

ADMISSIONS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (PUPILS)

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Policy reviewed by: Christopher Sanderson, Director of Compliance and Policy

Policy approved by: Robert Berry – Director of Operations

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Reviewer's Signature:



Approver's Signature:



Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

General

This policy explains the school's admissions procedures and its commitment to strive for equal treatment of, and opportunities for its pupils. A separate policy exists which address equal opportunities in relation to employees.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we at The Village Prep School believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit our School. We hold open mornings throughout the year, which give prospective parents an opportunity to tour the school and meet the Head. Details are published on our website and all registered parents are informed. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents at other times for a personal meeting with the Head and/or Head of the relevant school, and tour of the School. This policy applies to all pupils seeking admission to the school, including those in the EYFS.

The Entry Procedure

The School is a non-academically selective school. Selection is not based upon academic ability, but on a student's potential to prosper at The Village Prep School, socially and academically. Where possible, there will be an informal interview. We do require references from the candidate's previous school and we consider the observations and feedback from staff following any trial day(s). Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the school.

Applicants for admission should register by the end of December of the year preceding the desired year of admission. The school aims to make transition from any one school, year group or class as non-disruptive socially and educationally as possible.

The Village Prep School welcomes in-year applications, but places in any one-year group can only be allocated if there is a place at the time of application. Please contact the School Secretary for details.

Equal Opportunities

Equal Opportunities is the focus on ensuring that children have equality of access and outcome throughout all aspects of school like and that their life chances for the present and future are not impeded or distorted by anything that happens during their participation in the process of education. Rather, they should be widened to allow children to achieve the whole scope of their potential. Equality of access, however, does not necessarily lead to equality of outcome.

Equal opportunity recognises and celebrates our similarities and our diversity as individuals and groups. It recognises that all individuals have an intrinsic right to be nurtured in such a way as they are able to reach their full potential. Equal opportunity accepts that, whilst all children have something of value to contribute, they do not all start on a level playing field. Consequently, some may be disadvantaged in their attempts to reach their potential. The school works hard to differentiate and maximise their personal achievement.

Issues of equality are applicable to us all, but there are a number of people about whom Equal Opportunity concerns are often more formally expressed. Such groups are referred to in the Equality Act as the "Protected Characteristics" and are identified as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The school's policies, for example, on curriculum, PSHE and anti-bullying, explain how it promotes a sense of respect and tolerance, and guards

against discrimination against, people who demonstrate a protected characteristic.

Equal Opportunities covers the whole process of education but particularly embraces issues of multiculturalism, anti-racism, disability, ethnicity, gender and trans-gender, sexuality, and socio economic disadvantage. Strategies to combat inequality include those dealing with issues of self-esteem and sense of self-worth, school organisation, curriculum content and delivery, discipline, provision for those considered to have special educational and or English as an additional language needs, underachievement, and building social relationships within the school community. Equal opportunity is about creating the structures and contexts for unlocking potential.

Equal Treatment

The Village Prep School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social background. We currently have a procedure for bursary applications and this can be obtained from the Bursar's office. The school has due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and promotes respect and tolerance for people who have a protected characteristic. We welcome children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our school community and the rights and freedoms of others. The School is committed to being an Equal Opportunities Education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community. The school recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law, in line with the 1976 Race Relations Act; all candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, language, religion or belief, national or social origin, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all of our pupils to attend all assemblies and outings, and to take full part in all Religious Education lessons.

Special Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department, with reasonable adjustments, can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that our site can make provision for them. The physical layout of the site and buildings may restrict the movement of individuals who have particular difficulties with mobility. Some of these restrictions may be insurmountable. The school has a three-year disability access plan in compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act.

Reasonable Adjustments

The school defines a reasonable adjustment as one which can reasonably be undertaken within its normal staffing, facilities and resources, given the context of the school. The school reserves the right not to offer a place where it is believed that any necessary adjustments exceed the criterion for reasonable adjustment. Where the school believes that a child's particular needs can be met by drawing on a limited range of additional expertise or resources, but nevertheless beyond the criterion for reasonable adjustment, the school may decide to offer a place on condition that the additional cost will be passed on to parents.

We advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the school before they register for a place, so that we can determine whether a place can be offered and make appropriate adjustments for them. Prospective parents are also asked to inform the school if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable a child to access the assessment process. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, EHCP (Education, Health, Care Plan) or

a medical report to support their request for a place and alert the school to any request for extra time or other special arrangements.

Pupils with Medical Requirements

If the school believes that it can meet a child's needs for medical provision, or the ongoing administration of medication, in accordance with the reasonable adjustments criterion, above, the school will endeavour to meet such needs. Where necessary, if specialist knowledge is required, the school will arrange additional training for relevant staff to support a pupil's medical needs (for example for anaphylaxis, diabetes and asthma). We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers any reasonable adjustments that can be made and the administration of medication, to enable a child to become and continue as a pupil at the school. For further information, please refer to the policy on first aid and the administration of medication.

Pupils with Dietary Requirements

Where reasonable adjustments can be made, the school welcomes pupils who have particular dietary requirements due, for example, to cultural or religious backgrounds or to food allergies or intolerances. Information on dietary needs is gathered as part of the admissions process and shared, as appropriate with catering and teaching staff. In more complex situations, a meeting may be organised between the school secretary and/or catering manager and the parents and/or health practitioner to discuss and plan for a child's dietary needs. Parents are asked to inform the school promptly if there is a change in a child's dietary needs.

The Assessment Process

The aim of the process is to identify potential. We are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The Village Prep School have strong traditions in sport, music, drama, art, debating and community activities. They also have many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

Waiting List for Entry throughout the Year

At times, spaces do become available in various year groups throughout the year. If parents are interested in applying for a place during the year, they should contact the School Secretary who will organise a mutually convenient time for a visit. We will contact the child's current school and request references.

Sibling Policy

Many siblings join the school and a family atmosphere is encouraged. However, admission is not automatic, and there may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

Scholarships

The Village Prep School offer fellowships which are awarded at the Head's discretion to allow the pupil to develop and grow particular talents.

Overseas Applicants

The Village Prep School welcomes overseas pupils, who can study at the school, provided that UK immigration requirements, such as are in force at the time, are met and they have a relative, legal guardian or host family living in the UK with whom they can reside. Where necessary, individual admission arrangements will be made for pupils applying for a place at the school from overseas.

Fluency in English

In order to cope with the brisk pace and social demands of the school, pupils should ideally be fluent English speakers. Normally pupils should have been educated in the English medium regularly before coming to the school. Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are supported in school, but it is suggested that tutoring is arranged outside school, in the first instance, to get pupils up to the required standard. Where this is not possible, for example, when a family has to move with little notice, the school provides additional support for EAL for those identified as requiring it for one session per week, with additional sessions available at additional cost, above the normal termly fees payable. This may also mean adapting the student's timetable for a period of time. All students are assessed for their ability in English, where English is an additional language, using the school's own assessment process. The outcomes are reported in line with the school's stages of English acquisition within the Infant and Junior departments, and in line with the Common European Framework for Reference of Languages (CEFR) in the Seniors, where applicable.

Religious Beliefs

We are not a religious school and welcome children from all faiths or none.

Offer and Acceptance:

If the school offers your child a place, a confirmation letter along with an Acceptance Form will be sent to you. To accept the offered place a completed Acceptance Form, signed by both parents, along with a copy of your child's birth certificate should be sent to the School Office. A deposit is also required to secure the place; details of the deposit are outlined within the offer letter. Please refer to the School's Terms and Conditions for information as to how the deposit will be held and in what circumstances it will be refunded. Further information is also provided in the Terms and Conditions about cancellation of a place that has been accepted.

School's Contractual Terms & Conditions

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's Contractual Terms and Conditions, by which all parents and pupils must abide. Copies are made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process; for registered pupils, copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to you on request.

If parents consider that the school's decision not to offer their child a place is contrary to its admissions policy, they can make an appeal to the Chatsworth School Director of Operations. Such an appeal would be managed in line with Stage 3 of the school's complaints procedure, except that it would not be necessary for at least one member of the appeal panel to be independent of the management and running of the school.

Admissions Register

In accordance with Paragraph 15 of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations, and in line with requirements related to children missing education, as noted in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school records on its information management system the required personal information about each registered pupil. The school must notify the Local Authority in the area where the school is situated of the addition or removal at non-standard times of a pupil’s name from the admissions register, if the pupil is of compulsory school age. This includes informing the Local Authority when the child has been taken out of school to be home educated, when the family has apparently moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend, when the child is in custody for more than four months, or has been permanently excluded.

The school has a statutory duty to treat both parents equally and to provide both parents with information about the child’s work and progress, even if one parent does not live in the family home, unless there is a legal reason not to do so. Therefore, on the pupil’s admission, the school needs to gather and record the name and address of each parent in cases where parents do not live in the same household.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term “senior manager” means a School Head and their designated deputies.

This policy applies to all employees in all Schools (save for Schools with their own procedure which shall prevail) and other work environments within The Village Prep School

This policy applies within all companies, which are wholly owned subsidiaries of Chatsworth Schools Ltd, a company registered in England, registered number 11552579.

The registered office of all companies is Crimea Office, The Great Tew Estate, Great Tew, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 4AH. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Director of Operations at the above address.

POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE

| Date | Key Amendments | Version Number | Signed off by |
|-------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 11/01/2018 | Policy Approved – Fit for use by schools. | v1.1 | RG |
| 01/09/2019 | Annual Endorsement | v2.0 | RNB |
| 24/11/2020 | Policy Review | v.3.0 | RNB |
| 16/06/2021 | Annual Policy Review | v4.0 | |
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