



4.14

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

The Downs is an inclusive school and no child will be refused entry on the grounds of race or religion.

Children are admitted to The Downs at any age between 4 and 12 years (Reception to Year 8).

The only restrictions placed on entry are those of number and the need to ensure that there is a match between the school and pupil. The ability level of each potential pupil and any special need that they may have is therefore taken into account as it is essential that the school is able to provide appropriately for each child's needs.

In the event of a year group being full, a child's name is entered on the waiting list. This is operated on a first come, first served basis.

Pre-Prep children are expected to progress into the Prep School, but the school reserves the right to refuse entry. All pupils are expected to remain at The Downs until they are 13 and have completed Year 8.

The Process

- Following an initial enquiry, a school prospectus and accompanying letter or email from the Headteacher is sent out. In doing so, prospective parents (PP's) are encouraged to visit The Downs and to meet the Head
- In general, visits last two hours. During this time PP's meet the Head. They are then given an extensive tour of the school largely by the Heads of the Prep and Pre-Prep. They observe pupils in the classroom, view facilities, meet staff and talk to children informally. An informal letter of reply is sent after the visit.
- Should the PP's of children in Years 1- 8 wish, they are offered a 'Taster Day' for their child (children). During this Taster Day, prospective children are 'guided' by a pupil from The Downs. The prospective pupil experiences a normal school day but time is taken to informally assess their academic strengths.

- Children potentially joining the Reception Year are offered a 'Taster Morning', however, because the children are so young it is unusual for PP's to seize this opportunity. Rather they accept a place and take the chance for their children to join Familiarisation Mornings in the Summer Term. At this time groups of new and prospective children come and enjoy a morning (and lunch) to familiarise themselves with the new environment.
- During a 'Taster Day', on permission being given by the parents, prospective children are informally assessed. Without causing unnecessary anxiety, their literacy and numeracy skills are evaluated by the use of INCAS or tests in maths and English are used (PIRA or PUMA). Additionally, PP's are asked to provide latest school reports. Further information about the Informal Assessment Process is available upon request.
- Results of the 'Informal Assessment' are presented to parents during a debrief with the Head at the conclusion of the Taster Day. Should the Head offer a place at the school, it is confirmed in writing immediately after the visit.
- Children who are not yet of school age or who cannot be offered places immediately are placed on an entry list. A registration fee of £100 must be provided to be placed on the list, this fee is **not** refundable.
- When a child is registered parents are asked to confirm acceptance of the place within six months of the child's start at the school. A deposit of £500 is required and is refundable in the final invoice.

Induction of a new child

New children joining the Reception Year are encouraged to attend the Familiarisation Mornings held during the Summer Term. These mornings are proven to make the children's transition into full time education largely uneventful and more often enjoyable.

Children joining The Downs in other age groups are welcome to spend a day at the school – in addition to the 'Taster Day' – upon request.

During the holiday period previous to starting, new children will be contacted firstly in order to put them at ease but also to inform them of their guides (Y1 to Y8). 'Guides' are pupils in the same class as the new children whose task is to help the new child settle down with as few anxieties as possible. They are carefully chosen and are often already known to the children.

Admissions Register

The school Admission's Register is managed by the Registrar. Alongside the register the Registrar keeps a paper trail of communication with the LA.

The Registrar is kept well informed of any ISI updates or statutory by the Head. For further information on the process of admissions please see The Missing Child Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The process of admissions is carefully monitored by the Registrar and Headteacher. An evaluation of the process is on occasions made by questionnaire and parent interview.

This policy (or Handbook) was updated on	Signed on behalf of the School/Nursery	Date for next review
<i>16.09.21</i>	<i>D. Isaachsen</i>	<i>01/09/2022</i>

Overview required by Education Committee - date	Policy upload to ISI Portal - date	Policy uploaded to website(s) - date
<i>11.10.21</i>	<i>2/11/21</i>	<i>2/11/21</i>