

Nursery Information Pack 2026



Sacred Heart

Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Welcoming Merton and Kingston families of all faiths and none



www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

The government's 'Best Start in Life' website explains:

“From that very first drop-off to the days filled with laughter, new words, and proud little achievements, every moment in childcare is part of your child’s growing journey. At first, those early goodbyes can feel emotional for both parent and child. But that small moment of separation can be an important part of learning to discover the world independently – learning to share toys, explore new activities, and make those first friendships. Before you know it, your child begins to find their own rhythm, gaining confidence, independence, and curiosity that will carry them into school and beyond.

Childcare and early years education offer so much more than a safe place to play. It’s where curiosity is encouraged, where friendships blossom, and where every day brings new opportunities to learn and grow.

Research shows that children who attend high-quality early education and childcare between ages two and four perform better at every stage of school – with those early years creating a strong foundation for their future. Studies have also found that pre-school education plays a positive role in children’s development, and the quality of that early learning environment continues to benefit them as they grow.

Juggling work, family life, and childcare can feel daunting at times. But when you know your child is happy, nurtured, and thriving in the care of dedicated professionals, everything feels a little easier.”

Why childcare matters in your child’s early years

A new nursery model at Sacred Heart

From September 2026, Sacred Heart is delighted to be expanding its nursery to be open longer and to make places available to more children. Nursery will now welcome children from 2 to 4 years old and remain open from 7.30am to 6.00pm for 48 weeks of the year.

We understand the importance of flexibility and convenience for our families so we will be offering two types of contracts for our nursery sessions: term-time only (TTO) and all year round (AYR) with the option to add flexible extended hours to term-time sessions, subject to availability. We will continue to offer funded places (15 or 30 hours) and we can 'stretch' this funding across 48 weeks where necessary. We hope this new model will meet the needs of local working parents.

Learning in Love

At Sacred Heart, we understand that every child is unique and our school motto of "Learning in Love" starts from the moment we welcome your family into our school. Our established nursery setting has a strong track record of providing a nurturing educational environment to 3 and 4 year olds, supporting each child's development and delivering excellent outcomes. Nursery has excelled at preparing children for the next stage of their education as they transition to Reception.

From September 2026 we will be extending our current offer to include 2 year olds who will have their own room and access to their own outdoor space.

We want our 2, 3 and 4 year olds to be fully immersed into the wider school community and school life. Children will be able to use the school's different learning environments both indoors and outdoors as well as specialist teachers for PE and Music and the children will wear the Early Years version of our school uniform.

A choice of two different price plans

All year round – 48 weeks a year

All day: 7.30am to 6.00pm (minimum 4 sessions a week)

Term-time only – 38 weeks a year

Morning session: 8.30am to 11.30am or Afternoon session: 11.30am to 2.30pm

All day: 8.30am to 2.30pm (see below for extended day options)

Children with 15 funded hours usually attend 5 morning or afternoon sessions a week, but we do have limited availability for these funded hours to be used over 2.5 days instead (to include a Monday or Friday).

Extended day – subject to availability for term-time only children

Breakfast session – 7.30am to 8.30am

After-school session 1 – 2.30pm to 3.30pm

After-school session 2 – 3.30pm to 4.30pm

After-school session 3 – 4.30pm to 6.00pm

We offer 2 year olds up to 30 hours of funded nursery education each week. If your child has turned 2 by 1st September 2026, you are able to apply for a 2 year old place in our nursery to start in September 2026. We admit children in September, January and April (space permitting) and your child must be at least 2 years when they join.

We offer 3 and 4 year olds up to 30 hours of funded nursery education each week with 26 places in the morning and 26 in the afternoon. If your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023, you are able to apply for a place at our nursery to start in September 2026. We admit children in September, January and April (space permitting) and your child must be at least 3 years when they join.

Costs

Please note, the figures below are for the academic year 2026/27 and will be subject to an annual inflationary increase. Nursery fees are not subject to VAT and you will be invoiced monthly.

		<u>2 year olds</u>	<u>3 & 4 year olds</u>
<u>Extended morning:</u>			
Breakfast session	7.30am to 8.30am	£10	£7
<u>Core nursery hours:</u>			
Morning session	8.30am to 11.30am	funded or £30	funded or £21
Afternoon session	11.30am to 2.30pm	funded or £30	funded or £21
<u>Extended afternoon:</u>			
Until school pick-up	2.30pm to 3.30pm	£10	£7
Tea time	3.30pm to 4.30pm	£10	£7
Late finish	4.30pm to 6.00pm	£15	£10.50

The rate for 3 & 4 year olds applies to terms where your child is either 3 or 4 on the first day of the funded period (1st Sep, 1st Jan, 1st Apr). The rate for 2 year olds applies to terms where your child is 2 on the first day of the funded period (1st Sep, 1st Jan and 1st Apr).

Additional Voluntary charges

Government funding is not intended to cover the full cost of childcare. If you are eligible for funding you will still be responsible for paying for or providing these items:

Optional breakfast (toast/cereal/milk/fruit)	£3
Optional lunch (school meal - hot)	£4
Optional tea (school meal - cold)	£3

We do not charge fees for Bank Holidays or during unavoidable school closures (eg polling day). No exchanges, credits or refunds will be given for your child's absence (eg due to illness or family holidays while nursery is open).

During usual opening hours If you collect your child late we will charge a £5.00 late collection fee plus the hourly rate rounded up to the nearest 15 minutes. After 6pm – For collections after the nursery has closed, we will charge £15.00 per 15 minutes, per child.

All-year round places - A deposit of £100 is payable on acceptance of an all-year round place. This will be off-set against your first month's invoice. You will need to give one term's notice to leave an all-year round place and will be charged up until the last day of each extended term – Autumn (19th December), Spring (31st March), Summer (14th August).

Late/non-payment of fees – we reserve the right to suspend additional hours if payment of an invoice is late by more than 2 weeks. Please talk to us if you ever have any problems making a payment.

Nursery Funding

Each funding stream has different eligibility rules. Use the Best Start in Life Eligibility Checker to see what you are eligible for.

Funding Option	Who it's for	What you get
30 Hours Funded Childcare	Eligible working parents with children aged 9 months to school age	Up to 30 funded hours per week during term time
15 Hours Early Learning for 2 year olds	Families with limited resources or receiving certain benefits	15 funded hours per week
15 Hours Universal Funding	All families with children aged 3–4	15 funded hours per week
Universal Credit Childcare	Working families claiming Universal Credit	Support with childcare costs
Tax-Free Childcare	Working families earning under £100k	The government tops up £2 for every £8 you spend, up to £2,000 per child per year or £4,000 for children with disabilities.

You will need to apply for and obtain your eligibility code by the last day of the month before the new term begins (by 31st December for Spring term funding, 31st March for Summer term funding & 31st August for Autumn term funding), you will then be required to re-validate your code via your childcare account every 3 months. Please note, if you do not obtain your code in the required timeframe, you will not receive funding and will be required to pay for your child's Nursery place.

If you opt for our all year round nursery model, we can stretch your funded hours across 48 weeks of the year. This means you receive a maximum of 11.875 hours per week for the 15 hours scheme or 23.75 hours per week for the 30 hours scheme. If you require any additional hours over and above your funded entitlement these will be charged at our standard hourly rate. Tax-free childcare can be used alongside both 15 and 30 hours of funding. You can apply for tax-free childcare at <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

The Government only funds the delivery of EYFS in the funded hours attended, (except for families in receipt of the 15 hour funding for 2 year olds who receive additional support). The funding does not include meals and snacks, enrichment activities or any additional hours and sessions required over and above the funded hours. Any additional charges will be shown clearly on your termly fee bill. We will ask you to provide nappies, wipes and sun cream for your child. You also have the option of sending in packed-meals from home. We do not charge for music and PE lessons nursery children receive which are funded by the school.

What are the benefits of a school-based nursery?

Quality school-based nursery provision is popular with parents, especially families with children of different ages. It can mean a single point of contact, easier drop-offs and pick-ups and continuity of care from the beginning of a child's education. School-based nursery settings see lower staff turnover, and can benefit from opportunities available to the wider school, for example qualified specialist subject teachers in PE and music, support from a qualified Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and can result in smoother transitions into school for children.

Child development and daily routines

Their early years experience plays a big role in your child's physical development, school readiness and emotional wellbeing. A strong daily routine helps children understand what to expect and feel safe. Our nursery follow the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) framework on learning through play. Planning is overseen by a qualified teacher to help ensure every child reaches their potential. Activities include painting, building with blocks, playing with sand and water and lots of outdoor exercise that helps children develop fine and gross motor skills. Children also learn to share, tidy up and take part in circle time, which supports language and social skills.

Food

During both term time and holidays, children will be provided with a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack. Our menus are fully compliant with school food plan guidelines. Nursery staff are paediatric first-aid trained and we have strong procedures in place across the school to cater for allergies and intolerances. We recognise the importance of healthy nutrition for children delivered in a calm, friendly setting and expect food to be consumed whilst sitting at a table. Children are served breakfast from 7.30am and are offered a choice of wholegrain cereals, toast and milk or juice. Fruit is also available. For a charge, our caterers can provide a full menu for lunch or you may prefer to send a packed lunch. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. A light tea will be served from 4.30pm.

Uniform

Our nursery children wear the Early Years version of our school uniform, which is also worn by our Reception children.

- Blue Sacred Heart Sweatshirt
- Red polo shirt with school logo or plain red polo
- Plain navy jogging bottoms (or any other toilet accessible garment)
- Footwear suitable for physical activity – no sandals or boots please

Nursery communication and parent engagement

Strong communication between parents/carers and nursery staff is essential. We'll always keep you updated on your child's day, from meals and sleep to activities and milestones. At drop-off and pick-up, you will be able to speak with our EYFS practitioners about your child's day or overall progress. They can answer your questions and share insights. If your child has allergies, additional needs or medical care plans, please discuss these with staff early so any necessary adjustments can be made.

Attending events like open days or settling-in sessions lets you get to know the environment, ask about routines and understand how staff will support your child. We find that settling-in sessions before your child starts can significantly reduce stress levels and make them more comfortable in new environments.

School Tours

We have a schedule of school tours for prospective parents, bookable from our school website www.sacredheart.merton.sch.uk/tours. We understand that you may need to bring children or babies with you and they are very welcome to attend.

Stay and Play Sessions

Sessions for parents of children who are interested in joining our nursery in September will take place during the summer term. They will start with a presentation from the headteacher followed by some time spent in our nursery with plenty of opportunities for you to ask questions. The dates and times of these sessions is available from the School Office.

How to apply

Nursery admissions are processed by the school. Our application form can be completed online or you can ask the office to send you a copy by email or you can collect a paper form from us.

If you have any questions regarding our pre-school or nursery admissions please contact our Admissions Team by calling 020 89420215 or email admissions@sacredheart.merton.sch.uk. This email address is monitored during school holidays.



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Why choose Sacred Heart Nursery?

Our aim is to be the nursery that works for your family

Open longer, with real flexibility

We offer both term-time and all-year-round (48-week) places, with extended hours from 7:30am to 6:00pm. We understand the demands of modern family life and aim to support parents with flexible, reliable care in a setting where every child is known and valued.

Welcoming and homely

Our nursery is being enhanced with dedicated rooms for 2 year olds and 3 & 4 year olds, each with access to their own outdoor learning environment. These outdoor spaces will be refurbished in 2026 with the help of a government grant, creating safe, engaging environments to nurture curiosity, creativity and a love of learning.

At the heart of our school community

By welcoming children from age 2, Sacred Heart offers a true one-stop drop-off for families. We hope that nursery will be the beginning of a happy and successful partnership which will continue throughout your child's time at Sacred Heart.