



# MALVERN ST JAMES

## Girls' School

### **Admissions Policy**

This policy is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions and is reviewed and updated annually.

#### **General**

Malvern St James Girls' School is a leading, single-sex, independent school for pupils from ages 3 to 18. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit MSJ. We hold a number of Open Events throughout the year which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School's Admissions Office to arrange a visit.

#### **The Entry Procedure**

MSJ is a selective school. Selection for the MSJ Prep and the Senior School is through an entry assessment, an interview and references from the candidate's previous 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. The School admits pupils into all year groups apart from Year 11 and Year 13; the exception to this is for occasional short-stay pupils.

Applicants for admission should ideally register one year preceding the desired year of admission. The School's Registration Form is available on the School's website and from the Admissions Office.

#### **Equal Treatment**

MSJ's 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 the world at large. MSJ's bursary programme is generous and designed to assist as many as possible of those who meet MSJ's entry criteria to take up a place here.

MSJ is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, sexual orientation, linguistic background or social background.

The School's provision for bursaries is described further on in this policy.

## **Special Needs**

MSJ does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them the necessary support that they require, can cater for any additional needs, and that our site can accommodate them.

We ask parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before they sit the entrance examination so that we can make adequate provision. Parents should provide with the Registration Form a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a medical report if they have one.

The School will discuss thoroughly with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at the School.

## **Conditions for Admission**

It is a condition for admission that:-

- all applicants meet the selection criteria for admission
- all applicants disclose reports from external agencies (e.g. Educational, Health and Care Plan, Educational Psychologist report) and Court Orders if they have any of these prior to Entrance Examinations
- general health information be submitted prior to Entrance Examinations
- any conditions of entry to the School are fulfilled
- the School receives the Parent Contract signed by any person with legal responsibility for the prospective pupil and payment of an acceptance deposit
- the applicant is of an appropriate age and maturity and the School can adequately cater for and meet the needs of any disability and/or special educational needs.

The Headmistress will make the final decision over entry having taken into consideration all the criteria for admission, including evidence that a pupil will be able to meet the School's requirements and expectations regarding discipline and conduct.

Admission will depend upon the availability of a place in the appropriate Year group and House. If an offer of a place is made, this will be subject to acceptance of the School's Terms and Conditions of the Parent Contract. Where an offer of a scholarship and/or exhibition or a bursary is made, the offer will also be subject to the accompanying Conditions of Award.

For all applicants, admission will be subject to successfully passing the entrance assessments set by the School.

## **MSJ Prep Entrance Procedure**

Entrance procedure in the MSJ Prep consists of a 2-day 'taster' visit. Ideally these would be over 2 consecutive days, although for younger pupils this may not always be appropriate. During the taster, the prospective pupil is able to spend time with their Year Group, following

the timetable and after-school activities. Taster Days are chosen specifically to link with the key interests of the prospective pupil. Pupils requesting entry into EYFS and Key Stage 1 will be informally assessed during the Taster Days by the class teacher. Pupils entering into Key Stage 2 will be informally assessed during the Taster Day by the class teacher and will have further, more formal assessments with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in verbal and non-verbal reasoning, spelling, reading accuracy and comprehension and numeracy.

For pupils who reside overseas and are unable to attend a Taster Day where they would be informally assessed, a written reading and writing assessment will be provided to be completed at their current school, agent's office or local British Council or a member of the Admissions team will invigilate their assessments remotely. A virtual interview will also take place.

Pupils joining the School in Reception start in the September following their fourth birthday. This is in line with the statutory guidance on school starting ages. In exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to a pupil starting at the School sooner, once turning 4. This decision would be determined by the Headmistress following discussion and recommendation from the Head of the Pre-Prep. This early start may mean that the pupil spends more than three terms in the EYFS.

### **MSJ Senior School and Sixth Form Entrance Procedure**

The entrance procedure in the Senior School and Sixth Form consists of applicants sitting an entrance examination at the School and an interview. For pupils applying from outside the UK, entrance examinations can be sent to approved centres, usually agents' offices, their local British Council or their current school or a member of the Admissions team will invigilate their assessments remotely. In these instances, we would conduct a virtual interview. We issue guidelines about examination procedures.

Scholarship examinations and interviews, for all relevant entry points, are held at the School on published dates, or for overseas applicants assessments will be arranged to take place remotely.

Senior School Entrance Examinations for Years 7-10, take the form of Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT4) and an English Comprehension Examination (or Oxford Placement Test (OPT) for non-native English speakers, which measures a student's English language capability).

For Sixth Form entry, in addition to meeting general entry requirements, pupils are required to take written papers in three of the subjects that they intend to study at A Level, to ensure that they are able to successfully access the courses. There are minimum GCSE grade requirements for a number of subjects including sciences and mathematics. GCSE results will need to be shared with the Admissions team in August when requested. Pupils whose first language is not English are required to take an online Oxford Placement Test (OPT), unless they have completed the UKiset assessment. The School will use the UKiset assessment system for all overseas candidates seeking admission into the Senior School, unless the candidate is able to sit the School's own entrance papers at their local British Council or a school approved selected test centre.

We do not release the completed scripts of entrance examination papers either to primary / prep schools or to candidates. We do not publish past papers but advice is provided by the Head of Admissions on suitable preparation work.

### **Offer of a place**

For entry into MSJ Prep, pupils are normally offered a place following successful Taster Days and positive results from the formal and informal assessments. The School must be satisfied that the applicant is of appropriate age and maturity to integrate well into MSJ and will be able to make the most of the opportunities on offer. The School will liaise closely with nursery and junior schools and require the Headteacher of an applicant's current nursery or school to provide a confidential report where relevant.

For entry into the Senior School and Sixth Form, pupils are offered places on the basis of meeting the entrance requirements, including an interview. Virtual interviews can be offered to pupils if necessary. The School must be satisfied that the applicant is of appropriate age and maturity, with the ability to integrate well into MSJ in order to make the most of the opportunities on offer. Offers are also subject to satisfactory references and a confidential report from the pupil's current school.

For entry into MSJ Prep, Senior School and Sixth Form, we also ask parents and current schools to provide any information which will help us to make our decisions and to cater well for each pupil. This includes, where relevant, any existing Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile and/or existing assessment of need for individual learning support. Parents considering transferring their child from the nursery or another school to Malvern St James are advised to inform their current nursery or school of their plans to move their child to our school (and enter their child for our examinations for entry to the Senior School and Sixth Form) and to fulfil all financial obligations to that school.

The decision to admit each pupil is taken by the Headmistress. Each pupil's application is carefully considered. The School reserves the right to review pupils at key transition stages to confirm progression to the next stage of schooling. In exceptional circumstances, the School may consider admitting a pupil out of their chronological year group. In the event of a pupil not being accepted, details of the reasons will be given. The decision of the Headmistress is final.

We do not publish details of results except to announce the names of those awarded and accepting scholarships.

When a place is offered, parents/legal guardians who wish to accept are asked to sign an Acceptance Form agreeing to be bound by the terms and conditions of the Parent Contract. All those with parental responsibility for the pupil (and any party contributing in part or full to

payment of fees) are required to sign the Acceptance Form and return the original copy to the Head of Admissions. An acceptance deposit must be paid on acceptance of the offer.

All pupils whose parents do not reside in Great Britain or who may be abroad for a period of time on business or holiday, are required to have a guardian in Great Britain. This person must be available at all times to act on their behalf and respond to the needs of both the pupil and the school. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange a suitable guardian for their child. Whilst the School is not responsible for guardians, all guardians are sent the school's Guidelines for Guardians at the beginning of the year. Additionally, parents will receive a copy of the School's Guardianship Charter prior to their child's enrolment and must return a signed copy of the Guardianship Charter Form to confirm their agreement. If House Staff are concerned about a pupil's guardian, they will discuss it with the Director of Boarding who may contact the pupil's parents.

### **Sibling Policy**

Most female siblings join us at MSJ. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

### **Fees**

The annual fees are set each year by the School Council and are published on the School website.

### **Scholarships and Exhibitions**

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and recognise exceptional talent. We welcome open applications for Scholarships and Exhibitions at 11+, 13+ and 16+, which are awarded on merit. Details of the Scholarships and Exhibitions are published on the School website [here](#) and are also available from the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Admissions Office.

### **Bursaries**

MSJ's bursary programme is generous and designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet MSJ's entry criteria to take up a place here. Bursaries are means-tested and both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need; but typically extend to up to 40% remission in cases of proven need. The exception is the Founders' Award bursary which can provide a remission greater than 40%, depending on need.

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 and seeks a bursary. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

Our bursary offer can be viewed on our website or obtained from the Admissions Office.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

Further details are available from the School website or through the Admissions Office. The application process for a Bursary is confidential and is handled by the Director of Finance.

### **Extra Charges**

As well as the published fees, we publish details of our charges for extras. These include individual music and drama lessons or specialised sporting activities such as archery and riding.

Some pupils may need learning support and the School is able to provide this individual support outside timetabled lessons. If we consider that such support is desirable based on performance in the entrance assessments, we will indicate this to parents in the offer letter or a follow-up letter and make clear that a charge may apply. Sometimes, a need for additional support becomes evident after a pupil has joined the School. In such cases, we will write to parents informing them of the recommendation and any additional charges and make the necessary arrangements for learning support outside timetabled lessons, which may incur charges, once we have the approval of parents.

### **Allocation of places in a boarding House**

Pupils are placed in boarding Houses by Year group. However, when there are insufficient places available in a particular House, pupils may be placed in another suitable House.

### **Overseas Pupils**

We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at MSJ as a boarder, provided that they have a relative or responsible adult living in the UK who can act as a guardian, and with whom to stay for holiday periods when the school is closed to pupils. More details are contained in the School's Terms and Conditions. We expect overseas pupils to remain at MSJ for the entirety of their education.

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of MSJ, pupils must be able to speak an adequate level of English. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parents' expense.

### **Visa application process**

Once all the required documents have been received to accept a place at Malvern St James, our legal representatives will oversee the application for the Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS). A Student Visa Compliance administration fee of £150 per term for the duration of your child's time at MSJ, will be made for each referral. The charge is payable with the fee invoice every term. Our legal representatives will liaise with parents to guide them through the complex visa application process.

## Records and Review

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be [e.g. no more than 6 months following an unsuccessful application], but reasons to retain for longer might include: e.g. if the parents express an interest in the candidate re-applying for any reason at a later date, or in the potential candidacy of another sibling; or to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.

MSJ will notify the local authority **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point, i.e. where a compulsory school aged child joins a school after the beginning of the school's first year. The School will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

MSJ will notify the local authority when a pupil is removed from the attendance register at a non-standard transition point, i.e. where a compulsory school aged pupil leaves a school before completing the school's final year. A pupil will only be deleted from the attendance register after the above duty to notify the local authority is met. The school will also keep a record of outgoing pupils, when a pupil leaves the school before the end of Year 13. Records will include the name and address of the destination school, the expected start date and confirmation from the destination school that this pupil is on their attendance register.

Further details can be found in our Attendance and Children Missing Education policy, and our Safeguarding Policy.

Malvern St James is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Senior Leadership Team and Governors review this policy regularly. This Policy does not form part of the School's contractual terms and conditions, which are made available to parents as part of the admissions process. A copy of the current edition of the standard terms and conditions is available on request.

<b>Authorised by</b>	Resolution of the School Council
<b>Signature</b>	
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