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A full version of this policy is available to staff from their subject team leader and in the staff room. For others, a copy can be obtained by writing to the Headteacher.

Contents

Purpose, Values and Aims of Highfields School.....	2
1. Summary	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Implementation	3
4.1 Definition of terms.....	3
4.2 Admission into Year 7.....	3
4.2.1 The Admissions Process	3
4.2.2 The Admissions Process	5
4.2.3 Waiting lists	5
4.2.4 Transport Issues.....	5
4.2.5 Free Meal Entitlement.....	5
4.3 Admission into Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 other than at normal transfer time.....	5
4.3.1 Free Meal Entitlement.....	5
4.3.2 Managed Moves	6
4.3.3 Hard to Place students.....	6
4.3.4 Children with Additional (Special Educational) Needs	7
4.3.5 Early Transfer	7
4.4 Appeals.....	7
4.5 Objection to Admission Arrangements	8
5. Review Process	8
6. Responsibilities	8
6.1 The Governors have responsibility for:.....	8
6.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:	8
6.3 All staff are responsible for:.....	9
7. Monitoring, evaluation and Policy review.....	9
8. Associated Documents	9
8.1 Associated Policies.....	9
8.2 Appendices.....	9
8.3 Forms	9
8.4 Letters.....	9





Purpose, Values and Aims of Highfields School

Our Core Purpose

To be an inclusive, happy community that values every individual and inspires them to achieve their full potential.

Our Values

Inclusion, fairness and equality
Respect and tolerance
Celebration of achievement
Personal reflection, honesty and mutual trust
Care for our environment

Aims – to achieve our core purpose and values we aim to:

- Respect all students and staff as individuals
- Celebrate diversity and promote equality
- Provide appropriate levels of challenge
- Develop understanding and enjoyment of learning
- Support and encourage individuals to make a valuable contribution to society
- Be a reflective school seeking continuous improvement
- Play an active part in our community
- Nurture physical and emotional well being
- Promote a happy, safe and stable environment





1. Summary

- This policy explains Highfields School's Admission policy as a Community Secondary School under Derbyshire County Council's authority.
- The responsibilities of staff and governors are stated.
- The criteria for admission into the new Year 7 and other years are given.
- The appeals process for admission is outlined.

2. Purpose

To interpret legislation, directives and advice for children seeking admission to Highfields School.

3. Scope

This document applies to all students seeking admission to Highfields School at the start of and during the academic year.

4. Implementation

4.1 Definition of terms

Normal Area

The "normal area" of a school is a defined geographical area around the school which the school serves. Living in the "normal area means the child has full-time residence in a property in that area, which is the child's only or main residence. To find out if a house is in Highfields' normal area you can enter the postcode into an interactive tool on the following website: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/admissions. You can also find this out by emailing admissions@derbyshire.gov.uk or ringing 01629 537479.

Admission Number

The admission number for each year group refers to the school's capacity to accommodate students in that year group and represents the minimum number of eligible students the school must admit if sufficient applications for places are received. For Highfields School, the admission number of each year group is **246**.

General Prejudice

If a student's admission to the school, over and above the standard number, "prejudices the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources" then the school can express a case of "general prejudice" against that and any other student into the school at appeal, should it go that far.

4.2 Admission into Year 7

4.2.1 The Admissions Process

Highfields School is a County 11-18 School, so the allocation of places at the School is managed by the local authority, Derbyshire County Council. Relevant legislation has made it compulsory to have a coordinated scheme for admissions to secondary schools with effect from 2005/06 and admission arrangements are consulted upon and agreed annually by the Derbyshire Admissions Forum, with deadline dates for the publication of school prospectuses, for applications to Derbyshire schools and for preferences to be





forwarded to other local authorities set in time for a national offer date in March.

Every year, early in term 1, the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher in charge of Lower School and the permanent Head of Year 7 visit each primary school in the Matlock area to speak to parents/carers of students in Year 6. Highfields School puts on an Open Afternoon and Evening at which parents/carers of students seeking admission to the School in Year 7 can visit the School and talk to staff and students about the School, prior to completing their application forms for admissions. The headteacher is happy to see parents at any time about admissions issues if they make contact with him.

Parents can apply for admission to the school using the application form supplied with the “How to apply...” booklet **or** online through www.derbyshire.gov.uk/admissions **or** by phone on 08 456 058 058. They will be invited to state their preference for any three schools and to give their reasons. Details on how to apply can be found through details in **Appendix 8.2.1**.

Where application for admissions exceed the number of places available, the following admissions criteria apply:

- i. Individual students who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which can best be met in the school will be given priority where so determined by the county council in consultation with the governing body.
- ii. Children in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, a local authority (under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989); the so-called “children in care”
- iii. Children living in the normal area given in the booklet who will have a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission.
- iii Other students living in the priority area.
- iv. Children living outside the priority area who will have a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission.
- v. Other children living outside the priority area.

Within these criteria first priority is given in order of distance between the child’s home and school (shortest distance = highest priority). The LA has a Geographic Information System to measure the nearest available route. It is measured by a standard walking distance (**not** the straight line distance) calculated to within 2 metres. This measurement is taken from the postal address file, normally the house front door. For Highfields, the grid reference is taken from the nearest gate or entrance to the school’s lower site - Starkholmes. This applies equally to those living inside and outside the County’s boundary.

Application must be received by the LA before 3.30pm **on the last day of Term 1 (October) of the year prior to admission.**

The School has no involvement in the process by which the new Year 7 Intake are selected for admission. This is the province of the LA alone. However, the Head teacher will answer any questions from, and provide a prospectus and



other details about the School for, any parent who contacts him. A visit to the school can also be arranged on request.

The offer of places will be made by the LA to parents of all children concerned on the same day. This day is the same nationally, **and for admissions the date is the nearest working day to 1 March of the year prior to admission.** Places are offered on a full-time, permanent basis.

A place cannot be guaranteed for any child whose parents/carers apply after the closing date. This includes a child who moves into Highfields' normal area after that date. In situations where late applications are received and Highfields' admission number has been reached, but subsequently a place becomes available – if choices need to be made between normal area applications, those children living nearest Highfields School (measured by the nearest available route) will be given preference.

If a child is refused admission to the School, the parents have formal rights of appeal (see **Section 4.4**).

4.2.2 The Admissions Process

For admissions procedures to be fair it is important that all the information parents/carers provide is accurate. If any information is found to be misleading or fraudulent the LA reserves the right to withdraw any offer for a school place at Highfields.

4.2.3 Waiting lists

Waiting lists are maintained by the LA for oversubscribed schools and are set up on the national offer day in March and maintained until 30th September of that year. Children's names will automatically be placed on this list where it has not been possible to offer a place and they had given Highfields School a higher priority preference than the school at which they have been offered a place. A vacancy arises only when the number of offers falls below the published admissions number of 246. Priority on the waiting list is determined according to the published admission criteria (see Section **4.2.1** above). The date of application does **not** affect waiting list order.

4.2.4 Transport Issues

Transport to and from school can be assisted by the LA under certain circumstances. Full details are available in **Appendix 8.2.1**.

4.2.5 Free Meal Entitlement

Full details are available in **Appendix 8.2.1**.

4.3 Admission into Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 other than at normal transfer time

4.3.1 Free Meal Entitlement

Parents seeking admission of their children to the School Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 other than at the normal transfer time are asked to contact the headteacher directly, who will be happy to show them around the School by prior arrangement. The application for a place must be made to the Admissions and Appeals Team on 01629 537479 or email admissions@derbyshire.gov.uk.





A place for the child cannot be guaranteed even if domiciled within the school's normal area. If the school is oversubscribed it has the right to refuse to admit any extra students on the grounds that "to admit would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources" (1980 Education Act). In this event, parents have a right of appeal to the LEA (see **Section 6.4** below).

In considering applications for admissions outside the normal admission round, Derbyshire schools will exercise any discretion available to them to give particular consideration to the needs of 'children in care' who have moved into their normal area as a result of changes in care arrangements.

The School has an agreement with the LA to accept into any Year Group students who are "hard to place" by virtue of permanent exclusion or behavioural/social difficulties in excess of the Standard Number, on the recommendation of the LA. Such students will be asked to sign a behaviour contract as a condition of acceptance.

Every child admitted will go through an induction process managed by the appropriate Head of Year.

Information about waiting lists and withdrawal of offers is as above.

4.3.2 Managed Moves

Highfields School is part of the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Learning Community (HPDDLCL) and there is a countywide protocol (2007 Managed Move Protocol, DCC) used by the eleven secondary schools in that learning community such that the movement of a student from one school to another in the learning community can be effected if the donating and receiving schools, **and the parents of the student** agree it is in the long-term educational interests of the student for that move to take place. In effect, it is a strategy to avoid the permanent exclusion of the student. A "quid pro quo" arrangement exists. The learning community monitors such moves to ensure fairness and effectiveness in the process. For further details, please contact the headteacher.

4.3.3 Hard to Place students

A local authority, fair-access protocol is currently in place allowing the in-year placement of students who are permanently excluded from their present school and are "hard to place" by virtue of their behaviour record. This protocol relies on the existence of collaborative clusters of schools within Derbyshire LA, where a school might agree to admit a "hard to place" student where other routes of possible admission have been unsuccessful.

This process is managed by the LA. District 11-19 Managers attend and, in some cases, chair meetings and key support services would also be involved. Each cluster has access to a budget to support individual students and fund initiatives to improve the outcomes for vulnerable students. Support centres are part of the cluster provision and some students may be admitted on a virtual roll, where a trial period is regarded as being necessary.

Further details may be obtained from the LA or the headteacher





4.3.4 Children with Additional (Special Educational) Needs

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, on which these notes are based, does not apply to children who have Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) formally known as Statements of Special Educational Needs. A different process applies to such children and their parents should contact the Special Needs Section of Derbyshire County Council on 01629 580000, extension 6547 or 6531 or email sen.admin.@derbyshire.gov.uk.

It is Derbyshire's policy to meet children's needs, wherever possible, in mainstream schools. The term 'special educational needs', now called SEND, is used when children have a learning difficulty or disability which makes it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.

A child with additional needs may need extra help or different help from other students of the same age. Only a few children with additional needs require a detailed assessment by the Local Authority. This is called a **statutory assessment of special educational needs**.

The EHCP formally known as a statement of special educational needs describes a child's needs, how they should be met and what personal budgets will be used for. It also gives parents the opportunity to express a preference for which maintained school their child should attend.

4.3.5 Early Transfer

Derbyshire County Council believes it is better for children to stay within their peer group instead of being accelerated through the education system, which may lead to difficulties later.

In a very small number of cases a child may be admitted in the year before they would normally transfer. Such a decision will be based on information from the child's present school indicating:

- Exceptional ability and progress on National Curriculum and other measures of school attainment.
- Exceptional social, language, physical and emotional maturity for their age, so that they will be able to cope with an early transfer.

Where an early transfer is being considered, schools can request advice, which may include individual assessment of the child by the Educational Psychology Service.

Parents should consider carefully the full impact of early transfer for their child and consult the head teacher of the child's present school by the beginning of Year 5.

Ultimately, the decision rests with the head teacher who will reach a decision based on advice sought and what is considered to be in the best interests of the child.

4.4 Appeals

When parents are unable to obtain a place for their child at the school they want, they can appeal against the decision to an appeal panel independent of DCC and the school. Details of the appeals procedure for all Derbyshire





maintained secondary schools can be obtained by contacting Call Derbyshire on 08 456 058 058.

Highfields School's basis for challenging any appeal is the concept of "general prejudice", defined above.

Parents can get more information and make their appeal online at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/admissions

The decision reached by the independent panel will be binding on the LA and the parents.

A further application in respect of the same school will not be allowed in the same academic year unless significant and material changes in the circumstances arise.

4.5 Objection to Admission Arrangements

Parents/carers and other bodies wishing to object should write to the Schools' Adjudicator if they consider that a school's arrangements do not comply with the law or the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice. The Code is available on www.dcsf.gov.uk/sacode or by order from:

TSO PO Box 29
Norwich
NR3 1GN

Tel: 0870 600 5522

Parents/carers and other bodies wishing to object should write to:

The Secretary
Office of the School's Adjudicator
Mowden Hall
Staindrop Road
Darlington
DL3 9BG

5. Review Process

Each policy is reviewed by the lead person, Senior Leadership Group and the relevant Governors' Sub-Committee for approval before being presented to Full Governors for ratification.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The Governors have responsibility for:

- Ensuring that this policy is in place, monitored continually and reviewed annually by GSC Student and Community Links Committee.
- Ensuring that any complaints arising from the operation of this policy are dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints policy.
- Encouraging, supporting and acclaiming good practice.

6.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy on a daily basis.





- Ensuring that staff, students and parents are aware of this policy, eliciting their support for it and giving them the opportunity to comment on its effectiveness.
- Setting up a system to monitor the operation of the policy and report as directed to GSC Student and Community Links Committee.
- Providing training for those with responsibilities within this policy in order that they might discharge these responsibilities more effectively.
- Encouraging, supporting and acclaiming good practice.

6.3 All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are aware of this policy and of their responsibilities within it and discharge those responsibilities as well as they are able.
- Undergo training, at the direction of the head teacher, in order to discharge their responsibilities within this policy more effectively.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and Policy review

We will collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy and make adjustments as appropriate. This policy will be reviewed annually by GSC (Student and Community Links).

8. Associated Documents

8.1 Associated Policies

Additional Needs, Special Educational Needs, Behaviour.

8.2 Appendices

8.2.1 How to apply for a place at Secondary School

LA guide for parents of children transferring from primary to secondary school in September each year. This information is contained in a booklet obtainable from the Admissions Team, St Helena Centre, Sheffield Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7LU - Telephone 01629 537479.

8.2.2 Home School Agreement

8.2.3 Highfields School Prospectus

Copies of this are available from either of the school offices or the school website (<http://www.highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk/>)

8.2.4 Derbyshire County Council School Admission Appeal Information

Detailed information on the admission appeal is available on the DCC website (https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/school_places/appeals/)

8.2.5 Admission Appeals – Highfields School – Case for general prejudice

8.3 Forms

8.3.1 Admission to Secondary School – Parental Preference Form

This form is available only from the admissions Team at the address given in 8.2.1 or online through Derbyshire County Council website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/school_places/secondary_admissions/

8.4 Letters

8.4.1 Welcome letter to new students