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Achieving Excellence Together in a Caring Community

Dorchester Primary School

Admission Arrangements 2024-25

1. General Arrangements

1.1 Entry to Nursery

Dorchester Primary School has nursery provision on the school site which offers places from 15 hours per week to a maximum of 30 hours per week. The nursery can offer up to 36 places for morning sessions and up to 26 places for afternoon sessions. Note that children who attend Dorchester nursery are not given priority for a place to the Reception class, and a separate application has to be made for children in nursery to be admitted into Reception.

Children are eligible for consideration for entry to Nursery Class from the term after their third birthday.

1.2 Entry to Reception

Dorchester Primary school will offer full time education to children from the September directly before their fifth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age or, for children born between 1 April and 31 August, not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Where the child is attending the school nursery, a separate application must be made for entry into Reception Classes. Places in the Reception Classes are allocated according to the

admissions criteria shown below; no automatic entry or priority is given to children attending the school's nursery provision.

1.3 Admission of Children Outside Their Chronological Age Group

Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside that age group. The school will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate, taking into account of the child's individual needs and abilities and considering in which year group these needs can best be met.

Teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. Before deciding to apply to submit a request for admission outside a child's chronological age range the parents should visit the school. The teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in the year of entry, how it is tailored to meet the needs of all pupils and how the needs of these pupils will continue to be met as they move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns the parent may have.

Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's 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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a different age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

All requests should include recent professional evidence of the child's circumstances which make education outside the age group necessary. Evidence must be of the individual child's need, rather than general factors which relate to a wider group of children born at a similar time.

Parents requesting delayed entry to Reception should submit an application for the child's actual age group before the relevant closing date. The request for later admission should accompany the application. This enables the application to be processed and a school place secured in the child's actual age group if the request is refused. Decisions on these cases will consider if it is in the child's best interests to join Reception or Year 1 at statutory school age. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their request prior to offer day.

2 Applications

2.1 Nursery

Applications for nursery places in Dorchester Primary School should be made through the school. Application forms can be downloaded from the Dorchester Primary School website (www.dorchesterprimary.com) or collected from the school office. We follow the London Borough of Sutton's admissions criteria.

2.2 Reception

Sutton participates in the Pan-London Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for entry to Primary School. Applications should be made through the child's home Local Authority. For London Borough of Sutton residents the link is:

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200439/school_admissions/1069/applying_for_a_primary_school_place

2.3 Admission after the start of the school year in Reception or into Years 1-6 (known as In-Year or Mid-Term Admissions)

Applications outside the normal point of entry to Reception should be made to the London Borough of Sutton. The Borough will then check for available spaces and contact the school. If your child is offered a place, the school will contact you directly.

3 Admission Number

Dorchester Primary School normally admits 90 children to Reception in each admission year. Due to the falling birth rate locally, the London Borough of Sutton are currently capping entries to the school at 60 children.

4 Admissions and Oversubscription Criteria

4.1 Nursery

When the school nursery is over-subscribed, applications for admission in 2024/2025, will be ranked against the following factors:

- i) Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 September 2024
- ii) Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 January 2025

- iii) Children who have reached the age of 3 years before 1 April 2025

Please note only category (i) places will be filled at the initial allocation stage. The school will fill any vacancies for category (ii) or (iii) applicants at a later date.

Within each of these bands, applications will be prioritised as below:

- a) Looked after children or previously looked after children (see notes at 4.4.1)
- b) Where there are professionally supported medical reasons or exceptional social reasons why a child should attend this particular nursery (see notes at 4.4.2).
- c) Where a sibling is already in the main school at the time of admission (see notes at 4.4.3)
- d) Straight line distance between the child's home address and the main school (see notes at 4.4.4)

Where oversubscription occurs in categories (a)-(c) above, the subsequent criterion will be applied as a tie-breaker. If oversubscription occurs in category (d), and home to school distance is equal, rank order will be drawn by lots.

4.2 Reception

Where the school is over-subscribed for any year group, applications for entry in 2024/2025 will be ranked against the following factors:

- i) Looked after children or previously looked after children (see notes at 4.4.1)
- ii) Where there are professionally supported medical reasons or exceptional social reasons why a child should attend a particular school (see notes at 4.4.2).
- iii) Where a sibling is already in the main school at the time of admission (see notes at 4.4.3)
- iv) Straight line distance between the child's home address and the main school (see notes at 4.4.4)

Please note children with an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school will be admitted before all other applicants. The admission number in section 3 will be adjusted to take this into account before the remaining places are offered to other applicants.

Where oversubscription occurs in categories (i)-(iii) above, the subsequent criterion will be applied as a tie-breaker. If oversubscription occurs in category (iv), and home to school distance is equal, rank order will be drawn by lots. Where this applies to twins or other multiple births, the school will consider if it can accommodate the additional child(ren) on a case by case basis.

4.4 Notes

4.4.1 Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children

A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously looked after child is a child who was adopted, or subject to a residence order, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after.

4.4.2 Professionally Supported Medical Reasons or Exceptional Social Reasons

Applicants wishing to be considered under this criterion must supply professional evidence supporting their case at the time of application. Providing evidence does not guarantee priority under this criterion; the Admissions Committee will consider if the evidence provided demonstrates that the child must attend this school and cannot reasonably attend an alternative school.

Applicants will not be individually advised if their application has been prioritised under this criterion.

4.4.3 Siblings

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living as part of the same family unit at the same address, from Monday to Friday.

Siblings in Year 6 at the time of an application to start Reception in September 2023 will not qualify as a sibling.

4.4.4 Straight Line Distance

Distances will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The point within the school to be used in any distance calculation will be the main entrance to the school building. All distances will be measured by the computerised Geographical Information System maintained by Sutton Admissions team.

The child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the applicant's normal place of residence. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will normally be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child, however all available evidence will be considered.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places to Reception will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address up to the dates stated in the Pan-London Co-ordinated Admission Scheme may be considered if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as if a family has just moved to the area, or has returned from abroad. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, and for mid-term admissions will be the child's current address. Any offer is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Parents have a responsibility to notify the school and Local Authority of any change of address.

Please note: Address verification and checks are conducted by the Home Local Authority according to their address policy. We reserve the right to conduct additional checks.

4 Waiting lists

Where there are more applicants than places available, waiting lists will operate for each year group according to the oversubscription criteria shown above and without regard to the date the application was received or when a child's name was added to the waiting list.

Waiting lists for entry to Reception in September 2024 will be maintained strictly in accordance with the admissions criteria for the school until the last day of the Autumn term. Parents wishing to remain on the waiting list after this date must write to the school by 31 December 2024 stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school.

Applications for Reception outside the usual September 2024 admissions round, and for other year groups, will be considered through the mid-term admission process. For mid-term

applications, children with an Education, Health & Care Plan, those to be admitted through the borough's Fair Access Protocol, looked after children and previously looked after children (see notes at 4.4.1) will take priority over children on the waiting list. Waiting lists are then held according to the remaining admissions criteria for the school.

Mid-term waiting lists will be reviewed at the end of each academic year; Parents wishing their child to remain on the waiting list after this time must write to the school by the end of July, stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school.

Children applying for nursery who are not offered a place will be automatically added to the school's waiting list. Nursery waiting lists will be reviewed before being carried forward to the 2025/26 academic year, to confirm which autumn and spring born children wish to be considered for a place in the next academic year.

5 Appeals

Applicants who are not offered a place will be given a right of appeal for all schools of a higher preference than the school offered. Outcome letters will give details of how to lodge an appeal.

There is no right of appeal against a decision not to offer a nursery place.

Policy agreed February 2023

Reviewed annually