NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY

Approved by:	**Castlefort Governing Body**	**Date: September 2026**
Signed by:	**Chair of the Governing Body**	
Last reviewed on:	**September 2026**	
Next review due by:	**September 2027**	

1. AIMS

Our aims are:

1.1 To ensure access and entitlement to the benefits of high quality Nursery education on a fair and equal basis, for children and families in our local community.

1.2 To establish an admissions policy governed by clearly defined criteria that may be articulated to parents and other professionals.

1.3 To ensure, as fairly as possible, that all children who gain a place will fully benefit from their Nursery education with us, their needs being fully met, whilst we make the very best of our available resources.

2. NURSERY SESSION OPTIONS

2.1 Sandcastles Nursery is currently offering 3 different options for Nursery:

- 2.1a Part-time place, 15 hours free childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds *Children are eligible for this funding the term after the child turns 3-years old. This is offered as a morning session (8:45am-11:45am) or an afternoon session (12:30pm-3:30pm).

- 2.1b Full-time place, 30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds *Subject to government funding https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare. These places are offered on a full-time basis 8:45am-2.45pm every day. The 30 hours free funding covers the session times only. Castlefort Academy requests a £3* daily chargeable extra to cover the 45 minutes until 3.30pm (end of the afternoon session). This does not include the cost of an academy lunch, which must be funded separately, if required, at a cost of £2.25 per day. These charges must be paid weekly. *Prices are subject to change

- 2.2b Part-time place with self-funded extra provision. This option is available to children who are not eligible for 30 hours funding. For example, if a child has a 15-hour morning place, parents may fund the afternoon session (subject to availability) at a cost of £14 per session, to enable their child to access full-time provision. It is important to note that should another parent should request either a 15-hour or 30-hour Government funded place for their child, the academy have the right to withdraw the self-funded place. We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible of cancellation of extended provision. The £3 daily chargeable extra and meal charge (if required) may also apply.

3. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO THE NURSERY

The Governors of the academy will offer children a place in the Nursery for the term after their third birthday, according to the criteria listed below in priority order:

3.1 The child is 3 years old and will move to Reception in September.

3.2 Children in public care and previously looked after children.

3.2 Siblings (including foster brothers and sisters who live at the same address) currently attending Castlefort Academy in the September of the year of their admission.

3.3 Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which names the academy.

3.4 Children for whom a place at the academy is essential on medical or social grounds as supported in writing by a medical practitioner or a social worker.

3.5 The child's name is on the waiting list. The child will be allocated a place based on the date of when their child's name was added to the list.

3.6 Distance between the home address and the academy as measured in a straight line with those living closer to the academy receiving the higher priority.

4. NURSERY INTAKE

4.1 The Nursery will take children from the term after their third birthday.

4.2 A child will remain in Nursery until the end of the academic year in which they are 4 years old.

4.3 Subject to available places, there will be 3 admission intakes during the academic year – September, January and April.

4.3 Any 'spare' places will be allocated during the year, as they become available. For example, a child who is 3 or 4 years old and eligible for funding,

5. DECISIONS ON PLACES

5.1 Decisions to offer a place will be based on the criteria and procedures laid out in this admission policy.

5.2 Decisions will be final and there is no right of appeal.

5.3 The offer of a Nursery place DOES NOT mean automatic entitlement to a place in our Reception class.

5.4 Parents who accept a place will be expected to commit to taking up the place for the rest of the term and ideally, academic year.

6. NURSERY INDUCTION SESSION AND HOME VISIT

6.1 Nursery start dates and induction dates will be staggered over a two-week period at the start of each term, depending on places. The child will be offered to attend a 1-hour Induction session and our staff will then conduct a home visit on the same afternoon/evening. The child will be expected to start their part-time/full-time place the following day.

7. LEAVERS DURING THE YEAR

7.1 If a child is withdrawn by their parents from Nursery during the academy year, the place cannot be held open and will be automatically offered to a child on the waiting list. If parents/carers would like their child to return to the Nursery at a later date, then they will have to re-apply for a place and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with any other applications at the time, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has previously been in the Nursery class, or any other Nursery class, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

Please give half a term's notice if you wish to withdraw your child's place.

8. ATTENDANCE & LOSS OF NURSERY PLACE

8.1 If attendance and/or punctuality is poor or irregular the Nursery teacher or academy office staff will talk to the child's parents/carers and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from Nursery education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual due to the great demand for places and impact on funding.

8.2 If after a period of two weeks, attendance and/or punctuality remain poor a letter will be sent to the parents/carers inviting them to meet with the Headteacher.

8.3 If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance and/or punctuality within an agreed period, then the child may lose their place. Parent/carers will be notified of the loss of place in writing.

9. TRANSFER FROM NURSERY INTO ACADEMY

9.1 All parents and carers will be made aware that a place in the Nursery does not guarantee a place in the academy and that they must still go through the correct and official Walsall Council admissions procedure.

9.2 The Nursery staff will liaise closely with colleagues in our Reception class to plan for a smooth transition into our Reception class, or any other chosen or allocated academy. Nursery staff will forward reports and other agreed records to other academy's as appropriate.