

Admissions

Policy Reviewed: September 2021
Next Policy Review Date: September 2022

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Equal Opportunities Statement

The Moorland Waldorf School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and is opposed to discrimination and prejudice on the basis of social categorisation. The school seeks to respect and value each person as an individual human being and to encourage tolerance, mutual respect and an appreciation of the value of difference. It aims to accord every member of the school community equal worth, regardless of gender, disability, age, race, culture, class, faith and sexual orientation. Although the school has a very broadly Christian basis, it wishes to promote understanding and respect for the beliefs and practices of others. MWS totally rejects all forms of racism, including any statements in Rudolf Steiner's work that may appear to be racist.

The school wishes to prepare pupils to make a positive contribution to a diverse society and aims to promote equality of opportunity as an employer and resource provider. In particular, the school aims to ensure that:

- Pupils and staff recognise that discrimination on the basis of social categorisation is unacceptable
- Pupils and staff contribute to a supportive learning environment by showing respect for one another as individuals and by having high expectations of one another
- All pupils and staff feel secure enough to express their own views and to question one another
- Pupils are valued as individuals and each pupil's education and care is developed in relation to individual needs and abilities
- Within the school and its curriculum opportunities are effectively used to enhance respect for all human beings in their richness and diversity
- Forms of social categorisation will not be used as criteria for pupil admissions
- All staff feel valued and supported and receive appropriate advice and encouragement for professional development
- In all staff appointments the best candidate for the job will be appointed on strict professional criteria only
- All forms of discrimination, prejudice or harassment carried out by persons within the school's responsibility will be treated as unacceptable and will be dealt with via existing disciplinary procedures
- The principles and practice of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community: pupils, prospective pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, trustees and visitors
- Policies and practices conform fully to current legislation relevant to this area including the Equality Act 2010.

Admissions Policy

Intent

This policy is intended to ensure that:

- Enquirers are provided with sufficient information to make a realistic judgement about the suitability of the school for their child's education
- Parents experience our response to enquiries as prompt and efficient and their introduction to the kindergarten or school class as warm and welcoming
- Parents are clear about expectations, responsibilities and the degree of cooperation required at the school
- Financial arrangements between parents and school are clear and agreed before a pupil is admitted to the school
- Admissions procedures are fully compliant with the school's equal opportunities statement and equal opportunities legislation and are fair and open
- The school is confident that, when a child is admitted, the school has the resources and skills to meet that child's needs.

Aims

We aim to:

- Provide step-by-step procedures for managing admissions
- Keep clear and accurate records for each admission
- Ensure that parents understand what the school can provide for their children
- Ensure that staff involved in admissions work within a clear structure
- Ensure that the admissions procedures realistically assess the needs of prospective pupils and the resources the school can provide to meet those needs.

Applications

All applications must be considered on their merits. The school is bound by the requirement on all schools to provide an effective education and by legislation relating to disability, discrimination and equality. Staff involved in the admissions process, in consultation with the College of Teachers and, if necessary, the trustees forming the Eskdale Trust Council, will need to decide what is possible and reasonable in relation to:

- Entry to the kindergarten or school class as it exists
- The facilities and resources the school can provide
- The training and experience of the staff.

Children with Special Physical or Educational Needs

Every effort will be made to cater for children with special needs and there will be no discrimination when considering admission requests. As with any other child, in the admissions process the school will attempt to assess its ability to meet the child's needs in relation to what is possible and reasonable as set out above. This will include liaison with parents and other professionals in assessing the child's needs and what additional support and resources can reasonably be provided.

Admissions Procedure

MW aims to make Steiner Waldorf education available in a comprehensive way. Any child's right to apply for this education should not be affected by race, gender, faith, disability or economic or social background.

Aims and Values

Our aim is to provide an open point of entry to both our kindergarten and our school. We wish to be welcoming to new and prospective families, encouraging them to become part of an active school community. We hope that you will feel able to express your thoughts and share your questions.

We hope you will find our admissions process helpful, clear, efficient and in line with Equal Opportunities legislation. We hope that you have been, or will be, able to inform yourself about Steiner Waldorf education, that you have visited, or will visit, the school, and that you have looked at our website, www.moorlandwaldorf.org. In addition, you may find other sources of information via the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship website, www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk.

We intend to follow a simple process, which keeps you informed at each stage of the application procedure. The process is described below.

Process

1. Enquiries

Your enquiry about will be welcomed. Your address and telephone number will be noted and you will be given details of expectations regarding financial and practical contributions in support of the school. You will be invited to make an informal visit to the school, which could involve attending one of our open mornings. The kindergarten caters for children between the ages of two and six; it offers four morning sessions per week during term time and, for families who need this, a number of afternoon care sessions, additional to the main programme, are available. The main school (class 1-5) caters for children between the ages of six and eleven in combined class groups.

2. Informal Visits, Open Mornings and School Events

We strongly recommend that you visit the school prior to completing your application form. Please see our website or contact the school administrator (info@moorlandwaldorf.org; 01287 661206) for details of forthcoming open mornings or other school events or to arrange an informal visit. Please note that during the coronavirus pandemic we may not be able to offer open mornings or events.

3. Application Form and Acknowledgement

Once you have visited the school and decided to proceed with your application, please complete and return our pupil admission form. Please also let the school have a copy of your child's birth certificate, copies of any previous educational reports from other settings your child may have attended and any medical or other reports that might help the school to meet your child's needs. The form can be downloaded from our website: www.moorlandwaldorf.org or obtained from the school office. Please send the form and supporting documents to:

The Administrator,
Moorland Waldorf School,
Danby,
Whitby, YO21 2NJ

We aim to acknowledge your application within about five working days. If you have not already visited the school, you will be invited to do so. If any information or documents are missing from your application, we will contact you to request them.

4. Financial and Practical Support for the School

The school receives very little in the way of financial support from the state and wishes to be genuinely open to all. It receives an annual financial grant from the Esk Valley Camphill Community to cover the costs of children from the Community who attend the school. Parents and carers who live outside the Camphill Community are expected to pay the full fee, which we strive to keep as affordable as possible. There may be bursaries available, at the discretion of the trustees, on an annual basis that parents and carers may apply for, but parents would be required to disclose financial information so that the school can make a decision about whether to award the bursary. All school parents and carers are expected to give time to fundraising activities and to undertake some practical tasks to help the school. Parents and carers of three and four-year olds in the kindergarten are eligible for a free place for attendance for up to five mornings per week, funded by the local education authority through the Early Years Foundation Scheme (EYFS.) Some parents and carers may also be eligible to apply for the extended 30-hour agreement for three and four-year olds and should apply through childcarechoices.gov.uk. Some parents and carers in receipt of certain Government benefits may be able to apply for funding for a 2-year old. Applications for this should be made to North Yorkshire Council. Afternoon care sessions in the kindergarten are separately charged for at a rate of £15 per session and may be eligible for EYFS funding if parents have sufficient hours remaining. Further details can be obtained from the school administrator. Fees are administered by the school administrator. Decisions about bursaries are made by the Trustees for the Eskdale Community Trust for Education, the charity responsible for the school. Details of bursaries awarded are kept confidential. Forms relating to fees, financial contributions and to EYFS free places will be sent to you when your application has been accepted.

5. Acceptance

Moorland Waldorf School is committed to providing equal opportunities for all children and will do its best to meet the individual needs of all applicants where this is reasonably possible.

If your application to kindergarten is accepted the school will send you a letter offering your child a place in the kindergarten, and any other forms (e.g. medical or financial) that need to be completed before your child begins to attend. You will also receive a parents' handbook, which contains useful information about how the school is run, and an invitation to meet one or two existing parents who will be pleased to discuss this and answer any questions you may have.

Before your child attends the kindergarten, but after you have been formally offered a place, you will be invited to an informal meeting with your child's prospective teacher and, if it is deemed appropriate, our SENCO. This is done as and when a place becomes available, when your child reaches the appropriate age to start kindergarten, or when an assessment of your child's needs and/or the school's ability to cater for them is required.

This meeting should last for approximately an hour, and we hope that during this time you will share with us a picture of your child, that your questions will be answered and that we will have the opportunity to share with you the educational practice and intentions of Steiner Waldorf education and the ethos of our school.

In the kindergarten we are conscious that we are providing a bridge between home and school and that this is often a child's first experience of independence from the family. We take our partnership with parents and carers very seriously for this reason and aim to provide the best experience for your child.

Acceptance into the lower school will be decided through an interview with your child. After receipt of your application form and other documents your child will be interviewed by the appropriate class teacher and one other member of the College of Teachers. It will be useful for the class teacher to be shown recent examples of your child's work. The aim is to informally assess your child's present and future development and needs and to try to form a picture of how he or she will relate to the distinctive curriculum and to the children who are already in the class. The College of Teachers will then consider the

application form, other documentation and the report of the interviewing teachers and decide whether to offer a place. In general, we consider both the welfare of the applicant and of the class he or she would join. Please note that during the coronavirus pandemic visitors to the school will be required to distance and wear facemasks if requested.

If your application is not accepted the school will send you a letter, within five days of making its decision, explaining why your child has not been successful. You will have the right to appeal against the school's decision within fifteen days of receipt of the school's letter. The letter will outline the appeal procedure.

For your child to remain in the school you will be expected to honour any financial commitment you enter into in support of the school and to take part in the annual programme of fundraising and practical activities that supports the school.

6. Children with special needs

Should your child need special assistance you will have a meeting with the teacher and the Learning Support teacher to establish what help can be provided. Please ask for our SEN Policy for more information on the resources and assistance that Moorland Waldorf is able to provide. It may be possible to offer one or two 'taster' visits for your child to gradually acclimatise to the setting and to allow the teacher to form an accurate picture of his/her needs. The extent to which the child should be accompanied by a parent/carer during 'taster' visits should be agreed with the teacher.

Please note that, because of its participation in the EYFS, the school may be able to access external funding to help meet the special needs of three and four-year olds in the kindergarten. If external funding has been obtained and ceases to be available at age five, or if, after the fifth birthday, the school feels that your child's needs have changed over time so that more support is necessary than hitherto, you will be invited to meet the teacher and Learning Support teacher to discuss how the school can try to meet your child's needs. The school will do its utmost to continue to do so but, ultimately, continued attendance will depend on the availability of the resources required for this. Similarly, because the mode of education in Classes One to Five of the school (ages six to eleven) is different from kindergarten, progression from kindergarten to school is subject to an assessment of the school's capacity to continue to meet your child's needs and all admissions to Class One are reviewed during the first term of school attendance.

In some circumstances where appropriate funding and/or support is not available the school may reach the conclusion that it is not possible to meet your child's needs, but all reasonable steps will be taken to try to avoid this outcome. At no point will your child be discriminated against because of his or her individual needs. We will work closely with families and other professionals to assess our ability to meet your child's needs and this will form the basis of decisions about admission and progression.

7. Oversubscription

If your child is under two years old and therefore too young to begin kindergarten, or if there are no available places in the kindergarten, you will be offered a place on our waiting list and you will be informed at regular intervals about your position on the list. The date the school receives your application form and any supporting documents will be the date you are deemed to have joined the list. On the waiting list priority of admission will be given as follows:

1. Children of staff members
2. Siblings of children who are already attending the school
3. Children of co-workers of the Esk Valley Camphill Community
4. Children who are in public care (Looked After Children)

5. Length of time on the waiting list.

8. Enrolment

Once all necessary forms have been received, a place offered, the agreement document signed, and financial arrangements have been made your child is formally enrolled at the school and may begin to attend. The school will agree a starting date and pattern of attendance with you. For two, three and four year olds the number of attendances per week is entirely negotiable.

Please note that acceptance into the kindergarten does not confer an automatic right to later transfer to Class One of the school, where the mode of education is different from kindergarten. Your child's development will be assessed during the time spent in kindergarten and you will be informed prior to statutory school age (five years old) whether it is expected that there will be a place for him/her in Class One of the school. In addition, during the academic year of your child's sixth birthday, in consultation with you, the school will decide on the date of transfer to Class One – children with birthdays after 31 May are considered very carefully to determine whether it would be in their best interests to remain in kindergarten for an additional year prior to transfer to Class One.

9. 'Flexi-Schooling'

'Flexi-Schooling' is an arrangement in which a child only partially participates in the full educational programme offered by a school.

The Moorland Waldorf School welcomes home -schooled children to enter into flexi-schooling arrangements. We believe this allows home-schooled children to enrich their educational experience, by coming into contact with a variety of teachers, children and learning environments. 'Flexi-School' arrangements require all parties to be quite clear about their respective responsibilities.

MW wishes to make clear that while we can offer the 'flexi-schooled' child valuable *educational support*, we cannot accept responsibility for the child's education. As such, ***responsibility for a 'flexi-schooled' child's education lies exclusively with the parent.*** Parents are accountable to the local authority for the quality and scope of this education. We will ask parents to sign a home-schooling agreement.

9. Other Commitment

In addition to the financial commitment and the routine participation in fundraising and practical help mentioned above, we warmly encourage parents and carers to contribute whatever other time and support they can offer. We are always in need of people with a diverse range of skills including gardening, building/carpentry, general maintenance, publicity, information technology, finance/administration, fundraising and artistic skills. We fully understand that some parents/carers are able to give more time than others and that circumstances change from time to time, but we do hope that all families will support the school to the extent that they are able, thereby balancing the load and ensuring a positive, productive and accessible school community. This assistance is much appreciated and forms an integral part of the school's ethos.

We invite you to contact us at any time during this application process with any questions, suggestions or comments which might help us make the process run more smoothly.

Thank you for reading this Admissions Procedure. We look forward to welcoming you to the Moorland Waldorf School.

Endorsement:

Name: Linda Parker

Position: Chair of ECTE

Date: 28/09/2021