

THE DOWNS SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2016/17

Determined by the Full Governing Body – 17 March 2015

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The admission arrangements for admission to The Downs School for the 2016/17 academic year and subsequent years are set out in this document. These arrangements take account of all relevant legislation and the School Admissions Code of Practice.

The aim is for admission arrangements to work for the benefit of all parents and children in the area, to be as simple as possible for parents to use and help them to make a decision on the best school for their children. Parents must use the application form of their 'home' Local Authority, i.e the admissions authority of their home address, when applying for a place. Completed forms should be sent to the 'home' LA by the closing date for applications of the home LA. Parents are encouraged to use the 'on-line' application form provided by their home LA. Details of how to make an application can be found on The Downs School's website (www.thedownsschool.org) and on the LA's website (www.westberks.gov.uk/primaryadmissions).

ADMISSION NUMBERS

Following a Net Capacity Assessment of all maintained schools in West Berkshire by the LA an Indicative Admission Number was reached. The governors set the admission number with regard to this Net Capacity Assessment for the school. The approved admission number for entry to The Downs School is 180.

At age 16, a minimum of 10 "additional" places will be offered in year 12 (i.e. over and above students attending The Downs School who progress from year 11 to Year 12).

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

The following over-subscription criteria in order of priority are applied for application when the school receives more preferences than places available. All preferences will be treated on an equal basis.

A Looked After Children and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately following having been looked after.

B Catchment Area Pupils

Children whose permanent home address is within the catchment area of the school shown on the map at www.westberks.gov.uk/catchments. Where necessary, priority will be given to siblings in catchment. It is the child's normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents/carers and are living at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round (31 October 2014) that is used to decide in which school's catchment area the child lives. Future addresses must not be used and will not be accepted.

Where parental responsibilities are shared, the permanent home address will normally be considered to be with the parent/carer with whom the child spends the majority of days and nights Monday to Friday; this will normally be expected to be with the parent/carer that receives the pupil's Child Benefit, where this benefit is still available. Where there is any doubt about the split of the residence then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week.

Where catchment areas have changed and parents/carers are applying for a school where they were resident in the catchment area before the change, they will still be considered as catchment for that school if :

- a) the child for whom a place is being sought has a sibling (sibling defined in criteria 3 of the oversubscription criteria) and
- b) the application was made for the sibling from the same permanent home address as the current address.

Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places, e.g. temporary addresses whilst retaining a previous permanent home will not be accepted. If parents/carers are in the process of moving from one address to another and want to use the new address for the school place allocations, evidence that they have moved and are already living in the new address will need to be provided before allocations begin. Even if a move is planned, a future address must not be used and will not be accepted

Any child offered a school place based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information concerning a catchment area permanent home address will have their place withdrawn and a new application will be required, by which time preferred schools may be full. This may also occur after the child has been admitted to a school.

There are no proposals to alter the catchment area of the school.

Criteria C & D apply to children whose permanent home address is not within the preferred school's catchment area

C Siblings

Pupils with a brother or sister (including step/foster sibling) living in the same family unit who is already on the roll of The Downs School and, in relation to admissions at The Downs School's first point of entry, will continue to attend compulsory education at the school during the following academic year.

D All other applicants

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs naming a school will always be admitted at any time, above any other child including those on the waiting list. This is a legal requirement. Outside of the Normal Admission round the West Berkshire In-Year Fair Access protocol will also apply.

TIE BREAKER

Priority will be given within any of the above over-subscription criteria to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to The Downs School. Distances will be measured using the West Berkshire Geographical Information System, with the measuring points as specified within that system, taking a straight line between the home address and the school using the unique property identification points within the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG), and not by taking travelling distances. In cases where there are multiple births, the parents/carers will be approached to decide which sibling or siblings will receive the available places.

WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be maintained for all schools and year groups where necessary for children not offered a school place at their first preference school. Placement will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria outlined above. Waiting lists will remain until the first day of a new academic year (1 September). At that time parents of pupils on existing lists will be asked to confirm in writing their wish to be placed on a newly constructed waiting list. Names will be removed from the lists if requested or if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted. Positions on waiting lists may change due to new applications or revised applications in respect of a change of preferred schools, and precedence is given to those subject to a direction or an admission in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications are considered as detailed in the coordinated and in-year admissions scheme (Appendix A).

IN-YEAR APPLICATIONS AFTER THE NORMAL ADMISSIONS ROUND

The administration of applications outside the normal admission round is detailed in the coordinated and in-year admissions scheme (Appendix A).

ADMISSION OUTSIDE NORMAL AGE GROUP

Requests from parents for school places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully whether for gifted and talented pupils or for those who have experienced problems, e.g. having missed education due to ill health, etc. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, cases will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests between the parents, schools concerned (both old and preferred) and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by The Downs School Governors' Admissions Committee. Those refused places outside the normal age group will be informed of their statutory right of appeal.

APPEALS

Any parent not offered a school place at their preferred school has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. This can be for a place at one or more of your preferred schools and against an alternative school place that has been allocated by this Council. Information on how to appeal will be provided with the result of the application. Appeals must be lodged by the dates set out in the coordinated and in-year admissions scheme for the normal admissions round or within 21 days from the date of the offer or refusal letter.

PREVIOUS YEARS ALLOCATIONS BY OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA Allocation for 2014/15

SEN	Looked After Children	Catchment	Sibling	Other
3	1	140	14	22

SIXTH FORM ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2016/17

These arrangements apply to new students entering the school at Year 12 for the first time, not existing school students.

The highest priority is Looked after Children and previously Looked after Children who meet the criteria under 1 and 2 below.

1 ADMISSION NUMBERS

At age 16, a minimum of 10 "additional" places will be offered in year 12 (i.e. over and above students attending The Downs School who progress from year 11 to Year 12).

2 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

At age 16 The Downs School has an open admissions policy, subject to the availability of appropriate courses and to particular requirements as published in the Sixth Form Prospectus. A student must be capable of benefiting from the programme of study.

In order to give the widest possible access for the variety of courses offered the Admission Arrangements are based on the grades achieved at GCSE as detailed below:

Detailed criteria are:

- A Students choosing BTEC Level II courses will be expected to have achieved 2 Ds or above or 4 A*-E at GCSE.
- B Students choosing to take 3, 4 or 5 A/S levels followed by 3, 4 or 5 A2 levels will be expected to have achieved at least 7 Cs or above at GCSE.
- C Mathematics and science require at least a grade B at GCSE in the relevant or related subject. Other subjects usually require a grade B in the relevant or related subject. Further mathematics requires at least a grade A.
- D All full time students are expected to follow a minimum of 3 subjects at A/S and A2 or a level II programme.

Most entry to Year 13, following completion of one year of study, will be students completing the second year of a two year Sixth Form course. Other applications will be considered on the basis of AS level results.

3 WAITING LISTS

If over-subscribed a waiting list will be operated on the same criteria as for Year 7 entry. Appeals for Sixth Form entry will follow the same rules as for Year 7 entry.

4 CLOSING DATE AND LATE APPLICATIONS

The closing date for applications for school places in the normal admission round is the Friday before the February half term.

The Downs School will, as far as possible, accept applications that are received late for a good reason, provided they are received before allocation procedures begin.

The full policy can be obtained from the school and it is also available through the LA website at:
www.westberks.gov.uk/Admissions_Policies

APPENDIX A
CO-ORDINATED AND IN-YEAR ADMISSION SCHEME FOR ALL
MAINTAINED WEST BERKSHIRE SCHOOLS
2016-17

Introduction

This is the qualifying co-ordinated and in-year admission scheme to be adopted by admission authorities for all maintained schools in the area of West Berkshire for the 2015-16 academic year pursuant to Section 89B of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The admission authorities to which the scheme will apply are the following: West Berkshire Local Authority, (for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools) and own admission authorities in the LA, the governing bodies of all West Berkshire Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academy Schools.

The scheme was agreed following consultation with all maintained schools in the LA. The scheme also aims to secure admission arrangements to schools in the areas of different Local Authorities, so far as it is practicable and compatible with requirements.

The LA must formulate the scheme by 1 January and the LA must inform the Secretary of State of the adopted scheme by 15 April 2015.

The Normal Admissions Round

In relation to any application made in the normal admission round, each parent in the area shall receive a single offer of a school place, or a refusal, determined under the scheme, the result of which shall be communicated in writing to the parent by the LA on **2 March 2016** (for secondary admission) or **16 April 2016** (for primary admission).

West Berkshire residents must make applications for school places online, via the West Berkshire web-site, or on a West Berkshire Common Application Form, where parents can express a preference for up to three schools, rank those schools and give reasons for the preference. All preferences must be expressed on this form, including those for schools in a different area.

Residents of other areas should make their applications on their home local authority Common Application Form or in accordance with the requirements of their home local authority and return them to those authorities. Relevant information will be forwarded by those Local Authorities to West Berkshire for consideration if a preference is made for a West Berkshire School.

Each preference will be considered against the school's over-subscription criteria if necessary and, where more than a single school place could be offered, the place will be offered for the highest ranked preference. Information on applications stating preferences for schools for which the governing body is the admissions authority will be passed to the schools preferred. Places will be offered after consultation with those schools regarding available places.

Where a child is eligible to be admitted to a single school applied for online or on the Common Application Form, a place will be offered for that school.

Where a child is eligible to be admitted to more than one school applied for online or on the Common Application Form, a place will be offered for the highest ranked school.

Where a child is not eligible to be admitted to any school applied for online or on the Common Application Form the LA will either:

- 1 Offer an alternative school place if that child is from the area, or
- 2 Make no offer for an alternative school place if that child is not from the area.

Children from the area with no allocated place will normally be offered a school place in the following order:

- 1 At the catchment area school if a place exists, using distance as a priority;
 - 2 at the nearest school from the home address where a place exists.
 - 3 in the unlikely situation of there being no West Berkshire School places available, at the nearest West Berkshire school without breaking class size legislation no place will be allocated.
- The normal admissions round process will be undertaken in accordance with the timetables below.

Late Applications

The closing date for secondary admission applications in the normal admission round is **31 October 2015** and the closing date for primary applications is **15 January 2016**. The authority will accept applications received after this date provided that they are received **before allocation procedures begin** and treat them as on time applications.

For Secondary applications that are considered late received before the offer date of **2 March 2016** will be processed together from **4 March 2016**.

Late applications received between **2 March 2016** and **31st March 2016**, will be processed together from **1 April 2016**.

Late applications received from **1 April 2016** will be processed by date of receipt on the basis of the admissions oversubscription criteria of the preferred school.

No place will be allocated to children from waiting lists until 1 April 2016 when acceptances should have been returned.

For Primary applications considered late received before the offer date of **16 April 2016** will be processed together from **17 April 2016**.

Late applications received between **16 April 2016** and **30 April 2016**, will be processed together from **1 May 2016**.

Late applications received from **1 May 2016** will be processed by date of receipt on the basis of the admissions oversubscription criteria of the preferred school.

No place will be allocated to children from waiting lists until **21 May 2016** when acceptances should have been returned.

In-Year Applications

All applicants, including those who live outside of West Berkshire, who would like to apply for a West Berkshire school (excluding Englefield CE VA Primary School) place outside of the normal admission round must make applications on a West Berkshire Common Application Form. Parents can express a preference for up to three schools, rank those schools and give reasons for the preference. All preferences must be expressed on this form.

Applications for Englefield CE VA Primary School must be made directly to the school.

West Berkshire residents applying for a school place in another Local Authority's area must apply to that Local Authority directly and send completed forms there. The processing and allocation will be done by that authority.

Each preference will be considered against the school's over-subscription criteria if necessary and, where more than a single school place could be offered, the place will be offered for the highest ranked preference. Information on applications stating preferences for schools for which the governing body is the admissions authority will be passed to the preferred schools.

Places will be offered after consultation with those schools regarding available places.

Where a child is eligible to be admitted to a single school applied for on the Common Application Form, a place will be offered for that school.

Where a child is not eligible to be admitted to any school applied for on the Common Application Form the LA will:

- 1 Place the applicant on a waiting list(s).
- 2 For West Berkshire residents where there are no available places within a reasonable distance from the home address, refer the application to the Pupil Placement Panel in accordance with the Council's In-Year Fair Access Protocol. Children placed by the PPP will be admitted as a priority irrespective of existing waiting lists.

Any child for which the West Berkshire In-Year Fair Access Protocol will apply shall have a placement, and subsequent registration, determined by the Pupil Placement Panel following appropriate referral and consideration.

Schools have Published Admission Numbers (PAN) which determines the number of pupils that can be admitted into each year group. Schools are considered to be full in a year group when the PAN is reached and at that point, further applicants will be placed on the waiting list. When a child is removed from the school roll, the Admission Authority will determine that a place has become available in a particular year group if the number on roll has dropped below the PAN.

Entry on the School Roll

A child **must** be included in a school's Admission Register for the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the child will attend the school.

The Local Authority will notify the parents and school of the date by which the child is to be admitted so that there is no ambiguity about the date from which the child is on the school roll.

The dates will normally be confirmed as follows:

For admissions in the normal admission round a child shall be registered at the start of the Autumn Term, or other appropriate Term subject to parental deferral or Voluntary Aided primary admission arrangements.

For the admission of a child in-year following a change of home address into the area, or further than a reasonable distance from their existing school, the last date by which the child shall be registered shall be the first day of the second school week following the offer letter.

This will provide for at least one full week if required to arrange re-integration. For the admission of a child in-year transferring between schools, one or both being within a reasonable distance from the home address, the last date by which the child shall be registered shall be the first day of the one of 6 West Berkshire School Terms following the offer letter. In each of the above in-year situations a school may register a child earlier than the date provided if considered appropriate following re-integration discussion between the school and parents.

In the case of a school place being sought for a future date, applications will not be considered more than one West Berkshire Term ahead of the date by which a place is required when that is the start of a future term. Other applications will be considered before the start of the term in which the admission is required.

Children placed by the Pupil Placement Panel for whatever reason shall be registered, dually if appropriate, by the date provided on the outcome sheet. Actual attendance may be determined after periods of assessment elsewhere.

Duties of the LA

- To forward application data received for places at Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools in the area to the governing body as soon as possible.
- Where an application is made online or on the Common Application Form for a school outside the area, or received from another LA for a school within the area, to exchange details of that application with the other LA as soon as possible, and no later than the timetabled date for the normal admissions round.
- To determine by reference to the LA's admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria the order in which any application for a place at a Community or Voluntary Controlled school is ranked.
- To confirm with the Governing Bodies of Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools, by reference to their admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, the order in which any application for a place at those schools is ranked.
- To determine whether a child is to be granted or refused a school place at a school in the area in accordance with this scheme, and timetable for the normal admissions round.
- To inform the governing body or other LA where appropriate of the decision whether to grant offers or refuse applications, and by the timetabled date in the normal admissions round.
- To communicate the decision granting or refusing places at schools in the area to parents, including the date by which the pupil will be registered, on behalf of a governing body where appropriate, on **2 March 2015** (for secondary admissions) or **16 April 2015** (for primary admissions) for the normal admissions round.
- In –Year to communicate the decision granting or refusing places, etc to West Berkshire residents.

Infant Classes

Infant classes (i.e. those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

Duties of the Governing Bodies acting as Admission Authorities

- To forward applications incorrectly received directly for places at the school to the LA as soon as possible.
- To receive application data from the LA and determine by reference to the governing body's admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria the order in which any application for the school will be ranked, and to notify the LA of the ranked list by the timetabled date for the normal admissions round.
- To ensure that any determination under this scheme to offer or refuse a place at the school will only be communicated to the parent by the LA on behalf of the governing body.

Secondary Schools – Normal Admissions Round Timetable

31 October 2015	Closing date for applications
22 November 2015	LA transfer of applications data to other LAs
28 January 2016	First provisional allocation list sent to other LAs
2 March 2016	Offers and refusals issued to parents
17 March 2016	Parent's acceptance of offer
31 March 2016	Closing date for appeals

Primary Schools – Normal Admissions Round Timetable

15 January 2016	Closing date for applications
14 February 2016	LA transfer of applications data to VA Governing Bodies (Additional data received later from other Local Authorities will be transferred for inclusion)
4 March 2016	West Berkshire VA Governing Bodies' ranked lists to the LA
16 April 2016	Offers and refusals issued to parents
7 May 2016	Parents' acceptance of offer
15 May 2016	Closing date for appeals

This co-ordinated and in-year scheme for school admissions for 2016-17 has been adopted by the Governing Body of:

The Downs School

Mr Chris Moss - Chair of Governors

Date: 17 March 2015