



Admissions Policy – Playgroup 2021-22

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| Applicable to: | ✘ | All NEAT academies |
| | ✔ | NEAT Primary academies within Newcastle upon Tyne: Central Walker C of E Primary School, Tyneview Primary School, Walkergate Community School, West Walker Primary School |
| Approval body: | NEAT Board of Directors | |
| Effective date: | 2021-22 | |

Status:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Statutory policy or document | No |
| Review frequency | Annual |
| Approval by | Trust Board |

Publication:

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| Statutory requirement to publish on website | No |
| If not, agreed to publish on website? | Yes – trust and school websites |

Version Control:

| Revision Record of Issued Versions | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------|--|
| Author | Creation Date | Version | Status |
| Governance Support Adviser (HH) | 16 December 2020 | 1.0 | Policy approved by NEAT Board of Directors. |
| Changed by | Revision Date | Version | Status |
| Governance Support Adviser (HH) | 16 July 2021 | 2.0 | To reflect changes to statutory Admissions Code effective from 1 September 2021. Approved by Executive Team on behalf of the Board of Directors. |

| Review Date | |
|--------------------|---|
| Frequency | Next Review Due |
| Annually | December 2021 (or earlier if new guidance or legislation issued and/or business need for earlier review identified) |

1 Purpose

NEAT Academy Trust (NEAT) is responsible for admissions for 2-3 year olds to all schools within the trust. The purpose of this policy is to set out the arrangements about how children will be admitted to the 2-3 year old provision (playgroup) at each primary school, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school.

2 Scope

This policy sets out the arrangements for admissions to each school's playgroup only. These admissions are managed directly by the school, not by Newcastle City Council.

There is a separate document setting out the admissions arrangements for 3-4 year olds to the schools' nurseries. Admissions to the Reception class and in-year admissions from Reception to Year 6, which are managed in conjunction with Newcastle City Council, are covered by a separate policy.

3 Roles and responsibilities

- **NEAT Board of Directors:** The Board is responsible for approving the admissions arrangements to playgroup 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 2-3 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 decisions about whether to admit or refuse children admissions to any available 2-3 year old places.

4 Planned intake number for 2021-22

| School | Maximum number of places (15 hours) available in the Playgroup |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Central Walker C of E Primary School | 24 |
| Tyneview Primary School | 30 |
| Walkergate Community School | 12 |
| West Walker Primary School | 16 |

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 the playgroup at the beginning of the term after their second birthday and can remain in the playgroup until they are eligible to be admitted to nursery provision in the September after their third birthday, or are admitted to the nursery provision earlier as described in the Admissions Arrangements – Nursery.

5 How and when to apply for places

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

Applications for September 2021 must be submitted **by midday on 22 April 2021**. Applications received after the closing date will be classed as **late** and processed **after** all of the applications received on time. Applications for a playgroup place after the start of the school year can be submitted at any time.

NEAT primary schools will share information about families applying for a 2-3 year old place in order to plan their provision appropriately. If you apply for a place at more than one school this will not affect how your application is assessed and you will receive an offer of a place from each school, if you meet the eligibility criteria and there is a place available following any application of the oversubscription criteria.

NEAT schools coordinate the timing for offers of places in playgroup where this is part of a planned intake at the start of each term. Schools may plan for intakes of children into playgroup in January and April if places become available through the progression of children into nursery provision.

Offers of places will be made according to the following timetable:

- For places starting in September 2021 – week ending 14 May 2021
- For places starting in January 2022 – week ending 5 November 2021
- For places starting in April 2022 – week ending 25 February 2022

6 How places will be allocated

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

If there are enough places in the playgroup then all applicants will be offered a place.

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

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 Leader 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 who qualify under the government scheme providing free childcare to parents of 2-3 year olds.
3. 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 2021. 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.

4. 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. Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children living nearest to the school (which in the case of Walkergate Community School means the main school site on Sutton Street) as measured in a straight line distance from a single fixed central point at the school to a point in the centre of the home address of the child, using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and British National Grid Easting and Northing co-ordinates

Additional notes:

- In the event that more than one child has an equal right to an available place the place will be offered based on random allocation.
- 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 nursery places does not take into account attendance at any specific playgroup. Children in the playgroup will not be given priority nor are they guaranteed a nursery place at the school.
- Children in the nursery class 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 playgroup place are automatically placed on a waiting list until the child exceeds the age eligibility criteria for playgroup 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.

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.