

DAME CATHERINE HARPUR'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY



Dame Catherine Harpur's School and Nursery is an independent school for pupils from ages 3 to 11. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important and we believe that a personal visit is not only invaluable but essential.

We therefore very much hope that you and your child will visit Dame Catherine's. We hold a number of Open Events throughout the year details of which are published online on our website and on our facebook page a few weeks in advance of the day but we welcome prospective parents and their children into our school at any time and just ask that an appointment is made wherever possible in advance by contacting our school office.

The entry procedure

Dame Catherine's is **NOT** a selective school.

There are 2 separate admissions at Dame Catherine's.

Pre-school early years provision. This includes:

- **Pre-school.** This is from the age of 3 years ie. nursery
- **Extended pre-school** This is a continued stage of early years which will be flexible in length (up to 1 academic year) according to the age and needs of a child. This stage is for children in the academic year in which a child reaches 5 years but who are not aiming to start school until compulsory school age (or where parents are intending to home school after this point.)

Primary school admission.

Our school admission at Dame Catherine's begins at compulsory school age. *

- Children who turn five between 1 September and 31 December reach Compulsory School Age on 31 December. They must be enrolled on our school admission register from 1st January at the latest or choose to attend sessions as a home-schooled child from this point.
- Children who turn five between 1 January and 31 March reach Compulsory School Age on 31 March. They must be enrolled on our school admission register from 1st April at the latest or choose to attend sessions as a home-schooled child from this point.
- Children who turn five between 1 April and 31 August reach Compulsory School Age on 31 August. They can remain in our pre-school setting for the academic year if parents prefer this route.

** Parents can choose to enrol their child into the 'reception year' from the September in the academic year the child is 5.*

There are 2 groups in our primary school provision at Dame Catherine's

- 5-7 year olds. Children are taught alongside our reception / extended pre-school children (4-5 year olds.) This group is known as Rabbits.
- 7-11 year olds

Whilst children are taught in 2 classes, smaller groupings are used which can mean that age groups eg. 7-9 year olds are taught separately where appropriate. This also allows for some flexibility and transitional support for our 6-8 year old children.

We welcome children into any year group and mid-year, where spaces are available.

Dame Catherine's pre-school admissions criteria

Entry into the pre-school is determined using the following selection criteria:

- The presence of a sibling already in the school community;
- The child has a parent working at the school
- The parents have already submitted an application for a school place from when the child is of compulsory age.
- The child lives in the village community
- a previous family connection with the school
- The family has shown an ongoing interest in sending their son/daughter to the pre-school as demonstrated by attending an Open Day or visiting in person

Dame Catherine's school (from compulsory school age)

Entry into the School is determined using the following selection criteria:

- The presence of a sibling already in the school or early years setting;
- The child has a parent working at the school
- Attendance in the school pre-school provision
- The child lives in the village community
- a previous family connection with the school
- The family has shown an ongoing interest in sending their son/daughter to the school as demonstrated by attending an open Day or visiting in person.

Dame Catherine's is fortunate to have children whose families bring a wide diversity of backgrounds. We do not discriminate in terms of race, sex or disability. Please see our SEND policy for further details on children with disabilities or special educational needs.

Parents should initially enquire about the availability of spaces from the school office. Waiting lists will be held in circumstances where we have no spaces available and the criteria listed below would apply.

[Our admissions policy treats applications as full-time applications.](#)

[Dame Catherine's supports families who wish to apply for reduced-timetable agreements \(known more widely as flexi-schooling.\) However, where such an application is received, the school has various considerations and requirements in place before it can consider this request. Please request a copy of the relevant school policies and discuss these with the school on application.](#)

[The school will always seek to ensure that places are available for full-time children. However, it also reserves the right to allocate specific places on a reduced timetable, even if there is not a full-time space available. This could be the case for in year admissions and applications received after the deadline for the next academic year.](#)

Application, registration and admissions process

Pre-school / extended pre-school provision

Applications are accepted at any time with children starting after their 3rd birthday.

If parents wish for their child to extend pre-school provision past the end of the academic year when their child is 4 years old, they are asked to complete the application for continued pre-school provision form by 1st March to enable them to secure a place for the following September.

School provision

For children starting school at any point in the following academic year, we ask these families to apply by March 1st so that we can write to families by 15th April and offer them a secure place for the following academic year. Late applications will be accepted should there be spaces, using the admissions criteria in our admissions policy.

Parents or carers interested in applying for a place at in our pre-school provision should register interest by phoning or e-mailing our office to arrange a visit. We offer taster days for children in school and parents who are interested in a taster day are asked to complete a booking form to provide some basic information. Should parents wish to proceed with an application, they will be asked to complete the school admissions form and provide the deposits as outlined in the fees schedule for that year.

For parents interested in places for children in advance of the next academic year, the school will keep a pre-registration list and ensure that families are kept informed of any open day events to enable them to keep in touch with the school.

Offer of a place:

Should a place be available and your child is a good match with the school (which forms part of the discussion following the taster day) parents will be offered a place in writing. If a class is full, your child will be placed on a waiting list.

Acceptance:

A place is deemed accepted when we receive the completed parent contract (signed by parents with parental responsibility) together with the appropriate deposit (which contains terms and conditions.) These should be read before accepting the place.

Children **will not** be placed on the school roll until the following are in place:

- The required deposit is in place
- An admissions form with all required information
- A parent contract signed by parents with parental responsibility.
- Identification for the child / children (birth / adoption certificate or passport)

Special needs

Some of our pupils have special educational needs and we can offer them the support that they require. We advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the school before completing the admission process so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report to support us in meeting the child's needs.

We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

Sibling policy

Most siblings join us at Dame Catherine's however admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different environment.

The School reserves the right to change the above process and description at any time.

Last updated: January 2024

This policy will be reviewed annually.