



| Admissions Policy | |
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| Independent School Standards: paragraphs 15 and 34 | |
| Policy content: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Direct referrals | |
| Latest ratification by Trustees: | September 2023 |
| Next review by Trustees: | October 2024 |
| Latest Update: | September 2023 |
| Links: | SEND Policy |

Admissions Policy 2023/ 2024

Introduction

The New School is a new model for education that operates as a charity. We are a non-selective, non-fee-paying independent school in Croydon for young people aged 4 – 16 years. At capacity the school will have 120 young people from age 4-16 years; this will be achieved by 2026. The intake in September 2023 is 10 young people in Reception. We do have an in-year only waiting list for Year 1 -8 should a place become available. Please complete the application process as below.

The admissions round for school entry in September 2024 opens on 1st November 2023, and closes on 31st January 2024. All entries made within this window will be considered at the same time, so an early application is not an advantage to a school place. Allocation of places is set out below. Applications made after 31st January 2024 will be added to our second waiting list.

Purpose

This document sets out the admissions process and criteria for The New School. All applications comply with the processes set out below and The New School will do their utmost to guarantee an inclusive, objective, fair and equal opportunity process.

Aims

- To ensure our democratic model of education is open to as many young people as possible, regardless of their background
- To ensure the admissions process is easily understood by applicants
- To ensure procedures are fair, objective, and transparent based on the democratic principles that are part of the culture of The New School
- To promote diversity through an inclusive admissions process
- To avoid discrimination and/or unlawful or unfair exclusion
- To ensure diversity and equal access to education as outlined by our school principles.
- To enable an even representation of young people from the four key local authorities with which we work - Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham.

1. The direct admissions process for school starters

Step 1: Families fill in the application form on the school website (which goes live on 1st November 2023 for school entry in September 2024). The cut-off date for applications is 31st of January 2024.

Step 2:

- a. Receive an offer for a school place on 31st March 2024, or;
- b. Receive a waiting list offer If the school is oversubscribed on 31st March 2024.

Step 3:

- Families accept the school place offer by returning the acceptance form by the stated time limit of 30th of April 2024.

The New School follows a typical school year that runs from September to July, split into three terms (Autumn term, Spring term, Summer term). Usually, the school admits children who turn four before the 31st August to start school in September of the Autumn term, however there may be an option for a deferred start until the term when the child reaches their 5th birthday. Such a request must be put in writing by emailing the school admissions team admissions@thenewschool.org.uk

1.1 Open days

The New School usually arranges two open days in November and December or January, dates of which will be published on the school's website. Please get in touch via email or phone if you are interested to know more about the school before (or after) applying.

1.2 Applications

The application form to register children can be found on The New School's website. Parents/carers are asked to fill in all required fields before they submit it to the school. Incomplete application forms will not be accepted. Upon request the school's Office Administrator will help to fill in the form over the phone.

Once The New School has received an application form, we will email a confirmation of receipt within one school week. Should parents/carers not receive such confirmation, they must contact the school office on office@thenewschool.org.uk immediately, as The New School doesn't take any responsibility for delays and/or missed dates due to lost electronic mail.

For school entry in September 2024: The cut-off date for applications is January 31st, 2024. All applications must reach The New School on or before this date.

If families miss the cut-off date, you may still apply and will be added to a second waiting list, and will be considered as part of the general admissions process if there is a vacancy once there are no longer any remaining children in the relevant year group on the first waiting list. More information can be found in the section 'Oversubscription criteria' below.

2. Offer letters

All successful applicants will receive an email on the 31st of March 2024 confirming an offer for your child's school place or a waiting list place. This email contains the Parent/Carer's handbook and a school place acceptance form.

2.1 Accept the offer for a school place

To accept the offer, parents/carers must read the parent/carer handbook and complete and return the signed acceptance form along with supporting documentation if relevant,

on or before the date stipulated in our offer email (30th April 2024), after which the offer will be withdrawn. Once the offer has been accepted parents/carers will receive a confirmation email for their child's school place. Should they not receive a confirmation email, it is important to contact the school office by emailing office@thenewschool.org.uk as The New School doesn't take any responsibility for lost electronic mail.

2.2 Deferrals

Should parents/carers seek to defer their child's school start until after their fifth birthday, please email admissions@thenewschool.org.uk.

3.0 The admissions process for older children or in-year starters

The admissions process for older children or in-year starters is the same as outlined above. Once we have received your application form with the desired year group, we will consider the request depending on vacancies available. Please note, we are currently heavily oversubscribed and have a long waiting list.

All young people who are applying in-year will be asked for an informal meeting with the parents/carers and the child. This is a chance for the Co-headteachers to get to know your family a little better, to discuss any questions you may have about the school in greater detail, and for everyone to decide whether this school is the right environment for the child.

4.0 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

It is The New School's responsibility to ensure every child's needs are met, and the school commits to do so wherever possible, with the resources that we have available to us. Please note that as an independent school that is also charity funded, we do not have the same access to local authority resources.

The admissions process for children with SEND is the same as outlined above but includes an informal meeting with the SENDCo to establish a thorough needs assessment. Once The New School has received the application form with the desired year group, we will consider the request depending on vacancies available.

4.1 Additional adult support

If there is a need for an additional adult to support the child and they don't already have an EHCP in place to fund this additional adult, The New School is unfortunately unable to allocate a school place. More information can be found in the school's SEND Policy.

4.2 Informal meeting

The New School will only arrange a meeting provided there is a vacancy in the appropriate year group, or for the parents/carers and young person next on the waiting list according to oversubscription criteria if a place opens.

Once the application form has been received and where the parents/carers have self-disclosed all identified SEND for their child, The New School will arrange a meeting

between parents/carers, the child and the SENDCo will be arranged.

Once a meeting is arranged, The New School will email to ask for any additional information to bring on the day. This might include copies of any special educational needs documentation that previous nurseries or childcare providers have about the child.

Parents/carers need to know that this meeting is not an exam and their child does not need to 'perform'. Instead, it is a chance for the SENDCo to get to know the young person a little better, to discuss any questions the family may have about the school in greater detail, and for everyone to decide whether this school is the right environment for this child.

5. Trial period

To ensure that The New School is the right place for you and your child, and for the school to be sure that we can meet the needs of each young person who gets a place at the school, we have a two-week trial period for each new starter. This takes place in two consecutive weeks at the start of term.

5.1 A trial period commences on the first day of school, and only after a place has been formally offered by the school. The school offers a school place via email by confirming the receipt of:

- The completed acceptance form (all fields are mandatory) including any barriers to learning, or history of behaviour or other social and emotional issues
- Copies of recent school reports (or samples of work/tutor reports for homeschooled children) – we may ask to contact previous schools or tutors.
- Any assessments, diagnoses, or education plans relating to additional learning needs
- Settling in questionnaire

5.2 The school may ask for an additional meeting prior to offering a trial period if there is concern that the school may not be able to meet the child's academic, social and emotional needs (and do so without unreasonable detriment to the school's capacity to meet the needs of other young people). The school may determine that a trial period should not go ahead.

5.3 During the trial period young people will join the class, and participate fully in the teaching, learning and life at The New School. The class teacher will be the main point of contact for the parents.

5.4 At the end of the two week trial there will be a phone call with the family and the pastoral lead, to reflect on the experience to decide if The New School is the right setting for your child and to establish whether their needs can be met by the school. If

a young person is requiring more support to settle we will discuss this with the family and it may be that the school and family decide that this is not the right school for the child.

The child will be asked:

- Do they want to join the school? This is a big step towards taking responsibility for their own education. Everyone who comes to The New School is here because they have made their own choice to come here.
- Do they have an interest in learning?
- Do they want to come to a democratic school and have the capacity to participate in and share the responsibility for decision-making in the school?

The School will reflect on:

- Does the school feel that the school can meet the child's academic, social and emotional needs (and do so without unreasonable detriment to the school's capacity to meet the needs of other young people)?
- Do they have an interest in learning and do we believe they have, or will have, the capacity to take advantage of the learning environment at The New School?
- Do they want to come to a democratic school and have the capacity to participate in and share the responsibility for decision-making in the school?
- Has their behaviour during the trial weeks raised any concerns about their ability to be in school without detracting from others' learning and / or general enjoyment of the school?

This trial process leads to one of the following outcomes:

- The child will be offered a place permanently and where necessary or appropriate, with some conditions
- The child will be given more trial time if deemed necessary
- The child will not be offered a permanent school place and the reasons will be shared in a written statement
- The child or the family decide not to accept the place

If the school deems that we are unable to meet the needs of a young person, the decision of the school is final.

6.0 Waiting list

The New School holds an up-to-date waiting list for each year group and places will be offered according to the oversubscription criteria as defined below.

New applicants should apply through the school's admissions process and if the child's year group is oversubscribed, they will be added to the waiting list for their child's year group.

Once a vacancy becomes available, The New School will email the parents/carers of the child next on the waiting list as determined by our oversubscription criteria (**please note**

the waiting list is not ranked until a place becomes available so we will not be able to tell you where your child is on this list). We will try to call once if a telephone number has been provided. The relevant forms and prospective school start date, which is usually the first day of the next term, will be included in the email. Parents/carers are asked to respond within one school week and to return the signed forms, the parent contract, and any supporting documentation to secure the place.

If there is no response within three days, the school will allocate the place to the next child on the waiting list and the non-responding applicant will be removed from the waiting list.

The New School can at any time confirm the place on the waiting list but unfortunately, they will be unable to give any indication as to how long young people could be on our waiting list or when a place may become available.

Parents/carers with children on a waiting list for a year group that does not have school places available, will be emailed to ask if they would like to remain on the waiting list for the following academic year. **Please note all applicants for a school place in a year group that has openings (Reception only) for September 2024, or for an in-year place that hasn't already completed an application form must complete a new application form to be added to the waiting list.**

6.1 Oversubscription Criteria

School places will be allocated using the following oversubscription criteria.

- a. Children of employed staff or long-term team members** (over 1 calendar year engaged 1 day per week or more)
- b. Sibling/Current family association:** This means a brother or sister of a child who has qualified for a place at The New School already. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers and sisters, adopted siblings, step/half brothers and sisters, foster brothers and sisters.
- c. Looked after children or previously looked after children:** A looked after child is a child who is either in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services function. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- d. 50% random allocation and 50% proximity to the school:** If there are still places available 50% of the remaining places will be given through random allocation and 50% to those living nearest to the school. In the case of an uneven number of places remaining, the higher number will be decided based on random allocation.

The address must be valid at the date of application and is irrespective of the local authority in which you live. Proximity is measured as a straight line from the school gate to the front door of a child's home. Where a child resides in a block of flats, the school measures the distance from The New School's address point data to the address point data of the building block. The school can hold back an offer until valid proof of address is provided (i.e. council tax bill, energy bill, child benefit documentation). Should The New School discover that the parent has given a false address, the place will be withdrawn.

6.2 Random allocation explanation

Random allocation is used for the allocation of school places during the main application process. On the waiting list, the remaining applicants will stay equally ranked and if a place becomes available it will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

6.3. Positive action

In the admissions application process, taking positive action allows The New School to achieve diversity when faced with two or more applicants of equal merit. In such a case, the school may select the applicant from a group that faces disadvantage or is under-represented in the school community over an applicant who isn't from that group. The New School resorts to positive action selection after a thorough assessment of all applications and when they are satisfied that their decision is proportionate. This is a voluntary action The New School undertakes to encourage diversity and guarantee the inclusion of young people who share one or more of the eight "protected characteristics" (such as race, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation).

7. Arrangements for appeals

Parents have the right of appeal should they not be satisfied with the decision made by the school admissions process. The appeals hearing panel will be independent of The New School's admissions team.

7.1 Written appeal

One of the Co-Headteachers will respond within one school week of receiving a written appeal to admissions@thenewschool.org.uk to arrange a formal meeting with the admissions team responsible for the decision made, and/or any other member of staff if relevant. The parent/carer can request a neutral person to be present if required to arbitrate. A written record of the discussion will be made. The parents/carer, a Co-headteacher and those involved in the school admissions process if appropriate will all receive copies via electronic mail. The New School intends to complete this process within four school weeks.

7.1 Hearing

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the formal response, the school will establish a hearing with the Appeals Panel. The panel consists of three people who are not directly involved with school applications. The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Chair of Trustees and will include: a trustee, a member of staff independent of the

admissions process, and an independent person (not connected to the management or running of the school). The parent/carer is welcome to attend the hearing and may be accompanied by another person who will not be legally qualified.

The New School will make every reasonable effort to coordinate the timing of the hearing to allow the parent/carer to attend, however, if the parent/carer is unable to attend the hearing after three attempts at finding a suitable time, it will still go ahead.

7.2 Recommendations to solve the matters of the appeal

The panel will investigate the appeal and make their findings and recommendations available in writing electronic mail to the parent/carer, the Co-headteacher, the Chair of Trustees, and the admissions team. The New School intends to complete this process within four school weeks from the date of the formal meeting.

7.3 Further recourse

If any complaint could not be resolved through this process, please refer to our complaints policy.

Availability

A copy of this policy is available to download on our school website or can be obtained as a copy at our school office during opening hours.

Privacy Statement

Who we are: *The New School is the Data Controller.*

Why do we need your data: *Your and your child's details are required by the school to facilitate your child's admission to the school.*

What is the lawful basis for processing this data: *This information is necessary for the school's legitimate interests.*

Who will this data be shared with: *We will only share your data with third parties if we are legally obliged to do so.*

How long will we keep your data: *we will hold your data for as long as we have a lawful basis to process your data.*