



# Starting Nursery 2026-2027

For children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023

## Introduction

This booklet explains how you can apply for a nursery place at Devonshire Primary School.

### When can my child start Nursery? Children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023

**There is one main intake for nursery each year, which is in September.** The **earliest** that a child will normally be considered to start nursery is at the beginning of the September following their third birthday.

### Are places full time or part time?

All nursery places are 15 hours, part time, five mornings per week. The morning session is 8.40am to 11.40am.

## NURSERY ADMISSION CRITERIA

When the nursery is oversubscribed, places will be allocated according to the following oversubscription criteria:

1. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children (see page 5 for more details).
2. Children who have a professionally supported medical or exceptional social reason (see page 5/6 for more details).
3. Children with an older brother or sister attending the main school at the time that the younger child starts nursery (see page 6 for more details).
4. On the basis of proximity to the school, measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the main entrance of the school building, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

### Do I get priority for a reception place if my child attends the nursery?

Children attending our nursery have no priority for admission to reception. This is to ensure that parents who have decided not to send their child to nursery will not be disadvantaged when applying for a reception place. As such, it is not necessary for your child to attend our nursery class in order to gain a place in reception at the school. A child may attend a nursery class in one community school but apply for a reception place at a different school. **You will need to make a separate application for a place in reception at the appropriate time, regardless of which nursery school (if any) your child attends.**

## Children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023

It may be possible for younger children to gain a place starting mid-way through the year, subject to the availability of places. To be considered for one of these places next year you should apply before the deadline of 15 January 2026.

Please note that **Devonshire's Nursery is likely to fill up in September with children who have already turned three**, so even if your child turns three between 1 September 2023 & 31 August 2024 and you apply before the deadline of 15 January 2026, it is still possible there will be no places available in the nursery. **Your child may have to wait until September 2027 to begin nursery.**

**Applicants born between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024 will not be considered at the initial allocation and will be placed on the waiting list.**

If a place becomes available it will be allocated according to the following criteria:

1. Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 September 2026
2. Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 January 2027
3. Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 April 2027

If any criteria 1, 2 or 3 are oversubscribed, places will be offered based on our Nursery Admission Criteria on page 2. We will only contact you should a place become available.

## Can my child start nursery earlier?

No, a child must be no younger than three years of age when they start Devonshire Nursery School. Alternative provision for younger children may be available in alternate / private nursery provision. For more information on alternate / private nursery provision please contact the Sutton Family Information Service.

### **Sutton Family Information Service**

Tel: 020 8770 6000 (9am to 5pm)

[Online enquiry form](#)

[Family Information Website](#)

## How do I apply for a nursery place?

The application form to apply for Devonshire's Nursery during the 2025/2026 academic year is available via our school website [www.devonshireprimary.org](http://www.devonshireprimary.org).

The closing date for applications is 15 January 2026.

Before completing the form, it is very important that you read through this booklet and that you understand how your application will be considered.

## Completing the Application Form

**If you wish to apply for a nursery place at Devonshire Primary School you must complete the application form online and return it by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026, together with a copy of your council tax or council tenancy agreement as proof of address.**

It is important that the application form is fully and accurately completed and submitted with the appropriate evidence (see below). If there are mistakes or inaccuracies on the form it may delay your application.

### **Child's address**

The address on the front of the form should be the child's permanent place of residence. It should not be a business, relative or carer's/childminder's address, nor is it permitted for a family to use a temporarily rented address to secure a nursery place for their child. The address will normally be the parent's address. If the parents do not live together, it should be the parent with whom the child spends the majority of the time. This will normally be the parent who receives Child Benefit in respect of the child. An application can only be made from a single address. **You are required to provide your current council tax bill. If you are a council tenant, you should provide a copy of your council tenancy agreement.**

If there is a formal equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child.

If you move address after completing the application form, you must write to inform us as soon as possible and provide evidence of your new address (please see page 10). The address to be used in the allocation process may vary depending on the date you moved.

Any offer of a place based on where the child lives is conditional on the child being resident at the address at the closing date for application.

The school reserves the right to seek evidence from parents, Council records, primary schools or any other sources deemed appropriate. The school may also make a home visit and refer cases to the London Borough of Sutton's Investigation Officers where it is deemed appropriate.

Any application which uses false information will be withdrawn and may be subject to legal proceedings. If an application is found to be fraudulent after places are offered, the place will normally be withdrawn.

### **Parent/Carer's Details**

The person applying on behalf of the child should be the person with Parental Responsibility for the child. However, there may be occasions where this is not the case, and this should be indicated on the form.

**Parental Responsibility** is defined by the Children Act 1989 and amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Parental Responsibility is automatically acquired at birth by the natural mother and natural father, if he was married to the mother at the time of birth or they were married subsequently. For children born since 1 January 2003, the child's natural father will have Parental Responsibility if he jointly registered as the child's natural father following the child's birth. Other people can obtain Parental Responsibility by seeking a Parental Responsibility legal agreement, obtained with the consent of all persons with Parental Responsibility or by a court order, or when a child is placed with them for legal adoption. Step-parents, grandparents and other close relatives do not have automatic Parental Responsibility, and can only acquire it through a legal agreement or court order. If you are a distant relative or not related at all to the child it is likely that you are a Private Foster Parent. In law this means you must tell your local Council you are caring for the child and also you must tell the child's parents (or the person with Parental Responsibility) about the application for a school place and obtain their permission. You can find more information of Parental Responsibility at <https://www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities>.

If you are unsure about your status, you should submit your application with a covering letter to explain your situation.

### **Looked After Children**

Following a change in legislation from 1st September 2021 the criteria for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children is: A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those 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. 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). As such, if the child you are applying for is Looked After, it is important that you include this on the application form and provide supporting evidence from a social worker.

**Please note that children adopted from overseas are not classified as children in public care.**

### **Social/Medical reasons**

You are able to give a reason for applying to our nursery. Whilst we will have regard to the information you provide, this alone would not normally give priority for a place. If you wish to apply under exceptional medical and social criteria, you must provide additional information and professional evidence to support your case which should be attached to your application form. Supporting evidence should be provided from a professional, such as a social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police, doctor and/or hospital consultant. Refugee and Asylum-Seeking children may be included under this criterion depending on individual circumstance and subject to support from a relevant professional or council officer as listed above.

Providing professional evidence does not guarantee your child priority at the school. The decision will be made by our admissions panel, who will consider whether the circumstances warrant a child being placed at our nursery and whether they should give the child priority over other applicants who may, for example, have siblings at the school or who may live closer.

If there are supported medical and social needs for mobility reasons, consideration for a priority place will normally only be given for our nursery if it is the nearest, unless you can demonstrate why our nursery, which may be further away than another, will be more appropriate for your child's needs.

Evidence to support a medical condition can come from the family GP or child's hospital consultant. This should confirm your child's condition and outline how it is managed. It should also confirm how it would affect your child in school and its relevance to a nursery placement. Common ailments such as asthma would not normally be given a priority placement. Any other medical conditions in the family may be considered but as a separate issue under social reasons. Parents are responsible for providing the evidence to support an application for medical or social placement. Any application that does not have supporting evidence will not be given priority and the school is not responsible for ensuring parents provide it.

### **Siblings**

A sibling is defined as brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living as part of the same family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday and will be in attendance at our school when the younger child is due to start.

### **Supporting Evidence**

You must include:

- Evidence of address – current council tax bill or if you are a council tenant a copy of your tenancy agreement
- Evidence for social/medical reasons to be considered

### **Closing date**

The closing date for applications is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

Applications made after the closing date will be considered after those received on time, unless there are exceptional circumstances, supported by independent evidence.

## **When will I know if my application is successful?**

### **Children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023**

We will contact you by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

You will be given two weeks from the date of the offer to decide whether or not you want to accept the place.

If you are not offered a place, you will receive an email by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and your child's name will be added to our waiting list. Vacancies arising after the initial allocation will be offered to children on the waiting list according to our Nursery Admission Criteria on page 2.

### **Children born between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024**

Your child will be placed on the waiting list but you **MUST** fill in a new application form if you wish your child to be considered for a nursery place in September 2027. This application form will be available online from mid-October 2026.

## **Can I defer my child's place at nursery?**

No. If you are offered a place in our nursery but you do not wish your child to start until a later term, the place will be withdrawn and your child's name will be placed on the waiting list for the later term.

However, you should note that Devonshire's nursery is usually full in the Autumn term, and as such, there is no guarantee that a place will become available later in the year.

## **What if I miss the closing date for applications?**

If you miss the closing date your application will be treated as a late application. Your child will not be considered for a place in the first round of offers unless we are under-subscribed. If we are oversubscribed your child's name will be added to the waiting list and you will be informed of this by email by 30th April 2026.

## **I do not live in Sutton, can I apply for a nursery place at Devonshire Primary**

Yes. If you live outside of the borough you can still apply for a nursery place via the online form.

## **Change of address**

If you move at any time after submitting an application to us, you must advise us immediately and provide proof of your new address, so that we can update our records and ensure that correspondence is sent to the correct address. Proof of your new address should include either a copy of your tenancy agreement or a copy of a solicitor's letter confirming the sale/purchase (this must be after completion has taken place). Exchange of contracts or a future completion date will not be accepted.

The address to be used in the allocation of nursery places may vary depending on the date you moved, and as such, failure to tell us about a new address may result in an incorrect allocation of nursery places. If you fail to tell us about a house move, we may withdraw your application or any offer of a nursery place that has been made.

## **What if my child has Special Educational Needs?**

If your child is not yet going to an early education setting, you can talk to your doctor or health visitor who will be able to give you advice about the next steps to take.

## How will waiting lists be managed?

Your child will automatically be added to our waiting list in the following circumstances:

- If you are not offered a place at the initial allocation
- If you submit a late application, and we are oversubscribed with applications who applied on time
- If you are applying for a nursery place for a child who is already 3 years of age and we are already full

The waiting list will be ranked according to the nursery's admission criteria. No priority can be given to children according to the date their application was received or their name was added to the list.

As some families decline their offer of a nursery place, vacancies are created. These will be filled from the waiting lists.

You should note that your child's position on a waiting list may go down as well as up. This is because other children might be added to the nursery's waiting list that have greater priority for a place against the admission criteria. This can happen when new families move into the area or when other families ask to go on the waiting list for a nursery after the initial allocation date.

Waiting lists will not be carried forward to the 2027/2028 academic year. If your child is not successful for a place in 2026/2027 but will remain eligible for a nursery place in 2027/2028, you will need to complete a new online application from October 2026.

## Information about nursery funding for three- and four-year-old children

The Government has provided funding for all four-year-old children and most three-year-old children to attend a nursery. The nursery can be in the private sector (that is, a private day nursery, pre-school or playgroup), or in the maintained sector (that is, a local authority school). If the nursery is in the private sector, it must be inspected by OFSTED and registered with Sutton Extended Services and Early Years.

The funding is available for up to 30 hours a week, for 38 weeks. The payment goes directly to the nursery provider and will cover the cost of a place in most private nurseries and all local authority nurseries. Please note that we do not offer 30-hour placements (see page 2 for further information).

The table below shows when your child is eligible for a grant

<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday between</b>	<b>Grant will be from</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Summer Term (starting after Easter) onwards
1 <sup>st</sup> April – 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Autumn Term (beginning in September) onwards
1 <sup>st</sup> September – 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Spring Term (beginning in January) onwards

For further information about nursery provision in Sutton and the funding available, please contact the Family Information Service

**Once you have accepted the offer of a Nursery place for your child, we require 6 weeks written notice of your intention to withdraw your child from Devonshire Nursery.**

## To help you

Try to visit the nursery before completing your application form.

1. You should bear in mind that the nearer you live to the nursery the more likely it is that your application will be successful. However, there is no guarantee of being offered a place.
2. Medical reasons only apply to the child and must be supported by evidence which shows why a particular nursery is the only one your child can attend. Confirmation of a condition will not necessarily be sufficient to give medical priority.
3. Social reasons do not include routine childminding arrangements but may include medical conditions relating to another member of the family.
4. In all cases it is your responsibility to provide the evidence to support a request for a priority placement. The school will not seek evidence on your behalf.
5. If you are not offered a place in our nursery you can apply for an alternative nursery. You can accept an alternative offer and leave your child's name on our waiting list.
6. Before returning your application, please check that you have included the following information:
  - Child's name
  - Child's date of birth
  - Your postcode
  - Any relevant medical or social evidence to support your application
  - Current council tax bill or council tenancy agreement
  - Details of siblings in the main school
7. If your circumstances change after you have submitted your form, you must notify us in writing at:  
Nursery Admissions  
Devonshire Primary School  
Devonshire Avenue  
Sutton  
Surrey  
SM2 5JL or email: [nursery@devonshire.sutton.sch.uk](mailto:nursery@devonshire.sutton.sch.uk)
8. Nursery education is not statutory; your child does not have to attend a school nursery.