

ADMISSIONS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (PUPILS)

Policy reviewed by: James Thompson – COO

Review date: July 2026

Version: v9.0

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Next review date: July 2027

Reviewer's Signature:



Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.
This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE

Date	Key Amendments	Version Number	Reviewed by
11/01/2018	Policy Approved – Fit for use by schools.	v1.1	RG
01/09/2019	Annual Endorsement	v2.0	RNB
24/11/2020	Policy Review	v.3.0	RNB
16/06/2021	Annual Policy Review	v4.0	RNB
05/06/2022	Annual Policy Review	v5.0	RNB
25/06/2023	Annual Policy Review	v6.0	CS
07/06/2024	Annual Policy Review	v7.0	AE
27/11/2024	Policy Review	v7.1	AE
07/01/2025	Policy review from ISBA Guidance	v7.2	JCT
23/6/25	Annual Policy Review	V8.0	JCT

General

This policy explains the school's admissions procedures and its commitment to equal treatment of, and opportunities for, its pupils. A separate policy exists addressing equal opportunities for employees.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we at Chatsworth Schools believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit our School. We hold open mornings throughout the year, which give prospective parents an opportunity to tour the school and meet the Head. Details are published on our website, and all registered parents are informed. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents at other times for a personal meeting with the Head and/or Head of the relevant school and a tour of the school. This policy applies to all pupils seeking admission to the school, including those in the EYFS.

The Entry Procedure

The school is a non-academically selective school. Selection is not based upon academic ability but on a pupil's potential to prosper at the school, socially and academically. Where possible, there will be an informal interview. We do require references from the candidate's previous school or nursery and consider the observations and feedback from staff following any trial day(s). Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who can benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

Applicants for admission should register by the end of December of the year preceding the desired year of admission. The school welcomes in-year applications, but places in any one-year group can only be allocated if there is availability at the time of application.

Equal Treatment, Inclusion and Information Sharing

Chatsworth Schools seeks to admit pupils who will benefit from and contribute to the life of the School. We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and are mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 throughout the admissions process. All applicants will be considered fairly and on their individual merits.

The School is committed to equal treatment for all applicants and pupils regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, or social background. We welcome applications from children with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and abilities and seek to provide a diverse and inclusive school community.

To enable the School to make informed admissions decisions and to assess whether appropriate support and reasonable adjustments can be provided, parents are required to disclose all relevant information about their child at the earliest opportunity. This includes information relating to:

- special educational needs;
- disabilities;
- medical or health conditions;
- allergies;
- safeguarding concerns;
- behavioural, emotional or social needs;
- Educational Psychologist reports;
- EHC Needs Assessments or EHC Plans (whether draft or final); and
- any other matter that may materially affect the pupil's education, welfare, attendance or participation in school life.

Parents must ensure that all information provided to the School is accurate, complete, timely and not misleading. Parents are also expected to inform the School promptly of any changes in circumstances or any new information arising after an application has been submitted and before, or during, the pupil's enrolment at the School.

The School may request additional information, reports or professional assessments where necessary in order to understand a child's needs and determine whether appropriate provision can reasonably be made. Decisions regarding admission will be made on an individual basis, taking account of the child's needs, the School's ability to provide appropriate support, the interests of the child and the welfare of the wider school community.

A failure to disclose relevant information, or the provision of inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information, may in certain circumstances result in an offer being withdrawn or, where a pupil has already joined the School, a review of the pupil's place in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions. Such decisions will only be taken after careful consideration of all relevant circumstances and legal obligations.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities(SEND)

Chatsworth Schools does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can reasonably offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential pupils. We require parents of children with special educational needs, disabilities or allergies (suspected and diagnosed) to discuss their child's needs with the School at the outset of the admissions process so that we can consider and make – to the extent reasonable – appropriate provision for them.

Parents are required to provide with the Registration Form full details of all relevant information about their child, including any reports (including any educational psychologist reports, medical reports or assessments or other relevant expert third party reports), materials or information about their child's needs (educational, health or otherwise), and this may include any final or draft EHC needs assessments (or applications for a needs assessment) or final or draft EHC Plans (or applications for an EHC Plan) or equivalents. This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about any adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to meaningfully access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. This information should be provided prior to the admissions assessment process.

Where parents of a prospective pupil feel their child requires adjustments (in respect of the admissions process and/or with regards to education at School and participation in School life in the event they are offered and take up a place at the School), parents should raise these with the School at the outset and the School may – depending on the circumstances - require some further information from parents or request further assessments in respect of the needs identified and will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments proposed and whether they can reasonably be made for the child if they were to become a pupil at the School.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's special educational needs and/or disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments (in the case of disability), we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to meaningfully access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or

staff may be put at risk, or where the School cannot reasonably accommodate the adjustments required or reasonably provide the nature or level of the support required.

Sometimes, the situation of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the pupil starting at the School. The School requires parents to be pro-active in updating the School as to any changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a pupil's place at the School. However, the School may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a pupil's circumstances change materially. It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming and transparent in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.

In the event your child has an EHC needs assessment or EHCP (or equivalent) (whether at the application stage, draft or final form) it is important that these (and the applicable supporting documentation, e.g. educational psychologist reports or other expert assessments) are shared promptly with the School and that the School is kept up to date with respect to any relevant decisions of the Local Authority or changes in provision.

Pupils with Medical Requirements

The School welcomes applications from pupils with medical conditions and will consider each application individually. Where appropriate, the School will discuss a prospective pupil's medical needs with parents and relevant healthcare professionals to determine whether suitable provision can reasonably be made. Further information can be found in the School's First Aid and Administration of Medication Policy.

Pupils with Dietary Requirements

Where reasonable adjustments can be made, the school welcomes pupils who have particular dietary requirements due, for example, to cultural or religious backgrounds or to food allergies or intolerances. Information on dietary needs is gathered as part of the admissions process and shared, as appropriate with catering and teaching staff. In more complex situations, a meeting may be organised between the registrar and/or catering manager and the parents and/or health practitioner to discuss and plan for a child's dietary needs. Parents are asked to inform the school promptly if there is a change in a child's dietary needs.

The Assessment Process

The aim of the process is to identify potential. We are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. Chatsworth Schools have strong traditions in sport, music, drama, art, debating and community activities. They also have many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

Waiting List for Entry throughout the Year

At times, spaces do become available in various year groups throughout the year. If parents are interested in applying for a place during the year, they should contact the Admissions Registrar who will organise a mutually convenient time for a visit. We will contact the child's current school or nursery and request references.

Sibling Policy

Many siblings join the school and a family atmosphere is encouraged. However, admission is not automatic, and there may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

Scholarships

While Chatsworth Schools does not currently offer scholarships, we provide means-tested bursaries to support eligible families. Our bursary forms are available from the Registrar's Office and it outlines the application process and criteria. Bursaries are reviewed annually, and parents must provide updated financial information each year to continue receiving support.

Overseas Applicants

Chatsworth Schools welcomes overseas pupils, who can study at the school, provided that UK immigration requirements, such as are in force at the time, are met and they have a relative, legal guardian or host family living in the UK with whom they can reside. Where necessary, individual admission arrangements will be made for pupils applying for a place at the school from overseas.

Fluency in English

To access the curriculum effectively and participate fully in school life, pupils are expected to possess an appropriate level of English for their age and stage of education. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are supported in school, but additional tutoring may be recommended. Parents are encouraged to arrange this tutoring outside school to ensure their child's success.

Where this is not possible, for example, when a family has to move with little notice, the school provides additional support for EAL for those identified as requiring it for one session per week, with additional sessions available at additional cost, above the normal termly fees payable. This may also mean adapting the student's timetable for a period of time. All students are assessed for their ability in English, where English is an additional language, using the school's own assessment process. The outcomes are reported in line with the school's stages of English acquisition within the Infant and Junior departments, and in line with the Common European Framework for Reference of Languages (CEFR) in the Seniors, where applicable.

Religious Beliefs

We are not a religious school and welcome children from all faiths or none.

Offer and Acceptance

If the school offers your child a place, a confirmation letter along with an Acceptance Form will be sent to you. To accept the offered place a completed Acceptance Form, signed by both parents, along with a copy of your child's birth certificate should be sent to the School Office. A deposit is also required to secure the place; details of the deposit are outlined within the offer letter. Please refer to the School's Terms and Conditions for information as to how the deposit will be held and in what circumstances it will be refunded. Further information is also provided in the Terms and Conditions about cancellation of a place that has been accepted.

Withdrawal of Offers

Chatsworth Schools is committed to maintaining compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and related regulations, including the Independent School Standards (ISS) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA). We ensure that all decisions related to admissions are fair, transparent, and compliant with relevant legal frameworks.

Decisions to withdraw an offer or decline an application will be made only after:

1. A consultation with parents or guardians.
2. A review of the circumstances by the school's leadership team.
3. Legal advice, where necessary, to minimize potential legal and reputational risks.

All such decisions will be communicated in writing, outlining the reasons clearly and sensitively.

School's Contractual Terms & Conditions

Chatsworth Schools ensures alignment between its admissions policy and parental contracts.

Parents must agree to the school's terms, which include:

1. Providing accurate and complete information about the pupil.
2. Notifying the school of any changes in circumstances that could affect the pupil's education or wellbeing.
3. Understanding that breaches of these terms may result in the withdrawal of a place, in line with the school's commitments under the Equality Act 2010.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process; for registered pupils, copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to you on request.

The school's complaints procedure applies only to enrolled pupils and their parents. Appeals related to admissions decisions follow a separate process and will be considered in line with Stage 3 of the complaints procedure. However, the appeal panel will not require an independent member, as the appeal does not pertain to current pupils.

Admissions Register

In accordance with Paragraph 15 of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations, and in line with requirements related to children missing education, as noted in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school records on its information management system the required personal information about each registered pupil. The school must notify the Local Authority in the area where the school is situated of the addition or removal at non-standard times of a pupil's name from the admissions register, if the pupil is of compulsory school age. This includes informing the Local Authority when the child has been taken out of school to be home educated, when the family has apparently moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend, when the child is in custody for more than four months, or has been permanently excluded.

The school has a statutory duty to treat both parents equally and to provide both parents with information about the child's work and progress, even if one parent does not live in the family home, unless there is a legal reason not to do so. Therefore, on the pupil's admission, the school needs to gather and record the name and address of each parent in cases where parents do not live in the same household.

Record Retention

Chatsworth Schools retains admissions-related data in compliance with data protection legislation. Data for unsuccessful applications will be retained for six months unless there is a specific reason to retain it longer (e.g., to facilitate reapplication). For successful applicants, data is retained in accordance with the school's Privacy Notice and Retention Policy.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term “senior manager” means the School Head and their designated deputies.

This policy applies to all applicants seeking admission all within Chatsworth Schools.

This policy applies within all companies, which are wholly owned subsidiaries of Chatsworth Schools Ltd, a company registered in England, registered number 11552579.

The registered office of all companies is Crimea Office, The Great Tew Estate, Great Tew, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 4AH. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Director of Information at the above address.