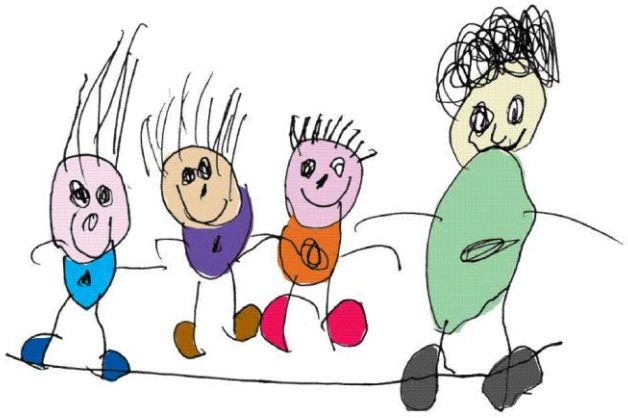
Free Early Learning (FEL) Admissions Policy and Procedure



Broomhall Nursery School

October 2026

Policy Statement

1.1 This policy aims to ensure best practice for admission into Broomhall Nursery School to enable a maximum number of children to access their free early learning place and through the delivery of flexible options, support parents to access employment or training.

1.2 Broomhall Nursery School will ensure that children are admitted to its nursery provision in a fair and consistent manner and in accordance with the published policy and procedure.

2 Equal Opportunities / Inclusion

2.1 All children (regardless of all protected characteristics including race, gender, religious belief or affiliation, intellectual or physical ability, social or cultural background) will have equal access to places at Broomhall Nursery School. Where oversubscription occurs, places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria detailed in section 5.2 below.

2.2 Broomhall Nursery School implements equality and inclusion policies relating to the following key legislation:

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Schools Standards and Framework Act (1998)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- SEN Code of Practice (2015)
- KCSIE (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)

3 Early Years Foundation Stage

3.1 Broomhall Nursery School works within the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which came into effect on 1 September 2026. The EYFS provides a quality framework for the integration of care and education for children from birth to the 31 August following their fifth birthday.

3.2 When a child is admitted to Broomhall Nursery School that previously attended another early years setting, we will ask for documentation of the child's progress within the EYFS from the previous provider or parent \ legal guardian. If Broomhall Nursery is the child's first provider, an initial assessment will be carried out by gathering information from the parent \ legal guardian.

3.3 Broomhall Nursery School will work in partnership with other settings the child attends to identify and support their individual play, care and learning needs. Partnership working will also include working together with parents and professionals from other agencies to share information about children's progress and to identify specific needs at an early stage.

3.4 If a child accesses their 15 or 30 hour free early learning at two settings or attends another setting not funded by the free early learning, Broomhall Nursery will share record keeping and assessments as appropriate. This will ensure good continuity of care and education for the child as well as effective communication with parents.

4. Free Early Learning Places

4.1 All children aged 3-4 years are entitled to fifteen hours Free Early Learning (FEL) per week, during term time. Many working parents of 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 30 hours free childcare per week in term time. Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to find out what support you are eligible for or refer to our leaflet about 30 hours Working Parent Entitlement and Tax-Free Childcare. Children are eligible for a FEL place according to their date of birth as outlined on the table below:

A child born on or before	**Will become eligible for a free place from**	**Eligible Term**
1 April and 31 August	1 September following their 3rd birthday	Autumn
1 September and 31 December	1 January following their 3rd birthday	Spring
1 January and 31 March	1 April following their 3rd birthday	Summer

4.2 Children can access between 3 hours and 15 hours FEL per week or, if eligible, 30 hours free childcare under the Working Parent Entitlement scheme based on parental choice and what Nursery can accommodate within its pattern of delivery (see section 6 below). This will enable a child to increase the number of hours per week that they access over several terms if the parent feels that their child is not ready to access 15 hours per week immediately.

4.3 Children may access provision at different times on different days; however, the child will not be able to start and finish outside of session starting and ending times. The pattern of attendance must fit in with Broomhall Nursery School's pattern of delivery (see section 6 below). If a child is accessing the full 15 hours per week it must be spread over a minimum of three days per week. A child cannot be offered less than three hours in any one day.

4.4 We will ask you to sign a Termly Pattern of Attendance Form each term to confirm how many FEL hours per week and weeks of the term you intend to claim at Broomhall Nursery School and if you are claiming any hours at another setting.

4.5 Additional hours over and above the 15 hours or 30 hours Working Parent Entitlement will be charged by Broomhall Nursery School at £6.50 per hour (rate current at October 2026). Charges are still incurred for additional hours booked if a child does not attend whether or not this is due to sickness, holiday or parental choice. A 4 weeks' notice period must be given for cancellation of both paid for and FEL sessions. (Please see section 7 – Summary of Additional Charges).

4.6 If you take a family holiday(s) during term-time only the first 4 weeks of your holiday will be funded by FEL. The annual allowance commences the term after your child's birthday, ie. if your child is born in October, your annual allowance runs between Jan-Dec. Broomhall Nursery will charge you for any additional weeks taken during term-time at the rate of £6.50 per hour or part hour (price current at October 2026). In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority may agree to fund more than 4 weeks holiday so it is important that you contact the Nursery Office well in advance of your child's absence so that we can contact the Childcare Planning Team on your behalf.

5 Allocation of Free Early Learning Places

5.1 Criteria

a. A child has the right to attend Broomhall Nursery School from any part of the City.

b. Once admitted to the provision, children may stay until they transfer to a primary or infant school, or the child reaches statutory school age. A place would not normally be removed from a child unless the parent decides they no longer need it.

c. If, at the application deadline date, there are more places available than there are applications, then all children will be offered a place. Subsequent applicants will be offered places until the provision is full. Once full, applicants will be placed on a waiting list and places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

5.2 Oversubscription Criteria

The following is the order of priority in which applications should be considered if the provider is oversubscribed.

1) **Looked After Children (children who are currently in care)** who:
   - are looked after at the time an application for a school is made or
   - will be looked after at the time when the child is admitted to school.

2) **Previously looked after children** who
   - who left care because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

3) **Special Education Need or Disability (SEND)**
   - any child that has an Education Health Care Plan for SEND.

4) **Vulnerable Children**
   - who are subject to a recognised Child Protection Plan.

5) **Parent with Exceptional Need**
   - includes children with a parent who has a medical need affecting their mobility and the setting is the nearest to the family home.

6) **Children accessing Broomhall Under 3s provision**

- any child who has attended Broomhall Under 3s for at least 2 terms prior to admission to Broomhall Nursery School as these children and families will already be established at the setting. It should be noted that attendance at Broomhall Under 3s is not a guarantee of a place at Broomhall Nursery School.

7) **Children with a sibling at Broomhall Nursery School**

- any child who has a sibling at Nursery.

8) **Date of birth priority**

- with oldest children admitted first. This will mean all children have an equal opportunity, regardless of where they live, of accessing provision for a similar length of time prior to compulsory school age.

9) **Earliest date of application**

- if all other factors are equal then the earliest application will receive priority. Children applying for a place at Broomhall Nursery School in advance of their eligibility will be placed on the waiting list and the date of their application recorded.

A place that supports working\training parents will be guaranteed until the child starts school full time, therefore any additional childcare hours will be guaranteed, unless the provider restructures and is unable to continue to offer those hours.

Where the full FEL entitlement cannot be offered because the provision is full, then requests will be placed on a waiting list in order of application. Once the session becomes available, the parent will be notified. Alternatively, a parent can choose to use the remaining FEL entitlement at another provision.

6 Pattern of Delivery

6.1 Session Times

Nursery is open from 8am to 5pm every weekday in term time, excluding Bank Holidays and Staff Training Days. The standard sessions we offer parents are based on 3 hour morning and 3 hour afternoon sessions. If a parent is entitled to access the 30 hour WPE offer they can also access our Extended Offer.

STANDARD OFFER	Cost		EXTENDED OFFER	Cost
8.00am- 8.45am Breakfast Club	£6.50		**8.00am- 9.30am** Early Risers	£13.00
8.45-11.45 am Core Morning	£19.50 or FEL		**9.30am-3.30pm** Core Day	FEL
11.45am-12.45pm Lunch	£6.50 or FEL (full day)		**3.30pm-5.00pm** After School Club	£10.00
12.45pm-3.45pm Core Afternoon	£19.50 or FEL			
3.45pm-5.00pm Tea Club	£10.00			

6.2 15 Hour FEL Pattern of Delivery

At Broomhall Nursery you can use your 15 hour FEL during our core morning (8:45am-11:45am) or core afternoon sessions (12:45pm-3:45pm) or across full days (8:45am-3:45pm). Most parents choose 5 mornings or 5 afternoons but it is possible to have any combination of paid and FEL sessions within our Standard Offer and pay for the additional sessions taken. Please note that only full 3 hour core sessions can be taken, not part of a session.

Examples:

5 morning sessions 8:45am to 11:45am = 15 hours at nursery
15 hours FEL
Weekly bill = £0

3 full days 8:45am to 3:45pm = 21 hours at nursery
21 hours less 15 hours FEL = 6 hours @ £6.50/hour
Weekly bill = £39.00

6.3 30 Hour Working Parent Entitlement Pattern of Delivery

Parents can choose from two different ways of using their 30 hours WPE

1. Standard Offer (available for any number of core sessions/lunch period up to and including the full 30 hours)
2. Extended Offer (only available if you use the full 30 hours WPE)

With the **Standard Offer** (8:45-3:45) you can book as many sessions as you like using your 30 hours WPE. Any additional hours taken will be charged at £6.50/hour. Please note that only full 3 hour core sessions can be taken, not part of a session. You can also buy Breakfast Club Sessions at £6.50 and Tea Club Sessions at £10 to give you an early start or a late finish to the day.

The **Extended Offer** is for those parents using the full WPE up to 30 hours across shorter six hour days (9:30-3:30) at no extra cost. However, you can choose to extend some of the days by paying for the Early Risers Club at £13.00 and the Tea Club at £10.00 should you wish to do so.

If you wish to leave nursery and/or change provider midway through the term, you will be asked to give 4 weeks' notice. Within this notice period you will not be able to claim FEL at another provider and you will be liable for any paid for sessions.

7 Summary of Additional Charges

7.1 Additional Sessions taken over FEL

Any additional sessions taken over and above FEL sessions are charged at £6.50 per hour, or part hour. These additional charges are invoiced in advance on a four weekly basis and are payable within 14 days. A four week notice period is required in order to change/cancel additional sessions.

7.2 Breakfast Club Food

A selection of cereals, toast, fruit and milk are offered as part of Breakfast Club.

7.3 Hot Lunches

Hot Lunches are provided by Taylor Shaw at a cost of £2.85 per day. The menu runs on a three weekly timetable and parents can choose between a meat or vegetarian option. Children with allergies can access a Special Diet Menu on provision of a medical letter from the GP or Hospital which states the nature of the allergy in detail. Alternatively, parents can provide a packed lunch (please note we are unable to warm up food).

7.4 Snack Contribution (Voluntary)

We provide a healthy morning and afternoon snack for children, consisting of a variety of fruit, breadsticks and either milk or water. Alternative milk can be provided for those children with allergies. The nursery has to pay for the fruit (we do not get this free) and we therefore ask parents for a £6 voluntary contribution on a half termly basis.

8 Appendix

8.1 Definitions for the purpose of this policy

- Nursery School

School providing pre-school education for 3 and 4 year old children only

- Maintained Sector provider

Provider maintained directly by Government funding

- Application Deadline

Date by which applications must be received for initial consideration for a place for the following term

- Waiting List

List of applications maintained by the eligible provider in the event of oversubscription. The waiting list is maintained in order of admission criteria

- Autumn Term

The school term beginning in September and ending in December

- Spring Term

The school term beginning in January and ending at Easter

- Summer Term

The school term beginning in April and ending in July

- Pattern of Delivery

The days and session times the nursery uses to offer childcare and funded hours

8.2 Contacts for Advice and Support

Childcare Planning Team	(0114) 2813785
Pupils' Admissions Primary Admissions	(0114) 2735766

9. Free Early Learning (FEL) Admissions Procedure

9.1 Parents\carers may apply at any time for a place for their child. Broomhall Nursery School will set a deadline date by which applications should be received each term in order to be considered in line with all other applications. All parents\carers applying for a place will be given a copy of the admissions policy and procedure in force at that time, asked to complete a standard application form and informed of the deadline for submission of the application.

9.2 The admissions policy and procedure and application form will be distributed to parents\carers, on request. Application forms from parents\carers should be submitted to Broomhall Nursery School.

9.3 Where there are more applications than places, all applications received by the deadline will be considered using the oversubscription criteria only.

9.4 Applications submitted after the deadline will only be considered for admission if the provider is not full or a place becomes available. If a place does not become available, the application will be considered at the deadline for the following term.

9.5 All information given by the parent\carer must be regarded as confidential, but must be made available to those considering the application.

9.6 Attendance at Broomhall Nursery School does not guarantee a place at any specific primary or infant school.

9.7 All applications for places at Broomhall Nursery School will be considered in the week after the half term, of the term before entry. Children are eligible for the free early learning provision from the term after their third birthday. Therefore children can be admitted at the beginning or during any of the three terms (autumn\spring\ summer) subject to the availability of a place.

Date of Birth of Child	Term in which child is eligible to be considered for entry	Application Deadline
1 April – 31 August	Autumn Term	Last Friday before half term of the Summer term
1 September – 31 December	Spring Term	Last Friday before half term of the Autumn term
1 January – 31 March	Summer Term	Last Friday before half term of the Spring term

9.8 The governing body will delegate the admissions procedure to the Head Teacher, Assistant Head and the School Office Manager. This group will liaise with other bodies (e.g. Local Authority, Health, Social Services, Pre-schools etc.) as appropriate to secure more information about the child's individual play\care\learning needs.

9.9 Parents may apply for between 3 hours and the total number of hours the setting is open per week (within the operational constraints[1] of the setting). Up to 15 hours of this can be claimed as free early learning, or if eligible, 30 hours of Working Parent Entitlement. Subsequent hours will be charged in line with this policy which has been agreed by the Governing Body. Parents applying for fewer than 15 hours per week must be given equal consideration as those applying for the full 15 hours.

9.10 When applying, parents will indicate their preferred times of attendance in line with the options offered by the individual provider. Allocation will be at the discretion of the provider and providers should attempt to minimise vacant sessions whilst maximising the number of children accessing their free early learning.

[1] Broomhall Nursery School's operational constraints are the starting and ending times of its sessions e.g. 3 hours minimum for a core session.

9.11 If a child attends more than one provider and is claiming for more than 15 hours free early learning, Broomhall Nursery School will resolve the funding dispute with the parent\carer and the other setting and inform the local authority of the outcome.

9.12 If a parent\carer chooses to reduce their child's hours (either FEL or paid for hours) at Broomhall Nursery School then a 4 week notice period is required for the change to take effect.

9.13 If a child transfers to a different eligible provider during the term, the funding will be split accordingly, so long as an appropriate notice period of 4 weeks has been observed by the parent\carer. 'The Code of Practice for Providers of Government Funded Early Learning outlines the arrangements to cover the financial implications of children transferring between providers.

9.14 Parents will be informed as soon as possible after their application has been considered, but no later than 2 weeks after half term, of the term before entry to Broomhall Nursery School.

9.15 All children due to start in any particular term, will be given a common starting date. Where there are large numbers of children due to start in the same term, they may be phased in over a two week period.