



**Rossmere
Academy**
ENRICHING EDUCATION

Nursery Admission Policy

Policy Dated:	January 2026
Adopted by:	LGB
Date of Next Review:	
Reason for Review/Revision:	New legislation
Publication Scheme	School website
Version	03
Lead	Headteacher

1 Purpose

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

2 Scope

This policy sets out the arrangements for admissions to schools' nursery 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 6 and in-year admissions from Reception to Year 6. These are managed in conjunction with Local Authorities in which our 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: The 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.

Assistant Head EYFS: The Assistant Head is responsible for co-ordinating admissions to any available 3-4 year old or 2 year old places

Nursery Teacher / Sparkles Lead: The Nursery Teacher and Sparkles Lead are responsible for contacting parents and arranging home visits and start dates

Office Manager: The Office Manager is responsible for maintaining the waiting lists, taking calls from the LA Early Years Officer about new 2 year olds, sending out letters offering places and keeping the Portal updated for the monthly funding head counts

4 Planned intake number for 2026-27 and 2027-28

Nursery

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

Nursery works on a legal ratio of 1 adult for every 13 children.

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. These children are entitled to 30 hours or a full time place.

Children are usually admitted to Nursery as soon as they reach their third birthday if there is space.

Rossmere nursery has space for:

- 26 children attending full time (30 hours)
- 26 children attending just morning nursery
- 26 children attending just afternoon nursery

Sparkles

Eligible 2 year olds are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision (0.5 full time equivalent place).

Parents in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision – eligibility is checked by Hartlepool Borough Council and children are added to our waiting list after their 2nd birthday. They are eligible the term after they turn 2.

Working parents are entitled to 15 hours nursery provision They must apply for a voucher code the term in which their child is 2 and they can start the term after they turn 3.

Sparkles works on a legal ratio of 1 adult for every 5 children.

Children are usually admitted to Sparkles the term after their second birthday if there is space.

Sparkles has space for:

- 15 children attending every morning
- 15 children attending every afternoon

5 How and when to apply for places

Nursery

All applications for nursery places must be made on the individual school's application form and returned directly to the school.

Applications for Nursery should be made in good time and well before a child's third birthday:

- The School will place applications on their waiting list and will contact parents a few months before the child's third birthday to offer a place.
- At this point parents are asked to confirm that they accept the place and to discuss whether they would prefer a morning or afternoon place.
- Should the parent request a 30 hour place they will be informed whether there is space, or whether we only have 15 hours places at this time.
- Parents requesting a 30 hours place must apply on the Childcare Choices website for a code. They must re-apply every 3 months.

Sparkles

All applications for Sparkles places are made in two ways:

- Parents in receipt of benefits apply for a place to Hartlepool Borough Council as soon as their child reaches their second birthday. They are then added to Rossmere's waiting list if they meet the criteria
- Working parents apply on the Childcare Choices website for a code when their child reaches their second birthday. They must re-apply every 3 months. When they have a code they must contact the School to be added to the waiting list.

Applications for Sparkles can only be made when your child is already two:

- the School will place applications on their waiting list and will contact parents to offer a place as soon as one becomes available.
- At this point parents are asked to confirm that they accept the place and to discuss whether they would prefer a morning or afternoon place.

6 The process of accepting a place

Whether your child is offered a place in Nursery or Sparkles, the process is the same:

- A letter or phonecall offering the place
- The parent replies to the letter by contacting the school to accept the place
- The Nursery Teacher / Sparkles Lead carry out a home visit to find out more about the child and introduce themselves to the parent. This is an opportunity for our staff to find out about any additional needs that need to be planned for,
- The child and parent are invited to visit. This may either be after the school day or during the Nursery / Sparkles session. This helps staff to see how the child may react in the Nursery/Sparkles setting and so that parents understand how our sessions work.
- The child is then given a confirmed start date.

7 How places will be allocated

Places are allocated strictly in date of birth order. A space will not be saved for a child if there are older children who are eligible now.

If a number of children become eligible at a similar time for either Nursery or Sparkles, we will use the following criteria to determine which child will be given the place first:

1. Children with an EHCP that names Rossmere Academy
2. 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.

If a child is eligible for 30 hours in nursery but there are no spaces left they will be offered a 15 hours place and will be on our waiting list for the next time a 30 hours place becomes available.

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.
- Parents and carers should note that the allocation of Reception places does not take into account attendance at any specific nursery provision. Children in the nursery of the School will not be given priority nor are they guaranteed a Reception place in the main School.

8 Waiting lists

Children who do not receive an offer of a nursery place are automatically placed on a waiting list until the child exceeds the age eligibility criteria for nursery provision or the parent advises the School that a place is no longer requested. 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.

9 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.