

# Islington Early Years Admissions Policy

## November 2014

### Introduction

The Council has a wide range of early years provision available for young children before they have to go to school.

But, the way that the early years services are funded means that it is important to explain clearly the council's policy for making provision for children of different ages and how it decides which children are offered places.

All three and four year olds and some two year olds are entitled to receive 570 hours free early education per year. This is usually taken as 15 hours per week for 38 weeks but some providers will allow fewer hours per week to be taken over more weeks per year. The entitlement can be taken in schools, children's centres, other early years settings and with childminders. It is funded by central government and is referred to in this document as part-time funded early education.

This following policy applies when parents express a preference to receive provision for their 3 and 4 year olds in Islington Community Primary Schools and Islington Children's Centres and, in the case of the 2 year old early education entitlement, other early years providers.\*

### Four Year Olds

Nationally, all four year olds are entitled to a part time funded early education place. Islington Council aims to provide all four year olds with a full-time (30 hours per week) early education place from the term following their fourth birthday.

Any hours provided above 30 hours per week for four year olds are subject to the council's charging scheme.

### Three Year Olds

Nationally, all three year olds are entitled to a part time funded early education place from the term following their third birthday.

The Council provides additional hours up to 30 hours per week for some three year olds in schools and school-based children's centres.

Any hours provided above 30 hours per week for three year olds in primary schools and primary school-based children's centres are subject to the council's charging scheme.

Any hours provided above 15 hours per week in non- primary school -based children's centres are subject to the council's charging scheme.

## Under Threes

The Council provides part-time and full-time early education places for Islington-resident children under three in children's centres, early years centres, nursery schools and some primary schools. These are subject to the council's charging scheme, except for the part-time two year old places, where children meet the eligibility criteria for a funded early education place.

A two year old is entitled to a part-time funded early education place from the term after their second birthday if they live in Islington and meet one of the following criteria:

- the child is looked after by the local authority, is adopted or subject to special guardianship or a residence order
- the family meets either of the following financial criteria:
  - eligibility for free school meals
  - in receipt of Working Tax Credit with an annual income of no more than £16,190
- the child has a significant additional need and meets one of the disability criteria

To find out if you are eligible, go to [www.islington.gov.uk/freeearlylearning2](http://www.islington.gov.uk/freeearlylearning2)

## How does the council decide who should be offered places in its children's centres, early years centres, nursery schools and nursery classes?

### Admissions Criteria

Parents may state their preference as to which nursery class, school or centre they would like their child to attend in the years leading up to the child's admission to reception class. However, if there are not enough places available, the Council will allocate places to Islington residents as follows:

- 1 to children 'looked after', adopted, subject to special guardianship or a residence order;
- 2 to children 'at risk' (or the sibling of a child 'at risk') who are the subject of a child protection plan;
- 3 to children deemed by the Council to be 'in need' (see 'Children in Need Priority Statement' attached)
- 4 to other children in the following order:
  - a) to three and four year olds, a part-time (15 hours) early education place;
  - b) to four year olds, a full time (30 hours) early education place;
  - c) to three year olds, a full time (30 hours) early education place where parents are working or studying full-time and earning less than £25,000 gross family income;
  - d) to other three year olds, a full time (30 hours) early education place

If there are more applications than places available, places will be allocated in the following order:

- i) to children already on the roll of the school or centre;
- ii) for school nursery classes, to children with a sibling registered in the primary school;
- iii) for children's centres, to children living in the designated reach area;  
for nursery classes to children living nearest the school
  
- iv) to non-Islington residents living nearest the school or centre decided by a straight line measurement

### **Places for Children Under Three**

Places are allocated first to Islington children in Categories 1, 2 and 3 above (to children looked after, adopted, subject to special guardianship or a residence order; to children 'at risk' (or the sibling of a child 'at risk') who are the subject of a child protection plan; to children deemed by the Council to be 'in need') and then:

Other places which are subject to the council's charging scheme are then for full-time working or studying parents and allocated in the following order:

- a) to children with a sibling registered in the same setting/school;
- b) to children resident in the designated reach area;
- c) to children of an appropriate age to fill the vacancy to ensure a balance of places across the age range
- d) to children living nearest the children's centre decided by a straight line measurement

For places for two year olds entitled to funded early education the following criteria are to be applied in all participating settings including private, voluntary and independent settings:

- a) to children of an appropriate age to fill the vacancy to ensure a balance of places across the age range
- b) to children with a sibling registered in the same setting/school
- c) for children's centres, to children living nearest the centre and resident in the designated reach area;
- d) for schools and other settings, to children living nearest the school/setting decided by a straight line measurement

### **Non-Islington Residents**

Non-Islington residents can only be considered for places in children's centres, early years centres, nursery schools and nursery classes:

- if children are receiving the part-time funded early education entitlement
- through the non-subsidised places scheme\*; or
- if they are key workers\*\* in Islington

## **\* Non Subsidised Places Scheme**

Up to 132 places (approximately 12% of total) in children's centres, nursery schools and early years centres, may be allocated outside the above criteria, through a non-subsidised places scheme. The scheme enables parents who are able to pay the full non-subsidised charge to apply for a place. Places within this scheme are allocated first to those who live in Islington, second to those who work in Islington, and third to other applicants.

## **\*\* Key Workers Scheme**

Key workers, who are not resident in Islington but are employed in Islington, may be considered for community places in children's centres and early years centres which no Islington resident wishes to take up. For this purpose, key workers are defined as teachers, NHS clinical staff, police and community support officers, staff employed in schools and children's centres, and social care workers. Key workers must have a permanent contract of employment for at least 17.5 hours per week and a family income of less than £79,999 per year.

## **Special Educational Needs**

All schools and centres will be expected to provide for children with additional educational needs. However, for those with more severe and complex special educational needs, some centres are additionally funded for a specific number of additionally resourced places. These 36 places are allocated by the central, multi-agency Under Fives Advisory Group.

## **Parental Responsibility**

You have a duty to inform the local authority if the child is fostered through a private arrangement with the child's birth family. Private Fostering refers to carers who are NOT step-parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles and who do NOT hold parental responsibility.

## Children in Need (CIN) Priority Statement January 2012

Islington Council and partners consider the following children to be most in need of the services (which may include day care) they provide or commission.

An Early Years Multi-Agency Panel allocates places in priority order as per the list below, 'A' being the highest.

1. Children who are assessed as requiring additional services in order to reach or keep up a reasonable standard of health or development and who are:

children who are "Looked After"	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1)	<b>A</b>
children subject to Court Orders or Police Powers of Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)	<b>A</b>
children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3)	<b>A</b>
children who are likely to become "Looked After"	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4)	<b>B</b>
children whose parents [or primary carers] are experiencing difficulty as a result of drug or alcohol-related problems (this could include the child if appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5)	<b>B</b>
children living with domestic violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6)	<b>B</b>
children of parents who are teenagers	<input type="checkbox"/>	(7)	<b>C</b>
children who have suffered abuse in the past	<input type="checkbox"/>	(8)	<b>C</b>
children who are privately fostered	<input type="checkbox"/>	(9)	<b>C</b>
children who are unaccompanied refugees or asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	(10)	<b>C</b>
children of parents who are or were previously looked after	<input type="checkbox"/>	(11)	<b>C</b>
children who are homeless	<input type="checkbox"/>	(11)	<b>D</b>
children who are currently housed in bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation (temporarily housed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(12)	<b>D</b>
children whose parents [or primary carers] have a significant physical or mental illness or physical or learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	(13)	<b>E</b>

Children with a disability: that is children with one of the following conditions:

a visual impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>E</b>
a <u>mild</u> to <u>moderate</u> speech and language delay	<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>E</b>
a communication impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(14)	<b>E</b>
a physical disability or chronic and significant illness	<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>E</b>
a hearing impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>E</b>
a <u>mild</u> to <u>moderate</u> learning difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>E</b>
children with serious emotional or behavioural difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	(15)	<b>F</b>
children who are siblings of disabled children	<input type="checkbox"/>	(16)	<b>G</b>