

## **Riverside Nursery Schools Admissions Policy: Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

This Admissions Policy explains how we manage admissions and enrolment of children into our nurseries.

Riverside Nursery Schools aims to have an inclusive and fair Admissions Policy, to give a clear order of priority for offering places in our nurseries and to offer excellent customer care to parents/guardians with children on our waiting lists.

Please contact our Head of Admissions on 020 3475 0455 or [admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com](mailto:admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com) with any queries regarding our Admissions Policy.

### **1. Equal Opportunities**

We are keen to represent a cross section of members within the community and do not discriminate against children or families, or prevent entry into our nurseries, based on colour, ethnicity, religion or social background. We do not discriminate against children or adults with learning difficulties or disabilities or refuse entry to our setting because of learning difficulties, special educational needs and/or disabilities.

An assessment will be undertaken in conjunction with relevant agencies, to ensure the nursery concerned is suitable to cater for the child's individual needs. We would develop an action plan to ensure that children or adults with learning difficulties or disabilities can participate successfully in the services offered by the setting and in the curriculum.

### **2. Data Storage and Security (GDPR)**

In compliance with current UK data protection legislation, any data provided/collected by Riverside Nursery Schools regarding a child/adult/family will be kept secure and treated with confidentiality. The data collected will only be used by Riverside Nursery Schools and will not be disclosed to any external sources without prior consent.

For more information, please refer to our full [GDPR Data Protection Policy](#)

### **3. Schedules of Attendance**

**Attending nursery for 1 day per week (Full Day Care settings only):** A parent/guardian who wishes for their child to attend the nursery 1 day per week will be obliged to take a day chosen by the nursery. This will very likely be a Monday or a Friday.

Should a parent/guardian wish to reduce their child's days at the nursery to 1 day per week, they will be required to reduce to a day chosen by the nursery. This will very likely be a Monday or a Friday.

If a Monday or Friday are not available a mid-week day may be offered. However, the parent/guardian will be obliged to change their child's schedule to include a Monday or Friday when it becomes available.

**Attending the Full Day Care nursery for 2 or 3 days per week:** A parent/guardian who wishes for their child to attend the nursery or to reduce their days to either 2 or 3 days per week, will be obliged to take either a Monday or a Friday as part of their child's schedule.

If a Monday or a Friday are not available, mid-weekday/s may be offered. However, the parent/guardian will be obliged to change their child's schedule to include a Monday or a Friday when it becomes available.

For families with children who started at a Riverside Nursery School prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 who have had children in attendance continually from that time, we will do our best to honour preferences for midweek schedules subject to availability.

**Recommended Attendance for Term Time only children:** For a term time only setting we recommend a minimum of 3 half days for a 2 year old and 5 half days for a 3-year-old. Ideally, we then suggest 7 half day sessions the term before they start reception

**Attendance at more than one nursery – full day care:** A child will only be able to attend one full day care nursery at a time. However, a child can transfer from one nursery to another. We do not offer places between multiple sites as we consider multiple nursery settings to be detrimental to a child's wellbeing. We would suggest that a child have a nursery and a nanny or childminder rather than attend multiple nursery settings.

**Attendance at more than one nursery – term time only:** An older child that attends one of our term time only settings has the option to attend one of our full day care settings over the summer holidays if they would like to and providing the nursery has the space to accommodate them at that time. Please contact Admissions to discuss this in more detail.

#### **4. Recommend a Friend Policy**

If a parent/guardian who already has a child in one of our nurseries recommends a friend to Riverside they also send their child to us, then both families will receive a 10% discount on their first/next 3 months fees in a Full Day Care setting **or** for their first/next terms fees in a term time only setting.

Please note, if the new family leaves within three months, the offer will no longer apply.

#### **5. Registering to Join Our External Waiting List**

The following conditions of registration apply to join the waiting list for one or more of our nurseries:

- The child must be registered by a legal parent/guardian
- The child must have a date of birth or due date
- Registration dates cannot be transferred from one child to another including between siblings or friends/extended family members
- A parent/guardian will be asked to confirm via the online registration form that they understand the following:

- That joining the External Waiting List does not guarantee a place for the start date or days requested.

- The registration fee of £75.00 is non-refundable but will only be charged once per family, not per child and will also allow you to join the waiting list for any of our nurseries and not just one setting.

- That once a child has joined a nursery, bank holidays and absences including sickness or holidays are paid for and non-refundable.

- The Full Day Care nurseries are closed for one working week between Christmas and New Year, and this is accounted for in the fees and fees for this period are non-refundable.

- That a child cannot start the settling in process until their place is secured with the relevant forms completed and fees paid.

**Why we charge registration fee:** The registration fee helps to give us a realistic idea of families waiting to join the nurseries. It also covers the administration of being on our waiting list. This involves all communication with you including regular email updates about the progress of the waiting list.

You will have access to our dedicated Admissions Team who will be able to update you about your child's place on the waiting list and discuss at any time your options and requirements.

You will also have the opportunity to visit the nurseries as many times as you would like prior to being offered a place with us and receive complimentary settling-in sessions at the nursery once your child's place is secured.

**Confirmation of registration:** Once the completed registration form and fee have been received, the child will be placed on the External Waiting List in the date and time order in which the registration form and fee was received.

The parents/guardians will be sent an emailed receipt to confirm their child's place on the waiting list.

## 6. Internal Waiting List

Our Internal Waiting List consists of:

- Children currently attending a Riverside nursery who need to change or increase their days or may have to move rooms.
- Children who have a sibling already attending a Riverside Nursery and who will be joining when the sibling is still in attendance. Children whose siblings have left the nursery will join the External Waiting List but will have priority over children who have not attended a Riverside nursery.
- Children who have a sibling already attending a Dukes Education School that need a nursery place for a younger sibling.
- Children whose parents/guardians have requested that they transfer from one Riverside nursery to another.

Children on our Internal Waiting List have priority over children on our External Waiting List and will be offered places in the order of date and time that the Internal Waiting List request was made by the parent/guardian and relevant to the appropriate room for the child.

Joining the Internal Waiting List or having a child already in the nursery, does not guarantee a place for the start date or days requested.

**New children joining Riverside:** Will be added to the Internal Waiting List from the date and time they have accepted a place for their child at the nursery. The date and time will be determined by the time the parent/guardian sends back their completed registration form.

**Children already attending a Riverside nursery:** Will be added to the Internal Waiting List on the date that the request is made in writing by the parent/guardian. If a request is made by telephone the parent/guardian will be asked to confirm the request in writing also. Amendments to requests made at a later date must also be confirmed in writing.

**Siblings:** There is not a registration fee to add a child with a sibling already attending the nursery to the Internal Waiting List.

Where more than one child from the same family attends, a discount of 7% will be applied to the lower of the two invoices only. The discount will only apply when both children are attending the nursery. Once one sibling has left the nursery, the discount will no longer continue, and full fees will apply.

If a sibling leaves the nursery, the child not yet attending will be moved to the External Waiting List (please see the section above for further details).

**Confirmation of joining the Internal Waiting List:** Once the written request has been received by our Admissions team, the child will be placed on the Internal Waiting List in date and time order of which the written request was received. An email confirming that the child has been added to the Internal Waiting List will be sent to the parent/guardian.

## 7. How We Prioritise Waiting Lists

Each nursery's waiting list is divided into an Internal and External Waiting List and ordered by registration/request date and time, but priority is also given in the following order:

1. Internal Waiting List - families with children already attending a Riverside Nursery or a Dukes Education School. This can include children ready to move from one room to another.
2. Internal Waiting List - Riverside Nursery Schools and Dukes Education staff member's children
3. External Waiting List - families with children who used to attend a Riverside nursery.
4. External Waiting List - Children of families with exceptional circumstance/special education needs - whether based on social or medical grounds. Supporting evidence will be required upon registration and an assessment will be undertaken to ensure the nursery concerned is suitable to cater for the child's individual needs.
5. External Waiting List - families with children who have not attended a Riverside nursery.

## 8. Offering, accepting, changing days and giving notice of a place

Places are subject to availability and Riverside Nursery Schools cannot always guarantee nursery places for the exact start date or days requested despite how far in advance a parent/guardian may have registered the child. Nursery places are offered in the order of priority found above in Section 7. Therefore, a child's position on the waiting list is fluid and subject to change. Because the nurseries are usually at full capacity, places typically become available when children leave the nurseries. We will endeavour to offer the days requested by the parent/guardian. However, if we are unable to offer what is requested, we will offer the days that we do have, with the option to increase or swap when the requested days become available.

**Siblings:** We fully understand the importance of siblings being in the same nursery together. However, we cannot guarantee siblings a place in the nursery for the exact start date or days requested regardless of how far in advance a parent/guardian may have registered the child.

**Changing or increasing days:** The changing of and increasing of days is subject to availability and may be dependent on availability per room/group. We are not able to confirm or guarantee exactly when a change or increase of days will become available.

**Reducing days:** Should a parent/guardian wish to reduce their child's days at the nursery they will be required to reduce as per Section 3: Schedule of Attendance.

A parent/guardian will be required to provide 6 weeks notice for Full Day Care settings of half a terms notice for Term Time only settings of the reduction and this must be given in writing to the admissions team.

**If places are not available by the requested start date:** If the requested start date has passed, then the child will remain on the waiting list until a place becomes available unless the parent/guardian explicitly requests that the child is to be removed from the waiting list.

**Offer of a place:** We will contact the parent/guardian to confirm the availability of a place usually at least 6 weeks or half a term in advance. In some circumstances we may be able to contact the parent/guardian more or less than 6 weeks or half a term in advance and reserve the right to require a decision from the parent/guardian based on this notification.

As soon as we have knowledge of a place becoming available, we will contact the parent/guardian by telephone/email to offer the place. If the parent/guardian fails to contact us or confirm acceptance of the place within a reasonable amount of time, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

If we receive no contact from the parent once a place has been offered, their child will become 'inactive' on our waiting list.

**Declining a place:** A parent/guardian has the right to decline places offered for their child. They can either remain on the waiting list and adjust their requirements or change their child's status to 'inactive' on the waiting list.

**'Inactive' status on the waiting list:** If a child is 'inactive' they will not be offered a place in the nursery unless the parent/guardian has requests that the child is 'reactivated' on the waiting list, and they have confirmed that they are ready to accept a place.

The child will then be placed back on the waiting list in the order that they originally registered.

## 9. Accepting, reserving, and securing a place:

Once a place has been offered it can be secured by completing the Registration Form signed by the parent/guardian and paying a £400 deposit (and the £75.00 registration fee if this hasn't already been paid).

When the child leaves the nursery, the deposit will be repaid without interest to the parent/guardian and any outstanding fees will be deducted from this sum.

A child cannot start settling into the nursery until all relevant documentation has been completed and applicable fees paid.

**Cancelling a child's place prior to the child's start date:** A child's place is deemed accepted upon returning the Registration Form signed by the parent/guardian. The deposit is non-refundable if a child's place is cancelled.

The deposit is non-refundable if a child's place is cancelled before the start date, however the deposit can be reactivated if the child joins the nursery in the future. Future places are subject to availability.

Cases of serious illness or genuine hardship may receive special consideration upon written request.

**Accepting, securing and giving notice of a change or increase in days:** Once a change or increase in days has been confirmed by our admissions team, a 'Change of Schedule' email will be sent to the parent/guardian to confirm the change. The parent/guardian must reply to this email to secure the change.

Once the reply has been received by the admissions team, the change or increase in days is confirmed and we will require 6 weeks/half a terms notice to cancel or change again.

**Accepting, securing, and giving notice for a transfer between nursery sites:** A child can transfer from one Riverside nursery site to another. A transfer will be confirmed by our admissions team and a 'Transfer Agreement' email sent to the parent/guardian to confirm the transfer.

The parent/guardian must reply to the email to secure the transfer. Once the email has been received by the admissions team, the transfer is confirmed.

Should the parent/guardian wish to cancel the transfer, the child will not automatically be able to return to the original nursery as places will be subject to availability. However, the child can re-join the waiting list.

## 10. Transferring between Riverside Nurseries

Once a place is available for a child to transfer between our sites the parent/guardian will be contacted as outlined above in Section 9.

It is likely that a place will come up when the correct amount of days in the appropriate room for the child become available at the preferred site. It is important that a child is ready to transfer and this may not be the case if they have been attending the current nursery only for a short time. This may therefore take some time to accommodate.

We will liaise with the parents/guardians and the nursery to ensure that a transfer at that time is in the child's best interests.

Parents/guardians will need to ensure that they can take time to settle the child into the new nursery. If it is agreed with the family that the child is not ready to transfer and or the parents are unable to invest time in resettling the child, the child can remain on the Internal Waiting List to move at a later date.

### **11. Events requiring notice to leave the nursery or reduce days**

A minimum of 6 weeks/half a terms written notice is required to leave or reduce days at the nursery. Notice must be made in writing to our admissions team by email to [admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com](mailto:admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com)

In lieu of notice fees charged will be 6 weeks/half a term fees or at the rate that would have applied had the child attended the nursery.

Once written notice has been received the notice date is final and cannot be brought forward or put back. Receipt of notice will be sent to the parent/guardian by email. If a receipt is not received, the parent/guardian must contact admissions immediately as the notice may not have been received.

The notice is not deemed accepted until a parent/guardian has been sent a receipt. Once all fees are settled the deposit will be refunded. Riverside reserves the right to deduct outstanding fees from nursery funding and deposits.

Cases of serious illness or genuine hardship may receive special consideration upon written request.

### **12. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities**

We will liaise with the relevant agencies (health and education authorities) and a child's family to assess the suitability of our setting to meet the child's individual needs. If additional resources are required, funding is likely to be applied for. Funding allocated to the child will be accounted for in the monthly fees charged for their place. If the funding does not entirely cover the cost of additional staffing or resources required to meet the child's needs, the parents/guardians may be obliged to cover additional costs. This will be discussed with the family and relevant agencies at the time of admission, or at any time that the child's needs change during their attendance at the nursery.

### **13. Fees and funding**

Our latest fee structure for each nursery can be viewed on our website. We review our fees each September.

If a child is eligible for funding, the funding entitlement will be accounted for in the fees. If eligibility for funding has not been confirmed in time that payment is due, parents/guardians will need to pay the full unfunded fee until the eligibility for the entitlement has been confirmed.

If the nursery is unable to claim the funding, parents/guardians will be liable for the full shortfall in fees per month. This can be when a child first joins the nursery or at any time that the child is no longer be eligible for funding during their time of attendance at the nursery.

**Sibling Discount:** A sibling will receive a 7% discount on their fees while their older sibling/s are also in the nursery. Once their older sibling/s have left the nursery, the discount will no longer continue, and full fees will apply.

**2-year-old funding:** We don't currently accept 2-year-old funding at any Riverside Nursery Schools

**3-year-old funding (15 hours):** We currently accept 3-year-old funding (15 hours) at all Riverside Nursery Schools but do not offer any fully funded places so fees will still apply

**3-year-old funding (30 hours):** We currently accept 3-year-old funding (30 hours) only at our Fully Day Care Riverside Nursery Schools but do not offer any fully funded places so fees will still apply. We don't currently accept 3-year-old funding (30 hours) at our Term Time only settings.

## **14. Useful Information**

### **There are no guarantees that we will have a place for your child when you need it**

It is important for you to know first of all that joining our waiting list does not guarantee your child a place from the date that you want or on the days that you need. But rest assured that you will be offered a place with us eventually.

### **Why can't we guarantee you a place when you need it?**

Our nurseries usually operate at full capacity and places usually become available only when children leave. Therefore, we are reliant on children leaving and sometimes on room capacity to be able to offer you a place. Some nurseries may be able to guarantee you a place for your child and this may be because they are not at full capacity.

### **How can we guarantee your child a place when you need it?**

The long and short of it is that we can't. The earlier that you register the higher you will be on the waiting list and that is as much as you can do.

### **Be flexible if you can**

If you can be flexible and accept any days that we have available, then you are more likely to get your ideal days more quickly. Accepting less days (i.e. if we only have one day to offer you) will also help as more often than not we have only one or two days to offer you initially.

### **Getting an update about our waiting list and places coming up**

You are more than welcome to contact our admissions team at any time to discuss your child's place on the waiting list.

### **Accepting a place for your child**

Once you have decided to accept a place with us you will be sent a Registration Form to complete and sign and you will be asked to reserve your child's place with a deposit of £400.00 and a £75.00 registration fee if this has not already been paid earlier.

### **What if we offer you a place and you feel it is too soon or that the days don't suit you?**

This is no problem at all and is not unusual. We can move your child to a later month and/or adjust your requirements on our files. Your child can remain on our waiting list for as long as you need.

### **Will your child be moved to the bottom of the waiting list if you decline a place?**

No they will not. You have a specific date and time that you registered your child. When we come to offer you a place in the future - any child that was registered before yours will be offered a place first and any child that was registered after yours will be offered a place after you have been offered.

### **In anticipation of being offered a place**

Please ensure that you have viewed your chosen nurseries. Once a place is offered to you, you will need to make a decision quickly as to whether you wish to take the place or not. If you haven't seen us for a while or last visited before your child was born, you may wish to book a refresher appointment.

### **Make sure that you are contactable - do we have your correct contact details?**

We would certainly not want you to miss out on a place so please make sure we have your correct contact details.

Consider that you may have registered your child with your work email address and therefore if you are now on maternity leave you may need to give us a different email address.

#### **Your requirements – if anything changes**

Don't forget to let us know if your requirements have changed, if you are now flexible with your days or require an earlier or later start date. If you no longer require a place or wish to make changes to your requested start date, please update us immediately as this will speed up our admissions process.

#### **Your preferred nursery and your second choice**

If you have registered your child for more than one of our nurseries, we ask that you carefully consider whether you are happy to take a place at your second/third choice site.

#### **Transferring between our nurseries**

If you plan to transfer to your preferred site eventually, please consider that moving a child from one nursery to another can be very disruptive and that they will need to resettle all over again. We would suggest that a child changes nursery at the point when they are due to move up into the next room as this would be the natural time for a transition anyway.

#### **Attending two nurseries**

At Riverside a child will only be able to attend one of our nurseries at a time. However, a child can be transferred from one site to another. We do not offer places between 2 of our sites as we consider multiple nursery settings to be detrimental to a child's wellbeing. We would suggest that a child have a nursery and a nanny or childminder rather than attend multiple nursery settings.

#### **Keeping us updated on your child's needs**

Please let us know of any medical conditions, dietary requirements, special needs or additional needs. Also, if there are new circumstances in your child's life i.e. a new baby coming, bereavement or parent separation. It is important that we are aware of your child's needs when we offer you a place in the nursery as we want to make sure that we meet them appropriately

## **15. Terms & Conditions**

This Admissions Policy should be viewed in conjunction with our [Terms & Conditions](#)

#### **Review of the Admissions Policy and Terms & Conditions**

We reserve the right to alter our Admissions Policy and Terms & Conditions at any time.

Written notification of all revised Terms & Conditions will be given.

#### **Acceptance of our Admissions Policy and Terms & Conditions**

These are deemed accepted by the parent/guardian upon completion of the online registration form to join our waiting list and once a child has been admitted to the nursery, upon a signed Registration Form having been received by our admissions team.

## **16. Who to contact**

#### **Admissions queries:**

Contact our Admissions Team on 020 3475 0455 or email [admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com](mailto:admissions@riversidenurseryschools.com)

#### **Accounts queries:**

Fees, funding, tax free childcare and other financial queries contact our Bursar [bursar@riversidenurseryschools.com](mailto:bursar@riversidenurseryschools.com)

#### **Complaints:**

Please see our [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

## **17. Related policies and documents**

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with the following:

- [Kew Montessori Policies](#)
- [St.Margarets Policies](#)
- [Twickenham Green Policies](#)
- [Twickenham Park Policies](#)
- [Grosvenor House and Holly Road Policies](#)