



St James's C of E Primary School

Let Your Light Shine

Pre-School Admissions Policy (January 2026 start)

Ratified on: 27th November 2025

Ratified by: Lee Salton-McLaughlin

Review date: December 2026

Written by

N Sefton

Vision

We believe that every child is made in the image of God; inherently valuable and unique. Jesus is the light of the world and God has placed the light of the Holy Spirit within each of us:
Let your light shine to reach your God-given potential.
Let your light shine courageously.
Let your light shine as a beacon of hope.
Let your light shine ~ be the best we can be!

As a voluntary aided school, St James's CE Primary School Local Governing Body is the admission authority for the admission of children to its Pre-school.

There is no link between Pre-school admissions and admissions into the main school. For a Reception class place, a separate application will need to be made via Dudley Local Authority. Please see the separate main school admissions policy.

Pre-school is able to place between 16-32 children in the mornings and has capacity to increase this should demand meet available staffing ratios. All day sessions (6 hours), will be made available for all 30 hours children however additional 15 hours places, should parents wish to increase their child's hours, cannot be guaranteed unless it is financially viable to the pre-school.

Every child in the term after their third birthday is entitled to 15 hours funded early education. The school currently offers up to 15 hours of funded Pre-school education each week over 5 mornings. From September 2025, we will also offer 30 hour places to eligible children of working parents. Sessions offered at St James's Pre-school:

15 hour provision	AM sessions (Monday- Friday)	8:40am- 11:40am
30 hour provision	Monday – Friday	8:40am-3:20pm* A charge of £4.00 per day for the final 40 minutes of 2:40pm-3:20pm

Children will be able to enter pre-school the term after their third birthday. The school will not consider applications for earlier admission. The Pre-school place continues until the end of the summer term prior to the September when the child starts reception class.

There are three intakes (September, January and April)

All parents/carers will need to complete an application form for Pre-school which is available from the School Office and on the school website (Appendix 1) these forms will be kept on file until the term prior to the start date. The deadline for applications is the first day of term, in the term before your child would start Pre-school. Late applications will be processed if spaces are available. Completing the application form does not automatically entitle your child to a place at St James's Pre-school.

Once a place is offered the parent must accept or decline the offer within the time frames detailed in the offer letter. At this point parents are invited to express a preference for a morning or afternoon session or 30 hours and their DFE voucher code will be required in order to secure the place. Parents are reminded that they must apply for a child's 30-hour code the term before they need to access pre-school or revalidate their code when asked to do so to ensure it remains valid. Should the code expire then the child will be offered 15 funded hours.

Split Funding Arrangements

While the Department for Education (DfE) permits parents to split their child's funded early education entitlement between multiple providers, St James's CE Pre-school reserves the right to decline such arrangements.

This decision may be based on the following considerations:

1. Administrative Burden: Coordinating split claims requires communication with other providers and the local authority, which can be time-consuming.

2. Financial Viability: Government funding rates may be lower than private fees, making split arrangements less attractive for the setting.

3. Operational Complexity: Managing attendance and scheduling across multiple settings can introduce logistical challenges that affect the quality and consistency of care.

Proposed split funding arrangement will need to be submitted in writing to pre-school@st-james.dudley.sch.uk the term before the child takes up a place at pre-school.

In making decisions, Governors are mindful of parental preference but cannot guarantee to meet parental preferences in the event of over subscription.

To ensure continuity and a thorough education parents are strongly encouraged to ensure their child attends all five sessions offered (either mornings or full days), which will help their child to meet educational and social targets and support them to be school ready before moving in to full time a reception class.

If there are more applications than there are places available in the Pre-school, then all applications will be considered against the following over-subscription criteria:

1. First priority for admission shall be given to relevant Looked after children and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). Further references to previously looked after children means such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after.
2. Second priority for admission shall be given to children with a "serious and ongoing medical condition" where St. James's C.E. Primary is the most appropriate school to meet the condition. (Parents must provide supportive information from their child's Hospital Consultant at the time of application in order to be considered under this criteria. This supportive information should include information about the needs of the child and should detail the difficulties the child would experience if they attended another school. Parents should also indicate why St. James's C.E. Primary is the most appropriate to meet their child's medical condition rather than any other school. The Governing Body will not seek to obtain medical evidence on behalf of parents.)
3. Families who can demonstrate a close commitment to St James's Church, Wollaston

4. Families who can demonstrate a close commitment to a recognised Christian Church.
5. Priority for admission shall be given to children who have a brother/sister, half brother/sister (where the children share one common parent), or step-brother / stepsister, living at the same address and who will still be attending St. James's C.E. Primary in the academic year in which the child is due to start Pre-school.
6. Sixth priority will be for those families able to take the full 5 session offer with no planned absences.
7. Any places that remain available once the above applicants have been admitted, will be filled according to those children who live closest to the school, determined by a straight-line measurement in metres, from the home address to the main entrance of the school.*

*Parents may be asked for proof of address.

Should a place not be available, a parent may request that his/her child is placed on a waiting list for the Pre-school class. The waiting list order of priority is as the above categories 1-4 and is not based on the length of time on the waiting list.

There is no statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place in the Pre-school. Parents who wish to challenge the decision of the Governing Body should write to the Governing Body. The Admissions Committee will consider all challenges, and the Clerk will respond in writing on behalf of the Governing Body. Parents should note that all decisions regarding admissions remain the responsibility of the Governing Body and are not delegated to the Head teacher or other members of staff. Parents are asked to recognise that early applications will not be given any priority. Visits to Pre-school are warmly welcomed. Parents are invited to visit our school website to take a look at our Pre-school provision. If you have any unanswered questions, we are happy to answer them by phone on 01384 283701 or email at info@st-james.dudley.sch.uk

Appendix 1



Pre-school Application Form

Children can join our Pre-school at the beginning of the school term following their third birthday. For more information, please read our Pre-school admissions policy on the school website <https://www.st-james.dudley.sch.uk/page/pre-school/126547>

We will contact you in the term prior to your child starting Pre-school. At St James's we offer either 5 morning sessions or 5 full day sessions. Parents will be given the opportunity to express a preference for the type of place that they would prefer. Whilst we do our best to accommodate parental wishes we have to be mindful of staffing regulations and number of places. Please use the following link to apply for 15- or 30-hours free childcare:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

If the information you provide on this form changes, please ring the main school office (01384 283701) so that the form can be updated. If you wish your child to be removed from the list of applicants at any time, please inform us at your earliest convenience.

Child's surname	Child's forename
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Full names of parent(s) or guardian(s)	
Address including postcode	
Telephone	
Email address	
Other children at St James's Primary School	
Current or previous settings attended	
Session request: <input type="checkbox"/> 5 morning sessions <input type="checkbox"/> or 30 hours provision (Mon-Friday 08:40-15:20) with an additional cost £4.00 for the final 40 minutes of the day (2:40pm-3:20pm) Please note we are unable to accommodate a mixture of morning and full time sessions.	
Code for either 15 hour or 30 hour place:	
Details of medical and/or special educational need and/or disabilities	
Is your child a Looked after Child – in the care of the local authority	

I confirm that my child is eligible for 15 or 30 hours free childcare

I confirm that my child will attend all scheduled sessions, except in cases of illness or other unforeseen circumstances.

I understand that the 15/30 hour code needs to be renewed before the end of every term and failure to do so may result in my child's place being cancelled.

Signature

Date

Please note, attending St James's Pre-school **does not** guarantee a place in our Reception class – you need to apply for this separately through the Local Authority.

For more information Click this link: <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/school-information/school-admissions/>