# Dunedin School Admissions Policy

**This document describes who we can help and our admissions criteria. It should be read in conjunction with our Admissions Process document.**

## The School

Dunedin is a small, independent day school, situated in Cameron Toll in Edinburgh, providing education for pupils from S1 to S6. Our aim is to provide a nurturing and supportive learning environment for young people who, for a variety of reasons, have not thrived in other educational settings, and have usually spent a significant period of time out of school.

We can enrol up to 21 pupils, who might come to us at any stage in their secondary school career, and from anywhere across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

The young people who attend Dunedin have often previously experienced significant barriers to attending school. These might include personal, social and emotional barriers as well as specific additional learning and support needs such as those associated with neurodivergence, dyslexia, dyscalculia etc.

Our approach is more informal and flexible than may be possible in most mainstream settings. By this means, we encourage pupils to re-engage with education, and to feel a sense of belonging in a school where they are valued for who they are, and where they are encouraged and supported to pursue their ambitions.

Despite our size, we are able to offer a broad curriculum, and pupils can work towards formal qualifications, where appropriate, as well as develop skills for learning, life and work through various extra-curricular trips and activities which are organised throughout the year.

## Who can we help?

We can admit a young person from S1 to S6 who needs a different learning environment in which to thrive, and who we believe we have the capacity to support.

Our primary concerns are:

- can we provide the support a young person needs?
- do they want help and support?
- do they want to be at Dunedin?

**When making decisions about our suitability for a young person, we also consider the needs of our existing pupils, and whether a new pupil will be able to thrive within the current cohort.**

It is important that young people and their families understand and are aligned with our core values of tolerance and respect, and that they are looking for a holistic learning provision where pupils are willing to engage in a range of academic and non-academic activities.

**Please note, the school does not have the capacity to accommodate any young person who has significant behavioural support needs or who presents with violent or aggressive behaviour.**

## Entry Requirements

We offer a curriculum based on the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, at levels appropriate to the individual young person.

There are no specific academic requirements for admission to Dunedin School, and we do not ask prospective pupils to sit any pre-admission academic assessments.

Instead, staff at Dunedin consider the range of needs a young person may have, and make decisions based on whether we can support these.

We do this by reviewing information from parents and professionals who know the young person. This is part of our admissions process. Our success depends on understanding our young people well, so sharing this information is vital.

## Offering a Trial Placement

A young person can only come on the roll at Dunedin after they have completed an initial trial placement, which forms part of our admissions process.

The opportunity for a trial at the school will only be offered if there is a vacancy for a permanent place, and funding has been agreed.

Staff make a collective decision as to whether we can offer a trial place on the basis of the prior information we receive about a young person's support needs.

More information about this is available in our Admissions Procedures.

## Enrolment

At the end of the trial placement, staff make the final decision collectively as to whether the school is able to support the needs of the young person and therefore take them fully on the roll.

If, for any reason, staff feel the trial has not been successful, a member of staff will meet with the family to discuss the reasons behind this decision.

More information about this is available in our Admissions Procedures

## Timings of Admission

We have no set admissions period, and young people may start with us at any point in the year, subject to a space being available and completion of a successful trial placement.

However, if we have no immediate available spaces, we may take the decision to temporarily suspend or pause the admissions process.

## Who to Contact

For more information about the school, or to make an enquiry about places or the admission process, please contact the school administrator, either by email or by phone:

**Email:** staff@dunedin.edin.sch.uk **Telephone: 0131 672 2638**