

St Francis Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Love: for God, each other, our learning, and the world..

Nursery Admission Policy September 2025/26

Introduction

The ethos at St Francis CE Primary School is to provide every child with a happy, caring, learning environment in which he or she can develop to their full potential.

Rationale

The application process for a Nursery Place is different to that of a school place. Please therefore read this policy carefully and ensure that you comply with our requirements to avoid disappointment.

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to free learning and care in an early years setting from the start of term (Autumn term – September, Spring term – January or Summer term – March / April) following their third birthday. This is term time only.

We offer places using the 30 hours free entitlement - subject to validation of an eligibility code. A 30-hour funded place includes an unfunded, 50 minute lunch time each day charged at £2.75 per day.

We offer places using the 15 hours free entitlement. 15-hour places can pay to be included in the 50 minute lunch time at a cost of £2.75 per lunch session.

We offer places using 15 hours free entitlement and 20 hours self-funded including the 50 minute lunch time.

The policy has been created to reflect the Christian foundations and the community focus of the school. The oversubscription criteria reflects this, as governors wish to offer Christian service in education, by offering places to children who regularly attend worship (who live in the parish) and to children living close to the school.

Age of Admission

- Children can be admitted to the nursery at the beginning of the Autumn, Spring or Summer term.
- Priority is for children in their pre-reception year after their third birthday.

- If there is a vacancy, and the criteria are met, an admission can take place in any term during the academic year.

How to apply

- Parents requiring a place for their child should complete the Nursery application form.
- An application form is available to download from the school website or can be obtained from the school reception.
- Applications for admission to St Francis School Nursery will be processed by the school directly and you need to hand in your application personally or send it to the school office.
- Nursery admissions must be received using the deadlines below:

| Start date in nursery | Application deadline |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| September 2025 | End of Spring term (March 2025) |

- If you are applying for a church place you must also make sure you fully complete and hand in a Supplementary Information Form (see below)

Allocation of preferred sessions

Parents will be required to give preferences with regards to the session options when they apply for a place. Account will be taken of any preference for session options expressed by parents, but preferences will be allocated subject to availability and are not guaranteed. If the preferred session is unavailable, the child will be offered an alternative session.

Nursery Admission Numbers

The number of intended admissions for each year is 26 full time equivalent places (30 hour). There are 10 sessions a week and each session is 3 hours long. Parents will be offered either a full time place (30 hours) or part time place (15 hours) morning or afternoon. Current funding arrangements also mean that funding can be split between different settings.

Oversubscription Criteria

If the nursery is oversubscribed the following criteria will be used to allocate places in the following order.

If a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming St Francis School then they will be admitted to the nursery without reference to the following criteria.

For all other children, if the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places then the following criteria will be applied in numerical order:

1. **Looked after children**¹, at the date on which the relevant application for admission is made and who a local authority has confirmed will continue to be looked after at the time they are admitted to the Nursery. This includes '**previously looked after children**' as defined below.
2. **Siblings**² of children who attend St Francis School at the time that the applicant is due to start.
3. **Faith places** - 50% of the remaining places (rounded up to the nearest whole place) will be allocated to applicants who:-
 - a) live within the catchment area of the parish of St John's Haydon Wick⁴ (please see map attached) and
 - b) are at the heart³ of a Christian Church⁴ and
 - c) have fully completed and handed in their SIF.

If the nursery is over-subscribed in this category then the church places will be allocated on the basis of those church applicants living closest to the school (in accordance with the provisions made in category 4)

If the nursery is under-subscribed in this category then the unused church places will be allocated to other applicants in accordance with the provisions made in category 4.

4. **Distance** - The remaining spaces will be allocated to all other applicants, with priority given to those who live closest to the school and all applicants must live within 2 miles. Distances supplied by the Local Authority will be used. The distance between the applicant's home and the nursery is taken as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address point of the applicant's home address and of the nursery address.

Tie Breaker

If there are two or more children competing for a single space under any of the above criteria then priority will be decided by casting lots (random allocation) and this will be carried out by no less

than two of the school Governors (non-parent governors) and in the presence of an independent witness.

Definitions

1. **'A looked after child'** means a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989). **A 'previously looked after child'** means a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order, or special guardianship order* including those 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.
2. **"Sibling"** means brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of a parent's partner/carer's partner and refers to those children who are living at the same family address, in the same family unit as the sibling for more than 50% of the time. Evidence of the address at which the child is living the majority of the time can be obtained by confirming the address at which the child is registered with their GP.
3. **An applicant 'at the heart of the church'** would be a regular worshipper. This means one who worships twice a month over a period of at least 2 years prior to the deadline of receipt for applications. To accommodate difficult patterns of work and family relationships account will be taken of week-day worship. The 'applicant worshipper' could be the child for whom application is made or one or both parents. Checks will be made to confirm church attendance via the information provided to us in the SIF.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worships the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

4. **"Christian Church"** means a church that is affiliated to Churches Together in England, or a church which is in full sympathy with its Trinitarian stance. For more information please see website www.ctbi.org.uk or contact the school office.

* An 'adoption order' is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)

Multiple Births

The Governing Body will endeavour to place siblings born at the same time (e.g. twins, triplets etc) in the nursery.

Waiting List

St Francis Church of England School holds its own waiting list which is maintained until the end of the school year an application was made. Placement will be determined by applying the above over-subscription criteria. Names will be removed from the lists if requested, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted. Positions on waiting lists may change due to new applications.

Late Applications

The closing date for applications is shown above. Applications may be submitted after this date but they will be deemed as late applications, which means that they will not be considered until after all on time applications. **If you wish to apply on a church place a Supplementary Information Form must be submitted to the school by this date.** If a Supplementary Information Form is not submitted in time the application will not be considered on the basis of a church place and the distance criteria will apply.

In Year Admissions

The above criteria will be applied for in year applications made during the school year where there are more applicants than places. Applications should be made directly to the school.

Appeals Procedure

If you feel that your application for a Nursery place has not been handled fairly please contact the school giving your reasons in writing and the matter will be considered by the School Governors.

Misleading Applications

Where the Governing Body discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent (e.g. a false claim to residence in the catchment area or of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the Governing Body is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.



Supplementary Information Form

In support of an application for a church place

This form should be submitted directly to the school by the closing dates below if you are applying for a nursery place for 2025/26:

| Start date in nursery | Application deadline |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| September 2025 | End of Spring term (March 2025) |

St Francis School, Taw Hill is a voluntary aided Church of England school, which means that the governing body is the admissions authority for the school.

Category 3 of the nursery admissions policy states that places will be allocated to children who:-

- a) **live** within the parish of St John's Haydon Wick (please see map attached)*
- and***
- b) are at the heart of a Christian Church*
- and***
- c) have fully completed and handed in a SIF by the deadlines above (or for admissions during the school year, when the application for a place is made)*

Please ask the leader of your church or a person in a position of authority within the church to complete the other side of this form in support of your application. Please note that we do routinely check and verify and we need to be able to contact the person completing this form before a church place can be offered. Incomplete forms will not be considered for a church place.

If you have not been attending your current church for 2 years, you may ask a minister at a previous church to complete a SIF to cover prior attendance. Please ensure that all SIFs covering the full two year period are fully completed and submitted by the date on the front of this form to be considered.

Details of the applicant

Name of child:

Name of parent/guardian/carer making this application:.....

Permanent residential address of child:.....

.....

Tel:Email address:

Details of your Church and Minister/Church Leader

Name of Church:

Name of Minister/leader:

Position held within the church:

Contact Address:

Tel:

Email Address:

To the Church Leader:

Please complete and sign this declaration below to confirm that the applicant or applicants are at the Heart of your church

Definition

The definition of 'at the heart of the Church' is covered in point 16 of the National Society's guidelines. An applicant at the heart of the church would be a regular worshipper. This means one who worships twice a month over a period of at least 2 years prior to the deadline of receipt for applications. To accommodate difficult patterns of work and family relationships account will be taken of week-day worship. The 'applicant worshipper' could be the child for whom application is made or one or both parents.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Declaration of Church leader of Minister

I.....*name*..... being the minister (or other leader or authorised representative or official) of*church name*.....

truthfully declare that the parent/guardian/carers/child detailed above are regular worshippers at the heart of my church (in accordance with the definition given above) and I confirm that they have been regularly attending at my church foryears and I can confirm that my church is affiliated to the Churches Together in England, or it is church which is in full sympathy with its Trinitarian stance.

Signed:..... Dated:.....

St John's, Haydon Wick (The diamond pin is St John's Church)

