Queenborough
School & Nursery

Nursery Admission Policy

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Queenborough School and Nursery

Nursery Admission Policy

September 2026

Queenborough School and Nursery serves the communities of Queenborough and Rushenden on the Isle of Sheppey. Subject to the availability of places, applications are welcomed from families living further afield.

This policy sets out the arrangements for admission to Queenborough School and Nursery's Nursery provision for children aged 2, 3 and 4.

Nursery places are separate from admission to the school's Reception class. Attendance at Queenborough Nursery does **not** guarantee a place in Reception. Parents/carers must make a separate application for a Reception place through Kent County Council by the statutory deadline.

Queenborough School and Nursery is part of EKC Schools Trust. This policy should be read alongside the Trust's relevant policies and the current statutory guidance and funding arrangements issued by the Department for Education and Kent County Council.

Applying for a place at Nursery

Parents/carers wishing to apply for a Nursery place must complete the appropriate Nursery application form and return it to the school office.

The Nursery may request appropriate documentary evidence to confirm a child's identity and date of birth and to support funding or safeguarding checks. This may include a birth certificate, passport or other appropriate evidence. Where a parent/carer is unable to provide a particular document, the Nursery will discuss appropriate alternative evidence with the family.

Applications should be made as early as possible. Making an application does not guarantee that a place or a particular session pattern will be available.

Nursery Provision

Queenborough School and Nursery currently offers Nursery provision for 38 weeks of the year, during school term time. The availability of particular sessions is subject to staffing, premises, funded-place requirements and the overall capacity of the Nursery.

The Nursery currently offers:

2-3-year-old provision

The 2–3-year-old provision is open:

8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday, term time only.

8.00am to 4.30pm, Fridays, term time only.

The Nursery typically offers up to 10 places per session, subject to staffing and capacity.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for a place should complete the 2–3-year-old provision application form.

Children may be admitted to the provision from the age agreed by the Nursery. Where a child is accessing a funded entitlement, the start date will also be subject to the child's eligibility under the relevant government and Kent County Council funding arrangements.

Main Nursery Provision for 3-4-year olds

The main Nursery is open:

8.30am to 3.30pm, Monday to Friday, term time only.

The Nursery has capacity for up to 45 children at any one time, subject to staffing, premises and regulatory requirements.

The standard session pattern is:

- Morning: **8.30am–11.30am**
- Afternoon: **12.30pm–3.30pm**

Parents/carers may request:

- five morning sessions;
- five afternoon sessions; or
- a full-time pattern of up to 30 funded hours where the child is eligible and a place is available.

The Nursery will seek to accommodate parental preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee a particular session pattern.

Children become eligible for the universal 15-hour entitlement from the term following their third birthday, subject to the applicable government arrangements.

Early years funding entitlement

Queenborough School and Nursery participates in the government-funded early years entitlements where the relevant conditions are met.

The entitlements available in 2026–27 include:

- the working parent entitlement for eligible children aged 9 months to 2 years;
- the working parent entitlement for eligible 2-year-olds;
- Early Learning for 2-year-olds for eligible families receiving additional support;
- the universal 15-hour entitlement for all eligible 3- and 4-year-olds; and
- the additional 15 hours for eligible working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds.

Eligibility is determined under the current government rules. Parents/carers should use the current government and Kent County Council application processes rather than relying on figures or eligibility information contained in this policy.

Working Parent entitlement for 2-year olds

Eligible working parents may be entitled to up to 30 hours of funded early education and childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year, subject to the government eligibility criteria and the availability of a place.

Eligibility is determined by the government/HMRC and may depend on matters including:

- the child's age;
- the parent's or parents' employment or self-employment;
- earnings;
- parental leave or other circumstances;
- immigration status; and
- other government eligibility requirements.

The earnings test is based on the applicable National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage and the government's current eligibility rules. The Nursery will not reproduce a fixed annual earnings figure in this policy because these figures can change.

Parents/carers must apply for the relevant childcare eligibility code and provide the Nursery with a valid code where required.

Eligibility codes must be applied for and reconfirmed within the relevant government deadlines. Parents/carers are responsible for keeping their eligibility information up to date.

The Nursery will check eligibility in accordance with Kent County Council's procedures.

Early Learning for 2-year olds

Some 2-year-olds are entitled to up to 15 hours of funded early education and childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year because their family meets the government's additional-support eligibility criteria.

In Kent, this entitlement is known as Early Learning for 2-year-olds.

Eligibility may include, for example, children who:

- are looked after by a local authority;
- have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan;
- receive Disability Living Allowance; or
- meet other government eligibility criteria.

The eligibility criteria are set nationally and may change. Parents/carers should check their eligibility through Kent County Council.

A child cannot access this funded entitlement before the relevant eligibility date, even where an application has already been made or eligibility has been confirmed.

Once a child has been confirmed as eligible, the funded entitlement remains available in accordance with the government and Kent County Council rules.

Eligibility for Early Learning for 2-year-olds does not guarantee a place at Queenborough School and Nursery's 3–4-year-old Nursery provision. Admission to the 3–4-year-old provision remains subject to a separate application, the Nursery's admission criteria and the availability of places.

Universal Entitlement for 3-4-year olds

All eligible 3- and 4-year-old children are entitled to up to 15 hours of funded early education per week for 38 weeks of the year, from the term following their third birthday.

Parents/carers do not need to apply for the universal entitlement.

The Nursery will collect the information and parental declarations required to confirm the child's eligibility and claim the appropriate funding from Kent County Council.

The universal entitlement is subject to the government's current eligibility, funding and delivery requirements.

Working Parent entitlement for 3- and 4-year olds

Eligible working parents may be entitled to an additional 15 funded hours, giving up to **30 funded hours per week for 38 weeks of the year**. Eligibility is determined under the government's current rules.

The entitlement is available to qualifying working parents where the relevant conditions are met. These conditions can include requirements relating to:

- employment or self-employment;
- earnings;
- parental leave and other circumstances;
- immigration status; and
- the child's age.

Parents/carers must apply through the government childcare service and obtain a valid eligibility code.

Parents/carers are responsible for applying and reconfirming their eligibility within the required deadlines.

A child will not be able to access the additional funded hours until the Nursery has confirmed that the relevant eligibility code is valid for the term concerned.

The Nursery has a limited number of places available for a 30-hour pattern. These places are allocated in accordance with the Nursery's published admission criteria and subject to capacity.

The standard 30-hour Nursery pattern currently runs:

8.30am–2.30pm, Monday to Friday, term time only.

The Nursery has a limited number of optional additional paid hours available from:

2.30pm–3.30pm, Monday to Friday, term time only.

The current charge is:

£8.00 per day.

These hours are private paid childcare and are separate from the funded early education entitlement.

Parents/carers are **not required to purchase these additional hours** as a condition of accessing their child's funded entitlement.

Availability is subject to Nursery capacity and staffing.

Parents/carers wishing to use additional paid hours will be required to agree to the Nursery's relevant terms and conditions.

Funded places and additional charges

Funded entitlement hours will be provided free of charge in accordance with the government's early years funding requirements.

Parents/carers will not be required to purchase additional hours, meals, consumables, activities or other services as a condition of accessing their child's funded entitlement.

Where the Nursery makes optional charges for additional services or private childcare, parents/carers will be informed of those charges in advance.

The Nursery will ensure that arrangements for optional charges are consistent with current Department for Education and Kent County Council requirements.

Where applicable, reasonable alternatives will be made available so that a parent/carer is not required to pay a charge in order to access their child's funded entitlement.

Funded Eligibility Dates

The term in which a child becomes eligible for funded early education depends on the child's date of birth and the particular entitlement.

The following table gives the general term pattern for the universal entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds:

Child's date of birth	Universal funded entitlement begins
1 April – 31 August	September term
1 September – 31 December	January term
1 January – 31 March	April term

Different eligibility dates apply to the various 2-year-old entitlements.

Parents/carers should check the current Kent County Council guidance for the relevant entitlement and application deadline.

Allocation of Nursery Sessions

The Nursery will endeavour to allocate requested sessions wherever possible.

However, the availability of particular sessions depends on:

- the number of applications;
- the child's eligibility;
- available places;
- staffing;
- the funded hours available;
- the age mix of children;
- regulatory requirements; and
- the operational requirements of the Nursery.

A child being eligible for funded hours does not give the parent/carer an automatic right to choose particular days or session times.

Where a requested session pattern cannot be accommodated, the Nursery will offer an alternative pattern where one is available.

Oversubscription criteria

If the Nursery receives more applications than there are places available, applications will be ranked using the following criteria, in order:

a) Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Priority will be given to children who are looked after by a local authority or who were previously looked after.

b) Children whose EHC Plan requires a placement at Queenborough School and Nursery

Priority will be given where a child's Education, Health and Care Plan requires the provision to be made at Queenborough School and Nursery

c) Children of staff

Priority may be given to children of staff employed at Queenborough School and Nursery where:

1. the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time the application is made; and/or
2. the member of staff has been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

This criterion will be applied in accordance with the arrangements of EKC Schools Trust.

d) Children already attending Queenborough School and Nursery's 2–3-year-old provision

Priority will be given to children already attending Queenborough School and Nursery's own 2–3-year-old provision who are applying to transfer to the main 3–4-year-old Nursery provision

e) Siblings

Priority will be given to children who have a sibling attending Queenborough School and Nursery at the time the child is due to join.

For the purposes of this policy, sibling includes a natural sibling, adopted sibling, step-sibling or foster sibling living as part of the same family household, where the sibling is attending the school or Nursery at the relevant time.

f) Distance from the child's home to the Nursery

Remaining applications will be ranked according to the straight-line distance between the child's home address and Queenborough School and Nursery.

Distance will be measured using the method and system determined by the school/Trust.

The child's home address will normally be the address at which the child ordinarily resides with their parent/carer. Where there is a shared-care arrangement or another unusual circumstance, the school may request further information to establish the appropriate address.

Waiting List

Parents/carers whose child has not been offered a place may request that their child's name is placed on the Nursery waiting list.

The waiting list will be ranked according to the published oversubscription criteria.

The waiting list is not a first-come, first-served list.

A child's position on the waiting list may change when:

- a new application is received;
- a child's circumstances change;
- a place becomes available; or
- information relevant to the admission criteria changes.

The waiting list will therefore be re-ranked whenever necessary.

Being placed on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will subsequently become available.

Offers of Places

The Nursery will endeavour to notify applicants of the outcome of their application by letter or other appropriate written communication.

Where possible, offers will be made at least one term before the proposed admission date. This may not be possible for late applications or where a place becomes available unexpectedly.

An offer will specify:

- the proposed admission date;
- the sessions offered;
- any relevant funded entitlement;
- any optional paid hours agreed;
- the date by which the parent/carer must accept the offer; and
- any information or documentation required before the child starts.

Parents/carers must confirm acceptance by the date specified in the offer.

Failure to respond within a reasonable period may result in the offer being withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant.

Withdrawal of an offered or allocated place

The Nursery may withdraw an offer of a place where:

- the parent/carer does not respond to the offer within the specified or a reasonable period;
- the application is found to contain information that is deliberately fraudulent or intentionally misleading and the information materially affected the allocation of the place;
- the child is found not to meet an eligibility requirement for a particular funded entitlement;
- the parent/carer does not provide information reasonably required to establish the child's identity, date of birth or eligibility, after the Nursery has given reasonable opportunity to provide alternative evidence; or
- the place was offered as a result of an administrative error and the Nursery is required to correct that error.

Before withdrawing a place on the basis of inaccurate information, the Nursery will consider the circumstances and give the parent/carer an appropriate opportunity to provide clarification or evidence.

Extended absence and attendance

Regular attendance is important for children accessing Nursery provision.

Where a child is absent, parents/carers should notify the Nursery as soon as possible and provide the reason for the absence.

If a child is absent for an extended period or repeatedly fails to attend their agreed sessions, the Nursery will contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for the absence and discuss continuation of the place.

The Nursery will consider the circumstances of the absence, including illness and other legitimate reasons for absence, before taking any decision about a place.

Where appropriate, a place may be withdrawn following discussion with the parent/carer and in accordance with relevant attendance, safeguarding and Kent County Council funding requirements.

The Nursery will not automatically withdraw a child's funded place simply because the child has been absent for a fixed number of days.

Unexpected or unexplained absence will also be considered in accordance with the Nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Non-payment for additional private childcare

Where parents/carers have separately agreed to purchase additional private childcare hours, payment will be due in accordance with the Nursery's published terms and conditions.

Where an invoice for separately contracted private childcare remains unpaid, the Nursery may withdraw access to those additional paid hours in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions.

Non-payment for additional private childcare will not, by itself, remove a child's entitlement to funded early education where the child remains eligible.

Equality, inclusion and SEND

Queenborough School and Nursery is committed to fair and equitable access to Nursery provision.

Admission arrangements will be applied without unlawful discrimination and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, relevant special educational needs and disability requirements, and applicable early years guidance.

The Nursery will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Where reasonable adjustments are required to enable a child to access Nursery provision, these will be considered in accordance with the school's duties and available support.

The Nursery will not refuse a child a place solely because the child has special educational needs or a disability where the Nursery is able to meet the child's needs and appropriate arrangements can be made.

Where a child's needs cannot reasonably be met within the existing provision, the Nursery will work with the family, the local authority and other relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and provision.

Safeguarding

The welfare and safety of children is a priority.

The Nursery will follow the school's current safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Parents/carers must provide the Nursery with up-to-date contact details and information relevant to the child's welfare.

The Nursery may contact relevant agencies where this is necessary to safeguard a child or meet its statutory responsibilities.

Reception Admissions

A place in Queenborough Nursery does **not** guarantee a place in the school's Reception class.

Parents/carers must apply separately for a Reception place through Kent County Council by the statutory national closing date.

Reception applications are determined under the applicable school admissions arrangements and are separate from this Nursery admissions policy.

Complaints and Queries

Parents/carers who have questions about a Nursery application or place should contact the school office in the first instance.

Where a parent/carer believes that the published Nursery admission criteria have not been applied correctly, they should raise their concern with the school.

Formal complaints will be handled in accordance with the current EKC Schools Trust Complaints Policy.

The Nursery will not treat a complaint about the admission process as an application for a place, and making a complaint does not itself secure a place.

Headteacher:	Mrs Christina Tomlin
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