

ALDRO



Admissions Policy Policy 15a

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Aldro is an independent school for boys aged 7 to 13. The school has approximately 180 pupils, around 60 of whom enjoy the family friendly boarding options available at Aldro. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is vital. We very much hope that you and your child will visit Aldro School. We hold a number of Open Mornings which give a general introduction to the school. Details are also published on our web site. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact our Admissions Manager, Mrs Sadler, on 01483 813535 or email on admissions@aldro.org to arrange a visit.

THE ENTRY PROCEDURE

Aldro is a selective school. Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the school. Although we have a range of academic abilities, the selection process includes academic entry tests designed to ensure that the boys to whom places are offered will thrive here. In specific terms, we want to be able confidently to prepare boys who join us for successful entry into similarly selective senior schools.

It is our stated aim that we, as a school, must be sure of our ability to meet the needs of accepted pupils. The School will do all that is reasonable to ensure the entry procedure (and any information about the School) is accessible for all-ability applicants (ensuring equal treatment, accessibility and SEND considerations are paramount) and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. This is more fully described below and in our accessibility policy (available as part of the admissions process).

Applicants for admission should register by October of the year preceding the desired year of admission. (The registration form is included in the prospectus). Our standard ages of entry are at 7 (Year 3) and 11 (Year 7), with occasional entry at other year-groups if there are vacancies.

EQUAL TREATMENT

Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Generous bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school. See information about bursaries below.

Aldro is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion or social background. Our provision for bursaries is described below.

ACCESSIBILITY, SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome all pupils irrespective of any special educational needs and/or disabilities, provided that they will be able to cope with the academic demands of the school. The School will do all that is reasonable to comply with the Equality Act 2010 so that the School may accommodate the needs of disabled applicants for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully

participate in the education provided by the School. Where an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report exist, these and any associated correspondence from the pupils' current school must be submitted in advance to enable the School to make a fair and complete assessment.

We will discuss thoroughly with parents the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child should an offer of a place be made at the school. In many cases, this will include the provision of 1:1 additional learning support lessons, with a small additional cost added to the termly bill. If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School is unable to cater adequately for the needs of children with disabilities, parents will be informed why an offer will not be made.

ADMISSION TO ALDRO

Open mornings take place every term and are an excellent way to visit the school, enabling the whole family to see the school in action and meet current staff and pupils. Mid-week Open Mornings seek to replicate a normal school day, whilst Saturday Open mornings seek to provide a more representative selection of the breadth of education available over time. Following attendance at an Open-Morning, or in some cases prior to this, prospective parents should additionally make an appointment with the Admissions Manager to meet with the Headmaster and have a personal tour of the school. This will be an opportunity to discuss in depth how the individual needs of the child might be met at Aldro.

The next stage involves the completion of a Registration Form and once this is received, together with the Registration Fee, prospective pupils are added to the admissions list and become 'registered boys' and will be invited to an Assessment Day.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The aim of the process is to identify well-rounded boys who will clearly thrive at Aldro and benefit from the outstanding all-round education on offer, both inside and outside the classroom.

We expect all our prospective pupils to take some entrance tests to ensure that they will be able to cope with the academic demands of school life and to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The assessment day for boys to Forms 3 and 4 will include online assessments in core subjects (spelling, writing, maths), alongside a taste of school life with music, drama and sport. Older prospective pupils will sit online tests in reasoning and written assessments in English and Mathematics. No preparation is necessary for the entrance tests which are designed to reflect the expectations of the National Curriculum and how it relates to independent preparatory schools.

In addition to the assessment days, we need to receive a report from the prospective pupil's current school. This not only paints a broader picture of a boy's abilities and interests than we can glean from our entrance tests, but also serves as an important "safety net" in case the boy significantly under-performs on the assessment day itself – which can be an issue with younger

candidates. We do not formally interview the boys on the test day, but there will be an opportunity for informal discussions with each boy in the course of the day.

APPEALS

Should a pupil not be offered a place at Aldro, we will make clear in our written feedback why that a pupil would not thrive or be happy here. We will always seek a reference from the current school and take this into consideration. There are many reasons why we might make our judgement, but it will always be made with the fullest set of information available to us. Should a parent wish to make an appeal against this decision, they should write in the first instance to the Headmaster, and include any further information that was not available at the time of making our decision. The Headmaster will acknowledge the initial appeal within 48 hours, and will form a review body of three people (not involved in the initial decision), to include at least one governor, to make a final decision within four weeks of the initial appeal.

OVERSEAS APPLICANTS

We welcome all applicants whether local to Aldro or much further afield. We ask families to come to visit Aldro so that they can see the school (especially if they are looking to board). During these visits we can arrange for a taster day and for the entrance assessments to take place. During the application process, we will need to formally check the Identification of all overseas applicants (those with non-UK or non-EU passports), and the Admissions Manager will help guide those of non-EU passports as to the exact process for registration, assessment and progress to an offer. Overseas pupils can study at Aldro as a boarder provided that they have a relative or legal guardian living in the UK with whom they can stay for the exeat weekends. Aldro is an authorised Tier 4 Visa sponsor.

ATTENDANCE & REGISTRATION

Once admitted onto roll at Aldro, we expect parents to support fully the ethos, vision, values, aspirations and aims of the school. We accept that there are sometimes unavoidable reasons for a child to be absent from school, perhaps in exceptional medical circumstances or when permission is granted by the Headmaster for a visit to a potential future school. It is our stated policy to target at least 98% attendance across the school year. Parents will be written to in the first instance if attendance drops below 95%, without reasonable explanation, and called in for a meeting with the Headmaster if this is not addressed by the following half-term.

SIBLING POLICY

Most siblings join us at Aldro as we are a family school. However, admission is not automatic, and there may be rare occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

BURSARIES

Our bursary programme is generous and is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet Aldro's entry criteria to take up a place here. We offer several means-tested bursaries annually to entrants where the parents have indicated on the registration form that they may be eligible for financial support. Both parents are required to provide proof of

their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need. Some of the Aldro Bursaries are set aside for candidates who approach the school via the Royal National Children's Foundation (RNCF); and in line with the school's Christian foundation, some are earmarked for the sons of people in full-time Christian work.

Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the school. Levels of support may vary upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Our Bursary policy and application form can be obtained from the Bursar. Decisions are made in consultation with an external advisory company, the Headmaster, Bursar and Governors.

FLUENCY IN ENGLISH

There is an expectation that all pupils at Aldro will have a good working knowledge and understanding of English, although help with English as an Additional Language is provided for boys who require it. There is an additional charge for this one-to-one tuition as part of a fixed international package. Pupils for whom English is not their first language, will have an informal language assessment during the school visit or during a Skype interview with the Headmaster, prior to being invited for entrance assessments.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Although Aldro has a Christian Foundation, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and we offer places to boys from other religious backgrounds or none. However, all pupils are expected to attend our Chapel services and morning assemblies. There is scope for boys from other religious backgrounds to practise their own faiths; however, parents should be aware that normal school commitments should be honoured and that there is compulsory Saturday morning school for all pupils in Form 4 and above, and matches on most Saturday afternoons for pupils in Form 5 upwards.

SCHOOL'S CONTRACTUAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

Copies will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process, and a copy of the school rules will be sign-posted to parents.