



# Discovery Federation

## Admissions Policy

Updated: September 2019 by Mrs C. Robson

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at the school
- Set out the school's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply
- Explain **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer your child a place

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

## 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Looked after children** are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

**Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

## 4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. Further information on applying for a place at a school in county Durham can be found at <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2189/Apply-for-a-primary-place>

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority. Please note: pupils already attending our nursery will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

### **4.1 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We would ask parents to discuss the identified needs with the school prior to starting so that appropriate intervention and support can be planned and implemented. Advice from the LA or other agencies may be requested to ensure any the school can meet any needs appropriately.

### **4.2 Applying for a school place if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of SEN**

Children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (or Statement of Special Education Needs) follow a different admission and transfer process for a new school. Please continue to complete Durham County Council's parental preference form, as part of the admission process to a new school. You continue to have a right to request a particular school and this will

be considered alongside the information that we have about your child's special educational needs. The information would have been provided as part of the Education, Health and Care assessment or following the review meeting.

## **5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group**

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

## **6. Allocation of places**

### **6.1 Admission number**

The school has an agreed admission number of 18 pupils for entry in Reception.

### **6.2 Oversubscription criteria**

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated. If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place. In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need which is supported by medical evidence from an appropriate authority. The school requires this medical evidence to accompany the Common Application Form as supporting evidence if you are making an application on the basis of social or medical need. A GP's report alone is not sufficient. Parents should supply at the time of application all documentation that they would wish to rely on in the event of any later appeal. Applicants are encouraged to supply as many relevant documents as possible.
3. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
  - a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
  - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

4. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

### **6.3 Tie break**

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be independently verified.

## **7. In-year admissions**

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Details about applications for in-year admissions can be found at the following webpage:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

## **8. Appeals**

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address:

Office of the Schools Adjudicator  
Mowden Hall  
Staindrop Road  
Darlington  
DL3 9BG

You can find details of the school's appeals timetable on the following webpage:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/5109/School-admission-arrangements-201819>

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing body every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing body will publicly consult on these changes.