



Desborough College Academy Trust

Admissions Arrangements

2024-25

Arrangements reviewed and adopted by Trustees	March 2023
Version	2
Review frequency	12 months
Date of next review	March 2024
Responsible Officer	Andy Murdoch

Part One

Admission to all year groups except the Sixth Form

This policy should be read together with information about your Local Authority's coordinated admission arrangements. The college will hold an Open Evening for prospective parents to attend and details of these can be found on the college website. Additionally, parents may telephone the college for an appointment to visit.

Making application / the timescale

Under the co-ordinated arrangements applicants **must** complete the LA application form for the area in which they reside and meet the closing date for that Local Authority.

Please see the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's website for information and closing date for receipt of Year 7 admissions.

Parents who are unsuccessful in their application will be given the opportunity to submit an appeal against refusal. Admission appeals will be heard by an Independent Panel. The exact dates for appeal hearings will be dependent on the availability of Panel Members but would usually be in the summer term.

In-Year Transfer applications should be made directly to the school. Only co-ordinated admissions into Year 7 are managed by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Authority.

Children with statements of Special Educational Need

The law requires Trustees to admit pupils with a statement of special educational need where the Local Authority has specifically named Desborough College as the most appropriate placement. These applications will usually be agreed in advance of the main allocation process. Where there is a late application to Desborough College, DCAT can be required to admit even if the admission number has been reached.

Criteria for admission

In the event of there being greater demand for admission than there are places available, places will be offered using the following criteria in the order given: -

1. Children in care.¹ This category includes a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order²

¹ I.e. children in the care of a local authority, as defined in the Children Act 1989, s.22

² Adoption and Children Act 2002, s.46; Children Act 1989, s.8 and s.14A. Evidence of this status will be required

2. Children with exceptional medical or social reasons for requiring the college (as explained in note 1 below)
3. Children of staff at the college where the member of staff has been employed at the college for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the college is made, or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Children who would have a sibling of compulsory school age who would be at the college at the time of admission of the child for whom a place is sought. The term 'brothers' includes a half or step child permanently living in the same family unit or a foster child permanently living in the same family unit whose place has been arranged by the social services department of a local authority. Sibling eligibility will flow from a foster child to other children of the family or from a child of the family to a foster child. A child is regarded as being of compulsory school age until the end of the school or academic year in which he becomes 16 years of age
5. Children who live in the 'designated area' of the college.
6. All other applicants.

If the school does not have places for all the children in a particular category, tiebreakers will be applied to prioritise places.

Tiebreaker 1 (applies to criterion 1, 2 and 4)

Children who have brother(s) of compulsory school age at the college at the time the applicant would enter the college. If there are still not enough places for all the children in criterion 4 once this sibling tiebreaker has been applied, applications will be prioritised using the second and then the third tiebreaker.

Tiebreaker 2 (applies to criterion 4 only)

Children living in the designated area. If there are still not enough places for all the children applications will be prioritised using the third tiebreaker.

Tiebreaker 3

Proximity to the college. This will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the pupil's house as determined by Ordnance Survey to the address point of the college. In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the college (for example families living in flats) and there are fewer places available then random allocation will be used to decide which child will be allocated the remaining place(s).

Qualification for sibling status is made on the basis that the pupil already at the college will be of compulsory school age and on roll at the college at the time of application. Attendance

of a sibling in Year 11 at the time of application or possible attendance in the sixth form (Years 12 and 13) does not confer sibling status.

The "home address" is the child's permanent address at the time the application is considered. It is where the child and parent or guardian lives during the college week, including nights. The school reserves the right to check the validity of any address given, by asking for evidence such as a recent utility bill confirming the name and address or inclusion on the Electoral Roll.

If the child does not live at the parent's address for valid reasons (e.g. lives with grandparents), we may ask to see official documentation such as a child benefit book or medical card to prove habitual residence of the child. In such cases you will need to state this on the application form. If you do not declare any such arrangements or use a relative's address for your application, we may consider that you have made a false declaration and withdraw the offer of a place. (Childcare arrangements are not sufficient grounds for naming another address).

Where an application is being submitted for a child who has a sibling (or siblings) in the same year group it will be the policy of the Governing Body not to offer a place to one child without offering the sibling (s) of the same age group at the same time. In these circumstances Trustees may determine to exceed the number of places temporarily on the understanding that this will not create a new admission number and as soon as children leave they will revert to the published admission number.

Definition of parent

We define parents not only as both natural parents, but include any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child; or any person who has formal care of the child. (This excludes child minding arrangements).

Waiting lists

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list. The list will be held in order of the stated admissions criteria. Late applications will be added to this waiting list dependent on the criteria they fulfil. This means that positions on the list may change over time. The school will maintain active waiting lists for all year groups.

Fair Access Protocol

The college is required to participate in the Fair Access Protocol introduced by the government in September 2007. This can, on rare occasions, require the college to be directed to admit a pupil where no alternative school can be found. This could mean such a child being admitted ahead of the waiting list or in very exceptional circumstances even if the year group is full.

Multiple births or children with birth dates in the same academic year

In cases where there is one place available and the next student on the waiting list is one from the same family born in the same academic year every effort will be made to admit both students.

Admission into year groups other than the year of entry (Year 7)

Where applications are made to year groups outside the year of entry, places will be offered dependant on available vacancies. In the event of more applications than places available the criteria outlined in section E will be applied.

Further information – named contact

Further details / information may be obtained from the Principal's PA, at Desborough College.

Note 1

Application of the medical or social category

The school will consider an application in this category only where the child, or his or her parent or guardian, can demonstrate a wholly exceptional medical or social requirement for attendance at the preferred school and that attendance at no other college will suffice.

It is expected that places will be given under this category in no more than a small number of instances in a year, if at all.

To apply under this category, the parent or guardian must send a letter with the application form explaining the reasons for requiring a place in this category. It must explain why the preferred school is the only suitable school and why no other school is suitable and must describe the difficulties likely to be caused by attendance at any other school. Such difficulties must be so exceptional as to be extremely rare in the population. The reasons may be associated with the child or with the family.

Supporting evidence must be included from a suitably qualified professional person associated with the child or the family, such as a consultant, a general practitioner, psychiatrist or a senior social worker. Evidence from members of the family or friends or a child minder will not normally be acceptable. All evidence must be on headed writing paper. Any evidence must be provided at the expense of the parent. The parent must give permission to the school to make such enquiries as it thinks necessary to investigate the matter further.

Domestic arrangements, such as child care arrangements, or the need to leave or meet children at more than one school at the same time are unlikely to be acceptable without accompanying exceptional medical or social reasons.

Applications lacking external objective evidence will be rejected under this category. Any rejected application will then be considered under the next highest appropriate category to the child. Applicants are strongly advised to name other schools within the permitted number of preferences.

Applicants seeking to rely on these grounds must provide the necessary evidence by the closing date for applications. This will allow time for the authority to request or seek additional evidence if necessary by the time that decisions must be made. It may not be possible to consider applications under this criterion after the closing date, even where a family has moved house into the area after the closing date for applications.

There will be no right of appeal against refusal of a decision in this category, but all parents will have the usual right of appeal to an independent appeal panel after allocations of places have been published.

Decisions under this criterion will be made by persons independent of the school.

Part Two

Admissions to College Sixth Form

Candidates for the Sixth Form may be in Year 11 at Desborough College or following courses at other schools.

The Sixth Form Prospectus and application form are available from the college.

3.1 Internal candidates

Desborough College students notify the college during Year 11 of their wish to stay on to follow courses in the Sixth Form through completion of the application form.

3.2 External candidates

Applications for places from external candidates can be made by either the parents/carers and/or the student. Places are considered on receipt of the completed application form.

If the student is refused admission, both parents/carers and the student have the right to appeal, either jointly or separately. If the appeal is lodged separately, both appeals will be heard together.

3.3 Allocation of places (oversubscription criteria)

In the case of oversubscription for a place on a particular course, places will be offered first to students within the college and then to external applicants.

The following criteria will be used to allocate to external applicants the available places on those courses that receive more applications than can be accommodated:

Children with statements of special educational needs that name a school in the statement are required to be admitted to the school that is named and who meet the academic requirements for the course. The admission authority does not have the right to refuse admission. Remaining places will be allocated in the following descending order:

- A Children in care, i.e. children in the care of a local authority as defined in the Children Act 1989. This category includes a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order³

³ Adoption and Children Act 2002, s.46; Children Act 1989, s.8 and s.14A

- B Students with siblings at the college at the time of admission. The term 'sibling' includes a half or step child permanently living in the same family unit or a foster child permanently living in the same family unit whose places as been arranged by the social services department of a local authority.
- C. All other applicants who meet the academic requirements of the course.

Tie breaker: If a school does not have enough places for all applicants within a particular category places will be prioritised by means of a tie breaker. This tie breaker will be proximity to the college measured in a straight line from the address point of the student's house as determined by the Ordnance Survey to the address point of the college, using the local GIS system.

Late applications

If an application is received after the deadline, this will be considered 'late'. Late applications will be considered after the allocation of places and notified after the main allocation date, unless exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. hospitalisation of a parent or a family has just moved into the area. In such instances, evidence will be required.

Multiple births or children with birth dates in the same academic year

Application for places is based on meeting the individual requirements of the course. However, in cases where there is one place available and the next student on the waiting list is one from the same family born in the same academic year every effort will be made to admit both students, subject to the availability of appropriate courses.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Places are offered on the understanding that there is a commitment to meet the academic requirements of the course.

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the college within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. Failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the college at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Appeals

The student and/or the parents of students who are not offered a place, have the right to appeal against non-admission. A panel, independent of the college, will hear appeals. Their decision is binding on all parties. Appeals for admission into the 6th Form will take place after GCSE results have been published.