









'To provide a foundation for fulfilled lives, inspiring confident and happy learners'

Our Values	Enjoy learning	Try our best	Make good choices	Respect each other & our surroundings	Work together	Celebrate our successes
	 learn	 try	 choices	 respect	 together	 success

Pre-school Admissions Policy

Document Adopted By Governing Body

Signed (Chair):

Date: September 2025

Print Name:

Date of Next Review: September 2027

Statement of intent

At Dobcroft infant School, we welcome all pupils, irrespective of faith, culture, race, disabilities or family background. The pre-school exists to provide early years “education” rather than “childcare” and supports a smooth transition into Foundation Stage Two classes.

The governing board is the admission authority and is responsible for setting the school's Pre-school Admissions Policy. This policy is written to ensure fairness and equality for all those intending to begin their education at the school.

Every child is entitled to 15 hours free childcare. Some children are entitled to up to 30 hours per week (depending on eligibility) Free Early Learning (FEL) in an early years setting, from the start of the term following their third birthday, for 38 weeks in a full school year. At Dobcroft Pre-school, this entitlement is normally taken from 9.00am to 3:25pm over 5 days.

The school can accommodate a maximum of 26 nursery children per day.

The sessions offered to pre-school children are as follows:

To access the full curriculum children need to attend either of the following sessions:

- 9.00am to 3.25pm Monday, Tues & Weds morning 9.00am to 12.00 (15 hours)
- Wednesday 12.25 to 3:25pm, Thursday & Friday 9.00am to 3:25pm. (15 hours)
- 9.00am to 3.25pm Monday to Friday (30 hours)

Additional wrap around sessions (7.45am-9am and 3.25pm-6.30pm) are also available. Please visit the [Parent Information tab](#) on our website to gain further information.

Children starting pre-school will be offered a home visit.

Please note that admission to Dobcroft Pre-school does not guarantee admission to Dobcroft Infant School which has a separate admissions policy which is administered by the local authority.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation

Guidance

- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'School Admission Appeals Code'
- DfE (2025) 'Early education and childcare'
- DfE (2025) 'Early years entitlements: operational guide'

2. Application timetable

A child is deemed to be of pre-school age from the beginning of the term following their third birthday.

Parents may register their interest in a place at the pre-school at any time during the year following their child's second birthday by completing the expression of interest form on the school website under the preschool tab.

A formal application for a pre-school place will then be sent to parents/carers in February of the year the pupil would be due to start preschool.

Parents/carers should complete the application form, also available from the school and on the schools website, and return it to the school, together with any relevant documentation as required (parent carer agreement and birth certificate), when the child is two years old, or as soon as possible after that but **no later than 1st April**.

The school will consider applications in accordance with the admission criteria. After applying the admissions criteria, priority will be given to those children who wish to start in September, then to those who wish to start in January and finally to those who wish to start in April. Parents/carers will be informed by email of the school decision by **29th April**.

The final decision on the number of hours a child is able to attend the Pre-school and the pattern of attendance rests with the Head Teacher.

Where places are remaining, casual days may be offered by negotiation at the start of each half term, up to the agreed admissions limit.

3. Criteria for Admission

Where there are more applications for admission to the Pre-school than the planned admission number (26), the Governing Body will apply the following criteria in strict order of priority:

- a) Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children.
- b) Children who live in DIS's catchment area **and** have a sibling attending Dobcroft Infant School at the time of admission.
- c) Children who live in DIS's catchment area **and** have a sibling attending Dobcroft Junior School at the time of admission.
- d) Children who live in DIS's catchment area.
- e) Children who live outside of DIS's catchment area and have a sibling attending DIS at the time of admission.
- f) Other children

Please note that children with an educational healthcare plan will be prioritised within each category, provided that appropriate written evidence is provided.

4. Deposits

The pre-school charges a refundable deposit of £50.00 to parents accessing provision.

The purpose of the deposit is to secure places for childcare and provide assurance to the pre-school that parents will take up the place. If a parent does not take up a reserved place, deposits will not be returned.

Deposits will be returned to parents within five weeks of taking up a reserved place.

5. Additional costs and Tax Free Childcare Schemes

A cost of £5.50 is charged per day for a child staying during the lunch time period between 12.00-13.10 pm.

Children will be given milk and snack each day.

Parents may bring a packed lunch for their child or purchase a school meal at a cost of £2.30 per day.

It is a requirement for attendance that children are toilet trained and out of nappies, including pull-ups. Please read our toileting and intimate care policy for further information.

If you are late picking up your child you will be charged £5 for every hour or part hour that you are delayed.

Fees will be payable at the start of each half term using ParentPay (each child will be given their own account as part of the admission process).

The preschool does support the use of tax free childcare schemes which offer tax deductible benefits to parents and carers. If you wish to use one of these schemes, the school office should be notified of this as soon as possible.

6. Reserve list

- 6.1. In circumstances where more applications are received than places are available, and where the criteria for admission has been applied, children who are not offered places will be added to a reserve list in order of the admissions criteria and not by date of application.
- 6.2. Should the planned admission number be reached mid-category (section 3), the school will allocate places to those children in each criterion whose place of residence is nearest to the school as defined in our main school admissions policy.
- 6.3. If a place becomes available, the pre-school will contact the parents of the child at the top of the list.
- 6.4. The reserve list is not a waiting list – if a request is made by a parent whose child has higher priority according to the admissions criteria, other children are moved down the list.
- 6.5. Placing a child's name on the reserve list does not guarantee that a place will become available.

7. Eligibility for 30 hours free childcare

Parents must check their own eligibility for the scheme using the government's ["Free Childcare for Working Parents"](#) website. If parents are eligible, they will be directed to the digital childcare service to apply.

Parents can only start claiming their 30 hours free childcare from the term following the date they receive a decision from HMRC. For this reason, parents are urged to apply as soon as possible.

If eligible, parents must provide the school with their unique code to confirm they are eligible for the scheme, together with their National Insurance number and child's birth certificate. As the free childcare hours cannot be claimed until the code has been verified, parents should provide the school with this information as soon as possible in order to avoid delay.

Parents will be prompted every three months by HMRC to reconfirm that they remain eligible for free childcare.

The LA will audit the eligibility codes at six points during the year to identify any children who have fallen out of eligibility.

The LA will notify the school as soon as possible where parents have fallen out of their eligibility. The school will then notify parents within five working days.

If parents cease to meet the eligibility criteria, they will receive a 'grace period' – i.e. they will continue to receive the 30 hours free childcare for a short period of time.

The Tax-Free Childcare (TFC) grace period allows you to keep your funded childcare place for a limited time (ending March 31, August 31, or December 31) after you become ineligible, giving you time to find work or increase hours, with specific end dates depending on when you lose eligibility. For TFC *accounts*, you can still use existing funds, but you won't get government top-ups; for 30 hours funded childcare, you get a grace period to retain the place, but it ends at term end, with the universal 15 hours available after.

How the Grace Period Works (for 30 Hours Entitlement)

If you miss the reconfirmation deadline for 30 hours free childcare, your eligibility lapses, but a grace period applies for continuity.

- **Grace Period End Dates (based on when you lose eligibility):**
 - **Ends March 31:** If you become ineligible between Jan 1 - Feb 10, or Oct 22 - Dec 31.
 - **Ends August 31:** If you become ineligible between Feb 11 - Mar 31, or Apr 1 - May 26.
 - **Ends December 31:** If you become ineligible between May 27 - Aug 31, or Sep 1 - Oct 21.

If a parent falls into their grace period before their child has started a 30 hours place, they should not take up their 30 hours place. The grace period will not continue once a child has reached compulsory school age.

8. Notice Period

Should you wish to remove your child from Dobcroft Pre-School you will need to give one half-term notice. This should be given in writing before the end of your child's penultimate half term.

9. Absences due to holiday, sickness or other personal reasons

Fees are non-refundable. Please note that missed sessions, whether due to sickness, holidays, or any other reason, cannot be refunded.

Parents/carers should call the school office to let them know that you will not be attending on any given day.

10. Uniform

Dobcroft Pre-school has a uniform which you can purchase via www.uniformshoponline.co.uk once a place has been offered. We also have pre-loved uniform which can be bought from our Friends Of Dobcroft Schools (FODS) team. See [this page on our website](#) for more information.

11. Withdrawing offers

Once a written offer has been made, there are limited circumstances in which an offer can be withdrawn. These are as follows:

- Offers made on the basis of fraudulent applications
- Offers made on the basis of intentionally misleading applications
- Parents not responding to an offer within three weeks
- A child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of nursery education

Notes

1. A Looked After Child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (Sect 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously Looked After Child is a child who immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

2. Siblings are defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

3. The place of residence of a child will be deemed to be the residential property at which the parent or persons with parental responsibility for the child reside on the date of application for admission to the pre-School.

4. Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child resides for the greater part of the week.