

Current Policy Date: July 2025

Review: Annual

Date of Next Review: July 2026

ADMISSIONS POLICY

- *Source – West Berkshire Council Nursery Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2021-22*

The Governing body has been delegated by West Berkshire Council to administer the admission arrangements for Victoria Park Nursery School.

NUMBER OF PLACES AT NURSERY SCHOOL

There are 2 main class groups at nursery school with places as indicated in the table below:

| Group Name | Age Group | 30 hour Places | 15 hour morning places | 15 hour afternoon places |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Willow Group | 3-4 year olds | Up to 32 * | 20 | 20 |
| Chestnut Group | 2-3 year olds | Up to 8 (Autumn Term)** | 16 | 12 |
| | | Up to 14 (Spring) ** | 23 | 23 |
| | | Up to 18 (summer) ** | 19 | 19 |

Please note that in Chestnut Group, capacity is reserved for children who are eligible for funding in the January and April of each school year. Due to meeting required ratios in Chestnut Group, places may be limited by available staffing.

* If 30 hour places are less than 32, this will release additional morning and afternoon places up to a maximum of 52 children in each session.

** If 30 hour places are less than these amounts, this will release additional morning and afternoon places up to a maximum of 24 children in mornings & 20 children in afternoons for Autumn Term, and a maximum of 37 children in each session for both the Spring and Summer Term.

ADMISSIONS PANEL

Admission to Victoria Park Nursery School is regulated by an admissions panel which will consist of the Headteacher and two governors. The Admissions Panel meeting will be arranged for one half term before the child's entry to Nursery School. The panel will confirm allocations within the criteria below.

SESSION ALLOCATION

The core entitlement is 15 or 30 hours per week. 15 hours will be morning or afternoon sessions, 30 hours will be 4.5 days. Parents will not be able to defer allocation of the free entitlement to the following term – the application will be considered afresh with the child remaining on the waiting list.

APPLICATION FORMS

Parents should register an interest in a place at Victoria Park Nursery School by completing a registration form and providing a copy of the child's birth certificate.

No child will be guaranteed a place in Victoria Park Nursery School at the time of registration.

ALLOCATION PROCESS

- Applications will be considered on a termly basis (see Appendix A)
- Allocated places must be accepted by the deadline on the offer letter (usually 2 weeks) or the offer will be withdrawn.
- Places will be available until the child reaches compulsory school age or until the parent withdraws the child (see CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY).
- There will be no right to an appeal but parents will be given the opportunity to receive an explanation from the Headteacher in writing or personally if requested.
- The Local Authority will normally only consider cases where parents feel that this policy has not been applied correctly.
- Applications will not be considered on the length of time on a waiting list or by date of application.

LATE APPLICATIONS

- Late applications will be placed on the waiting list.

ABSENCE

- Any child with un-authorised absence for a period of 15 school days or a pattern of persistent absence may have their place withdrawn.
- Any child who has a holiday of more than 4 weeks, will have their place withdrawn and will be considered in the following term’s allocation process.
- Any child with a withdrawn place must make a fresh application for a place.

LENGTH OF STAY

- A pupil’s final term will be the term in which he or she will attain the age of 5 unless offered and accepted a school reception place within the Local Authority’s admission arrangements and co-ordinated scheme.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Admissions to Willow Group (criteria D - L) and Chestnut Group (criteria I - P) are considered separately. Where there are more applications than spaces in each Group, applications will be considered against the following criteria:

| Age | Oversubscription | Tie Breaker |
|---------------|--|---|
| 2, 3, 4 and 5 | A – Looked after children (LAC) and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted to became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately following being Looked After. | |
| 2, 3, 4 and 5 | B – Children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) naming Victoria Park as their preferred setting. | |
| 2, 3, 4 and 5 | C – Children of members of staff of the Nursery School* | |
| 5 | D - All pre-compulsory school age 5 year old children | |
| 4 | E - Children with exceptional medical/ social grounds ** | Within any of the over-subscription criteria priority will be given to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the nursery. Distance will be measured using the West Berkshire Geographical Information System (www.westberks.gov.uk) taking a |
| | F - Siblings already in the Nursery | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | G - Living within the boundaries of West Berkshire Council | straight line between the home address and the nursery and not travelling distances. |
| | H - All other applicants | |
| 3 | I – Children with exceptional social/medical grounds ** | Within any of the over-subscription criteria priority will be given to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the nursery. Distance will be measured using the West Berkshire Geographical Information System (www.westberks.gov.uk) taking a straight line between the home address and the nursery and not travelling distances. |
| | J - Siblings already in the Nursery. | |
| | K - Living within the boundaries of West Berkshire Council | |
| | L - All other applicants | |
| 2 | Children with exceptional social/medical grounds ** | Within any of the over-subscription criteria priority will be given to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the nursery. Distance will be measured using the West Berkshire Geographical Information System (www.westberks.gov.uk) taking a straight line between the home address and the nursery and not travelling distances. |
| | M - Children eligible for 2 year old funding | |
| | N - Siblings already in the Nursery | |
| | O - Living within the boundaries of West Berkshire Council. | |
| | P - All other applicants. | |

* Governors agreed this category in May 2023 due to the current difficulty of recruiting qualified staff, in particular Level 3 staff, in West Berkshire. Normal charging and remissions will apply.

** Exceptional medical/social grounds – if supported by professionals, e.g. Paediatrician, Social Worker, Health Visitor, Family Support Worker or Teacher from EDIT Team.

WAITING LISTS

- Waiting lists for places and sessions will be established for those who have not been offered places and priorities in the same order as the oversubscription criteria.
- Waiting lists will be amended within a term and non-compulsory school age applications; including 5 year olds of non-compulsory school age with the above criteria applying similarity.
- Places will be allocated as they become available within a term.

APPENDIX A

Admissions Panel Dates for 2025 and 2026

| Application Closing Date | Admissions Panel Date | Deadline for Accepting Place | Admission to Nursery School |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10 October 2025 | 15 October 2025 | 4 November 2025 | January 2026 |
| 30 January 2026 | 4 February 2026 | 20 February 2026 | April 2026 |
| 15 May 2026 | 20 May 2026 | 5 June 2026 | September 2026 |