

# Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

## Admissions Policy & Procedure



Thomas Coram Centre and  
Nursery School  
49 Mecklenburgh Square  
London WC1N 2NY



Reviewed and Approved: February 2026	Next review: February 2028
Reviewed every two years	

## Introduction

Admissions to Thomas Coram are based on the following Camden criteria:

- Direct London Borough of Camden referrals - children who are 'looked after' by a local authority or adopted children who were previously 'looked after';
- Children assessed by the local authority as being in need according to the terms of the Children Act or as having 'Special Educational Needs' likely to result in an Education Health Care Plan under the Education Act, where the assessment concludes that their needs would be best met by this school;
- Sibling(s) currently in the school;
- Proximity to the school.

At Thomas Coram, we offer a wide range of options for children to attend and benefit from nursery education:

We offer places for **toddlers** (children who are aged two- to three-years-old, as determined by government criteria. Children admitted through the two-year, government-funded scheme are admitted into Toddlers the term after their second birthday).

We also run two **kindergarten** or nursery classes for children who are three- and four-years-old, as determined by government criteria. Children are admitted into Kinder when they are three years old - usually the term after their third birthday.

Throughout the nursery school, we offer term-time, all-year round and extended-day places.

## Number and types of places offered in each age phase

### Toddlers

There are two Toddler rooms with 16-20 children in each room. Staff work to government-determined ratios of one adult to four children, only utilising the new option to move to ratios of an adult to five children if a family needs emergency support.

Total: 36 places

We offer full-time and part-time places in Toddlers. Part-time places, however, are limited and have to match perfectly. For example, a child who has a Monday and Tuesday place shares with another child who has Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

### Kinder ('Kindergarten')

There are two Kinder or Nursery classes with up to 52 children in each class. The Kinder classes are free-flow and the Kinder teaching team work together. Staff work within government-determined ratios of one adult to thirteen children with a qualified teacher in each class.

## **Extended-Day / Extended Year**

A number of 'Extended Day' / 'Extended Year' places (8.30am-5.30pm / 46 or 39 weeks per year) and 'Core Holiday' places (9.30am-3.30pm / 46 or 39 weeks per year) are also available, subject to staffing ratios.

*Children are generally admitted at the start of the autumn, spring and summer terms depending on their date of birth and the availability of spaces.*

## **How to apply for a nursery place at Thomas Coram**

We ask parents to either complete the application form on the 'Admissions' page of our website (under the 'Parents & Carers' tab) and email it to the school office (admin@thomascoram.camden.sch.uk) or call in to the school and complete an application form any time between 9.00am-5.00pm.

We hold regular school visit sessions where prospective parents and carers are invited into the nursery school to see the provision we offer and ask any questions you may have. We strongly recommend parents and carers contact the school to arrange a visit by calling 020 7520 0385.

If you have any further questions about the school's admissions policy or procedure, please see our 'Frequently Asked Questions about Admissions' sheet on the 'Admissions' page of the school website or contact the school office.

## **Funded Places**

### **Who gets 15 hours government funded childcare and early education?**

- All children aged between three and four currently get at least 15 hours of government funded early education each week, for 38 weeks of the year.
- Some two-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds get 15 hours - that includes if their parents are receiving qualifying benefits, they are looked after by a local authority or they have an EHCP.
- Parents of two-year-old children, whose parents are working (from April 2024)

### **How does 15 hours free childcare work?**

It's available at participating early year's settings and they must be registered with Ofsted. Usually, it's 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year. It works out at 570 government-funded hours per year. The scheme doesn't cover extra costs like meals, nappies or trips.

## How do I apply for 15 hours free childcare?

You can apply by signing up to the government's Childcare Choices website or following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

Parents will have to confirm that they are still eligible for the support every three months.

## When will my child get 30 hours free childcare?

Children aged between three and four are eligible for 30 hours of free childcare each week, as long as their parents are working. To qualify as 'working', parents have to be earning at least £8,670 a year but less than £100,000 each. All parents in the family need to be working to qualify.

## What is the 'Camden Enhanced Offer'?

An additional 15 hours of government funded early education for 3- and 4-year-olds on top of the statutory offer is available for the most disadvantaged children in Camden, subject to eligibility criteria. You can apply 3 months before your child's third birthday.

To be eligible for the Camden Enhanced Offer you must be:

- A resident of Camden
- Not eligible for the Government's 30 hours for working parent(s) - check eligibility for the government 30 hours free childcare at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)
- Taking your universal entitlement of 15 hours free childcare in Camden

You must also meet **one** of the following criteria:

- Your family meets the criteria for free school meals
- Your family receives working tax credits and your household income is less than £16,190
- Your child is being 'looked after' by the local authority or is a child who has 'left care'\*
- Your child has an education, health and care plan\*
- You receive disability living allowance for your child\*
- You receive support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- You receive Universal Credit and have an annual net earned equivalent to, and not exceeding, £15,400

\* Evidence must be provided with application

## What other government support is there for childcare?

The government's tax-free childcare scheme allows families to claim money back on childcare costs. For every £8 you spend on childcare, the government will pay you £2. You can receive up to £2,000 per child per year.

Families with disabled children get extra support through tax-free childcare. You can receive up to £1,000 every three months (up to £4,000 a year). You can also use it to help pay your childcare provider so they can get specialist equipment for your child such as mobility aids.

People on universal credit can claim back up to 85 per cent of their childcare costs. This only applies to people whose annual family income is less than £40,000, who are working (both must be working if you are a couple), and who pay for childcare such as holiday clubs.

To access this government support, you will need to first set up a *Government Gateway* account then sign into your childcare account. To do this, you will need:

- Your National Insurance number
- Access to a mobile phone or landline
- Details of one or more of the following: your UK passport, tax credits, P60 or a recent payslip

### **Free School Meals**

We are fortunate in having our own catering team who produce healthy, home-cooked food for children each day. The majority of children in Kinder stay for lunch (12.30-1.30pm). We work with Health Improvement Practitioners at Camden Council who review our menus and provide training for the staff team.

Many families are eligible for free school meals, and everyone should apply for the funding. To apply, visit: [camden.gov.uk/free-school-meals](https://camden.gov.uk/free-school-meals) .