




South Lee Prep School
Bury St Edmunds

Admissions Policy

September 2024

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Signed: 	Steve Honeywood, Chair of Governors 1/9/24
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Admissions Policy

This school policy is written with reference to the Equality Act (2010)
This is a whole school policy which also applies to Early Years Foundation Stage

Aims and Ethos

At South Lee, education is centred around instilling a life- long love of learning in each child by developing their skills and nurturing their growth as individuals.

We believe that respect for children, belief in children and viewing the world through the eyes of children, should inform our teaching and care.

We believe in a rounded approach to education where emotional and social well-being, confidence and self-awareness are inseparably intertwined with academic progress.

We encourage children to develop into well rounded individuals who are ready to thrive in and contribute to the wider community and global society.

We encourage children to have high aspirations and in doing so to take ownership of their steps towards success.

We aim to channel the natural curiosity of children so that they become resilient, independent, critical and creative learners, through a rich, broad and challenging curriculum.

We aim to provide opportunities for development and interests outside the classroom, allowing children to develop a healthy and mindful lifestyle, a sense of adventure and a zest for life.

We aim for the children at South Lee to foster the values of teamwork, leadership, tolerance, kindness, trust and social responsibility.

We view education as a shared journey in which we work closely with parents, guardians and most importantly the children themselves.

The Admissions Process

South Lee School is a co-educational independent day school for pupils aged 3 months -13 years.

The usual points of entry are at Nursery age (3 months) and Reception (approximately 4 years old).

Admission at other ages is dependent on the availability of places. Children are admitted in each year group, generally up to a maximum of 18.

Entry into the school at Nursery is by registration and a parental meeting with the Nursery Manager. Your child will be invited to do a taster session to see how they feel in the environment.

Entry to the school at the 4+ stage is by registration and parental interview. There is no formal assessment of children at this stage other than to ensure that a child is ready for a school environment. Therefore, the majority of the school's intake is non- selective.

At other points of entry, the intake is selective only in so far as we seek to ensure that a child will cope with the demands of our strong academic curriculum and, as such, seek to answer the question 'will this child be happy here?' Overall, then, the pupil population is of mixed ability, though by the time the children leave,

the average attainment on standardised tests is above the national average. In order for us to make this judgement, all children for 4+ entry are invited to a taster day.

Having registered your application for a place for your child, you will thereafter be kept fully informed, by the Admissions Officer, of the progress of the admissions process. We do our best to avoid creating large waiting lists and to give you the earliest possible indication of whether a place will be available. We understand that in a matter as important as the education of one's child, the admissions process can be an anxious one and we endeavour to reduce this anxiety wherever possible.

The school considers itself a community in which each individual's needs should be recognised and each of its members' talents and aptitudes should be fostered. It is as a living and caring community that the school is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for children, parents and staff. The school will not discriminate against anyone on grounds of their racial or ethnic origin, culture, health conditions, circumstances relating to home life, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or, where practicable, disabilities.

On the child's first day, we will contact the child's previous school and ask for any safeguarding records and their pupil file to be sent over to us, either electronically or via registered post. We will also submit an application to enrol the child to South Lee Prep via the CME portal. If a child leaves outside of the normal transition years, we will also complete an off roll CME form and notify them of their next school.

Booking a Tour

In addition to Open Days, we offer you time to visit the school and get to know us, as we are, during the normal school day. The Admissions Officer will arrange for you to spend a good deal of time at the school, touring each of the school's sites (usually with children) and meeting with herself and the Headmistress. You are most welcome to bring your children but you need not imagine that the school will be 'interviewing' them or otherwise assessing them at this time. The purpose of the visit is simply that we should meet and get to know each other in a relaxed setting, and that you should have an opportunity to see the school in action, experience its atmosphere, discuss its educational approach and ask any questions before deciding whether to proceed with registration.

Please contact the Admissions Officer to arrange your tour (admissions@southlee.co.uk on 01284 754654).

Taster Days

Once you have had a tour, you will be offered a taster day as part of the registration process. We will work with you to choose a suitable day, when your child will experience a range of lessons. The purpose of this day is to allow your child to experience being part of the South Lee community, and for us to informally assess them to consider whether they are a good 'fit' for the school.

Children at Local Schools

Parents of children already in schools in the area, are asked to discuss a possible move with the Head of the school their child is already attending. We adhere to IAPS guidelines and do not encourage parents to move their children from another school without good reason.

Registering for a place

Registrations may be accepted at any time. Upon payment of the registration fee and completion of the appropriate documentation, a child will be registered on our list of possible entrants. However, it is important to understand that the acceptance of a registration form does not constitute the formal offer of a place.

If you wish to visit the school when your child is still very young, to decide whether to register, we are happy to arrange this but a visit should also be made when we will all be better placed to discuss things. Those children who already attend our Nursery are automatically offered a place in our Reception class.

Later Registrations

We continue to accept registrations while there remains some hope, however small, that a place may eventually be forthcoming. The procedure followed in such cases is as outlined above and it is not uncommon for us to be able to offer a place to a child registered quite late in the day.

Offers to Siblings

Priority is automatically given to siblings and places are likewise offered automatically unless there is some concern which requires us to discuss things further.

Getting to Know the Children

As part of our effort to get a full picture of a child who is not attending our Nursery, we assume that you will be happy for us to visit your child in his or her current nursery or playgroup should we feel that this would be helpful. We cannot do this in all cases but, where we can, we find that it gives us a much better feel for the child than we are likely to gain when they come to see us for a brief visit later on in the proceedings. Such visits may take place before or after a firm offer of a place has been made. In any case, we invite all children to whom offers have been made to a 'moving up day' in the Summer term, by which time we will have allocated them to their class.

Academic Assessments

As part of the registration process, children are invited in for a taster day. This allows us to informally assess your child and see how well they settle in with their peers. If we consider there be a particular learning need, either through prior discussion with parents, or through observations on the day, we may conduct simple reading/spelling tests. Form tutors will also compile a basic report on the child's experiences throughout the day. If parents have an awareness of any learning need prior to the taster day, they need to inform the school so that support can be put in place if necessary. All in all, the children are never left without support and we help them over any difficulty. They should very much have enjoyed their time with us and while this is a valuable aim in itself, it also allows us to observe them in circumstances where they feel they can be themselves. Where a learning difficulty has been reported prior to the assessment, or where a possible learning difficulty becomes apparent during assessment, our Individual Development specialists produce notes as appropriate.

When the child is collected at the end of the day, we will provide a brief feedback to the parents regarding our informal observations. Should anything more significant become more apparent, we will arrange a meeting with parents prior to admission.

Equal Opportunities

We hope to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our school community and is vital in preparing our pupils for the world today. South Lee School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, social background, nationality or disability. Please see the **Equality and Diversity Policy**.

Special Educational Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We are a non-selective school. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Individual Development (ID) Department can offer them the support that they require. The school has staffing to support a range of educational needs. Children will be withdrawn from some lessons and will be given extra support during this time. Alternatively, support may be offered in the form of a classroom assistant within individual lessons.

We welcome pupils with physical disabilities, however, recognise that because of the nature of our site there will be some children whose needs we will not be able to accommodate. We advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the Head before he or she comes for a visit so that we can make adequate provision for him or her. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or medical report, if available, at this time.

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.

Details of any disability, special educational needs or learning difficulty must be declared. We also require parents to undertake a continuing contractual obligation to disclose any learning difficulties, SEN or disability and any IDP or other relevant reports. A failure to disclose may, in some circumstances, amount to a breach of contract by the parents allowing the school to terminate the agreement with immediate effect.

Religious Belief

South Lee School is a non-denominational school. There are assemblies throughout the week, which often have a religious or spiritual theme that are Christian in their learning. All pupils are expected to attend, and it is expected that while pupils may not wish to participate in any religious aspects of these assemblies, they should show respect during any hymns/ prayers that may take place. We celebrate or recognise religious festivals.

Fluency in English

In order to be able to access the curriculum provided at South Lee School and to cope with the social demands, it is helpful if pupils are fluent English speakers. However, we have, and will continue to, accept children with limited English.

Scholarships

Currently the school offers a small number of scholarships for children moving into Years 7 and 8. The exams for these scholarships take place in the Lent Term when the children are in Year 6. Details of these scholarships can be obtained by contacting the Admissions Officer at the school office on 01284 754654 or via email admissions@southlee.co.uk.

Children Missing Education

The law requires that all schools have to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

South Lee Prep School must inform the local authority if any of our pupils are going to be removed from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have been certified by the school nurse as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

All schools including South Lee School must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority. If a child's whereabouts is unknown by school and/or parents, then police should be contacted via 101. Even if this is only for a short period of time as it helps to build a pattern and the history can be useful for future missing episodes.

Please see safeguarding policy.

Fees and Bursaries

Financial assistance towards the payment of fees is available in cases of proven financial need and is not dependent on academic performance (other than to satisfy the school's academic entry requirements).

Bursaries, which are means tested, will vary depending on the needs of the family. They are awarded to pupils who, it is believed, will gain most from a South Lee education and will contribute fully to the life of the School.

Decisions regarding bursary assistance are made by the Governors' Bursaries Committee, advised by the Head and Finance Manager. The Committee will consider each application, following an informal interview and scrutiny of the family's financial circumstances which includes verifying the capital and current income available to meet fees. Awards are subject to annual means testing to allow for adjustment to reflect changed circumstances.

South Lee School's Contractual Terms and Conditions

Copies of the school's contractual terms and conditions will be made available during the admissions process.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have cause to complain about our admissions process, however, copies of the School's complaints procedure can be sent to you on request or found on the school website under policies.

Provision of Information

The School is required to provide you with the following information:

- The school's address and telephone number and the name of the Head;
- Where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair; and
- A statement of the school's ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims.

The School is required to make available the following policies and documentation:

- School's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
- Educational and welfare provision for pupils with statements and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- Curriculum policy;
- Policy to promote good behaviour and set out sanctions;
- Anti-bullying strategy, health and safety policy, first aid policy;
- Academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations;
- Complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year;
- A copy of the report of any inspections of the school or boarding provision; and
- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

All of the above items are available to download from the School's website (<https://www.southlee.co.uk>). Please contact the Admissions Officer (admissions@southlee.co.uk or 01284 754654) if you would like to receive printed copies of any of these documents.

