Almeley Primary School
Little Elms Nursery

ADMISSIONS POLICY- Nursery and Reception

For Reception admissions we adopt the LA admissions policy (For admissions 2027-2028)

Approval of the Governing Body

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for:

Almeley Primary School
& Little Elms Nursery

It was developed/revised during the:

Summer Term 2026

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body

We aim to review this policy during the:

Summer Term 2027
It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body

Signatures

Mrs J Keeble
Headteacher

Governing Body

Entry into Little Elms Nursery

The responsibility for admission into nursery provision lies with the governing body of Almeley Primary School. Entry to our nursery is independent of the admissions code, but we aim to be fair and transparent when allocating places at all times. Places in the nursery are dealt with directly by school and applications should be made directly via the school office or email – admin@almeley.hereford.sch.uk. We welcome visits from parents/carers and children considering applying for a place within our nursery. Although not compulsory, this is an opportunity for parents/carers to see what we have on offer. We also hold an 'Open Morning' in conjunction with the school during the autumn term, which is advertised locally beforehand. If we are able to offer a place, then parents/carers need to complete registration forms which should be handed in to the school office.

1. We accept applications for nursery when a child is over the age of 2.

2. Places in the nursery are dependent on the number of hours allocated in the nursery at any given time during the year, taking into account the staff/pupil ratio. Children that have a sibling in school will be given a priority as well as if you have expressed an interest in attending the school. We follow the EYFS Framework for staffing ratios in the nursery. Children may attend up to five days a week, term time only, between the hours of:

    - 9am – 12pm (morning session)
    - 12pm - 3pm (afternoon session)

Also available - breakfast club (7.30am – 9am) and after school care club (3pm – 5.30pm- Monday to Wednesday – 4.15-5.30pm, Thursday-Friday 3pm- 4.15pm). These must be booked in advance (where places are available, these are allocated on a first come, first served basis).

3. Parents/carers may fund their child's place by:

    - Using the 30/15 hours over 2 years of age depending on entitlement (parent/carer to apply via government website:
    - 3 year olds are entitled to 15hrs
    - By purchasing sessions

Funding is provided through Herefordshire County Council (Nursery Education Funding) only.

We will try our upmost to offer the places preferred by parents/carers but unfortunately, this is not always possible. Parents/carers must only bring their child to their allocated sessions. If you wish to change your hours you will need to put this in writing to the school/nursery with a half a terms notice. If we need to change your hours we will give you a half terms notice.

4. In the first instance, we will:

    - offer places of 30/15 hours free entitlement with the option to pay for extra hours in line with the school opening hours

5. Parents need to prove eligibility for 30/15 hours funding provision by applying for a specific code – Department of Education Reference Number (DERN) via the government website. If the 30/15 hour

code is not received within an agreed timescale, then a place at nursery may be withdrawn and offered to a family on our waiting list.

6. Parents/carers need to prove eligibility for 2/3 year old funding if applicable by providing a specific code via the government website. If the 2/3 year funding code is not received within an agreed timescale, then a place at nursery may be withdrawn and offered to a family on our waiting list.

7. Unfortunately, a place at Little Elms Nursery does not guarantee a place at Almeley Primary School. A separate application needs to be made for entry to the school's Reception class and this is managed through Herefordshire County Council admissions team: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/schools-admission-policies

Entry into Almeley Primary School

Our governing body applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced a new framework for school admissions as of September 2000. This was later revised in the Education Act of 2002. Our Admissions policy conforms to the regulations that are set out in that Act and are further explained in the statutory School Admissions Code of Practice and the statutory Appeals Code of Practice. These were revised in 2011.

1. Aims

- We seek to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities.
- All applications will be treated on merit, and in a sensitive manner.
- The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we adopt the procedure set out below (as determined by Herefordshire Local Authority) to assess whether a child is to be accepted or not. It is our wish for parents to find a place for their child at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.

2. How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school

- Our school is a community school, and it determines the admission arrangements in agreement with Herefordshire Local Authority. The Admissions Authority for our school is therefore the LA, which publishes its entry regulations every year.

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/schools-admission-policies

Parents should apply for entry to our school through the following website:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/schools-admission-policies

- The LA's annual admissions prospectus informs parents how to apply for a place at the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express their preference, but this does not, in itself, guarantee a place at that particular school. Application should be made on the form that can be obtained from the Local Education Authority, and should be returned by the date stipulated on that form. The LA will notify parents of the decision as soon as all the applications have been considered.

- Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. In Herefordshire, however, most children start school at least a term earlier than the law requires. The council's standard admissions policy entitles parents to places for their children, in one of the council's maintained schools, according to the date of their child's 5th birthday, as follows:

  In the autumn term if 5 between 1 September and 31 December inclusive
  In the spring term if 5 between 1 January and 30 April inclusive
  In the summer term if 5 between 1 May and 31 August inclusive

  The autumn term begins after the summer holidays, the spring term after the Christmas and New Year holidays, and the summer term after the Easter holidays.

- Allocation of Places

Places in reception classes for all maintained schools are allocated on the basis of applications received on or before 15 January 2027. Applications should be submitted to the Pupil Admissions Office. The date of 15 January 2027 applies for all admissions during the school year, including children who might be entitled to start school in January 2027 or April 2028.

- The Primary National Offer Day for the admission year will be: Tuesday 16 April 2027

- Late Applications

Applications received after 15 January 2027 will be allocated to the preferred school on the understanding that admissions do not exceed the published admission number or conflict with the requirement not to exceed 30 pupils in a key stage one class. When considering the late application the council or the relevant Voluntary Aided, Foundation School or Academy will have regard to the reason for the delay in applying together with the distance to the nearest alternative school.

3. **Option for Delayed Entry**

The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. The date compulsory school age is reached is determined by dates set by the Secretary of State for the autumn, spring and summer terms. These dates are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March. Therefore parents are not obliged to take up the offer of a place in September and they can delay the admission until the beginning of the spring or summer term in the term after the child's fifth birthday.

- **Deferred Entry – for Summer Born Children**

As previously stated parents are not obliged to take up places for their children any earlier than the law requires (i.e. currently from the term following their 5th birthday). If a parent wishes to defer entry we advise speaking to the headteacher in the first instance who will then be able to explain the provision on offer to children in their Reception year and how it is tailored to meet the needs of summer born children. They will also be able to explain how the provision will continue to be made as children move up through the school. Almeley Primary follows the admissions criteria provided by Herefordshire Local Authority, which can be found by following the link above.

- **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented, the parents/carers may seek early entry.

Children born in the summer term (i.e. 1 April – 31 August) are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted into a reception class (the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1). Parents/carers have the option of requesting delayed entry where they hold back their child from joining the correct year group for their age so that they start school a year later than they are due to.

Paragraph 2.17A of the Admissions Code requires that, in any circumstance where a parents/carers requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the admission authority must make a decision based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School, the Local Authority must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School the Local Authority will request the head teacher of the school to take account of the parents/carers views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught permanently behind or ahead of their chronological age group. The reasons for the decision must be clearly set out. This process must be completed in advance of the closing date. In the event that the delayed entry is not approved, parents will need to make an application in time for the 2026 intake (by the 16 January 2026). If delayed entry is approved you will receive details of how to proceed with an application.

Please be aware that even if delayed or early entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. You should therefore give careful consideration to requesting delayed or early entry.

4. Admission Criteria

Children with a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Educational, Health & Care Plan will be allocated a place after which if the school is oversubscribed, places will be offered up to the PAN in the following priority order:

- Priority 1: Looked after children and previously looked after children who have since been adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
- Priority 2 - Children living within the defined catchment area* of the school;
- Priority 3 - Sibling connection - Children who have a sibling** at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the child is due to start
- Priority 4 - Exceptional circumstances - Children with exceptional medical, social or compassionate grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the wellbeing of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source.
- Priority 5 - Distance*** - Children who live nearest to the school by the shortest available walking route.

  No priority is given to pupils living outside but attending a primary school within the catchment area of the relevant high school, i.e. the determining factor is the child's home address.

  Where, at any school, applications exceed the number of places, the priorities will be applied in the sequence indicated above, i.e. after children who either currently are or were in the 'looked after' system it will be catchment area children second, siblings third, ****exceptional circumstances fourth, then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.

If the admission of the top three categories can be satisfied, but there are insufficient places for all out of area siblings, priorities will be decided first by reference to exceptional circumstances, then according to distance, with those living nearest to the school using the distance calculations outlined below *** taking priority

Following the allocation of the top two categories there may be an occasion when it is not possible to offer places for all children living in the catchment area. In this situation the places will be allocated in the sequence of the criteria listed above, i.e. first to children with siblings who would still be at the school in September 2024, next to pupils with exceptional circumstances, and finally according to distance from the school.

In case where distance is not the final deciding factor i.e. two applications are at exactly the same distance then the final tie breaker will be a lottery undertaken by an individual independent of the Children and Families directorate.

* In order to determine the relevant catchment area, the home address of a child is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. If arrangements are such that a child resides at two addresses for equal amounts of time, then parents must decide which address to use for admissions purposes. Where more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Local Authority may not be able to process any application until agreement over the preferences is reached. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed and in some instances, where agreement cannot be reached we may not be able to proceed until a legal resolution has been sought and the courts determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling.

Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools. To find the catchment school for a postcode please visit https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/find-school

** A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parents/carer's partner, and in every case the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address.

***Distance is measured by the shortest available walking route (using road and/or made up footpath) using the nearest network node from the property address point to the nearest network node at the main school entrance gate.

5. Multiple Birth policy

If when places are offered under only one child from a multiple birth family can be admitted (one of a twin or triplet for instance) then subject to clause 2.15 of the School Admission Appeals Code places will be offered at the same school to the other children from the same multiple birth.

6. Admission appeals

- If the LA do not offer a child a place at this school, this will be because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the school to increase too much.

- If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent panel considers all such appeals, and its decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to whom we had refused a place, then we will accept this decision and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. (Further details of appeal arrangements are set out in the revised Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals)

7. The pupil admission number PAN

The ‘PAN’ is the number of children the LA considers the school can accommodate in any year group. The PAN for our school is 11. We keep this number under review, and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances change.

8. Sizes of classes for infants

The maximum class size for Key Stage 1 children (aged five to seven) is 30.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored by the governing body and reviewed every three years, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our school or in the local area. The policy will always take due note of guidance provided by the local Admissions Forum.