

TRUST POLICY

Nursery Handbook – Admissions Policy



Approval		
Director approval	Date approved:	13 th March 2026
<i>For Clinical Documents only: Add departmental governance group</i>	Date approved:	N/A
Ratification		
Trust Management Committee	Date approved:	22 nd July 2026
	Review Date	22 nd July 2029

Version	Date	Author	Status	Comment
1.0	February 2026	Tracey Gregory and Lorraine Brunton	Archived	New trust wide policy
1.1	August 2026	Tracey Gregory	LIVE	Minor changes in line with legislation

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1. Introduction

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust Workplace Nurseries welcomes children of the staff from the Trust, also the children of employees of their key local partners including other NHS Trusts, Primary Care Trusts, and Southeast Coast Ambulance Service.

The nurseries provide a small proportion of places for other public sector workers and general public use.

We welcome prospective parents and carers to view the nursery at any time but advise that an appointment be made to ensure that the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager is available to spend time with them.

Although every effort will be made to meet the requests, parent and carers will be advised to also consider alternative arrangements, as the demand for places in our nurseries can be very high and it may not always be possible to allocate a nursery place.

If the place is not yet required or there are no current vacancies then the form will be entered on the waiting list, stating the date the Nursery Manager received application form.

2. Policy Statement

UH Sussex Nurseries recognise the important contribution of diversity in all families which is considered when allocation of places is given to parent/carers following criteria below.

- As a workplace nursery the Parent or Carer works for UH Sussex NHS Foundation Trust are prioritised.
- The length of time on the waiting list
- The number of spaces in the group specific to the age of the child and the number of sessions available.
- A sibling of the child attends the nursery
- A full-time place takes priority to one requiring part time
- Both parents/carers are employees of the Trust
- Request for 'Local Authority funded only' session
- Previous refusal of allocated places
- 1:1 support for a child with SEND. Sessions will be agreed with the parent/carer and Local Authority in line with appropriate nursery staffing levels to support reasonable adjustments i.e. EY funded hours, morning or afternoon sessions.
- Previous nursery arrears
- The need of the child, if support is beyond reasonable adjustments.

*Please note children with additional educational needs are welcomed and seen as providing a valuable contribution to the setting. (See Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy)

Unfortunately, our nurseries have only limited 'Term Time Only' sessions and may not be able to support 'Adhoc Only' sessions unless in emergency circumstances. Please discuss with the Nursery Manager.

3. Nursery Registration Fees

On acceptance of a Nursery Application Form a non-refundable deposit of £10.00 is required to secure the place for your child on the waiting list. The Registration Fee is to covers administration costs. This involves communication, publication of nursery leaflets and documentation and staffing to support with 'show rounds' and 1:1 meeting.

During 'Admission' period the Nursery Manager will discuss fees this will involve your fee rate and method of payment. (Please see Nursery Handbook – Child Care Fees Policy)

Fees are based on a structure of salary under the NHS 'Agenda for Change' banding. A separate fee rate is for parents and carer or other public sector workers/general public.

**Other medical professionals such as Doctors and Dentists we will request salary details to be matched against AFC banding.*

4. Offer of a Nursery Place

All nursery places are allocated by the UH Sussex Nursery Management Team only.

We will contact the parent or carer to confirm the availability of a place usually 6 to 8 weeks in advance of a requested start date. However, if an application to the waiting list has been submitted for a significantly long period i.e. before maternity leave than the Nursery Manger will periodically contact you to discuss your requests of sessions and start date.

**Please note for those that are on the waiting list for a significant period of time this does not guarantee you a nursery place until you have formally agreed a start date with the Nursery Manager.*

As soon as we have knowledge of a place becoming available, we will contact the parent or carer by telephone or email to offer the place.

We will attempt to contact the parent or carer by email or telephone over a period of 3 weeks. If we are unable to contact the parent or carer, we will assume that a place is no longer required for their child and will change their status to 'Inactive' on the waiting list.

When considering a place from the date that the offer is made, the parent or carers has a maximum of 10 days to decide whether to accept the place. If the parent or carer fails to contact us or confirm acceptance of the place within this period, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. If we receive no contact from the parent once a place has been offered, their child will become 'inactive' on our waiting list.

When considering a place, a parent or carer would like to defer the space from the date that was originally agreed with the Nursery Manager and not taken within a reasonable timeframe i.e. 1-2mths from the allocated date without sufficient notice, then your application will be treated like all other applications on the Waiting List and NO priority will be given.

5. Child Admission of a Nursery Place

Once a nursery place has been offered with an agreed start date, settling sessions will be offered to you and your child to ensure that you child settles well into the nursery environment.

During the settling session you will have the opportunity to discuss any issues with your child's 'Key Worker' and complete relevant admission forms, details of your child's birth certificate / passport number will be required, plus named persons with 'Parental Responsibility'.

All Legal Documentation must be completed before the child is left for a settle session without a Parent or carer being present this includes:

- Admission Document including passport / birth certificates details
- Emergency Contact Numbers
- Health Information
- Dietary Information *including allergies, intolerances, preferences and weaning stage*

Your 'Key Person' will also introduce you to the other staff in your child's room and explain the daily routine and the child observation development records.

The Nursery Manager will take time to discuss with you to discuss any queries you may have, clarify the session times and give guidance to payment options and direct you to the UH Sussex Nurseries policies.

Nursery security is paramount. On completion of your Admission Form, you should notify the nursery of who will collect your child each day. If there is anybody who is not permitted to collect your child, then parent or carer will need to inform management in writing. We use a password system to ensure the safety of your child. You choose a password memorable to yourself on admission to use to collect your child. This password should only be shared with other people when they need to pick up your child. A copy of all passwords will be stored in the office and will be checked before we allow your child to leave with an unfamiliar face. This will ensure that an authorised person only collects your child.

If after the settling periods, the child has not settled then additional sessions may be required this will be discussed with the Key Worker the Parent/Carer and Nursery Manager. A fee may also be introduced. Alternatively, if the Parent/Carer is to work then a reduction of hours may be advised i.e. the first week will be half day sessions rather than full time.

The Nursery Manager or Childcare Service Managers reserves the right not to accept a child in the setting if they are too distressed to be left without their Parent or Carers.

During the period that a child is enrolled with the nursery should there be changes to sessions the Nursery Manager will provide an updated 'Contractual Agreement' which will need to be signed and returned prior to the change of sessions.

It is a request of the UHSussex NHS FT Nurseries that the preschool children leaving to start Primary School finish by the end of August this allows time for the child to rest and adjust to the transition to school.

Most children will start school in the September after they have turned 4 years old. Parental wishes of deferring a child to start school at the compulsory age is permitted, however due to the extensive waiting lists UHSussex Nurseries this may not be accommodated by the Nursery Manager. Please refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>. Notice of end dates will be provided by the Nursery Manager and Service Manager during the summer term.

6. Nursery Fee Charges

Please refer to our Fee Policy.

- The fee rate is based on the NHS Agenda for Change Salary Banding. Doctors and Dentists that are paid under a different pay body will be asked to show clarification of salary hourly rate to match against AFC.
- The fee rate is based on the parent or carer who is highest earner if both work for the Trust.
- The fee rate is based on an AFC hourly rate / Banding grade not hours of contract.
- If a Banding grade changes due to a temporary 'fix term post', promotion or demotion it is the responsibility of the parent/carers to inform the Nursery Manager at the earliest opportunity to ensure the fee charge is correct. No refunds will be given if notice has not been given in a timely manner.
- Nursery Fee Letters and Statements will be given per term providing a 'breakdown' of charges for the term.
- General Public spaces are limited and have a standard charge
- In the case of a child attending whom an extended family member is an NHS employee they will be charged at a General Public rate unless the contract agreement of payment is in the name of the extended family member i.e. Grandparent.
- Parent and carers are fully refunded for Public Holidays and one week between Christmas and New Year.
- In the event of an unforeseen event which results in the nursery needing emergency closure then a full refund of the session will be given in the following month's fee deduction.
- If your child is absent all charges will still apply for example sickness and annual leave. However, in Special / Exceptional circumstances you may request a meeting

with the Nursery Manager or Childcare Service Manager to discuss your child's absence.

- Pandemic Influenza / COVID-19 CHARGES: Are subject to the latest Government recommendations and the discretion of the Nursery Manager.

7. Additional Sessions

UH Sussex Nurseries recognise there are occasions when you may be required to alter your rota shift or attend training on a day that is not within your usual pattern therefore if possible and at the discretion of the Nursery Manager than an agreed swapping of attendance may be offered. This will be for a period of up to 1 week only.

A child attending an additional session above the contractual agreement will be charged at the usual nursery fee rate.

Cancellation of an additional session is fully chargeable if less than 48 hours' notice

8. Early Years Funding

Please refer to the Nursery Handbook Early Years Free Entitlement Policy

In accordance with the Free Entitlement the core teaching times at the Wendy House and Sussex House Nursery are:

- Morning session 9am – 12noon
- Afternoon session 1.30pm – 4.30pm
- Funded only sessions of 6hrs is 9am – 3pm

We spread the Local Authority Funding over a period of 47 per year claiming 12 or 24 hours per week.

As UH Sussex Nurseries predominately provides a service for employees of the Trust the sessions offered in the nurseries are designed to support the working patterns of the varying departments within our hospitals.

Sessions are of 4.5hrs and 9hrs per day and the entitlement formula allows 3- or 6-hours free entitlement hour with the remaining hours to be paid at the normal nursery rate relating to your salary bracket. Therefore, there is a restriction of offering only funded hours within the service agreement of sessions.

UH Sussex Nurseries are able to offer a limited amount of funded only places with an increase offer if there is a lack of fulltime spaces for working Parents and Carers on our waiting list.

Funded only hours will be offered: 9am to 12noon/1.30pm to 4.30pm or 9am to 3pm

9. Late Collection

Frequent Late Collection will result in termination of a nursery place (refer to Nursery Handbook - Arrivals and Departure Policy and Safeguarding policies)

10. Activities and Additional Costs

UHSussex Nurseries provide a rich learning environment and will strive to bring various learning opportunities within the nursery and occasionally outside the nursery premises. This can be in the form of external professionals supporting sport or literacy activities or local outings. Where reasonably possible UH Sussex NHS Foundation Trust will financially support these activities however there may be occasions when we are for a small contribution from parents or carers.

The Nurseries believe that all children should have fair and equal access to meals, snacks and activities.

Fees are inclusive of meals and refreshments.

- Breakfast: Cereal, Toast with spreads,
- Snacks: Fruit, Vegetables, Hummus, Crackers
- Cooked Lunch: 2-week menu displayed in nurseries
- High Tea: Selection of sandwiches, fruit occasionally yoghurt and other foods
- Drinks: Water and Milk

Where possible we will support and make reasonable dietary adjustments to support a child with an allergy or intolerance or religious/cultural/lifestyle preferences.

We accommodate with gluten free bread, dairy/wheat/gluten free and vegetarian cook lunches however the Nursery Manager will discuss with the parent and carer the child's individual dietary requirements and may advise to supply additional foods from home. Any additional foods supplied by the Parent/carers will have no change to the nursery fee. (please refer to Nursery Handbook - Food and Drink Policy)

University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will endeavour to not have any ingredients which are NUT based.

11. Absence of a Child

Providers must follow up on absences in a timely manner. If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts must be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts

3.11 Early Years Statutory Framework Sept 2026

Reporting of an absence should be by telephoning the nursery or by email. We request that you contact your child's nursery at the earliest possible opportunity if they are not attending. As part of our legal responsibilities frequent and unexplained absence will be recorded as part of our safeguarding procedures.

If a child is to be absent from nursery, we request the following:

- To provide as much notice as possible, however absence on the day due to sickness or unplanned annual leave to be informed by **10am.**
- To inform the nursery by telephone or email contacts; we request emails have both the manager and deputies in the event of one of them being absent or to use UHSussex Nurseries inbox uhsussex.nurseries@nhs.net
- You will be required to complete a 'holiday' absence form if your child will be away from the nursery for more than 1 week, this will include reasons and place of travel.
- Nursery Managers will consider patterns of absence, known family concerns and professional judgement on whether a Safeguarding referral should be made.

We request that parents and carers do not discuss nursery matters through personal messaging or social networking to staff or other parent/carers

12. Further Information

To support new families enrolling into our nurseries we will endeavour to do the following:

- The Nursery staff to wear uniform with nursery logo for identification.
- There is a photographic name board in the main corridor to identify all staff working in the nursery.
- Where appropriate nursery staff will wear their Photo Trust I.D. badge
- Students will be introduced to nursery parents and carers and where possible will wear clothing / I.D. badge displaying their name and place of education.
- The Nursery Manager / Deputies will provide a tour of the setting and introduce you to other nursery staff.
- When a vacancy becomes available in the next age group you will be notified of the room that you child will be moving into either from the nursery manager, the key worker or room leader.
- Our nurseries usually operate at full capacity and places usually become available only when children leave. Therefore, we are reliant on children leaving and sometimes on room capacity to be able to offer you a place

13. Links to other Trust policies

UHSN008 Nursery Handbook - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

UHSN007 Nursery Handbook - Child Care Fees Policy

UHSN031 Nursery Handbook - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

UHSN012 Nursery Handbook - Arrival and Departure Policy