



# Nursery Admissions Policy 2024-26

<b>Frequency of Review:</b>	Every 2 years
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	Summer Term 2026
<b>Adopted by the Board of Empower Trust</b>	

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### 1. Introduction

We aim to ensure that all sections of our school communities have access to an Early Years Settings through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

At Empower Trust we recognise that children benefit greatly by having high quality preschool provision. This period of time for your child is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage. When children take up their places in nursery they have the opportunity to make friends, have fun and engage in active learning. All of our settings will make sure your child's needs are met to help them feel secure and confident about starting school when the time comes.

Our academy schools that have nurseries are:

Academy School	Age that children can start the nursery
Greenacres Primary School	Term after their <b>third</b> birthday
Market Drayton Infant and Nursery School	Term after their <b>second</b> birthday
St Mary's Primary School	Term after their <b>third</b> birthday
St Peter's Primary School	Term after their <b>third</b> birthday
Wilfred Owen Primary School	Term after their <b>third</b> birthday
Woodfield Infant School	Term after their <b>third</b> birthday

It cannot always be guaranteed that there is a place as soon as a child reaches the age outlined above, as this is dependent on spaces in the setting.

All of our nurseries operate term time only for 38 weeks per year.

### 2. Admissions

For admission into one of the school nurseries applications must be made directly to the school where you would like your child to attend nursery. This can be done at any point in the year providing your child meets the age criteria outlined above. You can express an interest in a nursery place from the moment your child is born and submit your details to the school.

#### Admission Criteria

- Children with an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) which names one of the school nurseries will be allocated a place in that school subject to consultation with the Local Authority.
- Looked after children' or children who were previously 'looked after' but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.  
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).
- Children taking up their full entitlement of 15 hours/30 hours.
- Priority will be given to those children who are four years old and will be starting school soon.
- Children who live in the designated catchment area. If there are not enough places for all the children in the catchment area, then the following criteria for admission will apply in order:
  - Priority will be given to children living within the catchment area according to the following criteria:
    - Children have an older sibling at the main school on the day they are due to start nursery.
    - other children who live within the catchment area.
- Children living outside the designated catchment area will be offered places according to the following criteria:
  - Children who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start nursery.
  - All other children.

## **Forces Applicants**

St Mary's will consider Forces applicants to ensure they are not disadvantaged

### **3. Funding**

The early years entitlements are:

- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to 2 years old (new entitlement from 1 September 2024)
- the 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 2-year-old children (new entitlement from 1 April 2024)
- the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds
- the universal 15 hours entitlement for all 3 and 4-year-olds
- the additional 15 hours entitlement for eligible working parents of 3 and 4-year-olds

The entitlement hours are up to 15 hours of childcare a week over 38 weeks of the year (equivalent to a maximum of 570 hours a year), or, for 3 and 4-year-olds, up to 30 hours of childcare a week over 38 weeks of the year for qualifying children of working parents (equivalent to a maximum 1,140 hours a year).

Please note: only one of our schools offers places for 2-year-olds.

### **Shropshire 24U Scheme**

24U funding is not to be confused with the government's expanded 15 hours of free childcare for 2-year-olds which is for eligible working families.

### **Is my child entitled to this free early years education?**

24U funding is for families currently receiving some additional forms of government support.

If you can answer 'yes' to one or more of the following questions your child may be eligible to receive 15 hours of free early years education per week over 38 weeks of the year, from the beginning of the term following their second birthday:

- Has your child left care through special guardianship or an adoption or residence order?
- Is the place for a child who is 'looked after' by a local council?
- Does your child have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan (EHP)?
- Does your child get disability living allowance (DLA)?
- Do you receive income support?
- Do you receive income-based jobseeker's allowance (JSA)?
- Do you receive income-related employment and support allowance (ESA)?
- Do you receive support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act?
- Do you receive the guaranteed element of state pension credits?
- Do you receive the working tax credit four week run-on?
- Do you receive tax credits and have an annual income less than £16,190?
- Do you receive universal credit and have an annual income less than £15,400?
- Do you receive child tax credits and have an annual income not exceeding £16,190?
- Do you get tax credits and earn no more than £16,190 a year?
- Is the child a member of a family with no recourse to public funds with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private/family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights
- Is the child of a subset of failed asylum seekers (supported under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 – 'the 1999 Act')
- S17 of the Children's Act refers to those children who are subject to a LA Children in Need plan.

### **When is my child eligible?**

If you meet the criteria you're entitled to the free place from the term following your child's second birthday:

- If your child was born between 1 January and 31 March you're entitled to the place from the summer term (after Easter)
- If your child was born between 1 April and 31 August you're entitled to the place from the autumn term (September)
- If your child was born between 1 September and 31 December you're entitled to the place from the spring term (January)

For further information: [24U Funding](#)

### Applying for free childcare:

If your child is age three or four and you want to access **15 hours of free childcare**, you don't need to make an application as your childcare provider will do this for you automatically.

You'll just need to show them a copy of your child's birth certificate, and you'll also have to sign a declaration form. Talk to you're the school directly to find out more.

Working parents of two-year-olds can also apply for 15 hours of free childcare, to be accessed from April. Parents can apply via [Childcare Choices](#).

### 30 hours Childcare

If your child is three or four years old and you're eligible for **30 hours of free childcare**, you'll need to [fill out an application form online](#).

If you're eligible, you'll get a childcare account and a code which you'll need to show to your childcare provider, along with your child's date of birth and your National Insurance number.

You'll need to reconfirm your details every three months, or your code will expire.

Check your eligibility and apply for [30 hours free childcare at this link](#).

You can log into your Government childcare account [here](#).

### When should I apply for free childcare?

You can make an application at any point in the year. However, to make sure you receive your code, leave plenty of time to apply. The best time to apply depends on when your child turns three – work out when is best for you [at this link](#).

You will be asked to reconfirm you're still eligible every 3 months. This means that if you apply at least 3 months before your child starts going to your childcare provider, you'll need to reconfirm you're still eligible before you take up a place.

For parents of two-year-olds to access 15 hours of free childcare, we recommend those eligible apply between mid-January and the end of February so that parents won't need to reconfirm eligibility before taking up a place. Parents can apply via [Childcare Choices](#).

### How to sign into your Government childcare account

To apply for 30 hours free childcare, you can sign into your account [at this link](#).

You'll need your Government Gateway user ID to login.

### What if you are self-employed or on a zero hours contract?

You will be eligible if you (or both of you in a couple) earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours at the National Minimum Wage.

### What if one parent loses their job?

There will be a short "grace period" allowing parents to have a chance to find new employment The following grace periods apply:

Date parent becomes ineligible	End of grace period
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan – 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar
11 <sup>th</sup> Feb – 31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug
1 <sup>st</sup> Apr – 26 <sup>th</sup> May	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug
27 <sup>th</sup> May – 31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	31 <sup>st</sup> Dec
1 <sup>st</sup> Sep – 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	31 <sup>st</sup> Dec

**Private funding**

Any sessions taken prior to the funding will be charged and are payable a month/half term/term in advance; on the request of parents/carers we can also offer weekly payments.

There may be some additional hours available (meaning parents could choose to pay for an additional hours or fund this through 30 hours free childcare if eligible). These places are allocated on a first come first served basis, priority will be given to those taking the full 30 hours. Schools may offer a **maximum number of places available for 30 hours** to avoid taking up too many places for other children. This will be reviewed termly and the number of 30-hour places may increase if space allows.

**4. Other information**

- Attendance at the Nursery does not guarantee that your child will have a place at the school, as this is a separate admission process.
- We are an equal opportunity trust and our admissions process considers children independently of gender, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the setting to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
- Some of our nurseries complete home visits prior to your child starting the nursery. Where this is the case, a member of staff from the setting will contact you about making a home visit. This gives the opportunity for a member of the team to see your child in an environment with which they are familiar. This will also give the parents/carers a chance to meet key staff and ask any questions. Parents and their child will be invited to attend an open session prior to their child starting.
- A daily attendance register will be completed.
- Children are only allowed to go home with a named adult (over 16 years of age).

We are required by law to keep on record the following details of children:

- Full name, address and telephone numbers of the child and parents or carers the child normally lives with.
- Information about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child, along with the address of every parent known to the setting.
- Parents' place of work and contact number.
- Contact details of any carer or childminder.
- Child's date of birth.
- Record of immunizations.
- Any special dietary requirements.
- Any food allergies.
- Any special health requirements.
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's family doctor.
- Names of people who can collect your child from school

We will record and submit the following information to the Local Authority about individual children receiving the Free Entitlement to Early Years provision as part of the Early Years Census:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Gender
- Ethnicity (This data will be collected on a voluntary basis on child's registration form)
- Special educational needs status
- The number of funded hours taken during the census week
- Total number of hours (funded and unfunded) taken at the setting during the census week.