



ADMISSIONS POLICY

Reviewed and updated autumn 2024 | Next review autumn 2025

Introduction

St Nicholas' School prides itself on its caring approach which focuses on individual needs. We understand that deciding on the right school for your child, is very important and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We hold several Open Events throughout the year, which give a great insight into life at St Nicholas'. Details of these events are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times.

The aims of this policy are:

- To set selection criteria and procedures that are fair to all applicants. No applicant will be treated less favourably during the application process or during assessment on the grounds of their skin colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, gender, religious faith (or lack of belief), orientation, socio-economic group, disability or special educational needs.
- To identify applicants whose academic and other abilities appear to match the ethos and standards of the School and whose personal qualities suggest they have the potential to contribute sufficiently to the School community and benefit from the many opportunities that St Nicholas' offers.
- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes.
- To comply with the School's equality duties as required by the Equality Act 2010.

The School prospectus describes the broad principles on which the School is operated and provides an overview of the School's history and ethos. The School takes reasonable care to ensure that the prospectus is accurate and up to date, but does not form part of the contractual terms and conditions.

Pupils may enter the School at any age. If entry is at age 11 or above, the prospective pupil is required to sit an entrance examination in English, Mathematics and Verbal Reasoning.

For younger pupils, new entrants are assessed informally in the classroom. Pupils come to the School from a range of feeder schools, both Independent and maintained.

Where there is a waiting list for places at the School, priority will be given to siblings of current pupils, providing they are registered 12 months before the proposed start date.

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

Admissions Procedure

Parents are encouraged to visit the School or attend an Open Event. Information about the School is also available from the School website.

Registration

Parents/guardians must complete a Registration Form and pay the Registration Fee of £100. The Registration Fee is set as a payment towards the costs incurred by the School in administering the admissions process and is non-refundable.

The completion and signing of a Registration Form does not guarantee admission by the Headmistress nor does it in any way bind parents. Parents are encouraged to register their children for entry into St Nicholas' School at any time before admission allows the School to ensure that parents are kept informed of Open Events and other events for example taster days and helps build a relationship with the family before the child is due to enter the School.

Entrance Procedures

For entry into all years, pupils may apply at any time in the school year. If places are not available a pupil can be placed on a waiting list.

Requirements:

- A copy of the latest school report
- Fees (if applicable) at the present school have been paid in full
- The applicant's learning difficulties and other special needs (if any) have been fully disclosed at the point of registration to the School

Nursery School

Assessments for our Nursery pupils are based on observing them playing as part of a group and interacting with adults and their peers in a 'Stay and Play' session.

Infant and Junior Department

All pupils are invited in for a Taster Day, where the prospective pupil can spend time with their year group following their timetable. The prospective pupil will be assessed during the day by the class teacher in English and Mathematics and get the opportunity to meet the Headmistress. During this time, we will reach out to their current school for a confidential reference. We do not advise any special preparation for our assessments.

Senior Department

All pupils are invited in for a Taster Day, where the prospective pupil is able to spend time with their year group following their timetable. The child will be invited to sit our entrance examinations where they will be asked to complete a computer-based CEM assessment, in verbal, non-verbal and numerical ability. They will also complete an English creative writing piece and have an informal discussion with a member of the Senior Management Team. During this time, we will reach out to their current school for a confidential reference. We do not advise any special preparation for our examinations. These tests have been selected to provide us with your daughter's true potential, whilst highlighting her all-around profile.

Offer of a place

Following a successful application, an offer letter will be sent to the parents of the prospective pupil, who, if they wish to accept the offer, should complete and return the Acceptance Form with the £500 acceptance deposit to secure the place. 40% of this money will be put towards the first term's fees and the remaining balance will be held as collateral against costs incurred by the pupil. It will be offset against the final account and a refund will be made where applicable, after the pupil has left School. The deposit is not returnable should the prospective pupil fail to enter the School at the term indicated. However, if the prospective pupil does not reach the academic standard required, the deposit will be refunded in full.

Special Needs and Disabilities

Whilst the School welcomes applicants with learning needs and disabilities (physical and otherwise) its facilities for disabled pupils and those with learning difficulties, are limited at present. However, the School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 so that it may accommodate the needs of disabled applicants for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

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

In accordance with the School's terms and conditions, parents must inform the School when submitting a Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties or other circumstances which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School.

Parents of disabled children will be invited to a preliminary meeting with the Head to discuss ways in which any disadvantages could be lessened or eliminated from the admissions process and to ensure that the applicant can be adequately catered for should an offer of a place be made.

The School may request further information, such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report, and any associated correspondence from the pupil's current school that the School considers necessary to make a fair assessment.

If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School is unable to adequately cater for the needs of those children with disabilities, parents will be informed why an offer will not be made.

If an applicant's disability becomes apparent after admission, the School will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in order to allow the child to continue at the School. If, after reasonable adjustments have been made, the School is unable to adequately cater for and meet the needs of the pupil, the Head may request parents to withdraw their child. Fees in lieu will not be payable in this circumstance and the acceptance deposit will be returned.

Bursaries

Scholarships and Bursaries are available. Scholarship awards of up to 20% reduction in the tuition fee may be awarded. A number of Bursaries are offered for pupils whose parents have limited means. Please see the School's Bursary Policy for more information.

Complaints

In the event of any dispute regarding admissions, parents are referred to the Complaints Procedure, which can be found in the Parent Handbook.