

Admission to School Nursery Policy

School Admissions & Access Service

August 2026



Barnsley – the place
of possibilities.



Introduction

The Barnsley Local Authority processes admission to school nurseries for the schools listed in Appendix 1.

Attendance at a school nursery does not guarantee a place at that school.

A timetable for admission to school nursery is provided at Appendix 2.

1. Date of Admission to School Nursery

Children who turn three between the following dates	Month of Admission	Term of Admission
1st April – 31st August	September following their 3 rd Birthday	Autumn
1st September – 31st December	January following their 3 rd Birthday	Spring
1st January – 31st March	After Easter* following their 3 rd birthday	Summer

*April born children are admitted the September following their 3rd birthday, and not after Easter, regardless of when Easter falls.

2. Expressing a Preference for Admission to nursery

2.1 This procedure applies to admission to nursery (Foundation Stage 1) in a primary school.

2.2 For admission to nursery (Foundation Stage 1), parents will be invited to express two preferences for those nursery schools at which they wish their child to receive education.

2.3 Parents are eligible to apply from the term following their child's second birthday. Refer to Appendix 2 for detailed timescales.

5.4 The application will provide two spaces in which parents can state their preferences in rank order.

5.5 Applications can be submitted through the Council Website using the Online Admissions System, which is the preferred method of application recommended to parents. Forms can also be posted or emailed directly to School Admissions (parents are advised to obtain proof of posting if using a postal service).

5.6 Applications must be submitted by the closing dates of 1st May, 1st October or 1st February (dependent on term in which child is eligible to receive Early Years Funding). Refer to Appendix 2.

3. Single Offer of a School Nursery Place

3.1 All preferences for individual school nurseries will be treated equally.

3.2 For each preference expressed the Authority will determine whether the child is eligible for admission.

3.3 Where a preference is expressed for a nursery which is oversubscribed the Authority will apply the priority of admission oversubscription criteria.

3.4 The Authority will extend a single offer for a school nursery place based on the highest ranked preference where the child meets the eligibility criteria.

3.5 The Authority will only make a single offer of a school nursery place for 15 hours per week (the universal funding entitlement for every 3 & 4 year-old).

3.6. Parents wishing to access 30 hours or specify a morning or afternoon session must discuss this directly with the school nursery.

3.7 Parents will be notified of the offer at least six weeks before the start of the term in which their child becomes eligible.

3.8 No acknowledgement of an offer will be required from the parent where they accept that offer of a place. However, where a parent declines the offer of a place made to them by the Authority, they must inform the Authority within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the letter.

3.9 Where the Authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent, the child will remain on the waiting list. Parent can choose for their child to attend an alternative Early Years Setting whilst remaining on the waiting list for their preferred school.

3.10 Where an application submitted by a parent contains fewer than two preferences it will be processed using the same criteria as one which contained two.

3.11 In the case where a parent fails to complete and submit an application form, they will not receive a single offer of a school nursery place.

4. Late Applications

4.1 Late applications for nursery schools received after 1st October, 1st February, or 1st May (depending on the term in which the child becomes eligible to start) will be considered only after the initial allocation of nursery places has been made for applications submitted by the respective deadlines.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

5.1 Where the number of applications for a nursery school received for each term exceeds the number of places available, then admission will be determined in accordance with the following priority of admission criteria:

- Children who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school are required to be admitted.
- First, to Looked After Children (LAC), Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), and children who have been in state care outside of England (IPLAC).
- Second, to the eldest child allocated in order from oldest to youngest

5.2 A 'looked after child' is 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 care functions at the time of making an application to the school.

5.3 Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). This also includes 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.

6. Waiting Lists

6.1 The Authority will establish a waiting list for all nurseries where the number of applications exceeds the available places.

6.2 Names of children will automatically be placed on the waiting list for a nursery where they have not been offered a place where that nursery is ranked above that at which a place has been offered to the parent.

6.3 Parents will have the right to request their child's name placed on the waiting list of a school where they have not been offered a place which is ranked lower than that at which they have received a single offer of a school place.

6.4 A vacancy arises in nursery only when the number of allocations to a particular school fall below the number of places available. Any vacancy which arises in nursery following allocation of places will be filled from the waiting list.

6.5 The waiting list will be established during the termly allocations and be maintained until the child is eligible to start full time school.

6.6 The waiting list is determined according to the Authority's priority of admission oversubscription criteria.

6.7 Following the termly allocations, should an application be received for a school where the pupil has a higher priority, as determined by the admissions criteria for a place at the school, they will be placed on the waiting list above those with a lower priority.

7. Deferral of a nursery place

7.1 Parents have the option to defer their child's nursery place for up to two terms following the initial offer. The child will be placed on the waiting list. Deferring a child's nursery place does not guarantee an offer for the later term. Applications will be reconsidered with all other applications for that term.

8. False Information

8.1 If the Authority determines that a school place offer was made based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, and this has denied a place to a more eligible child, the offer will be rescinded.

9. Appeals Against the Authority's Decision Not to Offer a School Nursery Place

9.1 As attendance at school nursery is not compulsory, there is no appeals process in place.

10. Date of Birth Criterion: Tie Break

10.1 Where the offer of the remaining place in the nursery could be made to the parent of eligible multiple siblings, it will be for the parent to determine for which sibling the single offer of the school place will be made.

- a) Where the offer of the remaining place in the nursery could be made for a number of eligible children with the same date of birth the determination of the single offer will be by Random Allocation.
- b) The Random Allocation will be completed by the Local Authority's admission system.

11. Parental Responsibility & disputes

11.1 Parents or carers who hold parental responsibility have the right to make the application for school. However, only one application can be made so a decision must be taken as to which parent/carer will complete the application.

11.2 The school preferences must be agreed by all parties, if they do not agree all application(s) will be withdrawn.

11.3 If parents or carers are not in agreement of the application to school, the application will not be processed until written consent is given by both parties or a court order has determined the school preferences.

12. Transferring school nursery

12.1 Parents or carers who wish to move their child to another school nursery setting in Barnsley, must complete a new form. The School Admissions Team will be able to support with this request by email or telephone call.

13. Children delaying entry into Reception

13.1 A child reaches compulsory school age on the 31st December, March or August following their 5th birthday.

13.2 If a child delays entry to Reception, they may continue to access early years funding (e.g. 15 or 30 hours) **only** if they are not enrolled in a school place.

13.3 Once a child is attending a school, they are no longer eligible for early years funding at a nursery setting.

13.4 During the delayed term(s), the child **must not** attend both a school and a nursery setting simultaneously if claiming early years funding

13.5 A deferred or delayed entry does not guarantee a Reception place at the attended nursery school.

APPENDIX 1

Admissions School Nurseries

Apply to school admissions for the following nurseries:

All Saints Academy Darfield	Milefield Primary School
Athersley North Primary School	Oakhill Primary Academy
Athersley South Primary School	Oakwell Rise Primary Academy
Birkwood Primary School	Outwood Primary Academy Darfield
Burton Road Primary School	Outwood Primary Academy Littleworth Grange
Carlton Primary Academy	Parkside Primary Academy
Cherry Dale Primary School	Penistone St John's Voluntary Aided Primary School
Darton Primary School	Queens Road Academy
Dodworth St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy	Sandhill Primary School
Goldthorpe Primary Academy	Shawlands Primary School
Gooseacre Primary Academy	Springvale Primary School
Greenfield Primary School	St Helen's Primary Academy
High View Primary Learning Centre	Summer Lane Primary School
Highgate Primary Academy	The Forest Academy
Hoyland Common Primary School	The Hill Primary Academy
Hunningley Primary School	The Mill Academy
Joseph Locke Primary School	Ward Green Primary School
Keresforth Primary School	Wellgate Primary School
Kexbrough Primary School	West Meadows Primary School
Lacewood Primary School	Wilthorpe Primary School
Ladywood Primary School	Wombwell Park Street Primary School
Laithes Primary School	Worsbrough Bank End Primary School
Lift Meadstead	Worsbrough Common Primary School
Mapplewell Primary School	

Schools that do their own admissions

Apply directly to the schools for the following nurseries:

Brierley Church of England Primary School
Heather Garth Primary School Academy
Holy Rood Catholic Primary School
Holy Trinity Catholic and Church of England School
Jump Primary School
Kings Oak Primary
Lift Shafton
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
St Helen's Catholic Primary School
St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School
Tankersley St Peter's CofE (Aided) Primary School
The Ellis Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Schools that do not have a nursery unit

Barugh Green Primary School	Millhouse Primary School
Birdwell Primary School	Oxspring Primary School
Brierley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Royston St John Baptist CE Primary
Carrfield Primary Academy	Silkstone Common Junior and Infant School
Cawthorne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Silkstone Primary School
Cudworth Churchfield Primary School	St Mary's Church of England Primary school
Elsecar Holy Trinity CofE Primary Academy	Summerfields Primary Academy
Gawber Primary School	Thurgoland Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School
Hoyland Springwood Primary School	Thurlstone Primary School
Hoylandswaine Primary School	Upperwood Academy

APPENDIX 2

Timetable for admission to Nursery School

Child turns three between	Apply from	Apply by	Notified by	Term of admission
1 st September – 31 st August	1 st January following their 2 nd birthday	1 st October	1 st week in November	Spring (January)
1 st January – 31 st March	1 st April following their 2 nd birthday	1 st February	1 st week in March	Summer (after Easter)
1 st April – 31 st August	1 st September following their 2 nd birthday	1 st May	1 st Week in June	Autumn (September)

* Applications received after the closing date for on time applications will be processed after the termly allocations. If a child applying is already eligible to attend nursery applications will be processed within three school weeks of receipt.

Further Reading

[School Nursery Places](#)

[Early Education Funding for three and four-year-olds](#)

[30 Hours free childcare for three and four-year-olds](#)

Contact & Information

Web: [Barnsley School Admissions](#)

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