



LANCASTER
STEINER SCHOOL



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ADMISSIONS POLICY

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ADMISSIONS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Steiner Waldorf education aims to be a comprehensive education. Any child's right to apply for this education should not be affected by race, gender, faith, disability or social background. The Lancaster Steiner School receives children from 3 up to, and including, the academic year in which the child reaches eleven years of age.

The different ages catered for are:

- Cherry Trees Kindergarten: from 3 years up to and including the academic year in which the child turns either 5 or 6 depending on the year group which is currently closed.
- Hazel Class – the schools transition class for children aged 4 – 6 years.
- Lower School: which covers Primary Education until 11 years of age.

To reflect our approach to pupils' individual learning needs, our year groups have flexible boundaries.

Usual year groups run from 1st September – 31st August, however if either parents or teachers feel a child would be better served in a different year group then a proposal can be put forward to move the child. The usual boundaries for placement in a different year group are 30th June - 15th September. Such children are welcome to stay at Lancaster Steiner School to complete Class 5 (Year 6). However, parents should be aware that local secondary schools often prefer children to remain with their age corresponding peer group, thus entering their new school in Year 8. Parents should contact their preferred secondary school when their child is in Class 4 to discuss options for transitioning. We wish to be welcoming to new and prospective families, encouraging them to become part of our active community, and hope that they will feel able to express their thoughts and share any questions. We hope prospective families will find our Admissions process helpful, clear and efficient, and in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy.

RECORD KEEPING

Following the decision-making and communication process, the interview forms and all other relevant papers are kept in the School Office.

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO LANCASTER
STEINER SCHOOL.**



PROCEDURE

The Office Assistant is responsible for implementing all stages of the procedure and can be contacted by emailing enquiries@lancastersteinerschool.org, or telephoning the school on 01524 381876.

Prospective families may contact the school either in person or by phone, email or social media. All initial queries regarding admissions will be passed to the Office Assistant.

During the initial enquiry the Office Assistant will gather information regarding the child and convey our methods and some of our educational philosophy to you as parents/carers; this is to help and foster an understanding of our distinctly different learning environment.

Parents will then be invited to visit the school. This stage usually takes place without the child. The visit lasts for around 45 minutes and is a further opportunity for prospective parents to understand our unique school, our approach to education and the curriculum we present.

Following this, parents submit an application form with payment of a £50.00 administration fee which is *non-refundable (except for children solely using the early years vouchers)*. The admission form must be accompanied by the child's original birth certificate and copies of school reports / medical reports as appropriate.

The child is then invited to attend for a trial session in the appropriate class.

KINDERGARTEN This will be for the first hour of the day 9.00am – 10.00am, accompanied by a parent / guardian. The child will experience the drop-off routine and take part in that morning's led-activity (e.g. bread-making).

LOWER SCHOOL This will typically be for two days, to be arranged with the Office Assistant.

The educational and financial interviews will then be arranged. The educational interview lasts for approximately 1 hour during the afternoon with the class teacher and if appropriate the SENDCO. This takes place without the child present in order to be able to discuss the child and their needs freely. Following this a financial interview will be arranged with the School Bursar to confirm and arrange a payment plan. These meetings usually take place on the same day.

An offer of a place is made after agreement by the College of Teachers, see Appendix 1 for alternative outcomes. We aim to respond within 4 weeks of your educational interview.

If the child's start date is not the beginning of the academic year, the Office Assistant will coordinate a start date with you. Where the College of Teachers feels that it would be appropriate for the child's needs, his or her initial transition into the school may be staggered (i.e. starting with a smaller number of days/hours) or otherwise adapted in consultation with parents, the teacher and, where appropriate, the SENDCO.

The first six weeks is considered a trial period in order to ensure that the school is able to meet your child's needs. During this period, the teachers will review and share with the parents the child's level of integration into Lancaster Steiner School. In some cases, an extended trial period may be requested by the teacher. This allows adequate reviews to take place.



ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

LOWER SCHOOL

Within the Lower School there are 14 spaces per class.

If a class is oversubscribed, priority will be given to applications taking the following points into consideration:

- Siblings of pupils currently in the school
- Children of staff members
- Length of time on the waiting list
- Children whose parents intend them to stay at the school long term
- Children coming from another Steiner School
- Children over 5 who intend to attend full time
- Children whose parents / family have a connection with the school
- Children whose parents are paying full fees
- Geographical proximity to the school
- Children who have siblings who can be accommodated in other classes

KINDERGARTEN

For admission into our Kindergarten we have 8-10 places per age group (25 places in total) for part-time attendance. This figure may vary if younger children enrol on a full-time basis.

Priority will be given to applications taking the following points into consideration:

- Siblings of pupils currently in the school
- Children of staff members
- Length of time on the waiting list
- Children whose parents intend them to stay at the school long term.
- Children who intend to attend for more than the 15/30 hrs of Early Years Funding
- Children relocating from another Steiner school
- Children who have siblings who can be accommodated in other classes
- Children whose parents / family have a connection with the school
- Geographical proximity to the school

Should there be no vacant places in the Kindergarten or Lower School class appropriate for the child, the date on the application form will also serve as the date he or she is entered onto the Lower School or Early Years waiting list.

PLEASE NOTE THAT PROGRESSION THROUGH THE SCHOOL IS NOT GUARANTEED AND A NEW APPLICATION NEEDS TO BE MADE AT THE TRANSITION FROM KINDERGARTEN TO LOWER SCHOOL. PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT PLACES IN CLASS 1 ARE NOT GUARANTEED SO PARENTS ARE ADVISED TO ENSURE THAT A PLACE IS HELD FOR THEIR CHILD AT THEIR LOCAL STATE SCHOOL. THIS IS IN CASE OF ANY UNFORESEEN EVENTUALITY WHICH MAY DETERMINE THAT THEIR CHILD IS UNABLE TO ENROL IN THE LOWER SCHOOL.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

No child will be discriminated against because of his or her individual needs. Any decision made will be based solely on our capacity to meet those needs, and not on the existence of these needs.

Lancaster Steiner School is limited in its provision to support children with Education Health Care Plans due to financial constraints.

If during the admission process a child is identified as having additional needs that would require an Individual Pupil Plan or placement of the pupil on our SEND register, then the SENDCO will be involved in the admissions process.

As soon as an admission application is flagged by staff or parents as having possible SEND the SENDCO will arrange to meet with the parents and child to assess the situation. Further progress in admissions will be subject to the SENDCO recommendations.

If, after reasonable adjustments have been made, the child's needs are not being met despite the class teacher's differentiation and advice from the SENDCO being followed then the school may have to withdraw an offer of a place and support the family in finding a more suitable setting which can provide additional support.

The school does not fund One-to-One support (a Teaching Assistant) for individual pupils. This decision has been made in recognition of the financial constraints upon the school. Any funding allocated to a TA supporting one pupil must be devolved from other areas and may have a detrimental effect on other pupils.

If external funding can be accessed for support which is outside the financial scope of the school, then we will consider whether we are able to implement that support.

Parents are given the option of privately funding one-one support to be employed by the school if they so wish. If parents wish to do this the school may fund up to 20% of the TA post.

Please note that whilst it is possible for the school to access funding to assist children up to the age of compulsory schooling (5 years old), thereafter this may not be possible. In such cases while we will liaise with external agencies and try to provide appropriate support and resources for all children with additional needs applying to our Kindergarten, we may not be able to do so beyond this age where access to funding cannot be sourced.

If children attending during the Early Years are receiving additional support through Local Authority funding, their continuing needs will be re-evaluated before they reach compulsory school age (which is the start of the term following the child's fifth birthday). Continuation of provision will depend on their needs at that time and the availability of resources to ensure a programme to any individual needs.



APPENDIX 1

ACCEPTANCE

We are able to offer your child a place at Lancaster Steiner School.

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED

When there is a need for clarification of information given verbally at the interview, or when more details of a particular difficulty surrounding the child emerge, information will be requested before a decision on acceptance into the school can be made.

ACCEPTANCE WITH CONDITIONS APPLIED

Any special circumstances relating to curriculum provision for the child e.g. Learning Support provision or adaptation of the educational provision in order to accommodate the child's medical needs (e.g. only able to attend for limited periods each day) must be specified. The letter of acceptance must also include: any additional costs to the parents of meeting such conditions; the procedure for reviewing the pupil's progress (e.g. the goals to be met, the maintenance of independent work habits, etc.); the date for the review(s) (approximate, e.g. at the first half-term or the exact date).

ACCEPTANCE IS IN DOUBT

The appropriate teacher along with a member of the College of Teachers will meet the family to discuss the doubts about the school being able to meet the needs of the child. Following this meeting it may be decided to accept the child under certain specified conditions (as above, or some other way of meeting the child's needs).

REJECTION

The Admin Assistant informs the family, based on feedback from the relevant teachers, stating that we are unable to meet the educational needs of their child. If additional reasons need to be given, then clarity will be sought from the College of Teachers (or the person delegated by College to advise on such issues) on the terminology to be used.