



## **Spring Meadow Primary School and Nursery Admissions Policy 2026-27**

**Ratified:**

**Review Date: December 2025**

Governors welcome applications for places for children whose parents wish them to be educated at Spring Meadow Primary School and Nursery. Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with Education Health and Care Plans, where Spring Meadow Primary School and Nursery is the named school, the oversubscription criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below.

### **Looked After Children**

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 will be given first priority in oversubscription criteria ahead of all other applicants in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. This also includes 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. 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 (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

### **Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that name the school on the plan are required to be admitted to a school regardless of their place in the priority order.

### **Age of Admission**

Essex County Council's policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021 would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2026.

As required by law, all Essex infant and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point.

Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the original application was accepted.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place initially should contact the individual school(s) for further details as to what this would entail.

Where parents choose to defer entry, a school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year. The process to be followed is defined in detail in the 'Primary Education in Essex' booklet. Supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort should be submitted, if there is such evidence available.

The Trust will decide whether the application for a Reception place will be accepted or whether it will be treated as an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age appropriate cohort and will write to parents with the outcome of the request. s

### **Policy and number for entry into Year R**

Spring Meadow Primary School and Nursery provides a 4 to 1 1 education. Children will be admitted at age 4 without reference to aptitude or ability. The number of intended admissions for the year commencing September 2027 will be 50.

### **Applying For a Place- Cohort Applications**

You must make an application to the Local Authority for your child to attend Spring Meadow Primary School and Nursery. The Governors recommend that parents/carers read the current Essex Admissions Arrangements

### **Oversubscription for entry into Year R**

There is no guarantee of a place for children living in the priority admission area. In the event of oversubscription places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:

1. Looked After Children and previously looked after children (as defined above);
2. children with a sibling attending the school;
3. children living in the priority admission area;
4. remaining applications.

In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from home to school, those living closest being given the highest priority

### **Home address**

Applications will normally be processed on the basis of the home address for the child at the time of application and determination, unless, where there is a new home address, proof of an exchange of contracts or copy of a tenancy agreement can be provided by 31 January 2025.

The home address is considered to be the address at which the child resides on a permanent basis or is 'ordinarily resident', including overnight. This is generally the address of the parent/carer.

In some cases, children may be 'ordinarily resident' for the majority of the school week, including overnight, with another relative or carer, such as a grandparent. This may also be the case where a child resides between two parents at different addresses following the breakdown of the parental relationship. Where this is the case, the application will be processed on the basis of that address (where the child resides for the majority of the school week) and proof of address and formal residence arrangement will be required with the application. The child must be living with the parent, relative or carer 24 hours per day, for the majority of the school week. Where there is an eligibility for child benefit, evidence that the adult with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' receives the child benefit may be requested. If the adult(s) with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' is not in receipt of the child benefit, further enquiries may be made and evidence requested to confirm that the child is

'ordinarily resident' at the stated address, for example, GP/health registration address evidence.

Arrangements where parents can leave and collect children from another relative or carer on a daily basis will be regarded as childcare arrangements, and the child will not be deemed to be 'ordinarily resident' with that person.

### **Distance tie breaker**

For admissions purposes the Trust uses data provided by Ordnance Survey (OS) to measure straight line distances. The OS data plots the co-ordinates of each individual property (the home address) which are referred to as address points. The definition of the home address is as described above.

Straight line distance is measured from the address point of the home address to address point of the school. Distances are reported in miles to three decimal places. If a child's time is split equally between two residences, the address of the residence at which the child resides for the majority of the school week would be used to measure the distance between the child's school and home.

In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at a school the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by the Trust not involved in admissions, with the exception of twins, triplets etc.

### **Address checking**

Where residency is relevant to an application for a school place, the Trust may ask a random sample of applicants to provide proof of their home address. This must be a copy of one of the following:

- UK driving licence;
- council tax notification;
- two utility bills dated within the last 6 months (gas, electricity, water or landline phone)

Where there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of a home address, the Trust reserves the right to take additional checking measures including, in some cases, unannounced home visits. If a school place is secured through false information regarding a home address, the Trust may withdraw the place offered.

### **Admission of children from overseas**

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in the UK have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in the UK for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

For parents and children living overseas and planning to move to the UK, an application for a school place will be considered for such children even though they may not be resident in the UK at the time of application. The application may however be processed on the basis of the overseas address.

It is the responsibility of the parents of foreign national children to check that their children have a right under their UK entry conditions to study at a school before applying for a place. The County Council cannot advise or assist in such immigration matters.

If an applicant from overseas owns a property in Essex but is not living in it, but intends to take up residence with their child at the Essex home before the start of the autumn term, then evidence of this address must be provided for the application. Any offer of a school place will then be conditional upon receipt of evidence of taking up residency at that property in Essex.

### **Siblings**

For applications made in the normal admission round a relevant sibling is a child who has a

brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends the preferred school or partner school in any year group excluding year 6.

Biological and adopted siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year will also be treated as siblings irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings.

For mid-year applications a sibling is a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school or partner school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission.

### **Priority Admission Areas**

There is no guarantee of a place to children living in the priority admission area of a particular school.

Parents are also able to check in which school's priority admission area their address is located (if any) using the online 'Priority admission (catchment) area finder on the Council's website [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions).

### **Twins, Triplets etc.**

For applications made in the normal admission round, if the last child to be offered a place is a twin and their sibling cannot be offered initially, the Trust will ensure both twins are offered a place. In the case of triplets or other multiple births, if the majority of children can be offered a place initially, the Trust will offer places to the remaining children. For example, if two triplets can be offered a place, the remaining child will also receive an offer of a place.

For mid-year applications, where a family moves into an area necessitating a change of school for their twins (or triplets etc) and the majority can be offered a place then a place will be offered for the remaining child(ren). However, where the family does not move but wishes to transfer the children to another local school where there are insufficient places for all of them then a place would not normally be offered for all.

### **In Year Admissions**

For all In Year Admissions please contact Sapphire Davids on 01255 504528 or via email at: [office@springmeadow.essex.sch.uk](mailto:office@springmeadow.essex.sch.uk) or at the main school office.

### **Withdrawal of an offer**

If a school place has been secured through false information or has been offered in error, the offer of the place may be withdrawn.

### **Waiting lists**

The Trust will hold waiting lists for their oversubscribed school from 1<sup>st</sup> September and continue to allocate places from these lists if spaces become available. Applicants will be ranked on these waiting lists in priority order, according to the school's admission criteria. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

### **Appeals**

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Applicants are only able to appeal once each academic year, unless there is a significant change in circumstance.

For information on how to appeal appellants should contact the school within 20 days of being notified that their application has been unsuccessful. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is

on each school's website.