Pathway Trust

Nursery Policy

Policy effective from	1 September 2026
Policy owner	Director of Primary Schools
Policy applies to	Berrow Church Primary School Castle Batch Primary School East Huntspill Primary School Pawlett Primary School Severn Beach Primary School St Anne's Church Primary School West Huntspill Primary School
Policy changes since last version	New policy

1. Admissions

1.1 Pathway Trust is committed to providing nursery education in our primary schools where this supports the needs of the local community. Our aim is to provide a high quality early education for children, as well as supporting working parents by providing childcare. Our Early Years curriculum is sensitive to the needs of all children within a stimulating, safe and happy learning environment. These experiences lay the foundations for the future development and learning of children at school and beyond.

1.2 When offering places, we will:

- Offers places for children to start from the age of two years old.
- Admit children for places on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Operate a waiting list if a place/session is not available, regularly monitor the waiting list and inform parents/carers of any changes.
- Provide regular open days and events, held throughout the year to provide prospective parents/carers with opportunities to see the classroom environment.

1.3 If interested in a nursery place at the school, parents/carers should:

- Complete an online application form.
- On confirmation of a place, pay a registration fee (refundable for those accessing funded hours only).

1.4 There is no statutory appeal process for admissions to nursery. If parents/carers have concerns they must put them in writing to the Headteacher who will consider the complaint in accordance with the Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Procedure, available on the trust website.

1.5 Attendance at nursery does not qualify a child for a place in the school's reception class. Parents/carers must apply for a reception class school place through their local authority (see Admissions Policies on the trust website).

1.6 If a parent/carer chooses to delay their child's date of entry to a reception class until the child is of statutory school age, the nursery place for that child will not normally continue unless it is recognised that the child has exceptional circumstances and the local authority recommends that the delay is in the best interests of the child.

2. Attendance

2.1 It is recognised that attending nursery is not statutory, although good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. A good attendance routine at nursery sets the pattern for when children move into their statutory primary education.

2.2 To encourage good attendance, the school will:

- Ensure nursery is welcoming and every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Ensure all term dates including INSET days are clearly displayed on the school website.
- Maintain thorough and accurate records of all absences, reasons provided, and any actions taken, using either manual or electronic registers.
- Follow up with non-attendance. Safeguarding is taken seriously and the school will always contact home (including emergency contacts if required) if contact has not been made regarding a child's absence. We will be rigorous in seeking explanations for absences, and will investigate all individual cases and any patterns of absence.
- Proactively identify and follow up on a child's regular non-attendance, take early action to prevent non-attendance developing, and monitor the impact of any targeted support that is put in place.

2.3 Parents/Carers are asked to:

- Notify the school as soon as possible before the child's session start time if a child will be absent. This can be done in person, through a parent communication app, or by phone call (an answer phone is available to leave a message if required).
- State the reason for the absence (e.g. illness, medical appointment) and, if possible, how long the child will be absent.
- Notify school of any planned holidays or days off. There is no requirement for these to be authorised but parents/carers should provide adequate notification of these to avoid unexplained absence.
- Be aware that the school will monitor attendance and will follow up on unexplained absences, potentially requiring further action to ensure the child's safety.

2.4 Parents/carers should inform the nursery of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in nursery such as bereavement or parental separation. This will help the school to identify any additional early help that may be required.

2.5 The trust recognises that some children are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example children who are vulnerable or have special educational or medical needs. Additional support will be provided with reference to school policies including the Special Educational Needs Policy available on the trust website.

2.6 Safeguarding concerns for any child at any time will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and followed up in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy which is available on the trust website.

3. Food and drink

3.1 The trust promotes healthy eating habits, and food safety is a priority for us. To achieve this we will:

- Always supervise eating, being within sight and hearing of children to prevent choking and food sharing.
- Ensure the schools catering partner meals are prepared appropriately, for example, spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes are cut into quarters or segments, and cylindrical foods like carrots and cocktail sausages are cut lengthways into thin batons.
- Collect detailed information during registration on allergies and if required, perform risk assessments, and create individual plans to prevent cross-contamination and ensure safety in line with our Allergy Safety Policy available on the trust website.
- Ensure all qualified practitioners are paediatric first aid trained and at least one will be present during all snack and mealtimes.
- Recognise hunger and fullness cues, feeding children at their own pace and never forcing them to finish a meal.
- Ensure meal and snack times are social occasions where practitioners sit with children, set a good example with table manners, and offer encouragement where required.
- Ensure menus (as offered by the schools catering partner) provide a wide variety of nutritious foods from the four main food groups to encourage children to try new dishes.
- Ensure practitioners and children wash and dry their hands thoroughly before mealtimes.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces, and wash and sterilise dishes after each meal.

3.2 Parents/Carers are asked to:

- Follow the healthy lunchbox guidance: Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS.
- Ensure packed lunch items are prepared in a way that helps prevent choking (i.e. spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes are cut into quarters or segments, and cylindrical foods like carrots and cocktail sausages are cut lengthways into thin batons.
- Provide ice packs in packed lunch boxes where required.

4. Toilet and intimate hygiene

4.1 Children can attend nursery at any stage of their toilet training journey. Children may not yet be fully toilet trained or may still be wearing nappies or equivalent when they join the nursery. Toilet training is seen as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn, where appropriate, with the full support and non-judgemental support of adults. We will work with parents to support their child with their toileting

needs as and when developmentally appropriate for their child. We will follow the DfE Toilet training guidance.

4.2 To support all children, we will ensure:

- Children's nappies/pull ups are checked and changed at least once per three hour session, more often as required. Times will be recorded on the parent app.
- Children are encouraged to use the toilet regularly throughout the day and supported if needed.
- Changing mats/stations are provided in children's toilets. These provide safe areas to lay young children if they need to be changed.
- Appropriate PPE is used by practitioners (i.e. aprons and gloves). Practitioners will thoroughly wash their hands after each change.
- All practitioners are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing children.
- Practitioners ensure that changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Children are required to wash their hands after being changed or using the toilet.
- Children who are toilet trained can access the toilet when they need to and are encouraged to be independent.
- Children have spare supplies in their bag suitable for the length of their session. After each change, nappies and pull ups pants are disposed of in the nappy disposal bin. Reusable underwear that has been wet/soiled can be bagged and sent home at the end of the child's session. Heavily soiled underwear may be disposed of by practitioners in the nappy disposal bin.

5. Sleep and rest

5.1 We recognise that children can become very tired during the day and that it is necessary to provide all children with the opportunity to rest during their session. We believe that every child's needs are different and this is why we aim to provide flexibility and opportunities for children to take rests and naps as they need and desire. The school will ensure that suitable facilities and equipment are provided for designated areas or places in the classroom for sleep and rest. Practitioners will ensure that all children receive the rest that they need during their day and regard it to be a highly important part of their personal and developmental needs.

5.2 To support all children, the nursery will ensure:

- Practitioners work closely with parents to support children's sleep care, routines and rest so that continuity of support can be maintained between home and nursery. Practitioners will provide a positive climate to encourage parents to share information openly around the child's developing sleep needs or if a child is having difficulty with sleeping at home and this is impacting on their daily wellbeing in nursery.

- If a child falls asleep during their session practitioners will make the child safe and comfortable in an appropriate space. On the rare occasion that children arrive at school asleep, parents will need to wake their child before leaving them at nursery to continue their rest if required.

- Written records are kept of all children who are sleeping. Sleeping children will be monitored by staff every 10 minutes to check if a child is comfortable and remains safe. The time a child is put down to sleep, when they wake and ten minute monitoring checks are recorded by practitioners. Sleeping children will not be left unsupervised, with a practitioner always remaining in the same room.

- Within the classroom there are quiet rest areas which contain cushions, soft toys and books where children can go if they wish to rest and relax at any time of the day.

- Parents are permitted to bring in a dummy, small toy or comforter which will be stored in the children's bags until needed. Practitioners will always try to take account of parents' wishes when dealing with sleeping children. However unreasonable requests by parents/carers will be discussed and alternatives sought. Practitioners will not carry out requests of parents/carers if they feel that it could put the child in any danger.

- Practitioners are fully aware of the fact that children need rest and appreciate that children have individual needs and routines which vary as they grow and develop.

- The preferences and wishes of parents are always valued and practitioners work closely with them to ensure each child's individual needs are carefully met. Practitioners will not normally leave children to sleep for periods longer than one and a half hours unless requested or indicated by the parents/carers. We will take into account the religious views, beliefs and cultural values of the child and their family as far as possible when supporting children with sleep.

5.3 When supporting children who need to sleep, we will follow the DfE guidance Help for early years providers : Safer sleep

- The temperature of the room/classroom in which a child sleeps should ideally be between 16 and 20 degrees.

- The room should be effectively ventilated.

- Children will be placed on a firm, flat sleep mat on the floor, covered with a clean fitted cotton sheet.

- The child should be placed on their back. If children get themselves into a different position while they are asleep, this is fine.

- Children will be put down in their clothes, but heavier clothing such as jeans, jumpers, hats, cardigans, bibs, and any unnecessary layers will be removed.

- Children may use a light breathable blanket during sleep.

- Pillows will not be used for children sleeping.