

Duffield Meadows Primary School



Admissions Policy

Date of issue: April 2021

Minute Reference: 21/66

Date of Review: April 2022

Headteacher's signature: 

Chair of Governors' signature:



Contents:

[Statement of intent](#)

1. [Legal framework](#)
2. [Roles and responsibilities](#)
3. [Determining a PAN](#)
4. [Oversubscription criteria](#)
5. [Applications and offers](#)
6. [Admissions appeals](#)
7. [Monitoring and review](#)

Statement of intent

At Duffield Meadows Primary School, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered in an open and fair way.

The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school, and is called the 'agreed admissions number'. Our published admissions number (PAN) is 45.

The table below sets out who the admission authority is and other responsible bodies in our school.

Type of school	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at the school?
Community school	LA	Schools Adjudicator	LA

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2014) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2012) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The admission authority is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance when carrying out the overall admission of pupils into the school.
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a pupil, as well as the parent's right to appeal and the appeal process.
- Implementing any advice or recommendations given by the Schools Adjudicator without undue delay.
- Determining the admission arrangements on an annual basis and publicly consulting stakeholders on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.
- Setting clear, fair and effective oversubscription criteria which do not discriminate against any pupil.
- Communicating oversubscription criteria clearly to parents.
- Notifying the LA of any in-year admissions and their outcomes.

2.2. The Schools Adjudicator is responsible for:

- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to admissions.
- Receiving concerns and objections regarding the admission of pupils and making recommendations to the admission authority as a result of these concerns and objections.
- Approving variations to determined admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

2.3. The appeals clerk is responsible for:

- Having an in-depth knowledge of the relevant appeals codes and other relevant law.
- Providing an independent and impartial service for admission appeals.

- Making the necessary administrative arrangements for hearings.
- Notifying all parties of the order of proceedings in advance of an appeals hearing.
- Responding to queries from appellants in advance of an appeals hearing or identifying who will be appropriate to respond.
- Being an independent source of advice on procedure and admissions law.
- Keeping accurate records of proceedings and providing written notification of the appeals panel's decisions.

3. Determining a PAN

- 3.1. The number of places available is determined by the capacity of the school.
- 3.2. The PAN for new Reception pupils is 45.
- 3.3. The admission authority will consult with the governing body where it proposes to increase, decrease or keep the same PAN.
- 3.4. Where the admission authority has set a PAN lower than the school's wishes, the school will submit an objection to the Schools Adjudicator, where appropriate.

4. Oversubscription criteria

- 4.1. In the event of there being an oversubscription of applicants to the school, the following oversubscription criteria for each relevant age group will be applied:

For all community and controlled schools individual pupils who have a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care plan which names the school will be admitted.

1. Looked after children and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).
2. Children living in the normal area served by the school at the time of application and admission who have brothers or sisters attending the school at the time of application and admission
3. Children living in the normal area served by the school at the time of application and admission
4. Children not living in the normal area served by the school but who have brothers or sisters attending the school at the time of application and admission
5. In the case of voluntary controlled church schools, children whose parents request a place on religious grounds
6. Other children whose parents have requested a place

When in the case of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 above, choices have to be made between children satisfying the same criteria, those children living nearest to the school (measured by

straight line distance) will be given preference. The school will accept all pupils who name the school in their EHC plan.

4.2. If it is unclear whether a child meets the oversubscription criteria, the admission authority may request proof of address. This proof will not include any of the information detailed in [5.6](#) of this policy.

4.3. When formulating their admission arrangements, the admission authority will not:

- Place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements.
- Take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a feeder school.
- Give priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in their application.
- Introduce any new selection by ability.
- Give priority to children based on any practical or financial support their parents give to the school or associated parties, including any affiliated religious organisation.
- Give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial or educational status of parents applying – apart from where these factors determine a child's pupil premium eligibility, and for children whose parents work at school.
- Take account of reports from previous schools about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude or achievement, or that of any other children in the family.
- Discriminate against any protected characteristic.
- Give priority based on a child's or their parents' past or present hobbies or activities.
- Name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools.
- Interview children or parents.
- Request financial contributions as part of the admissions process.
- Request photographs of children – apart from for proof of identity when sitting selection tests.

Catchment areas

4.4. Route Measurement - The Children's Services Department has a Geographic Information System (GIS) to measure the straight line distance. It is measured by a standard straight line distance calculated to within two metres. This measurement is taken from the postal address file, normally the house front door. For schools the grid reference is taken from the postal address file and will normally be the centre of the school for primary phase schools or the nearest gate or entrance for secondary phase schools.

Siblings of pupils and children of staff

- 4.5. The term brother or sister includes:
- (a) a half-brother and/or a half-sister
 - (b) a legally adopted child being regarded as a brother or sister
 - (c) a step-brother and/or step-sister residing in the same family unit

Admissions procedures

- 4.6. The school will offer open events and school visits to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants or disabled parents.
- 4.7. The school may assess its ability to cater to the applicant's needs by:
- Inviting the applicant to attend the school for half a day
 - Visiting the applicant's home
 - Visiting the applicant's current education provision

Consultation and determination

- 4.8. The admission authority will consult on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements.
- 4.9. Consultation will last for a minimum of six weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.
- 4.10. The admission authority will consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.
- 4.11. The admission authority will consult with the following:
- Parents of all pupils
 - Stakeholders
 - Other admission authorities within the relevant area
 - The governing body and the LA who are not the admission authority
- 4.12. The admission authority will publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements and the contact details of the individual responsible for admissions liaison on the school website.
- 4.13. A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.
- 4.14. Admission arrangements will be determined by 28 February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the arrangements have been made.
- 4.15. Finalised admission arrangements will be published on the school website.

- 4.16. Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

5. Applications and offers

- 5.1. Parents will be provided with a common application form (CAF) where they will note their three preferred schools, along with a brief explanation, in rank order – the schools do not have to be located in the LA area where the parents live.
- 5.2. Parents will provide LAs with the following information within the CAF:
- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
 - Their and their child's address and proof of residence
- 5.3. The CAF will be submitted to the parents' LA.
- 5.4. Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met.
- 5.5. The admission authority will request supplementary information for the purpose of processing applications where necessary; however, they will have due regard to [4.6](#) of this policy.
- 5.6. The admission authority will not request any of the following:
- Any personal details, including information on criminal convictions or financial status
 - The first language of the parent or child
 - Details about the parents' or child's disability, medical or SEND requirements
 - Any parental agreement to follow the ethos of the school in a practical way
 - For the child to complete any part of the form or for two parents to provide signatures
- 5.7. Once a place has been offered, the admission authority may ask for the child's short birth certificate as proof of birth date.
- 5.8. For PLAC and LAC, the admission authority will request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the LA confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the order being made.
- 5.9. A clear, fair and objective waiting list will be provided until 31 December of each year. Priority will not be given to pupils based on the date they were placed on the list. LAC and PLAC will take priority over the waiting list.
- 5.10. An offer will only be withdrawn if it has been made in error, a parent has not responded within 20 working days, or if the offer was made via a fraudulent or misleading application.

- 5.11. Where an offer has not been responded to within the designated time frame, the admission authority will give the parent a further opportunity to respond and will explain that the offer will be withdrawn if they do not.
- 5.12. If any application is found to be fraudulent after a child has started at the school in the first term of the new academic year, the school may withdraw the place. If the fraudulent application is found after this time, the pupil will not be removed.
- 5.13. All offers will be made on National Offer Day, i.e. 16 April or the next working day.
- 5.14. The admission authority will maintain a waiting list for oversubscribed schools.
- 5.15. The admission authority will make clear in the admissions arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group for the admissions round.
- 5.16. The headteacher will assist the admission authority with deciding on which year group a child will enter. Once a decision has been reached, the child's parents will be informed in writing along with an explanation of how the decision was reached and any reasons why.
- 5.17. Pupils not of usual school age will not be given less of a priority where the school is over subscribed.
- 5.18. Applications for children coming from overseas will be treated in accordance with Home Office rules.
- 5.19. For children of UK service professionals, the following procedure will be adhered to:
 - A place will be allocated to the child in advance of the family arriving in the area named in the application form.
 - The application must be accompanied with an official letter confirming the relocation date and the service unit's postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.
 - The application will not be refused on the grounds of the child not currently living in the area, nor will places be uniquely reserved.
- 5.20. The arrangements for service children will be in line with the government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

6. Admissions appeals

- 6.1. When informing a parent of their unsuccessful admissions application, a letter will be sent which includes the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal.

6.2. Parents will be informed in the letter that, if they wish to appeal, they must make the appeal in writing.

6.3. Grounds for appeal are not limited.

Constitution of appeals panels

6.4. The admission authority and the appeals panel will act in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance.

6.5. The judicial function of the appeals panel will be transparent, accessible, independent and impartial, and will operate in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

6.6. A clerk will be appointed to the appeals panel who is independent of the school and the education functions of the LA.

6.7. The appeals panel will comprise a chair and at least two other panel members. The panel will also include at least one lay person and a person who has experience in education.

6.8. The chair of the appeals panel is responsible for the conduct of the hearing, including introducing parties, explaining individual roles and how the hearing will be conducted, and ensuring that parties have sufficient opportunity to state their case and ask questions.

6.9. Panel members will be independent from the school and will remain independent for the duration of their service.

6.10. The clerk is responsible for assigning members of the appeals panel; however, they will not assign the following disqualified persons:

- A member of the LA which is the admission authority or in whose area the school is located
- A member or former member of the governing board of the school
- An employee at the LA or governing board of the school, other than a teacher or TA
- Any person who has, or at any time has had, any connection with the admission authority, school or LA who may not act impartially
- Any person who has not attended training required by the admission authority arranging the appeals panel

6.11. There will be three members of the panel available at all times during the appeals process. If any member has to temporarily withdraw, the hearing will be postponed until the panel member returns. If the panel member is unable to return, they will be replaced, and the appeals will be reheard.

6.12. Appropriate training will be given, funded by the admission authority, to all panel members and clerks before they take part in a panel hearing. As a minimum, this training will include:

- The law relating to admissions.

- The panel's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
 - Procedural fairness and natural justice.
 - The roles of specific panel members, e.g. the chair.
- 6.13. Members of the appeals panel will receive travel and subsistence allowances where applicable, and will be compensated for any loss of earnings or expenses.
- 6.14. The rate of payment is set by the LA and has due regard to the recommendations of the remuneration panel.
- 6.15. The appeals panel must not have a vested interest in the outcome of the hearing.
- 6.16. The admission authority will indemnify the members of the appeals panel against any legal costs and expenses they incur in connection with any decision taken in good faith whilst acting as a member of the appeals panel.

Appeals hearings

- 6.17. The admission authority will publish an appeals timetable on their website by 28 February each year. The timetable will comply with section three of the 'School Admission Appeals Code'.
- 6.18. Appeals will be lodged and heard for the normal admissions round within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.
- 6.19. For late applications, appeals will be heard between 30-40 school days of the appeal being lodged.
- 6.20. For in year admissions, appeals will be heard within 30 days of the appeal being lodged.
- 6.21. **[Sixth forms only]** Appeals will be heard within 30 school days of confirmation of exam results where an offer was conditional, or 40 days where a place is not conditional upon exam results.
- 6.22. Admission authorities will provide appellants with written notification of the date and all final arrangements of the appeal hearing, including a deadline for the submission of any further evidence that was not sent in the original appeal.
- 6.23. The admission authority will comply with any request for information to help parents prepare their case for the appeals hearing.
- 6.24. All evidence relating to the appeal hearing will be passed on to the clerk, including the admission process, reasons for the decision and how the admission would cause prejudice to the education provision of the school.
- 6.25. The clerk will send all the papers required for the hearing to both parties and the members of the panel seven days before the hearing.
- 6.26. The presenting officer will be responsible for relaying to the attendees the decision not to admit the child, and answer questions where necessary.

- 6.27. Appellants may attend in person or be represented by another individual. Where appellants cannot attend, a decision will be made based on the written evidence.
- 6.28. Appeal hearings must be private and held in an accessible location. The order of the appeals will be:
- Case for the admission authority.
 - Questioning by the appellant(s) and panel.
 - Case for the appellant(s).
 - Questioning by the admission authority and panel.
 - Summing up by the admission authority.
 - Summing up by the appellant(s).
- 6.29. Multiple appeals will be heard, either individually or in groups, by the same appeals panel where appropriate.
- 6.30. Notes of the hearing will be made and kept securely by the admission authority for a minimum of two years. These notes are, in most cases, exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Reaching a decision

- 6.31. When reaching a decision, the admission authority will have due regard to section three of the 'School Admission Appeals Code'.
- 6.32. Appeals decisions will either be upheld or dismissed – there will be no conditional decisions made, in line with section 94(6) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 6.33. The final decision will be decided by a simple majority. If votes are split equally, the chair will make the casting vote.
- 6.34. The final decision and accompanying reasons will be communicated in writing to the appellant, admission authority and the LA.
- 6.35. The decision letter will be signed by the clerk or chair of the appeals panel and sent no later than five school days after the decision has been made.
- 6.36. If a child has been refused admissions due to any SEND, this will be considered by the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) and not the appeals panel.
- 6.37. The admission authority will have due regard for the two-stage process outlined in the 'School Admission Appeals Code' when negotiating appeals regarding infant class sizes.

Complaints

- 6.38. Appellants do not have the right to more than one appeal in respect of the school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application from the appellant due to a material

change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

6.39. Appellants can apply for a place at the school for a different academic year.

6.40. If appellants have an issue with the appeal process, they can complain to the Local Government Ombudsmen.

7. Monitoring and review

7.1. This policy will be reviewed by the governing body on an annual basis.

7.2. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.

