23 March 2017

Dear prospective Parents

You will find attached our offer for places in September 2017: in considering our Admissions procedures for the next academic year, the Governing Body has used all the information available at this time to make the best possible decision for our Nursery Schools, and their future.

Background

The Government has implemented the Early Years New Funding Formula that takes effect on 1 April 2017. The formula sets out how much funding per hour our Nursery Schools receive for each child taking up a funded place. Despite the Government’s promise to give Local Authorities enough funding to maintain current levels for Maintained Nursery Schools, our Federation is facing a significant reduction in funding per child per hour.

Many of you will be aware of the Government’s election manifesto commitment to give working families 30 hours of free childcare for 3- and 4-year-old children from September 2017. Early Years providers, including Maintained Nursery Schools, are not obligated to provide the extended entitlement.

The Decision Process

The Governing Body is committed to our core purpose of providing outstanding Early Years education to as many children and families as possible and this is always at the forefront of any discussions.

Using the new levels of funding, the Governors performed an analysis of how the Nursery Schools will be affected financially if they offered the extended entitlement. It has become very clear that if we offered the 30 hours under the current levels of funding, the Nursery schools would immediately go into deficit budgets. The Governing body has, therefore, decided that our Nursery Schools are not in a position to offer the extended entitlement due to the reduced funding. We fully understand and appreciate that this will be disappointing for some parents, but the Governing Body cannot implement an admissions procedure that will negatively impact on the sustainability of the Nursery Schools.
Admission offers

At Cookham Nursery School, in order to accommodate more flexibility for the current 15 hours and working parents, we have made the decision to add a 2.5 day option to our place allocation. We will therefore from September 2017 be offering:

1. **2.5 days** Monday (8.45am – 3.30pm), Tuesday (8.45am – 3.30pm) and Wednesday (morning – 8.45am – 11.45am). Children who take up this offer will be required to attend lunch club on Monday and Tuesday at a cost of £3 per session.

2. **2.5 days** Wednesday (12.30pm – 3.30pm), Thursday (8.45am – 3.30pm) and Friday (8.45am – 3.30pm). Children who take up this offer will be required to attend lunch club on Thursday and Friday at a cost of £3 per session.

3. **5 morning sessions** (8.45am – 11.45am)

4. **5 afternoon sessions** (12.30pm – 3.30pm)

In addition to the above we will continue to offer lunch club, early drop and additional sessions subject to availability at recently revised costs.

If you have any queries or comments regarding the above information, please contact Sarah Cottle (Co-Headteacher). If you are concerned about our inability to provide 30 hour places, we would be grateful if you could pass on your concerns to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Cottle*

SARAH COTTLE (MRS)
Co-Headteacher Cookham, Maidenhead and The Lawns Nursery Schools