



**Family and Young People's Service**

# **Children's Centres Childcare Admissions and Charging Policy**

This document reflects the statutory and policy position in July 2013 and will be updated annually in the future.

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# 1.1 Introduction

The document provides information on how parents and carers in the City of London can access the subsidised care and education places within children's centres. The City is responsible for one maintained<sup>1</sup> early years provision which is the Cass Child and Family Centre, which provides early education and affordable childcare along with a range of free activities for families with children aged from birth – five<sup>2</sup> years old.

The City also has an arrangement with the Golden Lane Children's Centre in Islington to enable City families resident in the north-west of the City to access a local children's centre.

This document explains the City's policy and process for making the places at Cass and Golden Lane available to families, and the rules about how the City decides which children are offered places.

**There are five routes for admission explained in this document:**

**A. Priority referral places** – for children who have been identified as Children-in-Need through a statutory Children's Social Care assessment or for children with additional needs identified through a the multi-agency Common Assessment .

**B. Two year old offer places** – for two year olds from low income families (details of who is eligible for these places on pages 9 and 12)

**C. Community places** – for families resident in the City where parents/carers who are in full time education, training or employment. Prioritised for low income families' using the City's charging policy explained in Annexe 1

**D. Community key worker places** – available at Cass Child and Family Centre for City workers in essential services (listed on page 12), and only applies to children under the age of three.

**E. Marketed community places** – may become available when community places have not been filled and marketed to those on a higher income, firstly to City residents and then non-City residents.

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<sup>1</sup> Maintained – this means a setting or school that the local authority has overall responsibility for

<sup>2</sup> Children start school in the term after their fifth birthday, so children move up at this time

## Management of the admissions process

Admissions are managed by the centres since 1 April 2011: therefore all applications should be made directly to the centres, except for applications for priority referral places or the two year old offer (A and B above) which should be made directly to the City of London and addressed to the City's Education and Early Years Manager

There is a range of private and independent nurseries in the City that offer good quality early education and childcare: for more information about them please contact the Family and Young People's Information Service on 020 7332 1002 or [fyi@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:fyi@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or by searching **[www.fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://www.fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk)**.

The City now has a Childcare Affordability Scheme to provide financial support to parents using some independent nurseries who have a family income below £55k pa.

You can also obtain further information about this scheme from the Family and Young People's Information Service on 020 7332 1002 or [fyi@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:fyi@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## 1.3 City of London Children's Centres admissions policy

The City has pulled together a range of early education and childcare provision into this document to help families have a clear understanding of what is available and how to access it.

### **The policy incorporates the City's legal duties relating to childcare:**

- the statutory requirement to provide early years and childcare places for city resident children identified as being in need of additional support;
- the sufficiency duty to ensure that families resident in the City have access to good quality affordable childcare;
- the two year old offer of 15 hours free childcare and family support for low income families; and
- the free nursery education offer for three and four year olds.

Under this admissions policy priority will be given firstly to children who are assessed as having an additional need and then to families on incomes under £55,000. In addition 4 places at Cass Child and Family Centre are prioritised for Key Workers working in the City of London. Places unfilled through these routes may be marketed to those on a higher income firstly to City residents, and then non-City residents. Decision to allocate these remaining places will take place in the second half of the autumn term.

The City also wishes to support City workers and non-City residents to access early years provision in the City. Parents/carers who are unable to access a place at Cass Child and Family Centre or Golden Lane Children's Centre may obtain a place at one of the local private nurseries. Information on these nurseries is available from the City of London Family and Young People's Information Service (FYi), who can also provide information on the City of London Childcare Affordability Scheme which provides subsidies for parents on lower incomes for some private nurseries in and near the City.

Parents seeking to access a place as a City resident will be required to show evidence that they live in the City, such as a Council Tax bill.

## **1.4 What Provision is available for children of different ages within this policy?**

### **0 – 2**

Part-time and full-time Community places are available for children aged from three months to two years in both children's centres; these places are subject to the City's charging policy against an assessment of income.

#### **The two year old offer.**

A number of the community places for two year olds will be made available as part of the government programme aimed at two year olds from low income families. This provides up to 15 hours free childcare to families in receipt of income support or some other benefits based on income ( on the same basis of eligibility as Free School meals .)

These places are for key groups of children who will benefit most from early access to childcare. The aim is to involve parents and families to better support their child's learning and development. Families will need to meet the qualifying criteria to get a free childcare place.

#### **Three year olds – free early education offer**

All children aged three are entitled to up to 15 hours of free early education per week for a maximum of 38 weeks a year from the term after their third birthday until the term after their fourth birthday.

All places offered to children aged three will be offered on a part time basis only. Parents/carers wishing to take up additional childcare hours/sessions at either Cass Child and Family Centre or Golden Lane Children's Centre above the part time offer will need to contact the centre directly to arrange this. Additional hours will be charged using the City of London's charging policy See Annexe 1

#### **Four year olds - free early education offer**

The City will aim to offer all three year old children in receipt of a part time place, a full time 30 hour early education place in the term in which they become four. For children with July and August birthdays, the City aims for a full time place to be offered for the summer term.

#### **Extended hours**

A limited number of extended hours places (maximum 8am to 6pm) are available at both Cass Child and Family Centre and Golden Lane Children's Centre. For these extended hours, parents will be charged in accordance with the City of London's charging policy. See Annexe 1

## 2. Cass Child and Family Centre (CCFC)

The Cass Child and Family Centre is located in the east of the City and is a designated Sure Start Children's Centre. The centre also incorporates the nursery and reception classes for Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School.

The centre provides full and part time childcare and is open 50 weeks a year from 8am – 6pm. The centre was judged as 'Good with outstanding features' by Ofsted in its 2012 inspection.

Places at Cass Child and Family Centre comprise a mixture of core day, extended day, term-time, and all year round places across the 0 -4 age range. They may be filled on a full or part time basis. A small number each year are allocated to children with additional educational, health or social needs. Places are prioritised for City children with additional needs and for families with low incomes.

Parents/carers applying for community places at Cass Child and Family Centre may qualify if they are a resident in the City of London and

- In employment or education/training and
- On a low income

To qualify for one of the four key workers places a parent/carer must:

- Be a key worker (as defined on [page 15](#))
- Be working within the City of London and
- Have an income below £55,000

All parents offered a childcare place will be asked to undertake an income assessment in order to determine the level of charges payable in accordance with the City's charging policy.

Free places will be available only for Priority Referral places where parents have no income or are on Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance.

## 2.1 Places at Cass Child and Family Centre

Childcare places available in each age range at Cass Child and Family Centre:

### Core day term-time places

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Community places</b> Full time equivalent places (FTE)	<b>Nursery Education places</b> (in accordance with school admissions policy)
0-2s	6 (2 of these places will be prioritised for Key Workers)	
2-3s	8 (2 of these places will be prioritised for Key Workers)	
3-4s	10	20

### Nursery Education Places

Nursery Education Places belong to the school and are managed by the governors who will allocate them according to the school's published admission policy. Please contact Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School directly for details of the admissions process, or look on the school website

### Extended hours

Some community places carry the option of an extended day, with a maximum day of 8am – 6pm.



### 3. Golden Lane Children's Centre

Golden Lane Children's Centre is attached to Prior Weston School at the Golden Lane Campus in the EC1 area of the London Borough of Islington. The setting is open weekdays from 8am to 6pm for 49 weeks a year. The Children's Centre was judged as 'Good with outstanding features' in its 2012 inspection.

The City has an allocation of 12 places across the 0-4 age range at the Golden Lane Children's Centre.

The 12 places at Golden Lane comprise a mixture of core day, extended day, term-time, and all year round places across the 0-4 age range. They may be filled on a full or part time basis. A small number each year are allocated to children with additional educational, health or social needs, through the priority referral process described on page 10.

Parents/carers applying for community places at Golden Lane may qualify if they are a resident in the City of London and

- In full time employment or education/training; and
- On a low income (under £60,000 pa)

#### 3.1 Places at Golden Lane Children's Centre

##### Core day term-time places

Age range	Community places Full time equivalent places (FTE)
0 – under 3s	4
3 – 4s	8

##### Extended hours

Some, but not all, community places carry the option of an extended day.

Parents who do not qualify for a City funded community place at Golden Lane Children's Centre can apply for an Islington marketed place and should contact the centre.

## 4. How to Apply and the Admissions Routes

Parents/carers of children living in the City can apply for a community place directly to Cass Child and Family Centre or to Golden Lane Children's Centre. They will be required to complete the City's Children's Centre Application Form and a financial assessment.

Applications will only be considered when both forms have been completed and returned and evidence of City residence provided. Places will be made available using the admissions routes outlined below.

### The routes for admission are:

**Priority Referral place** – for children who have been identified as Children-in-Need through a statutory Children Social Care assessment or for children with additional needs identified through the multi-agency Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

**Two year old offer place** – for two year olds from low income families in receipt of income support or some other income based benefits (see section 5.2)

**Community place** – for families resident in the City, where parents/carers are in education, training or employment. These applications will be managed by the Children's Centres. Community places for children under 3 years are prioritised for low income families using the City's charging policy which can be found in Annex 1

**Community Key Worker place** – available at Cass Child and Family Centre for children under three whose parents are City workers in essential services as listed on [page 15](#).

A Key Worker must have a permanent contract of employment and be working for at least 17.5 hours a week. These applications will be managed by Cass Child and Family Centre.

**Marketed Community place** – may become available when community places have not been filled through the routes above, and allowing for emergency requirements, may be marketed to those on a higher income, firstly to City residents and then non-City residents.

### 4.1 Emergency places

A small number of places for each age group will be held back for emergency priority referrals.

## 5. The Admissions Criteria

### 5.1 Priority Referral

A priority referral application can only be made by a professional through a multi-agency Common Assessment or through a statutory Children's Social Care assessment.

Priority referral allocations will be made by the City's multi-agency Early Intervention Panel, and places may be offered on a full or part time basis. Eligible children will be allocated places by the panel in the following order of priority:

	Criteria		Panel order
<b>1</b>	<b>Children who are assessed as requiring additional services in order to reach or keep up a reasonable standard of health or development <u>and</u> who are:</b>		
	Children who are "Looked After"	1	A
	Children subject to Court Orders or Police Powers of Protection	2	A
	Children who have a Child Protection Plan	3	A
	Children who are likely to become "Looked After"	4	B
	Children whose parents [or primary carers] are experiencing difficulty as a result of drug or alcohol related problems	5	B
	Children living with domestic violence	6	B
	Children of parents who are school age (who would be excluded from school without childcare)	7	C
	Children who have suffered abuse in the past	8	C
	Children who are privately fostered	9	C
	Children who are unaccompanied refugees or asylum seekers	10	C
	Children who are homeless	11	D
	Children who are currently housed in bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation (temporarily housed)	12	D
	Children whose parents [or primary carers] have a significant physical or mental illness or physical or learning disability	13	E
<b>2</b>	<b>Children with a disability. That is a child with one of the following conditions which must be both permanent and substantial:</b>		
	Visual impairment	14	E
	<u>Mild</u> to <u>moderate</u> speech and language delay	14	E
	Communication impairment	14	E
	Physical disability or chronic illness	14	E
	Hearing impairment	14	E
	<u>Mild</u> to <u>moderate</u> learning difficulty	14	E
	Children with serious emotional or behavioural difficulties	15	F
	Children who are siblings of disabled children	16	G

## 5.2 Two Year Old offer

In order to be eligible for up to 15 hours of free early years childcare a two year old must be from a family resident in the City that meets at least one of the following criteria.

- The children are looked after by a local authority (under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)
- or
- The family come within the earnings and benefits criteria used to determine eligibility for free school meals (as set out in section 512ZB(4) of the Education Act 1996 ) as listed below. The child's parent must be in receipt of any one or more of the following support payments:
  - income support (IS);
  - income-based jobseeker's allowance (IBJSA);
  - income-related employment and support allowance;
  - support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
  - support under the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
  - entitled to Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit, and have an annual income not exceeding £16,190 (as of 6 April 2012), as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A child whose parent is entitled to the Working Tax Credit four-week run-on (the payment someone receives for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit) is also entitled to FSM.
  - Universal Credit:, which will replace current benefits with a single payment. , being phased in from 2013.
  - a child who is in receipt of a qualifying benefit in their own right is also entitled to FSM.

## 5.3 Community Places

**Places will be allocated in the following order of priority: For children aged three months – three years old**

<b>1</b>	City families where the parents / carers are in full time or part time education, training or employment with a household income below £55,000 <sup>3</sup>
<b>2</b>	City families where the parents / carers are in full time education in an establishment with no crèche facilities available on site or where there is no other financial support available. Confirmation from the course tutor will be required.
<b>3</b>	To City children with a sibling registered in the children's centre.
<b>4</b>	City children living nearest the school or centre (this is measured by the shortest available walking route from the home to the school; accessibility by car or public transport will be disregarded). In the event of two families living the same distance from the setting, priority will be given to the family with the lower income.

### **Places for children aged three and four**

For 3 and 4 year olds there are 10 community places at Cass Child and Family Centre and 8 at Golden Lane

**Places will be allocated in the following order of priority:**

<b>1</b>	Children under 3 already in a community place at the children's centre
<b>2</b>	City families where the parents / carers are in full time or part time education, training or employment with a household income below £55,000 <sup>3</sup>
<b>3</b>	City children living nearest the school or centre (this is measured by the shortest available walking route from the home to the school; accessibility by car or public transport will be disregarded). In the event of two families living the same distance from the setting, priority will be given to the family with the lower income.

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<sup>3</sup>Families with the lowest household income will be allocated a place first. Evidence of household income will be through a financial assessment and supporting documentation.

## 5.4 Community Key Worker Places at Cass Child and Family Centre (for children under 3)

For the purpose of this policy document Key Workers must have a permanent contract of employment and be working for at least 17.5 hours a week in one of the following essential services:

- **Police officers and community support officers**
- **Clinical NHS staff**
- **Social care workers**
- **Teachers and support staff**
- **Fire service staff**

All applicants will be expected to complete an income assessment form.

**Key worker places will be offered in the following order of priority:**

<b>1</b>	First priority is given to key workers working in the City of London based on the distance of their workplaces to the Centre. Priority for the two-three year old places will be given to children already occupying a three month to two year old place Places will be offered in the first instance where it will enable a parent to return to work after maternity/paternity leave A change in employment resulting in a move to a workplace outside of the City will mean the automatic loss of the place.
<b>2</b>	Second priority is given to siblings of children already attending the Centre
<b>3</b>	Third priority is given to other City workers based on the distance of their workplace to the Centre.
<b>4</b>	Fourth priority is given to any other families based on the distance of their residence to the centre

## **5.5 Marketed Community Places at Cass Child and Family Centre.**

Marketed Community places may come available when community places have not all been filled by the above routes.

**Marketed Community Places are allocated in the following order of priority:**

1. To those who live in the City of London with higher incomes
2. To those who work in the City of London
3. To all other applicants.

Where applications outnumber places available, priority will be in accordance with date of application.

