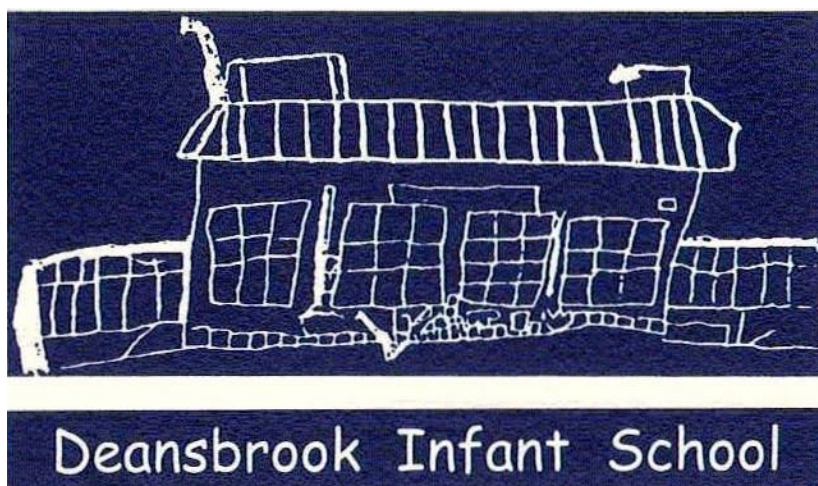


Deansbrook Infant School



Admissions Policy

Reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body: Spring 2022

Reviewed Annually

1. RATIONALE

Starting school, or moving from one school to another, is a big step for both children and their parents/carers. It can be an exciting time, but also worrying and stressful. A clear procedure for the admission of children into our school helps establish a partnership with families and enables each child to settle easily and quickly. We want parents and carers to be well informed and valued in their role and acknowledge the vital contribution they make to their child's education throughout their school career. We want parents and carers to trust the school and feel they are part of a friendly school community. We also want staff to understand and support the admissions process to ensure all children have a relaxed, secure and enjoyable introduction to our school.

2.SAFEGUARDING

The staff take all reasonably practical steps to provide a safe and healthy environment for children. All staff are alert to the signs of abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) and neglect and follow the agreed procedures for investigating child abuse as defined by the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership. All staff have a responsibility for the safeguarding of the children in their care and others who may be affected by their actions. The school safeguarding procedures will apply as soon as the admission process starts.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION

We believe it is the right of all parents and carers and their children, regardless of their abilities, gender, ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexuality, or linguistic, cultural or home background, to be included in all aspects of school life, have access to school information and participate in all activities. This includes participating in all meetings pertaining to admissions and documentation regarding the admissions process. We will:

1. Consider any special educational needs that have been identified and discuss them with the child's parents. The discussion will include consideration of the settling-in process required for the child.
2. Consider any disabilities that have been identified and discuss them with the child's parents. The discussion will include consideration of the settling in process required for the child.
3. Consider the need for an interpreter (from the LA, or existing staff or another parent, other family member or friend) at the admission interview, or as soon as possible once the child is admitted.
4. Be sensitive when requesting documentation or evidence of date of birth. It is recognised that some cultures calculate age using a different system and it is important to take care when allocating children to a year group.

4. AIMS

1. To ensure that parents and carers are fully informed of the admissions process and this policy is available on the school website.
2. To enable the school to properly prepare for the admission of children to the nursery and reception classes.
3. To facilitate the gathering of as much relevant information as possible to ensure the admission is properly planned for and appropriate provision made for each child in the first days at school.
4. To ensure that the school's ethos and expectations are made clear to parents and carers.

5. To ensure that all members of the school community make all new children and their parents and carers feel welcomed to our school.
6. To ensure that the education of children admitted on a 'casual' basis suffers as little disruption as possible through careful assessment of their progress and stage of development.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Admissions Criteria

The school follows Barnet's recommendations for admissions.

Where applications for places in the Pre-school/Nursery or the school exceed the standard number of places available, Barnet's agreed criteria to allocate the places will apply:

1. Children who are 'looked after' and children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been 'looked after'. A child looked after is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. An adopted child is defined by section 12 of the Adoption Act 1976 and section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A child arrangements order is defined by section 8 of the Children Act 1989. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989
2. Other children whom the Director of Children's Service accepts have an exceptional medical, social or other need that the school is particularly able to meet. Applications in this category will be considered only if they are supported by an attached written statement from a doctor, social worker or other appropriate professional. Parents/carers must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the child's need and the particular school. Difficulties with child care arrangements because of work or other commitments would not be grounds for priority under this category. Information not provided at the time the application is submitted may not be considered at a later date
3. Children who, at the time of admission, have a sibling living at the same address who already attends the school. Siblings would include half, step, adoptive and foster siblings provided they also live at the same address as the applicant
4. Children of teaching staff of the school where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and will be in employment as a teacher at the school when the child starts school
5. Children who live in the London Borough of Barnet, giving priority on a geographical basis but taking account of the proximity and location of the child's home in relation to the school and to all other community schools in the area
6. Any remaining places to be offered to children living outside the borough on a geographical basis, giving priority to those living closest to the school when distance

is measured in a straight line between the address point for the child's home, supplied by Ordnance Survey, to the school's main gate using the Council's computerised geographical information system.

Distances are measured between the front door of the child's home and the main school gate using the council's computerised geographical information system. Applicants from the same block of flats, or those who live the same distance from the school will be selected in random order and places will be allocated accordingly.

Although attending the Nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception, we strongly wish to admit children to the Nursery whose parents/carers wish them to attend the infant school. This will aid continuity of experience to the children, helping them settle easily and maintain friendships already established in the Nursery.

5.2 Admissions to Nursery and Reception

5.2.1 Admissions to Nursery

The nursery has 39 full time equivalent places for children aged over three years old. Children are admitted to nursery the term after their third birthday and all are entitled to a 15 hour nursery place. We also offer 30 hour places for those families who are eligible. Parents/carers who are applying for a 15 hour place will initially be offered a morning session. Afternoon sessions will only be offered once all the morning sessions have been filled.

Prospective parents who have shown an interest in a nursery place, will be offered an appointment to visit the school. During the visit the parents and carers will meet with the headteacher or other senior member of staff and be invited to:

1. Walk around the main areas of the school (hall, library, dining room and playground) and visit some classes in the school (usually one class from each age group).
2. Be informed of the procedure for admissions.
3. Discuss any issues relating to their child that may influence the admissions procedure.
4. Take a school brochure for future reference.
5. Be informed of all before and after school care eg Breakfast Club and After School Club (Busy Bees)

Parents/carers who are offered a place in the nursery for a September start will be invited to a meeting in the summer term before the child starts. At the meeting parents/carers are informed of:

- The requirement of a home visit or a meeting (face-to-face or virtual) with their child's teacher or the headteacher prior to their child starting in the nursery
- Any relevant information about the child's social and emotional needs
- Any indications of special educational needs and any previous interventions

If a child is offered a home visit, two members of the nursery team will visit the child in their home situation. Parents can discuss any concerns or issues that they may have and any strategies which will help their child settle at nursery.¹

Children are admitted into the nursery in small groups over a period of time to allow staff to settle each group before the next new group arrives.

On-entry assessments are carried out for each child during the first three weeks of entering the nursery. These assessments are used to inform planning and make judgements about each child's progress over time.

Reserve list

In circumstances where more applications are received than places are available, children who are not offered places will be added to a reserve list in order of the admissions criteria and not by date of application. Once the admissions criteria has been adhered to, priority will be given to children who are due to start Reception in the following academic year. If a place becomes available, the nursery will contact the parents/carers of the child at the top of the list.

The reserve list is not a waiting list, if a request is made by a parent/carer whose child has higher priority according to the admissions criteria, other children are moved down the list.

5.2.2 Admissions to Reception

Ninety places are offered to children for the reception classes whose 5th birthday falls within that academic year. Children are usually admitted in the September of the year of their fifth birthday.

Parents and carers are advised to make on-line applications to the borough. The school admin staff can assist parents with this, if necessary. The local authority notifies of the decision to offer a place, or otherwise, by the end of May. Parents and carers of children who are not offered a place at this stage may decide to leave their application for further consideration, or remove their application in favour of

another school. Where applications for places exceed the standard number of places available, the LA admissions team will use the councils agreed criteria to allocate the places (see above)

If a child turns five between April 1st and August 31st, a parent can request to defer their child's starting date until the term after their fifth birthday. The admission authority (the local authority and the headteacher) must then take account of the child's individual needs and abilities in making a decision about whether they should be admitted to Reception or Year 1 when they start school.

Admissions Procedure

1. The local authority informs the school of those families who have been offered a place and those parents who have accepted a place during the latter half of the summer term.

2. Parents are invited to a meeting in July (face-to-face or virtual) and at the meeting the parents will have the opportunity to meet the reception staff team and hear about:

- The requirement of either a meeting at school with their child's teacher, or a home visit prior to their child starting school

¹ See Appendix 1

- The settling in process, including the class the child has been assigned
- Pupil premium entitlements
- Health and safety considerations
- Attendance and punctuality policy
- Parent School Partnership
- Parent Teacher Association (Friends of Deansbrook)
- The arrangements for lunchtimes and school meals menus (universal infant free school meals)
- The arrangements at the beginning and end of the day
- The requirements for school clothing

Before the meeting parents will have been emailed an electronic 'Welcome pack' containing:

- Personal information form, which includes pupil premium entitlements and emergency contact details
- The home-school agreement;
- A school prospectus;
- Parental permissions form (internet, e-mail, photographs, fruit, milk);
- Expectations for attendance and punctuality;
- The opportunity for a visit to the school prior to their child's first day. The invitation is for both the child and parents. The visit includes a brief greeting and introduction with the headteacher and an opportunity to visit the classroom.

Children are offered a home visit during the first week of the autumn term. All the children start school in the second full week as follows:

- They stay for half a day (either morning or afternoon) for the first two days
- They stay for the morning or afternoon session and lunch for the next two days
- They stay all day on the Friday of the first week

This is a flexible arrangement and may involve more half days before the child is ready for full days at school. This will be discussed with the parents by the class teacher.

5.3 'In year' admissions

An 'in year' admission is one which takes place after the school year begins that has not previously been planned as a nursery or annual reception intake. Children are usually offered a place as a 'in year' admission if there is a place available when:

- The family has moved into the area and the child does not attend another local school.
- There are special circumstances for a child moving schools mid year.

5.3.1 Procedures for 'in year' admissions:

The child's family applies for a place to the local authority who apply the school admissions criteria.

The authority then informs the school that a place has been offered to the child. The school will then:

1. Make an appointment to meet with the parents/carers to discuss the school aims, equal opportunities and inclusion and behaviour management policies and discuss reasons for the change of school
2. Gather as much relevant information as possible including:
 - The child's progress
 - How the child had settled into the previous school and any other relevant information regarding the child's social and emotional needs

- Any indications of special educational needs and any previous interventions
 - The history of the child's previous schooling, if any
 - The need to contact outside agencies (e.g. Children and Families, refugee support, education social worker, learning/behaviour support)
3. Assign the child to a class and briefly introduce the child and parents/carers to the class teacher
 4. Arrange a visit meeting, showing the child and parents/carers where to go on the first day, making arrangements for lunchtime
 5. Arrange a start date and discuss flexible settling in arrangements where needed
 6. Where relevant, telephone the child's present or previous school to inform them of the child's imminent admission and make a request for any records and UPN number
 7. Inform the EMA/Special Educational Needs Coordinator of the admission to ensure appropriate induction and support, including initial assessments and information gathering and provision of appropriate resources

5.4 Settling children learning English as an additional language/SEND

1. Information regarding previous educational experience, ethnicity, languages spoken and experience of English collected at initial meeting.
2. Information passed on to inclusion leader and inclusion support TA, where appropriate
3. A member of the EMA/SEN staff visits the child in classroom during first fortnight and gathers initial assessment information
4. Discussion between EMA leader/Inclusion leader and class teacher
5. Buddying child with partner
6. Introducing parents to others in the school who speak the same language or have similar needs
7. Continuing support from EMA staff / SEN staff in first half term at school or as long as appropriate

5.5 Arrangements for children who leave school mid-term

We want to ensure that transfer between this school to another mid-term is successful and stress free for the child, the family, the receiving school, and the child's existing peer group. The school will:

1. Pass on information about the child, including the child's UPN, a mid-year report of progress to the next school and the EYFS data, Year 1 phonics screening results and End of KS1 assessments, where appropriate
2. Help the child discuss feelings and concerns about the transfer through class discussion, or private discussion as the child requires
3. Invite the child to take photographs of the class and their work and select pieces of work of which they are particularly proud for the new school
4. If necessary complete a CME (Child Missing in Education) form which we pass to the Local Authority with details of the child's new school, if known

We will support the class once the child has left by:

1. Discussing feelings, particularly of close friends, during circle time once the child has left.
2. Engaging in 'Random Pair' games to enable the close friends to form new relationships.

5.6 Managed Moves

Where the parents/carers and the school recognise significant pupil behaviour issues which are moving towards a permanent exclusion, a managed move will be considered. If a managed move is felt to be appropriate, the school will work with the parents/carers and the LA to identify an appropriate school and will work with that school to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. It is essential that the receiving school is fully aware of the child's difficulties so that it is able to provide the necessary support to enable them to make a 'fresh start'.

6 Monitoring, Evaluating and review

The monitoring, evaluation and review of our admissions policy is regarded as essential to achieving our aims. The Governing Body, through the Pupil, Parent and Community Committee, together with the headteacher, the school administration team and the senior leadership team will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy by:

- Recording the number of parents/carers who attend the pre-entry meetings and the 'meet the teacher' evenings and arrange follow up meetings if possible
- Talking with a sample of children and their parents and carers to gain their views of the effectiveness of the admissions policy – both annual admissions and casual admissions
- Reporting to the Governing Body the effectiveness of the policy

When the policy is successful the school will be characterised by:

Children who:

- Demonstrate confidence in coming to school and moving around the school, in words and actions.
- Settle quickly and form positive relationships with peers and staff

Classroom staff who:

- Have knowledge of each child's backgrounds, interests and achievements
- Prepare the classroom prior to a child's first day at school
- Support each child through good lesson planning and preparation
- Support children by using effective strategies
- Assess, record and report each child's progress, including initial assessments
- Communicate with each child's parents/carers

Administrative staff who:

- Are welcoming to all parents/carers and children
- Work collaboratively with other staff members
- Are knowledgeable and understand the admissions procedures and collect data with care and sensitivity

Parents/carers who:

- Feel welcomed and involved in the school community (events etc)
- Are knowledgeable about the curriculum their child is following
- Understand how they can support their child's learning
- Are confident in requesting information about their child's progress

Governors who:

- Understand this policy and regularly review the policy through the Pupil, Parents and Community Committee.

Appendix 1

Settling children into nursery

1. The school will liaise with the previous setting, where appropriate.
2. Children are admitted in small groups from mid-September.
3. All children starting nursery in the autumn term are admitted into nursery by October half term.
4. Parents/carers are expected to stay in the nursery for at least part of the first day, but by the second week should be able to leave their child for short periods of time.
5. By the child's third week in nursery, parents/carers are expected to leave for the majority of the session. Parents/carers are requested to tell their children they are going and then leave immediately.
6. Should a child become upset during the separation period, the nursery team will arrange a programme of separation.
7. Staff will make arrangements to comfort any distressed child and will phone the parent/carer if the child does not settle.
8. Once parents/carers start to leave, some children may attend nursery for a shortened session.
9. The nursery team will make a professional judgement about when a child is ready to stay and advise the parent/carer that they must leave.
10. Should a child be unable to settle, the parent/carer will be advised to withdraw their child until they are able to separate and cope with the demands of the nursery session.

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