



# Admissions Policy

Reviewed by (Head Teacher/DSL):

Date: January 2021

Approved by Board of Trustees on:

Review Date: January 2022

Page left blank intentionally

## 1 Rationale

Bristol Steiner School is an inclusive, non-selective, non-denominational independent school. Steiner Waldorf Schools are founded on respect and care for the development and individuality of human beings. The school welcomes all families that want to pursue a Steiner Waldorf education. Children will be considered for admission in accordance with this policy.

Five values underpin the educational philosophy at Bristol Steiner School. Please see Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Values that underpin the educational philosophy at Bristol Steiner School**

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. The welfare of the child is paramount and no child should suffer harm of any form, either at home or at school. Every person that works at or visits the school has the responsibility to make sure all pupils are safe. The Admissions policy is an essential part of the school's Safeguarding practice.

*For the purposes of this policy, 'staff' also includes agency staff, volunteers, students working at Bristol Steiner School, and 'parents' includes carers and legal guardians, unless otherwise specified in the text.*

## 2 Aims

Bristol Steiner School aims to:

- Treat all applicants to the school fairly and transparently;
- Understand the holistic educational needs of children applying to the school;
- Respond sensitively and proactively to the concerns of parents;
- Ensure that children and parents are offered high quality information and experiences to base their decision on;
- Ensure that transitions for all children are well managed, supportive and safe and;
- Seek ways to be inclusive and to broaden access to the school.

### 3 Implementation

This policy is the responsibility of Head Teacher, the Senior Management Team (SMT), the Admissions and Business Development Manager and the Trustees of the School. This policy should appear on the school website.

### 4 Other policies

This policy works in conjunction with the following school related policies and procedures:

1. *Prospectus*
2. *Equalities*
3. *Fees & Finance*
4. *Deposit*
5. *Bursary*
6. *Staffing*
7. *SEN, disability, SEND and Inclusion*
8. *Whistleblowing*
9. *Complaints*

### 5 Monitoring and Review

Bristol Steiner School will seek to continually improve all its related safeguarding policies, procedures and guidelines. The school will review this policy on a regular basis to confirm that the content and approach is still appropriate. The review will take place whenever there are significant changes and not later than 12 months from the previous review date.

### 6 Bristol Steiner School provision

Bristol Steiner School accepts children between the ages of 3 to 11 years. Please see Table 1.

Age	Bristol Steiner School Area	Class	Mainstream Equivalent
0-3	Parent & Child Group	Parent & Child	Nursery
3-4	Rowan Tree Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Nursery
4-5		Kindergarten	Reception
5-6		Kindergarten	Year 1
6-7	Main School	Class 1	Year 2
7-8		Class 2	Year 3
8-9		Class 3	Year 4
9-10		Class 4	Year 5
10-11		Class 5	Year 6

**Table 1: Classes at Bristol Steiner School**

Pupils proceed from the Kindergarten through to the Main School, located on the same premises. The school accepts new applications throughout the year. Pupils can join the school at any point during the academic session.

The school has a separate parent and child offering for babies and infants from birth to the age of three years.

## 7 Attendance

Pupils may attend Kindergarten on a part-time or full-time (which includes afternoon sessions) basis. In line with the Steiner Waldorf education model, at the school children remain in Kindergarten until they are 6 years of age (i.e. beyond the commencement of statutory education at the age of 5 years). Statutory provision will begin in Kindergarten followed by five class teacher years in the Main School from the ages of 6 to 11 years. Minimum attendance requisites are designed to build a pupil's resilience in and stamina in preparation for Main School. Please see Table 2.

Class	Attendance
Kindergarten: 3 year olds	A minimum of 3 mornings per week
Kindergarten: 4 year olds	A minimum of 4 mornings per week
Kindergarten: 5 year olds until they join Class 1	A minimum of 5 mornings per week
Main School: Class 1	5 full days with the option of leaving at 12.45pm on Wednesday and Friday. Full fees apply.
Main School: Class 2	5 full days with the option of leaving at 12.45pm on Wednesday and Friday. Full fees apply.
Main School: Class 3	5 full days with the option of leaving at 12.45pm on Friday. Full fees apply.
Main School: Class 4	5 full days. Full fees apply.
Main School: Class 5	5 full days. Full fees apply.

**Table 2: Classes at Bristol Steiner School**

## 8 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school provides an inclusive education and consider all applications carefully. Bristol Steiner School is not a special school and there are inevitably limitations to the school's capability to make special needs provision. The school welcomes children with identified Special Educational Needs (SEN), disabilities and other needs, wherever the school believes it is able to meet that child's particular requirements. The school assesses the individual child in the context of the class they may join, considers the support which can be provided to the child within the school, and whether it is possible to meet the child's needs. The school will discuss any needs thoroughly with parents, to consider what support and adjustments may reasonably be made at the school. It is also recognised that this is an ongoing process, as a child's needs may change over time. The school will therefore continue to assess a child's needs throughout their time as a pupil, with any concerns being discussed with parents (and other relevant professionals) as appropriate.

## 9 Admissions Process

The school accepts new applications for Kindergarten and Main School places throughout the year. Pupils can join the school at any point during the academic session. The admissions process involves the following, sequential stages:

- Stage 1 – Liaison with Admissions Team
- Stage 2 – Registration of application (£95 non-refundable registration fee)
- Stage 3 – Meeting with Head Teacher and Admissions & Business Development Manager
- Stage 4 – Meeting with Teacher
- Stage 5 – Review application
- Stage 6 – Allocation of place at School

- Stage 7 – Meeting with Admissions Administrator
- Stage 8 – Acceptance of place at school (£200 deposit fee)
- Stage 9 – Confirmation

### **9.1 Stage 1 – Liaison with Admissions Team**

To indicate interest in placing a child at Bristol Steiner School, contact the school via the official website, email address, telephone or in person. The enquiry will be directed to the Admissions & Business Development Manager. Information relating to the school will be sent via email.

### **9.2 Stage 2 – Registration of application**

To register an application, please request an application form from the school.

#### **9.2.1 Application for child below Statutory School Age (SSA)**

To apply for a child below Statutory School Age (SSA), the School will require:

- Early Years (EY) Pupil Application Form (completed and undersigned)
- Financial Agreement Form (completed and undersigned)
- A copy of your child's latest school report
- Any other relevant reports or referrals concerning your child to include (if applicable):
  - Any medical or other assessment reports (e.g. for speech therapy, asthma)
  - Individual Education Plan or Behaviour Plans from any existing or previous school
  - Full disclosure of any SEND and any additional needs
  - Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
  - Educational Psychologist's report
- Proof of payment of £95.00 non-refundable registration fee

#### **9.2.2 Application for child above Statutory School Age (SSA)**

To apply for a child above Statutory School Age (SSA), the School will require:

- Pupil Application Form (completed and undersigned)
- Financial Agreement Form (completed and undersigned)
- A copy of the child's latest school report
- Any other relevant reports or referrals concerning the child to include (if applicable):
  - Any medical or other assessment reports (e.g. for dyslexia, speech therapy, asthma)
  - Individual Education Plan or Behaviour Plans from any existing or previous school
  - Full disclosure of any SEND and any additional needs
  - Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
  - Educational Psychologist's report
- Proof of payment of £95.00 non-refundable registration fee

### **9.3 Stage 3 – Meeting with Head Teacher and Admissions & Business Development Manager**

The School will arrange a physical or virtual meeting with parents of the child, the Head Teacher and the Admissions & Business Development Manager present. During this meeting, the parents will receive an overview of the school and will then have the opportunity to present general and/or child-specific queries. If parents wish to proceed, the school will then move to the next stage.

#### **9.4 Stage 4 – Meeting with Teacher**

The School will invite you to attend a meeting with a teacher (in most cases this will be the relevant Class Teacher) to talk about the child and the start of their journey at the school. To ensure that every child is properly supported within the school setting, please provide the school with all details that may be considered as relevant to the child's development. The discussion will entail details of the school environment, learning methods and approach to child development.

During the meeting, parents will have the opportunity to discuss any aspects relating to the child's particular needs. The child will be also be invited to attend part of this meeting, to enable the teacher to understand the child's individual personality. If the teacher feels it necessary, the teacher will establish contact with the child's previous teacher. The motive of the meeting is to obtain a good understanding the child, so that the School can act in the best interests of each child.

Parents are encouraged to share all relevant information regarding their child with the school, as this enables staff to ensure that the child's needs are met. This allows the pupil to settle in quickly and make good progress at school.

#### **9.5 Stage 5 – Review application**

The Head Teacher will review the application and associated documentation provided to understand the individual child holistically. The Head Teacher will decide whether the school can meet the child's needs and whether the child can make progress at the school.

If the position is not clear (for example if either the child's needs or the measures required to support them are not apparent), depending on the particular circumstances, parents may be asked to arrange a professional or medical assessment of the child, at a cost to the family.

#### **9.6 Stage 6 – Allocation of place at School**

The school will inform parents of the final decision in writing.

##### **9.6.1 Admissions Criteria**

Places are allocated into the applicable year group in accordance with the following priorities:

1. Children of current Bristol Steiner School staff
2. Siblings
3. Prospective pupils, in the chronological order by when a completed application was submitted (inclusive of all applicable supporting documents and payment of the non-refundable registration fee)
4. Capability of the School to meet child's individual needs

##### **9.6.2 Offering Places**

In the event that the school is unable to establish contact with a prospective family to offer a place, the Admissions Team will proceed down the list in order to fill the place.

##### **9.6.3 Holding Places**

Where parents wish to put their child's application on hold at any stage, if a place has been allocated to a child, the place will be lost and the application, if resumed, will be treated as a new application and added to the base of the list.

#### **9.6.4 When places are not immediately available**

Applications will be placed on a waiting list and places will be offered in accordance with the admissions criteria as soon as they become available. Please see Section 9.6.1.

#### **9.7 Stage 7 – Meeting with Admissions Administrator**

The Admissions Administrator will invite you to attend a meeting with a member of the Admissions Team to discuss fee arrangements and finalise the paperwork.

Prior to this meeting, please read the following:

- Fees & Finance Policy (available on the School website)
- Deposit Policy (available on the School website)
- Terms and conditions of School Parent Contract

#### **9.7.1 Documents that must be brought to the meeting with the Admissions Administrator**

Parents will be required to bring:

- The child's birth certificate and identification
- A signed copy of the School Parent Contract
- One form of identification is required for each parent to confirm identity from the list of accepted documents below:
  - Current signed passport
  - Home Office Residence permit (EU nationals) and own country passport
  - Full UK Driving Licence (card)
  - Benefit Book (or government notification letter)
  - Tax exemption certificate (with photograph)
  - Inland Revenue Tax Notification
  - Firearms Certificate
- One form of identification is required for each parent to confirm address from the list of accepted documents below:
  - Utility bill (less than 3 months old)
  - Council tax bill (within the last year)
  - Full UK Driving Licence (if not used as ID)
  - Bank, building society or credit union statement or passbook
  - Mortgage statement
  - Solicitor's letter (recent house purchase or land registry confirmation)
  - Local authority/Housing Association rent card/tenancy agreement
  - Benefits book or government notification (if not used for confirmation of identity)

#### **9.8 Stage 8 – Acceptance of place at School**

When a place is allocated for a child the school will require:

- Application Form (completed and undersigned)
- School Parent Contract (completed and undersigned)
- Proof of payment of £200.00 deposit fee



### **9.9 Stage 9 – Confirmation**

The School will confirm the child's school place and start date in writing, upon receipt of all relevant paperwork. The School Parent Contract will come into effect. The child's Class Teacher and Admissions Administrator will contact the child's parents to finalise the practical details that relate to the child starting school.

### **10 Transitions**

The School anticipates that all children who join the Kindergarten will continue to progress through the school until they leave at the age of 11 years. There are stages of transition from Kindergarten to Main School, when the school ask parents to confirm in writing that they wish their child to continue at the school. For those wishing to leave the school at a point of transition, please refer to the School Parent Contract for details of the required notice period.

### **11 Fees**

Parents will sign a financial agreement during the admissions process. This will clearly state the agreed fees. Please visit the Fees & Finance Policy for more details.

#### **11.1 Payment terms**

Fees are invoiced termly. Payment is due in advance on the first of each month, payable by standing order.

#### **11.2 Payment via standing order**

##### **11.2.1 Monthly payment via standing order**

On agreement with the Finance & Administration Manager, payments can be made on a monthly basis, in advance. This is the annual fee divided equally over 12 months. No interest is payable.

##### **11.2.2 Termly payment via standing order**

On agreement with the Finance & Administration Manager, payments can be made on a termly basis, in advance. This is the annual fee divided equally over 3 terms. No interest is payable.

#### **11.3 Absence**

No refunds will be made for absence.

#### **11.4 Fee increases**

Each year the School reviews the school's budget and will agree, with the Trustees, a fair fee increase. This fee rise includes, but is not limited to rising fixed costs, employee pay increases, changes in government policy and other major repairs. Any increase will be communicated by letter to each family at least six weeks before it comes into effect. Fees increases will usually come into practice on the 1st of September each year. Parents will be expected to change their standing orders to reflect this. The School reserves the right to review this during the year based on extraordinary circumstances such as, but not limited to government policy changes.

#### **11.5 First Half Term**

The first half term for all new pupils at the school is a trial period for both parents and the School. This is a time in which teachers will closely observe and assess a child's progress to ensure that the school is able to meet the child's developing needs and when the parents can decide if the school is a suitable learning environment for their child.

No financial penalty applies when a child is withdrawn in their first 6 weeks (or half term), however written notice is required and a pro-rata contribution is payable up to the date of the notice. Thereafter, a full term's notice is required as stated in Section 12.1. Please visit the Fees & Finance Policy for more details.

## 12 When a child leaves the School

### 12.1 Notice to Leave

If parents wish to withdraw their child from the school, then parents must give one full term's notice in writing by the first day of the term that the child is leaving. Please see Table 3.

Final date Notice to Leave must be received	Leaving Date
First day of Summer term	End of Summer term i.e. July
First day of Autumn term	End of Autumn term i.e. Christmas
First day of Spring term	End of Spring term i.e. Easter

**Table 3: Notice to Leave**

If parents wish to take their child out of the school for a period longer than three months and request the School to hold their child's place, then parents must pay a retainer fee. This will be set at 35% of the full fee. The first three months will be payable at the full fee.

No financial penalty applies when a child is withdrawn in their first 6 weeks (or half term), however written notice is required and a pro-rata contribution is payable up to the date of the notice. Thereafter, a full term's notice is required as above.

### 12.2 Exit Questionnaire

The School will offer every parent the opportunity to express their reasons for leaving. This information will be used for the future development of the school and to gain feedback about any changes that may benefit the school community. The school will request the parents of all pupils leaving the school to complete an exit questionnaire.

### 12.3 Child Welfare Records

When a pupil leaves the school, the School will ensure that any pupil's welfare records are transferred confidentially to the new setting and will liaise as necessary to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

## 13 Bursaries

The School is committed to inclusion and broadening access to Steiner Waldorf education. The school has a bursary scheme to provide means-tested financial support to eligible parents. The bursary scheme is designed to support families that cannot afford to pay full fees. Please visit the Bursary Policy and contact the Finance & Administration Manager for more details.