



2.7 Admission Policy

Including Early Years Foundation Stage

Durlston School is a non-selective independent school for children ages 2 to 16 years. The School seeks to create a safe, caring and happy environment in which all pupils are valued and can thrive personally, socially and academically. This admissions policy sets out the admission arrangements for entry to the School, including at Early Years Foundation Stage.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We hold regular Open Weeks throughout the year, details of which can be found on our website, but we are very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at any time during the school term. You will have the opportunity to meet the Headmaster along with members of staff and the senior leadership team.

If you would like to arrange a meeting then please contact Mrs Lisa Lilley, on 01425 610010 or admissions@durlstonschool.co.uk who will be more than happy to discuss your requirements.

CRITERIA

We are pleased to be academically non-selective in our intake. Admission is open to children who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution to the life of the School. Admission decisions will be made using fair and objective criteria by the Headmaster, based on a child being able to cope with mainstream education (including GCSE).

Admission is not automatic and there may be occasions when we judge that a child may thrive better in a different academic environment.

Parents applying for a place will be asked for details of any learning difficulties, disability or special educational need, including behavioural, emotional and/or social difficulties their child may experience. If any additional need is highlighted then reports and supporting documentation will be requested and reviewed by the Headmaster, with support from the SENDCo.

APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION

The school welcomes applications for any year group, subject to availability. The main entry points into the school are Reception, Year 3, Year 7 and Year 9. The application process for these entry points are covered below.

The Registrar will maintain the waiting list and so early registration is recommended, with further details found below.

For entry into school for Kindergarten

If a Kindergarten place is available and you wish to register your interest then you will need to complete the Registration form and submit payment of a £100 (VAT exempt) Registration Fee. In the term prior to your child's proposed start date, he or she will be invited with a parent or carer to attend a Kindergarten Admissions Taster Morning. This is an informal session in which your child will have the opportunity to explore the Kindergarten environment and play alongside others. During this time, the Kindergarten staff team will undertake an informal observation in how the pupil copes with the setting and also how they interact with their peer group.

The Head of Pre-Prep will then collate feedback from staff and inform the parents if the school is able to offer a place. In order for the parent to accept the offer of a place, parents must complete the Acceptance form (thereby accepting the Terms and Conditions of the Parent Contract) and pay the acceptance deposit of £500.

The first month of Kindergarten sessions will be used as further opportunity for informal assessment to ascertain that we can meet your child's needs as he or she settles in. We reserve the right to decline the place if we determine that the school is not suitable for the pupil during this time. In this instance, your £500 deposit will be refunded.

For entry into school for Year R to Year 6

Following a tour of the school, if you wish to register for a place then you will need to complete the Registration form and submit payment of the Registration Fee, being £120 (inclusive of VAT). The prospective pupil will then be invited to spend a day (or morning in Kindergarten if you are seeking a Reception place) at school working alongside their peer group. During the day the Form Teacher will undertake an informal observation in how the pupil copes with the education and also how they interact with their peer group.

The Headmaster will then collate feedback from staff and inform the parents if the school is able to offer a place. In order for the parent to accept the offer of a place, parents must complete the Acceptance form (thereby accepting the Terms and Conditions of the Parent Contract) and pay the acceptance deposit of £360 (inclusive of VAT).

For entry into school for Year 7 and above

Following receipt of the Registration Form and Fee (£120 inclusive of VAT), your child will then be invited to attend an assessment day, which will normally be held in the Spring term in the year prior to entry. The aim of the process is to identify potential as we are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, stretching beyond the confines of the academic curriculum.

The assessment will include both maths and English tasks. During the day the pupil will also join in with various lessons and/or activities in order to gain a feel for life at Durlston.

In order to join the assessment day, the Registration form must be completed and the Fee must be paid prior to attendance.

The Headteacher of the pupils' current school will be contacted to provide a written reference as to the prospective pupil's academic ability, attitude and behaviour. We will also ask for their views on the pupil's involvement in the school community, talents and interests and any other special circumstances such as SEN or disability.

The reference may also include the results of tests taken, such as NFER, MIDYS or CATs as applicable to their current school.

The Headmaster will then collate feedback from staff and inform the parents if we will be able to offer a place. Offers must be accepted within 14 days of the offer being made in order to secure your place. To accept the offer of a place, the Acceptance form (thereby accepting the Terms and Conditions of the Parent Contract) must be completed and the acceptance deposit of £360 (inclusive of VAT) paid.

For parents wishing to join an assessment day in the Spring term when their child is in Year 6 but seeking a place for Year 9, places are subject to availability and in the case an offer is made then the school will conduct a follow up meeting with the pupil during the Spring term prior to their Year 9 entry. This will allow the school to ensure that they have developed as expected over the two years and that they are still suitable for entry into the school. The school reserves the right to decline an offer of a place, with the full deposit being refundable to the parents.

Further information if the school is oversubscribed

The school is committed to remaining a non-selective school and will not make decisions on entry solely based on academic ability but on children who have a passion to learn.

In the case where registrations exceed the number of places we have available, the school may give preference to families who have:

- a sibling already attending the school
- a parent who is an Old Durlstonian
- submitted a registration form earlier than other parents

The Headmaster has the final discretion on any offers that are made to parents. This will apply to any entry point throughout the school.

EQUAL TREATMENT

The School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or social background. We welcome children of many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds.

DISABILITY AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The School currently has limited facilities for the disabled. Children with mobility difficulties may find the environment problematic as there are some stairs, classrooms with limited access and several small corridors that would make movement difficult for a fully wheelchair bound child. However, the School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

The School needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational need, which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions process and take full advantage of the education provided at the School. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational needs, should provide the School with full details prior to the admissions procedure, at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place. We suggest that parents provide any medical reports and/or a report from an educational psychologist. The School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with particular needs, the School can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to ensure that the School can cater adequately for the pupil, should an offer of a place be made. The School will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. Similarly, if special educational needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the School will consult parents about reasonable adjustments in order to endeavour to allow the child to continue at the School.

DISCLOSURES

Parents must, as soon as possible, disclose any known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties. If, in the

opinion of the School, a child is not flourishing in the school environment because of a previously known but not disclosed learning or behavioural difficulty, an alternative educational experience may be suggested.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The School offers scholarships for academic, sporting, drama, art and musical excellence. The exams are held at the end of January each year. For those joining the school above Year 7, pupils may be invited to sit scholarship examinations following their Assessment day.

BURSARIES

Means-tested bursaries may be offered in certain circumstances. Further information is available on the website or can be requested from the [Headmaster](#) or [Bursar](#). Please see separate Bursary Policy.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you do not have any complaints about our admissions process, but copies of the School's complaints procedure are available on our website.

Reviewed by the Board of Governors: March 2025

To be reviewed by the Board of Governors: March 2027