

**CONSULTATION ADMISSIONS POLICY  
FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS & CLASSES  
FOR 2026 – 2027**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the policy as applied to all Cambridgeshire County Council maintained nursery schools and classes.

1.2 See appendix 1 and 2 for a list of maintained nursery schools and nursery classes<sup>1</sup>.

1.3 This policy is reviewed and consulted on annually to ensure it continues to reflect statutory policy and local changes in maintained nursery legislation and guidance.

## 2. Compulsory school age

2.1 Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998 (SI 1998/1607). A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 March, 31 August and 31 December each year.

**2.2 The School Admissions Code 2021, which relates only to statutory education, does not apply to this policy.**

2.3 Children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. **Places offered under the Nursery Schools and Classes Admissions Policy will be available to the child from the date the place is offered until 31 August following the child's fourth birthday.**

2.4 Parents should be made aware that the process for applying for a place at a Primary School for the Reception Year is separate to that of applying for a place in a Nursery Class or School.

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<sup>1</sup> Correct on 3 October 2024

### **3. Eligibility for Early Education Funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds**

3.1 Three-year-olds (and two-year-olds who meet the eligibility criteria) are entitled to 15 hours per week over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year (or 570 hours per year) of funded early years provision from the start of the term beginning on or following the date set out below:

- Children born in the period 1 January to 31 March: 1 April following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable.
- Children born in the period 1 April to 31 August: 1 September following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable.
- Children born in the period 1 September to 31 December: 1 January following the child's third birthday, or second birthday, as applicable.

3.2 These dates are consistent with those used for determining the start of compulsory education.

3.3 Further information on eligibility criteria and funding, including the expanded offer introduced in 2024, can be found here: [Childcare expansion | HMRC Childcare Choices](#).

3.4 In most cases, it is in the best interests of the child to take up their funded entitlement with one provider, however there may be reasons why this is not possible. In such circumstances it is possible to divide the entitlement across up to two providers in one day.

3.5 Once a place has been allocated to a child, and the child has started with that provider, any request to transfer to an alternative nursery class, school or early years provider will not be encouraged, unless there are valid, exceptional reasons for the transfer, e.g. house move.

### **4. Application Process for a Nursery Class or Nursery School Place**

4.1 Parents may register their interest in a place at a nursery class or school at any time, but must formally apply for a place, using the Council's Parent/Carer Declaration Form.

4.2 Information and application forms are available from each school, via their website or from the school office or, alternatively, from the County Council website.

## 5. Application Timetable

5.1 Applications will be processed, and letters to families informing them of the outcome of their request for placement for their child/ren will be issued no later than:

| <b>Term applied for:</b> | <b>Letter will be issued no later than:</b> |
|--------------------------|---|
| Autumn Term 2026         | End of June 2026                            |
| Spring Term 2027         | End of November 2026                        |
| Summer Term 2027         | End of February 2027                        |
| Autumn Term 2027         | End of June 2027                            |

## 6. Catchment Area

6.1 The catchment area for a nursery class is the same as the published catchment area for admission to that school.

6.2 Each nursery school has its own catchment area. Details are available directly from the school.

## 7. Admission Number

7.1 Each nursery school, or class, has an admissions limit, determined locally. A nursery will be full and thus a child will be refused admission if the admissions limit has been reached.

7.2 Where there are places remaining, further admissions will be possible up to the agreed admission limit. However, places cannot be reserved for children who may move into the area later in the year.

7.3 Where more applications are received than places are available at a nursery school or class, places will be allocated in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria.

7.4 Where a tie-break is necessary within a category, priority will be given first to children who have a sibling attending the school at the time of admission and **then by date of birth with older children having priority<sup>2</sup>**.

## 8. Waiting Lists

8.1 Children who are not offered places will have their details added to a waiting list. Children's names are placed on waiting lists **in strict order of the oversubscription criteria, not according to the date of application**. This list will be held until such time as the child is of statutory school age and expected to transfer to a Reception class.

8.2 If a place becomes available, the school will contact the parents of the child whose name is first on the waiting list.

## 9. Definitions

**9.1 Siblings:** Children living together in the same family unit, who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application and admission to the school. Sibling includes:

- brother, or sister;
- half-brother, or sister;
- adopted brother, or sister;
- child of the parent/carer or their partner;
- children looked after, or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same household - for example a child in short-term, or interim, foster placement.

9.2 In every case, the sibling must be living permanently in the same family home (at least Monday to Friday) and must be on the roll of the school or have been offered and accepted a place at the school at the time of application and when the child starts.

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<sup>2</sup> If a further tie-break is needed, priority will be given to those living nearest the school, as measured by a straight line.

9.3 Unless otherwise stated, in the case of the admission of children to a nursery class, children who are attending the primary school are **not** considered as siblings in terms of determining priority for places.

## **10. Home Address**

10.1 The address given on a child's application should be the child's permanent or main residence at the time school places are allocated. This should also be the address where the child will be residing when they take up their place. A child's application can only be considered from **one** home address. Therefore, their "main residence" must be the address at which they spend the majority of their school nights (Sunday – Thursday). An address used for before and after-school childcare arrangements will **not** be considered appropriate.

10.2 For the purpose of determining admissions, distance within Cambridgeshire is calculated by measuring a straight line from the reference point of the home, as determined by the OS AddressBase Premium <sup>™</sup>, to the reference point of the school.

## **11. Evidence Required**

### **11.1 All entitlements**

11.1.1 Parents are required to provide proof of the child's date of birth and home address. Evidence may be submitted in the form of the child's short form birth certificate, passport, a child benefit letter or a utility bill (showing the parent's name).

11.1.2 Where a family is expecting to move house, confirmation of the new address will be required before the application can be considered. Confirmation should be by way of a copy of the signed lease agreement or a letter confirming contracts have been exchanged and with confirmation of a completion date.

### **11.2 Childcare entitlements for working parents**

Each school will determine whether it will offer the 30-hour extended entitlement and the way in which this offer is delivered at the school. This will be a decision for the governing body of the school and will be published on the school's website.

Where the 30 hours working parent entitlement is available, parents will be required to provide proof of their eligibility to the extended entitlement. This proof will be through the production of a unique code issued to the parent/carer by HMRC. The school is then required to carry out validation checks to confirm that the child is still entitled to an extended place before making offers to parents.

## **12. Absences**

12.1 **Short absences** - where a child is registered to attend the school but is unexpectedly absent for a single session or short period, no action is necessary.

12.2 **Extended absences** - where extended absence occurs for medical reasons, the school will work to support the family in the most appropriate way for the individual child. It may be that keeping a place open may smooth the way for a phased return and be the best approach for the needs of the child concerned.

12.3 Extended absences for other reasons must be discussed in advance with the school. Parents are encouraged to take family holidays/vacations during the school holidays, but if this is not possible, the request must be made in writing to the school including details of the dates of the proposed absence and the reasons for the request.

12.4 The school will respond in writing to the request. Parents are advised that any request/absence for more than 4 weeks may result in their child's place at the school being withdrawn and offered to another family.

## **13. Withdrawing Offers of Nursery Places**

13.1 Parents are obliged to inform the nursery school or class of any change of address following an application, as this may affect the allocation of a place. Failure to do this could result in an offered place being withdrawn.

13.2 Once a place has been offered in writing, there are limited circumstances in which the nursery school or class can consider withdrawing the offer. If a place is offered based on a

fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, or a parent has not responded to an offer within 10 school days, the school may withdraw the place. These situations can only be considered with the full involvement and agreement of the Early Years Funding Team.

**13.3 Childcare entitlements for working parents** – when a parent ceases to meet the eligibility criteria for a funded place under the 30 hours extended entitlement, their child's place will continue to be funded during a "grace period". At the end of the grace period, if the parent's eligibility can no longer be confirmed, the parent will be able to access 15 hours universal funded early education and childcare at the school (for three and four year olds), but additional hours would be agreed through a separate private arrangement between the parent and the school and would no longer be funded.

13.4 The Council is required by government to ensure that no child is in receipt of more than their entitlement of early education and childcare funding.

13.5 For further information regarding Cambridgeshire County Council's funding offer please visit: [Early years funding | Cambridgeshire County Council](#).

## **14. Charging for Places**

14.1 With effect from September 2012, regulations came into force which allow schools to charge for spare places in maintained nursery classes and nursery schools. Details of where this is available to parents, and a copy of the relevant charging policy, will be available from the school directly.

## **15. Admission of Children to the Reception Year at School**

15.1 A child is entitled to a full-time place at school in the September following their fourth birthday. The child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

15.2 Where the parents wish, the child may attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

15.3 For further information on delayed and deferred entry into Reception please visit [Cambridgeshire Reception delay and deferral | Cambridgeshire County Council](#).

15.4 Please note: four-year olds in Primary School Reception classes are not eligible for early years funding. From the date a parent accepts a school place and agrees a start date, even if the choice is for them to attend on a part-time basis, the free early years entitlement will no longer be available.

15.5 Parents who would like their child to continue in the nursery school or nursery class beyond this date, i.e. parents of children who are eligible to start Reception at school from the beginning of the Autumn Term and are opting to delay this start by a whole year, **must** make a fresh application for a place at the nursery school or nursery class for the new academic year, although the place is not guaranteed.

## Appendix 1

| <b>Maintained Nursery Schools</b>                        |                  |  |               |
|--|------------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Age Range</b> | <b>Address</b>                               | <b>Tel No</b> |
| Brunswick Nursery School (Cambridge Nursery Federation)  | 2 – 5            | Young Street, Cambridge, CB1 2LZ             | 01223 508790  |
| Colleges Nursery School (Cambridge Nursery Federation)   | 2 – 5            | Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2LD             | 01223 712168  |
| Histon Nursery School                                    | 2 – 5            | New School Road, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9LL | 01223 712075  |
| Homerton Nursery School                                  | 2 – 5            | Holbrook Road, Cambridge, CB1 7ST            | 01223 508766  |
| Huntingdon Nursery School                                | 2 – 5            | Ambury Road, Huntingdon, PE29 1AD            | 01480 375216  |
| Kings Hedges Nursery School                              | 2 – 4            | Northfield Avenue, Cambridge, CB4 2HU        | 01223 518330  |
| The Fields Nursery School (Cambridge Nursery Federation) | 2 – 5            | Galfrid Road, Cambridge, CB5 8ND             | 01223 518333  |

## Appendix 2

| <b>Maintained Nursery Classes</b>   |                  |   |               |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Name</b>                         | <b>Age Range</b> | <b>Address</b>  | <b>Tel No</b> |
| Castle Camps C of E Primary School  | 3 - 11           | Church Lane, Castle Camps, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4TH           | 01799 584270  |
| Cherry Hinton C of E Primary School | 3 - 11           | High Street, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, CB1 9HH                | 01223 568834  |
| Clarkson Infants School             | 2 - 7            | Trafford Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 2ES              | 01945 584867  |
| Colville Primary School             | 3 - 11           | Colville Road, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, CB1 9EJ              | 01223 576246  |
| Eastfield Infant and Nursery School | 3 - 7            | Pig Lane, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE27 5QT       | 01480 463958  |
| Fawcett Primary School              | 3 - 11           | Alpha Terrace, Cambridge, CB2 9FS                             | 01223 840299  |
| Kinderley Community Primary School  | 2 - 11           | Church Lane, Tydd St Giles, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 5LG | 01945 870374  |
| Orchard Park Primary School         | 3 - 11           | Ring Fort Road, Orchard Park, Cambridge, CB4 2GR              | 01223 438200  |
| Ridgefield Primary School           | 3 - 11           | Radegund Road, Cambridge, CB1 3RJ                             | 01223 712418  |
| St Matthew's Primary School         | 3 - 11           | 19 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, CB1 2LD                         | 01223 568838  |
| Townley Primary School              | 2 - 11           | Crown Road, Christchurch, Wisbech, PE14 9NA                   | 01354 638229  |

NB. Many Cambridgeshire schools directly run Early Years provision through a different arrangement to a maintained nursery class. For further information on other providers offering funded Early Years places, please visit [Childcare information - Cambridgeshire County Council](#) or make enquiries directly to the local school.

## Appendix 3

### Template Maintained Nursery School Admission Policy

| Funded early years entitlement type | Places offered | Number of places available |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Age 2-3 Years (15 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 2-3 Years (30 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 3-4 Years (15 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 3-4 Years (30 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |

**Catchment area:** *Please contact the school for information.*

#### **Over-subscription criteria – 2-3 Year Old Entitlement:**

Where more applications for 2–3-year-olds who meet the eligibility criteria are received than places are available, places will be allocated in accordance with the following over-subscription criteria:

*NB. Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school will be admitted before the over-subscription criteria are applied. Those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name the school will be referred to the Statutory Assessment and Resource Team to determine an appropriate place.*

1. Children in Care, previously known as Looked After Children, and children who were Children in Care but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a resident order or special guardianship order.
2. Children living in the catchment area of the school.
3. Children who have been referred by a Social Worker, Health professional, Pre-School Specialist Support Teacher, Special Needs Officer, the Traveller Referral Team.
4. Children not living in the catchment area of the school.

### **Over-subscription criteria – 3-4 Year Old Entitlement:**

Where more applications for 3–4-year-olds are received than places are available, places will be allocated in accordance with the following over-subscription criteria:

*NB. Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school will be admitted before the over-subscription criteria are applied. Those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name the school will be referred to Statutory Assessment and Resource Team to determine an appropriate place.*

1. Children in Care, previously known as Looked After Children, and children who were Children in Care but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a resident order or special guardianship order.
2. Children who have previously attended the school under the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
3. Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceases to be in state care as a result of being adopted<sup>3</sup>.
4. Children living in the catchment area for the nursery school, who have who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission and have been identified as part of the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
5. Children living in the catchment area for the nursery school, who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission.
6. Children not living in the catchment area for the nursery school who have who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission and have been identified as part of the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
7. Children not living in the catchment area who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission.

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<sup>3</sup> A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society

## Appendix 4

### Template Maintained School with Nursery Class Admission Policy

| Funded early years entitlement type | Places offered | Number of places available |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Age 2-3 Years (15 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 2-3 Years (30 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 3-4 Years (15 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |
| Age 3-4 Years (30 Hours)            | Yes / No       |                            |

**Catchment area:** *Please contact the school for information.*

#### **Over-subscription criteria – 2-3 Year Old Entitlement:**

Where more applications for 2–3-year-olds who meet the eligibility criteria are received than places are available, places will be allocated in accordance with the following over-subscription criteria:

*NB. Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school will be admitted before the over-subscription criteria are applied. Those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name the school will be referred to the Statutory Assessment and Resource Team to determine an appropriate place.*

1. Children in Care, previously known as Looked After Children, and children who were Children in Care but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a resident order or special guardianship order.
2. Children living in the catchment area of the school.
3. Children who have been referred by a Social Worker, Health professional, Pre-School Specialist Support Teacher, Special Needs Officer, the Traveller Referral Team.
4. Children not living in the catchment area of the school.

### **Over-subscription criteria – 3-4 Year Old Entitlement:**

Where more applications for 3–4-year-olds are received than places are available, places will be allocated in accordance with the following over-subscription criteria:

*NB. Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school will be admitted before the over-subscription criteria are applied. Those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name the school will be referred to Statutory Assessment and Resource Team to determine an appropriate place.*

1. Children in Care, previously known as Looked After Children, and children who were Children in Care but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a resident order or special guardianship order.
2. Children who have previously attended the school under the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
3. Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceases to be in state care as a result of being adopted<sup>4</sup>.
4. Children living in the catchment area for the school, who have who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission and have been identified as part of the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
5. Children living in the catchment area for the school, who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission.
6. Children not living in the catchment area for the school who have who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission and have been identified as part of the two- to three-year-old funded entitlement.
7. Children not living in the catchment area who have not yet reached statutory school age before the term of admission.

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<sup>4</sup> A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society