



Admissions Policy for The Orchard Nursery at Shiphay Learning Academy

How We Operate

The Orchard Nursery is open for 38 weeks of the year in the Nursery rooms and up to 50 weeks of the year using additional childcare facilities in The Hub. This offers parents the ability to use their 15 funded hours in the Nursery over 38 weeks. We also offer up to 30 hours funded nursery care for those eligible, available from 38 weeks per year or stretched for up to 50 weeks per year; this means less hours per week over a greater number of weeks up to 1140 hours p.a. Children can start in the nursery once they turn three.

Sessions and Timings

The Nursery has 39 spaces per session. Sessions run from 09:00 – 12:00 and 12:00 – 15:00 with lunch care provided. A school meal incurs an additional charge. In addition, families have the option to either pay for Breakfast Hub or include it in their hours from 08:00 – 09:00 (07:30 – 08:00 incurs a charge of £1 and may not be included in funded hours) and also the After-School Hub, open between 15:00 - 18:00. This may be used as funded hours or paid for as extra. This allows families to access complete wrap around care from 7:30am - 6:00pm if needed. We also provide a Holiday Club during school holidays at an additional cost or may be used as part of funded hours.

Families are able to request a mixture of full and half day Nursery sessions, depending on their individual requirements. In our experience, only attending one or two sessions a week can reduce the effectiveness of the learning and play experiences for children. We therefore strongly recommend that children take the full funded entitlement, or more, in our setting; however, we understand that this may not always be possible. We are only able to offer a regular session pattern and are unable to make session changes week on week. In some cases, subject to availability, we are able to offer more sessions if families need to make a permanent change.

Places in The Hub may be taken as part of the funded hours as we run an Early Years Foundation Curriculum for nursery age children in all provisions. Places at The Hub are subject to availability and must be booked in advance.

Age of admittance

The Orchard Nursery is open to children from the age of 3 years with up to 15 or 30 funded hours available per week from the term after their third birthday. Additional 3-hour sessions can also be paid for in addition to funded ones and are equivalent to a rate of £5.75 per hour (from September 2025 and is subject to change following an annual review). Additional paid 3-hour sessions may be added according to availability.

We can also consider applications from families that are in receipt of 2-year-old funding, so their child can start nursery once they turn three with funded sessions. For families not in receipt of 2-year-old funding, we can also consider applications for a child as soon as they turn three (depending on availability of places), but these sessions will be charged until the term after their 3rd birthday when funding will commence.

Making an Application

Parents or Carers need to complete a Nursery Application Form to indicate their interest in a Nursery place. This can be found on the school website: <https://www.shiphay.com/admissions-nursery/> or hard copies are available from the Families' Reception at the front of the school.

Children will be allocated a place based on the following criteria:

- Children with an EHCP or who are CLA
- Children who have a sibling already attending Shiphay Learning Academy
- Children of members of staff who have been employed at the school for more than two years or recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy for which there was a skills shortage.
- Distance from school

All applicants will then be placed on a waiting list. Places will be allocated in May for an Autumn Term start and in October for a Spring/Summer Term start. Any request to change the pattern of days or increase days will be subject to availability in the provision and is at the nursery's discretion.

All parents/carers must complete a registration form, detailing in full any health, dietary, medical, medicinal, allergic or other special needs. Parents/carers must also complete a permissions form and a Home-School agreement.



Tie Break

Where there are more applications than places available in a particular category, those living closest to The Orchard Nursery will have priority for any places available, (i.e. the shorter the distance the higher the priority).

Waiting List

Families will be informed if we are currently unable to offer their child a Nursery place. A waiting list will be drawn up from unsuccessful applicants, giving priority in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and tie break arrangements, as stated above. Any places that become available will be filled from the waiting list.

Accepting a place

Parents or Carers will receive a letter stating the sessions that have been allocated for their child. In order to secure the place, we require all paperwork to be returned to the Nursery Administrator, Chantal Bailey and Google Forms completed by the date specified on the allocation letter. If paperwork and forms are completed or returned late, this could result in a place being reallocated.

Fee schedule

Fees are due half-termly in advance on the first day of each half term, payable through the online cashless ParentPay system. If you have indicated that you will pay by childcare vouchers, we will keep a record of this. Please ensure that voucher payments will be enough to cover your child's nursery costs.

No charge is made when the nursery is closed during school holiday periods, bank holidays and non-pupil days. There is no reduction for other holidays or child absence (see the section below). The nursery reserves the right to withdraw a child from the provision if fees remain unpaid.

Holidays, absences and notice to terminate

The nursery is open for 38 weeks of the year during term-time in the Nursery rooms and up to 50 weeks of the year using additional childcare facilities in The Hub. Fees are payable at the full rate for all periods of child absence, including holidays taken during term-time and sickness. A calendar months' notice in writing or a month's fees in lieu of notice is required from the parent / carer to terminate a child's place in the nursery or reduce the number of hours normally taken by that child. Where a child's place is terminated by the nursery due to non-payment of fees or other dispute, a charge equivalent to one month's fees will be made by the nursery in lieu of notice.

Early Years Entitlement Funding

Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their application for Early Years Entitlement Funding is made in line with the Local Authority's requirements. Late, incomplete or invalid applications may result in nursery fees being charged at our normal rates for these sessions. Parents/carers will need to complete a form to confirm their eligibility for 30-hour childcare funding. Those not entitled to 30-hour childcare can pay for additional hours at the rate of £5.75 per hour. You must tell us if you split your nursery funding between providers.

Snacks and meals

Our school provides a milk scheme – Cool Milk - that is available to all of our pupils and is free for under-5s; parents will need to register their child. Nursery children also receive free fruit. School meals can be ordered at an additional charge, otherwise children will need a packed lunch, including a drink, if they are staying over lunchtime on a day they attend the Nursery.

Sickness and illness

Any child who has, or develops, an infectious illness must be kept at home. This includes conditions such as vomiting, diarrhoea, discharges, conjunctivitis, sore throat and obvious rashes. In order to prevent the spread of illness, any child suffering from vomiting or diarrhoea must be kept at home until clear of symptoms for a minimum of 48 hours. Fees are payable at the full rate during the period of sickness absence from the nursery, where these are charged.

Behaviour

We promote positive behaviour, encourage good manners, self-control and consideration and respect for others and property. We distract children from poor behaviour and redirect their attention to something different and positive, which normally works very well. However, as a last resort, we have to reserve the right to exclude a child from nursery if their persistent poor behaviour affects the safety or well-being of other children.

Notice of change

Terms are subject to change in whole or part with one month's notice.