

## ADMISSIONS - Further Guidance for external candidates – St Dunstan's College Sixth Form

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### 1 ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

St Dunstan's College entry for Sixth Form (16+ post GCSE).

#### 1.1 16+ Sixth Form (Year 12)

We hold a Sixth Form Open Evening during the Michaelmas Term in the academic year preceding entry, as well as other smaller events throughout the year. More details can be found on our website.

Students applying for entry to Year 12 in the Senior School take an online GL assessment assessing candidate's logical thinking and problem-solving skills. Applicants will also write an essay-style answer on a topic of general intellectual interest. These assessments will provide us with a standardised score, which will help make an informative decision as to whether an applicant should progress to the second stage.

If invited to a second round, candidates will be asked to attend subject workshops in two of their intended A Levels where they will tackle problem-solving questions. A general interview will also be held with a member of the Sixth Form team or the Senior Leadership team. Separately to this, any candidate who has done exceptionally well in their entrance assessments may be invited for a Diploma Scholarship Academic interview with the Head of Sixth Form and another senior colleague. They will be required to prepare a presentation on a topic of our choosing, and presentations should be engaging, intellectually stimulating and seek to impress the panel with the student's learning.

Offers are conditional on GCSE results and entry requirements for the Sixth Form are currently set at reaching at least an average of grade 6 as a proportion of all the GCSEs a candidate has taken. Each subject then has a tariff set which must be met to access that course at A Level, usually this would be grade 7 or 8 and/or other requirements, such as having sat a particular qualification at GCSE. Please consult the Sixth Form prospectus for further details.

Offers are made at the beginning of December with an acceptance deadline of mid-December.

## Occasional and other points of entry (Senior School)

Occasional places do become available from time to time across all year groups. In order to be considered for an in-year place, families should register their interest online using the Enquiry Form.

Assessments for other points of entry or non-standard years of entry in the Senior School are arranged as required. Candidates will sit an age-appropriate academic assessment. Observations of a child's learning behaviours and social interactions are considered alongside the results of any assessments taken. We will also contact your child's current school to ask for a reference and/or recent school report. This is followed by interviews with the Head of Year/Section and with, in the case of 16+ entry, two Heads of Department or similar in A level subjects that the student wishes to take. These will also be taken into consideration when the offer of a place is being considered.

## 2 SCHOLARSHIPS

Academic and co-curricular scholarships carry a fee remission usually up to 35% for one or more awards but the maximum aggregate value of non-means tested awards would normally not exceed 35%.

All Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship Awards are expected to be held for the duration of a student's time in the Sixth Form, provided his / her conduct fulfils expectations as stated in the *Terms and Conditions of Acceptance* and that their progress is in line with College expectations as outlined in our *Scholarship Policy*. Diploma Scholarships are reviewed by the annual Awards Committee, to reflect on progress across the preceding year. Should an ongoing concern be raised in this review, notification will be made to parents and will be revisited in both ensuing committee meetings, held at the beginning of Lent and Trinity terms. Should it be necessary to remove an award, one term's notice will be provided.

### 2.1 Sixth Form Diploma Scholarships at 16+

#### 2.1.1 The Sixth Form St Dunstan's Diploma

The Sixth Form Diploma is embarked upon by all who join the Sixth Form. It has three strands, Knowledge, Character, and Futures, and these build to shape the individual journey of each student before they leave us readied for their post-College lives. It was created to recognise that students are more than a set of grades, and to foster those students who demonstrate, model and champion the values at the heart of our school: the courage to be who they are, the creativity to develop new ideas and shape their own futures, the confidence to try, succeed and respond positively to failures, the compassion to understand and appreciate others and the wider world, and the curiosity to always want to discover more. At the end of their time with us, students take part in a graduation ceremony where they will be awarded a pass, a merit, or a distinction, depending on how well they are able to complete the three strands – see Sixth Form Handbook for further details.

### 2.1.2 The Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship

In order to encourage and nurture talent in particular areas of College life, Diploma Scholarship exists in the following six fields: Academic Excellence, Art & Design, Drama, Music, Sport, and Design Engineering. These awards are limited in number and value and are only presented to candidates of outstanding ability or where significant potential is identified.

Current Year 11 students are invited to apply for a Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship during the Michaelmas Term of Year 11. They complete an application form which outlines the six fields they show outstanding aptitude for, and what they hope to further achieve in that field during their time in the Sixth Form. It is expected that all Diploma Scholars complete a project of their devising in their chosen field and present this on the Scholars' Symposium evening during Michaelmas term of Year 13. Furthermore, Scholars exemplify the College's core values and are expected to lead clubs, societies, and ad hoc events in those fields across their time in the Sixth Form. They are leaders and role models who encourage younger students to also excel in that field. They will be supported by regular training and mentoring by the Head of Sixth form and their team, as well as by Heads of Department who guide and shape leadership activities alongside the scholar. It is also an expectation that scholars maintain their academic grades to a commensurate level with their title. Following receipt of applications, interviews are then held by the Head of Sixth Form alongside a member of the Senior School Leadership team. Heads of Department may also request to see work portfolios or watch and attend sporting or drama fixtures to further assess potential in a given field. Diploma Scholarship offers are made before the Christmas holidays.

External 16+ candidates, hoping to join the College, can also apply for the Diploma Scholarship in November of Year 11. Applications should be made through the on-line registration process. The separate Diploma Scholarship application form will then be sent to candidates allowing them to make a case for which of the six fields of excellence they believe suitable for. Cases may be made for up to two fields of excellence, and outstanding results must be demonstratable in each. Candidates will then be invited to interview with the Head of Sixth Form, or member of the Senior Leadership Team, and attend Diploma Scholarship interviews with the relevant Heads of Department, where if appropriate, portfolios or ability can be assessed.

A scholars' retreat, attended by senior members of staff, is organised in February of Year 11 for those students who have been awarded a Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship. The retreat is open to both successful external new joiners, as well as our successful internal Year 11 students. The Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship attracts a fee remission, rising to a maximum of 35% for candidates who excel in a given field or fields. The maximum aggregate value of non-means tested awards would not usually exceed 35%.

For internal students any academic & co-curricular awards held in Middle School are confirmed during the Trinity Term of Year 10, when Heads of respective Departments review holders' progress. Once confirmed, these awards would continue to be held through years 11, 12, 13 alongside their relevant remissions. These award holders may also apply to hold a Sixth Form Diploma Scholarship and hold this in addition to any earlier confirmed

award. Again, total remission for all non-means tested awards held will not usually exceed 35%.

### 1. Diploma Scholar – Academic

#### **Criteria**

Students with an outstanding academic record of achievement will be invited to apply. It is likely that they will regularly demonstrate levels 8 or 9 in their GCSE topic tests and half-termly assessments. They will be capable and creative thinkers willing to produce new and stimulating research and ideas in their areas of interest. They will be highly articulate and interested in leading discussion and debating groups across different years during their time as a Diploma Scholar. External 16+ applicants, besides having commensurate grade predictions from their schools, will also have excelled in the reasoning tests they will have sat for application to Sixth Form. Similarly, external candidates should indicate at point of online application whether they wish to be considered for Diploma Scholarship – Academic.

### 2. Diploma Scholar – Art & Design

#### **Criteria**

The Art Department looks for young artists who are passionate about the subject through developing their own work, by visiting galleries and museums on a regular basis and through having a range of artistic skills that allow for the demonstration of a high level of creativity. They are expected to champion the subject across the year groups, devising & leading weekly group activities with the help of teachers, for a minimum two terms per year of Sixth Form.

#### **Assessment Day**

The assessment includes drawing tests and interview based on a portfolio of key pieces.

### 3. Diploma Scholar – Drama

#### **Criteria**

Students should have been actively involved in productions throughout their time in education and be able to depict a passion that goes beyond the classroom.

There is no minimum requirement in terms of professional body or amateur group membership, but candidates should be able to verbally depict a passion for the subject with supporting examples of practice in the field. This field of study may include but is not limited to: acting, dance, stage management, costume design, light and sound technician, production management, film, or media studies. Students will be expected to champion the subject to other year groups in weekly clubs and termly performances, with the help of teachers, for a minimum two terms per academic year of Sixth Form.

#### **Assessment Day**

Students who specialise in acting should be prepared to perform a two-minute monologue from a published play of their choice whilst dancers should perform a 2-minute piece in a style of their choice. Other specialisms are invited to present a 2-minute portfolio outlining their field of expertise. All candidates will also participate in a short question and answer session, with questions derived from their performances/ presentations.

#### 4. Diploma Scholar – Music

##### **Criteria**

Candidates are expected to be actively involved in music at their current school as well as outside it (e.g. being part of a choir or orchestra). We welcome applications from students having taken ABRSM or Trinity Board exams as well as Suzuki students. Candidates are required to be at a level akin to at least Grade 6 in their main instrument. On receipt of an award, students will become a lead practitioner of music encouraging other year groups via performance and taught music sessions and they will be expected to take part in both Forder and out-of-hours performances.

##### **Assessment Day**

For the Audition, candidates are required to play two contrasting pieces on their chosen instrument(s) (candidates can offer solos on two instruments) as well as answer some sight reading and aural questions. Candidates are also interviewed by the Director of Music.

#### 5. Diploma Scholar – Sport

##### **Criteria**

Candidates should be able to evidence a track record of outstanding commitment and performance in their current setting. As a performer, we would expect applicants to be competing at county level or equivalent, depending on the sport they currently participate in. In addition to demonstrating full commitment to our competitive programmes across the Sixth Form, Diploma Scholars will be expected to create and lead weekly clubs with the full support of the department, for a minimum of two terms each academic year.

##### **Assessment Day**

Candidates would be observed during a whole afternoon of sporting fixtures at St Dunstan's. Alternatively, we would equally be happy to attend a competitive fixture at the candidate's current school as part of our assessment.

#### 6. Diploma Scholar – Design Engineering

##### **Criteria**

The Design Engineering Department is looking for the next generation of engineers and students with a real passion and aptitude for Design Engineering. Students will be fascinated

by how things work and finding modern and practical ways to solve real world problems. They are expected to be subject champions across all year groups and key stages. They will be required to develop and deliver weekly Forder activities to students in Michaelmas and Lent term for the duration of the Diploma.

### **Assessment Day**

Students will have been sent a design brief in advance of the interview, they will produce a design response which they will then show to and discuss with the Head of Department on the assessment day.

## **3 BURSARIES**

The bursary programme is designed to help as many as possible of those who meet our entry criteria to take up a place at St Dunstan's. The College offers a number of means-tested awards annually to entrants at Year 3, Year 7, and Year 12. Bursaries are not usually available for candidates applying to the College outside these entry points.

Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need but can extend to full fee remission in cases of proven need. To qualify for consideration for a bursary, the gross family income must be below £75,000 per annum. Our assessors, Bursary Administration Limited (BAL), take into account anything that can be realised as a high value asset. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the College's ability to fund these within the context of what is viable within its overall budget.

It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be a personal matter. However, the College has a duty to ensure that all bursary awards are well focused, therefore, in addition to current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of award will include:

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family – i.e. where there are two partners, both would be expected to be employed unless one is prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for payment of school fees as would equity values in houses. Families with a second home or buy to let properties will be required to show willingness to release capital accordingly.
- Where parents do not live together, the financial circumstances of both parents' households will be assessed unless there is sufficient evidence that it would not be reasonable to do so. BAL's assessment is based on both parents' ability to contribute to the school fees and contributions to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources.

- Where fees are already being paid to other schools BAL's assessment will take this into account.

Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the College considers that the following would not be consistent with a family in receipt of a bursary:

- Frequent or expensive holidays;
- New or luxury cars including those on hire purchase;
- Investment in significant home improvements which are not required as part of the essential maintenance of the family home;
- A second property/land holdings unless part of a business which is providing adequate income to be considered as such;
- Regular, excessive expenditure;
- The use of disposable income to repay loans for any of the above or to repay, for example, Director's loans to personal companies;
- 50% or more equity in the family home

Every year, the number of bursary applicants greatly exceeds the amount of funding available. Bursaries are therefore awarded on the basis of academic merit.

Bursaries are normally offered for a whole academic year and can be up to 110% in exceptional circumstances, covering the cost of uniform, lunches, and other essentials. However, to ensure that the College is providing the appropriate level of financial assistance an annual review is undertaken for bursary award holders in Years 7 – 10, this review will normally take place in the Trinity term.

All bursary awards are subject to an ongoing duty of disclosure. Along with an annual review, families in receipt of a bursary are required to inform the College of any improvement in their financial circumstances, such as an increase in salary or receipt of an inheritance, whenever it occurs, even if it occurs outside of the annual review period.

Bursaries are only offered to families who are resident in the UK. If applications are being made for more than one child at the same time, there is no guarantee all applicants will receive the same level of bursary.

The College's practice is to allocate its entire bursary funding, available for the year, on entry. The College's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed, will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the College, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

To apply for a bursary, families should tick the box on the online registration form and the College Admissions Team will send an activation link to the bursary portal which will allow families to present their financial situation and upload supporting documents.

Forms returned incomplete, without supporting documentation or after the official deadline will not be processed.

The College respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families, therefore recipients are expected to do likewise, and awards should not be discussed between families.

Please note that an external independent company Bursary Administration Limited will assess all bursary applications received and some bursary offers may be made subject to a home visit taking place.

There are limited funds available for Bursaries each year and they represent a unique opportunity for students who would not otherwise have access to the renaissance education on offer at St Dunstan's College to benefit from a state-of-the-art education. As such, in order to allow St Dunstan's College to offer financial assistance to as many future applicants as possible, we would encourage parents and students who have benefited from such awards to consider their own support as part of their moral obligation, when circumstances may allow them at a later stage in life to support in turn others in need.

#### 4 EXPECTATIONS OF AWARD HOLDERS

**Obligations of Sixth Form Scholars:** the pupil who is the subject of a Sixth Form Scholarship is required to fulfil the purpose of the Award by:

- achieving the minimum transition requirement of 3 grade Bs or above in their end of Year 12 examinations.
- demonstrating a positive approach to learning, as evidenced by learning scores. Sixth Form Scholars are expected to have a consistent average learning score of 15 or above, and no subject to be below a Learning Score of 13.
- engaging fully in the Scholars' Programme, including attendance on Scholars' trips, seminars, and other activities
- maintaining sufficient progress in their Sixth Form Scholarship Project, by:
  - meeting published deadlines for the Project
  - receiving satisfactory feedback from their Mentor and/or the member of staff responsible for the Sixth Form Scholars on each aspect of the Project which is handed in
  - engaging with their Project Mentor by checking in regularly and keeping meeting notes
  - presenting their completed project at the Scholars' Symposium in Year 13
- contributing positively to the life of the College through contribution to House activities, academic pursuits, and the Co-Curricular programme.
- setting an excellent example to other pupils and demonstrating the values of the College by adhering to the College Rules and demonstrating the positive behaviour outlined in the *Expected Pupil Behaviour Policy*.

*The above information is correct as at 24.05.2024*