



## Admissions Policy and Procedure

### General information

Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School accepts children with a wide range of abilities and the admission of any individual applicant is subject to the criteria set out below. The school believes that all children have individual needs and aims to meet those needs as best as possible, taking into consideration the child's age, developmental stage and other circumstances. The school aims so far as possible to create balanced, mixed-ability class groups. This policy, alongside others where relevant, is subject to current legislation, the school's policies for Equal Opportunities and in particular The Equality Act 2010.

Applications are welcomed on behalf of all children, although not all applicants can be admitted to the school. Decisions on admission of a pupil and assignment to a particular class take into account the needs of the individual pupil, the likely impact on other children in the class, the balance of the class group and the resources available to the school.

Although admission to the school at the beginning of a term is preferable, this is not a fixed policy. Children joining Elmfield School are allocated to classes according to their age. It is only in very exceptional circumstances that the school will place a pupil in a class that is 'inconsistent' with their age.

### School's resources

We will consider applications on behalf of children with physical, medical and special educational needs. The school will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate these needs. However, there are some children whose needs may not, in our view, be met by the educational approach we offer, and such children will not be admitted. No definitive statement can be made about which children with special educational needs can and cannot be accommodated in the school, as every situation is unique. However, we only cater for children who fall within an academic ability range which enables them to benefit from our rigorous and broad curriculum. All pupils have access to the services of our learning support department, on the basis of need. However, the resources that we can fund from for Learning Support within normal tuition fees are limited.

### Assessment of applicants

We do not operate a written entrance examination. Nevertheless, all applicants to the school are assessed for suitability by the following methods, in addition to the Equality Act 2010:

1. Consideration of the existing constellation of pupils in the target class and the likely impact of the new applicant were they to join the class. For example, we may not admit a child applying to join a class with particularly vulnerable pupils if there is evidence of disruptive behaviour from the applicant.

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Furthermore, we may not admit a child whose admission would mean the introduction of a second Learning Support Assistant into the class.

2. Review of reports from previous schools, educational psychologists or other relevant, reputable sources.
3. Assessments by our Learning Support Department.
4. Interviews and/or observation of the child by the prospective class teacher or class guardian, the learning support department or another relevant teacher.

Applicants are also assessed in line with the following criteria, which will increase the likelihood of admission:

1. Whether the child has siblings already attending Elmfield or going through the application process at Elmfield
2. Children of teachers appointed to work at Elmfield
3. Children applying from other Steiner Waldorf schools
4. Children from families with a clear commitment to Steiner Waldorf Education

Candidates are assessed against the above criteria using reports from previous schools (where applicable), interviews with pupils and parents, and an assessment of the existing class into which the new applicant would be placed. In all cases children are first accepted on a half term's trial. Initially a new child might need some extra tuition in certain areas, such as foreign languages.

Admission into School from Kindergarten will be reviewed by the Kindergarten teachers and often by the Child Development Consultant, with agreement from the College of Teachers; Education Lead and the Early Years Lead. Parents should not assume that there is a guaranteed entry into Class 1 from Kindergarten / Transition. Children will be assessed against a set of criteria as to their readiness for Class 1, which may result in a withdrawal of a place or an extended period in Kindergarten.

We reserve the right to decline an application if assessment criteria are not met.

### **Admission Procedure**

1. Parents will complete and submit an application form for the pupil in question, together with the pupil's most recent school report.
2. We may contact previous educational settings to request references for prospective pupils.
3. We normally require parents to have attended an open event or tour prior to joining the school.
4. For children applying to join the Early Years Department (Nursery, Kindergarten or Transition) parents will be offered a pre-joining interview whereby the parents and the child meet with two teachers. The child will often interact with one teacher whilst the other discusses the child's biography with the parents, gathering relevant pedagogical and social information.
5. For children applying to join Classes 1 to 11, children are required to attend three consecutive trial days or more if this is deemed appropriate. Our SENDCo Department may assess and/or observe your child

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during this trial if there is evidence of a need for support. Children who have experienced learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties in another setting may be referred to our SENDCo

6. Parents are invited to attend a meeting towards or at the end of the trial visit where the trial is discussed and the teachers will gather relevant pedagogical and social information from the parents. Children applying for a place in classes 1 – 7 are not required to attend this meeting unless there is a specific need to address. For children in classes 8 and upwards the child is required to attend this meeting, or part thereof.
7. A finance discussion is arranged by phone or in person to ensure parents are aware of the notice periods and the requirement to maintain timely fee payments. A discussion about financial assistance is also available upon request. A place may not be offered if there is evidence of an inability to pay fees or non-payment of fees/significant debts at another educational setting. A school place may be subsequently withdrawn if financial commitments to the school are not met.
8. The prospective pupil's application is discussed at the next departmental teachers' meeting and ratified at College and parents are informed whether a place will be offered to the pupil. If a place is offered, you will receive a written offer of a place; an enrolment form along with other relevant forms. The signed enrolment form is a legally binding contract, and the child will be admitted at an agreed date or as soon as possible. The offer of a place is always subject to a half term trial. In some instances alternative and conditional review dates may be stipulated.
9. The first half term is considered a trial period at the end of which a child's progress and integration will be reviewed by the class teacher. This may result either in the ending of the child's stay at Elmfield, an extension of the trial period, or full acceptance by the School.
10. Withdrawal of a child by the parents after full acceptance is subject to one term's notice to the school, or a term's fees in lieu of notice.

### **Complaints**

If you are not satisfied with the school's admissions process or the decision that we reach, you should put your complaint in writing to the Bursar within five days of the date of our admissions decision. The complaint will then be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints procedure, a copy of which is available on our website.

Policy last reviewed January 2017  
Lesley Taberer, Bursar

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