



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

Policy Name: Admissions Policy and Procedures
Policy Number: 3.1
Date: 21 September 2019

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1 Policy Statement

1.1 Sidcot (the School) is a school with the ethos of the Religious Society of Friends ('Quakers') and accepts students from all faiths or none, aged 3 (Nursery) to 18 (Year 13).

1.2 The School is a mainstream school offering a supportive environment that enables all students to achieve to the best of their abilities. This includes those who are 'gifted and talented' and those with mild learning support needs and disabilities, who are suited to the School's Offer. The learning needs of each class as a whole are also taken into account to ensure that all enrolled students will have the opportunity to benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular activities available

1.3 The School accepts students throughout the year from Nursery to Year 9. Students are able to join examination Years 10 and 12 up to one term late, at the School's discretion, but it will not accept students into Years 11 and 13.

1.4 The School has carefully developed an admissions procedure alongside this policy to enable parents and students to learn more about the School, its educational approach, ethos and leadership. An overview of the process is available on the School Website. Alternatively, the Registrar can be contacted and will give a verbal explanation.

1.5 This policy is available on the School's public website and in hard copy form free of charge. It can be made available in different formats upon request.

2 Policy Aims

2.1 The aims of this Policy are:

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes;
- To ensure that the School identifies and welcomes students who will benefit from the School's offer of academic education and activities, and who will contribute to the existing and prospective School community;
- To set out an admissions policy and procedure that is fair to all who apply;
- To comply with the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other guidance and legislation.

3 Equal Opportunities

3.1 In applying the Policy and procedure, the School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, welcoming students from all ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds whilst balancing human rights and freedoms with the lawful needs and rules of the School community and the rights and freedoms of others. The School will not discriminate against prospective students irrespective of their race, colour, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social origin, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, disability or special educational needs.

3.2 The School is active in its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and has an Equal Opportunities Policy - Children (2.11), Special Educational Needs and Disability (6.4) in practice.

3.3 As a Quaker School, Sidcot accepts prospective students from backgrounds of all faiths or none, but who have a commitment to Sidcot's Values. The School does however, expect all its students to attend Meeting for Worship and School assemblies which are fundamental to its ethos.

4 Disability and Special Educational Needs (SEND)

4.1 The School has a very successful track record in supporting students with mild educational needs including Dyslexia and Dyscalculia, and is registered with CReSTeD (The Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils).

4.2 At present the School's facilities for students with disabilities are limited, but it will do all that is reasonable to ensure that it makes its premises, culture, policies and procedures, accessible to students with disabilities. The School is not academically selective beyond an expectation that each student has a willingness to learn and is able to access the school curriculum as a whole, subject to reasonable adjustments being made. There is an expectation that students are able to meet their own personal care needs subject to some reasonable adjustments, according to their age. In particular, the School has limited facilities to assist with toileting, feeding, dressing etc.

4.3 Parents must inform the School when making an initial inquiry of any emerging issues, known or suspected special circumstances relating to their child's health, physical and mental well-being, allergies, physical disabilities or learning difficulties or social circumstances which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and / or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School and keep the School appraised of any changes.

4.4 Where a parent believes that their child may be in need of learning support, in advance of any visit, they must send their child's most recent school reports, including any educational psychologist's report, speech and language reports or health report to enable the School to ascertain whether it can meet the student's needs in the classroom with such support as is reasonable. Please refer to our special needs and disability policy for further details. The School will initially decide whether it can meet the needs of the child based on these reports before taking the enquiry any further through liaison with the SENCO. Prospective parents will be consulted as appropriate to provide further information.

4.5 Parents of disabled children or those with SEND may be invited to a preliminary meeting to discuss ways in which any disadvantages could be lessened or eliminated to ensure that the child could be adequately catered for should an offer of a place be made.

4.7 If, after due consideration of what reasonable adjustments could be made for a disabled child upon admission, the School considers that it cannot make suitable provision, or appropriately meet the student's needs, or that the presence of the student in the school may have a detrimental effect on the well-being or safety of other members of the community, it will inform the parents of its decision to decline admission and the reasons for it.

4.8 If a child's disability becomes apparent to the School after admission, the School will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in order to allow the child to continue at the School. If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School is unable to adequately cater for and meet the needs of the child, the Headmaster may request parents to withdraw their child.

Provided that the parents provided full disclosure of any emerging issues and special circumstances which may have affected their child's admission at the appropriate time, in accordance with paragraphs 4.3 and 5.3, fees in lieu will not be payable in these circumstances and the deposit will be returned.

5 The Admissions Procedure

5.1 Interested parents should view the School's website www.sidcot.org.uk on which a copy of the prospectus can be found – www.sidcot.org.uk/admissions/contact. A hard copy of the prospectus may also be requested. Those with an interest can find out more by attending an Open Morning, or by requesting that a visit and tour of the School be arranged at a convenient time. Parents are asked to supply any educational psychologist reports or other reports which may be related to special educational needs and disability (SEND) in advance of the visit, if appropriate. Please refer to paragraphs 6 -11 of this document for specific entry requirements to the School.

5.2 Following the enquiry and/or visit, if parents would like to pursue their interest in a place for their child, an application form needs to be completed and submitted together with the relevant fee (which is non-refundable) to the Head of Admissions.

5.3 On receipt of the Application Form, entrance assessment tests (for setting purposes) will need to be taken. These assessments can take place at the School or in the office of a trusted agent who already has a contract with the School. Copies of relevant school reports as well as any educational psychologists' or speech and language therapists' or health reports will also be required.

5.4 Each prospective student will have a one-to-one interview with either the Head, a Deputy Head, member of the Senior Management Team, or other appropriate staff member. If it is not possible to attend the School for a personal interview, this can be held via SKYPE (or other visual media).

5.5 For all UK applicants, the School will ask the Head of the prospective student's current school to provide a written reference regarding the prospective student's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in school life, talents and interests, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, or a disability. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at the school (such as NFER or SATs) and predicted grades at GCSE (if appropriate), and a request for confirmation that all fees have been paid up to date. This request will not be made until the parents have advised that it is appropriate to do so.

5.6 Parents must disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, physical and mental well-being, allergies, physical disabilities, self-care needs or learning difficulties or social circumstances which could have the effect of impacting on their child's learning and social behaviours, or those of other children in their prospective class. Failure to disclose important information during the admission process is in breach of the Parent Contract and may lead the School to withdraw a student after acceptance.

5.7 Once all aspects of the admissions process are complete and the application is approved (or as soon as a place becomes available for those students on the waiting list), the School will send an Offer Letter to the parents which will also set out any specific conditions relating to the offer of a place. An offer of a place at the School will be subject to the School's terms and conditions set out in the Parent Contract.

5.8 The student's parents must read the legally binding Parent Contract before signing and returning the Acceptance Form to the Head of Admissions, together with the deposit payment and a completed Medical Card, in order to accept and secure the place. The amount of the deposit will be advised at the time of application. The deposit will form part of the general funds of the School until it is repaid without interest following settlement of all outstanding fees and extras due to the School upon the student leaving, or where it is otherwise forfeited in accordance with the terms of the Parent Contract.

6 Admission Criteria

6.1 In all cases, the Headmaster has to agree the admission of any student. The Headmaster's decision is final.

6.2 It is a condition of admission that:

- The student meets the admissions criteria set out in this policy;
- Any conditions of entry to the School are fulfilled;
- Full disclosure of any SEND and any additional needs are made;
- The School receives a signed Acceptance Form;
- The School receives payment of a deposit and a signed Parent Contract;
- The School receives a copy of the student's passport;
- The School receives a copy of the student's birth certificate in order to verify who has parental responsibility for the student, and is provided with a copy of any relevant court documents that set out matters affecting the student's care or living arrangements;
- The applicant (student) is of appropriate age and maturity;
- The School can adequately cater for and meet the needs of any disability and/or special educational needs.
- In the case of students from overseas, that a Guardian is appointed in accordance with the Guardianship Agreement completed to the School's satisfaction unless the student is attending for one term or less and has appropriate arrangements in place.

7 Nursery

7.1 Nursery take children from the beginning of the term in which they turn 3. Once an application has been made with session choices, the child will be invited for two taster sessions, one of which will include lunch.

7.2 Following the taster sessions a decision will be made as to whether a place will be offered. If an offer is made; a home visit will then follow. The purpose of the home visit is to see the child in his or her familiar environment, and for the parent to share pertinent information with their child's key worker. The School will advise parents if it feels that a further taster session is necessary to determine the offer of a place.

7.3 In the half term before their start date, a confirmation letter of session choices and start date will be issued. Siblings are given priority of sessions, following that, priority will be given to those children who will be transferring into Sidcot's Reception class.

7.4 Children should be toilet trained on entry to the Nursery, but in the case of children with disabilities, an assessment will be made on a case by case basis in line

with the School's duty to make reasonable adjustments. The School has limited facilities available for those with continence issues.

8 Junior School

8.1 Admission to Nursery does not guarantee the offer of a place in the Junior School if the Junior Head is of the view that the offer of a place is not in the best interests of the School or pupil. Where relevant the principles in paragraph 4.8 will apply.

8.2 Prospective pupils who are new to the School, are assessed for eligibility by attending a two-day Taster Programme. This will apply whether the proposed start date is at the beginning of the year or mid-year.

8.3 During the taster days, the prospective pupils will be paired with an existing pupil in the year group they would be joining, shadow them and have an opportunity to experience the routines, teaching and general atmosphere of the School.

8.4 In order to ensure we are able to meet the needs of prospective pupils, an additional taster day may be required by the School and/or an assessment session with our Learning Support specialist. The assessment will take place during the course of the taster days.

8.5 Prospective pupils who wish to be considered for entry to Years 3 – 6 will also be required to sit a baseline test in Maths and English. This will not form part of the taster days, but will be organised through the Admissions Department at a mutually convenient time.

8.6 Feedback from the Taster Programme is given to the Head of Junior School by class teachers. This information is considered alongside test results, a current school report and any other relevant reports.

8.7 The Head of the Junior School, in conjunction with the Headmaster, shall then decide whether the School can meet the pupil's academic, social and pastoral needs, and whether awarding a place is in the best interests of the student and the School community. Feedback is given to parents as soon as possible once a decision has been made, after which arrangements for the student to start will be made.

8.8 In the case of children entering Junior School from Sidcot's Nursery; the process outlined above will not be followed, as they will have been assessed in the Nursery.

8.9 The School reserves the right to refuse entry to any existing pupil into any year from Reception to Year 6, if in the opinion of the Junior School Head, the School does not meet the educational, pastoral and social needs of the pupil concerned or it is not in the best interests of the School Community for them to continue.

9 Senior School

9.1 The School assesses prospective students for eligibility to enter the Senior School on the basis of a current school report and/or any other relevant reports.

9.2 A formal interview with the Headmaster or a Deputy Head and in some cases, a Taster Day, also form part of the School's assessment for eligibility to ascertain if the School can meet the student's academic, social and pastoral needs and whether awarding a place is in the best interests of the student and the best interests of the School Community. The School may request such further information as it considers necessary when considering whether to award a place. The School requires all students entering Years 7-10 (Third Form to Lower Fifth Form) to take assessments in English and Mathematics. It uses the outcomes of these tests to give a clear understanding of the student's ability in those subjects and an indication of whether

they will be able to access a mainstream curriculum. These baseline tests help us to place the student in the correct set and forms an important part of the student's educational monitoring and assessment throughout the School.

9.3 Entry to the Junior School does not guarantee the offer of a place in the Senior School, if the Head is of the view that the offer of a place is not in the best interests of the School or student. Where relevant the principles in paragraph 4.8 will apply.

10 Sixth Form Entry

10.1 The requirement for entry is an expectation of a minimum of five 'standard' GCSE passes (formerly five grade C or above).

10.2. To have the very best chance of passing some IB and A level subjects students should have a 'strong' pass (grade 5 or above) in that subject at GCSE. A grade 5 in Maths and English is required for entry on the IB diploma.

10.3 Success by the end of Year 12 (to gain at least a pass in all subjects taken in the internal exams at the end of Year 12) is a requirement for progression into Year 13.

11 International Students

11.1 The School requires all prospective international students to provide a school report, personal statement and internationally recognised English qualification at the level appropriate to the course they are taking (please see below). If there is no evidence of an English qualification, prospective students will usually be required to take the Oxford Placement online test to assess their level of English. Prospective students must undertake such tests under strict examination conditions either at their current school or at a recognised educational agent's office who has an existing formal Contract with Sidcot School.

11.2 It is accepted that it is not always possible to visit the School for an interview. In such cases, the School uses SKYPE or other such means to interview the prospective student. During this interview, the School will verify the student's identity and language ability as well as assessing the student's potential to take an active part in school life and make the most of the opportunity on offer.

11.3 Please find below the guidelines for the level of English expected of an international student at each entry point to the School along with requirements for the admissions process:

11.3.1 Senior School entry (Years 7 and 8):

- Minimum level A2 ability in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) for languages as stated by the UK Border Agency or an equivalent internationally recognised qualification. Students without such a qualification will usually be asked to do an online Oxford Placement test.
- Prospective students will have a one to one SKYPE interview to test their motivation for coming to Sidcot. Maths will be tested on arrival at the School for setting purposes.

11.3.2 Senior School entry (Years 9, 10):

- Minimum level B1 ability in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) for languages as stated by the UK Border Agency or an equivalent internationally recognised qualification. Prospective students without such a qualification will be asked to do an online Oxford Placement test.
- Prospective students will have a one to one SKYPE interview to test their motivation for coming to Sidcot. Maths will be tested on arrival at the School for setting purposes.

11.3.3 Y11 Pathway - the one year GCSE course for overseas students:

- Minimum level B1 ability in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) an equivalent internationally recognised qualification. Prospective students without such a qualification will be asked to do an online Oxford Placement test.
- Prospective students will have a one to one SKYPE interview to check their English ability and motivation for coming to Sidcot. Maths will be tested on arrival at the School for setting purposes.

11.3.4 Sixth Form A Level and Sports BTEC (Year 12):

- Minimum level B2 ability in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) or an equivalent internationally recognised qualification. Prospective students without such a qualification will be asked to do an online Oxford Placement test.
- Prospective students will have a one to one SKYPE interview to test their motivation for coming to Sidcot. Prospective students will be required to take a Maths test as part of the admissions process if they plan to study Maths, Chemistry, Accounting or Physics.

11.3.5 Sixth Form International Baccalaureate Diploma (Year 12):

- Minimum level IELTSs 6.0 or B2/C1 ability in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) or an equivalent internationally recognised qualification. Prospective students without such a qualification will be asked to do an online Oxford Placement test.
- Prospective students will have a one to one SKYPE interview to test their motivation for coming to Sidcot and take a Maths test under exam conditions either at their current school or at an educational agent's office to assess their suitability for the IB programme.

12 Guardian Requirement for Overseas Students

12.1 During their time at Sidcot, all international students must have a UK Guardian. Guardians may be a relative or a family friend who is over 25 years of age and lives within 50 miles of the School. They may not be living in student accommodation, and must have suitable accommodation available to them. The Guardian must be appointed by parents before the student arrives in the UK. If there

is no appropriate friend or family member who is able to accept the role; the parents must appoint a Guardian from a professional guardianship agency – the School recommends the selection of a Guardian registered with AEGIS. The School does not appoint Guardians on behalf of students. The Guardian must be able to care for the student at short notice, at times of illness, recuperation, in the event of an exclusion, or otherwise as necessary, in addition to liaising with the School as necessary and providing the first point of contact. It is a condition of entry to the School that the Guardianship agreement is completed to the School's satisfaction in respect of overseas students.

13 International Students who reside outside the EU / EEA

13.1 All prospective international students who reside outside of the EU (and are not ordinarily resident in the UK) will also require a CAS (Certificate of Acceptance of Study) from the School to be able to apply for a visa to study in the UK for the given period of their course. All prospective students must read carefully the requirements of a Tier 4 Student Visa to make sure they meet the criteria before making an application to the School. These requirements are found on the UK government website (www.gov.uk). The School has contracted the support of The Taylor Partnership Ltd to manage and deliver the School's Tier 4 system so international families and their agents will be guided through the visa application process by these experts.

13.2 A prospective student, who has accepted a place at the School, but fails to attend the course because a visa has been refused, must pay a full term's fees in lieu of notice.

13.3 A CAS will not be issued until the School has received the signed Acceptance Form, deposit and application fee in full and a copy of the passport and details of an appointed UK guardian.

13.4 All overseas students from outside the EU must have a valid Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) with healthcare surcharge paid, if applicable. A BRP application is made as part of the visa process.

13.5 All non-UK resident EU students must hold a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), and / or private health insurance. The EHIC card provides cover for health care whilst in any EU country including emergency medical care and essential ongoing treatment without any upfront payment. Any changes concerning BREXIT that may arise in the UK over coming months will not affect the EHIC scheme until after 2020.

13.6 Parents may feel they would like their son/daughter to also have private health insurance whilst at Sidcot School in order to provide additional medical benefits whilst in the UK. It is the parents' responsibility to check the terms of cover of any private medical insurance, and whether the insurance company requires the student to have an EHIC card in any event. Private health insurance may still be require the payment of x-rays, medical care or treatment upfront with the ability for the parents to claim reimbursement from the insurance company subsequently.

13.7 The School Health Centre requires a copy of the student's BRP / EHIC card, and/or valid health insurance certificate, to keep on file in case medical treatment is required at any time whilst in school.

13.8 Some students who may require long term, or elective treatment whilst at Sidcot School. Some treatment may also need to be provided privately, or be referred back to medical services within their home country. If a student has a pre-existing medical condition requiring medication, medical equipment or treatment, parents must provide full information prior to joining Sidcot School, and agree treatment management with the School Nursing Team and any insurance company. Arrangements for the provision of medication and medical equipment is the responsibility of parents.

14 Waiting Lists

14.1 Where classes/year groups are full, the School will operate waiting lists. Where this is the case it will offer a place conditional on a vacancy becoming available, at which time it will contact the parents. When the non-refundable application fee is received, the position on the waiting list is secured and prioritises the students on a first-come, first-served basis. When a place becomes available, the School will notify the student at the top of the waiting list in writing to ascertain whether they want to take up the place. If they decline, the option will go to the next student on the list and so on. A student on the waiting list for entry in a particular year, may defer entry once to a later year although the School does not accept students into Years 11 and 13; in so doing, however, the student will forfeit his/her position on the waiting list (if one exists) and will be placed next in line of the new chosen year group.

- a) The School will, give priority to applications from a child whose sibling already attends the School.
- b) Children who are intending to enter the Junior School will be given priority when allocating Nursery places.
- c) Children who are in the Junior School will be given priority when allocating Senior School places.
- d) Parents are advised to contact the School well in advance of the anticipated start date in order to ensure a place is available.

15 Scholarships

.15.1 The School offers a range of academic and talent scholarships on entry to Sidcot in Years 7, 9, 10 and 12. Please request details from the Head of Admissions. The Scholarship policy is available on the School's website.

16 Bursaries

16.1 Means-tested bursaries are available in cases where financial assistance is required. The level of assistance varies each year according to the amount of funds available and the number of applications received. Bursary forms and further information about bursary applications are available from the Head of Admissions. The Bursaries Policy is available on the School's website.

17 Other Factors

17.1 Prospective Student's age

- 17.1.1 Very occasionally, the School may offer a place to a student resulting in them being one year ahead or behind their standard year group, if it

considers as a matter of professional judgement that this is in the best interests of the student and the School.

17.2 Special circumstances

17.2.1 In any of these cases, the School may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the student's current school (including samples of work) or any family history of a condition, considered necessary in order for us to make a fair assessment.

17.3 Special Considerations

17.3.1 If the School has to decide between two or more prospective students who meet the admission requirements after giving all appropriate allowances and special consideration, it will give preference to children of Members of and Attenders at the Religious Society of Friends. It may also give further preference to a prospective student the priority of these considerations would be decided on a case by case basis:

- who already has a brother/sister in the School or whose parent or grandparent was a former student;
- who is planning to join Nursery and is intending to enrol in the Junior School for Reception and beyond;
- whose parent is a current member of staff;
- with a particular skill, talent or aptitude; or
- for whom, in certain circumstances, a boarding place is sought.

18 Appeals Procedure

18.1 In the event of the School being unable to offer a student a place, parents may appeal to the Headmaster in writing, within 14 days of receipt of the School's decision. The Letter of Appeal should set out clearly the grounds for the appeal and include any relevant supporting documentation. A panel consisting of at least one senior member of staff and one member of the Board of Governors will examine the appeal. They may invite the parents to attend an appeal meeting, but are not bound to do so if they consider that the relevant facts are already available. The School will notify the parents of the Panel's decision, in writing, within 21 days of receipt of the letter of appeal. If an appeal is made during school holidays and the Panel does not expect to be able to notify a decision within this period, the School will notify the parents of this in writing.

19 Data Protection

19.1 The School will take all reasonable measures to safeguard information provided as part of the admissions process. Information gathered as part of the admissions process will form part of the student's record in the case of successful applicants. Information gathered as part of the application for applicants who are not offered a place will be destroyed after the student ceases to be of school age as it is not unusual for a deferred application for a place to be made.

19.2 The School's Privacy Notice advises how the School processes the data provided.

20 Review

20.1 This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of External Relations in conjunction with the Board of Governors.

21 Statutory Guidance, Regulations and References

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Independent School Standards (England) Regulations (2014)
- The Handbook for the Inspection of Schools (Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements) 2018.
- UKBA (UK Border Agency – returned to Home Office control) legislation for sponsoring Tier 4 students.
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The European General Data Protection Regulation 2016

22 Related Policies

Equal Opportunities – Children

Bursaries Policy and Procedure

Special Needs and Disability in Practice

23. Date of Review

This policy was last reviewed on 21 September 2019 by the Director of External Relations and is subject to annual review, unless a sooner review is required by a change to legislation, best practice or procedure.

Appendix 1 – Key Persons Involved in the Admission Process

Responsibility for the overall assessment of a student's suitability for admissions	Iain Kilpatrick, Headmaster
Responsibility for Admissions in the whole school and for this Policy	Angela Dudley-Warde, Director of External Relations
Responsibility for the management of the Admissions process	Claire Rundle – Head of Admissions
Senior School academic assessment including overall assessment of Special Educational Needs	Christian Hughes, Deputy Head (Academic)
Deputy Head Pastoral	Joanna Leite Deputy Head (Pastoral) Veronika Chidemo Assistant Head Pastoral
Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)	Sarah Bates, Head of Learning Support

Junior School student assessment	Natalie Bone, Head of Junior School (from January 2020)
Responsibility for allocation of boarding places	Joanna Leite, Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Contact details for the Admissions Department	admissions@sidcot.org.uk 01934 845212