NEW SILKSWORTH ACADEMY

ALLIANCE • AMBITION • ACHIEVEMENT

Admissions Policy – Nursery 2026-27

Policy Dated:	March 2025
Adopted by:	Local Governing Body
Date of Next Review:	March 2026
Reason for Review/Revision:	Annual review
Publication Scheme	School website
Version	05
Lead	Headteacher

1 Purpose

New Silksworth Academy is responsible for admissions for 3-4 year olds to Nursery and 2 year olds to Early Learners. The purpose of this policy is to set out the arrangements about how children will be admitted to the nursery or Early Learners, including the criteria that will applied if there are more applications than places.

2 Scope

This policy sets out the arrangements for admissions to schools' nursery and Early Learners only.
These admissions are managed directly by the individual School, not by Local Authorities.

There is a separate policy document setting out the admissions arrangements for Reception to Year 2 (Infant Academy), Year 3 to Year 6 (Junior Academy) and in-year admissions from Reception to Year 6. These are managed in conjunction with Local Authorities in which Extol schools are located.

3 Roles and responsibilities

Extol Board of Trustees: The Board is responsible for approving the admissions arrangements to nursery provision at its schools. The Board delegates day-to-day decision-making about admissions to each School.

Headteacher: Each School's Headteacher is responsible for decisions about the number of places to be provided for 3-4 year olds and 2 year olds within the maximum number set out in the funding agreement for their School.

Early Years Lead: Each School's Early Years Lead is responsible for co-ordinating admissions to any available 3-4 year old places or 2 year old places.

Office Manager: The Office Manager is responsible for maintaining waiting lists, sending out letters and offering places, and communicating with parents/carers, Sunderland LA Admission services, the Early Years Lead and the Headteacher.

4 Planned intake number for 2026-27

All 3-4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision (0.5 full time equivalent place).

Some parents are also entitled to a further 15 hours per week childcare provision, subject to the governments eligibility criteria, which parents may wish to take up within the School's nursery provision. This would be a further 0.5 full time equivalent place.

The maximum number of full-time equivalent places (FTE) available for 2026-27 is:

New Silksworth Infant Academy	39FTE

The number of places available at any time will be subject to operational decisions by the School's Headteacher based on the demand for places, the needs of individual

children and the cohort of children as a whole, the age profile of the cohort, the availability of staff to achieve the required staff:child ratios, and the limitations of the physical environment.

Children are usually admitted to nursery in the September after their third birthday.

Where places are available, children are usually admitted as follows:

- Children who turn three during the Autumn Term can enter the nursery at the beginning of the Spring Term in January;
- Children who turn three during the Spring Term can enter the nursery at the beginning of the Summer Term in April.

Eligible 2 year olds are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision (0.5 full time equivalent place). The maximum number of full-time equivalent places (FTE) available in Early Learners is 15.

Early Learners work on a legal ratio of 1 adult for every 5 children.
Children are usually admitted to Early Learners the term after their second birthday if there is space. However, we may offer an earlier start date if feasible and appropriate for a child.

5 How and when to apply for places

All applications for nursery and Early Learners places must be made on the individual School's application form and returned directly to the school. These are available via the schools website.

Applications for Nursery should be made in good time and well before a child's 3rd birthday, applications for Early Learners (2 year olds) should be made well before a child's 2nd birthday. The School will place your application on their register of interest and contact you when your child meets age criteria and a place is available.

Extol schools coordinate the timing for offers of nursery places according to the following timetable:

- For places starting in September 2026 – week ending 22 May 2026
- For places starting in January 2027 – week ending 6 November 2026
- For places starting in April 2027 – week ending 19 February 2027

6 How places will be allocated

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school will first be admitted.

All 3-4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision per week. All applicants will be offered 15 hours provision per week, if there are enough places available in the nursery.

If more applications are received than the number of places available in the nursery, the following oversubscription criteria will be used in the order shown to decide which children will be allocated a 15 hour place:

1. Children who are currently looked after by a local authority in England, children who were previously looked after by a local authority in England or who appear to the Early Years Lead to have been in state care outside of England, and immediately afterwards became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. Applications under this criterion must be

accompanied by evidence of the appropriate order. This must be submitted with the application.

2. Children with a sibling who will be on roll at the School or attending the nursery or any other early education or childcare provision provided by the School on the date that the child will be admitted in September 2025. Sibling can be a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent's partner, as long as the children live at the same address.

3. Children living in the School Catchment Area.

4. Children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants Children with an exceptional medical reason that means they can only attend the specific school (for example, where the child or one or both parents has a disability that means that the child can only attend this school). Strong supporting evidence must be provided from a healthcare professional who is independent of both the family and the school. The evidence must relate specifically to this school and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs.

5. Proximity to School.

Some parents, based on the qualifying criteria determined by the government, will be eligible for an additional 15 hours free childcare per week whereas other parents may wish to pay for additional hours. If there are enough places in the nursery to accommodate requests for additional hours beyond the universal 15 hour entitlement these will be considered on a first come first served basis according to the date of application, regardless of whether the parent is eligible for the additional free childcare or wishes to pay.

Additional notes:

- Parents/carers have one week to respond to an offer of a place. If an acceptance is not received it may be assumed that a place is no longer required and the offer may be withdrawn.
- Parents who share responsibility for the care of their child are expected to reach agreement to a preferred school between them. In the event of a dispute the school will accept the application from the parent to whom the child benefit is paid.
- You must give the child's permanent address at the time of application. The address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of your child must not be quoted as the home address.
- If the child lives part of the week between two parents, the child's address should be the address where the child lives (1) during the school week, or (2) with the parent who receives child benefit or where the child is registered with a GP, if there is any dispute.
- Parents and carers should note that the allocation of Reception places does not take into account attendance at any specific nursery provision or playgroup. Children in the nursery or playgroup of the School will not be given priority nor are they guaranteed a Reception place in the main School.

7 Waiting lists

Children who do not receive an offer of a nursery place or Early Learners place are automatically placed on a waiting list until the child exceeds the age eligibility criteria for nursery provision or Early Learners provision or the parent advises the School that a place is no longer required. Should a place become available then the oversubscription criteria will be applied again to every child on the waiting list at the time of the vacancy.

8 Complaints

Any concern regarding the application of these admissions arrangements should be raised under the trust's Complaints Procedure.

Definitions

Parent is defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as including any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A **Looked After Child** is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions, in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989, at the time the application for admission to School is made and whom the Local Authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the date of admission.

An **Adoption Order** is an order made under Section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976 or Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A **Child Arrangements Order** (previously known as a **Residence Order)** is an order made under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 14 of the Children Act 2014, outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live.

A **Special Guardianship Order** is an order made under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

A child is regarded as having been in **state care in a place outside of England** if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Those Pupils who are Distinguished from the Great Majority of Other Applicants Those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school.