



Admissions Policy 2025-26

International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA)

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Rationale

Montessori Principles

As a Montessori community, IMSA is guided by the following principles:

- **Independence:** Encouraging children to make choices and take responsibility for their learning.
- **Respect:** Valuing each child as an individual and fostering care for others and the environment.
- **Hands-on Learning:** Using materials and experiences that support active exploration and discovery.
- **Prepared Environment:** Designing classrooms that meet the developmental needs of children aged 0–5.
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** Inspiring curiosity and joy in learning rather than relying on external rewards.
- **Peace Education:** Promoting kindness, empathy, and collaboration in daily life.

IMSA Mission Statement

The mission of the International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is to nurture the full potential of every child aged 0–5 by fostering independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. Guided by Montessori philosophy, IMSA provides a carefully prepared environment where children learn through hands-on experiences, freedom within limits, and respect for themselves, others, and the world around them.

Our goal is to support children in becoming confident, compassionate, and responsible individuals who can adapt to a changing world while holding fast to values of peace, cooperation, and respect for diversity.

The mission of the International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is to cultivate internationally-minded students who connect their acquired knowledge to action in the real world. Our goal is to inspire children to become active, compassionate, lifelong learners who can relate harmoniously with other people and cultures.

International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is a diverse and non-selective school, admitting students irrespective of:

- ability;
- race or nationality;
- appearance;
- cultural, social or family background;
- mother tongue or accent;
- religious beliefs;
- gender or sexual orientation.

All students have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

Aims

This Policy lays out the procedures for the application for a place at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA), ensuring:

- equal and fair opportunity for all potential applicants;
- an efficient and effective process from initial enquiry to enrolment;
- consistent application of school policies and those of Orbital Education.

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with, and with reference to:

- International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) Enrollment Contract Terms & Conditions;
- International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) policies;
- Parent Code of Conducts;
- Orbital Education policies and procedures;
- Albanian law and by-laws on Pre-University Education.

Admissions Requirements

Admission is open to children aged between 0 and 5 years, from all nationalities, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

- there must be a reasonable prospect that the student will benefit from the learning programmes on offer;
- there must be good prospects of meeting the student's needs without unduly prejudicing the education and/or welfare of other students;
- the school will maintain its commitment to international education through a balance of nationalities and language groups, but the language of instruction is English; All Albanian nationals will follow Ministry of Education requirements on Albanian Language and Literature as well As Albanian History and Geography for relevant year groups.
- prospective parents and students understand and accept the school's Vision, Mission and Values, Enrolment Agreement, and expectations with regard to curriculum and community life;
- there is adequate information from parents and previous schools to support an informed decision.

English Language Requirements

The language of instruction at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is English.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

For students with mild or transient special needs, whether these are identified before or upon application or if they become apparent during the student's time at International Montessori School

of Albania (IMSA) we may be able to provide additional SEN support. This may incur an additional fee. For full details, see the SEN Policy.

Such special needs may include mild general learning disabilities (such as below average general intellectual functioning and slower rate of maturation or social adjustment) or specific conditions (including dyslexia, dyscalculia, difficulties with working memory and processing, speech and language disorders, sensory impairments such as hearing difficulties, dyspraxia (coordination or verbal), dysgraphia, milder forms of Autistic Spectrum disorders (e.g. Asperger's syndrome), ADHD and some emotional and behavioural problems).

International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is prepared to consider applications from students with mild special educational or physical needs under the following circumstances:

- the nature of the special need is clearly established prior to admission;
- the scope of the special need does not exceed the competencies and provisions available within the school, or through agencies known to the school and with which it can work.

It must be recognized that we may not be able to meet the specific needs of a child, and enrolment at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) may not be appropriate. We cannot enrol children whose needs cannot be met within the school's existing resources.

Staff who are involved in the assessment of potential students must be robust and thorough when assessing the strengths and abilities of applicants with special needs, to ensure that the school is able to effectively meet these needs within the levels of current provision.

Admissions Process

Whilst it is always best to start and finish a school year, we understand that this may not be possible for several reasons. We will accept admission, subject to available places, at any time of the year.

Students leaving the school must give at least one month's notice, otherwise deposits and other charges will be forfeit, as per the Enrolment Terms & Conditions.

Admission is at the discretion of the Admission Officer and Principal S/he will consider documentation and references from the applicant's current school, feedback from meetings and interviews with the applicant and/or the applicant's parents,

1.Initial Meeting

All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the school for an Initial Meeting with the Principal and to enable the family to familiarise themselves with the school, its philosophy and its facilities.

The Initial Meeting is arranged through the Admissions Manager for both sides to ask questions to assess whether the student is likely to succeed at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA). Relevant documentation will be shared and discussed. The family will be given a tour of the school including, where possible, meeting relevant teachers.

If the family is not in Albania or there are particular time constraints, the school may consider a candidate for admission through a virtual meeting. Consideration without an Initial Meeting may only happen in exceptional circumstances.

All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the school for an Initial Meeting with the Principal and to enable the family to familiarise themselves with the school, its philosophy and its facilities.

2. Joining Pack

The Joining Pack contains the International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) Vision, Mission and Values, the Schedule of Fees & Charges, Academic Calendar, the Enrolment Terms & Conditions, the Equal, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the Concerns & Complaints Policy, Parent Code of Conduct. Parents state that they agree to these documents when they sign the Contract.

The Joining Pack documents are also available on the school's website.

3. Taster Day

To help with the decision-making process, we encourage families to take advantage of an Assessment Day, when the student joins the school for a full day. The Assessment Day enables us to consider the student's capacity to cope with the curricular and co-curricular expectations and social and behavioral requirements of life at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA). An online application form should be completed and submitted through the application portal before the Assessment Day.

If a student is unable to join the school for a full day, a [CAT4 assessment] will be conducted online.

4. Follow-Up

The Admissions Manager will send a follow-up e-mail, requesting a decision about whether the family will apply for a place at International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA).

5. Application

The family submits the online Application Form with the supporting documents (student's photo, student's vaccination certificate, passport or ID copy of student and parents, and three most-recent end-of-term reports).

6. Review

A member of the SLT reviews the Application Form and may contact the student's current and/or previous school(s) for additional information if appropriate.

7. Offer

If the Principal is satisfied that International Montessori School of Albania (IMSA) is the right school for the applicant, an Offer Letter will be sent to the parents (which may specify certain special conditions), together with an invoice for Initial Charges (Registration Fee and Enrolment Deposit).

8. Acceptance and Confirmation

Parents are required to confirm the student's place by payment of the Initial Charges within eight (8) days of receiving the invoice. Upon notification by the Finance Office of receipt of the payment, the Admissions Manager sends a Confirmation Letter and one copy of the Contract, countersigned by the Principal, to the parents. The student's place is now formally reserved.

Failure to settle the Initial Charges within eight days may result in the applicant's place being forfeited.

Tuition Fees and any further charges must be paid according to the Terms & Conditions and the Schedule of Fees & Charges.

9. Further Information

Before the student joins the school, the Admissions Manager will send, by e-mail, a Welcome Pack, including the Parent Handbook, timetable information and uniform information. Further information, particularly for students joining the Early Years, may also be included, as required.

10. Student Placement

Students applying to IMSA will be placed into the correct year group by their age, development and previous school performance.

Decisions about placement will be made by the Admissions Manager together with the Principal and the Teacher of the group. The school reserves the right to decide about year group placements of new students, which are made according to the following criteria:

- Age according to Albanian schools' criteria (Appendix 1 gives a guide to which class a child is most likely to enter);
- Special circumstances based on observations or for specific social/emotional (not academic) reasons.

Each applicant is considered individually and with reference to previous educational experience but, based on best practice, we do not generally advocate putting children in classes in advance of their chronological peers.

If, in our professional judgement, the student is not optimally placed, we may consider to change a student's class and/or year group soon after admission. We will discuss the reasons for suggesting such changes to the parents, who are key participants in the decision-making for this.

Waiting Lists

Children who have successfully completed the application procedure, but are unable to join the school due to no place being available, will be offered a place on the Waiting List with priority given to:

- 1) siblings of current students
- 2) returning students
- 3) children coming from other Orbital Education schools
- 4) children of staff members
- 5) native English speakers
- 6) others prioritised by date of completion of the Admissions process.

Policy Review

This Policy is to be reviewed every two years and updated as and when changes occur.

Appendix 1 – Class Allocation Chart

Placing your child in the right class is very important in their development.

Here at IMSA, we allocate students to a class based on the following criteria:

1.

Date of Birth	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
01/09/2022 to 31/08/2023	-	-	Infant/toddler
01/09/2021 to 31/08/2022	-	Infant/toddler	Casa
01/09/2020 to 31/08/2021	Infant/toddler	Reception	KG

2. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Based on observations or for specific social/emotion reasons.

Please note that whilst each applicant is considered individually with reference to their educational background, based on best practice we do not generally advocate putting children in classes ahead of their age group.

We also reserve the right, based on professional judgement, to move a student to another class and/or year group following careful consideration and clear communication with the parents should we feel the student is not optimally placed.