

Botton Village Steiner School Admissions Policy

In this policy the word “applicant” refers either to the applicant pupil or to their parent or guardian(s), depending upon context,

The school aspires to a non-selective admissions policy and does not discriminate between applicants on grounds of physical or intellectual ability, gender, religion or ethnic origin or for any other reason than its capacity to meet the applicant’s educational needs. The school wishes to treat all applicants fairly and openly, and to be timely and effective in its communication with them.

Applicants for admission to the school are assessed by application form, school reports and interview (an age specific assessment of their abilities)

The sole criteria for admission are as follows:

1. The capacity of the school to meet the applicant’s educational needs, taking into account its responsibility to the children already in the class so that the applicant’s acceptance does not adversely affect the education of the pupils already in the class and the distinctive nature of the curriculum.
2. The willingness of the applicant’s family or guardian(s) to contribute financially and practically in proportion to their circumstances.
3. The availability of a place in the class appropriate to the applicant's age.

1. Needs: Botton Village Steiner School considers all children as having individual needs and aims to meet these needs as well as possible. As we feel that it is not helpful for a pupil to change schools, we take a long-term view when we assess whether we can meet an applicant’s needs, i.e. It is not just a matter of whether we can meet their needs for a year, but preferably for all, or at least most of their education up to class 8 (age 14 or 15). The applicant’s educational, emotional and physical needs are assessed in an informal way at interview, by the appropriate class teacher or Kindergarten teacher and one other member of College of Teachers. A decision is made by the College as to whether to offer the applicant a place in the Kindergarten or school. The needs of children with summer birthdays are carefully considered to ensure they are placed in the appropriate class. Applicants are accepted on a term’s trial basis. In some cases a place may be offered subject to conditions, for example, extra tuition. Any such conditions will be clearly set out in the offer letter.

When the school considers that an applicant may have special needs, these needs will be assessed by the appropriate class or Kindergarten teacher, the SENCO and the Movement Therapist (eurythmist) if appropriate. If it is deemed to be helpful, a teacher or the head of a previous school may be contacted. Although we like to

include applicants with Specific Learning Difficulties we can only responsibly accept a few in each class.

If the College of Teachers considers that the applicant's needs cannot be met, it will explain its decision in writing.

When College considers that a child's educational needs can be met in Early Years Provision (Kindergarten) it does not automatically follow that this will be the case in school (classes 1-8), where the mode of education is different. The progression from Kindergarten into school is therefore subject to an individual assessment of the school's capacity to meet the child's needs. During the children's final year in Kindergarten they are observed and discussed by the Kindergarten Support Group, which includes a SENCO, to establish their suitability and readiness for school. This is then further discussed by College. Ideally each child is seen by the school doctor. A decision about progression is then made by the College of Teachers. Six year olds with birthdays after May 31st are considered very carefully regarding progression into class 1, and normally those with birthdays after June 30th remain in Kindergarten for a further year.

2. Parental Contributions: The school's ideal is to be socially inclusive and to welcome families regardless of financial circumstances. Applicants are expected to understand and accept the school's need for support as set out in the Statement on Parental Contributions and to have had a financial contribution proposal accepted before the child starts school.
3. The availability of places: Kindergarten can accommodate approximately 18 children, depending upon the number of days that each child attends.

Classes 1 to 8 are normally combined, with two year groups in each class; the combined classes can accommodate approximately 14, 20 or 30 children, depending on the room occupied. When these levels are reached the College of Teachers will designate classes as technically full. When a class is designated full, depending on the circumstances, the following options may be considered: changing room allocations, splitting a combined class to form two single classes, admitting additional pupils above the level at which the class is technically full – provided that the educational needs of the pupils to be admitted and those already in the class can continue to be met. In the case of this last option, decisions will be taken on an individual basis and may take into account the ease with which applicants are expected to adjust to the class and the curriculum; in some cases this may result in an applicant being offered a place before another candidate who, with reference to the general criteria set out below, would normally expect to have preference.

In general, if there is competition for places, applicants who meet the criteria for admission will normally be offered places in the order of completing their application, except that priority will be given (i) to the children of staff coming to work in the school,

(ii) to the siblings of existing pupils and (iii) children of Botton Village co-workers.

A completed application is one in which the required forms have been submitted and where the interview has taken place. Up to three applicants for each class may complete their application prior to a place becoming available and be placed on a waiting list.

Any applicant to the school who is not offered a place for any reason has a right to appeal against the decision, following the framework set out in the Concerns Procedure.