

St Joseph's Catholic Infant School



Pre-School Admissions Policy, Terms and Conditions 2025-2026

Basic Information

Our school operates a designated Pre-School for children who are three and four years old with a limited number of places for rising three's. The aims and values of our Pre-School are in line with the aims and values of our school. We want to create a caring and stimulating learning environment where children are nurtured and flourish.

As a Catholic Pre-School our children are introduced to an environment where Christian values of love and respect are a central part to the way we operate.

The Pre-School operates under the Governance of the school which is itself part of the St Thomas Catholic Academy Trust (STCAT). As a registered provider, we are legally bound to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Ofsted regulations.

Applications for Pre-School are managed by the school. There is no right to appeal for Pre-School places as there are no statutory guidelines until children reach statutory school age (5).

A Pre-School place does not provide automatic entry to our Reception classes. Applications for school places must still be made via Buckinghamshire Council.

Our offer is as follows:

- All morning sessions as available (8.40 am – 11.40am)
- All afternoon sessions as available (12.10 pm – 3.10 pm)
- Full days (8.40 am – 3.10pm)

The following combinations of Pre-School provision are available:

- A Funded place for 15 hours
- A Funded place for 15 hours with Lunch Club (payable)
- A Funded place for 15 hours with Lunch Club (payable) with an additional 15 hours paid (equivalent to 5 full days)
- A Funded place for 30 hours (proof of eligibility is required) with Lunch Club (payable)

Pre-School Admission Policy

Context

The school Local Academy Committee is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of Pre-School pupils. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law and the guidance of the Diocese and St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust.

The Local Academy Committee reserves the right to operate a single session each day (morning session) if there are too few applications to operate two sessions at any given time.

1. Pre-School has a maximum capacity of 48 places at any one time.
2. Parents wishing to apply for a Pre-School place for their child should refer to the most up to date information regarding our fee structure, arrangements for application and terms and conditions in Appendix 1 of this policy.
3. The closing date for applications for September of the next academic year is 31st March. Allocations for September will be made in April, applying the admission criteria on the consideration list as at 31st March.
4. Parents may add their child's name to our consideration list at any time. After the initial allocation in April places will continue to be allocated until all sessions are filled according to the admission criteria.
5. Applications will be ranked according to the admission criteria where there is over subscription.
6. Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child in Pre-School must complete a Pre-School Registration Form, Funding Form and agree to the terms and conditions.
7. Places are allocated until capacity is reached. Subsequent spaces will be offered with regard to consideration list and application of the admission criteria.
8. Children holding a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Educational Healthcare Plan, naming the Pre-School, will be admitted according to the regulations and policy of the Local Authority.
9. Please note that parents who decide to defer a Reception School place for their child (which ever school is offered to you) may **not** be able to continue to have a place at St Joseph's Pre-School as the place will have already been allocated to another child.
10. The Local Academy Committee will admit a maximum of five funded rising 3 year olds per session. (The earliest we offer places is in the term of a child's third birthday)
11. Priority is given to funded rising 3 year olds in the following order:
 - Families receiving some additional forms of Government Support
 - Working Families
 - Paid sessions

In the event of over subscription, the Admission Criteria set out overleaf applies.

Funded Hours

A child is entitled to 15 hours a week, funded learning and care in an early years setting from the start of the term following their third birthday, for 38 weeks in a full year.

For those eligible for 30 hours' free childcare it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure they have a valid/renew their eligibility code. This must be done before the start of each term, ie by 31st August for Autumn Term, by 31st December for Spring Term and 31st March for Summer Term.

For those eligible for 15 hours' free childcare but not the 30 hours, additional sessions may be available and paid directly to the school.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

The Local Academy Committee will consider all applications according to the criteria set out below without reference to the ability or aptitude of the child.

In the case of over subscription, the Governors will give priority to the children in the following order:

- A. Looked after children
- B. Siblings of pupils attending St Joseph's Catholic Infant School & St Edward's Junior School in Aylesbury
- C. Children of members of staff at the school
- D. Baptised Catholic children, evidenced by a Baptismal certificate
- E. Applications not covered by any of the criteria A to D and whose parents are in sympathy with the ethos of the school

Within each category, where necessary, sessions will be allocated as follows:

1. Children who already attend St Joseph's Pre-School at the time of application
2. Age of child at admission point (in age order)

Original Birth certificates, funding codes and completed admission and consent forms must be submitted to the school by the published deadline to secure sessions.

Definition of terms:

Parent

- This is defined in law (The Education Act 1996), as either:
- both natural parents as long as they were married to each other at the time of the birth, or have married each other since; or
- any person who has 'parental responsibility' for the child or young person (defined in Children Act 1989); or

Looked After

Looked after children as defined by the LA, including previously looked after 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), including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted

The definitions are as follows:

- Adoption order: 'under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002'
- Child Arrangements Orders: is an order setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children's Act 1989 and Children & Family Act 2014.
- A 'child arrangements order is one setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8 as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14).
- Special guardianship order: 'an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians) under Section 14A of the Children's Act 1989

Sibling

By sibling we mean a brother or sister. This means a brother or sister of the whole or half blood, or any other child (including an adopted child) who permanently resides at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility.

For the main point of entry: Siblings of children who are attending St Joseph's School or St Edward's Junior School in Year R to Year 5 at the time the allocations are made, and are expected to be on the school roll or St Edward's School roll at the proposed time of admission, or who have already been offered a place to start in the current academic year at either school.

For immediate in year admission after the normal point of entry: Siblings are children who are in Year R to Year 6 at the time of admission.

In the case of twins, if only one child could be offered a place and there were twins (or higher multiples of birth) as the next allocation then the school would admit both (or higher multiples of birth) even if this goes above the admission number of the Pre-School.

Applying for a Place

A Pre-School Registration Form should be completed in order to apply for a place. The form is available from the school office, or the website.

Parents are welcome to apply for a place at any time. If there are vacant places, applications will be considered individually according to the stated criteria.

Parents may express a preference for all mornings, all afternoons or both and the school will make every effort to accommodate those preferences, where possible.

The final decision as to when a child is admitted, the number of hours a child is able to attend and their pattern of attendance, rests with the Headteacher.

Admission Timeline

The governors will consider applications in accordance with the admission rules.

Parents will be informed of their decision within 15 school days of the application deadline.

Term of Entry	Application Deadline	Notes
Autumn Term	End of Spring Term	The main intake for the academic year and cannot guarantee a place or first choice after this date.
Spring Term	End of September	Ranked according to our admissions rules and offered based on availability
Summer Term	End of January	Ranked according to our admissions rules and offered based on availability

Any child not offered a place due to no vacancies will be added to the consideration list.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning session	8.40 am – 11.40 am Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	8.40 am – 11.40 am Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	8.40am – 11.40 am Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	8.40 am – 11.40 am Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	8.40 am – 11.40 am Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)
Lunch Club	11.40 am – 12.10pm Paid £2.75/session	11.40 am - 12.10pm Paid £2.75 / session	11.40 am – 12.10pm Paid £2.75 / session	11.40 am – 12.10pm Paid £2.75 / session	11.40 am – 12.10pm Paid £2.75 / session
Afternoon session	12.10 pm – 3.10 pm Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	12.10 pm – 3.10 pm Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	12.10 pm – 3.10 pm Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	12.10 pm – 3.10 pm Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)	12.10 pm – 3.10 pm Funded/paid £20/session (3yrs) £25/session (2yrs)

Our opening hours are as above, are term time only and cover 38 weeks of the year. Pre-School is closed for five in service training (Inset days). These will always be the same as the school Inset days and are available to view on our school website.

Parents will receive an invoice/confirmation of booking detailing any payments required. Funded session places will be shown as a zero on the invoice. Payments are required to be made via a Parentmail Account which will be set up when a child starts in Pre-School. Please note that help may be available for those in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium.

Fee Structure, Terms & Conditions

Our offer prioritises Funded Free Entitlement 2, 3 and 4 year old places with fee paid sessions offered subject to availability. Please be aware we currently limit the number of places for 2 year olds.

- Parents can register for both funded Free Entitlement sessions (eligibility must be confirmed) and fee paid sessions (See below for more details including the costs)
- Sessions are allocated in line with the admissions criteria above.
- Funded Free Entitlement places are prioritised
- A signed Parent/Provider Agreement for a Funded Free Entitlement place must be completed before a funded period begins. This may be one term at a time or for up to three terms but a new form **must** be completed for each academic year.

There are three types of Parent/Provider Agreement for Free Entitlement forms:

1. Parent/Provider Agreement for Free Entitlement – 2 year-olds (PPA-2YO)
2. Parent/Provider Agreement for Free Entitlement – Universal 3&4 year-olds (PPA-U) (15 hours per week)
3. Parent/Provider Agreement for Free Entitlement – Extended 3&4 year-olds (PPA-E) (30 hours per week)

Fees

- There are no registration fees for any Funded Free Entitlement Places
- All fee paid sessions must be paid monthly in advance and are non-refundable. Please note a one off Registration Fee of £20 is applied
- There is no deposit required to secure a place at St Joseph's Pre-School though we reserve the right to change this in the future

Further Information

- Fees and Free Entitlement sessions do not include the cost of nappies, nappy sacks and wipes. These must be provided by parents.
- Children do not wear school uniform at Pre-School. We ask you to send your children to school in easy to manage clothes that are also suitable for messy activities
- If a child is absent for more than four weeks due to a family holiday or pilgrimage, their place will be offered to the next child on our waiting list and their funding will be stopped. Parents may reapply for a place on return.
- Please be aware that we operate a staggered start at the beginning of term to help children settle. This means children may not attend for all of their hours in the first instance
- Children absent for a long period of time due to sickness will need to be recorded with a doctor's certificate. Their funded hours may be temporary reallocated; however, each case will be assessed individually.
- If attending full days, there is an expectation that the child will attend lunch club (payable). Parents must provide a packed lunch,
- Lunch Club can also be added to the end of a morning session or the beginning of an afternoon session and is chargeable. This must be booked and paid monthly in advance. Adhoc sessions are not possible.

Pre-School Lunch Club Policy

Lunch club is available to all children attending Pre-School on any day they attend the setting and is supervised by a member of the Pre-School Staff and Midday Supervisors.

The cost for the Lunch Club does not include lunch.

Pre-School Lunch Club Payments must be made via Parentmail or Tax-Free Child-Care Vouchers. Please advise the school office by email if payments are being made using vouchers quoting references and date paid.

Lunch Club fees must be paid even if a child is unable to attend a session due to illness, holidays or any other reason, as the fees are used to pay for the running costs of the club.

Key Information

- A months notice is required to change paid sessions.
- Parent's wishing to withdraw their child from St Joseph's Pre-School are required to give one month's notice. Our term dates follow the same dates as the main school. Parent's wishing to withdraw their child sooner than this are able to but will not be able to claim Free Entitlement funding with another provider for the remainder of that half term unless the child meets exceptional criteria, as agreed by Buckinghamshire Council.
- Parents claiming an Extended Entitlement (30 hour) funded place must be aware that it is their responsibility to reconfirm their eligibility code every 3 months with the HMRC. In cases where eligibility is not agreed then the extended entitlement place maybe lost following a grace period.
- Parents can access Funded Free Entitlements over a maximum of two sites in a single day
- Parents using more than one provider must inform each provider of the situation on the parent/provider agreement form
- Parents who decide to use more than one provider (i.e. St Joseph's Pre-School and somewhere else) and are eligible for the extended entitlement must declare which setting they are claiming the universal hours from (15 hours) and which one they are claiming the extended hours from (the additional 30 hours) on the Parent/Provider Agreement form
- Children who are eligible for funded places will be able to have a 'settling in' period over a maximum of four weeks, provided a parent/provider agreement is in place. By the end of the four weeks the child it is expected that the child be attending the hours as set out in the agreement
- Parents are required to pay a **late charge if their child is not collected at the end of their session. Charges will apply from the end of the session. There is a £5 charge for late collection up to 10 minutes late and an additional £1 for every minute thereafter. This applies to funded and paid places.**
- Payment is required for any booked sessions, lunch club, morning and afternoon sessions even if the child is on holiday or off sick. Booked unused sessions are not transferrable to alternative days.
- Payment for invoices must be made monthly in advance and by the invoice deadline. Parents will not be able to access any paid sessions until the invoice has been paid. Please note we will still seek payment of the invoice whether the paid sessions have stopped or not.
- Parents who are not offered a place at St Joseph's Pre-School will have their Registration Forms placed on a continued interest list and managed in line with our admissions criteria as set out in our admissions policy
- Once a place has been offered and the parent/provider agreement form has been signed:
 - Parents must complete an application form and additional information sheet which records all information that we require to know about a child.
 - The original Birth certificate (Full Version) must be submitted to the office to be copied.
 - Parents will be invited to a meeting prior to their child starting Pre-School.
- Parents must inform the school office of all non-attendance.

At St Joseph's School, we have an inclusive, diverse school community and as such, we welcome all children and their families regardless of their cultural background, economic circumstances or faith. We support children with SEND and actively promote equal opportunities and British values.

We will always try to be as flexible as possible to meet the individual needs of our children whilst always considering the effect this may have on children who are already attending the setting.

Other useful information:

- Eligibility for free childcare can be checked at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
- For full details of the Local Authority management of the free entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds please see Buckinghamshire Council's guidance on Local Management of the Free Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.