Berkswich CE Primary School			
Reference Number S1b	**Shared with Staff** October 2026	**Ratified by Governing Board** October 2026	**Review Date** April 2027
Policy Title	**Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Admission Arrangements Policy**		

Berkswich CE Primary School is shaped by a distinctive Christian ethos, which is at the heart of all that we do. Inspired by Jesus' words in John 10:10, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,"* we seek to provide an environment where every child can thrive - academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Berkswich CE Primary School treasures its strong links with local churches and the wider Diocese, which help us to continue growing as a life-giving, faith-filled community.

We are a warm, inclusive, and nurturing community, rooted in Christian values, where children are encouraged to grow into their fullest potential. We warmly welcome applications from all members of the community, regardless of ability, faith, or background. While we do not expect all families to share the Christian faith, we do ask that they support and respect the Christian character of our school.

It is important for children to be given the **best start in life**. The benefits for children attending our Nursery include:

- quality learning and development
- consistent routines and play
- new experiences
- making friends and being part of our wider school family
- becoming more confident and embedding good habits

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and guidance:

- Nursery Payment and Fees Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Booklet
- Staffordshire Early Years Attendance
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy

- Complaints Procedure
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined as:

1. **'Nursery 1':** these are children who will turn three years of age on or after 1st September. 'Nursery 1' children remain in the Nursery in the following school year, when they become 'Nursery 2.'

2. **'Nursery 2':** these are children who are three years of age before 1st September. These children will be of school age at the end of the school year in Nursery, and will apply for a Reception place for the following September.

Please read this policy in conjunction with our Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Booklet and the Nursery Payment and Fees Policy.

This policy is in place for admissions from October 2026 and has been updated following feedback regarding flexibility for places for this current academic year. The policy is reviewed every academic year, however governors reserve the right to review at other times of the year in response to changes in legislation or needs of the service. 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.

The Admissions Timetable

For Nursery admissions, all places are allocated by Berkswich CE Primary School in accordance with the school's Nursery Admissions 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 opens in the January prior to this; it closes in April, in order for places to be agreed in advance for the following September (following academic year/Autumn start).

Parents and carers applying for a September start will be notified of offered places at the end of April. Late applications may be available; please contact our school office to discuss.

For further details of how to apply for a Nursery place at our school for your three-year-old and for more information, please also read our Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Booklet. If offered a place, children can be admitted immediately after they are three years old. Please see the links at the bottom of the policy for further information regarding funding and when this can be accessed. Please note that Think2 and Working Parents Entitlements can be used to fund Two-Year-Old children who are turning three; therefore this funding can be used for a Nursery place as soon as your child is three years old – please ask the school office for further details.

Available Places

There are twenty-four morning places and twenty-four afternoon places available. However, the same child may use both a morning and an afternoon place each day. In this case, children will be supervised during our lunchtime club by Early Years and school staff; there is a separate charge for this session. Wrap-around care before and after school, (Cedars), enables us to extend the Nursery provision further. The number of places available in Nursery

may fluctuate from term to term, depending on the provision taken up by each child already in the Nursery.

A Teacher-led Nursery

The school is committed to providing high-quality, teacher-led Nursery provision wherever possible. Nursery staffing and operational costs are managed within the school's Nursery budget and in accordance with applicable local authority early years funding arrangements.

The school regularly reviews Nursery occupancy, take-up of available hours and the financial sustainability of the provision to ensure that resources are used effectively and that the needs of children and families continue to be met.

Where levels of demand and funding do not support the continuation of the existing staffing model, the school reserves the right to consider alternative staffing arrangements, provided that all applicable EYFS statutory requirements continue to be met.

If Nursery provision becomes financially unsustainable, the school may also consider reducing or discontinuing the provision. Any proposed changes will be considered in accordance with applicable statutory requirements, the school's governance arrangements and relevant local authority procedures. In the unlikely event of this happening, parents and carers would be informed in a timely and transparent manner of any proposed changes, and any required consultation and decision-making processes will be followed.

Funding Restrictions

Please note that Berkswich CE Nursery must conform with funding regulations as outlined in Staffordshire County Council's Early Years Funding policy. Staffordshire Early Years Attendance

Our Nursery attendance registers need to align with the funding claimed through the Early Education Funding Portal, and are examined if we are chosen for an audit.

Governors will decide on a case-by-case basis whether a payment can be made directly to the school for sessions that cannot be claimed through the EEF funding. Please talk to our school office if you would like further information.

Use of Provision Hours

At Berkswich CE Nursery, 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 excellent provision is also of great importance. With these as our priorities, all children attending our teacher-led Nursery are encouraged to attend:

- all-day places - **8:45am - 3:20pm for five days a week (six hours of provision, 30 hours in total)** with our optional lunchtime club available **at £6.50 per day**. Funded places are not conditional on buying lunchtime club, additional hours or any other extras.

- all-morning places - **8:45am - 11:45am (three hours of provision a day, 15 hours in total) for five mornings.** Lunchtime club can also be utilised.

- all-afternoon places - 12:20 - 3:20pm (three hours of provision a day, 15 hours in total) for five afternoons. Lunchtime club can also be utilised.

- Part-time sessions with minimum attendance of 15 hours may be possible subject to spaces and staffing ratios (please add required hours to the application form and speak with the office regarding this)

Agreed hours are added to a Staffordshire County Council Parent Declaration and Privacy Notice (provided by the school) and signed by parents and carers before funding starts; this enables the school to be paid for the funded hours.

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.

Lunchtime Club

For those using our popular lunchtime club, payment should be made through the schoolcomms app a month in arrears. Any variation in sessions must be agreed prior to any changes in attendance in order to ensure appropriate staffing levels are in place.

Children with a 'Nursery 1' Place

Children already holding a place in the previous academic year ('Nursery 1') need not reapply for a place and will continue to secure a Nursery place the following academic year. Please see further details in the admissions criteria below. Any adjustments to provision must be made within the application window for new Nursery September admissions and be agreed in writing by both parties.

In the case of applications for a later start in the Spring or Summer Term (rather than a September start), the admissions criteria will still apply, but within the available spaces. Please note that parents can send their child as soon as they turn three and may be able to use Think2 or Working Parents Funding (see links at the bottom of the policy).

Multiple Places

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

Oversubscription Criteria

It is our policy to try and meet parent and carer wishes where possible; however, in many cases, there are more applications than there are places, and in this instance, admission to Nursery will be determined by the oversubscription criteria detailed below:

Order of Oversubscription 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) Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the Nursery (see Additional Notes below).

1a) Children who are 'Nursery 1' will continue to receive a place the following year and need not reapply.

2) 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 child arrangements order or special guardianship order)

3) Children who attend 30 hours of Nursery provision per week.

4) Children who attend regularly for at least five mornings / five afternoons a week or a minimum of 15 hours per week.

5) Children with an elder sibling in attendance at the school who will still be attending the school at the time of the proposed admission date (for admission purposes, a sibling is a child who lives at the main address provided and either: has one or both birth parents in common; is related by a parent's marriage; is adopted or fostered by a common parent or is an unrelated child who lives at the main address, whose parents live as partners)

6) 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.

7) 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 (measured from the child's home front door to the main school gate).

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 if possible, 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 contact 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. We will work with parents and carers, the SENDCo and the Local Authority (including the SEND Inclusion Fund and Disability Access Fund where appropriate) to make reasonable adjustments so that every child can be included, and there is no additional charge to families for SEND support within funded hours. Any decision not to proceed with an offered place will only be made after discussion with parents and carers and advice from the Local Authority.

It is hoped that children starting Nursery will be toilet trained, or have started this process in good time ahead of starting at Berkswich CE, although this is not a condition of a place. Please be assured that staff deal with accidents that may occasionally occur with sensitivity and great care. We understand that every child is unique and sometimes this development may need a coordinated approach between home and Nursery.

Transition Sessions

We ask that the child attends at least two out of the three transition sessions before they start. Where this is not possible, please talk to us and we will arrange an alternative. 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 may be adapted.

Split-funding

If your child uses a second provider during the school holidays or during term time, then this may reduce the number of hours available during the 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 Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Booklet for more information about thirty hours funding. It is essential that Stretch Funding is agreed with the setting prior to acceptance of a place and that a second setting is noted on the privacy notice supplied by the school. Berkswich CE Primary operates over a period of 38 weeks.

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.

Spring Term Starters and Summer Term Starters

In order to continue to prioritise a teacher-led nursery, providing the highest quality learning opportunities, we may be unable to accept January places until after the earlier September places have been allocated and taken up.

How to apply

Please complete an online application form from our school website (Key Information/Admissions tab - https://www.berkswichceprimary.co.uk/page/?title=Nursery+Application+forms+and+policies&pid=375 or alternatively 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

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 Nursery Payment and Fees Policy. If any changes to provision mean that sessions are not used, parents and carers are liable for the fees incurred 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 hold a waiting list for places. The school will discuss notice periods with parents as required.

A school application form, County Council Parent Declaration and 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.

Welcoming You and Your Child to Our Berkswich CE Nursery

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. You will receive invites to transition settings and a special parcel for your child in preparation for their start in Nursery.

Children Starting After Their Third Birthday

Nursery provision is available as soon as your child is three years of age. Funding is available at this point if your child has already been using a funding code in a previous setting. HMRC

codes must be set up in advance of children commencing at Nursery. Children who are using 30 hours funding can access this the 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 until funding can be used to pay for the place or Two-Year-Old funding can be used if eligible (Think2 or Working Parents Entitlement).

Any changes to how early government funding can be claimed will be communicated to parents and carers; school will update the policy accordingly.

Funded hours are confirmed only once the school has checked your child's eligibility, including date of birth, proof of address and, for working parents' entitlements, a valid eligibility code checked through the Staffordshire early years portal. Parents and carers must reconfirm their code when HMRC asks them to, otherwise funding may stop.

Think2 and Working Parents Entitlement funding should already be set up if you wish your child to commence the term they turn three years old.

Extending Beyond Nursery Sessions

Additionally, parents and carers may extend the provision beyond these funded hours by paying for further time in the Nursery. Please refer to the Berkswich CE Primary Nursery Booklet for further information. All provision is agreed at the point of an offer of a place.

Birthday when child turns three	When a 3 year old funded place can start
1st January – 31st March	funded places can start in the Summer Term (after the Easter Break in April) unless parents opt to pay
1st April – 31st August	funded places can start in the Autumn Term (after the Summer break in September) unless parents opt to pay
1st September – 31st December	funded places can start in the Spring Term (after the Christmas break in January) unless parents opt to pay

Please refer to Working Parents Entitlement and Think2 funding for those wishing to use funding to send a child to Nursery as soon as they turn three.

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 (the national closing date is 15 January in the year of entry). Criteria for school admissions from Reception to Year Six is set and administered by the Local Authority. Please visit Staffordshire County Council Admission website (see below) for further information.

In accordance with legislation, children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the Nursery will be admitted to our Nursery setting when there is an available place without session numbers exceeding twenty-four children. Please contact the school to

arrange a meeting with our SENDCo to discuss your child's needs. This may reduce the number of places available to other applicants. Please see the 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 child arrangements 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. Proof of residence (and the child's date of birth) will need to be supplied by all families 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; this will be carried out by a person independent of the school.

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.

Berkswich CE Admissions information

https://www.berkswichceprimary.co.uk

Claim tax-free childcare to help with Nursery or Cedars payments

https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare

Government Childcare Choices including Funding for Two Year Olds (Rising Threes)

Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK

Check funding eligibility and register

Get free childcare if you're working: Apply for free childcare - GOV.UK

15 and 30 hour funding information

https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/childcare-support-available

15 and 30 hour funding frequently asked questions

https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/15-and-30-hours-childcare-support/faqs

Think2 Funding (Rising Threes)

https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/help-childcare-costs/funded-2-year

Working Parent Entitlement for 2 Year Olds (Rising Threes)

https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/check-youre-eligible

Free childcare to be extended to foster carers for the first time - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))

Applying for a school Reception place

https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Apply/Overview.aspx