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Director of Admission

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The Admission Process at Park

For students entering September 2008

To assist parents with Park's admission process, we offer the following descriptions and chronology. On the back page is a Park School checklist for you to use.

Parent Visit and Interview

If you would like to learn more about Park, please call to make an appointment to tour classes with a parent guide and to speak with Cynthia or Jonathan. These visits, usually in the morning, take approximately an hour and a half; we prefer that all parents or guardians attend, when possible. Once you have visited, you'll be in a good position to decide whether or not you wish to apply. A parent tour and interview are required, even if you attend the Open House on Sunday, October 28.

Application Form

This form, filled out on both sides and submitted with the \$50 application fee, begins the formal application process, and we then start a file for your child. Applications must be underway by January 4, so that the file can be complete by January 25. We urge you to submit your application as soon as possible after your parent visit. Earlier applicants can be offered greater choice of visit dates for their children and more time to ensure that the file is complete. It is strongly recommended that any child applying to Park's Nursery or Kindergarten classes have prior school experience. Please keep in mind that we have many more qualified applicants than openings.

Family History Form

After you apply, we will send you the Family History Form. This provides an opportunity for you to offer specific information about your family that may not have been covered in your parent interview. The most important part tells us about your child, his or her development, and your thoughts on his or her school needs for the upcoming years. **Please keep to the four pages provided and use type of a reasonable size.**

Teacher Recommendations

The Admission Office will request school records and teacher recommendations from your child's current school. We suggest that the teacher complete the form and send us a copy, keeping the original in case you are applying to more than one school. The teacher's comments play a crucial role in our efforts to get to know your child. We suggest that you speak to the teacher before the December vacation and thank him or her for completing the forms. Teachers of applicants to Grades VII-IX will be sent two forms, one each for math and English.

Personal References

We request an informal letter about your child and your family from the two people you have named on the application. It is important that the writer know your family well. Only one reference may come from a relative. Another good choice is a family friend, neighbor, or friend's parent. It does not matter whether they know or are known by anyone at Park.

Application Deadlines

Please send your application as soon as possible after your parent tour. The deadline for submitting the initial application is January 4, although later applications are sometimes possible for the middle and upper grades. All admissions materials must be received in the candidate's folder no later than January 25. Our office will call parents and schools if Family History Forms or school records are missing by this deadline.

Standardized Testing for Admission

Applicants for Grades VI-IX are asked to take the Independent School Entrance Examination (ISEE) or the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) in November, December, or January. (We prefer the ISEE, but the SSAT is acceptable.) You can learn more about the ISEE at www.iseetest.org. We have a limited supply of registration forms, so please contact us if you need one. For younger children, we ask the child's school to send any standardized test results, along with the teacher's report.

Applicants with Disabilities

Families who may need special accommodations during the admission process are invited to make these needs known. Auxiliary aids and services may be available upon request.

Your Child's Visit to Park

Children applying for Nursery and Kindergarten will be invited to one of a series of small-group morning play sessions during January and February. Those applying for Grades I-V visit in groups of applicants, arriving at 12:45 p.m. and participating in a range of activities with Park's teachers. Children applying for Grade I stay until 2:30, those for Grade II-V until 3:30. Applicants for Grades VI spend a half-day (8:10-12:20), and those applying for Grades VII-IX spend the entire day at Park (8:10-3:10). Our office will call you to set the date for your child's visit.

We think it is important for applicants to enjoy their visits to Park. School should be engaging, and we try hard to make the visits enjoyable, even for a nervous child. Very young children sometimes are concerned about separating from their parents; therefore, parents often wait in a nearby room. Upper School applicants who visit for the day may worry that they won't know anyone; we assign a student host who is eager to do a good job. We hope that visiting children can relax and have a good time, because we then will have the best opportunity of forming an impression of them. In preparing a young child for a school visit, most parents find it is wise to be as low key as possible: "This is a school that we like, and you have been invited to visit. You'll play and do some games with the teachers, and I'll wait for you with the other parents in a nearby room."

How Was My Child's Visit?

After your child's visit, parents are welcome to call for a brief report on the Park teachers' observations of the child. We like to hear, too, how your child experienced the visit. Since January and February are very busy times in the Admission Office, we ask you to be understanding if we cannot return your phone call right away.

Notifying Parents of Admission Decisions

Most Boston-area independent schools notify parents at the same time, mailing their letters on March 10 and asking parents to accept a place by April 10. A few schools use an earlier timetable, but, if requested, they will allow parents to wait until after March 10 before accepting a place. Park keeps a wait list during the spring and summer, when additional places sometimes become available.

Coffee with the Head of School

Parents may wish to meet Jerry Katz, Park's head of school. He is available for coffee with prospective parents in the lobby on four Friday mornings from 8:35 to 9:30 a.m. in the winter term: January 18, 25, and February 1 and 8. If you arrive by 8:15, you can also attend Morning Meeting in the theater and observe the start of the school day for Grades IV-IX.

The Park Parent

All applicants will receive the parents' monthly newsletter, *The Park Parent* in January and February. Its articles and notices will give you a feel of the year at Park. A number of events listed are appropriate for prospective parents to attend, especially Springfest, in May. This fair involves nearly every Park family and is fun for all ages. If you have questions about what you read in *The Park Parent*, call Cynthia or Jonathan, who will be happy to explain.



The Park School
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Admission Deadlines & Checklist

- Park School Admission Open House
October 28 (12:00 - 4:00 p.m.)
- Parent visit, tour and interview scheduled by
January 4 Date
- Application and \$50 fee
January 4 (earlier, please, if possible) Date sent
- Family History Form due
January 25 Date sent
- Two personal references due
January 25 Ask for references
Date sent
- Teacher recommendations due
January 25 Date sent
- Child's essay sent to Park (Grades VI-IX) due
January 25 Date sent
- Child's visit at Park
to be scheduled Date
- Admission decision letters mailed by Park School
March 10
- Parent reply date—Parents let Park know
their decision; send contract and deposit
April 10 Date sent
- Applicants for financial aid: Parents' Financial Statement
(PFS) due at sss in Pittsburgh (if applicable)
January 25 Date sent
- Current w-2s and tax forms (1040 & 4506) and a copy of PFS to Park
February 8 (if applicable) Date sent
- Applicants to Grades VI-IX: Registering to take ISEE or SSAT
January 25—Scores are due to Park (if applicable) Date of test

Parents should know that while these deadlines are important, we are sometimes able to accept late applications, particularly for the upper grades. We try to be especially helpful to out-of-town families who may not know their plans in time to meet this schedule. Please call and ask.