9 Early Years and childcare practice procedures

9.1 Waiting list and admissions

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information, and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all parents who apply for a place.

- The setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- Information about the setting is accessible, using plain English, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, provided in different community languages and in other formats on request.
- Children with disabilities are fully supported to take full part in all activities within the setting and the setting makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that this will be the case from the time the child is placed on the waiting list.
- The waiting list is arranged in birth order and in addition takes into account the following:
  - any child considered as vulnerable, this includes children who are assessed under section 17 of the Child Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan, a looked-after child, have a Education, Health Care Plan. This list is not exhaustive.
  - siblings already attending the setting
  - the vicinity of the home to the setting
  - length of time on the waiting list
  - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
- Funded places are offered in accordance with the Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance for local authorities and providers (Department of Education) and any local conditions in place at the time,
- Where it is financially viable to do so, a place is kept vacant for an emergency admission.
- The setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers and childminders are all welcome.
- The setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability, whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- The needs and individual circumstances of children joining the setting are monitored on 9.1c Childcare registration form, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place and that reasonable adjustments are made as required.
- Section 5 Equality procedures is shared and widely promoted to all.
- Places are provided in accordance with Childcare terms and conditions issued to every parent carer when the child takes up their place. Failure to comply may result in the provision of a place being withdrawn.

Admissions

- Once a childcare place has been offered the parents /carers are required to complete relevant paperwork, registration forms and a contract is signed. Confirmation of the space, booking and start date will be issued. This information is then held electronically regarding the child.

Children with SEND

- The manager / SENDCo must seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately.

- Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety and best interests of the child, at all times is paramount.
- At the time of registration, the manager / SENDCo must check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, if so, the manager /SENDCo must ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the setting manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.
- Preparation for admitting a child with SEND must be made in a reasonable amount of time and any delay in the child starting is scrutinised by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority must be regularly updated on the progress of the preparations.

Safeguarding/child protection

If information is provided by the parents that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or has had involvement with social care, the designated person will contact the agency to seek further clarification. Parents are advised on how to access the setting's policies and procedures.

Further guidance

Early Years Entitlements:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6605551b91a320001182b1bb/September_24_early_education_and_childcare_entitlements_expansion.pdf September 2025 early education and childcare entitlements expansion - local authority system guidance