

Woodside Academy



Nursery Funding and Admissions Policy

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out how Woodside Academy Nursery delivers government-funded early education and childcare places in line with the [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance \(effective April 2025\)](#).

It explains eligibility, attendance patterns, funded entitlements, meal and wrap-around arrangements, payment requirements, and any charges for hours or services that fall outside the funded offer. The policy ensures transparency and confirms that funded hours are delivered free at the point of use.

2. Nursery Opening Hours and Session Structure

Woodside Academy Nursery operates as part of the main school and follows a fixed school-day model.

- School and nursery day: 8:45am – 3:15pm
- Daily opening hours: 6.5 hours per day
- Weekly total: 32.5 hours per week

Nursery opening hours are fully aligned with the school day to support safeguarding, statutory staffing ratios, consistency of routines, and smooth transitions.

Due to safeguarding requirements, staffing ratios, and supervision arrangements, the nursery session cannot be shortened, split, or paused for individual children.

3. Funded Early Education Entitlements

The nursery offers the following government-funded entitlements, subject to eligibility:

Universal 15 Hours

- Available to all children aged 3–4
- Delivered free of charge
- Children attending under the universal 15-hour entitlement do not incur any charges

Extended 30 Hours

- Available to eligible working families
- Funding covers up to 30 hours per week
- Delivered free of charge

The nursery ensures that no charges are applied to any part of the funded entitlement.

4. Attendance Patterns and Charges

Full Week Attendance (32.5 hours)

Children attending for the full nursery week attend for 32.5 hours per week.

- 30 hours are funded (subject to eligibility)
- 2.5 hours per week fall outside the funded entitlement

These additional 2.5 hours are chargeable in line with statutory guidance.

Charges apply only to the non-funded hours.

The additional hours are charged at a cost of £6.13 per hour (academic year 2025/26).

This is reviewed every April and subject to change.

Fully Funded 4.5 Day Option (30 hours)

If parents do not wish to pay for the additional 2.5 hours, they may request an alternative attendance pattern of:

- Monday to Thursday: full days (8:45am – 3:15pm)
- Friday: morning session (8:45am – 12:45pm)
- 30 hours per week
- No charges apply

The Friday session includes the lunchtime period. Parents may either purchase a school-provided meal or provide a packed lunch from home.

The Friday session cannot be changed to a different day.

This attendance pattern:

- must be requested in advance,
- must be formally agreed by the nursery, and
- cannot be offered on an ad hoc or variable basis.

15-Hour Attendance

Children attending under the universal 15-hour entitlement attend within funded hours only and do not incur any charges.

Sessions for the 15-hour entitlement must be selected as either:

- morning sessions: 8:45am – 11:45am, or
- afternoon sessions: 12:15pm – 3:15pm

15-hour sessions do not include lunchtime provision.

Once your nursery application has been processed and your place confirmed by the Academy, parents will be sent a form to confirm their agreed attendance pattern.

5. Meals and Lunchtime Arrangements

Children attending nursery over the lunchtime period remain supervised as part of the funded early education entitlement.

Parents may choose to:

- provide a packed lunch from home at no cost, or
- purchase a school-provided lunch at the published rate (*please see the school website for the current lunch rate).

Charges apply to the provision of food only.

Supervision, care, and education over the lunchtime period form part of the funded entitlement and are provided free of charge.

Parents are not required to purchase a school meal in order to access funded provision.

6. Wrap-Around Care

Breakfast club and after-school club operate outside the nursery session and are classed as wrap-around childcare.

- Wrap-around care is not part of the government-funded early education entitlement
- Funded hours cannot be used for breakfast club or after-school club
- These sessions are optional and chargeable

Parents may choose to use their funded entitlement with another approved early years provider for childcare outside the nursery day.

7. Payment Arrangements

Where additional hours or services are taken:

- The 2.5 chargeable hours must be paid in advance
- Charges are invoiced on a half-termly basis via ParentMail
- Attendance for the full nursery week is conditional on payment being made in accordance with the agreed payment schedule.
- School lunches must be booked and paid for in advance on ParentMail.

8. Use of Childcare Vouchers and Tax-Free Childcare

Parents may use Government childcare vouchers and/or Tax-Free Childcare accounts to pay for:

- additional non-funded nursery hours
- breakfast club and after-school club

Funding entitlements themselves cannot be paid for using vouchers, as they are already government-funded.

9. Compliance with Statutory Guidance

In accordance with the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance (April 2025):

- Funded hours are delivered free at the point of use
- No top-up fees are charged for funded hours
- Charges apply only to hours or services outside the funded entitlement
- Parents are not required to purchase additional hours, meals, or services in order to access funded provision
- Providers may set their own session times, including fixed school-day models
- Optional extras, such as meals and wrap-around care, are not a condition of accessing funded hours

10. Admissions and Parental Agreement

By accepting a nursery place, parents agree to the attendance pattern offered by the nursery and any associated charges for non-funded hours or optional services.

All funding arrangements, session structures, and charges are clearly outlined in:

- nursery admissions information
- this policy

Parents are encouraged to discuss attendance patterns and funding options before accepting a place.

11. Support for Families

To support families:

- A 50% discount is applied to the additional hours charge for the second child where twins attend
- Alternative payment arrangements may be discussed where families experience financial difficulty

12. Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to changes in statutory guidance or local authority funding arrangements.

Date adopted: January 2026

Next review: April 2026

Approved by: Principal