



# Berkswell C of E School and Nursery/FS1 Admission Policy for September 2027

Berkswell C of E Primary School serves the Parish of Berkswell and admits children in the 3 – 11 years age range. The school's admission number is 30 and children are usually admitted at the start of the school year (September) in which they become five (four for Nursery/FS1).

Prospective parents/guardians are invited to see the school at work and those interested in applying for a place for their child, **should obtain a Berkswell School information pack** (available from the school office). This is strongly recommended if you require your Christian faith to be considered within the admission criteria.

Applications for Reception/FS2 are handled through Solihull Local Authority's Admissions Service. Applications for Nursery/FS1 are handled by the school.

An application form for a school Nursery/FS1 place can be found on the school website [www.berkswellschool.org.uk](http://www.berkswellschool.org.uk). Completed applications must be returned to school with any supplementary information by 6 December 2026. Offer letters will be sent on 13 January 2027. The school will send a confirmation email on receipt of the application.

All applications received will be considered together at one time by a committee arranged by the school governors. Where applications are lower than the school's admission number, all applicants will be admitted.

If the admission number is exceeded in any one academic year the governors will apply the following criteria, giving priority as follows:

1. Looked after Children and all previously looked after or children placed under a special guardianship order, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England as a result of being adopted.
2. Children who are a sibling of a pupil in school at the time of admission (this excludes siblings in Nursery/FS1).
3. Children whose family are members\* of Berkswell Church and live within the parish of Berkswell (see map in information pack) or the Local Authority catchment area.
4. Other Children who live within the parish of Berkswell (see map in information pack) or the Local Authority catchment area.
5. Children who are attending Berkswell School Nursery/FS1 at the time of application. (This criterion refers to applications for Reception Class/FS2 only).
6. Children whose family do not live within the parish of Berkswell but are members\* of Berkswell Church.
7. Children whose family are members\* of any other Christian Church. Within this policy 'Christian church' means any church which is designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or is a member of Churches Together in England, or the Evangelical Alliance, or a partner church of Affinity. It also includes churches which are members of the Anglican Communion worldwide, as set out in the list of members maintained by the Anglican Communion Office and available on their website: [www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org)
8. Any other children outside of the catchment area.
9. Any child whose application arrives at Solihull Local Authority's Admissions Service (for Reception/FS2) and to school (for Nursery/FS1) later than the published closing date for receipt of applications (unless there are particular, pre-agreed circumstances which prevented the application being made on time).

\*Membership of the church means that at least one parent/guardian and the child seeking admission have attended their church at least twice per month for a minimum of six months prior to the date of their application. The supplementary information form enclosed in the Berkswell School information pack should be completed and returned to the **school**.

## Steps to Qualify for Berkswell Church Membership

### 1. Registration Card:

- Before attending Berkswell Church for the first time, contact the **Parish Administrator** to obtain a Registration Card.
- Time will begin to run only once you have contacted the Parish Administrator for the explicit purposes of school entry qualification, even if you have already started attending Berkswell Church.
- You can reach the Parish Administrator by phone at **01676 529123** or by email at **office@berkswellchurch.org.uk**.
- The Parish Administrator will explain how to have the card signed after each attendance and other relevant matters.

### 2. Attendance Requirements:

- To qualify for church membership and receive a letter certifying church attendance:
  - Start attending by the **first Sunday in June** if you need a letter in December.
  - Start attending by the **first Sunday in July** if you need a letter in January.
- Attendance must be consistent; extra attendance in one month will not make up for missed attendance in another.

### 3. Definition of Attendance:

- Attendance means attending the **principal Sunday service**, held on Sundays at **10 am**.
- Other services do not count toward the membership requirement.
- Attendance must have occurred within the **six months immediately before** the date on which the certifying letter is issued, whether you are already a regular church attender or not.

### 4. Signing the Registration Card:

- A **Church Officer** must sign the Registration Card **on the day of attendance**. They cannot be backdated.
- For school entry purposes, Church Officers include:
  - The Rector.
  - Church Wardens.
  - Readers.
  - Parish Administrators.
- Signatures from anyone other than a Church Officer will not count toward your attendance.
- The Parish Administrator will identify the Church Officers when you contact them to obtain a Registration Card

Please remember that if you wish your Church membership to be taken into consideration, you should attach a letter from your minister confirming your membership.

- Within each category, the distance will be measured from a child's home to the school according to the measurement system used by Solihull Local Authority for Reception/FS2 and by school for Nursery/FS1; closest being offered first.
- If two or more applicants are the same distance from the school but only one place can be offered, a computerised random allocation system will be used to decide which applicant has the highest priority. The applicant with the lowest random number will have the highest priority.
- This random process will be carried out independently of the admissions authority.

The home address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parents. Where care is shared between two parents, parents will need to provide a copy of the court order defining the arrangement. In the absence of a court order, we will use the address of the parent who is in receipt of the child benefit. Parents will need to send a copy of your child benefit award for the last two years.

Distances are measured in a straight line from home to school by Solihull admissions system. The admissions system uses six-figure grid references provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). The grid references provide a unique point on each property.

- The Governors of Berkswell C of E Primary School have a duty to admit any Child with an education health and care plan that names the school. Any such admission will reduce the number of places available to other applicants.
- The criteria are applied with regard to Equal Opportunities and without reference to a child's abilities or aptitudes.

<sup>1</sup> Children within Local Authority care as defined in Section 22 of the Children's Act 1989, for example children in residential homes or foster care, and also children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (under the terms of the Adoption & Children's Act 2002) or because they became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order (under the terms of the Children's Act 1989).

<sup>2</sup> A brother or sister must live at the same address and could be:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents.
- a half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one parent; a stepbrother or stepsister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage or civil partnership (a formal arrangement that gives same-sex couples the same legal status as married couples);
- the separate children of a couple who live together; or
- an adopted or fostered brother or sister.

<sup>3</sup> Twins and children from multiple births may be treated as "excepted children" under the terms of Infant Class Size regulations, when one of the siblings is the 30<sup>th</sup> child to be admitted.

## **The offer – September Nursery/FS1 and Reception/FS2 entry**

For Reception/FS2, Solihull Local Authority, will make offers by letter on behalf of the Governors. For Nursery/FS1 offers will be made directly by the school. Parents/guardians will be required to accept or decline the offer by a specified date. If places then become available as they have been declined, they will be released to children whose applications were initially unsuccessful.

## **Unsuccessful application**

Parents/guardians will be informed if they have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place for their child. This letter will inform parents/guardians that they have the right of appeal.

The names of children not offered a place in either Nursery/FS1 or Reception/FS2 year groups will be placed on a waiting list. For Reception/FS2, the list will be held by the Local Authority until the end of the Autumn term. The waiting list for Nursery/FS1 will be held by the school until the end of the Autumn term. Should places become available, offers will be made in accordance with the admissions criteria detailed in the policy.

## **Appeals process**

Parents/guardians who wish to appeal against the decision of the Governors to refuse admission, should complete an appeals form stating the grounds for their appeal and send to the Clerk to the Independent Appeals Panel c/o the Diocesan Board of Education, within 20 days from the refusal. The appeals form may be downloaded from the school's website or requested from the school office.

- The Independent Admission Appeal Panel, appointed by Coventry Diocesan Board of Education, will consider the appeal and make its decision accordingly. Parents/guardians are given the opportunity to present their case to the panel and are informed of the result within 5 school working days following the appeal.

- Unless there have been significant changes in circumstances relevant to the application, the Governors will not consider a further appeal within the same academic year.
- It must be noted that there is no right of appeal for Nursery/FS1 places, as Nursery education is not statutory.

## Deferred entry to school

Provision must be made for the admission to school of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Where a place at a school has been offered:

Your child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;

- You can defer the date your child is admitted to the school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; or
- If you wish your child may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (31 December, 31 March and 31 August).

## Admission outside normal age range

It is usual for children to be taught in the year group according to their chronological age. This is entirely appropriate for the vast majority of children whose needs can be supported by experienced school staff and the opportunities offered by the early years foundation stage curriculum.

Occasionally, it may be in the best interests of the child to teach him or her out of their chronological year group. This may be because of serious illness or severe learning difficulties.

**Parents of summer-born children**, defined by the DfE as children born between 1 April and 31 August may request that their child be taught out of the normal age group. This request may be supported by professional evidence such as a speech and language therapist or it may simply be the parent's statement as to why they are making their request.

Parents wishing to make a request are advised to follow this process:

- Apply for a place for your child's normal age group at the usual time.
- Submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time and by the closing date, by emailing the school office.
- Admission authorities will respond to the request before national offer day.
- If the request is agreed the application for the normal age group will be withdrawn before a place is offered
- If the request is refused the application will proceed for the normal age group and you must decide whether to accept the offer of a place, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission once your child reaches statutory school age.
- If your request is agreed, this is not an offer of a school place, you must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group.

Once a request is submitted, the Governing Body is responsible for making the decision about whether the child should be admitted out of their normal age group.

The Governing Body will take account of the child's individual needs and abilities to consider whether these can best be met in reception or year one. In effect, this means that the Governing Body is making a decision about whether it would be in the child's best interest to miss the reception year.

In making this decision the Governing Body will take account of:

- The views of the parent
- Information on the child's academic and social and emotional development
- The child's medical history and views of medical professionals, if relevant
- Whether the child was born prematurely and to which year group it would have fallen into if it was born on time; and
- The views of the Head Teacher

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

If you are unhappy with the decision that has been reached following your request, you can make a complaint using the local authority complaints procedure for maintained schools or the schools complaints procedure for voluntary aided schools and academies.

If you are not satisfied with the way the local authority has handled your complaint, you may then refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. In the case of an academy, you may refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency who will consider the complaint on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.

The Department for Education has issued [advice and guidance for parents of summer born children](#).

### **Admission at other times – all year groups**

An application for admission during the school year can be made at any point. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the school so that they can make an informed choice about whether the school is right for their child. Applications should be made on the Solihull Local Authority form and returned directly to the Admissions Team at Solihull Local Authority, which coordinates admissions throughout the school year on behalf of the governors. The supplementary information form in the Berkswell School information pack and a minister's letter should be returned directly to the school if a parent/guardian wishes their church attendance to be taken into account in the application process. The school follow the local authority fair access and in-year processes.

The Governors will consider each application; if the number in the appropriate year group is lower than the admission number, a place will be offered by the Local Authority on the Governors' behalf. The school must respond to the applications within 2 days of receipt.

Where the year group is oversubscribed, the Governors can refuse admission even if the child is within the parish of Berkswell.

Parents/guardians whose child has not been offered a place during the year should contact the Local Authority if they wish their child's name to be placed on the school's waiting list.

The waiting list will be held, in strict oversubscription criteria order, by the Local Authority until the end of the school year.

Parents/guardians should confirm their continued interest in remaining on the waiting list, to the Local Authority the week before each half term break. Should places become available, offers will be made by the Local Authority on behalf of the Governors in accordance with the oversubscription criteria within this policy.

The Governors of Berkswell C of E Primary School comply with Equal Opportunities legislation and the Fair Access Protocol operated by Solihull Local Authority.



## Berkswell C of E School Supplementary Information Form

Please return this form to Berkswell School; please also remember to return your SMBC application form to The Admissions Team at Solihull Local Authority for Reception and Nursery application form directly to the school.

Surname ..... Forename .....  
Middle Name ..... Chosen Name .....  
Date of Birth .....

Child's Address .....

Postcode ..... Home Telephone .....

**Siblings** - If there are older brothers or sisters in the school please give their names .....

Are you member of Berkswell Church?  Yes  No  
Are you a member of any other Christian Church?  Yes  No

Please remember that if you wish your Church membership to be taken into consideration, you should attach a letter from your minister confirming your membership and that at least one parent/guardian and the child seeking admission have attended their Church at least twice per month for a minimum of six months prior to the date of your application.

If attending Berkswell Church, you must notify the Church Administrator on the occasion of your first attendance.

Name of Minister .....

Name and address of Church .....