

St Joseph's Primary School Nursery Unit  
8 Knockbracken Drive  
Carryduff  
Belfast BT8 8EX

Maintained Nursery Unit  
Admissions No: 52 (Part-time)  
Session Times – Morning Session: 8:50am – 11:20am  
Afternoon Session: 12:20pm – 2:50pm

Principal: Mr Barry McMahon  
Head of Nursery Unit: Ms F Donnelly  
Chairperson of Board of Governors: Mrs P Neeson

Telephone: 028 9081 0208 (Nursery Unit)  
028 9081 3523 (Primary School)  
Website: [www.stjosephscarryduff.com](http://www.stjosephscarryduff.com)

## Respective Functions of the Board of Governors and the Principal in relation to admissions.

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates the responsibility for applying these criteria to the Principal to select children for admission to the Nursery Unit in September 2026.

### **Open Day (Parents)**

Enrolment information for parents considering application to the Nursery Unit will be available on the school website from the week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025. Parents who require any additional information or who would like to discuss their application in more detail are welcome to contact the Principal by telephoning the school office.

### **Induction Meeting (Parents & Pupils)**

Arrangements will be made for new Nursery pupils & parents/guardians to meet with the Nursery staff. The Head of Nursery will provide further details in due course.

### **Applications**

A timetable of pre-school admissions procedures setting out the dates by which an application is to be submitted is available at [www.eani.org.uk/admissions](http://www.eani.org.uk/admissions) under 'Pre-School Admissions'. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 07 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 21 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 21 January 2026 will be treated as a late application.

As the pre-school admissions procedure is in two stages the timetable also specifies the relevant dates at Stage 2 which will determine if an application is to be considered as punctual or late.

Children who are not normally resident in Northern Ireland at the time of the proposed admission will not be considered for places until all applications from children residing in Northern Ireland have been dealt with.

Parents should note that the deadline for providing new or additional information for inclusion on their child's application form is 4pm on 26 January 2026.

Legislation requires providers to give preference to children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year.

The term, '*who normally reside...*' is used in a number of the criteria below. The Education Authority's guidance to parents states that the address you use on your application form must be the address at which your child is currently resident. When applying the term '*normally reside...*' the child's current home address at the time of application and which is stated on the application will be considered as the address at which they '*normally reside*'. This will be the case even if you intend to move house during the course of the application process and will be resident at a different address before the final decision on the allocation of places is issued.

### **Admissions Criteria**

The Board of Governors has determined that, in the event of more applicants than the places available, the following admissions criteria will be applied to select for the available places. The criteria will be applied in the order listed.

### **Statutory Criteria**

- 1 Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances\* in their final Pre-School year who were born:
  - on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school or
  - on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and, who have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-

School Education Programme as a target aged child; and, that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2027

Within Criterion 1 preference will be given firstly to children who normally reside in the upper end of the Parish of Drumbo & Carryduff, which lies on the Carryduff side of Knockbracken Healthcare Park gates (includes Knockbracken Road, Brackenwood Crescent & Drive and excludes Bracken Hill, all areas on the Carryduff side of a line drawn as the crow flies between the junction of Old Saintfield Road & Saintfield Road & the junction of Ballycoan Road & Mill Road West), then to children who reside in other parts of the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff and then to children from outside the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff.

**Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.**

2. Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by Criterion 1).

Within Criterion 2 preference will be given firstly to children who normally reside in the upper end of the Parish of Drumbo & Carryduff, which lies on the Carryduff side of Knockbracken Healthcare Park gates (includes Knockbracken Road, Brackenwood Crescent & Drive and excludes Bracken Hill, all areas on the Carryduff side of a line drawn as the crow flies between the junction of Old Saintfield Road & Saintfield Road & the junction of Ballycoan Road & Mill Road West), then to children who reside in other parts of the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff and then to children from outside the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff.

### Sub-criteria

In the event of over-subscription in any one of the above criteria nos. 1-2, then selection for the remaining places will be on the basis of the following sub-criteria in the order set down below:-

- (a) Children who have siblings i.e. defined as 'a child of the family'\*\* currently enrolled in St Joseph's Primary School (i.e. any year group from Primary One to Primary Seven inclusive). The definition of a 'child of the family' is set out below;
- (b) Children who are a Looked After Child (LAC), defined by the Children NI Order 1995 as children who are in the care of a Trust or who are provided with accommodation by the Trust;
- (c) Children who normally reside in the upper end of the Parish of Drumbo & Carryduff, which lies on the Carryduff side of Knockbracken Healthcare Park gates (includes Knockbracken Road, Brackenwood Crescent & Drive and excludes Bracken Hill, all areas on the Carryduff side of a line drawn as the crow flies between the junction of Old Saintfield Road & Saintfield Road & the junction of Ballycoan Road & Mill Road West);
- (d) Children who reside in other parts of the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff;
- (e) Children who reside outside the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff.

*\*\*'Child of the Family' includes a child born to a married couple or to a couple in a civil partnership; a child born to a co-habiting couple; a child born to a single parent; a child of either/any of those people by a previous marriage, civil partnership or relationship; a child living with a couple who has been treated as a 'child of the family' whether there is a marriage or a civil partnership or not; a child living with an individual, who has been treated as a 'child of the family'; an adopted or fostered child; a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family or individual.*

*The child should be a 'child of the family' as at the date of application.*

### Tie-Breaking Method

In cases where it is not possible to distinguish between pupils due to oversubscription in any of the above sub-criteria then children will be selected for admission on the basis of the initial letter of their surname (as entered on the birth certificate) in the order set out below:

**Z M A C M C O J K B V R A T E H Q L I M S U F Y D P C O' W G N X**

This order was determined by a randomised selection of letters. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the letters of the forenames will be used to determine selection.

If it is still not possible to distinguish between applicants, places will be allocated by drawing lots.

## Non-statutory criteria

**Note: Applications falling under Criterion 3 are processed only during Stage 2 of the admissions process, after final pre-school year (Statutory 1 and 2) applications.**

3. Children who were born:

- on or between 1 April 2022 - 1 July 2022 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
  - and have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and,
  - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1, or
- on or between 2 July 2023 and 1 July 2024 (inclusive); or,
- on or between 1 April 2023 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2028.

### Tie Breaker – Non Statutory Criterion 3

Within Criterion 3 preference will be given firstly to children who normally reside in the upper end of the Parish of Drumbo & Carryduff, which lies on the Carryduff side of Knockbracken Healthcare Park gates (includes Knockbracken Road, Brackenwood Crescent & Drive and excludes Bracken Hill, all areas on the Carryduff side of a line drawn as the crow flies between the junction of Old Saintfield Road & Saintfield Road & the junction of Ballycoan Road & Mill Road West), then to children who reside in other parts of the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff and then to children from outside the parish of Drumbo & Carryduff. Children within each category will be selected in Chronological Order of Age – eldest child first. In the event of two or more children having the same DOB the above random selection of letters will be used.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or submitted with the application form. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application form or submitted with it. An example of such information includes whether the child has siblings at the school.

Please note, applications for pre-school places should be completed online through the Education Authority's admissions portal. The portal will be open for parents to complete an online application on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 12 noon. The closing date for the receipt of punctual application is 12noon on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026. Documentation submitted in support of your application e.g. your child's birth certificate, Benefit Verification and documents verifying the address of your child's normal place of residence should be uploaded to the EA's Admissions Portal on or before 4pm on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

Applications indicating a preference for morning or afternoon places will be considered, however there is no guarantee that the desired session will be allocated.

### Verifying Documents

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any online application. Documentation submitted in support of the application should be uploaded to the EA's Admission Portal on or before 4pm on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

### Documents Required by St Joseph's

**Address Verification – If applying in January these documents must be submitted by 4pm on 26 January 2026.**

Applicants who **do not** have a sibling currently enrolled in any class from P1 to P7 are required to provide two pieces of supplementary evidence from the list of documents below:

- *Driving licence;*
- *Addressed payslip\**
- *Bank or building society statement which shows the address at which the child is resident\**
- *A mortgage statement or a rental agreement\**
- *Land and Property Services Agency rates demand\**
- *Any letter in connection with Child Benefit/Housing Benefit/Working Tax Credits/Job Seekers' Allowance/tax coding or tax returns\**
- *Electoral ID card*
- *Utility bill (for instance electricity, gas, Television Licence, telephone)*

*\* documents should not be more than one year old i.e. documents pre-dating 26<sup>th</sup> January 2025 will not be accepted*

### Duty to Verify

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any applicant's application form.

## Admissions criteria for entry September 2026

If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline given, this will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

### **Waiting List Policy**

The Open Enrolment Procedure concludes on 19 May 2026. If a vacancy arises after this date, all applications for admission to Nursery that were initially refused, late applications, applications where new information has been provided and new applications received will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. The Waiting List will be in place for the duration of the 2026/27 school year. The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place by this method. Your child's name will be added automatically to the list. Parents must contact the school if they wish to have their child's name removed from the list.

### **Applications and Admissions to Pre-School**

Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2025/2026*	99	56

***\*The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all pre-school children admitted to the pre-school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS.***

*(SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)*