



St. Stephen's CE Primary School Nursery Admissions Policy and Funding Handbook 2025/2026

Early Years Foundation Stage Rationale

We believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) should be a time of play, and that through play we discover the excitement of learning, rewards of achievement, and acquire life skills. Our bright, busy, and well-planned early years environment encourages children in the development of skills, attitudes and understanding. We will help them to reach their potential and become confident, active members of our school community. Through this process the children will work towards, achieve, and in some cases exceed the Early Learning Goals.

The Nursery

At St. Stephen's CE Primary, we have a full time nursery class. Our early years provision has been validated as 'outstanding' by OFSTED. Our nursery is run by a qualified Class Teacher, an Early Years Educator and a Nursery Teaching Assistant. It affords children a comprehensive EYFS education both within the free flowing classroom and our outdoor learning environment.

The Nursery core day runs from 9.00am-3.30pm for 38 weeks per year, Monday to Friday. Full-time attendance is obligatory and Nursery children are expected to wear nursery school uniform.

Children start our nursery class the September following their third birthday, with a home visit from our staff scheduled for the last week of the summer term before they are due to begin. Further practical details about our Nursery will be distributed once a place has been accepted and secured with the deposit.

Nursery Funding from September 2019

Government funding for EYFS provision in primary schools has changed significantly. In order to sustain our own provision, the school has introduced an updated admissions and financial model from September 2019. The Nursery will continue to offer 26 full time places. Full-time attendance will be obligatory. All 26 places are entitled to 15 free hours of early years education per week for 38 weeks per year, funded by the Government via the Local Authority. Our Nursery is open for 32.5 hours each week for 38 weeks per year. Our fees have been set at a competitive rate when compared with other local providers.

NURSERY ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Parents are invited to make an application from September 2024. The application window closes on **15th January 2025**. Places will begin to be determined and offered from April/May 2024, in accordance with the Nursery Admissions Criteria. Places will continue to be offered until all places are filled. Nursery places are allocated by the school. **The final decision regarding the allocation of all places rests with the Headteacher.**

All parents/carers wishing to apply for a Nursery place must complete a nursery application form. These are available on the school's website www.ststephensce.lbhf.sch.uk

Nursery Admissions Criteria

Priority will be given to children with a sibling in the main school at the point of entry.

The following criteria will be applied for admission to the Nursery, in order:

***Looked after children**, i.e. children in public care. This includes children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they have been adopted or became subject to a residential order or special guardianship order.

Foundation Places

1. **Church Reference + Sibling**: the child and its family are practising members of a Christian church and the child will have a sibling attending the main school at the point of entry. The school will seek a supportive Christian reference from the applicant's parish priest or minister.
2. **St Stephen's Church Reference + Parish Resident**: the child and its family are practising members of the congregation at St Stephen and St Thomas Shepherds Bush and live in the parish. The school will seek a supportive Christian reference from the applicant's Parish Priest.
3. **Church Reference**: the child and its family are practising members of a Christian church. The school will seek a supportive Christian reference from the applicant's Parish Priest.

Open Places

Open Places are Determined by Distance: Proximity of the applicant's home to the school, which will be determined by straight line distance measured using a computerized measuring system. Should there be more than one child with the same distance the decision will be made using random allocation.

Twins and Children of Multiple Birth

In the event that the school has one place to offer and the next child on the waiting list is one of twins or other children of multiple birth, the school will offer both twins, or all children of multiple birth a place - even if this means temporarily going over the published admissions number.

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

- The governors will prioritise children who satisfy the governors of medical or social needs, which can be met by the school. A professional assessment of any special needs should be presented in a letter from the applicant's general practitioner, social worker, medical consultant or other appropriate body and must be enclosed with the application form.
- After this, applicants under each criterion will be prioritised by the proximity of the applicant's home to the school, determined by straight line distance measured using

a computerized measuring system. Should there be more than one child with the same distance the decision will be made using random allocation.

It is important to note that acceptance into our Nursery class does not guarantee a child a place in our Reception class or further up the school.

Part Funded Places

Our 'Part Funded' places offer 15 hours' free nursery education. Funding for the remaining hours over and above the 15 hour free entitlement will need to be secured via either Option A or Option B below:



'30 hours' free childcare'

A family may be eligible for 30 hours' free nursery education if they meet the following criteria:

- The child is aged 3 or 4 while in the Nursery class;
- Both parents are working- or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family;
- Each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage;
- Each parent has an annual income of less than £100,000;
- Parents are seeking the free childcare to enable them to work;
- One or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave or on statutory sick leave;
- One parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled or have been assessed as having limited capability to work;
- Where the parent is in a 'start-up period' (no need to meet the income criteria for 12 months);
- Both parents and child live in England;
- If a non-EEA national, the parent has recourse to public funds.

Parents can check eligibility and apply via the following website:
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

A code needs to be applied for, prior to the start of each term and the voucher code given to the School Business Manager, along with the parents/carers' National Insurance number.

If a parent loses eligibility whilst their child is registered at our Nursery, they will receive a short 'grace period' to enable them to maintain their childcare arrangements for a period of time. Once the grace period has lapsed, parents will need to pay for the additional 15 hours via Option B below.

If a family are eligible for '30 hours' free childcare' then they will be charged a termly fee of **£420** to pay for the additional hours per week. This charge will be kept under review and will remain at a competitive rate when compared with other local providers. **School meals are charged at £2.40* per day.** *subject to increase in Sept 25.

Fees must be paid in advance of the start of each term in full. Any diversion from this is at the discretion of the Head teacher and governors.

Please note this cost includes a settling in period at the beginning of the first term. If a parent chooses for their child to build up their hours gradually to full-time, the full fee will still be due.

Families are asked for a deposit of **£100** to secure the child's place within two weeks of receipt of the offer letter. This deposit amount will then be reimbursed at the end of the final term. The school reserves the right to deduct any outstanding fees from the deposit before any reimbursement is made at the end of the final term.

Option B

If a family is not eligible for '30 hours' free childcare' then they will be charged a termly fee of **£1,680** to pay for the additional hours per week. This charge will be kept under review and will remain at a competitive rate when compared with other local providers. **School meals are charged at £2.40* per day.** *subject to increase in Sept 25.

Fees must be paid in advance of the start of each term in full. Any diversion from this is at the discretion of the Head teacher and governors.

Families are asked for a deposit of **£500** to secure the child's place within two weeks of receipt of the offer letter. This deposit amount will then be reimbursed at the end of the final term. The school reserves the right to deduct any outstanding fees from the deposit before any reimbursement is made at the end of the final term. Please note this cost includes a settling in period at the beginning of the first term. If a parent chooses for their child to build up their hours gradually to full time, the full fee will still be due.

If a family do not qualify, for '**30 hours' free childcare'** but feel that they would qualify for a 'vulnerable children and families' place, then further information is available by contacting the headteacher. Places are allocated at the discretion of the Head teacher and families will need to provide evidence of their possible eligibility.

OFFERING AND ACCEPTING NURSERY PLACES

For 2025/26, places will begin to be offered during March/April 2025. The offer letter will include an acceptance form which needs to be signed and returned to the school, within two weeks of the date of the offer letter. Families are asked for a deposit to secure the child's place within two weeks of receipt of the offer letter. This can be made via electronic transfer to the school via Parentmail. If a deposit is not received and cleared with the 2 week period your place will be offered to another child.

Unfilled Places

In the event of there being less applicants than places available, the Head teacher reserves the right to make decisions about how the Nursery class will be run for the forthcoming year.

Waiting List

All unsuccessful applicants will be kept on a waiting list in order of admissions priority and should a place become available, places will be offered in accordance with the criteria outlined above.

Equality

At St. Stephen's CE Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all children, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or socio-economic background. We ensure the 9 characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 are protected. Please refer to our Single Equality Policy for further details.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Payment Methods

Codes for '30 hours' free childcare' must be applied for by 31st August 2025 via:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

Deposits to secure a place can be made via electronic transfer or via Parentmail. The acceptance form will include all relevant payment information. All other payments should be made via Parentmail, details to follow after a deposit is secured.

Childcare Vouchers

We are able to accept childcare vouchers through schemes run by many employers for chargeable sessions. Please check with the School Business Manager to see if your company's scheme is suitable.

Notice Period

Parents must give the school one terms notice, in writing, should they wish to withdraw their child from the nursery.

Fraudulent Applications

The school takes very seriously any attempt to obtain a place by fraud. All cases are fully investigated. If the school finds that a Nursery place was obtained using a false address, the offer will be withdrawn, even after the child has started the school, and will be re-offered to a child who was legitimately entitled to the place.

If for any reason the offer is not withdrawn, occasionally when a child has been on roll for more than one term, any future sibling priority will cease to apply.

Use of Data

All personal information is handled in line with Data Protection principles. A full copy of our Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policy is available on the school's website.

Complaints

Any dissatisfaction with the admissions process should be addressed in writing to the Headteacher. A nursery panel will investigate any complaints fully before a decision is made and communicated back to the parent/carer.