



## ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAINTAINED COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED NURSERY SCHOOLS 2025-26

### **Policy**

Applications for all maintained nursery school places including those in the Voluntary Aided sector are co-ordinated by the Local Authority. Although there is no requirement under the School Admissions Code for the Local Authority to co-ordinate nursery admissions, all schools with maintained nurseries in St.Helens have agreed that the Local Authority should do this on their behalf.

The Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided schools and the Academy Trust for Academy Schools are the admission authorities for their schools and, therefore, determine their own oversubscription criteria. Details are available from the school.

### **Making an application**

In June 2023, the Local Authority opened the online application system to enable parents to apply for a maintained nursery for the Academic Year 2025-26. Paper applications will also be available for parents who do not wish to apply online. Parents will be invited to name up to three maintained St Helens nurseries on the form.

Applications will be considered on a termly basis after the closing dates detailed in the table below. Children will normally turn age 3 before the start of the term for which the application is made.

<b>Child's Age</b>	<b>Term of Admission</b>	<b>Closing Dates</b>	<b>Decision letters sent to parents</b>
3 on or before 31 August 2025	Autumn 2025	21 July 2024	25 September 2024
3 on or before 31 December 2025	Spring 2026	22 July 2025	23 September 2025
3 on or before 31 March 2026	Summer 2026	22 July 2025	23 September 2025

Children who meet the criteria for a priority nursery placement (see part 2 of application form under 'Priority Nursery Placements Procedure) will be prioritised in the nursery allocation process for the term following their third birthday - where there are available places, and it is the most suitable nursery that meets the child's educational needs.

All parents are entitled to 15 hrs free nursery provision from the term following the child's third birthday.

Normally, maintained school nurseries offer the universal 15 free hours in either five morning or five afternoon sessions. Schools will seek to accommodate parents' preferences, but this may not always be possible and cannot be guaranteed.

Places offered through the co-ordinated admissions process will only be for the universal 15 hours Free Childcare. Parents will need to contact schools to discuss the possibility of securing the additional 15 hours free childcare under the extended entitlement for working parents (if eligible) –

this will depend on space available in the relevant maintained nursery. Parents will be permitted to access their extended entitlement at any registered childcare provider in St.Helens.

Each nursery school/unit has a set number of places as detailed in the following table. Parents of rising 3 children who apply for spring or summer term admission should note that places will have already been allocated to children who were age 3 before 1 September and therefore limit the number of places available for the spring and summer term allocations.

### **Admission Numbers**

<b>Community Nursery Units/Schools</b>	<b>Admission Number 2025-26</b>	<b>Community Nursery Units/Schools</b>	<b>Admission Number 2025-26</b>
Allanson Street	60	Merton Bank Primary	26
Ashurst	26	Newton-le-Willows	52
Broad Oak	75	Rainhill	80
Carr Mill	52	Rivington	52
Chapel End	52	Robins Lane	26
Eaves	26	Sherdley	52
Eccleston Mere	52	Sutton Manor	26
Grange Valley	80	Thatto Heath	80
Legh Vale	100	Willow Tree	52
Lyme Community	35		

<b>Voluntary Controlled Nursery Units</b>	<b>Admission Number 2025-26</b>	<b>Community Nurseries in Voluntary Aided Primary Schools</b>	<b>Admission Number 2025-26</b>
Sutton Oak CE Primary	52	Corpus Christi	39
Wargrave CE Primary	70	Rectory C.E.	52

### **Oversubscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Nurseries**

If more applications are received than the number of places available, the Local Authority will use the following criteria, in order of priority, for deciding how places will be allocated:

- (1) looked after children and children who were previously looked after but then became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order<sup>1</sup>. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.<sup>2</sup>
- (2) children resident within St Helens who have been identified as a priority nursery applicant under the Local Authority's priority nursery placement procedure.
- (3) children resident in the Borough of St Helens.
- (4) children resident outside the Borough of St Helens.

<sup>1</sup> 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 services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

<sup>2</sup> A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

### **Tie Break**

In the event of any over-subscription in the number of applications made under any of the categories above the Local Authority will offer places firstly to children aged 3 before the term of admission and whose family home is nearest the school. The measurement shall be done by the Local Authority in a straight line using a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) data and the National Grid co-ordinates for the family home and the school. Where the tie break does not distinguish between applicants e.g. children living in the same block of flats random allocation will be used. This will be done by drawing lots and supervised by someone independent of the school.

### **Special Conditions for Twins (etc)**

Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins (or triplets etc) the Local Authority will not apply the tie break as it will admit the other twin etc too, even if that means going above the admission number. However, it is not possible to do this where the admission would breach the staff to pupil ratio. In that situation, only one place will be offered and the parent has to decide which child will take up the place, if any.

### **Late Applications**

Applications submitted after the closing date will only be considered alongside those who applied on time when they are received before the allocation procedures begin. However, as this date cannot be predicted, parents have no guarantee that any application received after the closing date will be included in the initial allocation.

### **False Information**

Any offer of a place is subject to a birth certificate and proof of address being provided. The address, which is given, should be that where the parent and child normally live. Where false information has been provided the Local Authority may withdraw the place that has been offered.

### **Waiting List**

If a parent's application is refused their child's name will be kept on a waiting list until the end of the spring 2026 term. The waiting list will be kept in criteria (not date) order. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place.

### **Appeal Procedure**

Parents should note that there is no right of appeal if a place at their preferred nursery cannot be allocated. Where a place cannot be offered, the Local Authority will inform parents of other St Helens maintained nursery schools/units with available places.

### **Transfer to Reception Class**

Parents should note that there is no guarantee that a child who has a place in a nursery will automatically secure a place at the Infant/primary School to which the nursery is attached. Parents must apply separately for a reception year place.

## Flowchart Summarising the Procedure for a Priority Nursery Placement

### Early Identification of Needs

Lead Professional identifies child meets the criteria for a priority nursery placement and calls for a Family Action Meeting (see notes 1 and 2 below and part 2 of Priority Nursery Placement application). Prior to the meeting the lead professional should contact the Admissions Section for clarification on available maintained nursery places. **It is mandatory** to invite a representative from the school as well as the Children's Centre Educator from the child's local Children's Centre to the Family Action Meeting or at least to consult with them about a potential Priority Nursery Placement.

### EHAT

Lead Professional must complete an eCAF prior to the Family Action Meeting

### Family Action Meeting

At the Meeting the child's/children's needs will be discussed within the family context. All available educational/childcare settings should be considered including: Patch funding, Section 17, 2-year-old funding, 3 & 4-year-old entitlement and Priority Nursery Placement. The Lead professional will complete a Family Action Plan based on the needs of the whole family (holistic approach).

### Family Action Plan

If a Priority Placement has been identified as the most appropriate provision the Lead Professional must submit the following:

- **An EHAT**
- **An application for a Priority Nursery Placement**
- A Copy of the **Family Action Plan**
- **A record of the meeting** reflecting discussion about the most suitable childcare

This must be sent to: School Admissions, Atlas House, Corporation Street, St Helens WA9 1LD

### Approved

Application passed to Admissions.

### Not approved

### Admissions Section

Decision letter sent according to Admissions Timetable.

### Further Family Action Meeting

Lead Professional to review Family Action Plan and discuss Educational/childcare settings again, then:

Re-submit the application for Priority Placement with the EHAT, a copy of Family Action Plan and a record of the meeting reflecting discussion about the most suitable provision.

**OR**

Consider other options i.e. Children's Centre, PVI Settings.

In brief, an application for a Priority Nursery Place will normally be made as an outcome of a Family Action Meeting.

**If a maintained nursery is being considered the relevant school will be invited to attend the meeting.** If a place in the maintained sector is deemed appropriate, then a **Priority Nursery Placement Application Form** must be completed together with an **EHAT** and a **record of the Family Action Meeting** including the **Family Action Plan** along with any discussion notes should be attached.

**EHAT No:**



## Application for a Priority Nursery Placement

### PART 1

To be completed by parents/carers (after the Family Action Meeting has identified that a Priority Nursery placement in a St Helens Local Authority maintained nursery is the most appropriate for the child).

<b>Your Child's Details</b>	
Surname: ..... Date of Birth ...../...../.....	
Legal surname at birth if different from above .....	
First Name(s)..... Gender(please tick) Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	
Home Address .....	
Postcode ..... Daytime telephone number (if any) .....	
Is the child in the care (or previously been in the care)of a Local Authority Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

NAME OF NURSERY which meets child's <i>educational</i> needs as agreed at Family Action Meeting

<b>PREFERRED SESSION TIME</b>	
Please state whether you would prefer a morning (am) or afternoon (pm) session and if there are any particular reasons for your preference	
am	
pm	
either	

<b>Parent/Carer Signature</b>	
I have noted the information in the current 'Nursery Education: Information for Parents' booklet and declare that the information given on this form is accurate and subject to verification.	
I also understand that the information provided on this form will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. It will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the provision of education services and education funding. In connection with this purpose, the information may be shared with schools. It may also be processed or shared with any organisation in the interests of preventing fraud, criminal offences and to ensure child health, welfare and protection	
<b>I am the parent or have parental responsibility for the child named</b> Signature (Parent/Carer) :	Date:

## Application for a Priority Nursery Placement

### PART 2

To be completed by the Lead Professional. I confirm that a priority placement in a St Helens maintained nursery is the most appropriate for the child as they meet (where indicated) one or more of the following criteria: Please tick...

1	The child has a disability	
2	The child has been/is Looked After by the Local Authority	
3	The child is subject to a Children Act 1989 Order	
4	There is no one exercising Parental Responsibility	
5	The child has a learning difficulty and may be subject to a statement of special needs	
6	The child is at risk or physical, sexual or emotional abuse or is neglected	
7	The child experiences mental health problems	
8	The child self- harms	
9	The child is terminally ill or suffers from a significant medical condition	
10	The child is homeless	
11	The child is having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age	
12	Previously eligible for a two year old funded nursery place	

**Please note: children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. (DDA and EYFS Card published in 2009)**

### PART 3

Recommended term of admission (this must not be before the child's third birthday):  
\_\_\_\_\_ term

**Name of Lead Professional:** ..... **Job title**.....

**Date :** .....**Contact Details**.....

**Telephone No :** .....

To be returned with a copy of the EHAT, the Family Action Plan and a record of the meeting to:  
**School Admissions, PO Box 512, WA10 9JX.**

### PART 4

Lead Professional considering application	<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Outcome of consideration: Y/N</b>	<b>Date:</b>

### PART 5

Admissions use only	<b>Professional informed of allocated nursery by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>