

THE DOWNS SCHOOL

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2009/10

The admission arrangements for admission to The Downs School for the 2009/10 academic year and subsequent years are set out in this document. These arrangements take account of all relevant legislation and the new 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.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2009/10

1. ADMISSION NUMBERS

The LA has recently completed a Net Capacity Assessment of all maintained schools in West Berkshire from which comes an Indicative Admission Number. Admission Authorities must have regard to this number when considering a Published Admission Limit within their admission arrangements. The published Admission Number for Year 7 entry to The Downs School for 2006/07 was 150. This was later raised by governors to 180. For 2007/08 year 7 entry was 180 and for subsequent years will be 180 pupils. Therefore the Admissions Number for year 7 for 2009/10 will be 180. The Admission number for year 11 with compulsory age pupils will remain at 150.

2. ADMISSION PROCEDURES - SECONDARY CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME

The Downs School is the admissions authority for admission to the school. LAs are required to draw up a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all maintained schools (but not special schools) in their area for September 2009 and LAs are required to exchange information on applications with their neighbours.

The Downs School's admission to year 7 will be administered by the LA according to the co-ordinated admission scheme.

The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to ensure that every parent of a child living in the LA area who has applied for a place in the normal admission round receives an offer of only one place on the same day.

The scheme will not affect the duty of the governors of The Downs School to set and apply its own admission arrangements. Schemes are an administrative process to make school admissions easier, more transparent and less stressful for parents.

Appendix C of the School Admissions Code of Practice sets out a model scheme for in-LA secondary co-ordination and Annex C1 a model timetable. West Berkshire LA and The Downs School have decided to apply that model.

3. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

The Downs School is a co-educational 11-18 comprehensive school. Pupils will be admitted at age 11 without reference to ability or aptitude.

For admission during the academic year 1st September 2009– 31st August 2010

Year Group	Date of Birth
7	1 st September 1997 to 31 st August 1998
8	1 st September 1996 to 31 st August 1997
9	1 st September 1995 to 31 st August 1996
10	1 st September 1994 to 31 st August 1995
11	1 st September 1993 to 31 st August 1994

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
(in accordance with legal requirements)**

❖ **B – Catchment Area Pupils, i.e.**

Children whose permanent home address is in the school's designated catchment area. This is taken to be the address at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round (24th October 2008).

Where parental responsibilities are equally shared, the home address will normally be considered to be with the parent/carer with whom the child spends the majority of time and nights from Monday to Friday; this will normally be expected to be with the parent/carer that receives the pupil's Child Benefit Allowance.

It is the child's normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents/carers that is used to decide in which school's catchment area the child lives. 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 plan to move, documentary evidence will be required, such as proof of exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement to confirm residence at the time of admission. If such evidence is received by 1 January during a normal admissions round the new address will be accepted for the forthcoming allocation. Confirmation received after 1 January will not be taken into account until immediately after allocation dates and waiting lists adjusted accordingly. At all other times changes of address will be considered immediately on receipt of evidence. 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 to E apply to children whose permanent home address is not within the preferred school's catchment area

❖ **C – Siblings**, i.e.

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 (or partner junior 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 – Linked Partner School Pupils**, i.e.

Children who currently attend a partner school that is formally linked to the preferred school, namely the schools of the Downs Federation: Beedon CE Primary; Brightwalton CE Aided Primary; Chaddleworth St Andrew's Primary; Chieveley Primary; Compton CE Primary; Curridge Primary; Hampstead Norreys CE Primary; Hermitage Primary; The Ilsleys Primary; Streatley CE Primary; Yattendon CE Primary.

❖ **E – 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.

4. 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 taking a straight line between the home address and the school and not by taking travelling distances. In cases where there are multiple births, priority will be given by time of birth, eldest first.

5. 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. Position on the list will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria outlined above. Waiting lists will remain until the first day of a new academic year (1st 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 withdrawals, new applications or revised applications.

6. LATE APPLICATIONS

The closing date for applications for school places in the normal admission round is 24th October 2008. The Downs School will, as far as possible, accept applications that are received late for a good reason, e.g. when a single parent has been ill for some time, or a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad, provided they are received before allocation procedures begin, normally on 1st January.

7. APPLICATIONS AFTER THE NORMAL ADMISSIONS ROUND

All applications received after the normal admissions round, including those for years other than the normal year of entry, will be treated in the same way as those received within the normal admissions round. Within the co-ordinated schemes, 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 and places only offered after consultation with those schools regarding available places.

Where there are no available places within a reasonable distance from the home address, the application may be referred to the Pupil Placement Panel in accordance with the Council's In Year Fair Access Protocol. In accordance with the West Berkshire In Year Fair Access Protocol, only as agreed by the West Berkshire Pupil Placement Panel following consultation with parents, all relevant professionals and schools concerned, hard to place children will be admitted above other children including those on the waiting list (except Looked After and children with Statements of Special Educational needs naming the school).

9. 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.

10. ADMISSION TO OTHER YEARS

1. Applications may be made for entry to any year group in the school, but will only be considered six months before the date by which the applicant is expecting to take up the place.
2. If the number of students in the relevant year group is not below the admission number for the relevant year group, then the applicant will be informed that the school cannot offer them a place, that they can be put on a waiting list, and that they may appeal against the decision.
3. A waiting list of applicants to whom the school cannot offer a place and who wish to be placed on a waiting list will be maintained. Applicants on this list will be in order based on the criteria for allocating oversubscribed places as listed.
4. Where an applicant offered a place does not, or cannot, take up the offered place within 2 weeks of the expected starting date, then the offer may be withdrawn and the place offered to the next applicant on the waiting list. In such circumstances the applicant would have to re-apply for admission.

SIXTH FORM ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2009/10

1. ADMISSION NUMBERS

The admission number for 2009/10 will be set at 10. This admission number relates only to external candidates who are being admitted for the first time 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 course.

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/Ss followed by 3, 4 or 5 A2s will be expected to have achieved at least 5 Cs at GCSE.
- C. Mathematics and science usually require a grade B at GCSE in the relevant or related subject. Other subjects usually require at least a grade C in the relevant or related subject.
- D. All full time students are expected to follow a minimum of 3 subjects at A/S and A2 or all the subjects within the BTEC programme.

Most entry to Year 13 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. LATE APPLICATIONS

The closing date for applications for school places in the normal admission round is 20th February 2009.

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 Downs School Admissions Arrangements(2009/10)
Determined by Governors on 11th March 2008***