

Date: April 2021

Next review due: April 2022

Responsibility: SMT (Principal, Head of Junior School, Head of Admissions)



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

Dame Allan's Schools (the Schools) exist to provide high quality education, both curricular and extra-curricular, for girls and boys from the ages of 3 to 18. Through our diamond structure, we combine co-educational and single sex education, with boys and girls being educated together at the Junior School, separately from the ages of 11 - 16 and together again in the Sixth Form.

Deciding on the right school for your child is vital and we believe that a personal visit to the Schools is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit the Schools. We usually hold a number of open events in the Autumn and Spring terms, further details of which are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective pupils and their parents/guardians/carers (hereafter referred to as parents) at other times. If you wish to arrange a visit, please contact the Schools' Admissions Office on 0191 275 0608 or admissions@dameallans.co.uk. If it is not possible to hold open events or arrange school visits due to circumstances beyond the Schools' control, details of alternative arrangements will be published on our website.

2. Entry Procedures

The academic curriculum offered by the Schools seeks to equip pupils to pass external examinations at ages 16 and 18 years. The norm is that over 90% of pupils in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) will proceed to Higher Education.

The Schools are selective and seek to identify pupils who have the ability and aptitude to benefit from the academic curriculum on offer.

Subject to assessment and dependent upon availability, applications are accepted into most year groups with the exception of direct entry into Years 11 and Year 13.

Applicants for admission are accepted throughout the year. The Application Form is available on the Schools' website and from the Admissions Office.

Further details relating to the assessment procedures are set out below.

3. Equal treatment

The Schools' aim is to encourage applications from applicants with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. As detailed below, bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many pupils as possible, who meet the admission criteria, to attend the Schools.

The Schools are committed to securing equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which all individuals are treated on the sole basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The Schools seek to select pupils of academic potential irrespective of sex, gender, race, nationality, religion or belief, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy (or having recently giving birth) or transgender status.

Where an applicant has any disability, they will be treated no less favourably than those without disabilities. The Schools will make reasonable adjustments to address the needs of applicants with disabilities subject to the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; the financial resources available; the cost and practicality of measures proposed; health and safety requirements or the interests of other pupils in the Schools.

Entrance examination and interview procedures will be arranged to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged. Special arrangements will be made in advance of examinations or interviews for any applicant who has a disability including the provision of extra time for applicants who have a recognised specific learning difficulty. Arrangements will be discussed in advance with the parents and the current school of any applicant. Relevant specialist reports will be sought in advance of entrance examinations and interviews.

4. Special Educational Needs

The Schools do not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our sites can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all of our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admissions criteria to all potential pupils. We require parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's needs with the Schools before he/she sits the entrance assessments, so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide with the Application Form a

copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report, if they have one, in order that the Schools can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the Schools can ensure, for example, that he/she will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure his/her health and safety, and the health and safety of others.

The Schools will discuss thoroughly with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the Schools, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil would not be able to access the education offered, or that his/her health and safety or those of other pupils may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the Schools.

5. Assessment Procedures and allocation of places

The precise details of the selection procedure vary according to the age of the pupil. We endeavour to ensure that all applicants and their parents are fully briefed about what is required.

The aim of the process is to identify the pupil's potential. The Schools are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests which stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The Schools have strong traditions in music, drama, dance, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

References are required and sought from an applicant's current school at all entry stages. These references are a key part of the selection process, along with examination performance and interview performance.

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

In the event of the number of children registered for any year group exceeding the places available, the following will be taken into consideration:

- Results obtained in entrance assessments;
- References from previous schools;
- The presence of siblings within the Schools or requiring entry;
- The nature of an existing year group.

At the Junior School, there are only a limited number of bursary places available (see section 7 below in relation to bursaries). We allocate places to pupils not requiring a bursary first, before allocating places to those applying for a bursary.

a. Junior School

FOUNDATION STAGE

Children are welcomed into the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** of Dame Allan's Junior School from the September after they turn three. Whilst the Schools do admit pupils who are rising three (ie whose third birthday falls within their first term at school), this is on a case by case basis and priority will be given to those children aged three at the point of admission. Prior to admission into Nursery or Reception, parents will be asked about their child's general development and any identified special needs. Subject to availability, children are invited to spend a session in the Nursery during which time staff assess their development and monitor any particular needs they may have. For children joining EYFS, there is an assessment which includes letter and number recognition, sequencing and motor skills.

A place, or on occasion a follow up visit, may then be offered. Where applicable, references will be sought from existing educational settings.

In extraordinary circumstances, where it has not been possible to assess the pupil, an offer of a place may be made, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references (if applicable) and subject to review at the end of the first year in school. If this review is unsuccessful and the pupil does not meet the required standard, the place may be withdrawn and the pupil will not be able to progress into the next year group.

KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

Assessment for entry into Key Stages 1 or 2 (Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) involves written assessments in Reading, Mathematics and Non-Verbal reasoning on standardised (age related) test papers and time spent with the applicant's peer group in a classroom situation. Alongside performance in the assessment, reports from current schools, previous learning experiences and special needs are also taken into account. The assessments are taken by arrangement following application.

In extraordinary circumstances, where it has not been possible to assess the pupil, an offer of a place may be made, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references (if applicable) and subject to review at the end of the first year in school. If this review is unsuccessful and the pupil does not meet the required standard, the place may be withdrawn and the pupil will not be able to progress into the next year group.

b. Senior Schools and Sixth Form

The main entrance examinations cycle is for admission to the Schools in Year 7 (11+) and takes place early in the Spring Term for entry the following September. Examinations are held on separate days for the Boys' and Girls' Schools. A reserve date is set aside for those unable

to make the main examination day. Applicants for places in Years 8-11 inclusive (or any applicant looking for immediate entry into Year 7) sit the appropriate examination for their year group by arrangement following their application.

Examinations for admission to Years 7-9 in the Senior Schools consist of papers in English, Mathematics and Non-Verbal Reasoning. Following the entrance examinations, applicants will be invited to attend for an interview as part of the selection process.

Pupils seeking admission to Years 10 will sit papers in English and Mathematics and will be interviewed by Heads of Department including Science and, where appropriate, a Modern Foreign Language. There will also be an interview with the relevant Middle School Head.

Applicants for places in Year 12 are interviewed by the Head of Sixth Form. Depending on the outcome of this interview, conditional offers are then made on the basis of GCSE results. We expect pupils entering Year 12 to have secured 45 points from their best 8 GCSE grades (grades 3 or below may not be included). For pupils applying for a bursary, they are expected to have secured 69 points from their best 9 subjects at GCSE. All subjects chosen at A level will require a minimum of grade 6 achieved at GCSE, with some subjects requiring a higher grade. Further details can be obtained from the Head of Admissions.

Applicants for places in Years 11 and 13 are decided on a case by case basis. If you require further information, please contact the Head of Admissions.

5. Sibling Policy

The Schools welcome applications from siblings. Admission is not automatic and will be subject to passing the appropriate entrance assessment. There may be occasions where the Schools judge that Dame Allan's is not the right environment for the sibling.

6. Bursaries and Scholarships

Bursaries are available to applicants from Year 3 (7+) onwards whose parental circumstances are such that they would not be able to attend the Schools without such an award. They are means-tested and can cover up to 100% of school fees. Applicants must satisfy the Schools' entrance criteria and performance in the entrance assessment is taken into account when awarding bursaries. Bursary awards are reviewed annually to assess the continuing financial eligibility of the recipient. The Schools' bursary policy can be obtained from the Head of Admissions or the Bursar.

Academic scholarships are available to pupils entering the Senior Schools at 11+, 12+ and 13+. They are worth a maximum value of 50% fee reduction and are awarded on the basis of outstanding performance in the entrance process (examination and interview).

Bursaries and scholarship awards are tenable during the whole time the successful recipient remains at the School, subject to satisfactory work and conduct under annual review (plus

financial eligibility for bursaries). The awards may be withdrawn if there is evidence that the recipient is not working diligently and/or their behaviour falls below the expected standard.

A Junior School pupil may sit the main school entrance examination if he or she wishes to be considered for a scholarship. However, all pupils who are allocated a place in Dame Allan's Junior School are entitled to a place in Dame Allan's Boys' or Girls' school as appropriate unless their progress in the Junior School gives cause for concern or suggests that they might find the transition to DAGS or DABS difficult. Parents will be informed of these concerns by Junior School staff and possible strategies to address them discussed, including the possibility that a pupil might sit the entrance examination to provide an objective view of their progress.

Scholarships are only available, in the first instance, to applicants sitting in the main entrance examinations cycle. Where an applicant sits the examination at a later date and does well enough to have otherwise been considered for a scholarship, consideration will be given to making an award based on the pupil's performance in the school examinations at the end of their first year in school.

Scholarships and bursaries in the Sixth Form are awarded at the Principal's discretion.

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians at the Senior Schools, who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability (and meet the Schools' entrance criteria). They cover the cost of tuition for their instrument or voice. Further details can be obtained from the Director of Music.

7. Overseas applicants

International pupils are only accepted into year 12 and applications are reviewed on a case by case basis.

8. Children of members of staff

Children of members of staff at the Schools will be subject to the same selection procedures as external applicants.

9. Religious beliefs

The Schools welcome applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.

Although the Schools have a Christian foundation and traditions, they do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief.

However, parents should be aware that all pupils are expected to attend the annual Carol Service and Founder's Day service, unless exempt for religious reasons.

10. Schools' Terms and Conditions

The Schools' terms and conditions will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

11. Complaints

The Schools' Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents. However, if they wish to make a complaint relating to the admissions procedures, they should address this in writing to the Head of the Junior School (for admissions to the Junior School) or the Principal (for admissions to the Senior Schools), within 3 months of any decision relating to an admission being made.

12. Records and review

The privacy of personal data provided by prospective pupils and their parents is of the utmost importance to the Schools. For full details of how the Schools handle personal data of prospective pupils and their parents and those who are offered and take up places at the Schools, please see our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices on our website.

The Schools will not hold the personal data of prospective pupils and their parents for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be until the last entry point into the Schools has been passed, unless parents inform us that they require a shorter period of retention.