



Nursery Admission Arrangements

2024 - 2025

With the agreement of the Governing Body of West Thurrock Academy, the Nursery admission policy of the school is stated in this document.

West Thurrock Academy Offer

The Nursery is a 52 place Nursery based on 2 sessions per day: 26 children in the morning and 26 children in the afternoon. All children are entitled to 15 hours free education the term after their 3rd birthday. The Governors of the school will offer children a place in the Nursery in the September following their third birthday, according to the criteria for admission.

From September 2024, the school will offer a limited number of spaces for families who qualify for 30 hours of free childcare. The Government introduced the 30 hours free childcare from September 2017.

For further information regarding 30 hours of free childcare please refer to the website using the address below:

<https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>

The school will continue to offer 15 hours of free childcare to all.

Applying for a Nursery Place

Applications will only be accepted if the child will have reached their third birthday by 31st August 2024.

Applications to the Nursery for September 2023 intake should be completed and **must be returned to the school by 20th January 2024**. Application forms are available at the school from Monday 31st October 2023. In order for the application form to be accepted, the following must also be supplied along with the application:

- Proof of home address. This can be in the form of a council tax bill or a utility bill.
- Original copies of the child's birth certificate.

Application forms will be date stamped on receipt.

Applications received after the closing date are treated as late applications. This means there will be far less chance of your child being offered a place at the Nursery.

Letters will be sent to parents notifying them of a Nursery place for their child by Friday 29th March 2024.

Definition of a 'Parent'

The definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether the child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes a person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has care of and/or parental responsibility for the child.

Inclusivity and Equality

West Thurrock Academy is inclusive to all children, including those with special educational needs (SEN), physical, mental or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The admission arrangements are determined and implemented by the Academy with in accordance to statutory equality duties.

We are pleased to offer any disabled pupil or pupil with individual needs a place at West Thurrock Academy provided that those needs can be successfully met and if the supporting agencies feel that it is an appropriate placement.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applicants than places, the following oversubscription criteria (admission criteria) will be used for deciding which applications have priority. These criteria are set out below in the order in which they are applied:

- **Looked after children and previously looked after children**

A 'looked after child' 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 functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Admission Committee to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence confirming the child's status, such as a signed letter from the child's social worker or former social worker confirming their current or previous status, an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England (as defined above), evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted will be required. Ideally, this should be received by the application deadline in the normal admission round. When assessing the evidence provided, the DfE's guidance will be followed.

- **Catchment area siblings**

Children whose normal place of residence at the closing date for applications is in the catchment area of the school and who will have a sibling at the school in Reception to Year 6 at the point of application **and** point of admission. Those living closer to the school are given higher priority.

A 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both parents), a half sibling (sharing one parent), an adopted sibling, a long term foster sibling (i.e. not a temporary placement), a step sibling (one child's parent married to the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner (one child's parent living with the other child's parent). In all cases, the sibling must live at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) as part of the same core family unit.

For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will **not** be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child. The Academy reserves the right to ask for documentary evidence that the sibling meets the definition where there is any doubt.

Parents must state the sibling's details in the application form.

- **Catchment area children**

Children whose normal place of residence at the closing date for applications is in the catchment area of the school. Those living closer to the school are given higher priority.

- **Non-catchment area siblings**

Children whose normal place of residence at the closing date for applications is outside the catchment area of the school and who will have a sibling at the school at the point of application and admission. Those living closer to the school are given higher priority.

A 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both parents), a half sibling (sharing one parent), an adopted sibling, a long term foster sibling (i.e. not a temporary placement), a step sibling (one child's parent married to the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner (one child's parent living with the other child's parent). In all cases, the sibling must live at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) as part of the same core family unit.

For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will **not** be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child. The Academy reserves the right to ask for documentary evidence that the sibling meets the definition where there is any doubt.

Parents must state the sibling's details in the application form.

- **Non-catchment area children**

Children whose normal place of residence at the closing date for applications is outside the catchment area of the school. Those living closer to the school are given higher priority.

Normal Place of Residence

The child's home address is the residential (not business) address of their parent (as defined in this policy) at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.

Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the West Thurrock Academy reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to determine which address meets the definition stated above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent.

Where the child's family are not living in the area of the Academy at the time the application is submitted, the application will still be accepted and processed. However, the address used will be the child's current address unless the application is supported by documentary evidence of the future new address which will meet the definition set out above (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, formal mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, etc.).

Catchment Area

Details of the school's catchment area can be found on Thurrock Council's website: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/catchment-areas/school-catchment-areas> or on West Thurrock Academy's website.

Distance

Distance is measured by the shortest straight-line distance from the front door of the home address to the main school gate. Addresses within the same block of flats will be regarded as a tie and resolved using the tiebreaker.

Multiple Births

When there are not enough places remaining in a particular criterion to allow all children from a multiple birth to be admitted within the published admission number, the school will admit the others as excepted pupils in the terms of the infant class size legislation so as to allow all children from that multiple birth to attend the same school.

Children of UK Armed Forces Personnel/Crown Servants

Applications for the admission of children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or Crown servants returning from overseas, will be accepted and processed in advance of the family's arrival in the area, as long as the application is accompanied by an official letter giving a relocation date.

The address at which the child will live will be used to apply the oversubscription criteria, provided parents provide some evidence of the intended address (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, official letter confirming exchange of contracts, etc.). Alternatively, where requested by parents, a Unit or quartering address will be used for this purpose.

Tie Breaker

In the event that two or more children have an address within the same apartment block or live the same distance from the school and in all other ways have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be allocated a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place.

Late Applications

Late applications will be considered after all other applications.

Decisions on Places

Decisions will be made by the school's Governing Body. Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admission policy.

Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the academic year.

Waiting List

Where the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year. Each child on the waiting list will be ranked in line with the oversubscription criteria and places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Procedure for Admission to the Nursery

If your child is offered a place at the Nursery, you will be asked to provide original documentation to confirm your address, before the Nursery place is confirmed.

Before starting at the nursery, parents may be offered a short visit to the nursery and a home visit at a pre-arranged time in July or September. All home visits will be conducted by two members of the nursery staff. It

If the visits are not possible due to restrictions, parents will be contacted by the teacher via telephone. This will provide an opportunity to meet staff and to get to know about the school.

Leavers During the Year

If a child is withdrawn by their parents from the Nursery during the school year, parents must give the school a minimum of 4 weeks notice, if possible. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open for a trial period and will be automatically made available to allocate to a child on the reserve list. If parents later wish their child to return to the Nursery then they will have to re-apply for a place on the reserve list and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with all the other applications, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has previously attended the Nursery, or any other Nursery, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

Attendance and Loss of Nursery Place

Due to the demand for a place at our Nursery, if attendance and punctuality is poor or erratic the nursery teacher will talk to the parents and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual. This conversation should be recorded and dated in the child's folder.

If after a period of two weeks where the attendance and punctuality does not improve a letter will be sent to the parents inviting them to meet with the Headteacher.

If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance within an agreed period, then the child may lose their place. Parents will be notified of the loss of place in writing.

If a child is absent for a period of three weeks without any contact from the parents and the school has been unable to make contact within this time, the child may lose their place and it may be offered to someone else. This will be decided by the Headteacher, and a letter explaining the situation will be sent to the parents.

Transfer from Nursery into Reception

Attendance at West Thurrock Academy Nursery does not guarantee, or give any priority for admission into the Reception for the following year. This is a separate application process.

Although West Thurrock Academy is its own admissions authority, we commission Thurrock Council to manage the application process for Reception places. Therefore, all parents and carers must be made aware that **a place in the Nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school** and that they must apply to Thurrock Council, School Admissions Team for a Reception place. Further details regarding how to apply for a Reception place can be found in the Reception section of this policy.

It is the parent's responsibility to register their child for a mainstream school place, to undertake statutory education. This information is available from Thurrock Council, School Admissions Team on 01375 390000 (main switchboard) or <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/primary-school-admissions/applying-for-primary-school-place>.

The Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in Reception classes to plan for a smooth transition to their chosen or allocated school. Nursery staff will send on reports and other agreed records to the school admitting the child as appropriate.

Appeals

Decisions are final and there is no right of appeal.