Foundation Stage Unit Policy and Procedure

Offwell C of E Primary School

Revised: November 2026

As a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School, Devon County Council is the admission authority and has responsibility for setting these admission arrangements and for making decisions regarding admissions applications. The decision-making process is delegated to the governing body.

These arrangements seek to comply with the government's School Admissions Code, the Local Conditions of Funding, the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Education for Three and Four Year Olds and Securing Sufficient Childcare and the co-ordinated admission schemes of Devon County Council, the local authority (LA) for this area.

The Ethos of Offwell C of E Primary School

At Offwell we are proud of our school; you will find a friendly and family atmosphere where we get to know each child whilst fostering a sense of community responsibility. Our Christian vision and values underpin everything we do: providing a safe, supportive and encouraging environment in which children's learning about themselves, each other and the world is paramount, whilst ensuring that their school days are enjoyable.

Early Years Entitlement Funding (EYEF) and 2 Year Funding

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to a free early education place for 570 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year.

Some 2 year olds are eligible for a funded place in a setting that the LA has approved as being good or better quality. Our nursery/ Foundation Stage Unit (FSU) can admit two year olds at the start of the term in which they have their third birthday.

We expect to admit children that will be using their EYEF (or 2 Year Funding for eligible rising 3 year olds) funding as well as children whose parents are buying additional hours and those that are both funded and buying hours. There may be some children who are only attending for bought hours and some that only attend for funded hours.

Admissions to the Nursery/ FSU

Offwell C of E Primary School admits:

- Funded 2 year olds as part of 2 Year Funding as rising 3 year olds at the start of the term in which they have their third birthday.
- Unfunded 2 year olds as rising 3 year olds at the start of the term in which they have their third birthday.
- Funded three and four year olds from the start of the term following their third birthday.
- Unfunded three and four year olds, over the funded 15 hours (all 3 & 4 year olds) from the start of the term following their third birthday.

Patterns of Attendance Available

We are required to offer early learning and care in a flexible way. Our school makes a core offer of:

Morning sessions of 3 hours between 8.50am and 12 noon (10 minutes are offered free to then match school morning session time). Children can stay until 1pm (counted as 4 hours)

Afternoon sessions of 3 hours between 12.00 to 3.15pm (15 minutes are offered free to then match school afternoon session time) and

All day sessions of 9.00 to 3.00pm (with additional time offered free to cover hours from 8.50am until 3.15pm) during term time only.

If you choose an afternoon or an all day session this includes the lunchtime period that is [12.00 – 1.00pm]. This time is considered to be part of the day when children continue their learning and will be funded as part of the Early Years Entitlement.

Extended Hours

We recognise that some families may need a longer day and we are able to offer this provision on certain days by prior arrangement only because of the additional qualifications staff require legally to care for nursery aged children. Governors will monitor and review this decision annually or before if appropriate.

Charging

There is no charge for applying for a nursery/FSU place here, for admission or for the provision of education. We will not request donations before or during the admissions process and any donations made to the school following admission are entirely voluntary. No activities such as visits are compulsory. We do not charge a deposit for retaining a nursery place.

The school must comply with the LAs Local Conditions of funding for all settings that offer the EYEF. A charge cannot be made if a child is only attending the nursery/FSU as part of their EYEF.

Details about buying additional sessions/hours in the nursery/FSU are set out in the charging policy. A policy on charging for activities is available on request from the school and can be viewed on our website.

The table below sets out our session times. When applying for a place please tell us what sessions you need. We only consider requests for sessions AFTER the oversubscription criteria have been applied.

Session Choices	Hours	Funded/Bought
8.40 – 12.00	3	As part of the EYEF or bought. We do not charge for extra 20 minutes.
8.40 – 1pm	4	As part of the EYEF or bought. We do not charge for extra 20 minutes.
12.00 - 3.10	3	As above – extra 10 minutes is not charged.
8.40 – 3.10	6	As part of the EYEF or bought.

Parents only wishing to use their 15 funded hours with us need to choose sessions carefully so that they can access the full 15 hours e.g. sessions of 6 + 3 + 3 + 3 hours = 15

Some parents are eligible to receive 30 hours funded hours for their children. Please enquire if you believe this may apply to you.

School Lunches

Free school meals (FSM) can be provided for children (whose parents meet the eligibility criteria) and if their child attends **both** before and after the lunch time period – this generally means an all day session. A FSM will be provided whether the child is attending for funded or bought time and regardless of their age.

Children who do not meet the eligibility criteria for free school meals are offered the opportunity to either buy a school lunch or bring a packed lunch.

Visiting

We welcome visits from parents and children who are considering applying for a place here. This is an opportunity for you to see what we have to offer. Visits are not a compulsory part of the admissions process and will not affect decisions on whether a place can be offered at our nursery/FSU. If you would like to visit Offwell C of E Primary School and Nursery, you should contact the school to make an appointment.

Most children will start at the nursery or FSU at the start of the term or half term. Other children join us “in-year” at other times. This may be because they are new to the area or simply would like to transfer from another school or early years setting.

To apply for a place here you should use the School Nursery Application Form. The form is available in the Stepping Out booklet Guidance for Parents on Admissions of Nursery Places and Foundation Stage Units in Devon and on our school website www.offwell-primary.devon.sch.uk

Places are not allocated to a child automatically, even where:

- there is an older sibling attending here;
- a child attends a particular toddler group or Children’s Centre attached to the school;
- a parent has expressed an interest at any time in the school; or
- the child has always lived close to the school.

No places will be held in reserve for a child who applies late; the Governing Body cannot hold places empty if another child applies for admission. We will publicise the need to apply but the responsibility for making an application will be with you as the parent.

How to Apply For a Nursery/ FSU Place

Parents must complete the School Nursery Application form and return it to the school.

The closing dates for applications for the Nursery/ Foundation Stage Unit intake are: **1 May, 1 September and 1January**. You can apply after these dates but your application may not be considered until after all of the applications that were on time. If you couldn't apply before because, for instance, you moved to this area, you should make sure that you inform the school. If the reason for applying after the closing date is accepted, your application will be considered at the same time as everyone who did apply on time if this is still possible.

Information Provided in an Application

We would like all applications to be fully and honestly completed. It is important that where we offer places to some and refuse others we do so fairly and consistently. Where we have reason to believe that information is false and has been provided knowingly we may withdraw the offer of a place. This is particularly relevant where an address is given which is not the one from which a child will actually attend nursery/FSU and this disadvantages another child. If necessary, we will ask for evidence of a child's home address before admission.

If you know or believe that your child's address will change before admission, you must inform the School as this may affect your application.

What happens next?

If there are fewer applications than places then no application will be refused. Only if there are more applications than there are places available will the Governing Body prioritise applications according to the oversubscription criteria below.

By 1 May, 1 October and 1 February we will contact successful parents to welcome them to the school and to make arrangements for admission itself. You will also be contacted if we do not have a place available so that you can apply to another setting.

If you need help finding a place at another setting please contact DISC Devon's Family Information Service on discinfo@devon.gov.uk telephone 0845 155 1013. Or search for childcare online http://devon.childrensservicedirectory.org.uk/kb5/devon/disc/home.page

Points of Admission

Generally children will start at nursery/FSU at the beginning of a term. Children joining at 2 years 9 months may be eligible for 2 Year Funding until they become eligible for the EYE funding. Eligibility for all 3 years olds to receive the Early Years Entitlement Funding (EYEF) is at the start of the term following their third birthday. This funding will be paid up until the time when the child reaches statutory school age if the parent chooses to defer or delay entry into school.

Children who are eligible 2 or 3 years old		
On or after	**And on or before**	**Funding starts this term**
1 September	31 December	Spring (after Christmas holiday)
1 January	31 March	Summer (after Easter holiday)

1 April	31 August	Autumn (after Summer holiday)

There is a legal requirement that all children begin full time education by the beginning of the term following their **fifth** birthday. All places offered in Reception at the normal round are for full-time admission in the September following the **fourth** birthday. This is a legal requirement on schools but not on parents who retain a right to defer admission or send their child part time.

Deferred Admission

September is the earliest point for admission to the Reception class at this school but is not a compulsory start date. All parents can defer admission within the Reception year until the beginning of the term following their child's fifth birthday. This is a decision for the parent to make, taking all factors into account including the advice of educational professionals.

Those parents who decide that their child should defer must inform the Head teacher. The place offered for their child will be held open until the beginning of the term following the fifth birthday and will not be offered to another child. Where a parent does not inform the Head teacher that admission is to be deferred and does not admit the child in September, the place will be withdrawn and may be offered to another child.

Children born between 1 April and 31 August cannot automatically defer admission to Reception into the following September but can apply for a place in Year 1. This would be an in-year application, no earlier than the half term in June.

Delayed Admission

This is where a child starts an academic year later than normal but still enters at the Reception stage. Such an arrangement must be supported with any combination of medical, social and educational evidence from independent professionals. A place cannot be guaranteed a year in advance. For discussion and advice, a parent should contact the School Admissions Team. It is advisable to submit an application on time in any event whilst a request for delayed admission is considered by all parties including the School.

The Admissions Process for 3 year olds.

Parents requiring a place from 2 years 9 months will apply one term before the period indicated below.

Children become **eligible** for a place when they were born:	On or after **1.4.** & on or before **31.8.**	On or after **1.9.** & on or before **31.12.**	On or after **1.1.** & on or before **31.3.**
Visit the nursery in:	Spring term	Summer term	Autumn term
Apply by:	1 May	1 September	1 January
Admissions panel meet in:	2nd or 3rd week in May	Final week in September	Final week in January
Receive a letter about your application before:	May half term	October half term	February half term
Reply to the letter **within 2 weeks** to accept a place (or ask why you did not get a place). You can telephone, email or write to the school.			

Start at Nursery/FSU (or at the start of term closest to that month)	September **Autumn term**	January **Spring term**	April **Summer term**

Published Nursery Admission Number (PNAN)

This is the number of places we intend to make available for our normal intake. Once we set this number, we will not refuse admission for applications below the PNAN. If there is unexpectedly high demand and we believe we could admit more children, we inform Devon LA Early Years and Childcare Team and either some children will be admitted above the PNAN or we will increase the PNAN. The number of children that can be admitted will depend on their age, the amount of floor space we have, the number of toilets and hand basins we have and what additional staff may be required.

The Governing Body also factor in the local demand for places and the age ranges of the children wanting a place. If there is a change to the PNAN part way through the year this must be published.

If there is an increase in the demand for places the Governors may decide to increase the PNAN at the start of the following term in order to accommodate children on the waiting list and conversely reduce the PNAN if there is a very low demand.

The table below sets out our PNAN

The maximum number of 3 and 4 year old children (this includes rising 3 year olds) that will be admitted at any one time	The class will have no more than 22 (at any one time) including reception children. The PNAN will depend on how many reception children are in class. We would be able to accept more children than this providing not more than 22 attended any one session.

When there are more applications than places available the following oversubscription criteria are applied.

OFFWELL C of E FOUNDATION STAGE UNIT

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

If there are more applications than places for any admission

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in the FSU the Governing Body will use the following oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications for both funded and bought hours:

Any child whose Statement of Special Educational Needs names Offwell C of E Primary School will be admitted.

1. Children in Care or who ceased to be in Care because they were adopted, made the

subject of a residence order or made the subject of a special guardianship order.

2. Children for whom an exceptional medical or social need is demonstrated.

3. Children who live in the school's designated area with a sibling on roll at the time of application.

4. Other children living inside the school's designated area.

5. Children who live outside of the school's designated area with a sibling on roll at application.

6. Other children.

Notes to Oversubscription Criteria

i. If it is necessary to distinguish between children in a particular category, priority will be determined on the basis of distance between home and the School measured as a direct line from the entrance of the residential dwelling, to the School as plotted on Geographical Information System (GIS) [i.e. the shorter the distance, the higher the priority].

ii. If the tie-breaker at (i) is not sufficient to distinguish between applicants in a particular category, there will be a random ballot.

iii. Where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings (twins, triplets, etc.) places will be allocated together at the nursery/FSU wherever possible, including offering place(s) above the PNAN.

iv. Where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings (twins, triplets, etc.) resident in our designated area, every effort will be made to allocate places here, including offering place(s) above the Published Nursery Admission Number wherever possible. This recognises the exceptional nature of the emotional bonds between multiple birth siblings. Where that is not possible, parents will be invited to decide which of the children should be allocated the available place(s) or seek places at an alternative setting with sufficient vacancies to accommodate both or all of the multiple birth siblings.

v. Waiting lists are kept where there are more applications than places available. Waiting lists will be kept so long as there is at least one name on it.

vi. Where two or more children reside within a block of flats, they will be deemed to live at an equal distance from the School.

vii. For children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants the School will consider a family posted to the area as meeting residence criteria for the designated area even if a residential address has not been identified. This would require confirmation in the form of a

letter from the relevant government department (for example, the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or Government Communications Headquarters.)

i) Evidence of exceptional medical or social need will be demonstrated according to the protocol below:

Protocol for Admission of Need

Background

1. Parents are invited to express preference for the school they would like their child to attend, together with reasons for preference on the Application Form.

2. In a small number of cases, a preference for this nursery provision will be because a parent feels there is 'exceptional medical or social need' for their child to attend here.

3. The 'exceptional' nature of these cases denotes that they will be individual in circumstance, however, exceptional need could include:

- Eligible 2 year olds referred through 2 Year Funding
- A serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence;
- The death of a parent associated with another school or early years provision;
- Significant caring responsibilities which can be supported by Social Services;
- Where one or both parents or the child has a disability that may make travel to a school further away more difficult.[1]

4. It is intended that this protocol may pre-empt some admission appeals where it is considered that exceptional justification to attend this school can be demonstrated before applications are prioritised and processed.

5. It is expected that professional evidence from a social care, medical or education expert, independent of the family would be provided which sets out a reasoned and unequivocal opinion that the child would suffer a significant detriment by not being admitted here.

Practice

6. Where a parent cites exceptional need, or where the Governing Body feel the reasons given by a parent for preferring this school on their application form could be considered as such, the protocol will apply.

Admissions in the Normal Round

7. School Nursery application forms that indicate exceptional need will be discussed by the Governing Body. Further information may be sought from the applicant if necessary.

8. If the Governing Body accepts that exceptional need has been demonstrated, the parent will be advised that the application is considered to meet criterion 2. This is not a guarantee of a place although we would not expect to be in a position where criterion 2 applicants would be refused admission.

[1] These examples are not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive. Neither should it be assumed that similar circumstances would impact on different children and families in the same way.

9. Where the Governing Body does not agree that the need is exceptional, the application will be prioritised according to the school's over-subscription criteria and a place will be offered or refused accordingly.

10. Where the Governing Body do not agree that the need is exceptional and a place is refused, the parent[1] will have the right of appeal through the schools complaint process.

11. Where the Governing Body do not agree that need is exceptional, the parent will be able to provide further information for consideration.

In Year Admissions - 'Out of Normal Round'

12. If the nursery/FSU has vacancies, the application should not be refused. If the provision has reached or exceeded the Published Nursery Admission Number or other agreed admission limit, the Governing Body will consider whether exceptional need is demonstrated.

13. If the Governing Body feels that exceptional need has been demonstrated, the parent will be advised that a place can be offered to the child here or alternatively the school will signpost the parent to a setting where there are places available.

14. Where the Governing Body do not agree that the need is exceptional, the application will be prioritised according to the school over-subscription criteria and a place will be offered or refused accordingly.

15. Where the Governing Body do not agree that the need is exceptional and a place is refused, the parent will have the right of appeal through the schools complaints process.

16. Where the Governing Body do not agree that need is exceptional, the parent will be able to provide further information for consideration.

Waiting Lists

Following allocation of nursery/FSU places the school will retain a waiting list. Waiting lists will be kept in order of the oversubscription criteria above. Places on lists will not be prioritised according to how long a child's name has been on that list or by the age of the child. It is possible that a child's name could go down on a list as well as up.

If a place is only available for a short period of time, i.e. half a term or less, then the school will discuss with the parent whether it would be in the child's best interest to attend the nursery/FSU for such a short period of time before having to find a place at another setting. Continuity and consistency of care is most important in the early years and having lots of transitions can be disruptive for a child.

Parents with very young children, i.e. those that are not due to start within the next two terms, will be asked to complete a **Note of Interest** form which can be found in the back of the Stepping Out booklet and told when they should submit the School Nursery Application form.

Admissions at Other Times

You can make a request for admission after the normal rounds of admissions –using the School Nursery Application Form. This allows for your child to start at Offwell C of E Primary as soon as possible. A formal offer letter will then follow from the school.

If you are seeking an in-year nursery/ FSU place because your child has just moved to the area and doesn't already have a nursery/ FSU place, admission would be as soon as possible.

If parents choose to leave one setting (after the census or headcount week) where they have been funded for some of the 15 hour entitlement and go on to attend another setting instead - the setting where the child was initially funded will retain the Early Years Entitlement Funding for the remainder of the term. The new setting that the child attends must admit the child and will not receive funding for that child until the start of the following term.

If the parent has been buying hours at the first setting it is likely that they will be required to give a period of notice before they leave. If this notice period is not given the setting may levy a charge on the family.

Increasing the Hours Attended

If a place becomes available part way through a term and there is a waiting list, priority for the place will be given to the child/children on the waiting list. If the parents on the waiting list do not want the places as the times that are available then the places can be offered to parents of children who are already attending the nursery. Similarly, if there is not a waiting list and there are parents of children that already attend the nursery who want to either take up additional funded hours and/or buy extra hours then a list of those parents will be made and the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine who should be given priority for that place.

Admission Appeals

If a nursery/ FSU place is refused, parents can go through the schools complaints process to express their concerns. The Governing Body will review the decision and decide whether the refusal was justified on the grounds that the nursery/ FSU is full. Even if it is agreed that the nursery/FSU was full, it will also consider the impact on the child and family and may still award a place at the nursery/ FSU if there is both the physical space and sufficient staff available.

Staffing

We organise our Reception children into groupings of 30 or fewer. This is the legal maximum number of children allowed in a Key Stage One class with one qualified teacher. There are very limited exceptions which would allow a school to exceed 30 children in a Key Stage One class. The staffing requirements for nursery children are for a 2:26 ratio. The provision must be lead by a qualified teacher who is supported by a Foundation Stage Practitioner or Foundation Stage Supervisor who must have a minimum of an NVQ 3 (or equivalent) qualification in Early Years. Where nursery numbers exceed 26 there must also be a Foundation Stage Worker with an NVQ2 qualification (or equivalent). The Head teacher has some discretion over arrangements when staffing Foundation Stage Units (where reception children and nursery children are integrated) as the way in which children are grouped and staff are deployed will mean that staff levels may vary depending on the activities being undertaken. However this discretion must be exercised bearing in mind the infant class size legislation and the ratio and qualification requirements for the nursery children.

Governor run provision (that is not lead by a teacher) requires an NVQ 3 (or equivalent) Foundation Stage Practitioner or Foundation Stage Supervisor and an NVQ2 (or equivalent) Foundation Stage Assistant with up to 16 children; for 17 or more children there must also be another member of staff to meet the 1:8 ratio requirement.

Where the nursery is separately registered with Ofsted to admit younger two year olds the staff ratios are 1:4 (In provision that is lead by a qualified teacher this applies where children attend

from the start of the term following their second birthday up until the start of the term in which the child has their third birthday).

Transport

No transport is available for preschool children.

Uniform Policy

Children attending Offwell C or E Primary School Nursery are not expected to wear a uniform. However, there are items available should parents wish. Some of the items required can be purchased from us and the rest of the uniform can be bought from retail outlets. Parents unable to purchase items of uniform or equipment will not be penalised, wearing uniform in the nursery/FSU is optional.

Parent/ Provider Contract

The EYE can be taken at more than one setting. Although there is no upper limit on the number of settings a child can attend careful consideration must be given to ensuring that the child feels settled, safe and can form relationships with significant adults.

Once a place has been allocated parents are asked to complete the Parent Provider Contract this helps the school and parent to see what time is funded and what time is being bought.

Parents must not claim more than the 15 hour entitlement, checks are carried out to ensure that over claims are not made.

Changes to Attendance

Changes to the times when a child is attending will only be agreed to take effect from the start of a term. The oversubscription criteria will be applied to both 1. and 2. below to determine within each group which children should be given priority.

Order of priority for the consideration of unfilled places:

1. New applications from parents whose children do not yet attend the nursery/FSU.
2. Requests by parents whose children already attend the nursery/FSU and they want to increase or change the times their child attends.

It is expected that parents will ensure that their child will attend at the times agreed on the Parent Provider Contract so that children can establish a routine and be ready to start school.

If a child is sick the parent must inform the school. If a child does not attend the nursery/FSU for a period of more than two weeks without informing the school that child's place may be offered to another child.

Notice

Although, we ask for parents to give us ½ term's notice of leaving our nursery, we understand that family circumstances change rapidly and we do not charge for remaining sessions booked if a child leaves mid term.

Induction and Transition Arrangements for Starting Nursery/FSU

Induction session will be made available for children whose parents wish this, and will be arranged individually between the Headteacher and parents. Where a child has attended a different setting beforehand, the FSU leader will make contact with the previous setting for transition information to be passed on.

Home visits can be arranged, parents should discuss this with the FSU Leader or Headteacher.

Where children transfer from Offwell C of E Primary School's Nursery to Reception year, they will be provided with experiences to familiarise them with the routines and experiences of the school, such as attending Collective Worship, transition into play and lunchtime routines with the KS1 children. This will be discussed with parents beforehand.

Where staff changes are planned, parents will be informed and wherever possible, time dedicated to enable transition opportunities.

Where a child is transferring from Offwell C of E Primary School Nursery to either a different Nursery or Reception year, staff will ensure good transition information is shared in a timely manner.

Contacts and Further Information

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