

Admissions Policy

Introduction

St Hugh's Prep School is an independent prep school for girls and boys from 3 – 13 years of age. The School is not an academically selective school and accepts children from all backgrounds and a wide range of academic abilities. Our Equal Opportunities Policy goes into more detail, but no applicant will be treated less favourably during the admissions process on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.

Aims

Our overriding aim is to ensure that every pupil who joins is able to access the full breadth and depth of our extensive curriculum, both academic and extra-curricular.

The School is committed to equal opportunity and seeks to apply its Admissions Policy fairly and sensitively to all applicants.

This policy can be made in larger print or more accessible format if required.

Condition of Admission

It is a condition of admission to the School that:

- Any conditions of entry to the School are fulfilled;
- The School receives payment of a deposit on acceptance of a place (as detailed below); and
- The School can adequately cater for and meet the needs of any disability and/or special educational needs as detailed in this policy (under the paragraph headed Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Admissions Procedure

The main entry points to the School are: Nursery (age 3), Reception (age 4), Year 3 (age 7), Year 5 (age 9) and Year 7 (age 11). Children may join the school in other year groups, depending on the availability of places.

The admissions procedure is as follows:

- Stage 1:** Prospective parents may request a prospectus from the Registrar. Parents are advised to ensure that they have looked thoroughly at our website and prospectus before arranging a visit and registering their child at the School.
- Stage 2:** The School appreciates that deciding on the right school for a child is hugely important. Parents will therefore be invited to arrange a personal visit or attend an open morning and will be given the opportunity to meet with the Head when visiting the School.
- Stage 3:** If parents wish to register an interest in a place for their child at the School, they

must complete a registration form and pay a non-refundable registration fee of £75 per child. The registration fee is non-refundable regardless of whether or not a child is offered a place. This registration ensures that your child is added to the appropriate waiting list (depending on the preferred age of entry) and can therefore be considered for a place at the School.

A registration form will be provided to parents when visiting the School or can be downloaded from the School's website or provided on request.

Stage 4: In the autumn term of the year preceding the proposed entry of the child, a conditional offer of a place will be made if a place is available. Places are allocated in order of registration date though priority will be given to parents who already have a child at the School and an allowance may be made for families with multiple children registered to join the school.

The offer of a place will be conditional upon the School being satisfied that we are able to adequately cater for and meet the child's needs (subject always to the School complying with the Equality Act 2010). To this end, when an offer of a place is accepted:

- Children are invited to attend an assessment/taster session or day at the School
- The School will request a reference and a copy of a recent school report from the child's current school (if any)
- For children living overseas who are unable to attend a taster session, all offers are conditional upon receiving a written reference form their current school, and an online interview with a senior member of our teaching staff.

Where an offer of a place is made, parents may accept the offer by completing and signing an acceptance form and paying an acceptance deposit of £500.

Following the acceptance of an offer, any professional reports which impact on the child's emotional, physical or educational profile must also be disclosed to the School to help the School assess the child's needs and any adjustments that may be needed to accommodate the child. This will allow adequate provision to be made in preparation for a taster day where necessary.

Parents who do not wish to accept the offer of a place for the date of entry specified but wish to defer to a future date of entry may request this. The child's name will then be transferred to the relevant waiting list and positioned according to the date of deferral.

Stage 5: Where a conditional offer of a place is made for entry into Reception-Year 8,

parents will be invited to bring their child to an assessment/taster session at the School.

The purpose of the taster day is to ensure that the child will be able to access the School's educational provision (including the School's curriculum) and to ensure that the School will be able to adequately meet and support the child's needs.

Children joining Nursery will be invited to attend a group taster session in the term prior to them starting. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children for this session and other Nursery children are present to promote friendships. Once an offer has been confirmed, the children are invited to attend again for a settling-in morning in the term before they start.

Children joining Reception to Year 8 will be invited to attend an Assessment/Taster session or full day at the school, two terms before they are due to start. Children joining Reception to Year 3 will be informally assessed through teacher observation, whilst children joining Years 4 to 8 will be required to take a set of standardised tests in addition to teacher observation. These assessments are required to ensure that there are no concerns about the School being able to adequately cater for and meet each child's needs. Once an offer has been confirmed, the children are invited to attend again for a familiarisation session, to meet the children who will be in their class and to meet their form teachers.

Stage 6: The School will write to the headteacher of the child's current school (if currently in education) to request a copy of their most recent school report and also a reference detailing their academic ability, approach to learning, any additional needs, and involvement in wider aspects of school life. The School will request permission from parents before such contact is made.

Stage 7: Where a conditional offer of a place has been made and the School is satisfied, following the child's attendance at the taster day and receipt of references and reports, that the child's needs can be catered for by the School, we will confirm that the condition for admission has been satisfied and will provide parents with written confirmation of the place.

If parents have applied for mid-year entry to the school, the same admissions process will apply, with the timing adjusted to meet the required start date. The School may also choose to adjust the order of the stages outlined above in order to meet the particular entry requirements of an applicant.

Tier 4 Sponsorship Visa Applications

As a registered licence holder for Tier 4 sponsorship, the School welcomes applications from children who currently live overseas and require a Tier 4 visa to be educated in the UK. Given the age range and boarding nature of the School, all children are required to have a resident parent in the UK.

Tier 4 sponsorship will incur an additional £500 administration charge per pupil, for license and administration costs. A deposit equivalent to one term's fees (at the current rate and appropriate to the child's year group of entry) is also required.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

The School will consider all applicants irrespective of any learning needs and/or disabilities. However, its facilities (physical and otherwise) for pupils with significant learning needs and/or disabilities are limited. The School's Accessibility Plan considers ways in which accessibility to and around School site can be improved for those with a disability.

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 adequately cater.

The School will do all that is reasonable to ensure the admissions procedure (and any information about the School) is accessible for disabled applicants and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary.

Parents must inform the School when submitting the registration form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School.

If either we, or parents, believe that learning support may be needed, this will be discussed with parents and the School's specialist staff (as appropriate). The School may request further information, such as a medical certificate, occupational therapist report and/or a current educational psychologist's report that the School considers necessary to make a fair assessment.

The School prides itself on being able to cater for a wide range of children's skills and abilities, including those in need of learning support. There will be rare occasions however when the needs of the child, in our reasonable opinion, will not be best met by an education at St Hugh's. When this is the case, and following further consultation with the parents, the School may decide not to offer a place or, where a conditional offer of a place has been made, may decide not to confirm the offer of a conditional place. Fortunately, this is very unusual and such decisions are not taken lightly, but when they are, they are done so with the child's best interest in mind and always having had to regard to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Waiting List

Once an offer of a place has been made, those parents who have not been offered a place for their child because there were not enough spaces available will be asked if they wish to keep their names on the waiting list for possible later entry.

Parent Contract & Acceptance Form

The letter offering a child a place at the school, the Parent Contract (Terms and Conditions) and the signed Acceptance Form, together form the basis of the contract between parents and the School. These documents are provided to parents when a place is offered, and are also available on request.

Reviewed by the Registrar and Head: Spring 2024

Reviewed and Approved by The Education, Welfare and Compliance Committee: Spring 2023

Next Review: Spring 2025