THE DOWNS
PREPARATORY SCHOOL
BRISTOL

4.14 ADMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction
The Downs is an inclusive school and no child will be refused entry on the grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics from the Equality Act 2010.

Children are admitted to The Downs at any age between 4 and 12 years (Reception to Year 8).

The only restrictions placed on entry are those of number and the need to ensure that there is a match between the school and pupil. The ability level of each potential pupil and any special need that they may have is therefore taken into account as it is essential that the school is able to provide appropriately for each child's needs. Reasonable adjustments will be made to cater for any child's needs, however, it is expected that they are able to access the curriculum independently unless there are recommendations within a child's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). With any learning need, should additional 1:1 support be suggested, this is discussed with parents and there may be an extra charge for these lessons which take place with a member of the Learning Hub Department.

It is advised that parents of children with special educational needs, learning difficulties, physical or mental disabilities or significant behavioural issues should discuss their child's requirements with the school before they visit for a taster day so that the school can make adequate provision for them. Parents should provide (with the Registration Form) a copy of any information relating to a child's learning needs, this may be an educational psychologist's report or a medical report at the time of application, if they have one. References from a child's current school or nursery will be sought prior to any offer given.

In the event of a year group being full, a child's name is entered on the waiting list.

Children are monitored as they progress through the school and the assessment of pupils is ongoing and underpinned by teacher observation. It is expected that all children will make reasonable progress. Any concerns regarding pupil progress or development to access the curriculum will be discussed with parents

with either the Head of Section or a member of SLT. Pre-Prep children are expected to progress into the Prep School, but the school reserves the right to refuse entry. All pupils are encouraged to remain at The Downs until they are 13 and have completed Year 8.

Please refer also to the following policies available on the website or via Admissions:

- 4.9 Equal opportunities and Disability Policy
- 4.8 Learning Support Policy
- 4.14 App1 Entry Assessment

The Process

- Following an initial enquiry, a school prospectus and accompanying letter or email from the Headteacher is sent out. In doing so, prospective parents (PP's) are encouraged to visit The Downs and to meet the Head
- Parents are then given an extensive tour of the school usually by the Head or students. They observe pupils in the classroom, view facilities, meet staff and talk to children informally. An informal letter of reply is sent after the visit.
- Should the PP's of children in Years 1- 8 wish, they are offered a 'Taster Day' for their child (children). During this Taster Day, prospective children are 'guided' by a pupil from The Downs. The prospective pupil experiences a normal school day but time is taken to informally assess their academic strengths.
- Children joining Reception are invited to join Familiarisation Mornings in the Summer Term. At this time groups of new and prospective children come and enjoy a morning (and lunch) to familiarise themselves with the new environment.
- During a 'Taster Day', on permission being given by the parents, prospective children are informally assessed. Without causing unnecessary anxiety, their literacy and numeracy skills are evaluated by the use of INCAS or standardised assessments in maths and English are used (PIRA,PUMA or QUEST). Additionally, PP's are asked to provide latest school reports. Further information about the Informal Assessment Process is available upon request.
- Results of the 'Informal Assessment' are presented to parents during a debrief with the Head at the conclusion of the Taster Day. Should the Head offer a place at the school, it is confirmed in writing shortly after the visit.
- Children who are not yet of school age or who cannot be offered places immediately are placed on an entry list. A registration fee must be provided to be placed on the list, this fee is **not** refundable. The amount of the fee is stated clearly on the Fees List which is published on the School's website
- When a child is registered, parents are asked to confirm acceptance of the place before the child's start at the school. An Acceptance Deposit is required and is refundable in the final invoice. The amount of the deposit is stated clearly on the Fees List which is published on the School's website

Induction of a new child
New children joining the Reception Year are encouraged to attend the Familiarisation Mornings held during the Summer Term. These mornings are proven to make the children's transition into full time education largely uneventful and more often enjoyable.

Children joining The Downs in other age groups are welcome to spend a day at the school – in addition to the 'Taster Day' – upon request.

During the holiday period previous to starting, new children will be contacted firstly in order to put them at ease but also to inform them of their guides (Y1 to Y8). 'Guides' are pupils in the same class as the new children whose task is to help the new child settle down with as few anxieties as possible. They are carefully chosen and are often already known to the children.

Admissions Register
The school Admission's Register is managed by the Admissions Manager. Alongside the register the Admissions Manager keeps a paper trail of communication with the LA.
The Admissions Manager is kept well informed of any ISI updates or statutory changes by the Head.

-

Monitoring and Evaluation
The process of admissions is carefully monitored by the Admissions Manager and Headteacher.

This policy (or Handbook) was updated on	**Signed on behalf of the School**	**Date for next review**
01.09.26	*D. Isaachsen*	*01/09/2027*

Overview required by Education Committee - date	**Policy upload to ISI Portal - date**	**Policy uploaded to website(s) - date**
Spring 2027	*n/a*	*n/a*