

Hartcliffe Nursery School



Admissions Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 23.11.2025
Signed: Headteacher	Cate Peel	
Last reviewed on:	November 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

Thank you for choosing Hartcliffe Nursery School as your preferred childcare provider. Please see below our Admissions Policy which will provide important information about our provision and the admissions process.

Rationale

We believe that all young children should have an equal opportunity to access high quality, Early Years Education.

To ensure all stakeholders understand our commitment to equalities and fairness we believe there needs to be clarity with regard to the priorities, criteria and procedures for allocating places at Hartcliffe Nursery School.

To balance the financial needs of the Nursery with the quality of our Early Years education and care, especially equity and support for our most vulnerable learners, and ensure that all aims benefit everyone.

Aims

- To have a fair and consistent process for allocating places.
- To ensure that children from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds are able to attend the Nursery, enabling all children to benefit and thrive, whilst upholding equal opportunities.
- To ensure all children potentially joining our nursery are equally valued and that families are able to express their own and their child's needs.
- To ensure the financial sustainability of the Nursery while providing high quality Early Years education and care.
- To reflect Bristol's Policy on Early Years Education and allocation of places and current research on the best provision for Nursery aged children (2-4 years).

Context

- We are a Local Authority Maintained Nursery School open term-time only offering education and childcare for children from 2 – 4 years old.
- We aim to fill all of our places. However, if enhanced ratios are required, we may not fill all of the spaces; this will be at the headteacher's discretion in collaboration with governors.
- We are open term-time only (TTO), 39 weeks per year, including 5 INSET days.
- The Nursery's budget is based on the Early Years National Funding Formula; we are paid per pupil, per hour and not by the number of spaces. Therefore, the budget is dependent upon how many children we have.
- All funded places for 2-and 3-year-olds are available from the term after their birthday.

Birthday	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eligible from...	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan

Definition of a 'parent'

In this policy, 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 legal care for the child.

Inclusivity and equality

The Nursery is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The

Nursery's entry arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (PSED).

Guidelines Priority for allocating places will be as follows:

1. Looked After Child, Children with a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Child in Need Plan (CIN).
2. Children with SEND or external agency involvement who are currently without a place within Early Years provision.
3. Children with siblings attending the Nursery or who have attended in the past.
4. Children within the Hartcliffe Community based on distance from the setting with closest first.
5. For 3 and 4-year-old provision: children already accessing nursery.
6. Families that require Day Care in line with our core offer: 15 hours or 30 hours.
7. Children who live outside of the Hartcliffe Community, but who have siblings who have attended or are attending the Nursery.
8. Where there is a child who would be considered 'in need' due to current family circumstances supported by a referral.
9. Children who live in Bristol, outside Hartcliffe in age order, oldest first.

Cherry Room

We have space for 28 children (2-year-olds) in each session with a ratio of 1 adult per 4 children.

Willow Room

We have space for 32 children (rising 3-year-olds) in each session with a ratio of 1 adult per 4 children until the children turn 3 years (by January) when the ratio is 1 adult per 8 children.

Chestnut and Maple Room

We have 30 spaces (3 and 4-year-olds) in each session with a ratio of 1 adult per 13 children. There is a Qualified Teacher in each room which allows for the ratio of 1 adult per 13 children.

Opening Days/Hours

Our opening days/hours are: Term-time only

Days	Opening and closing time
Monday	8am – 4pm
Tuesday	8am – 4pm
Wednesday	8am – 4pm
Thursday	8am – 4pm
Friday	8am – 4pm

Session Times

The session times for Willow, Chestnut and Beech Rooms are:

Day	Session Start Time	Session End Time
Monday	8.30am	2.30pm
Tuesday	8.30am	2.30pm
Wednesday	8.15am	3.00pm
Thursday	8.30am	2.30pm
Friday	8.30am	2.30pm

Cherry Room also has mornings only sessions

Day	Session Start Time	Session End Time
Monday	8.15am	11.15am
Tuesday	8.15am	11.15am
Wednesday	8.15am	11.15am
Thursday	8.15am	11.15am
Friday	8.15am	11.15am

All about Free Hours

Hartcliffe Nursery School is registered with Bristol City Council to offer free hours to:

- 2-year olds from working families
- Eligible 2-year olds
- 3 and 4-year olds – universal hours
- 3 and 4-year olds – Working Parent Entitlement hours.

Allocation of Places for 2-year-olds

Our 2-year-old room, Cherry Room, there are 28 places available per session. They are 15 hours per week, term time only. These are offered as 2 and a half days or mornings. Parents can share their preference for the beginning or end of the week, or mornings. (see section on session times).

Room	Sessions				
Cherry Class					
Beginning of the week hours:	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	Arrive: 8.30am	Arrive 8.30am	8.15-11.15am	Arrive: 8.30am	Arrive: 8.30am
End of the week hours:	Pick up: 2.30pm	Pick up 2.30pm	12.00- 3.00pm	Pick up 2.30pm	Pick up 2.30pm
Morning Sessions hours:	8.15 – 11.15am	8.15 – 11.15am	8.15 – 11.15am	8.15 – 11.15am	8.15 – 11.15am

Our main intake is in September. Our 2-year-old places for September will be offered in April; we will fill all spaces and create a waiting list if necessary.

If places become available at other points in the year, due to children leaving or moving to the 3-4 year old room, places may be offered out to those on our waiting list. It is at the discretion of the headteacher to decide if these are filled, as enhanced ratios may be required.

Free Early Education (FEE) places for 2-year olds

Early Education for eligible children aged 2

- FEE places are accessed through the Local Authority
- They are 15 hours per week, term-time only. These are offered at two and a half days. Parents can share their preference for beginning or end of the week.
- These places are for children whose parents are on no or low incomes who meet the eligibility criteria.
- Places are available from the funded term (Jan, April, Sept) after the child's 2nd birthday.
- Parents who wish to access a free 2-year old place should apply online to the Local Authority at www.bristol.gov.uk/freeplacefortwos who will confirm eligibility.
- Once we have received authorisation from the Local Authority, we will contact the parent to discuss and offer a place if one is available.
- Eligible 2-year-old free hours are available to eligible children from the term after their 2nd birthday.
- If there is no place available the child's name will be added to the waiting list. Children on the waiting list will be admitted in date of birth order, no earlier than the term after the child's 2nd birthday, as this is when the funding for the place is allocated.
- We can also refer you to the Family Information Service to find an alternative. If one cannot be found, your child's name and details will be added to a FEE waiting list. [Family Information Service](#).

We are happy to support parents to access this form and apply if they need assistance to do so.

If you wish to access a free 2-year-old place for your child, you should apply to the Local Authority at

www.bristol.gov.uk/freeplacefortwos who will confirm eligibility or through our website

<https://www.hartcliffenursery.co.uk>

Birthday	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eligible from...	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan

Funded 2-year old places for working families

As of September 2025, 2-year-olds from working families may be eligible for 30 funded hours. However, as our places are limited, and to ensure as many children as possible are able to access their funded hours, we will only be offering 15-hour sessions in the first instance. Should we have any remaining spaces to fill once all offers have been made, a waiting list will be put into place and parents will be informed after the 31st May if we are able to offer 30 hours.

If we are under subscribed for funded 2-year-old places for working families, we will look to offer places to rising 2-year-olds who have their 2nd birthday within the first term. These will be offered out in priority order. The child will be able to access their funded hours from their 2nd birthday rather than the term after. Alternatively, we will look to increase the number of FEE places offered should there be a need.

- Parents must apply for the funding by visiting www.beststartinlife.gov.uk or calling 0300 1234 097 to get an eligibility code (which is 11 digits long and usually starts 500...)
- Parents register their interest by completing an application form, stating which end of the week they would like their 15 hours.
- If we do not fill the 28 places by May 31st we will offer our working families the option to extend their hours to 30. This may be done beforehand depending on the number of applications.
- Once places are all filled up, any further application will be added to the waiting list. Admissions are filed in priority order.
- Full details on sessions, charges and invoicing can be found in the sections on 'additional sessions' and 'wraparound' at the end of this policy.

Grace Periods for the Working Parent Entitlement hours:

If a parent does not validate their code on time, we will inform parents that they have entered the grace period and will need to revalidate their code.

If a child who has a Working Parent Entitlement (WPE) Code becomes ineligible during the first half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of that term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. If a Working Parent Entitlement (WPE) Code becomes ineligible during the second half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of the following term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. Ineligibility would only affect WPE hours – the child can still have their Universal hours. In the event of parents losing their 15 WPE hours they can:

- Keep the child in the setting and pay the hourly rate for any hours that are not the universal entitlement hours.

- Reduce the amount of time their child attends the setting each week to just their universal hours. In this case the Nursery may fill the vacant hours with another child.

Paid Day Care Process:

- For children who are not eligible for either a Free Early Education (FEE) or a funded place, paid day care sessions can be purchased. Places are offered as 2 and a half days; parents can share a preference for the beginning or end of the week (see section on session times).
 - Normal daily hours are 8.30-2.30pm, with the option of adding additional wraparound hours, at the beginning and/or end of the day.
 - Parents register their interest by completing an application form, stating which days they would like.
 - A contract is issued, outlining their agreed sessions. This also outlines an agreement between the parent and the Nursery in relation to payments, termination, notice periods etc. You can request a copy of the contract at reception.
 - An invoice will be sent for one month's fee deposit to secure their place. This will be deducted from the final bill once notice has been given.
 - Parents accessing a 2-year-old day care place for their child need to be aware that there is no guarantee of a full time, early education place when the child becomes 3 years old.
- If we are unable to offer a place, they will be added to the waiting list for paid day care. Admissions are filed in priority order.

Allocation of places for children 3-4 years old:

Our main intake is in September. Places for children who are 3-4 years old before September will be offered in May. If there are spaces in our 3-4 year- old rooms (Chestnut and Maple), we may have another intake in January and April. It is at the discretion of the headteacher to decide if these are filled, as enhanced ratios may be required.

Chestnut and Willow have a capacity for 30 children in each room per session. These places will be prioritised for free universal entitlement (see below) to allow as many children in our community to access high quality Early Years education as possible and to support the financial sustainability of the Nursery.

Free Universal Entitlement:

- We have 60 places per session for children 3-4 years old.
- Universal funded hours are available to all children who are 3 or 4 (as long as they are living in England). Funded hours are available to all children from the term after their 3rd birthday. Parents do not need to apply HMRC for these hours.
- Places are 15 hours per week, term time only. Places are offered as 2 and a half days; parents can share a preference for the beginning or end of the week (see section on session times).
- Children who turn 3 years between September and January will be offered a space in Willow Room (our Rising 3's provision) rather than Cherry Room (2- year old provision) – this is to enable them to be able to claim the extended entitlement (see section below) in the term after their third birthday.
- Parents can register their child for a Nursery School place by completing an application form, either in person, at the nursery or by downloading from our website and sending it to us via email.
- All registrations to be considered and places offered to children following the criteria below.
- Places will be offered by phone, letter or email.

September allocations are in priority order of:

1. Looked After Child, Children with a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Child in Need Plan (CIN).
2. Children with SEND or external agency involvement who are currently without a place within Early Years provision.
3. Children with siblings attending the Nursery or who have attended in the past.
4. Children within the Hartcliffe Community based on distance from the setting with closest first.
5. For 3 and 4-year-old provision: children already accessing nursery.
6. Families that require Day Care in line with our core offer: 15 hours or 30 hours.
7. Children who live outside of the Hartcliffe Community, but who have siblings who have attended or are attending the Nursery.
8. Where there is a child who would be considered 'in need' due to current family circumstances supported by a referral.
9. Children who live in Bristol, outside Hartcliffe reach area in age order, oldest first.

3rd Birthday	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eligible from...	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan

Free Extended Entitlement (FEE) places:

We will allocate a certain amount of Free Working Parent Entitlement (WPE) hours places for families requiring 30 hours. The number of places allocated will be based on the total number of applications received for each intake.

Working families who meet the eligibility criteria in England with a 3 or 4-Year-Old child can apply for a further 15 hours free childcare per week. This is referred to as the Working Parent Entitlement free hours. Together with the universal free hours, this makes 30 hours free childcare. Parents have to apply via HMRC for the Working Parent Entitlement 15 free hours and renew their circumstances/eligibility every 3 months.

When allocating extended hours, places will be prioritised using the same criteria as for the universal hours (see above). When claiming 30 hours, any unused hours cannot be banked to be used at a later date. Information and updates on eligibility criteria can be found at www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare

How to apply online for the Free Working Parent Entitlement:

Parents can check eligibility via <https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/>. Parents can apply for both the Working Parent Entitlement (WPE) hours and Tax-free Childcare at the same time. Parents can check eligibility and apply for Tax-Free Childcare via the same website. Tax-Free Childcare is the system that is gradually replacing the old childcare voucher scheme - paying for childcare through the employer.

Parents need to complete and sign an EYR1 Parental Declaration Form which will be available from reception. This will give the Nursery the following information which is required to validate the 30 Hours Code.

Verification checks will be made on Bristol City Council's Provider Portal, using the following data:

- Child's Date of Birth.
- Parent's National Insurance Number (either parent is fine as they are interchangeable).
- 11-digit eligibility WPE Code (obtained from the Best Start in Life website).

Once the 30 Hours Code has been validated, we will be able to discuss availability of places. Places are not permitted to be offered without validation. Allocations will be in priority order as outlined above.

Three-month renewal cycle for the Free WPE Entitlement hours:

Parents will be prompted every 3 months to reconfirm the details they entered are still correct. They will be prompted by HMRC by email or text 4 weeks before, then again 2 weeks before if they have not reconfirmed. If parents miss the deadline, their code becomes ineligible and the grace period will come into effect.

Grace Periods for the extended hours:

If a parent does not validate their code on time, we will inform parents that they have entered the grace period and will need to revalidate their code.

If a child who has a WPE Code becomes ineligible during the first half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of that term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. If a WPE Code becomes ineligible during the second half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of the following term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter. Ineligibility would only affect WPE hours – the child can still have their Universal hours. In the event of parents losing their 15 extended hours they can:

- Keep the child in the setting and pay the hourly rate for any hours that are not the universal entitlement hours.
- Reduce the amount of time their child attends the setting each week to just their universal hours. In this case the Nursery may fill the vacant hours with another child.

Additional sessions and wraparound:

Additional Sessions and wParents may buy additional sessions, subject to availability. Please ask at reception to see a copy of the day care contract for current prices.

Our current regular hourly rate is £8.50 per hour. This is for non-free hours.

Breakfast Club: 8.00-8.30am £4.25 for the session

We do not offer sibling discount.

- **Full sessions** can be added from: £51.00

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8.30am-2.30pm

Wednesday 8.15am-3.00pm

- After school is available from 2.30pm until 4.00pm at a cost of £12.75

Additional hours and wraparound will be offered on a first come, first served basis. Availability may vary and cannot be guaranteed.

Parents will sign a contract with the Local Authority in relation to payment and collection of fees.

Parents will be invoiced on a monthly basis, 1 month in advance.

We reserve the right to withdraw the child's place if payment is not made. If the parent is unable to make payment due to financial difficulties, they must speak with us immediately to arrange a supportive debt repayment plan. If the repayment plan is not followed, we will terminate the wraparound sessions.

However, if eligible, the child can still have their Universal/WPE hours. We will continue to work with the parents to recover any outstanding debt. No further wrap around will be offered until the debt is cleared. Where debts arise for paid day care costs, places may be paused or terminated until debts are cleared in order to ensure these do not become unmanageable.

Parents will be notified in writing of any increase in the hourly rate at least 6 weeks in advance.

Session charges will still apply during periods of absence through sickness/personal holidays or in the event of any unforeseen circumstances beyond the settings control i.e. bad weather, advice from the local authority/police, industrial action. Sessions are not charged during INSET Days and Bank Holidays.

If nursery closure due to snow day for example, parents will receive a credit for that day.

Tax Free Childcare (for paid childcare)

We are registered to offer Tax Free Childcare. Parents can check eligibility and apply for Tax Free Childcare via <https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/> . Tax-Free Childcare is the system that is gradually replacing the old childcare voucher scheme - paying for childcare through the employer.

You must register with HMRC to be paid by Tax Free Childcare.

To support the payment of private hours, working parents can use their Tax-Free Childcare Allowance. Click here <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare> for more details on how to claim Tax Free Childcare giving up to 20% government support for all childcare costs.

For families claiming Universal Credit, there is up to 85% government support for all childcare costs, and they can claim in advance.

Invoicing

Invoices will be issued at the beginning of the month for the month ahead. Invoices will be sent by email unless otherwise requested. Payments must be paid within 7 days of receipt of invoice. Deposits will be taken off the final invoice when notice is given.

Payments from 3rd Parties (Colleges and Universities)

Free hours cannot be claimed at the same time that they are paid for by a third party. We will need to receive written confirmation as soon as possible to work out which hours are **a)** paid by the college / university, **b)** covered as free hours and **c)** paid for by the parent. Student parents may not always be eligible for Working Parent Entitlement/ Working Parent Entitlement childcare unless they meet the eligibility criteria found here <https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/>

Additional information

Meals

Children who attend nursery all day will be requested to provide a **healthy packed lunch** for the following days:

Cherry and Willow: Monday and Friday

Chestnut, Beech and Oak: Tuesday and Thursday

Free hot lunches are provided on:

Cherry and Willow Tuesday and Friday

Chestnut, Beech and Oak: Monday and Friday

We provide free healthy, hot school meals for children provided by Early Years Catering on:

Cherry and Willow: Tuesday and Thursday

Chestnut, Beech and Oak: Monday and Friday.

There is no need to provide a packed lunch for your child on hot meals days.

Enrichment contribution:

Not applicable

Appeals Process - Challenging the refusal of a place

Where parents believe that they have been incorrectly refused a place (e.g. the criteria in this document not being correctly applied to their application), they may ask to speak to the Head teacher, and if necessary submit a complaint following our Complaints Policy.

However, parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the Nursery. We will however, welcome the discussion and give parents the opportunity to share additional information that may affect their application.

If a parent would like to talk to Bristol City Council about the allocation of places, they can email

askcyps@bristol.gov.uk or call 0117 3574192.

Notice periods

We require 4 weeks' notice in writing to terminate any wrap around or paid place.

Failure to provide four weeks' notice will incur fees charged for the four weeks or part thereof. Any alterations to contracted sessions will need to be discussed with the day care manager and will be subject to availability.

Parents of 3-4 year olds are asked to make a termly commitment. This means that once parents sign the EYR1 Parental Declaration Form, a contract is made. If parents then decide to transfer to another provider mid-term, funding will not always be re-directed to the new childcare provider until the start of the following term (Sept, Jan, April).

The only group who can give a shorter notice period are Eligible 2-year olds who only need to give 1 months' notice.

This 'no notice period' only applies to free hours and not to any additional hours that parents have purchased.

Attendance

A child's nursery place may be reviewed where there are attendance issues. We will follow our Attendance and Absence Policy (You can request to see this by contacting reception) with regards to contacting families where attendance is an issue. We will make several attempts to contact parents before terminating a place. Any decision to terminate a child's place will be made by the headteacher.

Preparing to start Nursery:

Once a parent has been offered and has accepted a place at Hartcliffe Nursery School, the Nursery will contact the parent to invite them to attend A stay and play session with their child. Parents are given the opportunity to meet staff, look around and meet other families.

Parents will be given an induction pack. This will include a welcome booklet of information they need to know as well as the essential information forms for them to complete and return.

Once a key person has been allocated, they will contact the parents to arrange a home visit prior to the child's start in Nursery. At the home visit, information will be shared with parents regarding all aspects of Nursery life and staff will give parents the chance to ask any questions. This is also the first step for the Key Person, child and parent/s to get to know each other, making the child's transition into Nursery easier for everyone.

Your child's Key Person will also send you a booklet to share with your child along with confirmation of your home visit date and time. **Please note:** It may take a few weeks before your child can start their full

sessions, as the settling in period will be tailored to each child's individual needs. Your child's Key Person will discuss this with you at the home visit.

GDPR

All applications received will be filed in the office and stored securely in a locked cupboard and only accessed by staff working on admissions. By completing the application form parents are consenting to the processing of their personal data for purpose of admissions. We will destroy the application form at the end of the school year if the parent does not take up the place after the offer has been made in case they change their mind.

For more information on how we use personal data, please visit:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/908-free-early-years-education-entitlement-fee-privacy-notice/file>