

MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOLS

Oversubscription criteria 2026/2027



Plymouth City Council is the admission authority for community nursery schools in Plymouth.

The admission arrangements outlined within this document apply to community nursery schools in Plymouth in the 2026/2027 academic year.

Nursery admission criteria

Determining the admissions policy for community and voluntary controlled maintained nursery schools and classes is the responsibility of the local authority, which is required to comply with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2024). The local authority delegates the responsibility for administering the admission process for nursery schools and classes to the governing bodies of these schools. Places in nursery schools and classes usually become available when the oldest children enter a Primary School. Places may become available at other times if children leave nursery.

All children are entitled to access up to 15 hours a week of free nursery education at the request of the parent/carer from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. In addition to this universal offer, a further 15 hours of free childcare is available for children of working parents who meet the eligibility criteria through the government's 30-hour childcare initiative.

Funding of up to 15 hours a week is also available for some 2-year-olds based on eligibility criteria (known in Plymouth as ME2 Funding). This funding is available from the beginning of the term after the child's second birthday.

Whilst the Local Authority works within six terms for maintained schools, for the purposes of nursery education the term dates are defined by the DFE. These are as follows:

| April to 31 August

| September to 31 December

| January to 31 March

Oversubscription Criteria

Each maintained nursery school and class has a limited number of places available depending on the physical capacity of its buildings. The number of places available is called the Published Admission Number (or PAN for short). In the event that the number of applications to a maintained nursery school or class exceeds its PAN, the following admission criteria will be applied in the following order of priority;

1. **Looked after children and all previously looked after children.** 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) at the time of making an application to a school. 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 arrangement order or special guardianship order).

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

2. **A child known by the local authority to have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) and whose needs can be best met at the preferred nursery** – applications made under this criterion would need to be supported by written evidence from an appropriate professional;
3. **A vulnerable child with either a Child Protection or a Child in Need Plan or Early Help Assessment (previously known as Common Assessment Framework)** – applications made under this criterion would need to be supported by evidence from the child's social worker and/or health visitor explaining the advantage of the child attending the preferred nursery as opposed to any other;
4. **A child with exceptional medical or social grounds.** Children with an exceptional medical or social need for a place at the pre-school/nursery. Applicants will only be considered under this heading if the parent/carer or their representative can demonstrate that only the preferred pre-school/nursery can meet the exceptional medical or social needs of the child, a parent or both. The need must be specific to the pre-school/nursery: a child may have challenging circumstances that require additional support but if that support could be provided at another pre-school/nursery, there would be no exceptional need to attend this pre-school/nursery. The exceptional need could be due to the parent/carer's circumstances. Evidence provided can be in the form of a testimony from a medical practitioner, social worker or other professional who can support the application on an 'exceptional' basis. Without satisfactory supporting evidence, we will not prioritise an application as demonstrating exceptional need. If you are applying under the exceptional need category, you must complete and return the supplementary information form and return it to the pre-school/nursery with the appropriate evidence. If you do not return this supplementary information form, your application will not be considered under this category.

Exceptional medical or social need could include, for example:

- a serious medical condition, which can be supported by medical evidence;
- a significant caring role for the child which can be supported by evidence from social services;

Exceptional need for admission here will not be accepted on the grounds that:

- a child may be separated from a friendship group;
- parents wish to avoid a child from the current or previous setting;
- transport arrangements would have to be changed;
- the child has a particular interest or ability in a subject or activity;

5. **Children with a sibling already attending the pre-school/nursery applied for at the time of admission.** Children will be classed as siblings if they live at the same home address as defined in this policy, as a single-family unit. This includes a natural or adopted brother or sister, step- brother or sister, a natural or adopted child of a cohabiting partner, or a foster brother or sister or a child under a special guardianship order. In all cases the sibling must live with the applicant child as part of the same core family unit. Children who are children of friends or cousins living with their parents in the same household are not included. The sibling's details must be clearly stated in the full application form. Failure to do so may result in this category not being identified and the application being placed in a lower category;
6. **Other children** who are not shown in a higher oversubscription criterion.

NOTES:

Application for primary school: Attendance at a pre-school/nursery class attached to a primary school gives no guarantee that a child will continue into the school where the pre-school/nursery is located.

Attendance: There is a universal entitlement to 15 hours of funded education for all three- and four-year-olds. Eligible families may be entitled to an increase in hours up to 30 hours per week at the discretion of the pre-school/nursery and dependent upon capacity.

In the case of children who have attained their fourth birthday by 1 September, parents/carers may request that their child attend on a part time or full-time basis until compulsory school age. Approval is subject to the recommendation of the school following discussion with the parent/carer and the nursery/pre-school (if appropriate) and is in the best interest of the child.

Home address: A child's home address is defined as the address at which the child is normally resident or, where a child lives at more than one address, the address at which the child lives for the majority of the time. Where the home address is unclear, the Admission Authority will determine the appropriate address taking into account factors such as the address to which the child is registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and / or optician, and / or where child related benefits (if eligible) are payable. For the avoidance of doubt, the application will be processed using the address that meets this definition, rather than the address stated by the parent in the application, if different.

Oversubscribed nursery schools and classes are advised to ask parents/carers to provide proof of residence before admitting the child. Any allegations received by the admission authority of people providing false or accommodation addresses when applying for pre-school/nursery places shall be fully investigated and, if found to be true, it could lead to a criminal prosecution and withdrawal of an allocated place.

Multiple births: Multiple births are defined as the birth of more than one baby from a single pregnancy. We understand that parents/carers would like to keep twins, triplets and other children of multiple birth together. Where one can be admitted within the PAN or Admission Number (AN), the pre-school/nursery may admit them all and exceed the PAN or Admission Number (AN), if necessary.

Tie-breaker: Where we have to choose between two or more children in the same category as each other, then the nearer to the pre-school/nursery the child lives - as measured by a straight line on the map using Plymouth City Council's electronic mapping system - the higher the priority. Measurement points will be from the spatial locator identified by the National Land and Property Gazetteer. The spatial locator is the address point based on a general internal point. Flats are therefore taken to be the same measurement point regardless of floor of location. If the tie-breaker is not sufficient to distinguish between applicants in a particular category, there will be a random ballot as set out in the School Admissions Code. This will be undertaken by an officer of Plymouth City Council by the operation of an electronic random number generator.

PAN (given as full time equivalent)

| Nursery Schools | PAN 2025/2026 | PAN 2026/2027 |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Ham Drive Nursery School | 52 | 52 |
| Plymbridge Nursery School | 65 | 65 |

EXCEPTIONAL MEDICAL OR SOCIAL NEED FOR ADMISSION
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

Please note this is a supplementary information form for administration purposes only and is not an application form. It will be used to rank a submitted application according to the published admission criteria.

Only complete this form if you are seeking admission priority on the grounds of exceptional need.

If you wish us to consider whether you or your child has exceptional medical or social need to attend this pre-school/nursery (criteria 4) you must submit independent professional evidence which explains clearly why it is essential to attend this pre-school/nursery and no other pre-school/nursery. Please make sure that you have read the description of exceptional medical or social need in the admission policy for the school.

You will need to return the completed form and evidence when you apply for a pre-school/nursery place.

Return the form to: the pre-school/nursery applied for.

To be completed by the parent/carer

| | |
|---|--|
| Child's full name: | |
| Date of birth: | |
| Pre-School/nursery applied for: | |
| Nature of the supporting evidence that you are submitting, provided by a relevant professional: | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Evidence is attached: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Name(s) and organisations of the professional(s) providing supporting evidence: | |
| Name of parent/carer: | |
| Relationship to child: | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | |

Data Protection

The information collected on this form will be processed and may be stored electronically by the school in compliance with the Data Protection Act. The data may be shared with Plymouth City Council or other agents of the school, but only for administrative or other service provision purposes and with Government Departments where there is a legal requirement to do so. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, should information given be found to be fraudulent then the offer of a school place can be withdrawn. If you would like further information about Data Protection, please contact the school. By signing or submitting this form you acknowledge that you have read, understood and agreed to this data processing.

CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION**Schools****Ham Drive Nursery School and Day Care**

Ham Drive
Ham
Plymouth
PL2 2NJ

Telephone: 01752 366389

ham.drive.nursery@plymouth.gov.uk

www.hamdrivenursery.plymouth.sch.uk

Plym Bridge Nursery School and Day Care

Miller Way
Estover
Plymouth
PL6 8UN

Telephone: 01752 786444 or 01752 793495

reception@plymbridge.net

www.plymbridge.net

The Department for Education Schools (DFE)

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

www.education.gov.uk

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

Telephone 01325 735303

www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator