

Berkswich CE Primary School			
Reference Number S1b	Shared with Staff May 2024	Ratified by Governing Board May 2024	Review Date May 2025
Policy Title	Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Admission Arrangements Policy		

Please read this policy in conjunction with our [Welcome to Berkswich CE Nursery booklet 2024-2025](https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/welcome-to-nursery-information-booklet/) and the [Nursery payment fees policy](https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/welcome-to-nursery-information-booklet/): <https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/welcome-to-nursery-information-booklet/>.

This policy is place for admissions from September 2024; the policy is reviewed every academic year. Please note that governors reserve the right to review this at other times of the year in response, for example, to changes in legislation or government directed workforce pay increases. Parents and carers will be notified regarding any alteration. For those who already have a place for their child, the policy at the time of admission will remain in place for the duration of the academic year.

For Nursery admissions, all places are allocated by Berkswich CE Primary School in accordance with the school's policy. Applications for our Nursery are processed in line with the policies set by the governing board of Berkswich CE Primary School. Our Nursery admissions process for places in September 2025 opens in January 2024 and closes in April 2025. Parents and carers applying for a September start will be notified of offered places in April 2025. Late applications will be considered if places are available; however, often only limited hours are available at this point. Specific dates are found on our school website and in the Welcome to Berkswich CE Nursery booklet (<https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/nursery-information-and-admissions/>).

For further details of how to apply for a Nursery place at our school, please see below. Nursery places for September 2025 are offered to children born between 01.09.19 - 31.08.20. Children can be admitted immediately after they are three years old; families may need to self-fund, as government funding is only available from the term **after** their third birthday). The number of places available for this entry may fluctuate from term to term, depending on the number of hours of provision taken up by each child already in the Nursery. Please see the section below and the Welcome to Nursery information booklet (<https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/welcome-to-nursery-information-booklet/>) for more information about applying for place after a child turns three. For a start date other than September 2025, please see the relevant section below.

There are twenty-four morning places and twenty-four afternoon places, although the same child may use both a morning and an afternoon place each day. In this case, a lunch time session must also be booked; there is a separate charge for this session and it may not be

covered by the Early Education Funding. Wrap-around care before and after school, and the lunch-time club is available to extend the Nursery provision further.

It is our policy to try and meet parents' and carers' wishes where possible; however, in some cases, there may be more applications for a particular time of the day than there are places, and in this instance, admission to Nursery will be determined by the oversubscription criteria detailed below.

All local authority schools must fund the Nursery and the staff from the Nursery budget; the school budget is not allowed to subsidise this setting. We continue to prioritise a teacher-led Nursery; however, we reserve the right to convert the Nursery to a Qualified Lead Practitioner setting within the academic year if the number of places and take-up of hours does not sufficiently support the running of the Nursery. We also reserve the right to reduce the provision or cease the provision if the Nursery is not financially viable. Parents will receive full communication in the very unlikely event of necessary changes.

Funding restrictions

Please note that Berkswich CE Nursery is unable to receive Nursery funding for sessions that a child is regularly not attending; therefore, it is not possible, for example, to book for five sessions and regularly use only four of these, since this could lead to the County Council withdrawing funding for an individual. We would be able to accept payment made directly to the school for sessions when these cannot be claimed through the Nursery funding. This means that you are able to book and pay for more sessions than your child needs in practice if you are using funding and need some flexibility. Please talk to Mrs Gartside-Bentley (Nursery teacher and EYFS lead), if you would like further information.

Use of Provision Hours

At Berkswich CE, we have carefully considered the way in which the funding can impact each child's care and learning within Nursery. The financial viability of ensuring a high-quality provision is also of great significance. With these as our priorities, all children attending our full-time teacher-led Nursery need to take up:

- all morning places - **8:45am - 11:45am (three hours of provision a day) for five mornings, or**
- all afternoon places - **12:20 – 3:20pm (three hours of provision a day) for five afternoons, or**
- all day places – **8:45am – 3:20pm for five days a week (this will need to include purchase of the lunchtime session for £5 per day; all day places are six hours of nursery provision a day).**

Please note that all-day places require the purchase of the daily lunchtime session for £5 as this is not covered by the funding which would cover the six hours of Nursery provision. Parents choosing morning or an afternoon session only, may also add the lunchtime club to their provision for this small daily charge.

This will ensure continuity with a high level of uninterrupted provision. Parents and carers may request wrap-around care and it may be possible to increase hours, providing that these

are within the stipulated hours above and they have not already been offered to those starting the following term. All requested increases in hours, beyond those confirmed when the place is accepted, must be agreed prior to any changes in attendance, to ensure that staffing levels are correct. Agreed hours are added to a Staffordshire County Council Privacy Notice (provided by the school) and signed by parents and carers.

We make every effort to ensure that the length of the sessions remains unchanged and that wrap-around provision continues to support working parents and carers. Parents and carers will be notified as soon as possible of any changes.

Children already holding a place in the previous academic year need not reapply for a place and will continue to secure a place (see further details in the admissions criteria below); any adjustments to provision must be made within the application window for new Nursery September admissions.

Please note that if you are applying for more than one place, for example, for twins, then a separate application must be made for each child.

Order of Subscription Criteria

If the total number of applications for admission to the Nursery setting exceeds the number of available places, then the following order of priority will be used to allocate the available places.

- 1) Relevant Children in Care, including those previously determined as Looked After Children (that is, children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). As we are unable to exceed twenty-one children per session, then we may only be able to offer limited sessions if application arrives outside of the admissions period; we will always endeavor to provide the sessions required.
- 2) Children already in Nursery who have started in the previous academic year, are below school age **and** are wishing to take up five morning and/or five afternoon places each week will take priority
- 3) Children whose parent or carer is a member of the teaching staff **and** wishes to take up five morning and/or five afternoon places each week.
- 4) Children wishing to take up five morning and/or five afternoon places each week will take priority, in order to increase continuity of learning and continue to secure current staffing. Please note that the hours/days requested at the time of application are the condition of the place being offered. Once the place is accepted, any hours requested and not used will be invoiced (where funding cannot be claimed by the school).
- 5) Children with a September 2025 start date, rather than a Spring or Summer 2026 start.
- 6) Children who have an elder brother or sister in attendance at the school and who will still be attending the school at the time of the proposed admission date (for admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the main address

provided and either: have one or both birth parents in common; are related by a parent's marriage; are adopted or fostered by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the main address, whose parents live as partners). In the case of applications for the Spring or Summer Term, if the sibling criteria applies, then school cannot guarantee a place if available places can already be filled by those applying for full days or all mornings/afternoons.

- 7) Children whose parents can fully evidence a link with a local church and the personal importance of attending a Church of England setting evidenced through regular attendance.
- 8) Other children will be arranged in order of priority, according to how near their home addresses are to the school as determined by Google Walking Route Map.

Where it is not possible to accommodate all children applying for places within a particular category, then we will allocate the available places in accordance with the next criteria.

Late applications will be considered in line with the criteria above. Although a late application may mean that places have already been filled, where there are spaces, applications which fulfil criteria higher up the list will be considered before those applying for January or later starts.

Early start dates

For children who have a confirmed Spring or Summer Term start, they may request to bring their start date forwards; a new offer will be made and the conditions regarding hours and payments made in the offer letter must be accepted by the parents or carers before taking up the place.

Child development and previous experiences of child-care

A member of our Nursery staff will make contact with each child's previous child-care setting and the parents or carers. They will ask about any specific needs of the child to ensure that we are able, where possible, to tailor each child's learning. If a child's needs require additional staffing, the EYFS lead and/or the SENDCo will contact the parents or carers to discuss provision in more detail. Berkswich CE reserves the right to withdraw an offered place if the Nursery is not able to staff the setting in a way that ensures the health, safety or wellbeing of all in the Nursery. At the time of a place being offered, parents and carers are reminded of this condition.

It is expected that all children starting Nursery will be toilet trained or have started this process in good time ahead of starting at Berkswich. It is important to ensure that parents and carers understand that the setting facilities are primarily for children who are toilet trained; however, please be assured that staff deal with accidents that may occasionally occur with sensitivity and great care. For parents and carers who have been involved with toilet training in time for starting nursery, but have found that this process is taking a little longer than expected, we understand that every child is unique and sometimes this development may need a coordinated approach between home and Nursery.

It is conditional of accepting a place that the child needs to attend at least two out of the three transition sessions before they start. This is so that staff can further assess readiness to

start and to get to know the child and identify ways in which the provision should be adapted.

Split-funding

If your child uses a second provider during the school holidays, then this may reduce the number of hours available during school term time, and would lead to the nursery funding running out before the end of the summer term. This is due to the fact that funding is for a set number of hours. For those using, for example, childcare during school holidays, these funded hours **are often used up before the end of the summer term; this arrangement is referred to as Stretch Funding**. Families who are in this position may continue to use the Nursery as before, but will be invoiced monthly once the funding has come to an end. Please refer to the Nursery Information Booklet for more information about fifteen and thirty hours funding. It is essential that Stretch Funding is agreed with the setting prior to acceptance of a place.

If your child's funding is split between two providers, and the other provider claims hours which go over the child's funding limits, school may have funding declined by the County Council. When this is the case, school will invoice the parents for any costs not covered by the funding received. It is vital that parents state the name of any other provider and the exact hours of funding used within this second setting on the Privacy Notice. Funding can seem complicated when new to Nursery; a member of staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or to answer any queries.

Spring Term Starters and Summer Term Starters

In order to continue to prioritise a teacher-led nursery, providing the highest quality learning opportunities, we are unable to accept January 2025 places until after the September 2024 places have been allocated and taken up. Please contact Mrs Gartside-Bentley (via office@berkswich.staffs.sch.uk), for further information.

How to apply

Please complete an online application form from our school website (Key Information/Admissions tab - <https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/nursery-application-forms-and-policies/>) or collect a paper copy from our school office. Online application forms are automatically sent to the Nursery. Completed paper application forms should be emailed to office@berkswich.staffs.sch.uk or posted to:

Berkswich CE Primary School
Cedar Way
Walton-on-the-Hill
Stafford
Staffordshire
ST17 0LU

 (01785) 337360

Parents will receive an email in reply, to acknowledge receipt of an application. If you have not received confirmation, **it is vital that school is contacted**. There are occasions when contact details are incomplete and school has been unable to contact parents, or a sent

application has not been received. The Nursery cannot take responsibility for the loss of an application form that has not been acknowledged by email.

Accepting a place

Parents and carers will be notified of the outcome of their September 2025 application by Friday 11th April.

When places are offered, parents and carers receive a provision agreement. The place and the provision must be accepted by the deadline stated in the offer letter. By signing this agreement, parents are accepting the terms stated on the letter and in both the Nursery Admissions Policy and the Payment, Fees and Booking Policy for Nursery. If any changes to provision mean that sessions are not used, parents and carers are liable for the fees to be paid and will be invoiced for sessions for which school is unable to claim funding. If the place is not required, then we respectfully ask that parents and carers let us know as soon as possible as we often hold a waiting list for places.

A school application form, privacy notice and parental permissions will also need to be completed by successful applicants (and a wrap-around registration form if required). Your child's birth certificate must also be seen by the school.

We place great emphasis on welcoming families into our setting and ensuring that each child's transition into Nursery is as smooth as possible. Further information regarding new parent and carer meetings, invites to school events, uniform, etc. will be sent out once a place has been accepted.

Children Starting 'Early' After Their Third Birthday

Nursery provision is available as soon as your child is three years of age, but funding would not be available until the first term after their third birthday. If a child has turned three and is deemed by school to be ready for Nursery, then parents may choose to fully fund an available place.

Additionally, if parents receive 15/30 hours funding, they may extend the provision beyond these funded hours by paying for further time in the Nursery; for example, thirty hours would pay for five morning and afternoon sessions and then parents and carers would be invoiced for the lunch club. The chart below should be referred to if a fifteen hour funded place is required. Please refer to the Welcome to the Nursery Booklet for further information and links about how to apply for the additional hours of funding ('30 hours'). All provision is agreed at the point of an offer of a place.

Birthday when child turns three	When a funded place can start
1st January – 31st March	funded places can start in the Summer Term (after the Easter Break in April)
1st April – 31st August	funded places can start in the Autumn Term (after the Summer break in September)
1st September – 31st December	funded places can start in the Spring Term (after the Christmas break in January)

Deferring places

If a parent or carer wishes to defer an accepted place for a term or more, school will be unable to claim any government funding. In this situation, parents and carers may only hold the place if the fees are paid in full during this period. In this event, please contact the school as soon as possible to discuss this further. If the place is no longer required, then we ask that the Nursery is notified as soon as possible, so that the place can be filled and the viability of the provision for all ensured.

Additional Notes

Attendance at the Nursery will not guarantee admission to our Reception class or give any advantage to the child's application for Reception. Parents and carers must reapply for admission to Reception at the appropriate time through their Home Local Authority. Criteria for school admissions from Reception to Year Six is set and administered by the Local Authority. Please visit Staffordshire County Council Admission website for further information: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Apply/Overview.aspx>

In accordance with legislation, children who have a statutory statement of special educational need or Education, Health and Care Plan that names the Nursery will be admitted to our Nursery setting if there is an available place without session numbers exceeding twenty-four children. This may reduce the number of places available to other applicants. Please see additional notes above related to restriction of offers based on the maximum number of children who are able to attend each session.

Relevant Children in Care means children who are in the care of a local authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) and who (a) are looked after at the time an application is made and (b) in relation to whom the local authority has confirmed that the children will still be looked after at the time when the child will be admitted to school. It has also recently been extended to include those previously determined as Looked After Children (that is, children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

The home address is considered to be the child's, along with their parent/carer's main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places (i.e. where they are normally and regularly living). If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship), the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes. If a family is applying for Berkswich CE Nursery as a result of moving into catchment area, then proof of residence will need to be supplied before a firm offer of a place will be given by the school.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If there are a limited number of spaces available and we cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of children who live in the same block of flats or are the result of a multiple birth, then the child or children who will be offered the available spaces will be randomly selected by drawing lots.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above. If places become available after the offer date, then those already offered a place will be offered additional hours (e.g. a child who has a morning place may also then take up an afternoon place that has become available). If places become available after the offer date and they are not taken up by those who have already accepted a place, then they will be offered to the children at the top of the waiting list.

Inclusion on a school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available. A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed and is subject to change during the year (for example, a child may move up or down the list since each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria).

There is no statutory right of appeal for admission to a Nursery setting. Any disputes over the administration of the policy will be dealt with by the Governing Board Complaints Procedure.

Policy review

This policy is reviewed each September or sooner if necessary or if there are changes to guidance. Parents and Carers will be notified when reviews have been made.

Useful website addresses

- <https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/nursery-information-and-admissions/> for Berkswich CE Admissions information
- <https://berkswich-ce-vc-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/early-years/> for a view into our Early Years Provision
- <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>
- [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working>
- (news regarding changes to foster carer allowances: [Free childcare to be extended to foster carers for the first time - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))