



Learning to be a wonderful me

Admissions Policy



September 2024



In Dunclug Nursery School we are committed to providing a happy, safe and stimulating environment to support young children’s learning and development.

We recognise that the children in our care have individual interests, characteristics and needs and aim to enable each child to develop positive attitudes about themselves and towards their learning by –

- providing experiences that extend learning and challenge thinking
- maintaining positive relationships as a staff team, with our children, their parents, the community, the Board of Governors and other relevant agencies
- promoting the health and wellbeing of our staff, children and their families
- inspiring and developing all members of our school community

Our Nursery School implements the Open Enrolment process, as set out by the Department of Education (Circular 2017/17) and the Education Authority, who prescribe the ‘Criteria for selection’. Sub-criteria for selection of pupils are written by the Board of Governors and are reviewed on a yearly basis. In the event of the Nursery School being over-subscribed, criteria and sub-criteria are applied by the Principal, on behalf of the Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine, to support or verify information on any application form. The provision of false or incorrect information, or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by the Nursery School can result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any setting nominated on the school’s application form.



DUNCLUG NURSERY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The following gives details of the procedures in place to ensure that the Admissions process is carried out in a fair and consistent manner in Dunclug Nursery School.

MAILING LIST

Parents may add their child's name, date of birth and contact details to our Nursery School's mailing list prior to the application process, by contacting the Nursery School office during our opening hours. We will give all parents whose child's name is on our Mailing List notice of our Open Day and the subsequent application process, by contacting them in Term 1 of the School Year before their child is due to start Nursery.

OPEN DAY

We hold an Open Day for Parents and Children in Term 1 of the School Year prior to the year that their child hopes to start Nursery. Application forms and Information on how to apply for a Pre-School place for their child will be available on this day. The Open Day will be advertised in the local press, online on our social media and website, through leaflets distributed via local Primary Schools and SureStart programmes, by way of posters in local businesses and Government premises and through our Newsletters. If they are unable to attend our Open day, Parents may contact the Nursery School to arrange a time to have a look around with their child at another time that suits them.

APPLICATIONS

- Online applications should be made via the Education Authority's Admissions Portal at www.eani.org.uk.
- The Education Authority publishes a copy of each Pre-School setting's Admissions criteria prior to the opening of the parent portal.
- The closing date for applications is set by the Education Authority and is normally at the end of January prior to the September of the year that the child hopes to begin Nursery.
- All parents are required to upload a photograph or scan of their child's Birth Certificate, in support of their application.
- Parents who are in receipt of certain benefits can provide evidence of these, which is also uploaded digitally at the time of application.

CRITERIA

- The Criteria for selecting children from the applications received for our Nursery School is reviewed and amended yearly by the Board of Governors.
- Details of our Nursery School's selection criteria are published by the Education Authority online in the Admissions section of their website, www.eani.org.uk.
- A copy of our Nursery School's Criteria is also provided for all parents along with an application form, at our Open Day, or on request from our Nursery School office.
- Parents must provide details of how their child meets our published criteria as part of their child's application.
- Published Criteria are applied by the Principal to select children for the sessions available in our Nursery School. The application of these Criteria is then ratified by the Board of Governors.

OFFER OF A PLACE

- The Open Enrolment Process is divided into two stages. At the end of Stage 1, on the date stipulated and published by the Education Authority, parents of children in their final pre-school year will be offered a place by the Education Authority, or can find out by logging into the Parents Portal. Parents of children in their Penultimate Pre-School year and those who have deferred starting Primary School because their child is considered 'young for year' (those born between 1st April and 1st July) will be notified at the end of Stage 2 of the process.

LATE APPLICATIONS

- Applications that are made after the closing date for applications, as stipulated by the Education Authority, will be considered as 'late'.
- All punctual target-aged applications will be considered before any late applications.
- When undersubscribed with punctual applications, late applications will be allocated places in accordance with the published criteria.
- Applications from target aged children will be considered before applications from underage children at all stages of the Open Enrolment process.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

- If a parent feels that the Nursery School's criteria were not applied or were not correctly applied, they have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Tribunal. Details of how to appeal can be accessed from preschooladmissions@eani.org.uk.



INTERNAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTING CHILDREN FOR PART TIME SESSIONS

- Criteria are applied, as published, to select target-aged children for Full Time and Part Time Sessions in our Nursery School.

In order to select which children will be selected for Part Time morning or afternoon sessions, the following internal criteria is applied, as ratified by our Board of Governors –

- Parents who have specified Part Time am or pm **only**, or who have specified another provider before a further preference for our Nursery School, will be placed in their first preference part time session first.
- Criteria is then applied as set out in the published criteria, to select children for the Part Time Morning and Afternoon sessions.

INTERNAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTING UNDERAGE CHILDREN FOR OUR NURSERY SCHOOL –

If places should remain after the application of the published and above criteria to select children in their final pre-school year, places will be allocated to children not in their final pre-school year using the following criterion –

- **Chronological order of age (oldest first)**

In the event of two or more children being born on the same day, final selection will be made using the randomised selection of initial letters of the child's legal surname, as verified by their Birth Certificate. In the event of two legal surnames being identical, the alphabetical order of the initial letters of the first forename that appears on the child's Birth Certificate will be used.



WAITING LIST

After the conclusion of the Open Enrolment process in the June prior to the September that the child would like to start, the following criteria will be applied to select child(ren), should a vacancy arise –

- Children in their final pre-school year will be considered before those not in their final pre-school year.
- Children who have a family member employed by Dunclug Nursery School or serving as a governor at the time of application.
- Children whose brother/sister, half-brother/half-sister, step-brother/step sister, foster brother/sister have attended Dunclug Nursery School or who are currently attending Dunclug Nursery School.
- Children who are eldest or only child in their family.
- Selection by a randomised letter selection of the initial letters of their surname as it appears on their Birth Certificate, as set out in published criteria.

WAITING LIST FOR CHANGING SESSIONS

The Governors will consider requests to move sessions on a case by case basis, with the majority of cases being considered and allocated by applying the published criteria, i.e. -

If a parent expresses that they would like to change sessions, should a vacancy arise, children will be offered a change of sessions in the order of selection when the published criteria was applied, so the child who would have been selected next for the vacant place after application of criteria will be offered a move before a child who is further down the selection list.

There may be occasions when admission / changing sessions can be accommodated because of exceptional circumstances and the Governors reserve the right to consider these and make decisions on the same, on a case by case basis.