

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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Person responsible for policy: NJW

Admissions Policy – September 2024 entry

This Policy covers the principles and procedures that we follow in admitting students to Droitwich Spa High School. It is arranged in the following order:

1. Introduction and Rationale
2. The Admissions Process
3. Admission of Children their Age Group
4. Fair Access Protocol
5. Oversubscription Criteria
6. Multiple Births
7. Appeals
8. In-Year Admissions for Existing Year Groups
9. Admission to the Sixth Form
10. Useful contact details

1. Introduction and Rationale

Droitwich Spa High School has long been the sole provider of free secondary education in the town. It has a strong tradition of meeting the diverse needs of the entire community it serves. Each year it takes about 300 children from the town's two middle schools, drawn from Droitwich itself and its surrounding villages. In July 2011 it became an academy, and as such responsible for both the arrangements for admitting its students and the criteria for admissions should there be more applications than available places. As an academy, Droitwich Spa High School maintains its tradition and character as a comprehensive school; and as such, students are admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

2. The Admissions Process

Droitwich Spa High School participates in Worcestershire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme. Parents are advised to familiarise themselves with the scheme by consulting the authority's Parents Book on Admissions and Transfers to Schools. This contains full details on the application and allocation process. Copies of the book are available to view in schools and libraries throughout Worcestershire, and can be accessed online at

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The process is broadly as follows:

- If possible, parents and their children who are considering applying to the school for admission in September 2024 should attend the Open Day and Evening in September 2023.
- Alternatively, families may wish to arrange to visit the school during a normal school day by contacting the school directly. Additionally, parents and their children may wish to find out more about the school by reading through the school prospectus and by looking at the school website. Droitwich Spa High School recognises the extreme importance to families of choosing the right school and therefore is happy to do all it can to facilitate the process.
- Applications for admission for students resident in Worcestershire are made online using the link above. By clicking on the "School Places Apply Online" icon (see below), those wishing to make an application are guided through the admissions process. For those unable to access the internet, an IA1 form can be used, available from Worcestershire County Council. The deadline for all applications is 31st October 2023.

Applications made after this date should be made on an SA1 form and will be considered after all on time applications have been dealt with, there is no guarantee that late applications will be successful.

- For those resident outside Worcestershire who wish to apply for a place at the school, an application form provided by the “home” authority should be used. The “home” authority is the one relevant to the applicant’s home address. The “home” authority will ensure that the application details are passed on to Worcestershire Local Authority for consideration in the allocation of school places.
- All applications received are placed in rank order according to the criteria below. This Ranking List forms the basis of the offer of places made to applicants. The National School Offer Notification Day is 1st March 2024. On this date, the Local authority notifies families of the success of their applications on behalf of the School. At this point, unsuccessful applicants are notified of their right to appeal.
- Children who’s EHCP names DSHS in their plan will automatically be allocated a place

3. Admission of Children outside of 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. If a parent wishes their son/daughter to be admitted outside of their normal age group, they should put the request in writing to the Headteacher.
- The school will then make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parents’ views; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional: whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the headteacher. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the school must set out clearly the reasons for their decision.
- If the school agrees to a parent’s request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally submitted to the school) the local authority and the school will process the application as part of the main admissions round. If the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, a decision will be made and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. The school will not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

4. Fair Access Protocol

As part of the new Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, incorporating the ‘Hard to Place Protocol’, all schools with Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number to admit pupils covered by the Protocol.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

As described above, all applicants are placed in a Ranking List. There are 305 school places available for those starting in Year 8 in September; and the Ranking List is used to determine which students are given priority. The criteria for ranking students is as follows:

- a. 'Looked after Children' for whom the school is considered appropriate are given top priority. 'A "looked after child" has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the application to the school. A "previously looked after child" is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
- b. Children within the School's catchment area who have a sibling already at the School. Siblings are defined as brothers or sisters who share at least one birth or legally adoptive parent; or who have birth or legally adoptive parents living at the same home address as partners. Siblings must be attending the school at the time of entry for the younger child. Former pupils do not count as siblings.
- c. Children who reside within the catchment area of the School. The catchment area is defined on the map which may be viewed at the school on request or from Pupil Admissions and Transfers at Worcestershire County Council or found at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schoolsearch>.
If the residency of your child is split between both parents, we consider the home address to be the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). Parents may be required to provide details of the residency split. If the child spends equal amounts of time at both addresses, you must nominate which address you wish to use for the purpose of allocating a school place. If you fail to do so, we have the right to nominate the address that we consider appropriate, which will normally be the address being used for GP registration purposes.
For children of UK service personnel and crown servants, Admission Authorities must use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address or where a parent requests that a Unit or quartering address is used instead.
- d. Children with a sibling at the school – as defined above – who live outside the catchment area.
- e. Children attending one of our feeder middle schools, Witton or West Acre.
- f. Children who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest straight line distance. The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the School. The Academy Trust will utilise the Local Authority software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. ***(In the event of equi-distance applicants, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). Someone totally independent of the Academy Trust will supervise this process).***

Families who receive an offer will need to complete and return the acceptance slip contained in the offer letter to show whether they are accepting the place. Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified of their right to appeal. The School will maintain a Waiting List – kept in criteria order – until the end of the 31st December 2024 in case it becomes possible to make an offer to those who were initially unsuccessful.

6. Children of Multiple Births

If a parent is applying for places for children from a multiple birth, and there is only one place available at the school then the school would consider this to be an exceptional circumstance and would admit all children from that multiple birth.

7. Appeals

Any parent whose child has been unsuccessful in securing a place can appeal. Appeals are heard by an Independent Appeals Panel, following procedures laid down in the Schools Appeals Code (February 2012). Appeals must be made within twenty school days of receiving notification of an unsuccessful application.

8. In-Year Admissions for Existing Year Groups

Should a pupil wish to join Droitwich Spa High School in Years 9-11, or to join Year 8 after the awarding process has been completed, the procedure is detailed via the following links:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coordinatedschemes> and the in-year application information at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/inyearapplications>

Please note that DSHS is part of the co-ordinated scheme for in-year admissions for all Worcestershire schools. However, own Admission Authority Schools, such as DSHS, continue to reach their own decisions on whether or not they can offer or refuse a place, School Admissions will be the conduit for applications and responses to parents on their behalf within 15 school days of the school receiving the application.

9. Admission to the Sixth Form

Students wishing to pursue a course of study in the Sixth Form need to apply directly to the school by filling in a Sixth Form Application Form. This along with the Sixth Form Prospectus is available both at the school and online via the School's website. On receipt of an application form, the school will invite the applicant to an informal guidance meeting, to discuss the application in more detail. Candidates will then receive an offer of a place – confirmed by letter - conditional on attaining specified grades in particular subjects. There are general entry requirements to the Sixth Form. Students are expected to have achieved at least a grade 4 in English (Language or Literature), at least a grade 4 in Maths and have obtained at least 32 points in total from their six best other Level 2 qualifications. Exceptions may be made for students who have narrowly missed out on these criteria if they select an appropriate curriculum. There are higher requirements for particular courses, and these are made explicit in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

In the event of there being more applications from qualifying students than places available, the normal admissions criteria priorities will apply as set out above.

10. Useful contact details

Droitwich Spa High School Tel: 01905 774421 **Headteacher:** Mrs. N.J. Waters

Web: <https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk>

Office: office@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk

Worcestershire Pupil Admissions and Transfers

Tel: 01905 822700 Web: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education)

Tel: 0808 800 5793 Web: www.ace-ed.org.uk

Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre takes its responsibilities as a data controller and data processor seriously and are committed to using any personal data collected and held in accordance with the law. The schools policies, privacy notices and forms in relation to personal data are available for you to view on our web site at www.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk or by using the <https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/communications/information-management-and-data-protection/>

The School's Data Protection Officer is the *Governance Manager* who can be contacted at Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre, Briar Mill, Droitwich, WR9 0AA or by email at privacy@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk