Derwent and Southill Federation

We are a Values-led Federation
We respect ourselves; We respect others; We respect the environment.

Southill Lower School Admissions Policy 2026-2027

Southill Lower School has an agreed admission number of 15 in each year group up to year 4. Children will be admitted into the Reception Class in September following their fourth birthday.

There are separate arrangements for pre-school admissions. A preschool place does not guarantee a place in the Reception Year. The Local Authority co-ordinates admission into the Reception Year and applications for admission in September 2024 should be made in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme.

The timescales for the application process are set out in the local authority published admissions booklet, available with the application form from the school or the Local Authority. The web address http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/landing.aspx contains more information about admission arrangements for Southill through Central Bedfordshire including contacting the admissions team.

Should there be more applications than places, the following criteria will be used to determine how places are allocated:-

1. All 'looked after' children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school,
3. Other pupils living in the catchment area,
4. Other siblings living outside of the catchment area
5. Any other children.

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the headteacher's office. Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g., children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie breaker will be random selection, using the School Admissions Team database to allocate the place.

Parents applying for a place at the catchment area school during the normal admissions round will normally be offered a place. However, a place at the catchment area school cannot be guaranteed. If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area school if this would mean exceeding the admission number. In such cases, an offer of a place will normally be made at the nearest school/academy to the pupil's home address which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.

Pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

Definitions:

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' becomes subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

'Looked after' children

The Children Act 1989 defines a child who is "looked after" as a child or young person who is accommodated by the local authority (Section 20) or a child or young person who is the subject of a full care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38).

Sibling

A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

'Very Exceptional' Medical Grounds

*'Very exceptional' m*edical grounds refers to cases where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent/carer, brother or sister or other relative/childminder.

Home address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parents/carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Monday to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation, e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water) a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Appeals / Waiting Lists

Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent Admissions Appeal Panel. Any child refused a place at the school will be placed on a waiting list which will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria. Waiting lists for the normal year of entry will be maintained until the end of the academic year.

In-Year Admissions

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form and in accordance with the Local Authority's co-ordinated scheme for In-Year Admissions. The web addresshttp://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/landing.aspx contains more information about admission arrangements for Southill through Central Bedfordshire including contacting the admissions team.

Delayed admission for summer born children*

Parents have the right to request their summer born child's admission to Reception Year is in the September following their fifth birthday, however parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group, a decision will be made by the Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.

Parents/carers need to make their request in writing, separately from the common application form, directly to the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. The request should include the parents'/carers's reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional and if applicable, details if the child was born prematurely including whether they would have been in a lower school group had they been born on their due date.

The Governing Body, along with the Headteacher, will then consider the request, making their decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child in accordance with the school Admissions Code. Once determined, the decision will be communicated by the Governing Body to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.

If a request is granted, the parent will need to make an application as part of next year's normal admission round and this will be processed within the normal allocation process. A place is never guaranteed at the school and in the case of oversubscription, places are offered in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. In short it would be delaying the application rather than an offer of a place.

* A summer born child is one born between 1 April to 31 August.

Arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as one who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a persons' ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Most children with Special Needs will not be disabled within the meaning of the Act. The admission of pupils with disabilities is considered in the first instance in the same way as non-disabled pupils. Further considerations are made in the light of need and accessibility. It is the School Governors' Policy to accommodate pupils with disabilities should parents wish their child to attend the school. Steps are taken to prevent any pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils. In practice we ensure that classroom and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of all pupils, including those categorised as having Special Educational Needs. Staff organise human and physical resources within the school to increase access to learning and participation by all pupils. The School strives to ensure that whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect under the Equality Act 2010.

Policy Review

The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy, and for reporting back to the Local Authority.

Signed: Samantha Barlow (Executive Headteacher)

Signed: Andrew Jackson (Chair of Governors)