

Admissions Policy and Procedures (15a) **(Whole School including EYFS)**

Avon House is a co-educational Preparatory School, admitting children aged three to eleven years old.

Aims

Our philosophical foundation is based on the principle that;

“Avon House is a family, concerned for the happiness and general well-being of all. Celebrating and supporting every pupil begins with self-esteem, honesty, fairness, integrity, respect for oneself and respect for others. In our happy, secure environment the emphasis is placed on each child being recognised as a valued individual. We hope our pupils will develop their full potential in both academic and non-academic fields, with a strong moral understanding of truth, equality and humanity. We aim to give our pupils life-enhancing strategies to build on as they progress towards the adult world.”

The aims of this policy are to ensure that prospective parents are aware of the School's admissions processes and procedures when considering a place for their child. At Avon House, we want all prospective families to feel well supported throughout the admissions process.

Registration

The main point of contact for prospective parents will be the Admissions Lead who is contactable by telephone or email (admissions@ahsprep.co.uk).

Private tours of the School conducted by the Head Teacher or Admissions Lead are available for prospective parents where a school prospectus is handed out if required. A prospectus can also be requested via our School website. During the tour, parents will be shown around the School where any questions surrounding the School, admissions process or school policy and procedures can be discussed.

Open Mornings also take place once an academic term where prospective parents and pupils are invited into the School for group tours conducted by our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and a talk is given by the Head Teacher. All prospective parents are encouraged to visit the school both before registration and after entry confirmation.

Parents must, either prior to entering the admissions process or at the start of the process, disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or special educational needs. Admissions applications should be made to the Admissions Lead. Prompt registration is advisable as applications for entry are generally in excess of the places available. Parents are asked to note that the School does not accept pre-birth registrations.

Admission is ultimately at the discretion of the Head Teacher and is subject to the School's assessment procedures where applicable.

Entry Ages

The main points of entry are into Foundation 1 at age 3 (the term following a child's third birthday), Foundation 2 at age 4 (the September following a child's fourth birthday) and into Year 3 at age 7 (the September following a child's seventh birthday). Places do become available from time to time in other year groups and sometimes these become available mid-year. More details can be obtained from the Admissions Lead.

The academic year is from the 1st September to the 31st August for all year groups.

EYFS (Foundation 1 and Foundation 2)

Foundation 1 – Children who celebrate their 4th birthday by the 31st August

Foundation 2 – Children who celebrate their 5th birthday by the 31st August

Pre-Prep (Year 1 and Year 2)

Year 1 – Children who celebrate their 6th birthday by the 31st August

Year 2 – Children who celebrate their 7th birthday by the 31st August

Prep (Years 3-6)

Year 3 - Children who celebrate their 8th birthday by the 31st August

Year 4 - Children who celebrate their 9th birthday by the 31st August

Year 5 - Children who celebrate their 10th birthday by the 31st August

Year 6 - Children who celebrate their 11th birthday by the 31st August

Admissions Criteria

Entry to the School is based on:

- success in the relevant entrance assessments as appropriate;
- a positive confidential reference from the applicant's present school (if applicable);
- commitment to the School's ethos as described in the School's aims

The School reserves the right to restrict the offer of places to children whom the School feels can benefit from the broad and varied curriculum offered and make a positive contribution to the School community. All candidates must have the legal right to live and study in the UK.

Where required, priority is given to:

- Children of current members of staff
- Siblings of pupils currently attending the school at the point that the sibling starts attending the school
- Children of former pupils

After that, places are allocated on a first come, first served basis, with the date of registration being the deciding factor.

Siblings joining the school in Foundation 2 and above will need to reach the same minimum academic standards as any other pupils wishing to gain entry. Additionally, siblings may have to join a waiting list if they are not registered in sufficient time. Sibling places are also awarded on the premise that parents have demonstrated consistent support for the school during their older child's time at the school.

The school recognises that a balanced proportion of boys and girls in a year group is important for a successful co-educational environment. The proportion will vary from year to year, but will be as close as possible to 50:50 for all year groups.

Prior to Entry

- A Registration Form / Taster and Assessment Day Form is required (available from the Admissions Lead)
- A non-refundable Registration Fee / Taster and Assessment Day Fee of £100 is payable when parents return the Registration Form to the Admissions Lead
- All prospective parents must make an appointment to visit the School and meet the Head Teacher where possible.
- Parents are invited to school meetings which may be of interest to registered families prior to their child starting school
- Registered parents are also welcome to contact the School at any time during the admissions process

If a family decide to proceed with registration, the admissions process differs depending on the age of the child.

Foundation 1 Entry (Nursery) - children aged 3 to 4 years

The school admits approximately 24 pupils each academic year into the Foundation 1 class with a staff to pupil ratio of 1:8. There is great demand for these places and parents are encouraged to register their child at the earliest opportunity.

For entry at Foundation 1, Entry Acceptance Forms are sent out alongside the Registration Form if required and pupils have the opportunity to start the term following their 3rd birthday. Alongside the £100 Registration Fee, a £650 Entry Fee is also applicable. Upon receipt of the Registration Form plus Registration Fee and Entry Acceptance Form plus Entry Fee, places are confirmed by an Entry Confirmation Letter. The child's place is then secure for entry into Foundation 1.

There is no formal entry test for children entering the School's youngest year group, however parents/guardians are required to share with the School any pre-existing medical conditions or circumstances of note from their formative years ahead of the child starting school. Pupils are not pre-assessed, but places are offered on the basis that children are physically, socially and emotionally ready to start school. To that end, parents must be able to assure the School that their child can fulfil the basic minimum requirements before their child begins at the School. These are outlined below.

- Able to use the toilet and wash/dry their hands independently (children must be out of nappies)
- Able to communicate basic wants and needs through verbal communication
- Able to confidently move around independently without direct assistance of an adult
- Able to listen and respond to instructions
- Able to speak in short sentences by joining several words together
- Able to enjoy playing and interacting with other children
- Able to sit at a table whilst eating and drinking

Children in Foundation 1 are taught in a classroom setting that is a blend of a nursery-style setting and a more formalised learning environment. Children in Foundation 1 sometimes move around the school to visit other environments in order to be taught by specialist teachers, for example PE and Music.

Prior to starting school, the pupil will be invited to attend some Meet and Greet / Play and Stay sessions and, if appropriate, a member of the teaching team may do a home or nursery visit.

Avon House does not accept Early Years Funding however childcare vouchers and payment from Tax Free Childcare accounts are accepted whilst the child is in Foundation 1 only.

Foundation 2 Entry (Reception) - children aged 4 to 5 years

Pupils who enter in Foundation 1 are expected to remain in school until the end of Year 6, therefore limited places are available for entry into Foundation 2. From Foundation 2, classes are in two-form entry with approximately 18-20 children per class with a Teacher and Teaching Assistant.

Registered prospective Foundation 2 parents and pupils will be invited to attend a family interview with the Head Teacher and an informal assessment with a member of the Early Years Department. The informal assessment is age-appropriate and designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded curriculum and who will make a positive contribution towards the life of the school, including positive social interaction with their peers. If required, a member of the teaching team may also request the need to conduct a home or nursery visit.

Children coming into this year group will be expected to integrate successfully with the current cohort of that particular class, academically, socially and demonstrating excellent behaviour. Places are confirmed on the basis that children are physically, socially and emotionally ready to start school. Whilst reasonable adjustments may be made (see Special Educational Needs and Disabilities below), in general terms the School retains the right to defer or refuse entry to school where the informal assessment / nursery or home visit concludes that a child is not ready for school.

Prior to starting school, the pupil will be invited to attend some Meet and Greet / Play and Stay sessions.

Entry to Prep Department from Year 3 children aged 7+

Whilst our pupils automatically transition from our Pre-Prep Department (Year 2) to our Prep Department (Year 3), a small number of places do also become available for entry at 7+ each year.

Entry at this stage is by a selective process via the 7+ Entrance Exam that takes place in the Spring Term prior to September entry. Prospective pupils are required to complete a 7+ Entrance Exam - External Candidate Form and make a £100 Examination Fee payment. Details of the 7+ Entrance Exam with Scholarship Opportunities are then sent to applicants. This Fee is offset against the Registration Fee if the applicant is awarded a place.

To gain entry, a child must satisfy the assessment criteria showing the potential to be able to cope with the School's academic curriculum. In addition to reaching the required standard in these assessments a child must receive a satisfactory reference from their current school if applicable.

As part of the 7+ Entrance Exam, the School offers four academic scholarships for both internal and external children entering Year 3; information is available via the School's website and the Admissions Lead.

Children who are offered a place for September entry will be invited to attend an induction morning in the Summer Term.

We will only admit a child who we feel will thrive in our environment and does not display behaviour that would be detrimental to others.

Parents of pupils who join in Year 3 and above are asked to commit to an 11+ route to senior school

Entry to other year groups

Occasionally places may become available if children leave the School. Individual arrangements should be made with the Admissions Lead in relation to mid-year admissions.

Prospective pupils from KS1 upwards (Year 1) are invited to spend a Taster and Assessment Day with us. This gives us the opportunity to observe the pupils and a short assessment of strengths and weaknesses and levels of attainment is taken by our assessment staff. The Head Teacher, Admissions Lead or Inclusion Lead will, with parental consent, contact the child's current school in line with our Admissions Procedures.

In order for the Taster and Assessment Day to take place, a Taster and Assessment Day Consent Form must be completed which requests dietary, allergy and medical information as well as consent to contact the child's current school. A Taster and Assessment Day Fee (£100) is also required. This Fee is offset against the Registration Fee if the pupil is successful in gaining and accepting a place.

Prospective pupils attend Avon House for a full school day, joining the relevant class and taking part in all school lessons and activities planned for that day. They are buddied with a

current pupil from the class who will make sure they feel welcome and will help to orientate them around the school. At some point during the day, the prospective pupil will be assessed by either the Head Teacher, Deputy Head or Inclusion Lead. Parents are then invited to attend a meeting at the end of the Taster and Assessment Day where verbal feedback is given. An entry offer or entry decline is sent within a week of the Taster and Assessment Day taking place.

An additional visit to school or home may be required so staff can ensure that they can cater for the child's needs.

Entry Confirmation

If offered a place, an Entry Acceptance Form and Entry Fee payment of £650 are required to be completed and following receipt, places are then formally confirmed via an Entry Confirmation Letter.

All parents accepting a place are expected to adhere to the School's values and ethos as well as the School's Terms and Conditions (a copy of which is available via the School Office / Admissions Lead).

Acceptance of a Place Offer

A formal offer of a F2-Year 6 place will normally be sent to parents within a week of any informal / formal assessments taking place. If a place is offered, to confirm the acceptance of the place, parents are asked to complete an Entry Acceptance Form and return it with a Entry Fee of £650 to secure the child's place. £325 of this fee is refunded provided the child remains at the School until the end of Year 6.

We expect our pupils to stay at Avon House until the end of Year 6 when pupils transfer to secondary school. Where a family have other expectations, these should be discussed with the Head.

Non-Acceptance of a Place Offer

Parents who reject a place offer do so on the understanding that a place cannot be deferred for later entry. In doing so, parents can rejoin the waiting list for a later place, should one become available. However, in such circumstances, those pupils will still need to sit/re-sit for entrance assessments.

Waiting Lists

If registering a pupil in advance to a class that is already full, a Waiting List Form will be offered and parents will be contacted when a place becomes available. The school will remove names from the Waiting Lists if requested by the applicants or if applicants fail to respond to correspondence from the school within a given deadline. It is the responsibility of applicants to notify the school in writing of any amendments to contact details. The school cannot accept responsibility for changes of contact details for which the school has not been informed.

Scholarships

Four academic scholarships of up to 25% off fees may be awarded as a result of the 7+ Scholarship Programme. The scholarship process is open to both internal and external candidates. A 7+ Entrance Exam Form for external candidates / 7+ Scholarship Exam Form for internal candidates must be completed with the Entrance/Scholarship Exam taking place in the Spring Term, the year prior to entry to Year 3. A £100 Examination Fee is applicable and refundable if an internal applicant continues into Year 3. The £100 Examination Fee becomes the Registration Fee for any successful external applicants who join the School.

Musical talent is also recognised as part of the scholarship process. A Music Scholarship may be awarded to pupils from Year 3 based on ability and commitment to at least one instrument at Grade 2 level and above. Further details can be obtained from the Admissions Lead.

Equality

Avon House welcomes 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. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, orientation, property, birth or other status. Whilst assemblies cover a wide range of topics, all of our pupils are expected to attend our school assemblies that are fundamental to our Christian ethos.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Parents of a prospective child with a learning difference are asked to disclose the information at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, the school may take advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any request for confidentiality.

Although the School currently has limited facilities for a pupil with a physical disability due to the nature of the buildings and site, the School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 in order to accommodate the needs of children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs for which the School can cater, with reasonable adjustments. The School's Accessibility Policy is available on the School website.

If a child has any special educational needs or disability, the parents/guardians should provide the School with full written details at registration or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place. The School requires this information so that, in the case of a child with particular needs, the School can assess those needs and consult with parents/guardians about the reasonable adjustments that can be made to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the application process and if an offer of a place is made.

If special educational needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the School will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments and support that can be made to allow the child to continue at the School.

In all cases, there will be a discussion with parents and the School to establish that the School is right for the child and that the necessary provision is put in place. If required, the Inclusion Lead will also be included in assessment and discussions and will meet with prospective parents.

Languages

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of the school, pupils should normally be fluent English speakers. Whilst the school retains the right not to offer a place if it is felt that a child's level of English is not sufficient to access the curriculum, the School will make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of its curriculum, where possible. Further details of EAL are to be found in our EAL Policy.

Withdrawal

In accordance with the school's Terms and Conditions, parents are required to give one full term's notice in writing or to pay a term's fees in lieu of such notice before withdrawing a child from school.

Data Protection

Any data collected as part of the admissions procedure will be processed in line with the School's Terms and Conditions.

A copy of the School's latest Terms and Conditions can be obtained via the School Office or the Admissions Lead.

**In all matters regarding admissions, the Head's decision is final.
There is no appeals process.**

Reviewed September 2017 AC
Reviewed September 2018 EB
Reviewed April 2019 AC/RT/CM
Reviewed August 2020 EB
Reviewed November 2020 EB
Reviewed August 2021 EB
Reviewed August 2022 MO
Reviewed March 2023 VB
Reviewed May 2023 VB
Reviewed November 2023 VB