



Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School Nursery Session Allocation Policy

Our Core Offer

Bernards Heath Infant & Nursery School currently offers 15 hours per week of teacher-led Nursery education over either five morning sessions (3 hours per session), five afternoon sessions (3 hours per session), or 2 1/2 days at the beginning or end of the week (with an additional cost for Lunch Club). Lunch Club is run by our Early Years Practitioner and Nursery Assistant and can be added to the end of our morning Nursery sessions (subject to availability). We are currently exploring our capacity to offer a limited number of 30 hour places. Please complete your preference form with as much information as you can.

Admissions

Bernards Heath Infant & Nursery School is a community school and follows Hertfordshire County Council guidelines for admissions.

Start Dates

All children join Nursery in the September of the academic year in which they will reach the age of 4. The school will arrange a comprehensive induction for all children including meetings for parents and children with opportunities to visit their new learning environment.

30 Hours Childcare

The expectation at Bernards Heath Infant & Nursery School is that all children attend Nursery for 15 hours per week. Parents entitled to 30 hours free childcare may choose to accept a Nursery place with us and access the additional 15 hours with an alternative provider (childminder or PVI setting). The school is prepared to meet with individual parents on a case by case basis to discuss individual needs of the child if necessary.

In the event that we are able to offer a limited number of 30 hour places, children must attend our setting for a minimum of 24 hours – 4 days in total. This ensures consistency across a week for the education children are receiving and also to enable them to build stable friendships.

Policy on Allocation of Nursery Sessions

When children are offered a place in the Nursery, parents are asked for their preference for type of session - there is **no guarantee** that they will be offered the session they prefer.

In allocating sessions, we ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to gain from their nursery experience and that the needs of the individual child as well as the needs of the school community are reflected in the decisions made. The school ensures that our nursery provision in all sessions meets the appropriate objectives within the Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and that children are not disadvantaged by whichever session they are allocated.

The need to ensure there is an effective mix of gender and age in each session to ensure the school is offering the best educational and social experience to all the pupils is recognised as being of prime importance.



In order to ensure a fair and equitable allocation of sessions, the school applies the following set of criteria. These are not hierarchical except for the first point relating to children with identified Special Educational Needs. The criteria will be applied subject to there being more requests for a session than places to be allocated.

Agreed criteria for allocation of sessions:

- Any child who has a recognised Special Educational Need, illness or disability that necessitates their place at a particular session. We would take into account written advice from other professionals in applying this criteria.
- If family circumstances would be extremely difficult if not allocated the preferred sessions for example, number of children under five in a family, illness or disability in the family which impacts on the child or carer, or involvement with outside agencies.
- Parents whose work commitments make it **impossible or extremely difficult** for the child to take up a place if not allocated the preferred session. Information on childcare arrangements and whether it is a single working parent would also be relevant. Attending college courses or training will also be considered if relevant.
- Other family circumstances which may be taken into account including individual personal circumstances not covered or not sufficiently extreme as to be mentioned above.

In the event that we are faced with multiple families with identical circumstances over and above the number we are able to allocate, a Governor will be asked to randomly select an anonymous application.

The final decision will be taken by the Head Teacher and Governors in discussion with our Nursery staff. All identified factors will be taken into account and the basis of the decision will be confidential. Please be aware that developmentally typical behaviours for example, a nap time or children being more tired in the afternoon will not be considered as significant factors to influence the allocation of sessions. The school will confirm in writing to parents which session their child has been offered by Friday 15th March.

Right of Appeal

Parents are asked not to telephone the school to discuss the allocation but appeal in writing to the Head Teacher giving the circumstances to be taken into account. A change of decision will be considered dependent on spaces available and we may need to add your request to a waiting list.