

HEMDEAN HOUSE SCHOOL

CAVERSHAM

Admissions Policy (15a)

Revised: March 2024

Review Date: March 2025

INTRODUCTION

Hemdean House School (HHS) is a non-selective independent day school in Caversham, Berkshire for pupils aged between 4 and 11. The Headteacher is responsible for final admissions and the operation of this policy.

This policy is inclusive of all HHS pupils including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The aim of this policy is to ensure the application process is as transparent as possible.

INTAKE

- The usual entry point is at Reception level. If appropriate a place may be offered prior to the UK statutory school age.
- In-year applications can be accepted at any point throughout the year and for all year-groups, if places are available. Hemdean House has ample experience with in-year applications.
- Occasionally, an applicant may have fallen behind in their education due to illness or time spent abroad, etc. In such a case, Hemdean House may offer a place in a year lower than the applicant's age would normally imply. Parents will be consulted before such an offer is made, but the decision as to the appropriate year for the applicant, taking into account all the relevant circumstances, is a matter for the Headteacher, whose decision is final.
- Although no formal assessments are carried out joining the school will require completion of two in class taster days to provide written evidence of the child's capabilities in Maths and English. A child's reading ability will also be obtained.
- All classes are mixed ability and our aim is to make the classes as balanced as possible on a boy/girl ratio.
- We have a single class per year group and class sizes do not exceed 16, except in exceptional circumstances.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

- Hemdean House has limited facilities for pupils with physical difficulties but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and 2014 in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, Hemdean House can cater adequately.
- Parents of an applicant who has any disability or additional educational need must provide the Admissions Team with full written details, including any reports from external agencies, at the point of registering interest for admission and any additional information at least one week before visiting or attending a Taster Day at Hemdean House.

- Hemdean House requires this information so that, in the case of an applicant with particular needs, those needs can be assessed and the school can make sure they can provide adequately for them throughout the admission process.
- Should the school become aware of information that was withheld on application, any offer of a place maybe subsequently withdrawn, notice will be given and the deposit retained.
- The pre-existing SEND need, of the class, the applicant will be joining, will be taken into consideration as part of the application process. We aim to have balanced classes and the needs of the whole class must be considered.
- Hemdean House will consult with parents or guardians about the adjustments, which can reasonably be made for the applicant both during the admission process and later as a pupil.
- Where a child's SEND is identified, or develops, after the child has started at the School, we will endeavour to continue to support the child as long as we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support they require, if we believe it is in the best interest of the child and of the School community for them to remain at Hemdean House.
- Where, in our judgement, any of these conditions no longer apply, we reserve the right to withdraw a place at the School. In such circumstances, we will use our reasonable endeavours to support parents in finding alternative arrangements.
- As an independent school, we are not obliged to accept an EHCP, even if we are the named school.
- If we are named on a child's EHCP, we will liaise with the relevant local authority to ensure that we can adequately meet the child's need. However, as an independent school, we are not obliged to accept such applications where Hemdean House is not deemed to be a suitable school to fulfil the child's needs.
- Hemdean House will look to train or find courses for the staff to attend in order to help with the inclusion of any child in the school. The training will either be internal or external.

BURSARIES

- New parents should apply before signing their Acceptance Agreement.
- Current parents who are experiencing genuine financial difficulties may apply to the Governors, through the Headteacher for a Means Tested Bursary at any point, by completing a Bursary Form and providing evidence in the form of the previous 3 months bank statements including any savings accounts. Please contact the Finance Officer for further details.
- Bursaries are means tested and parents will be required to provide detailed financial information. The Headteacher, after reviewing the documentation together with the Finance Officer, will recommend the level of the bursary required to the Governors. The Governors have the final say in levels of bursaries awarded.
- The maximum offer is currently 30% but all applications are considered on an individual basis and a higher offer may be awarded if circumstances require and it is in the best interest of the child to attend HHS.
- The award of a bursary is tenable for the time the pupil attends Hemdean House, unless there is a change in personal circumstances. The level of bursary and parental current financial circumstances are reviewed termly. The award of a bursary is entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher and board of Governors.
- All awards are made on a case by case basis and are confidential.
- If there is a breach in confidentiality, the bursary will be withdrawn.
- Further details regarding our Fee structure and Terms and Conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.hemdeanhouse.co.uk/admissions/fees/>

ADMISSIONS TIMELINE

- After initial contact and completion of the 'online contact form' parents of prospective pupils are invited for a personal tour of the school, led by the Headteacher.
- Parents of applicants must complete a Registration Form (see 'Admissions Procedure') and pay the appropriate Registration Fee, which is non-refundable.
- If the applicant has any additional educational needs or disability parents must notify Hemdean House on the Registration Form, by completing the SEND questionnaire and provide full written details, including a copy of all reports prepared by an Educational Psychologist where available. Should the school become aware of information that was withheld on application, any offer of a place maybe subsequently withdrawn and the deposit retained.
- If applying for a place in Reception, parents must also complete the 'school readiness' questionnaire.
- Hemdean House will seek a written reference or reports from the applicant's current school, unless parents give a valid reason why this cannot happen.
- The offer of a place will normally be sent out within one week of the Taster Day. Parents will be asked to accept the offer, complete and return the Acceptance Form and pay the deposit within two weeks. If no response to an offer has been received within the time specified in the offer, Hemdean House will assume that the offer has been declined and the place may be offered to another applicant.
- A pupil cannot start at Hemdean House without the Acceptance Form and deposit first having been received.
- Should it be deemed that we cannot offer the correct level of support for a child, communication will also be sent out to those parents whose application has been rejected, stating the reasons a place could not be offered. Where possible Hemdean House will provide recommendations on more suitable places of education. If the desired year group is full, parents will also be informed of their space on a wait list.

ACCEPTANCE:

The preconditions for admission are that:

- The applicant is of the appropriate age and sufficient maturity for the year group applying to.
- Hemdean House is able to provide adequately for any additional educational needs the applicant may have.
- Hemdean House, having made reasonable adjustment, has the capacity to cope with any disability the applicant may have.
- The present school reports satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of parents and the applicant (if applicable).
- Hemdean House Registration Fee and Deposit have been paid.
- Registration Form and Acceptance Agreement have both been fully completed, signed and returned.
- Completed SEND form if applicable.

The admissions policy will not discriminate on the basis of the 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010, such as; the applicant's skin colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, religious faith, socioeconomic group, sexual orientation or those who have undergone gender reassignment.

SANCTIONS, MISBEHAVIOUR AND EXCLUSION

See: 'Behaviour Management Policy' available on the website.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process; but copies of Hemdean House's complaints policy are available on the website and can be sent to you on request.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Acceptance Agreement
- Terms and Conditions and School Rules