**Admissions Policy**

Gill Blowers Nursery School has served the Luton community for many years, providing education and care for children aged 0-5 years. It is a split-site school: the Mossdale site serves the community of Hockwell Ring, whilst the site at Leabank serves families on the Marsh Farm Estate. Both schools are situated on the ground floor of tower block housing.

Unlike the other maintained Nursery Schools in Luton, Gill Blowers Nursery School prioritises admission to children into the school from the catchment areas of Hockwell Ring and Marsh Farm in which the sites are based. Whilst these areas remain a priority, the catchment has occasionally stretched to incorporate the reach areas of the linked Children’s Centre. The other possible exception to this rule would be the admission of resourced children with severe and complex disabilities and children who pay for daycare. However, even in these cases children primarily fall within the catchment area and it is rare for places in these categories to be offered to children outside the catchment.

These catchment areas fall into the ‘deprived’ category as measured by the social deprivation factor, and the school’s brief is to prioritise families in need, especially those living in tower block housing in Luton. Thus, unlike other schools in Luton, we operate our Admissions on a strict ‘points’ system, in order to reach those children in greatest need.

Parents are required to complete a Registration Form (see Appendix A), when applying for a nursery place in the school (3-4 year old provision) which provides the information needed by the Head Teacher and Family Worker to assess their need. Parents need to complete a funded 2 year Registration Form (Appendix B) with evidence of benefits to apply for a funded 2 year place. The areas considered pertinent to need, and the points allocated to each area are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Aspect of need** | **Points Awarded** |
| **LAC** | **100** |
| **High Rise housing** | **100** |
| **Low Rise housing** | **50** |
| **Child Protection(in care, Tier 3/4)** | **50** |
| **English as an Additional Language (EAL)** | **20** |
| **CC Referral/Medical/Social care Referral** | **30** |
| **Disability/Special Educational Needs (SEN) in family** | **30** |
| **Four children under 5 years in the family** | **20** |
| **Prime carer currently not in education, employment or training** | **10** |
| **Parent not in employment, but accessing education or training** | **20** |
| **Lone Parent** | **20** |
| **Sibling previously attended** | **10** |
| **Assylum seeking/refugee family** | **20** |
| **Family in temporary accommodation** | **20** |
| **Teenage parent** | **20** |

As the only early years provision in Luton based in high rise flats the highest priority is given to the families who live in the tower blocks. These families have no access to safe outdoor facilities for their children and are often isolated and vulnerable. The majority are low income lone parent families who fall into the category that the Children’s Plan is aiming to focus support for i.e. ***“.. families who have suffered from generations of disadvantage, whose children stand to benefit most from high quality early years provision and other help.”***

The Children’s Plan continues: ***“The Government will ensure that all children have access to a world-class education which supports their cognitive, social and emotional skill development so that no child is left to fall behind. We will support families to help their children reach their full potential. We must also ensure that children growing up in families on low incomes are able to live in safe, cohesive communities, just like other children, to give them the best start in life.”***

All Admission requests are considered by a panel before places are offered. This ensures that every family’s circumstances are considered objectively and fairly, optimising equality of opportunity.

Mossdale site – based in Hockwell Ring

* **3-5 year provision**

As a school maintained by the Local Authority, there are 40 part time places which are funded for 15 hours of education and care per week. Places are allocated according to the admissions criteria illustrated above and priority given to those with the highest points.

* **2-3 year provision**

There are 20 part time places which are funded for education by the Local Authority and as such are free to parents that meet the funded 2s criteria. These places are in high demand and are allocated according to the admissions criteria and point system.

* **Daycare**

There are additional places for 2-5 year olds which are available for parents who pay for the service. ( 12 FTE 3-5 year places and 6 FTE 2-3 year places) There are also 3-4 FTE places for babies under 2 years.

This service was originally part of the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative which aimed to offer affordable daycare to the local community. This is a non-profit initiative and the majority of places are for those families who live in the Hockwell Ring area. However, a limited amount of places can be offered out of catchment if they are available. For details on fees and charging policy see Appendix B and C.

When demand for day care spaces is reduced, these spaces may be offered to families requiring 15 hours funded education for 2 to 4 year olds.

Leabank site – based in Marsh Farm

* **3-5 year provision**

As on the Mossdale site, there are 40 part time places which are funded for 15 hours of education and care per week. Places are allocated according to the admissions criteria illustrated above and priority given to those with the highest points. There are also up to 8 part time places which may be offered for wrap round care or for families of high need.

* **2-3 year provision**

There is a 2-3 year provision based on the Leabank site that has been running since September 2005, which offers 15 hours funded education for children meeting the funded 2s criteria which is set by the government and Local Authority. There are 48 part time sessions available.

Research has shown that early intervention with disadvantaged families is crucial in giving these children a good start in life and thereby helping them reach their full potential. As the **Children’s Plan: Building Brighter Futures**, December 2007 states:

***“…some children and young people, often from disadvantaged backgrounds, are still underachieving. While many of our teachers and schools are among the very best in the world, there is still too much variation in quality, and as a result children are not achieving all of which they are capable. And too many children and young people suffer unhappy childhoods because of disadvantage or problems that are not addressed, or tackled too late it is always better to prevent failure than tackle a crisis later*..”**