

# The Belham

## Primary School



# **Admissions Policy**

September 2016

## **Objectives of this policy**

- To provide clear and transparent information to support parents in applying for a place at The Belham Primary School.
- To ensure that the school's admissions procedures are accountable and in line with current legislation, in particular the School Admissions Code.
- To reflect the school's commitment to providing an inclusive education for pupils in the local community, irrespective of ability.

## **Responsibilities**

The Executive Head Teacher has delegated the role of administration of admissions to the Admissions Officer – currently Ms Kate Malecki.

The Head Teacher has delegated the role of the Appeals Committee to an independent panel, to be managed by Clerks Associates Ltd.

## **The School**

The Belham Primary School is a free school run by Dulwich Hamlet Educational Trust and opened in September 2015. The school is funded directly by the Department for Education.

We are our own Admissions Authority and are responsible for our own admissions arrangements. We are required to consult on a periodic basis and regularly publish our admissions arrangements.

## **Applying for a Reception place for entry in September 2017**

All applications for children starting school in Reception are to be made via Southwark Council eAdmissions online at <https://www.eadmissions.org.uk/eAdmissions/app>. We are however happy to offer help and advice to families when applying through Southwark for Reception places. Further information about applying for Reception places can be found in the publication 'Guide to starting Primary School 2016 -2017' which can also be downloaded from the Southwark Council website. For admission into our Reception classes in 2017 you will need to apply online by January 2017 – the specific date is published on the Southwark website.

Any applications received after the date published on the Southwark website will be considered as 'late applications'. In these cases the online application system will not be available and therefore a paper form should be requested from the Southwark Schools admission team by calling 0207 525 5337.

The completed form should be sent to Kate Malecki at the Belham Primary School, c/o Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, SE21 7AL.

The published admission number (PAN) for The Belham Primary School is **60**. All applicants will be admitted if fewer than 60 applications are received.

### **Children below compulsory school age**

Parents and carers can request that their child attends on a part-time basis until they reach compulsory school age, or that the date that their child is admitted is deferred until later in the academic year, or the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. Please see our separate Appendix related to Admission of Summer Born.

### **Admissions criteria**

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the number of places available, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health & Care Plan, where The Belham Primary School is named on the Statement or within the Plan, criteria will be applied in the order below:

1. Children in public care (Looked After children) and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order) [see note (a)].
2. Children who will have a sibling attending the school at their time of entry [see note (b)].
3. Children who have a specific psychological, medical or social need which the school is best placed to meet, backed up by professional advice and agreed by the Head Teacher and a governor panel [see note (c)].

4. Children living nearest the school measured by straight line route from home to the main school entrance on Maxted Road [see note (d)]

#### Notes

(a) A child in public care (Looked After child) means a person under the age of 18 years who is provided by social services with accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or who is the subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act. Children who are looked after under an agreed series of short term placements (such as respite) are excluded.

(b) Siblings include half brothers and sisters and stepbrothers and sisters who share the same home. It also includes adopted and foster brothers and sisters who share the same home.

(c) Evidence of psychological, medical or social needs including the reasons why a particular school would best meet those needs and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. This must be substantiated by written evidence from relevant qualified professionals e.g. a child or educational psychologist, a child psychiatrist, a general practitioner, an orthopaedic consultant or social worker.

(d) The distance is determined using the computerised Geographical Information System (GIS). This system measures the distance from each applicant's home to the designated main entrance of the school by the shortest straight line route in metres. A centroid (centre point), supplied by Ordnance Survey (OS), determines the start point of the home address. If a child lives in a block of flats where a communal entrance is used, the centroid for the block and not the individual flat is used for calculation purposes. When dealing with multiple applications from a block of flats to the same community school, lower door numbers will take priority. In the event that the distance is the same for more than one applicant, the school will use random allocation as a tie-break.

(e) Where the school becomes oversubscribed within a single criterion, places will be offered to children who live nearest the school. If oversubscription still exists, lots will be drawn. The process will be overseen by a person independent of the process.

(f) The home address is the address where the child resides. Where a child spends time with both parents or carers in separate homes and both have parental responsibility, the school will need to establish where the majority of school nights (Sunday to Thursday) are spent and treat that as the home address.

(g) Multiple births – if only one place is available at the school and the next child who qualifies for a place is one of multiple birth siblings, we will go over our published admission number to support the family when possible to do so.

*Parents are advised that websites such as Google Maps and Daft Logic will not give an accurate measurement and cannot be relied on for school admissions purposes. The school finder facility on Southwark Council's website gives approximate distances to schools based on postcodes alone and cannot be relied on to identify the school which is the closest to an actual address.*

### **Operation of waiting lists**

Where in any year, the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. This waiting list will be maintained by the school and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Parents may keep their child's name on the waiting list for as long as they wish; however their position on the list may alter depending on additional applicants.

### **Arrangements for admitting pupils to other year groups, to replace any pupils who have left the school**

'In-Year' applications must be made by completing the Southwark 'In-Year' application form which can be downloaded from the Belham Primary school website at [www.thebelhamprimaryschool.org.uk](http://www.thebelhamprimaryschool.org.uk). The completed form should then be returned to Kate Malecki at The Belham Primary School, c/o Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, SE21 7AL.

### **Arrangements for Appeals Panels**

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of The Belham Primary School. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the school. The Belham Primary School will comply with the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice which apply to maintained schools, and the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. The determination of the Appeal Panel will be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals and is binding on all parties. The school will prepare guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries parents may have about the process. Appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the appeal being lodged, or before the end of the summer term - whichever is sooner.

#### **Step one**

The panel must first consider whether the school's published admissions arrangements comply with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code. They must also decide if they were correctly applied in the individual's case.

#### **Step two**

If the panel decides there is good reason for turning down the application, the appellant has the chance to state why they are appealing against the decision:

- explain why the school is the best place for the child

- tell the panel about any special circumstances that might justify the child being awarded a place
- submit additional evidence or documentation that might be relevant to the appeal, such as a medical note from a doctor to support an application on the basis of social or medical need

### **Step three**

If the panel decides that the appellant's case is the stronger, it will uphold the appeal and the child will be awarded a place at the school. If it finds that the Admissions Authority's case is stronger, it will uphold the decision not to offer the child a place.

The panel's decision is binding - both on the appellant and the school's Admissions Authority, and can only be overturned by the courts.

The panel will let the appellant and the Admissions authority know their decision by post within seven days. If the appeal is successful the child will be offered a place at school. If the appellant is unsuccessful the child's name can, on request, be placed on a waiting list.