



Seedlings Nursery & Pre- School

at

Great Horwood Church of England School

Admissions Policy

September 2025

This policy was adopted on: 21 January 2026

Date of next review: September 2026

Signed:

P.M. Shaw

Our Vision

'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' John 15:5

At Great Horwood Church of England School, the academic, emotional and spiritual well-being of all individuals is at the heart of all that we do; where everyone is valued. We are a safe, welcoming school within the heart of the village community that aims to provide all our children and adults with the learning opportunities to flourish, be healthy, grow in resilience and realise their full potential; being fully equipped and prepared for a successful future.

Inspired by Christian faith and rooted in the teachings, values and spirituality of the Church of England we embrace our core values of love, perseverance and respect where all individuals learn to value themselves and others.

We are committed to setting high standards of achievement within a caring and nurturing learning environment. We aim to provide opportunities for children to develop a curiosity of learning, a thirst for knowledge through play, and an exploration of the world around them.

Admissions Policy

Introduction

Seedlings Nursery and Pre-school is part of Great Horwood Church of England School and operates under the governance of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST). This policy outlines the admissions arrangements for nursery-aged children in accordance with Buckinghamshire Council guidance and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework effective from September 2025.

At Seedlings Nursery & Pre-School, we envision a school community where love, perseverance and respect form the cornerstone of our educational journey. Guided by these enduring Christian values, we aspire to create a learning environment that nurtures the hearts and minds of every pupil, teacher, and member of our school community.

Together, we aspire to build a brighter future, one where love, perseverance and respect are not just values we uphold, but principles that guide us toward a world of greater understanding, harmony, and fulfilment. At Seedlings, we are more than a nursery; we are a family bound by these shared ideals, and together, we will make a difference in the lives of our pupils and our community.

Age Range and Funding

Children are eligible to join Seedlings Nursery and Pre-school from the age of 2 years. We offer support for:

- Disadvantaged 2-year-olds (parents who receive some additional government support)
- Universal entitlement for all 3- & 4-year-olds
- Working parent entitlements for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year (including 30 hours).
- Paid places are also available for families who do not qualify for government funding or wish to purchase additional hours.

- We offer 15 places for two year olds and 24 places for 3-4 year olds up to a maximum of 39 places.

Session Options

Seedlings Nursery operates for 48 weeks per year, Monday to Friday, from 7:30am to 6:00pm. Parents may choose either a term-time option (38 weeks) or a stretched offer across 48 weeks. Sessions are flexible and designed to meet the needs of working families.

Additional staffing – we are limited in the number of spaces we can offer so that preschool remains financially viable. However, if demand is high enough, we will endeavour to provide additional staffing to increase the numbers of children that can attend a session - but this is not guaranteed.

Admissions Process

Families who want their children to attend Seedlings Nursery & Preschool are most welcome to arrange a visit at any time, we also hold open days throughout the year. Details on visiting and arrangements can be made through the School Office Administrator – office@ghw.odbst.org or seedlings@ghw.odbst.org

Applications for nursery places should be made directly to the school using the Seedlings nursery admissions form. Include the date that you would like to start and send this to the School office. Please also complete the session request part of the form as soon as you know which days and times you would like.

We will review all session requests within two weeks of receiving the registration form and allocate places according to our admission rules detailed below.

We will contact you to confirm which sessions we are able to offer you. In order to confirm this place, you will need to complete the acceptance form and send it back to the school. If you do not send this form back by the final date stated on your confirmation letter, then your place may be forfeit and the hours given to a child on the waiting list.

Places are allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined below. Where places are available, all children will be offered a place. If demand exceeds availability, the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied in order of priority:

1. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the nursery.
2. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
3. Children with exceptional medical or social needs supported by professional evidence.
4. Children of staff employed at the school for two or more years or recruited to fill a post with a demonstrable skill shortage.
5. Children living within the catchment area of Great Horwood, Singleborough and Little Horwood.
6. Siblings of children attending Great Horwood CE School at the time of admission.
7. Children eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP).

8. Children living outside the catchment area.
9. Proximity to the nursery, measured by straight-line distance.

Where the Seedlings Nursery & Preschool session can take some, but not all, of the children who qualify under one of these rules, we will give priority to children by taking account of the next rule (or rules) in the numbered list to decide who has priority for places. If it still not possible to decide between two applicants who are equidistant then an independently scrutinised random allocation will be made to allocate the final place.

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move before considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned.

If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

Waiting Lists

Seedlings Nursery & Pre-School maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place in a specific session, and the parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription. The Preschool periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Additional Information

Seedlings Nursery does not apply any faith-based criteria in its admissions process. There is no wraparound care linked to nursery admissions. All admissions decisions are made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the School Admissions Code.

Contact Details

For further information or to arrange a visit, please contact the school office:

Email: office@jlg.odbst.org

Phone: 01844 343521

Explanation of terms used in the admission rules.

Note 1 Definition of Looked after children

For admissions purposes 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). This covers accommodated children and those who are in care under a Care Order/interim order. This can include: living with family or friends, in foster care, a children's home, residential school, special school or in supported lodgings.

This includes children who were previously looked after and immediately after being looked after became the subject of an adoption, residence order or special guardianship order as set out below.

Other definitions:

Residence order: is an order setting the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the children's Act 1989 special guardianship order: 'an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians) under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989

Note 2 Exceptional Social and Medical process

A panel comprising education professionals will consider the applications under this rule on receipt of information from the parent to indicate strong reasons for the child attending a particular Nursery or Pre-School. When making an application parents should send evidence from an independent professional person (this might be a doctor, health visitor, or Education Welfare Officer, for example) who knows about the child and supports the application to the school. It must clearly show why the Nursery or Pre-School is the most suitable and any difficulties if alternate schools were offered.

Note 3: Primary School Catchment Areas The primary school catchments can be viewed at:

<http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/schooladmission/>

Note 4: Definition of sibling

A sibling is a brother or sister. For admission purposes we mean one of two or more individuals who have one or more parent in common, or any other child (including an adopted or fostered child) who lives at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility or, (in the case of a fostered child) delegated authority. We will only consider a pupil in a primary school as a 'sibling' if he or she is attending, in the specified year groups, the Pre-School or school at the time the allocations are made (or, for in-term admissions the time of admission), or has been formally offered a place at the school. In all cases they are expected to still be at the school at the time of proposed admission.

Note 5: Definition of parent

This is as defined in law (the Education Act 1996) as either:

- Any person who has parental responsibility (defined in Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- Any person who has care of the child or young person.

Note 6: Definition of normal home address

This is the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child live together unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent(s) or person with legal care and control of the child.

To avoid doubt where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined by:

- i. Confirmation of the registered address to which Child Benefit is currently being paid, or, if child benefit is not received then the address from which the child in question is registered with the doctor.
- ii. If 1) above is not applicable then the parent with whom the child spends the greater proportion of the school week from Sunday evening to Thursday evening.

Note 7 Definition of home to school distance

The straight line distance definition: is 'the distance from the address point of the pupil's normal home address, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest open school gate available for pupils to use'.

As part of the computer system we use for school admissions there is a program that measures the 'straight-line' distance from the nearest open school gates to the child's normal home address.

The point we measure to at the child's normal address is determined by the Ordnance Survey ADDRESS-POINT which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid coordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File (PAF®)

The PAF contains postal address data and includes premises such as buildings or permanent mobile and park homes, plus other features such as temporary buildings and houseboats. Where Service families or families of other Crown Servants, who often move within the UK and from abroad are posted to the area, school places can be allocated in advance of the family move if an official government letter declaring a relocation date and an intended address is provided. A unit postal address or quartering area address will be sufficient if there is not a new home address. Where Service families are returning to live in a property they already own, evidence of ownership will be needed.

Note 8 Multiple births – twins, triplets etc

In cases where there is one remaining place and the next child on the waiting list is one of a twin, triplet or other multiple birth group then only one place can be offered to maintain our staffing ratios. The other sibling(s) can be put on the waiting list at the request of the parents