



Starting School Policy

Lead member of staff	Helen Williamson
Approval Level	Full Governing Body
Signed by	Jo Newton-Smith, Chair of Governors
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Next Review	Spring 2024

The admission policy of this school is common to all County Schools in West Sussex. The policy is outlined in the booklet "Information for Parents" which is published by the Local Authority. If you have not received a copy of this publication you may read it online at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions or request a copy by telephoning 03330 142 903.

This coming academic year, the children will be admitted to school in the September of the year following their 4th birthday. As parents you have the right to choose from September 2011 whether you wish your child to start full-time or part-time subject to the caveat that children must be receiving full-time education in the term following their fifth birthday. The school recommends that in most cases it is beneficial for children to start school full-time in September. Children may start on a part-time basis of a minimum of 15 hours per week and parents may choose to defer their child's start as set out below. All parents have the right to request full-time education from September despite in which term their child's 5th birthday falls.

Arrangements for children starting full-time:

If a parent wishes their child to start full-time from September, the following starting school procedures will apply:

- You may select for your child (regardless of their birth date) to attend full-time after a two week "introductory" period (these two weeks being of at least 15 hours per week)

Arrangements for deferring the term your child starts school:

If a parent wishes to defer the term in which their child starts school, the following starting school procedures will apply:

- Children with birthdays between 1st September and 31st December may start full-time education at the beginning of the Spring term
- Children with birthdays between 1st January and 31st April may start full-time education at the beginning of the Summer term
- It is recommended that children with birthdays between 1st May and 31st August begin full-time education in the Summer term at the latest, though parents may keep their child out of school until the following September, when they would need to re-apply for their child to enter Year 1. It is not possible to hold a place for deferred entry across school years.

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Arrangements if you wish your child to start part-time before full-time:

If a parent wishes their child to start part-time before beginning full-time education, the school will undertake the following procedures which provide the children with effective transition into full-time education:

- You may select for your child attend full-time after a two week part-time “introductory” period (these two weeks being of at least 15 hours per week). Autumn born children (1st September – 31st December) must start full-time education in January.
- You may select for your child to attend part-time for the first half of the Autumn Term and then full-time from November. Spring born children (1st January – 30th April) must start full-time education after Easter.
- You may select for your child to attend part-time during the autumn term and may attend full-time in January. Summer born children must attend full-time in September of the following year.

Deferring the start of a child’s education will not prejudice the place at the school within the school year: places for such children will be held open. However, they cannot be held until the following September. Any child may start full-time from September if the parents prefer.

In all cases the following applies:

- Any parent wishing to defer their child starting school will need to identify which term, Spring or Summer, they wish their child to start so that the school can ensure that starting arrangements for all pupils are managed sensitively and effectively. Any request to start part-time must be in line with the arrangements indicated above.
- All part-time attendance, as set out above, will be for a minimum of 15 hours arranged across 5 days and with attendance in the mornings (8.55am to 12 noon Monday to Friday).
- Parents will make clear whether they wish their child to start full-time in September or to defer their child’s start as indicated above. Full-time education must be undertaken in the term following their 5th birthday.
- Once parents have indicated their preferred starting arrangements, these cannot be changed except in exceptional circumstances and after discussion with the Headteacher.

Parents are very welcome to look around the school prior to completing their forms. Please telephone the school office for an appointment.

An Introductory Evening Social is held during the Summer Term for all parents of children who will be admitted during the following academic year. Official forms are completed, the reception staff give a presentation on how the Unit is run and a brief introduction to Early Years curriculum, and there is an opportunity to meet teaching, non-teaching and office staff, Governors and other agencies working within our school community. There will also be an opportunity to meet with reception teachers to discuss your child’s needs in more detail, during the first two weeks of term in September. The forms that make up the Pack will include a form that asks parents to indicate when they

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wish their child to start school and these must be received by the end of July to allow the school to effectively manage the starting dates of all pupils.

Parents are also invited to look around the school and to see the range of work accomplished by children in all year groups. This introductory evening is followed by a meeting for parents within the first half term of their child's admission.