Policy for nursery school / nursery class admissions in Lancashire

1. The County Council has devolved rather than delegated the administration of admissions to Nursery Schools. Therefore, in the event of a complaint the final responsibility and decision for admissions to Nursery Schools rests with the County Council.

2. Nursery Schools must agree a Published Admission Number (PAN) with the County Council before the start of the academic year. Published admission numbers will be stated in part time equivalent (pte) places. One pte place is 15 hours per week, term time only, or 570 hours a year if the place is stretched.

3. Operational numbers may vary depending on the needs of the children and school. Where capacity exists, places should be offered for at least 15 hours a week. (or 570 hours a year if a stretched offer) from the term after the child's third birthday.

4. Nursery Schools are permitted to agree take up of fewer hours to meet parental request but are not obliged to. Places will be funded on actual take up of hours.

5. Nursery Schools may set a minimum take up requirement when offering places.

6. Nursery Schools may also offer the working parent entitlement, of up to 30 hours per week (term time only) or 1,140 hours per year if stretched throughout the year. The agreed number of 30 hour places available should be decided in advance of the academic year and publicised to

parents/carers on the school website. Nursery Schools are not obliged to offer the extended entitlement.

7. Admissions are three times a year, for as long as places are available. Funding and entitlement are based on a three-term year, with places starting in September, January or April. This allows for effective induction procedures.

8. Children are entitled to a place from the first day of term and offers of a place must always give this as an option even if the Nursery School offers 'staggered starts' or induction periods to help children settle.

9. Parents will be notified that a place is available for their child no later than a half term in advance. Nursery Schools may set and advertise a termly deadline for considering applications for admission in the following term.

10. Nursery Schools may offer their places in several ways. These include half or full day sessions, extended sessions covering lunchtimes, or a stretched offer (fewer hours per week but including weeks during school holidays).

11. Where the working parent entitlement is available through hours in daycare provision or in partnership with other providers, the Nursery School must make clear which element is the universal entitlement and will therefore be guaranteed to continue if a child ceases to be eligible for the working parent provision.

12. The Nursery School shall provide information on their school website stating the opening times of the nursery provision and its educational aims and provision. The website should also set out the Published Admission Number as agreed by the County Council, and the County Council's policy for nursery admissions.

13. When more applications are received than there are places available, the following County Council criteria must be applied. These closely follow the admissions criteria for entry to County primary schools. Children with an Education Health and Care Plan naming the school will always be admitted. Headteachers should apply the criteria by

considering all eligible children from each priority category in turn until all the available places have been allocated. Other criteria (such as date of birth) cannot be used. Children with a final Education, Health and Care Plan in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted.

1. Children who are looked after (LAC) by a Local Authority “Previously Looked After” (PLAC), or “Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Child” (IAPLAC) at the time of their application and previously looked after children.

2. Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equality Act 2010.

3. Children who have taken up, or are eligible for, a disadvantaged 2-year-old place at the time of application.

4. Those children who, at the time of entry, have a sibling attending the nursery school.

5. Children who attend day care or a voluntary or private sector pre-school on site at the school. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given within this group to children who live closest to the school by the straight-line distance as calculated by Lancashire County Council.

6. Parents/carers who provide evidence of training/education at a local establishment, working locally or have established local childcare arrangements (at the time of the child's admission)

7. Where children who do not meet any of the above criteria, priority for any remaining places will be given to those who live closest to the school by the straight-line distance as calculated by Lancashire County Council. Headteachers can seek advice and assistance from the local Pupil Access Team in applying these

criteria.

Tie-breaker:

The distance criterion will be used as the tie breaker if there is oversubscription within any of the admission criteria; it is a straight line (radial) measure.

If the Local Authority is unable to distinguish between applicants using the published criteria (eg. siblings, those living the same distance from home to school, or families residing in the same block of flats) places will be offered via a random draw. The draw will take place at the local authority's office and the name/s will be drawn by an officer who is independent of the admissions process.

The distance measure is a straight line measurement (radial) between the applicant's home address points and the address point of the school (co-ordinates provided by ordnance survey data).

14. If there are more children than places, any child who is not offered a place can only be reconsidered and admitted at a later point if the parents have put the child's name on the school's continued interest list.

15. Where a family ceases to be eligible for the working parent entitlement, the free place should return to the universal entitlement level (for children aged 3+) when the grace period expires, unless the parent/carer agrees to pay for the extended hours. Schools offering the extended entitlement should explain this possibility in writing when offering the working parent entitlement place. Subject to capacity / availability parents/carers may be be allowed to keep their 3 or 4-year old child in their universal entitlement place even if they cease to be eligible for the working parent entitlement, providing the parent is not already using their universal hours with an alternative provider.

16. Schools may allow the parent/carer to continue to access the extended hours on a fee-paying basis but are not obliged to. Fee paid hours do not count towards a school's PAN.

17. Any complaint about the operation of this admissions policy, for example in the case of a particular child who has been refused admission, should be directed to the Head of the Nursery School in the first instance and then to the Access to Education Lead.

18. There is no statutory right of appeal.