



- **Our visions and values:**
- **Protecting children's right to play learn and have a voice.**
- **Keeping parents involved in children's development**
- **Governors and staff leading the way on quality**
- **Working partnership with health professionals and schools**
- **Being ethical, respectful and tolerant**

## Admissions and transitions policy for 26-27

<b>Status</b>	Statutory
<b>Statutory review timetable</b>	Arrangements to be determined annually. Any changes must be consulted on and where no changes are made, consultation is required at least every seven years
<b>Responsible governors</b>	Children's learning and development committee
<b>Last review date</b>	Spring 2026
<b>Date of next review</b>	Autumn 2026
<b>The policy is available for staff at:</b>	School offices and shared drive
<b>And for parents/carers at:</b>	School website

### Policy audit

#### Version, revision date, who revised, section revised

Vx, October 2020: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett: addition of COVID guidelines, clarification of offer process

V2, January 2022: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett: detail added to admissions criteria for children SEND; alignment with Local Authority criteria; addition of KCSiE 2021 guidance on transfer of records

V3, January 2023: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett: no change

V4, May 2023: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett, Pat English: detail added to deferral requests, Visiting Day corrected and updated, admissions email and settling in visits amended, school visits removed from transition process

V5, February 2024: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett, Hasina Rashid: added mechanism for new funding for 2-year-olds

V6, April 2025: Helen Currie, Alison Emmett, Lindsay Read: Visiting Day now free, revised offer for 2-year-olds, clarification on deferral, added Early Help referral to Admissions Criteria

V7, February 2026: Alison Emmett: change of committee to CLD, used Gemini AI and NHS readability tool to simplify and decrease reading age. Changed the order to make it sequential. Updated school statistics.

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This policy is developed and operates according to our 5 principles:

1. Protecting children's rights to play, learn and have a voice.
2. Keeping parents and carers involved in children's development.
3. Governors & staff leading the way on quality.
4. Working in partnership with health professionals and schools.
5. Being ethical, respectful and tolerant.

This policy is for:

- applicants for September 26
- in-year applicants for the academic year 26-27.

We will review it in Autumn 2026 for the 27-28 intake. Thereafter we will monitor and update it annually. We will update it sooner when national schools' admissions policy changes.

## Our aims

Young children often move between home and more than one setting before they're 5. This is a lot for parents, carers, and children to manage. We want starting and leaving our schools to be as smooth as possible. We aim to nurture the children's confidence and high self-esteem. A key part of this is working in partnership. We work closely with anyone who already supports a child's development:

- parents and carers
- other professionals.

The aim of this policy is to make sure:

- **Children** keep learning and playing in ways that match their unique interests.
- **Parents and carers** feel sure that their children are happy, safe, and heard at school.
- **Success** continues. We build on what children have already achieved so they can do their very best.

## Before Nursery

Most children join us from another early years setting. 'Most' means just over 50% of 2-year-olds and 65 to 70% of 3-year olds. Many of the others have never left their family.

To support this transition, we hold free stay and play sessions. We invite all families on the waiting list to come and play as often as possible. They get to know our staff, the environment, and our approach.

At both schools the Marketing and Policy Officer runs stay and play:

- **at Church Hill:** most Wednesdays in term time
- **at Low Hall:** most Thursdays in term time.

At Low Hall families can book by calling the Admin team on 020 8520 1689. For anyone who hasn't booked and for everyone at Church Hill, entrance is 'first come, first served'. Last entrance is half an hour after the session starts.

## Getting on the waiting list

Families can put their child's name on the Waiting List as soon as the child is born and has a name. Our Admissions Criteria below explains how the waiting list works.

## Two-year-olds

### Free Childcare (Funding)

A child may be eligible for free hours starting the term **after they turn two**. For some working families, funding can start as early as the term **after they are 9 months old**.

- **15 Free Hours:** Available for families receiving certain benefits, children with a disability (DLA/EHCP), or Looked After Children.
- **30 Free Hours:** Available for eligible working families.
- **Extra Hours:** Families can pay for extra daycare (8am–6pm). Book at least 2 days a week.

### Our Session Times (Term-time Only)

For 15-Hour Places:

- **Morning Option:** Monday to Friday, 9am to 12 noon.
- **Afternoon Option:** Monday to Friday, 1pm to 4pm.

For 30-Hour Places:

- **Option 1:** Monday to Thursday (9am to 4pm) and Friday (9am to 12 noon).
- **Option 2:** Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm.

*Note: We hope to offer a holiday playscheme at Church Hill when there is enough interest and we can make the building work.*

### How We Give Out Places

We have a ratio of slightly more than 1 adult to every 5 children. We offer places as soon as they become available.

When a space opens up, we give priority to:

- **For 15-hour places:** Families with Local Authority funding.
- **For daycare places:** Families with government funding for working parents.

### Moving Up

At Church Hill, children move from the 2-year-old team to the 3-year-old team the term after their third birthday and when they are developmentally ready. This move creates a space for a new 2-year-old to join us.

## 3-year-olds

### Free Childcare (Funding)

All children are eligible for 15 free hours of education, starting the term **after** their third birthday. Some families may be eligible for more.

- **15 Free Hours:** Available for all children.
- **30 Free Hours:** Available for eligible working families. (Note: For some families, this funding can start as early as the term after the child turns 9 months old).
- **Extra Hours:** Families can pay for extra daycare from 8am to 6pm. Book at least 2 days a week.

### Our Session Times (Term Time Only)

For 15-Hour Places:

- **Morning Option:** Monday to Friday, 9am to 12 noon.
- **Afternoon Option:** Monday to Friday, 1pm to 4pm.

For 30-Hour Places:

- **Option 1:** Monday to Thursday (9am to 4pm) and Friday (9am to 12 noon).
- **Option 2:** Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm.

### How We Give Out Places

Most of our places become available in September, after the older children leave for primary school.

- **September Starts:** Most 3-year-olds will start at this time.

- **Applications:** We begin our admissions process for the September intake just before the Easter holidays.
- **Waiting list:** If a place becomes available at any other time during the year, we follow the Admissions Criteria listed below to fill it.

## Short weeks

Children benefit from attending every weekday for their physical, social, and emotional development, and for their broad education. This is why we don't offer short weeks. The two exceptions are both strictly limited. Both are at the Executive Headteacher's discretion:

1. **Study** To allow a parent/carer to take up a student placement requiring longer hours (15-hour places only).
2. **Unusual circumstances** Examples are issues relating to Child Protection, Private Fostering, or for a family in crisis.

The schools may fund Exception 2 from the Extended Services budget.

## Admissions Criteria

At any point in the year when there are not enough spaces to offer a place to every child on the waiting list, we give priority to children in this order:

1. Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children.
2. Families who get the Local Authority funding for 2-year olds.
3. Families who get the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).
4. Families who get the government funding for eligible working families.
5. Those who have turned three while attending as 2-year-olds.
6. Medical or social reasons, children 'at risk', or those children referred to us by Early Help. Families must meet with the SENDco before we can offer a place for these reasons. If a child needs significant support, we may only offer them a 15-hour place. This is so we can offer them a high standard of support. The school SENDco decides how many hours we can offer.
7. Sisters and brothers of current or former pupils.
8. School staff children, or children who have a parent who works at a state-funded school within half a mile of each school. For Church Hill these means: Walthamstow School for Girls and Emmanuel Community School. For Low Hall this means: Edinburgh Primary School, Mission Grove Primary School (both sites), South Grove Primary School, Barn Croft Primary School, St Saviours C of E Primary School, Coppermill Primary School, Thomas Gamuel Primary School, Stoneydown Park Primary School, Willowfield School and Kelmescott School.
9. Distance: children who live closest to the school
10. Children who are not attending another early years setting

## The Admissions Process

### 1. Confirming Interest

In the **Spring term**, we email everyone on our waiting list whose child is old enough to start in September.

- We ask if families are still interested in a place and which session options they prefer.
- Families must provide their funding **eligibility codes** by the deadline we set.
- We ask families to tell us if their child is developing as they expect. Some children need significant support in nursery. We might only be able to offer them a 15-hour place. We ask families to speak to the SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator) at this point to find out if longer hours or playscheme are possible.

Sometimes families reply to this email and then decide they don't want a place. When this happens, we may charge a **£50 cancellation fee** to pay for our administration costs.

## 2. Allocating Places

- We apply our Admissions Criteria to the list of replies.
- We send families an **offer email** if a place is available.
- We try our best to give families the session times they prefer, but we can't guarantee it.

## 3. Accepting Your Place

After a family accepts an offer, we ask them to do two things to help us welcome their child:

1. **Check our website:** Get to know our school practices and procedures.
2. **Fill out the Family Information Form** and the **All About Me Form**.

## 4. Settling-In Visits

Every family must book **three settling-in visits**. These visits and all paperwork **must** be done before a child can officially start. Usually, two visits happen in the Summer term and the third happens at the start of the Autumn term. For some children all three visits happen before the summer holiday so the child can start as soon as possible in September.

During these visits:

- Families meet their child's **Key Person**. They discuss the "All About Me" form and answer questions.
- Families complete final paperwork and provide their child's **identity documents**.
- On the **third visit**, we tell families their child's official **start date**.

While a child will have a dedicated Key Person, all our staff work with all children to build positive relationships.

Around this time, we send families links to important guides, including *Getting Along Together*, *Curricular Goals*, and *Safeguarding*.

We also aim to speak with any previous settings a child has attended (like a playgroup or private nursery) to share information. For children with specific needs, we receive records from previous settings and professionals and visit them. This helps the child transition to us smoothly.

# Starting and Settling

## When will my child start?

We give families their official start date during the **third settling-in visit**.

To make sure every child gets enough attention as they join us, we use a **phased admission** process. This means we admit a few new children each day rather than everyone at once. We give earlier dates to families who require daycare for work and children who may need extra transition support.

## Helping children settle in

Starting school is a big step. Sometimes a child finds difficult to say goodbye or settle in. When this happens, their **Key Person** works with the family to find the best way forward. This might mean:

- Extra settling-in visits.
- Shorter hours for the first few days.

- Other personal strategies tailored to the child's needs.

## Transition to Primary School

Children leave us and go to a number of primary schools.

The most common primary schools for children from Church Hill Nursery School to transfer to are: Edinburgh Primary School, Emmanuel Community School, Greenleaf Primary School, Henry Maynard Primary School, Mission Grove Primary School, Our Lady and St George's Catholic Primary School, St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Woodside Primary Academy, Barclay Primary School and Hillyfields Primary Academy.

The most common primary schools for children from Low Hall Nursery School to transfer to are: Barn Croft Primary School, Coppermill Primary School, Edinburgh Primary School, Mission Grove Primary School, South Grove Primary School, St Saviour's Church of England Primary School, Sybourn Primary School, Stoneydown Park Primary School.

These are our main feeder schools; however, children may attend other schools, usually in the Borough of Waltham Forest.

### What we do:

- **Teacher Visits:** Reception teachers visit the children. Often, they share pictures of the new Reception Class.
- **Staff Meetings:** Our staff meet the staff from the new school, either in person by phone. They talk about the child's progress and what Reception will be like. They share information that will help children settle and identify friendship pairings that support a smooth transition.
- **SEND Reviews:** The SENDco organises summer term reviews for children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). They invite the new primary school to attend.

### Transition Records

At the end of the summer term, Key People meet with families to talk about their child's **Foundation Stage Transition Report** and to admire their **Learning Journey**. The family gets a copy of their **Foundation Stage Transition Report** and gets to keep the **Learning Journey** portfolio. The schools encourage families to share this portfolio with the new class teacher, as it reflects the child's unique strengths and interests.

The school passes this information to the new Reception teachers:

- **Foundation Stage Transition Report:** A summary of the child's achievements and progress. This includes comments from the family and the child.
- **Personal Education Plans (PEPs):** For Children in Care, sent under confidential cover.
- **SEND Records:** EHCPs and case notes for children with identified special educational needs and disabilities.

Our schools pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) of the new school:

- **Safeguarding Records:** For children on the Child Protection register, our DSL transfers records securely via *My Concern*. DSLs discuss information confidentially.

- **Child Protection Incidents:** In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)*, our DSL transfers low level or higher safeguarding concerns within 5 days of the child starting the new school. We do this either via *My Concern* or as a PDF.

### Children Joining Other Nurseries

Sometimes a child leaves to join a nursery class in a different school. When this happens, the school transfers all relevant records to the new setting.

## Delaying (Deferring) a primary school place

In rare cases, a child may stay with us for an extra year. This is a big decision. The Executive Headteacher must approve it in writing. This only happens in special circumstances.

### When We Consider a Deferral

- **Significant SEND:** The child has significant developmental gaps compared to peers who receive daily specialist SEND support. SEND means Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- **Summer Birthdays:** The child is born in August **and** our SENDco (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) feels they are not yet ready for primary school.

**Please note:** Not all children with SEND need to delay their school start. Most transition to primary school with their peer group.

### How to Request a Deferral

1. **Write to us:** Families send a letter to the Executive Headteacher by **December** at the latest.
2. **Contact the Primary School:** Families send their request to their preferred primary school as part of the normal application for primary school.
3. **Get Permission:** We can only keep a child on our roll when we have **written permission** from the Primary School Headteacher.

### Important Things to Know

- **Preference:** A request is not a guarantee. Neither the primary school nor our schools are required to grant a deferral just because a parent prefers it.
- **Current Students Only:** We only accept deferral requests for children who **already attend** one of our schools.
- **Local Guidance:** Please check the [Waltham Forest website](#) for official guidance on school admissions.

### Long-term Impact

Before deciding, parents should think about how this may affect their child later on:

- They may need to re-apply for a deferral at every major school change (like moving to Secondary School or a change of Key Stage).
- A school might say a child has to "skip a year" later in their education so they can leave secondary school at age 16 with their own age group.

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