

Rawdah Montessori Primary School Admissions Policy

Version: 2.0

Reviewed: October 2025

Next Review Due: October 2026

1. Policy Statement

At Rawdah Montessori School (RMS) we value the individuality of all children. We are committed to giving every child the opportunity to achieve the highest standards and to ensure that this happens regardless of gender, ethnicity, or background. Our school aims to be an inclusive environment within which children can fulfil their developmental potential and become independent, lifelong learners.

As a faith-based school, our Islamic values of justice, compassion, and respect for all underpin our approach to admissions. We welcome applications from families of all backgrounds who respect our faith ethos and are committed to the Montessori philosophy.

This policy sets out the procedures for admission to RMS, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with all relevant legislation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **SEND Policy**
- **Equality and Diversity Policy**
- **Parent Code of Conduct**
- **Home-School Agreement**
- **Fees and Financial Policies**

2. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

Legislation / Guidance	Relevance
Equality Act 2010	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. Schools with a religious character (including independent faith schools) are permitted to give priority to members of their faith community .
Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014	Requires independent schools to have a clear admissions policy and to act in accordance with it .
Children and Families Act 2014	Sets out the framework for supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)	Emphasises the importance of safeguarding throughout the admissions process.
School Admissions Code	While this code applies to state schools, its principles of fairness, transparency, and clarity are adopted as good practice by RMS .

3. Aims and Principles

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure a fair, transparent, and consistent admissions process.
- Welcome applications from all families who respect the school's Islamic ethos and Montessori philosophy.
- Place children in the class best suited to their developmental stage, not solely based on age.
- Identify any additional needs early to ensure the school can make reasonable adjustments.
- Maintain a balanced class composition to support a positive learning environment.
- Comply with all legal requirements, including the Equality Act 2010.

4. Admissions Authority

Admission to the school is at the discretion of the **Headteacher** (or, in their absence, the Deputy Head). The Headteacher reserves the right to refuse admission to any family who:

- Does not demonstrate respect for or understanding of the school's Islamic ethos or Montessori method.
- Provides false or misleading information on the application form.
- Fails to disclose relevant information about a child's additional needs that would impact the school's ability to support them.
- Has previously had a child removed from the school or has had a contract terminated for breach of the Home-School Agreement.

5. Faith-Based Admissions

As an independent school with a religious character, RMS is permitted under the Equality Act 2010 to give priority to Muslim families in its admissions process .

- **Priority 1:** Muslim children whose families are committed to supporting the school's Islamic ethos.
- **Priority 2:** Children of other faiths or none, whose families respect the school's Islamic ethos and are committed to the Montessori philosophy.

This priority order applies only when the school is oversubscribed. All applicants are welcomed and will be considered fairly.

6. Observation and Assessment

RMS is a selective school, but not in the traditional academic sense. Admission is based on an **informal observation assessment** designed to:

- Ensure children are placed in a class most suited to their developmental stage, not age alone.
- Assess whether children without prior Montessori experience can adapt to the Montessori environment and follow classroom expectations.
- Identify any Additional Learning Needs (ALN) or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) so the school can consider what reasonable adjustments may be needed.

6.1 Assessment Format

The informal assessment is adjusted according to each child's age and developmental stage:

Class / Age Group	Assessment Format
Toddler Community (2–3 years)	One or two observed mornings in the classroom, with parent present initially.
Children's House (3–6 years)	One or two observed mornings in the classroom, with parent nearby.
Elementary (6–11 years)	Two to five days of observation in the classroom, with parent leaving after drop-off.

6.2 Assessment Outcomes

Following the observation, the Headteacher and class teacher will assess:

- The child's readiness for the environment.

- Their ability to engage with Montessori materials and routines.
- Any support needs that may require reasonable adjustments.

The outcome of the assessment will be communicated to parents within **5 working days**.

7. Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

RMS is committed to being an inclusive school and welcomes children with special educational needs or disabilities, provided we can meet their needs with reasonable adjustments .

7.1 Early Disclosure

Parents are encouraged to disclose any known or suspected additional needs **at the point of application**. This allows the school to:

- Discuss the child's needs with parents.
- Consider what reasonable adjustments may be required.
- Determine whether the school can meet the child's needs within its resources and expertise.

7.2 Assessments and Support

- If a child is identified as having additional needs during the observation assessment, the school will discuss this with parents and may request further information from external professionals (with parental consent).
- Where additional support is required (e.g., one-to-one support, specialist assessments), this may incur additional fees. Parents will be informed of any such costs in writing before an offer is made.

- RMS is not a registered special school and cannot accept Local Authority–funded placements unless agreed on a case-by-case basis by the Department for Education (DfE).

7.3 Withdrawal of Offer

If a child is offered a place based on incomplete or inaccurate information regarding their needs, and the school subsequently determines that it cannot meet those needs, the offer may be withdrawn. This decision will not be taken lightly and will only occur after full consultation with parents.

8. Application Process

8.1 How to Apply

1. **Visit the School:** Prospective parents are encouraged to attend an open morning or arrange a tour to see the school in action and meet the Headteacher.
2. **Submit an Application:** Complete the school's **Application for Admission Form** and return it to the school office with the non-refundable application fee (if applicable).
3. **Observation Assessment:** The child will be invited to attend an observation assessment (see Section 6).
4. **Parent Meeting:** Parents will meet with the Headteacher to discuss the child's needs, the school's ethos, and the Home-School Agreement.

5. **Offer of Place:** If the assessment and meeting are successful, a formal offer of a place will be made in writing.

8.2 Application Timeline

- Applications are accepted throughout the year, subject to availability.
- For entry at the start of the academic year (September), applications should ideally be received by the **end of the Spring Term**.

9. Allocation of Places

9.1 Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated in the following priority order:

1. **Continuing Pupils:** Children already attending RMS who are progressing to the next class (e.g., from Toddler Community to Children's House), subject to developmental readiness.
2. **Siblings:** Children with a sibling already enrolled at RMS.
3. **Children of Staff:** Children of permanent staff members (limited to one place per staff member per year).
4. **Muslim Families:** Children from Muslim families who are committed to the school's Islamic ethos (in line with the school's faith designation) .
5. **Other Families:** Children from families of other faiths or none who respect the school's ethos and are committed to the Montessori philosophy.

Within each priority group, places will be allocated based on the date of application.

9.2 Class Composition

To maintain a balanced learning environment, the school may also consider:

- Age distribution within the class.
- Gender balance.
- The needs of existing pupils.

9.3 Waiting List

If a child is not offered a place, parents may request to be added to a **waiting list**. Waiting lists are maintained for each class and are reviewed termly. Parents will be contacted if a place becomes available.

10. Progression Between Classes

Progression from one class to another (e.g., Toddler Community to Children's House) is **not automatic**. Placement is based on:

- The child's developmental readiness, as assessed by the class teacher and Headteacher.
- The child's age (as a guideline, not a determining factor).
- Availability of places in the next class.

Parents will be informed of the progression decision in the **Spring Term** before the new academic year.

11. Transition and Settling-In Procedure

All children are required to attend a transition period as part of their admission. This ensures that children feel safe, secure, and comfortable within the school environment.

11.1 Toddler Community and Children's House

- **Day 1:** 20 minutes with parent present in the classroom.
- **Day 2:** 50 minutes with parent nearby (e.g., in the school office or waiting area).
- **Day 3:** Full session without parent (may be extended or shortened based on the child's needs).

11.2 Elementary

- **Day 1:** Morning session with parent leaving after drop-off.
- **Days 2–5:** Full days, with additional support from the class teacher as needed.

The settling-in period is closely monitored, and parents will receive feedback from the class teacher. If significant concerns arise, the school may discuss whether the placement is suitable.

12. Flexi-Schooling

At the discretion of the Headteacher, **flexi-schooling** may be permitted for children of compulsory school age. This allows a child to attend school part-time while being home-schooled for the remainder of the week.

- Typically, children will attend **three consecutive days** at RMS and be home-schooled for the remaining two days.
- Flexi-schooling is subject to a formal agreement between the school and parents, which will be reviewed termly.
- **Full fees remain payable**, as the place is held for the child and cannot be offered to another pupil.
- Parents must comply with all attendance and safeguarding requirements.

13. Fees and Financial Arrangements

13.1 Fee Structure

- **Toddler Community:** Fees are payable per term, with the option to pay in four monthly instalments.
- **Children's House and Elementary:** Fees are payable annually, with the option to pay in twelve monthly instalments.

13.2 Notice of Withdrawal

- A full term's notice is required to end the contract for Toddler Community places.
- For Children's House and Elementary places, notice of withdrawal for the next academic year must be given by the end of the **Spring Term 2** (usually late March/early April).
- If sufficient notice is not given, fees for the following term or year may remain payable.

14. Right of Appeal

If an application is unsuccessful, parents have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the **Headteacher** within **10 working days** of receiving the decision letter.

The appeal will be considered by a panel consisting of:

- A member of the Governing Body (not involved in the original decision).
- The Headteacher (if not the original decision-maker).

The panel's decision is final.

15. Data Protection

All information provided as part of the admissions process will be handled in accordance with the **Data Protection Policy** and UK GDPR. Information will be used only for the purposes of assessing and processing the application and will be retained securely in line with the school's data retention schedule.

16. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Headteacher and Governing Body, or sooner following:

- Changes to legislation or statutory guidance.
- A significant complaint or legal challenge.
- A recommendation from an external audit or inspection.

Review of Policy Dates

REVIEW DATE	REVIEWED BY	SIGNED OFF (Name & Role)

Oct 2025	Governing Body	Chair: Sohaib Tanvir
Next Review Due:		
Oct 2026	Governing Body	Chair:
	Headteacher	Headteacher: