



THE DOWNS
MALVERN

ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy is relevant to all sections of the school, EYFS, Pre-Prep and The Prep School

Summary Statement of Policy:

The Downs Malvern welcomes children, regardless of background and any protected characteristic, who will benefit from its ethos of providing a well-rounded, nurturing education, with excellent pastoral care and opportunities for the development of many talents. Admission to the School is based on potential, determined by: an in-person visit and/or online interview; taster days or a 'boarding experience', where possible; copies of a child's last two school reports, to include written text as well as grades; and references/endorsements (where appropriate).

1. INTRODUCTION

- a) The Downs Malvern ('the School') is a co-educational, independent day and boarding Preparatory School for children aged 3 to 13. The School has approximately 200 pupils, a number of whom board in some capacity, whether that be on a flexi-, weekly- or full-boarding basis.
- b) We strongly believe that a personal visit to the School is invaluable. It offers prospective parents and their children the opportunity to be able to meet as many children and staff as possible, as well as our Headmaster, Mr Andy Nuttall, and his wife, Polly. It also provides an opportunity for prospective parents and their children to ask questions about life here, and fully appreciate all that we do at the Prep School. In addition to private visits being available on a working school day, a number of scheduled Open House events take place throughout the year. Details of these are published on our website. Visits can be arranged with our Registrar, Mrs Katherine Cox (direct telephone number: 01684 544108; e-mail: registrar@thedownsmalvern.org.uk)

2. ENTRY PROCEDURES

- a) At the time of writing, the School does not expect children to sit a formal entrance test, except in the case of those who have chosen to apply for a 11+ Scholarship Academic Award (the assessments for which take place in January when a child is in Year 6).
- b) If a space is available in the appropriate year/class, a child will be invited to spend one or more 'taster days' ('taster sessions' in the case of Nursery entry) at the School, in order to allow both parents and staff to determine whether the School is correct for the child. For boarders, a 'boarding experience' will be offered, where possible.

- c) If there is any doubt from staff - or the Headmaster - as to the suitability of the School for a child, the parents will be informed as soon as practically possible after the end of the 'taster day(s)' (or 'taster session(s)' in the case of Nursery entry). In such circumstances, it is possible that a place may be offered after an extended trial period.

3. EQUAL TREATMENT

- a) Our aim is to encourage applications from children with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible; this enriches our School community and is vital in preparing our children for today's world.
- b) The School is committed to equal treatment for all, and does not discriminate against anyone, be it child or parent, on the grounds of protected characteristics, including age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.
- c) A limited number of bursaries are available.
- d) This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's policy on Equal Education Opportunities.

4. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

- a) The Downs Malvern does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. Children with disabilities and/or special educational needs are welcomed, provided the School can offer them the support that they require; cater for any additional needs; and ensure that the site can accommodate such needs sufficiently. We aim to ensure that all children, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.
- b) We require parents of a child with special educational needs, or physical or mental disabilities, to discuss their child's needs with the School, before consideration for a place can be given. This is to ensure that adequate provision can be made for the child. Parents should provide the School with a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, or a medical report, if they have one. This is so that the School can assess the child's needs; consult with parents about any adjustments that might reasonably be able to be made; ensure the child is able to access the education; and, ensure that the health and safety needs of the child and, indeed, others can be met.
- c) The School will discuss in detail with the parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child, if they join the School. This will ensure that a child is not put at a significant disadvantage, compared to a child who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.
- d) In some exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible for the School to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example: if, despite reasonable adjustments, it is felt that a child is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that the health and safety of the child, or other pupils or staff, may be put at risk, the School reserves the right to decline a place.

5. SIBLING POLICY

We hope to be in a position to welcome as many siblings as possible to the School. However, places are not given automatically, and there may be occasions when it is felt that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

6. BURSARIES

- a) A limited number of bursaries are available at the School. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published in the School's Bursary Policy.
- b) All parents or guardians, who are applying for a means-tested bursary, will be required to complete the School's Registration Form and pay the non-refundable Registration Fee of £100.00 per child, before a Bursary Application Form can be released to them for completion. The Registration Form should be obtained from the School's Registrar. Prospective parents and their child/children may be required to meet with the Headmaster before completing the Bursary Application Form. In some instances, the School may also make home visits prior to the award of any means-tested bursary.
- c) The level of support varies according to parental need and bursaries are offered for twelve months at a time. The family will usually be required to provide updated financial information for every year that the child/children attend(s) the School. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income.
- d) The School's Bursary Policy can be viewed on the School's website, or it can be obtained from the School's Registrar, or the Headmaster's PA.
- e) EYFS entry (**Early Years Foundation Stage**): 15 or 30 hours of Early Years Funding are available for children, starting from the term after their third birthday. Eligibility for the additional 15 hours requires certain criteria to be met, and a 'Parent Declaration Form for Nursery Funding' can be obtained from the School's Registrar. Funding ceases when a child enters the Reception class.

7. INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

- a) We welcome children from overseas who wish to join our School. All overseas children, whose parents are not resident in the UK, are required to have a relative or legal guardian living in the UK, with whom they can stay when the school is closed for 'Leave Out' weekends, half-term breaks etc.
- b) A guardian must be secured for overseas children **before** they join the School, and the guardian's contact details, as well as his/her consent, will be communicated to the School via a Guardian Form released by the School's Registrar.
- c) The School has the capacity to sponsor overseas children who require a Child Student Visa. The School instructs 'Newland Chase Education' to process visa applications on its behalf, and Newland Chase Education liaises directly with parents throughout the application process. Parents will be charged for this service, as detailed on the School's 'Fees & Charges' document.

8. FLUENCY IN ENGLISH

- a) The School welcomes children from overseas for whom English is not their mother tongue. Dependent on the child's level of English upon entry to the School, in-house weekly EAL lessons may be needed, and the need for these will be discussed with the School's Registrar, the Headmaster and the child's parents/Agent.
- b) Charges for EAL lessons are given on the School's 'Fees & Charges' document for that particular academic year. The School will liaise directly with the parent (in some cases, via the Agent) to determine how many EAL lessons may be needed, and written consent from parents will be sought before the lessons commence. It is usual that, if EAL lessons are required, they will not commence until after the child has settled in to school life for the first couple of weeks, unless agreed otherwise.

9. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

- a) Applications are welcomed from prospective pupils of all faiths, and of no faith.
- b) Although the School has a Christian ethos, the offer of a place is not affected by the religious belief of the child or the child's family.

10. SCHOOL'S CONTRACTUAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

Copies of the School's Terms and Conditions will be made available to parents by the School's Registrar as part of the admissions process.

11. COMPLAINTS

In the unusual event of parents having a complaint about the School's admissions process, a procedure for dealing with complaints is outlined in the School's Complaints Policy, available on the School's website, or upon request.

12. RECORDS AND REVIEW

- a) Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation, and the School's Privacy Notice and Retention of Documents Procedure.
- b) The School will not hold the personal data of a child and a child's family for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose.

Katherine Cox
Registrar

May 2023
Next Review May 2024