



ST WYSTAN'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Policy Written: 1st May 2018

Policy to be reviewed: May 2020

INTRODUCTION

St Wystan's School is a co-educational independent school for pupils from ages 2½ to 11. We welcome applications from pupils from a wide range of ability and background. Our current pupils represent the full ability spectrum, including some who require learning support and others who are gifted and talented. The vision and aims of the school are intended to enable each pupil to perform to the best of their ability, no matter what that level of ability might be on entry to the school. The school has a strong record of value added results, measures that will show the pupil's progress over time compared with expectations from nationally standardised assessments, although these are not externally moderated.

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes.
- To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent with this charitable purpose and fair to applicants.
- To ensure that applicants match the ethos and standards of the School and have the potential to contribute sufficiently to the school community and benefit from the many opportunities that are offered.
- To ensure that all pupils that join St Wystan's are able to be happy, successful and secure within our academic, social, moral, cultural and pastoral environment.

Applications for admission to St Wystan's School can be made at any time. However, there are limits upon numbers under the School's policy on class sizes. In the Early Years, numbers are limited due to room sizes and staff ratios. Therefore, in any age group, those who apply and satisfy the admissions criteria will be offered places on a "first come, first served" basis until the maximum class size has been reached. Pupils are encouraged to start in September although circumstances may allow a mid-term start date in which we are happy to accommodate.

Offers of admission to St Wystan's School are made individually and at the discretion of the Head, who will consider not only the criteria noted below but also other matters that may be relevant in any individual's case. Offers of admission to the Early Years are made individually and at the discretion of the Head.

St Wystan's School reserves the right to refuse entry and progress into any year from Reception to Year 6 if the school's structure, in the opinion of the Head and teachers, does not meet the educational, pastoral and social needs of the pupil concerned.

EQUAL TREATMENT

Our 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 today's world. Means-tested bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school. Our provision for bursaries is described below. Our education is accessible to all.

Although St Wystan's School has Christian roots, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and we offer the opportunity for pupils to practice their own faiths. Our community welcomes children from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our School community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all St Wystan's pupils to attend School assemblies. All admissions are in line with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Enrichment provision can offer them the support that they require. In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act we seek to ensure that those with special educational needs are not treated less favourably or put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission. The School will take all reasonable measures to support a child and will make adjustments to ensure accessibility to the curriculum where required. St Wystan's School does not have the expertise on the staff team to provide for the needs of pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties. However, the School does have a Learning Support Department who can work in conjunction with the teaching staff and the parents to support, in certain cases, a range of mild difficulties.

Additional support with specialist staff can also be arranged, including English as an Additional Language (EAL) at the parents' expense, in order for a child to maximise their potential or fully access the curriculum.

We welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that they can cope with our site. However, we advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before he or she visits so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report to support their registration.

Reasonable dietary requirements are accommodated, and parents may consult with the catering department in this respect.

DISABILITY

The school is obliged to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his/her ability. The school asks parents to include in the registration form any form of disability that may affect the child's education and for which provision must be made. The school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The school's layout consists of several storeys without lifts. Pupils are required to move around the building, often up and down stairs. This may put pupils with impaired mobility at a disadvantage. Whilst these matters cannot be remedied without major alterations to physical features of the school, the school has an Accessibility Policy that makes recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education.

We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers if any reasonable adjustments can be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the school. St Wystan's School's facilities for children with disabilities are limited, but we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children with disabilities. When a disability or special educational need is made known to us, we will consult with parents and make reasonable adjustments to our admission procedures and arrangements to enable a child, if he/she is able, to satisfy our admission requirements. In the Early Years we adhere to the SEN code of practice.

If a pupil is disabled, we have a series of duties in respect to them. In particular, we will:

- Not discriminate against the pupil directly, indirectly or in relation to a consequence arising from the pupil's disability;
- Not victimise or harass the disabled pupil;
- Make reasonable adjustments to prevent the disabled pupil from being put at a substantial disadvantage.

THE ENTRY PROCEDURE

The Bursar and/or the Head will meet visitors to the school. After a brief discussion they will be taken on a tour of the school, followed by further discussion. The personal contact with parents is an important part of our Admissions Policy. At the end of the tour parents will be invited to arrange a suitable date for a taster day for their child (KG to Year 6) or taster session for Nursery (when parents may stay). This is in order that the school and child can assess each other in a way that is less daunting than any formal entrance exam. The child will participate in the activities of the class they wish to join. An assessment of literacy and numeracy skills may be taken at some point during the day. St Wystan's School is not an academically selective 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, although it is expected that the children will be in a position to meet those academic targets expected for the year group to which she/he wishes to join. If there is a question over the child's abilities some informal testing will be administered. All such tests will be appropriate to the child's age and circumstances. Observation of the child's social skills will also take place. At the end of the day the Head will receive a short report on the child's performance.

ENTRY POINTS - These procedures apply for points of entry as shown below:

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY (From 2½)

Children will be admitted in order of registration or full-time placements. Siblings of children already attending St Wystan's School, or the Early Years will be given priority as well as those children intending to progress through St Wystan's School.

Children for admission at this level are invited to spend at least one taster session, to meet the children and staff. Visits are non-chargeable and arranged to suit parents and the Head of Early Years. The Head of Early Years will take the opportunity to observe the prospective pupil, how they interact with their peers and assess their social, personal and behavioural development in order to promote a smooth transition into the setting. During this time the parents are invited to stay and have a coffee whilst the assessment takes place or leave the school but return promptly at the allocated time.

Following confirmation of a place and agreement of a start date, the Early Years staff will contact the parents of the child to arrange settling sessions. Nursery parents are formally asked their intentions in the Spring term with regard to transferring to Kindergarten, if the class looks like it is over subscribed. Our provision for Early Years Funding is outlined below.

KINDERGARTEN (4 years)

For Kindergarten pupils, children are offered a place based upon the date that they registered. Children who are already in the Pre-School will be expected to continue through to St Wystan's School unless one term's notice is given as per our Terms and Conditions. Siblings of children already attending St Wystan's School will receive priority.

Children for admission at Kindergarten are invited to join the year group for an informal assessment with the Pre-Prep teaching team. This involves the children spending time with their peers so that we can take the opportunity to observe their interaction and social development. During this time the parents are invited to stay and have a coffee whilst the assessment takes place (if entry is for the next academic year) or leave the school and return promptly at the end of the school day (3.40pm) if the child is seeking a place for the current academic year.

PRE-PREP/PREP

YEARS 1 to 6 (6 to 11 years of age)

Applications from children not already at St Wystan's are welcome at any time if places are available. The aim of our process is to identify potential. We are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The school has strong traditions in music, drama, art and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

- They will be invited to attend for a Taster Day with their year group class
- Comments on their suitability for the school will be passed to the Head
- Parents are given feedback by letter, and verbally, and
 - Offered a place OR
 - Invited back because of concerns e.g. failure to follow the work of the class or difficulties noted in reading, spelling, or mathematics

AWARDING OF PLACES

The preconditions for admission are that:

- The Applicant will be able to attend lessons and participate fully in the life of the School. Reasonable adjustments will take place whenever possible to ensure new pupils do not receive less favourable treatment.
- The School is able to provide adequately for the learning needs of the Applicant.
- The School which the child currently attends or attended is able to confirm satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of the child and their parents.

In addition to the taster day a report will be requested from the child's current school – this will only be done on receipt of the registration form and with the parents' permission. Parents will be notified in writing within two weeks of the Taster Day whether a place at the School is being offered or not. The School will not be obliged to state its reasons for not offering a place.

Once both the school and the parents have decided that the child(ren) will attend the School, the parents should complete a registration form (included in the Prospectus) and pay the £100.00 registration fee.

Having accepted a place and paid their deposit, terms and conditions apply. Parents will then be kept informed of events and invited when appropriate. Children are welcome to attend for further familiarisation visits when convenient.

Where a waiting list situation arises i.e. where the School anticipates all places will be taken up between transitioning children and those already registered, parents will be informed at the time of their initial enquiry. They will be placed on a waiting list and will be informed when/if a place becomes available. Once these places have been offered and accepted, they cannot be withdrawn by the School even if the school receives additional applications including those from siblings.

THE PROCEDURE

The following procedure is to be adopted to ensure an efficient admissions process:

PRE – REGISTRATION

Parents who show an interest in a place at the School for their child or children will be given a School prospectus, the current fees list, the Registration Form, the ISI Inspection report and other internal documents to provide additional information.

REGISTRATION

Once a parent has submitted the Registration Form with the appropriate registration fee, the Bursar will acknowledge receipt of the Form, place it in the appropriate Year Group admissions file and log the entry onto the admissions database in receipt order. The Bursar will also send to the parents a pupil information form and a medical record/consent form which, on return, are to be passed to the School Secretary before filing in the pupils' file. If they wish to do so, parents may inspect the School's policies once they are fully registered and have paid the appropriate fee. Once the registrations database is full to maximum of 18 in any class, a waiting list in receipt order will be maintained and parents on that list are to be advised accordingly. Taster Day visits will be organised at appropriate times to allow the School to assess prospective pupils.

OFFER OF A PLACE

Providing a place remains for a registered child, the Bursar will arrange for the Letter of Offer to be sent to the parents. This will include a copy of the Terms & Conditions. The parents will return a Letter of Acceptance to the Registrar if they wish to take up the offer, with the required deposit.

Prior to the pupil starting at the School, forms are sent to the parent for completion. These include Parent Information, Medical and Acceptable Use (ICT) Policy and Acceptance Forms. These are to be returned, completed, before the start of the term in which the child is due to join the School.

Waiting lists are to be maintained throughout this process. Should an Offer of a Place be rejected, the first name on the waiting list is to be offered that place, and so forth.

ACCEPTANCE

Once a parent has returned the Letter of Acceptance, the Bursar is to ensure that it has been signed by the appropriate parties. The Letter represents a parents' agreement to the School's Terms & Conditions and forms the basis of a legal contract between the parties. It is to be kept in the pupil's file. The deposit cheque is to be handed to the Bursar who will make arrangements to start a pupil account and to credit the value of the deposit to that account.

Once the Acceptance Form and deposit has been received, the parents of future pupils will be bound by the School's Terms & Conditions. Any child who is subsequently withdrawn, even before the start of his/her time at the school, will be subject to the full term's notice. Failure to abide by this notice period could result in the levy of a term's fees in lieu of necessary notice.

MANAGEMENT

The School's admissions process will be monitored by the Board of Governors and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team. Day to day management of the procedure is delegated by the Head to the Bursar who is the School's admissions officer.

SCHOLARSHIPS

St Wystan's School offers Academic Scholarships for entry into Year 3 for internal and external candidates. Internal candidates will not need to apply separately, as they will be automatically entered due to our efficient internal assessment procedures. External candidates will sit the same assessment as our internal pupils and those pupils who score in excess of their expected age-related attainment during these assessments. Scholarships will be awarded at the end of the Spring Term for entry into Year 3. Sport and Music Scholarships are looked at on an individual case by case basis.

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a reduction in the fees throughout his/her time at the School. Details of the arrangements will be sent to all who express an interest.

We encourage parents of Scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees, to apply at the same time for one of the school's means tested bursaries described below, when they register their child.

Scholarships are held for the duration of a pupil's time at the school, provided his/her conduct is satisfactory.

EARLY YEARS FUNDING

At St Wystan's we currently offer up to 15 hours a week free childcare, and the Governors of the school have agreed to offer up to 30 hours a week from September 2017. For parents to qualify for the 30 hours funding there are certain eligibility criteria, which are outlined below.

- both parents must be working (or the sole parent in a lone parent family)
- each parent has a weekly income equivalent to 16 hours a week at national minimum or living wage;
- neither parent has an income of more than £100,000 per year
- parents on zero hours or registered as self-employed will also be eligible

Parents have to check their eligibility at HMRC website, if you qualify will be given an eligibility code which you will need to advise the school of. The school will then check your eligibility code by contacting the Local Education Authority (LEA). Once your code is validated the school will include your code on the census returns we submit to the LEA. You will have to confirm your eligibility every 3 months, and if you do not it will make you ineligible for funding – making you responsible for payment of the fees (you will still be entitled to the first 15 hours a week free).

Any parent in receipt of Early Years Funding only is not obliged to the pay registration fee of £100 and is due the full balance of their deposit upon leaving the school. Any parent accessing hours over the Early Years funded hours, then the £100 Registration Fee will apply, and there is a discretionary deposit return depending on parental written request to return the deposit.

BURSARIES

Our Bursary programme is generous and is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet St Wystan's School's entry criteria to take up a place here. We offer means tested awards annually to entrants at the usual points of entry. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published in the school's Bursary Policy, which can be obtained from the Bursar. 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 100% remission in cases of proven need. A home visit is conducted by the Bursar and a Governor responsible for Bursary applications for all new applications.

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. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income. The school's practice is to allocate its entire available bursary funding on entry. The school'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 school, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process; but copies of the School's complaints procedure can be sent to you on request.

APPROVED BY:

Headteacher & Governors