

POLICY	Owner	Head of Admissions and Parent Relations
ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT	ID (Version)	DU/3.2.1. (v6)
	Published	19-September-2023
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POLICY STATEMENT

The Arbor School (“Arbor”, “we”, “the school”) is an inclusive co-educational school that follows the National Curriculum for England (“NCfE”). Arbor endeavours to deliver high-quality education with a focus on eco-literacy, sustainability, global environmental justice, and student wellbeing.

The school is committed to ensuring a transparent, effective admissions process that is supportive of the school’s vision and the needs of its entire community, whilst remaining fully compliant with all applicable UAE regulatory requirements.

Arbor welcomes children from all backgrounds. Admission is subject to availability of a place, the completion of the required admissions procedures, and the school’s ability to meet the individual needs of the child.

Admissions duties are the responsibility of the school’s Head of Admissions and Parent Relations, supported by the members of the Senior Leadership and the Admissions and Parent Relations team. All places offered are based on recommendation from the relevant Head of School, Head of Thrive, as necessary, and approval from the Principal. Applications for students of determination are reviewed by the Head of Thrive before being referred to the relevant Head of School and Principal for approval.

APPLICATION

1. SCHOOL VISIT

A visit to the school is the ideal starting point to the admissions process and are encouraged by the Admissions and Parent Relations staff. School tours are organised by the Admissions and Parent Relations Department, by appointment, on designated days and times.

2. APPLICATION

Application is understood to be an expression of interest and does not commit parents to accepting a place, nor does it commit the school to extending an offer. Parents / guardians (hereafter “parents”) are invited to either complete the application form available online on the school website.

The school does not charge fees for application. The application form must be completed and submitted with electronic copies of all requested documents, which include:

- Copy of student’s passport
- Copy of student’s residence visa (if not available, the residency application)
- Copy of parents’ passports
- Passport-size coloured photograph of the student
- Passport-size coloured photograph of parents
- Copy of the student’s birth certificate
- Copy of the student’s Emirates ID (front and back)
- Copy of parents’ Emirates IDs (front and back)
- Latest school report (we will require the last two years’ school reports if applying for a place in Secondary School)
- Copies of any previous standardised testing in the student’s current school

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- Transfer Certificate or Transfer Letter from the student’s current school (if applying to Year 3 and above from outside Dubai) or KHDA Leaving Certificate if transferring from another Dubai school

Parents of a child who has any special educational needs should provide the school with full details at the time of registration, including any specialised reports and external evaluations.

Before beginning the application process, parents are asked to check KHDA guidelines for year group eligibility and to ensure they apply for the correct year group for their child’s age.

Once an application has been completed the school will contact parents to advise regarding places available. School places will not be offered until an admissions assessment has been completed.

3. ADMISSION ASSESSMENTS

After completing the application paperwork, all prospective students are invited for an entrance assessment. The assessment is an opportunity for the school to gain a better understanding of the abilities and interests of students. The assessment process is undertaken in the school, where possible, in a comfortable and relaxed setting. If the application for admission is during a school term, the students may also have opportunity to spend time in class. An assessment fee of 250 AED will be charged per application.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments will be through an observed play session to determine school readiness and to ensure that children meet minimum entry requirements which will enable them to access the school’s curriculum. If necessary, parents may be also asked to submit pre-recorded videos of their child. Children need to be fully toilet-trained before they can start school.

Assessments for entry into the Primary School (Years 1-6) include age appropriate physical or online assessments carried out by members of the school’s Academic Leadership Team. Years 3 or above may be asked to complete cognitive ability test (“CAT4”). If they do not have a recent result from their previous school

Students applying to the Secondary School take the age-appropriate CAT4 online assessment and attend an interview with the Head of School.

In all instances, reports from the previous school and the standardised test data, if applicable, are reviewed as part of the assessment. On occasion, the school may also require a confidential reference from the previous school.

For applicants who are unable to attend an assessment in person, assessment will be based on previous school reports, the most recent assessment data on Reading, Writing and Mathematics, if available and as applicable to the year group, and a remote session with the Head of School or another member of the school’s Academic Team. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are too young to attend a remote session, assessments will be through pre-recorded videos. An applicant who is identified during the assessment process as having possible special educational needs will be referred to the school’s Thrive Team for further evaluation.

Students re-entering Arbor may be exempt from re-assessment (if absent no more than one school term) at the sole discretion of the relevant Head of School and the Principal.

3.1. STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION

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ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT	ID (Version)	DU/3.2.1. (v6)
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All admissions for students of determination (i.e. students with special educational needs and disabilities), whether their needs are identified during the assessment process or declared by their parents at the time of application, will be handled by the school’s Thrive Team under the terms of the school’s admissions procedure for students of determination.

Members of the Thrive Team, led by the school’s Head of Thrive will work with parents as well as other specialists, where necessary, throughout the admissions process. Admission is not conditional on a medical diagnosis, but parents are expected to share previous reports which identify barriers to learning and recommended support strategies prior to admission assessments. In the case of recent reports not being available (i.e. less than two years old), the school may request an updated assessment if it is believed that historic reports no longer accurately describe the child’s needs.

Depending on the needs of the student, the Head of Thrive may issue an additional support contract as a condition to the offer of a place.

Places, if available, are allocated on a case-by-case basis and are based on the assessment of students’ needs and the ability of the school to provide for them. The Heads of School and the Head of Thrive will all agree before an offer is made. On occasion, students may be placed on a waiting list where the existing level of need is high within the requested year group.

3.2. STUDENTS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (“EAL”)

Students with EAL needs are referred to the Head of Thrive for evaluation. Depending on the needs of the student and the year group applied to, the Head of Thrive may issue an additional support contract as a condition to the offer of a place.

On occasion, students may be placed on a waiting list where the existing level of need is high within the requested year group.

4. OFFER OF A PLACE

The school will make every effort possible to make admissions decisions available to parents one working week (whilst school is in session) from the date of assessment. For students of determination, the admission process may take anywhere between three weeks to three months depending on the complexity of a particular student’s needs and the amount of information available to the school’s Thrive Team at the time of application.

Arbor promotes inclusive practices and strives to meet the individual needs of all students. On occasion this may mean that the school cannot offer a place to a particular student where, in the opinion of the Academic Team, the student concerned will not be able to develop / prosper in the academic and social environment of the school or the school’s structure does not meet his / her educational, pastoral, and social needs.

5. ALLOCATION OF PLACES

All places offered will be based on recommendation from the Head of School and approval by the Principal until all vacant places are filled. Sections within each year level will be as balanced and diverse as possible, considering students’ characteristics such as English language fluency, educational needs, cultural background, and gender.

When spaces are filled, applicants will be placed on a waiting list with a priority given to siblings of students of determination and then to siblings of other students

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	ID (Version)	DU/3.2.1. (v6)
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The school reserves the right to cap the waiting list for each year group. If the year groups are full and a student is unable to secure a place for that academic year, their application will not automatically roll over for the following academic year applicant will be asked to re-apply.

The school reserves the right to take fewer children in the event that insufficient number of applicants satisfy the admission requirements set out in this document.

Compulsory education in the UAE begins from Year 2. Students are placed in a year group deemed to be the most appropriate within the bounds of KHDA guidelines (as specified below) and the judgement of the school's Academic Leadership Team as a result of the admission assessment. For students changing curriculum, this may mean that parents need to sign a KHDA Demotion Certificate in order to join the school.

Age as on August 31 st by Year Group			
Foundation Stage 1	Foundation Stage 2	Year 1	Year 2
3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years

For admissions into Year 3 or above, an attested completion or transfer certificate from the previous school showing the last year level completed is a requirement.

6. **CONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE**

In exceptional cases, the school may offer a *Conditional Acceptance*. This may be as a result of references from a previous school or observations made during the admission assessment. In such a case, clear conditions and a timeline will be agreed between the school and the family. If these are not met, the school may ask the family to remove the child by the specified date.

7. **ENROLMENT**

Once an offer is made, families must take up the placement by making a payment for a registration deposit. This amount is deducted from the first instalment of the tuition fees. Failure to pay a deposit may result in the place being offered to another candidate. A place offer may be deferred for maximum of one term at the sole discretion of the relevant Head of School and the Principal.

Students may not be permitted to start school unless the first term tuition fees have been paid or a payment plan is agreed with the school's Accounts Team. Once fees are paid, a minimum of two working days are required before the students start school to enable essential administrative tasks relating to their admission to be completed.

It is a regulatory requirement that all students enrolled in Dubai private schools are registered with the KHDA with their Emirates ID and sign a parent-school contract. This process needs to be completed within the timeframe set by KHDA. As part of child safeguarding requirements, the school will also request at this time from the student's previous school any safeguarding information. Any information will be dealt with confidentially and stored securely.

8. **TUITION FEES**

Annual tuition fees are payable in three installments in advance on or before dates specified by the school.

The first instalment will not exceed 40% of the annual tuition fees.

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If new students enrol at the school part way through the academic year, the school may charge tuition fees starting from the month of enrolment. Returning students are expected to start school from the beginning of the term and are not entitled for such pro-rating.

A student may not start the academic year unless the term fees have been paid in accordance with the above.

For students who are identified as needing additional educational support and intervention, the costs of this provision will be per the *Additional Educational Needs* contract, agreed by the parent and the school.

Students are expected to attend school regularly. There will be no deductions from fees for holidays or student absence from school.

9. NON-PAYMENT OF FEES

According to KHDA regulations, the school reserves the right to suspend students from attending the school, withhold progress reports, final examination results, or transfer certificates until all outstanding fees have been paid in full. The school also reserves the right to not re-register returning students whose fees have not been paid in full or when fees are repeatedly paid late.

10. RE-REGISTRATION

For returning students, a re-registration form needs to be completed and a deposit payment is required during the timeframe specified by the school to confirm places for next year. This amount is deducted from the first term’s tuition fees. Re-registration for returning students will not be accepted unless all outstanding fees due have been paid in full. Failure to complete the above may mean that student loses his / her seat for the next academic year to new applicants.

11. WITHDRAWALS

Notice of student withdrawal must be made in writing to the Admissions Department six term weeks in advance. The school’s tuition refund policies follow the KHDA regulations outlined below:

- Tuition fees paid before the start of the academic year are refundable and only the registration / re-registration fees will be deducted.
- If the student attends school for two weeks or less, a month’s fees are deducted.
- If the student attends school for a period ranging between two weeks and one month, two months’ fees are deducted.
- If the student attends for more than one month, the term’s fees are deducted.

The refund will be calculated from the start of the term and the date of the official request by the parent stating the intent of withdrawal and not from the date the student was absent. Being on the school register counts as days in school.

Registration/re-registration deposit will not be refunded unless there are extenuating circumstances as specified by KHDA.

12. CANCELLATION

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With prior consultation and approval from KHDA, the school reserves the right to cancel a student's placement or refuse to re-register the student for reasons including, but not limited to: non-payment of fees by identified deadlines, non-completion of registration requirements, poor attendance and non-compliance with school policies and procedures.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Document Title	ID / Reference No.
Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy	DU/4.2.1.
Students of Determination Policy	DU/4.3.2.

ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation / Term	Description / Definition
CAT4	Cognitive Ability Test
EAL	English as an Additional Language
NCfE	National Curriculum for England
KHDA	Knowledge and Human Development Authority