



Preschool Admissions Policy From September 2026

socially mistakes **Together** potential
confidently morally spiritually
Grow **Learn** academically
Love **St** world
ourselves Jesus faith
others Joseph's

Date to be reviewed: Pentecost 2027

BACKGROUND

St Joseph's Catholic School is promoted by the Diocese of Northampton and is maintained by Buckinghamshire County Council. The LAC Committee is responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to the admission of pupils to the Preschool. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, the advice of the Diocesan Trustee, and its duty to the school and the Roman Catholic community.

The ethos of St Joseph's Catholic School is based on Christian Gospel values and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. We ask parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the rights of parents who are not of the Roman Catholic faith to apply for and be considered for a place here.

Admissions

Please note there is a separate admissions policy for a place in St Joseph's Reception and a place in the Preschool does not automatically result in a place in the main school.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Responsibility for the admission of pupils is delegated to the LAC Committee.

Currently prior to compulsory education, every child is entitled to receive 15 hours free Preschool education from the start of the term following his or her third birthday. Parents are entitled to 5 sessions free of charge (Universal Funded Entitlement) and one optional session if there is availability, chargeable at £19.50.

In exceptional circumstances, children may be admitted before this subject to discussion and agreement between parents and the Early Years Leader. The final decision regarding admission of funded children between their 2nd and 3rd birthday rests with the LAC Committee, informed by the professional judgement of the leadership team.

Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child in the Preschool from September 2027 – August 2027 must complete the Preschool admission form and submit it to the school office by 15th January 2026.

The LAC Committee will consider all applications according to the criteria set out in this policy without reference to the ability or aptitude of the child. Late applications will be accepted but dealt with after all applications made by the deadline.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their application by 1st May. To accept the offer of a place, parents will pay a deposit of £100 (unless the child's attendance will be fully funded in which case no deposit is payable), which will be

deducted from Preschool fees when the child starts attending the Preschool. In all other cases, the deposit is non-refundable.

PRESCHOOL SESSIONS

St Joseph's Preschool will be open at the following times:

	Mornings	Lunch (Additional charge)	Afternoons
Monday	8:45-11:45am	11.45-12.15pm	12.15-3.15pm
Tuesday	8:45-11:45am	11.45-12.15pm	12.15-3.15pm
Wednesday	8:45-11:45am	11.45-12.15pm	12.15-3.15pm
Thursday	8:45-11:45am	11.45-12.15pm	12.15-3.15pm
Friday	8:45-11:45am	11.45-12.15pm	12.15-3.15pm

There are morning and afternoon sessions each day. There is an additional charge of £3 should you wish your child to stay for lunch.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The LAC Committee has set its planned Admission Number for the Preschool at 48. In the event of oversubscription, once children who hold an Educational Health Care Plan who have been allocated a place, the following criteria will be applied:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children, including those who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note 2).
2. Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the relevant parish(es) for whom the school is the nearest Catholic school (see notes 3 & 7) and who have a sibling (see note 4) attending the school at the time of admission.
3. Other Catholic children (see note 3).
4. Siblings of other children of the school roll at expected time of admission. (see note 4)
5. Children of staff⁶ at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School who have been employed at the school for more than two years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.
6. Children of other Christian denominations supported by a priest or minister of religion.
7. Children of other Christian denominations without support from a priest or minister of religion.
8. Children of other faiths.

9. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social or, medical need of the child which can most appropriately be met at this school. (see note 6).*
- (ii) Siblings of children who will be on the school roll at the expected date of admission.*
- (iii) Children who have attended St Joseph's pre-school.*
- (iv) Proximity of the child's permanent address to school (as the crow flies)*

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

Applications should be made directly to the school using the school's own application form (available from the school or can be downloaded from the school website). Places will be allocated and confirmed to parents by the 1st March. Any remaining places will be allocated on a 'first come first served' basis. There will be three intakes throughout the year: September, January and April.

LEAVERS DURING THE YEAR

Parents are required to give a months' notice for any change of sessions, subject to spaces being available. The place of a child who has been withdrawn cannot be held open and will be automatically made available to a child on the waiting list. If parents/carers wish their child to return to the Preschool, then they will have to re-apply for a place and the application will be considered according to the criteria along with other applications at the time, unless there are special circumstances. The fact that a child has been previously been in the Preschool class, or any other Preschool class, will in no way influence the decision on being offered a place.

ATTENDANCE AND LOSS OF A PRESCHOOL PLACE

If attendance and/or punctuality are poor or erratic the Preschool teacher will talk the child's parents/carers and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from Preschool education, attendance needs to be regular and punctual due to the great demand for places. This conversation should be recorded and dated.

If after a period of two weeks, attendance and/or punctuality remain poor, a letter will be sent to the parents/carers inviting them to meet with the Head Teacher.

If, following the meeting, there is no sustained improvement in attendance and/or punctuality within an agreed period, then the child may lose their place.

Parent/carers will be notified of the loss of place in writing.

If a child is absent for a period of three weeks without any contact from the parents and the school has been unable to make contact within this time, the child may lose their place and it may be offered to someone else. This will be decided by the Head Teacher, and a letter explaining the situation will be sent to the parents/carers.

TRANSFER FROM PRESCHOOL TO RECEPTION

All parents and carers must be aware that a place in the Preschool does not guarantee a place in the school and that they must go through the correct admissions procedure with Buckinghamshire County Council.

The Preschool staff will liaise closely with colleagues in reception classes to plan for a smooth transition into our reception class, or any other chosen or allocated school. Preschool staff will send reports and other agreed records to other schools as appropriate. If attendance and/or punctuality are poor or erratic the Preschool teacher will talk the child's parents/carers and remind them that for the child to benefit fully from Preschool.

APPEALS

All parents have the right to appeal against any unsuccessful application to the Admissions Committee of the Governing Body, whose decision is binding on the Preschool and the parents. Please contact the School for details of how to appeal.

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal, the Preschool will not consider any further application in the same school year (1st September to 31st August) unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example, a change of address.

WAITING LISTS

The Preschool maintains a waiting list in admission criteria order. Any places will be offered when they become available. To accept the offer of a place, parents will pay a deposit of £100 (unless the child's attendance will be fully funded in which case no deposit is payable), which will be deducted from Preschool fees when the child starts attending the Preschool. In all other cases, the deposit is non-refundable.

The school will periodically seek confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the Preschool waiting list.

HELP AND ADVICE

The Early Years Leader and/or other member of the Senior Leadership Team will be pleased to meet and help with further advice. Please make contact via the School Office:

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School,
Priory Road,
Chalfont St. Peter,
Bucks SL9 8SB
Telephone: 01753 887743
Email: office@stjosephschalfont.school

Any outstanding queries will be referred to the LAC Committee for response.

ADMISSION OF TWO-YEAR OLDS

To apply for a place for a child after their 2nd birthday but before the term after they turn 3, please make an appointment to discuss this with the Early Years Leader **before** applying.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.
2. A 'looked after child' has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Both categories include those children who have been in state care outside of England.
3. 'Catholic' means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest (who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church).
4. 'brother or sister' and 'sibling' includes:
 - (i) All-natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
 - (ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.
5. A 'parent' means all-natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child.
6. To demonstrate an exceptional social or medical need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require a letter from a Doctor (medical need) or Director of Children Services (social need) in the relevant Local Authority, specifying why the school is the only reasonable alternative for the child and the reasons why other schools in the catchment area for the child are not appropriate.
7. For the purposes of this policy, the relevant parishes are: St Joseph's, Chalfont St Peter (which includes The Most Holy Name Church, Denham and Bridgettine Convent, Iver) and St Teresa's, Beaconsfield.