

COGNITA

Admissions Policy



DOWNSEND SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

September 2021

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 We welcome applications for admission from pupils of all backgrounds. This policy applies to all pupils, including those in our Early Years Foundation Stage. We admit pupils with an additional educational need and/or disability provided both parents and school conclude that we can provide appropriately for the child's specific needs.

2 Enquiries

- 2.1 All enquiries and applications should be made to the Admissions Manager, who will ensure that you have all the information you need.

3 Visits

- 3.1 Prospective parents are encouraged to visit to see the school in action and to meet the Heads of School. Open Days (on and offline line) run throughout the year providing an opportunity to experience the school. Alternatively, you might like to make an appointment for a Talk and Tour, or a personal tour. Please contact a member of the Admissions Team to arrange this.

4 Registration

- 4.1 Following a visit, parents wishing to register their child should complete the online Registration/Application Form and submit it with a payment for the registration fee. The registration fee covers the cost of administering the registration procedure, including the waiting lists and is non-refundable. Registration is an indication of interest and is not a guarantee of a place.

Parents will be asked to provide a copy of the child's birth certificate, passport page and a current utility bill at time of Registration.

- 4.2 The school will respond by confirming that the child's name has been placed on the admission list for the relevant term and year. If the year group is fully subscribed, they will be placed on a waiting list. A place is confirmed once a formal offer has been made by the school and a deposit has been received in return.

- 4.3 Registration fees are valid until we make an offer. If that offer is subsequently declined, we will ask you to re-register.

5 Admission to Nursery

- 5.1 Children are welcomed into the Nursery from the age of 2. There is no formal assessment, but all children are invited into a taster session. Parents will be asked about their child's general development and any identified special educational needs prior to a place being offered. Places are not automatic, in some rare cases a place will not be offered if we judge that a child's development is below expectation or that they will not flourish in the environment we offer.

6 Taster Days

- 6.1 We offer Taster sessions/mornings at Little Downsend. Taster Days at the Main School are an opportunity to experience the school and take assessments if children are unable to attend the formal assessment days in November and January.

7 Transition from Nursery to Reception

- 7.1 Transition from Nursery (age 3-4) to Reception (age 4-5) is automatic. Children are assessed based on an ongoing observation of their learning and development.

8 Transition through Year Groups

- 8.1 It is anticipated that all pupils will transition through the school and reap the rewards of the education on offer. Should this prove not to be the case, parents will be informed of any concerns at the earliest opportunity and at the latest before the end of the Spring Term if there appears to be any reason why the pupil may be refused a place in the subsequent year groups. In rare cases it may be that a pupil's progress or behaviour means that transfer to the next stage of the school is not deemed appropriate.

9 Admission to Other Year Groups

- 9.1 Children who have registered are invited to one of our assessment days held in the November and January prior to the September entry. These days aim to ensure that those pupils who join Downsend are most likely to benefit from the School's Future Skills provision. In the Junior School, children are assessed in Maths, English and Writing. They will also be given the opportunity to interact as a group to demonstrate their wider skill set. To enter the Senior School, pupils are assessed in Maths and English, and undertake a problem-solving exercise to determine their ability to be creative and to work collaboratively as a team. The assessment days are designed to be informal and enjoyable, as well as provide a thorough assessment of a child's profile.
- 9.2 Parents will be asked to provide a copy of the child's latest full school report and any interim reports. Parents are provided with a reference request to pass to their child's current school for completion and return.
- 9.3 Parents are asked about their child's general development and any identified special educational needs prior to a place being offered. Places are not automatic, in some rare cases a place will not be offered if we judge that a child's development is below expectation or that they will not flourish in the environment we offer.
- 9.4 Overseas pupils may be required to undertake a language proficiency assessment before a place is offered. This includes a written assessment and may also include an interview in person or via electronic media.
- 9.5 Assessment Days for Y2 and above run in November and January. The optimum number of pupils at each Assessment Day is 20, at which places will be capped. Invitations to reserve a place at an Assessment Day will be sent out on the same day and time with a booking link. The first bookings received for November will be registered for the Assessment Day. Once the optimum number is reached for November, bookings will be allocated to January.

10 Mid Year Entry

We welcome new enquiries for children requiring entry throughout the year where we have availability.

11 Year Group Entry

Students will be placed in the appropriate age group taking account of their age on the 1st of September. It is the policy of the school to place students within their appropriate age group.

12 Allocation of Places

- 12.1 In the event that the number of children registered for any year group exceeds the places available, the following criteria will be assessed to balance the cohort appropriately:
- Siblings in the school
 - References from previous schools
 - Results obtained in standardised tests
 - Demonstration of Future Skills according to a ranking system. Ranking will be based upon the pupil's ability to:
 - Think with a global perspective
 - Work collaboratively in a team
 - Be creative in their problem-solving activity
 - Show aptitude in using digital technology and terminology

- The Length of time the child has been registered
- The school reserves the right to ensure an appropriate co-educational balance dependent upon the existing cohort.
- For a child entering the Nursery, a child requiring a full time place will be given priority over a children requesting a part time place, provided sufficient sessions are available

13 Offer

- 13.1 The parents of each applicant will be informed within two weeks of the assessment, if their application has been successful and whether a place is available. The school will not be obliged to state its reasons for declining a request for admission.
- 13.2 The School will allocate a number of places in November, and again in January, based on trend data as a guide to the number of places that are likely to be available.

14 Waiting List

- 14.1 If no place is available, parents may place their child's name on the waiting list for the school. The school cannot guarantee when a place may become available.

15 Appeal

- 15.1 There is no appeal process for admission to the school. The decision of the Headteacher is final.

16 False Information

- 16.1 Where the school has made an offer of a place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

17 Overseas Pupils/Pupils with English as an Additional Language

- 17.1 We welcome pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, including overseas pupils and those with English as an additional language (EAL). Children entering the School must have an appropriate working knowledge of English and parents must be committed to supporting further English study at their cost, if necessary.
- 17.2 Overseas pupils are required to have a guardian who is resident in the UK and who can act on behalf of the parents, if required.

18 Equality

- 18.1 The school pays due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 18.2 Subject to our entry requirements being met, we welcome pupils with special educational needs or physical disabilities. We advise parents of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the school before registering for a place. This will enable the school to determine whether the school can make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the child can flourish as a learner. Where necessary, parents will be asked to provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report and the school may need to discuss provision with external agencies. The cost of such reports is the responsibility of the parent. Where specific provision is required, parents may be asked to pay an additional charge to meet these needs (staffing and/or resources). In some cases, the school may receive funding from the local authority to provide additional support.

19 Admissions Register

- 19.1 The school maintains an Admissions Register in line with regulatory requirements. See Admission, Attendance and Children Missing from Education Policy for further detail of statutory requirements.

Admissions Policy

Ownership and consultation	Director of Education
Document sponsor (role)	
Document author (name)	Simon Camby
Consultation – Oct 2016 (Original policy)	The following schools were consulted: Cumnor Boys School, Colchester High School, Clifton Lodge Prep School, Duncombe Prep School, Kings School, Kingscourt School, Meoncross School, and North Bridge House Senior School.
Consultation – May 2017 (Review)	The following schools were consulted as part of review: Akeley Junior, Kingscourt, Southbank Westminster, Meoncross, Downsend Ashtead Pre-Prep, Clifton Lodge Prep School. Representative of Education Team – Robin Davies, ADE.

Audience	
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