

THE DOWNS SCHOOL

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2011/12

The admission arrangements for admission to The Downs School for the 2011/12 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 are encouraged to use the ‘on-line’ application form provided by the Local Authority (LA).

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 pupils per year for years 7 – 11.

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).

ADMISSION PROCEDURES - SECONDARY CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME

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 2011– 31st August 2012

Year Group	Date of Birth
7	1 st September 1999 to 31 st August 2000
8	1 st September 1998 to 31 st August 1999
9	1 st September 1997 to 31 st August 1998
10	1 st September 1996 to 31 st August 1997
11	1 st September 1995 to 31 st August 1996

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 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. All applications will be considered on an equal preference basis against the over-subscription criteria for each of up to three preferred schools, NOT considered on the basis of first preferences before other preferences.

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.

The following timetable to be followed: dates agreed from the agreed co-ordinated scheme.

26 October 2010	Closing date for applications
22 November 2010	LA transfer of applications data to other LAs

28 January 2011	First provisional allocation list sent to other LAs and provisional numbers sent to West Berkshire schools
1 March 2011	Offers and refusals issued to parents
15 March 2011	Parents' acceptance of offer
31 March 2011	Closing date for appeals for the normal round

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** (in accordance with legal requirements)

❖ **B Catchment Area Pupils**

Children whose permanent home address is in the school's designated catchment area. Where necessary, priority will be given to siblings in catchment. The home address is taken to be the address at the closing date for applications in the normal admissions round (26th October 2010). 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.

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**

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**

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.

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 (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 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 co-ordinated 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 co-ordinated 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 co-ordinated and in-year admissions scheme for the normal admissions round or within 21 days from the date of the offer or refusal letter.

SIXTH FORM ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2011/12

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/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 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.