

Admissions Policy for The Dorcan Academy for the Academic Year Commencing September 2025-26

Requisite: legal requirement			Responsible Committee: Full Governing Body		
Vers.	Approval Date	Committee	Head	Chair	Next Review Date
I	15/11/2017	Admissions			01/11/2018
M	08/11/2021	Full Governing Body			01/11/2022
N	07/11/2022	Full Trustee Board			01/11/2023
O	06/11/2023	Full Trustee Board			01/11/2024
Determined Date:		06/11/2023			

• Rationale

The Dorcan Academy is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school serving Swindon.

The main principle of admission to The Dorcan Academy is to maintain the character of the school as a comprehensive community school, providing for the needs of young persons within the 11 - 16 age range, who live in the areas defined below. There is no guarantee of a place for children attending the named feeder school/s, but they are given priority in the event of oversubscription for places (please see details below). The school will endeavour to provide places for students who do not attend a named feeder school, but whose parents wish them to attend The Dorcan Academy, provided that they can be accommodated within the admission limits.

The published admission number for September 2025 in Year 7 will be 170.

• Procedures

Applications must be made through the Local Authority Co-ordinated Scheme and all instructions and deadlines within that should be adhered to by applicants. Full details of the scheme can be found on their website:

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20071/school_places_and_admissions

In brief the scheme is outlined below:

- Parents/carers are able to make an online application. Parents can express an equal preference for up to 3 schools.
- The closing date for all applications is the 31 October 2024. All applications must be submitted by this date.
- Offers will be made to parents by Swindon Local Authority on the 1 March 2025.
- Any child refused a place at a school will be put on a waiting list for that school and informed of their right to appeal against this decision.
- Parents/carers must accept or refuse the offer of a school place by the 15 March 2025.
- Appeals for on time applications, appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.

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- Appeals for late applications will be included if possible, if not will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the Scheme procedures.

Withdrawal of a place

The Dorcan Academy will have the right to withdraw a place if the applicants have not responded within a reasonable time, ie 28 school days.

Section 2 Oversubscription

When applications for admission exceed the number of places available the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which students to admit.

As required by law, those students with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that name Dorcan will be admitted.

These criteria will continue to be used to allocate any places that become available for in-year admissions after ordinary admission in September 2025.

1. As required by law the school will give top priority to applications on behalf of Looked After Children and all previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). Top priority will also be given to children who appear to have been in state care (ie in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only. For these definitions, please refer to page 3.

Applications from the named feeder schools will then be considered first and determined using the following criteria:

2. Children attending a named feeder school with a sibling attending The Dorcan Academy at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the time of the start of the new academic year. (This would not include siblings attending Dorcan as part of a directed off placement where the place has not been confirmed).
3. Other children attending the named feeder schools.
4. Children not attending a feeder school with a sibling attending Dorcan Academy at the time of application with a reasonable expectation they will be attending at the start of the new academic year.

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5. Applications of a child of a staff member: Any child of a staff member employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made or where they have been recruited to a post where there is a skill shortage.
6. Other children not attending a named feeder school.

Tiebreaker

In the event that there are more applicants meeting any of the oversubscription criteria above than remaining places available, priority will be determined by the proximity of the child's home to The Dorcan Academy using the Local Authority determined distance measured as a straight between home and school. If after applying the distance tie-breaker there are more applications than places available, a further **tie-breaker of Random Allocation (lottery)** will be used for the applications.

Section 3 – Definitions and Details

Feeder Primary Schools

We have strong curriculum and sporting links with the following local Primary Schools and give priority to applications from children who attend them:

Covingham Park Primary School

Eldene Primary School

Goddard Park Primary School

Liden Primary School

Nythe Primary School

Sibling

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Looked After Child and Special Guardianship Order

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

If a child has ever been Looked After or Adopted or subject to a residency or special guardianship order evidence would need to be provided and the LA reserve the right to ask the parent to provide this.

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This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

Home Address

The home address given on the application form must be the address where the child resides for most of the week with his or her parent or carer. More than one address as the child's home address will not be accepted. The terms of a residency order may clarify the home address. Where necessary to determine which address to recognise and in the absence of a residency order, the Dorcan Academy will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child.

In reaching this decision, evidence may be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and from which the child is registered with a medical GP. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary for instance where parents do not agree on the child's home address.

Children of Staff

Staff are defined as employees being on the permanent payroll of the school for two years. The completion of a supplementary form is required for consideration under this oversubscription criterion. (See Appendix 2)

Children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Admissions decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each child concerned.

Late Applications

The closing date for applications is the 31 October 2024. Applications may be submitted after this date but they will be considered as late application, which means they will not be considered until all the on time applications have been considered. The LA will endeavour to deal with late applications before the offer date, but it may not be possible to do this in every circumstance.

Section 4: Waiting Lists

The school will maintain a waiting list until the end of term 6 in the academic year of admission. Children will be ranked in the same order as the oversubscription criteria above and not based on the date either their application was received or their name was added to the list. Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol, will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

Section 5: In Year Admissions

Admissions for all other year groups will be dealt with in accordance with this policy. The LA will administer a co-ordinated scheme and applications should be made direct to the LA on the approved electronic form. Successful applicants will be admitted at the start of each of the 6 terms

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throughout the year. There will be a two-week admission window at the beginning of every term. Applications to transfer mid-term that are made after the two-week admission window will be considered, but may not be admitted until the next admissions window opens. Children will remain on roll at their current school whilst the transfer is in progress. The Governing Board may agree to admit children at any point during the term if, in its opinion, exceptional circumstances apply. The school will maintain waiting lists for all 'full' year groups using the Waiting List criteria.

Section 6: Appeals

If you are not offered a place at our school you have the right to appeal to an independent panel. If you are refused a place, please go on-line and complete the form to appeal. Link:
https://www.swindon.gov.uk/forms/form/439/en/appeal_a_refusal_of_a_school_place.

If you have any difficulties completing the form, please contact the Contact Centre on 01793 445500. Please contact admissionappeals@swindon.gov.uk

• Revision Notes

- Rev A original
- Rev B date changed, minor amendment to Section 5.
- Rev C changed to reflect Academy Status, dates and Looked After Children.
- Rev D revised to reflect change in PAN and to dates.
- Rev E dates amended and criteria updated
- Rev F Annual update
- Rev G Annual update
- Rev H Annual update
- Rev I Annual update
- Rev J Annual update
- Rev K Annual update to reflect change in PAN
- Rev L Annual update and review of PAN
- Rev M Annual update
- Rev N Annual update
- Rev O Annual update

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Appendix I*

The Governing Body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures. The duty is now to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies

- Complaints
- Safeguarding Children and Young people
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Lettings and Use of Premises
- Special Educational Needs
- School trips
- Curriculum
- Children in Care
- Health and Safety
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Security
- Equality Diversity and Community Cohesion
- Students with Additional Needs
- Internet Access and Use
- Use of ICT and Website
- Young Carers
- Privacy, Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Data
- Whistle blowing

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will consider safeguarding matters.

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Appendix 2

**Supplementary Information Form
Admission to Secondary School 2025-26**

This form should be completed if applying for consideration of a place in Year 7 for 2025-26 academic year and wish to be considered under the criteria

Any child of a staff member employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made or to fill a vacant post where there is a demonstrable shortage

Name of child for which application is made	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Name of Parent/Carer employed at the School	
Capacity in which employed	
Date employment began	

Signed Date

This form should be returned by 31 October 2024.

+ This form should be completed in addition to the Local Authority application form which must be completed in order for the request to be valid.

Office Use Only	
Date Received	
Criteria Confirmed	