our contact list, but their name will be re-entered at the bottom of that termly cohorts contact list at the time of withdrawal.

In September 2025 Two Year Olds from Working Families became entitled to 30 funded hours.

Our attendance structure has had to be redeveloped to meet the needs of the school and families.

As this initiative rolls out we may encounter problems that we have not even contemplated. The Headteacher and Governors will respond to timetabling challenges as they arise, but any decisions made regarding admissions will be made in the best interests of the school.

This policy to be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any significant changes to this school, local schools, the local area or Government Policy.

Reviewed Autumn 2025

Next Review: Autumn 2026