

Admission Procedure - Information for Families Approaching the School

(revised December 2022)

Information for families approaching the school

Admission procedure for Kindergarten

Admission stage 1

- A) Complete and return the following documents (copies available from the office or website):
- **Parent Contract** (pages 1-8). If your child is already at another school (or nursery, play group, etc.) We will also need a report or a letter from their teacher and any supporting documents relevant to your child's educational needs (EHCP, Educational Psychologist report etc.).
 - **Financial Agreement Form** (this confirms that you have understood and agreed to pay school fees. It must be completed before an admissions meeting can take place).
 - **Income and Expenditure Form** (if you need to apply for a reduced fee place). The request must be agreed with the Business Manager in writing **before** the Admissions process can commence. Please refer to the school 'Finance and Fees Policy' for more information about reduced fee places.
 - **Administration Fee** (per family) Applications should be accompanied by your £150.00 administration fee. You should pay this by BACS transfer to South Devon Steiner School. Please ensure you put your child's name as a bank reference.
- B) Arrange to attend a School Tour with the Admissions Manager. This is essential for families applying for a place in any class. Ideally, you will have attended a tour before your trial period / interview although exceptions can be made for international relocations. Booking is necessary.

Admission stage 2

- A) Once your Parent Contract, relevant financial forms and supporting documents have been received, they will be dated and held confidentially. An admissions meeting for you and your child will be arranged, subject to the availability of places, our ability to meet your child's educational needs and according to the date you wish your child to be enrolled. You are welcome to contact the Admissions Team to track the progress of your application.
- B) After the admissions meeting, the school will contact you and write to you to say whether or not a place can be offered. For information on replying to an offer of a place, please see below: What to do when you are offered a place

Checklist for Kindergarten interview. Have you...

- Completed the Financial Agreement (or cleared a reduced fee offer)?
- Returned the Parent Contract (pages 1-8)?
- Forwarded a report or teacher's letter from your child's current school (where applicable)?
- Included supporting documents relevant to your child's educational needs (where applicable)?
- Attended a school tour with the Admissions Manager?
- Paid your Administration Fee?

Admission procedure for Classes 1 - 12

Admission stage 1

- A) Complete and return the following documents (copies available from the office or website):
- **Parent Contract** (pages 1-8). If your child is already at another school/educational setting, we will also need a report or a letter from their teacher and any supporting documents relevant to your child's educational needs (EHCP, Educational Psychologist report etc.).
 - **Financial Agreement Form** (this confirms that you have understood and agreed to pay school fees. It must be completed before an admissions meeting can take place).
 - **Income and Expenditure Form** (if you need to apply for a reduced fee place). The request must be agreed with the Business Manager in writing **before** the Admissions process can commence. Please refer to the school 'Finance and Fees Policy' for more information about reduced fee places.
 - **Administration Fee** (per family) Applications should be accompanied by your £150.00 administration fee. You should pay this by BACS transfer to South Devon Steiner School. Please ensure you put your child's name as a bank reference.
- B) Arrange to attend a School Tour with the Admissions Manager. This is essential for families applying for a place in any class. Ideally, you will have attended a tour before your trial period / interview although exceptions can be made for international relocations. Booking is necessary.

Admission stage 2

Following submission of your Parent Contract and supporting documents, the relevant teacher / teachers will consider your application. A trial period may then be offered, during which your child attends the appropriate class for five days. All applicant pupils must attend a trial period before a formal offer of place can be made, with the exception of applicants to (a yet to be formed) Class 1.

During the trial period, there will be an opportunity to meet with the relevant class teacher/guardian to discuss your child's admission to the school. After this meeting, and at the end of the trial period, the school will contact you to confirm whether or not a place can be offered.

For applicants to an 'as yet unformed' Class 1, an admissions meeting will be held during the summer term of the preceding academic year. New children joining a newly formed class one from the first day of the Autumn term, will be subject to a term's trial period, as per the Terms and Conditions contained within the Parent Contract.

Checklist for Classes 1-12 trial period and admissions meeting. Have you...

- Completed the Financial Agreement (or cleared a reduced fee offer)?
- Returned the Parent Contract (pages 1-8)?
- Forwarded a report or teacher's letter from your child's current school (where applicable)?
- Included supporting documents relevant to your child's educational needs (where applicable)?
- Attended a school tour with the Admissions Manager?
- Paid your Administration Fee?

What to do when you are offered a place for either Kindergarten or Classes 1-12

If you are offered a place you must act fairly quickly to secure it.

If you wish to accept the offer, please pay your deposit within two weeks to the school bank account, or where a child is enrolled directly following their trial period, upon receipt of your offer letter. The deposit is £800 per child. If no deposit is received, the offer of a place may be withdrawn.

The offer of a place will be held for six weeks from the date of offer, provided the deposit has been paid. (This period may be extended by agreement to the next termly or half-termly break.)

If you are unable to take up the place within this period you can either:

- a) withdraw the application, or
- b) start making the agreed financial contribution as if your child were in the school to hold the place.

This rule is designed to allow families relocating to our area the opportunity to secure a place when their date of moving is uncertain. The main thing is to stay in touch with the admissions office throughout.

WHAT ABOUT FULL CLASSES?

The school is flexible about class sizes, but tries to maintain an average in Classes 1 to 8 of about twenty four children. It is usual for one or two vacancies to arise in each class during the year. The classrooms vary in size, so as a class progresses through the school the physical constraint on class size also varies. The Kindergarten takes a maximum of seventeen children per class, with varying numbers across the year-group according to age.

Sometimes a class is full to capacity. In this case you may still be considered for an interview (or classroom visit for 1-11), but would have to wait for a vacancy before being offered a place.

Sometimes a child will be accepted into a technically full class (24) if the class teacher feels that they will fit in well with the balance and dynamic of the class. It is important to remember that usually the class and teacher have been together since the age of six and the group has formed a distinctive character. The teacher will need to be sure that any additions to the class will enhance this, and that needs can be met in the context of the class.

For these reasons the school tries to avoid making definitive statements about full classes. Experience shows that families committed to the education offered by the school will normally find a place in due course. The Admissions Office can give information on availability and waiting-lists. Please note, like most schools, we do offer a priority to full fee paying families, siblings of children already enrolled in the school, the children of staff and children moving from other Steiner Waldorf settings. Please read the school's Admissions Policy for full details, which is published on the website.

WHAT IS THE PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?

The School is able to accept some children with specific learning difficulties. The School has an extensive SEND policy which applicant parents should read fully before submitting an application to the School.

Children with special educational needs will be assessed with regard to (i) their own needs, (ii) the resources available within the School to meet those needs and (iii) the make-up and balance of needs already in the class they are approaching. This assessment will take place before a place in the class can be offered.

Children with a statement of special educational needs / EHCP (Education & Health Care Plan) can occasionally be accepted, depending on what is required to support the statement.

Children with SEND will go through the admissions process, stages 1 and 2 as outlined above. For further details please read the school's Admissions Policy, available on the website.

WHAT HOURS WILL MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL?

Children can start in Kindergarten when aged three, depending on readiness as ascertained by the teachers. A child is often considered 'ready' when they can separate successfully from parents and use the toilet independently.

Children stay in Kindergarten up to age six. Kindergarten is offered five mornings per week although younger

children often attend between 3-5 mornings initially. This can be agreed between the teacher and the parents, and will take into account the child's ability to take part in the weekly 'Expedition Day'.

It is expected that all children who will be 6 years old by 31st August of the preceding academic year, will go to Class 1 each September. Exceptions can only be made where i) there is a significant need (i.e. SEND) and ii) the child is born between 1st April and 31st August. In this case, parents can request to defer the transition from Kindergarten to Class 1, to the next academic year, thereby delaying entry to formal education by 12 months. The deadline for parental requests to defer the Kindergarten to Class 1 transition is the last day of the first half of the Spring term (beginning of February half term holiday).

School hours are as detailed in the [drop off and collection schedule](#).

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

All school parents must pay School Fees. This is a contribution to the school as a whole and is not intended to reflect the "cost" or hours of your child's education. That is why the amount requested does not rise greatly as children progress through the school, even though the education in the older classes is considerably more expensive to provide. The table below gives the scale for 2022-23.

	Kindergarten	Classes 1 to 7	Classes 8 to 12
Eldest	£2092.00	£2796.00	£3419.00
Siblings	£1,832.00	£2382.00	£2895.00

Deposits

A deposit is payable before a child starts in the school. This will be returned when the child leaves provided all amounts outstanding have been paid. The deposit is £800 per child. This is payable in addition to the fees.

Reduced Fee Places

As long as the school is able to be financially strong and stable, it will adhere to its ideal to be socially inclusive and welcome applications from families having a wide range of financial circumstances. As such, the school offers families with a low income the opportunity to apply for a Reduced Fee Place.

If you wish to apply for a Reduced Fee Place, an Income and Expenditure Form must first be completed and submitted to the Admissions Manager together with copies of three months statements for all bank accounts held by the applicant family. Requests to pay reduced contributions can only be considered when an income and expenditure form has been completed. Please bear in mind that these arrangements are only intended for families whose circumstances leave no possibility of paying the requested contribution. Families are asked to explore all financial support possibilities before approaching the school for assistance.

Additional costs

These include outings and class trips, special items to be bought (e.g. recorders, calculators and certain text books) and exams. There will be advanced warning and/or discussion of these.

The school also requests a non-financial contribution in the form of practical help from families. The following is our current statement about this:

"Our school was founded by parents and we rely upon the active involvement of parents to keep it going. There are several ways in which parents contribute in a voluntary way. We call this the "non-financial contribution" which, together with the money people pay, allows the school to continue. As a way of sustaining and nourishing the school community, it has many advantages:

- *It provides a route for parents to get involved in the community, and to meet other parents as they work together*
- *It gives parents a sense of “ownership” of the school, while saving money on outside contractors*
- *Children see their parents as part of the school*
- *Tasks are done with love and care, which contributes to the school's special atmosphere*
- *Although there are meetings, much of the contribution is physical, healthy work.*

Ways in which parents contribute include:

- *Cleaning their child’s classroom – deep cleaning takes place on a half termly basis and is managed by class coordinators.*
- *Volunteering to take on a class role, such as the Class Coordinator/Treasurer.*
- *Joining the Parent Community Group (newly forming PTFA).*
- *Accompanying school trips (day and residential)*
- *Community Workdays – Helping with general cleaning, maintenance, gardening and special projects.*
- *Major fundraising and cultural events, such as the Advent and Summer fairs, for which you would be asked to help on a stall and make produce*
- *Supporting your child by providing a home life in keeping with the education, as far as reasonably possible.*

Although a voluntary contribution is – by definition – voluntary, in the interest of fairness the school has tried to set a guideline of expectation and it is important that parents approaching the school are aware of this. There are three elements to this, as follows:

*One workday (or two halves) per term – about 5 hours in total
 Helping with the big events (fundraising) – about 5 hours a term
 Classroom cleaning – usually once per term.*

In practice, and with the exception of the classroom cleaning rota, which is dependent upon the participation of everybody, parents are not restricted by the guidelines but are encouraged to choose the way of contributing that suits them best. Every family is different in terms of what they can offer, and the school values every contribution.

Families joining the school are asked to make conscious decisions about how they wish to contribute, and communicate this to the school. A Parent Volunteer pack is available for download from the website for further information about volunteering at our school.

Parent volunteers working with the students will be expected to undertake a DBS check, safeguarding training and supply reference.

At South Devon Steiner School (SDSS) we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We are committed to providing a caring, positive and safe learning environment for the pupils of our school in order to promote their social, physical, emotional and moral development. Child protection forms part of our school’s safeguarding responsibilities, and we follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Please visit our website for School Policies including Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. <https://www.southdevonsteinerschool.org/school-policies.html>