

T01: ADMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

St Hugh's School is an independent school for girls and boys from 3 – 16 years of age. The School is a mildly 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. These include age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage or civil partnership where applicable.

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
- that, following full disclosure and consultation with parents, the School is satisfied that it can meet the child's educational needs and welfare requirements and that admission would not require adjustments which are not reasonable in all the circumstances, having regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Admissions Procedure

The main entry points to the School are: Nursery (age 3), Reception (age 4), Year 3 (age 7), Year 5 (age 9), Year 7 (age 11), and Year 9 (age 13). Children may join the school in these and 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 Headmaster and/or Assistant Headmaster Admissions 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 £90 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:** An offer of a place will be made if a place is available and it is considered that the School can meet the child's needs. 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. Sibling priority will only apply provided that the School remains satisfied that it can meet the child's needs and that admission is compatible with efficient education and the maintenance of appropriate standards.

The Headmaster's decision regarding admission is final. Parents who wish to raise concerns regarding an admissions decision may do so under the School's Complaints Procedure.

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, before an offer is made the School will take the following steps where practicably possible:

- Children are invited to attend an assessment/taster session or day at the School

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- 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 from their current school, and an online interview with a senior member of our teaching staff
- For children whose first language is not English, an EAL assessment will take place to ensure that the child will be able to access the curriculum, or that they will be able to do so with appropriate EAL support to be agreed with parents
- For children wishing to join the Senior School in Year 9, a reference from the existing school will be requested and there will be an interview with the Headmaster to assess suitability against the St Hugh's values
- In advance 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.

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 plus VAT for entry into years 1 to 6. The deposit for entry in year 7 and above is £1000 plus VAT.

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. Waiting lists are maintained in registration date order, subject to sibling priority and any exceptional circumstances determined by the Headmaster.

Taster Days

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 9 will be invited to attend an Assessment/Taster session or full day at the school, 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 may be required to take a set of standardised tests in addition to teacher observation where such test results are not available. These assessments are

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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.

School Reports

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.

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.

Child Student Visa Applications

As a registered licence holder for Child Student Visa sponsorship, the School welcomes applications from children who currently live overseas and require a Child Student Visa to be educated in the UK. Children sponsored under a Child Student Visa must have a UK-based parent or educational guardian acceptable to the School

Child Student Visa sponsorship will incur an additional £600 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 welcomes pupils with SEND provided that the School is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs.

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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 maintains an Accessibility Plan and will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

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. Parents are required to disclose any known learning difficulties, disabilities, medical conditions or professional assessments relevant to the child's education, welfare or wellbeing.

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. 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 due 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

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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.

Data Protection

The School will process personal data obtained during the admissions process in accordance with UK data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice, which is available on the School website.

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