

The Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

RESPECT | ASPIRATION | RESILIENCE

Preschool Admissions Policy 2025-2026

Policy Reference:	AVA 006A
Description:	This document outlines the admission procedures for the Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool, aiming to ensure a fair and transparent approach to the admissions process.
Policy Audience:	Parents/Carers
Academy Trust Contact:	Primary Headteacher
Other related Academy Trust policies:	Equality Policy
Governor Committee:	Full Governing Body
Approved by the Governing Board on:	21.09.2024
Signed:	<i>RAScott</i>

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1. Introduction

Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool, situated in the Berryfields area of Aylesbury, provides nurturing and engaging term-time early years education for children from the term following their second birthday until they reach statutory school age. As a preschool (not a nursery), we focus on preparing children for the next stage of their educational journey within a structured and supportive environment. We offer funded places for both 2/3-year-olds and 3/4-year-olds, **with priority given to children in the 3/4-year-old age group.**

As part of the Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust, the preschool is rooted in a Christian ethos that guides our values and daily practice. However, we warmly welcome applications from all members of the community, regardless of faith or background.

Our Admissions Policy outlines a clear, fair, and consistent approach to allocating places, reflecting our commitment to inclusion, diversity, and the needs of local families.

This policy applies only to admissions to Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool. Please note that attending the Preschool does not guarantee a place in the Academy's Reception class. Parents must apply separately for a Reception place through the Buckinghamshire Council coordinated admissions process.

2. Planned Admission Number (PAN)

Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool can accommodate a **maximum of 48 places** at any one time. This is a combination of AM/PM sessions and 30 hours sessions.

3. Catchment area

A map of the Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool catchment areas is available on the Academy website via the following the link: [AVA Preschool catchment area](#)

Buckinghamshire Council's catchment area checker by postcode is available via the following link: [Postcode checker](#)

When using the catchment area checker by postcode, please select Infant as phase of entry. The catchment areas for our Preschool and Primary school are the same.

4. Children with an EHCP

Children holding an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be admitted according to the regulations and policy of the Local Authority, subject to the Preschool being able to meet the child's individual needs.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

If there is greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted. (See Note 1)
2. Children of staff at the Aylesbury Vale Academy in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) where the member of staff has been employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the preschool is madeand/or
 - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
3. Children with a normal home address (see Note 2) in the Preschool's catchment area.

Children eligible for the Extended Funding (30 hours) will be prioritised for the full day spaces. Children eligible for the Universal Funding (15 hours) will be prioritised for the AM/PM spaces. Children in the 3/4-year-old age group will be considered first then any remaining spaces will be allocated to children in the 2/3-year-old age group.

4. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends the Aylesbury Vale Academy preschool rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (see Note 3)

5. Other children.

Tie break:

The proximity of the child’s residence to the Preschool, assessed by the straight-line distance (see Note 4), will be used to differentiate between children in any criteria, prioritising those who live closer. In case of identical distances, placement will be determined at random by a neutral party.

6. Early Years Entitlement Funding

Type of funding	Hours available (term time only)	Starting age	Eligibility
Universal 3–4-year-old (available to all children the term after they turn 3)	15 hours per week (3 hours per day)	Term after they turn 3	No code
Extended 3–4-year-old (for working parents)	An additional 15 hours per week (total of 6 hours per day)	Term after they turn 3	Parents must provide code and must reconfirm every 3 months
2-year-old funding (for parents in receipt of certain benefits)	15 hours per week (3 hours per day)	Term after they turn 2	Parents must apply for code

Universal Hours - for 3- and 4-year-olds

All 3- and 4-year-old children can get 570 hours of free early education or childcare each year. It starts the term after they turn three years old. This means **15 hours each week for 38 weeks of the year (term-time only)**. This is offered as 5 sessions of three hours, either 5 mornings or 5 afternoons.

If a child is only eligible for the 15 Universal Hours, additional privately funded sessions can be requested however, priority will be given to those children who are eligible for the 30 hours (extended hours).

A child born on or between	Will become eligible for universal 3-4 year olds funding
1 st April and 31 st August	1 st September following their 3 rd birthday
1 st September and 31 st December	1 st January following their 3 rd birthday
1 st January and 31 st March	1 st April following their 3 rd birthday

Extended Hours – for 3- and 4-year-olds with working parents

This offer covers a total of 1,140 hours across the year (including the Universal Hours), 30 hours per week for the 38 weeks of the school year (term time only). This means that your child is expected to attend full time daily from 9:00am until 3:00pm.

We cannot confirm a 30-hour placement until the parent or carer provides a valid eligibility code. Without this code, the offer will be withdrawn. It remains the parent/carer's responsibility to reconfirm this code before the start of each term.

When to verify	
Verify your code before	To take up 30 hours from
31 March	April (Summer term)
31 August	September (Autumn term)
31 December	January (Spring term)

If you are unsure about your funding eligibility, please visit <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk>.

If you apply more than three months before the term begins, you will need to reconfirm your eligibility in your account to ensure your code remains valid.

15 hours of free childcare for two-year-olds (if any spaces remaining)

From the age of two until they turn three, some children may be entitled to 15 hours of funded childcare per week, based on a 38-week term time offer. The free hours do not apply automatically - eligibility criteria must be met for your child to qualify. Parent/Carers must have a code confirming they are eligible for the 15 hours funded provision.

Your child's birthday tells you when they can take up their funded place	
If your child turns 2 before these deadlines	They can take up their place from
31 March	April (the Summer term)
31 August	September (the Autumn term)
31 December	January (the Spring term)

Further information can be found on Buckinghamshire Council's website via the link below: <https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/childcare-and-early-years/>

Notes on Funded Provision

- A signed **Parent/Provider Agreement** is required for each child who joins the Preschool. This agreement covers a minimum of one term and a maximum of one year. A new agreement will only be needed at the beginning of a new term if there are changes to any details, including the number of free entitlement hours being accessed.
- If a child attends more than one setting, the **Parent/Provider Agreement** must include full details of any additional providers, as completed by the parent. Parents/carers may use a maximum of two sites in one day to access the free entitlement.
- Parents/Carers must provide **half-termly written notice** if they wish to withdraw their child. Early withdrawal is permitted however parents/carers will not be able to claim funding with another provider for the remainder of the half term unless the child meets specific exceptional criteria.
- Funding only covers the agreed AM (8:30 – 11:30), PM (12:00 – 3:00) or 30 Hours (9:00 – 3:00) sessions and cannot be used for sessions outside these times. Wrap around care services will incur additional charges.
- Funding does not cover the cost of consumables used during the funded sessions. A consumables fee of £5 per term will be invoiced to parents/carers and can be paid via the School Gateway portal.
- If the Universal and Extended free entitlement hours are split between two providers, parents/carers **must inform each provider** about which setting is claiming the Universal hours, and which is claiming the Extended hours.
- Funded hours registered on the Parent/Provider Agreement cannot be transferred to another setting if not used.
- A grace period is available to allow parents to keep their funded place for a short period if they become ineligible for the Extended entitlement. If a child becomes ineligible during the first half of a term, the funding will continue until the term ends. If ineligibility occurs in the second half, parents/carers must renew their eligibility by the 31st of the month marking the end of the term. After the grace period, parents/carers can either reduce the number of sessions or pay the applicable fees.
- If a child becomes ineligible in the first half of the Summer term, they will retain their place until the end of the term. However, if they become ineligible in the second half of the Summer term, the place will only be retained from the start of the following September term **if the eligibility code is renewed by 31st August**.

7. Applying for a place

Our Preschool operates a flexible model to accommodate both funded and privately funded children, prior to their transition into Reception class at their allocated primary school.

Who we can admit and order of priority.

- Funded 3- and 4-year-olds from the start of term following their 3rd birthday.
- Unfunded 3- and 4-year-olds from the date of their 3rd birthday.
- Funded 2-year-olds from the start of the term following their 2nd birthday subject to availability after allocating to 3- and 4-year-olds

Applications must be made directly to the Academy. Please check the Admissions tab within the Preschool section on the Academy website.

The key dates, for the purpose of preschool admissions can be found below:

Deadline for applications	For admission in
1 st April	Autumn Term
31 st October	Spring Term
31 st January	Summer Term

Availability of spaces depends on the ages of the children already enrolled in our Preschool. Priority will be given to children aged 3-4 to help prepare them for entry into Reception, while any remaining spaces will be offered to 2–3-year-olds. There will not be a fixed number of spaces for each age group, as this will vary based on the ages of the children already attending and the staffing ratios we can accommodate.

Please note our **Autumn term is our main intake**, and we cannot guarantee any further availability in subsequent terms.

Places are offered up until the beginning of the Reception year in which your child is due to start school. If you choose to defer or delay your child's school place, they will not be able to remain at Aylesbury Vale Academy Preschool, as their place will have been offered to another child. However, we reserve the right to consider supporting a child to remain in Preschool on a case-by-case basis.

8. Appeals

If you have not been successful in securing a place at our Preschool, there are no grounds for appeal.

9. Waiting list

The Preschool maintains a waiting list for those children who are not offered a place.

Applications received after the specified dates will be added to the waiting list and will be considered during the next round of allocations but **do not take priority**.

Requests from parents of children already attending our setting who want to either take up additional funded hours and/or buy extra hours will be given priority over those on the waiting list.

Children under 2 years old at the next point of entry cannot be added to the waiting list and you will need to reapply once your child is 2.

10. Sessions and timings *(subject to change as the school requires)*

Parents may request AM, PM, or full-day sessions, and the Preschool will do its best to accommodate these preferences. Children are expected to attend a minimum of 5 sessions per week for the 15-hour places and 10 sessions (5 full days) per week for the 30-hour places, unless there are exceptional circumstances that warrant a different attendance pattern. In such cases, the final decision on a child's admission and individualized attendance pattern will be made by the Headteacher and EYFS Lead.

The Preschool operates **during term time only, covering 38 weeks of the year**.

Additionally, each year the Preschool will be closed for in-service training (Inset days).

All requests for session changes must be submitted in writing and will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on availability. Session changes will not be processed until prepayment has been received.

Timings

Session	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	8:30-11:30am	8:30-11:30am	8:30-11:30am	8:30-11:30am	8:30– 11:30am
Afternoon	12:00 - 3pm	12:00 - 3pm	12:00 - 3pm	12:00 - 3pm	12:00 - 3pm
30 Hours (AM + PM session)	9:00am- 3pm	9:00am – 3pm	9:00am – 3pm	9:00am- 3pm	9:00am – 3pm
Fees	Funded or paid £20 per session	Funded or paid £20 per session	Funded or paid £20 per session	Funded or paid £20 per session	Funded or paid £20 per session

Wrap Around Care

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	8:30 – 9 am	8:30 – 9 am	8:30 – 9 am	8:30 – 9am	8:30 - 9am
£6.00 per session, per child (30 hours children only)					
Afternoon	3 – 4:30 pm	3 – 4:30 pm	3 – 4:30 pm	3 – 4:30 pm	3 – 4:30 pm
£6.00 per session, per child					

Please note that nappies, nappy cream, wipes, and other provisions are not provided and must be supplied by the parent/carer. Failure to provide these will result in a £10 charge per day.

11. Payment and Fees

Please note that all payments are due in full, half-termly in advance, and not in arrears. Refunds or credits will not be issued if your child is unable to attend due to illness or any other reason. Failure to pay for sessions in advance and in full will result in your child's place being lost.

Additional Charges

A late collection fee will also be applied for any late pick-ups without a valid reason, in line with our Late Collection Policy:

- Up to 10 minutes late: £10.00 per child
- 15-20 minutes late: £20.00 per child
- 20-25 minutes late: £30.00 per child

Persistently late collections will result in your child losing their place.

12. Attendance and Loss of Place

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends the scheduled sessions and on time to help establish a consistent routine and prepare them for starting school. No holiday periods can be booked during term time.

If a child's attendance falls below 95% without sufficient reason, their place may be subject to review and could be at risk. In such cases, parents will be asked to meet with the Headteacher or Preschool Manager to discuss the concerns. If there is no sustained improvement in attendance following the meeting, the child's place may be withdrawn. Parents will receive written notification, along with two weeks' notice, if the decision is made to withdraw the child's place.

If your child is unwell, you must inform the Preschool. If there is no communication and your child is absent for more than two weeks, their place will be withdrawn, and parents will be notified of this decision in writing.

We ask parents to give a half term's notice to change sessions or leave the setting; charges will still apply up until the child has left the setting. If you wish to leave sooner, you will not be eligible to claim funding with another provider for the remainder of the termly costs unless the child meets exceptional criteria.

13. Starting Reception

Parents/carers should be informed that enrolment at our Preschool does not guarantee an automatic place in Reception at AVA Primary. Parents must follow the coordinated admissions process established by Buckinghamshire Council and submit their applications within the specified timeframe. Additionally, children enrolled in our Preschool do not count as siblings for the purpose of applying for a school place at AVA Primary or Secondary at any time.

We will coordinate with Reception class staff at the school where your child has been allocated a place to ensure a smooth transition. Reports and other relevant records will be shared with the admitting school as appropriate. Staff from the new school will also be given the opportunity to visit the children in the Preschool.

14. Contact details

Further information can be obtained from:

Aylesbury Vale Academy - Primary Phase

John Fitzjohn Avenue, Aylesbury, HP18 0FG

Telephone: 01296 674263

Email: avapreschool@theacademy.me

15. Explanation of terms

Note 1 By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. Previously looked after children are children who have been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be

accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Evidence that a child from outside England was previously in state care will be required to come within this criterion. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Note 2 By normal home address, we mean the child's home address where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with parental responsibility.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book, which shows the address concerned. If it becomes clear or there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence.

Shared Parental Responsibility or Joint Residence

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents/carers with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make a judgement about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- which parent is in receipt of Child Benefit
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

Moving house

If parents move house after an application has been made under the co-ordinated scheme, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home Local Authority (if living outside of Buckinghamshire) or Buckinghamshire Council must be informed straight away.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of

contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required. If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned.

Service families/Crown Servants

Where Service families or families of other Crown Servants, who often move within the UK and from abroad are posted to the area, school places can be allocated in advance of the family move if an official government letter declaring a relocation date and an intended address is provided. A unit postal address or quartering area address will be sufficient if there is not a confirmed new home address. Where Service families are returning to live in a property they already own, evidence of ownership will be needed.

Addresses that we would not accept

- an address that is of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. We expect that you have sold, or leased, through an agency, your previous property or that a lease agreement on a property you previously rented has expired and that you have no other residence. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address, which might be considered only temporary.
- Only part of a family has moved out of the normal home address unless this was part of a divorce or permanent separation arrangement. If this is the case, we would require proof.
- Two or more families claim to be living together in a property which is not suitable for the number of adults and children present and for which there is no formal record of this arrangement.
- A child moves to a home other than with their parent unless this is part of a formal fostering or care arrangement. We may check this information.
- The address is that of a holiday home. A family living at a known holiday home address will be asked to provide leasing evidence and if there is a limitation on the tenancy, then it will not be accepted.

Fraudulent or misleading information

If a child does not live at his or her parent's address (for example if s/he resides with a grandparent), it needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient for listing another address.

We can refuse to accept where you say your child lives, if we have any doubts. In cases such as this, we will continue to ask for evidence to show that you and your family live where you say you live. We may check the evidence you have provided with other agencies, including your child's current school.

The Academy works closely with Buckinghamshire Council to ensure that places are not obtained based on false addresses. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes

clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g., a false claim to living in the catchment area), and we have denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, we will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

Note 3 When applying under criterion 4 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring The Aylesbury Vale Academy. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker and/or appropriate professional who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

Note 4 We use straight-line distance for admission purposes. The straight-line distance is defined as 'the distance from the address point of the pupil's normal home address, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest open school gate available for pupils to use'. A computerised system is used to determine the straight-line distance.

The point we measure to at the child's normal address is determined by the Ordnance Survey ADDRESS-BASE which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid coordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File (PAF®).

The PAF contains postal address data and includes premises such as buildings or permanent mobile and park homes, plus other features such as temporary buildings and houseboats.

For multiple occupancy buildings (such as blocks of flats), the front door of the block is taken as the front door of every property within it.

The Governing Body will review this policy annually and reserves the right to make amendments as required by changes in legislation or best practices.