



# ADMISSIONS POLICY

*This policy includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)*

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*Policy owner: Headteacher*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

St Wystan's School is a co-educational independent school for pupils from ages 4 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 School is organised into the following areas:

- Pre-Prep 4-7 years
- Prep 7-11 years

Documents in support of this Policy include:

- Accessibility Policy (Including EYFS)
- Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

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.

Entry to the school does not rely on passing a formal academic test although, occasionally, an offer of a place may be withheld, or withdrawn, in the following circumstances:

- Where a pupil's previous school or nursery setting indicates that his/her behaviour was such that it inhibited their learning or that of other pupils.
- Where the School feels that the pupil will not be able to cope with the curriculum.

- Where the School does not feel that it can adequately provide for a child whose learning difficulties, or physical impairments, are beyond the support that the School is able to offer, in order for him/her to access the curriculum.
- Where the School in which the pupil currently attends or attended is not able to confirm satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of the child and / or their parents.

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 room sizes which impact class sizes. In Reception (EYFS), 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 Reception are made individually and at the discretion of the Head.

Open Days are held each academic year. Prospective parents are encouraged to attend at least one of these with their child prior to applying for admission, although we are understanding that this is not always possible.

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.

## **2. THE ENTRY PROCEDURE**

Prospective parents will be invited into 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. 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 from the class teacher. The Head and the class teacher will meet the parents at the end of the day to feedback on how the taster day has gone.

## **3. ENTRY POINTS** - These procedures apply for points of entry as shown below:

### **3.1 Reception (4 years)**

Applications from families are welcome at any time if places are available. Children are invited to join the year group for a taster day which is an opportunity for informal assessment with the Reception teaching team. This involves the children spending time with their peers so the team can take the opportunity to observe their interaction and social development. The taster session may be half or full day, depending upon the individual child.

### **3.2 PRE-PREP/PREP**

#### **YEARS 1 to 6 (5 to 11 years of age)**

Applications from families with 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 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

### **4. 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 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 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.

### **5. 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 assistant 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.

## **6. 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.

## **7. 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.

After the school taster day, further discussions will take place between the school and the parents/guardians as to whether this is the correct setting. The School will not be obliged to state its reasons for not offering a place at this stage.

Once both the school and the parents have decided that the child(ren) will attend the School, the parents should complete a registration form and pay the £100.00 registration fee. This form is to formally acknowledge an interest in a school place and does not secure the place (this is done after receipt of a deposit).

The school will then offer a place to the child(ren) and will send further information to obtain more details. This is an admissions form which will need to be completed along with a Form of Acceptance. At this stage a deposit will need to be paid to secure the school place.

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.

## **8. THE PROCEDURE**

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

### **8.1 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 Registration Form and the offer of a school tour.

### **8.2 Registration**

Once a parent has submitted the Registration Form with the appropriate registration fee, the Operations Manager 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 Operations Manager will also send to the parents a pupil Emergency Contact Numbers information form and a medical record/consent form prior to any taster day or session which, on return, are to be added to our online database for all staff to access if needed. 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.

### **8.3 Offer of a Place**

Providing a place remains for a registered child, the Operations Manager 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 Form of Acceptance to the school if they wish to take up the offer, with the required deposit. At this stage we will also require admissions forms to be completed with more details of the child, parents/ guardians etc.

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.

#### **8.4 ACCEPTANCE**

Once a parent has returned the Form of Acceptance, the Operations Manager is to ensure that it has been signed by the appropriate parties. The Form represents a parents' agreement to the School's Terms & Conditions and forms the basis of a legal contract between all parties. It is to be kept in the pupil's file. The deposit paid by bank transfer will be verified by our finance team.

Once the Form of Acceptance 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.

#### **9. 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 Operations Manager who is the School's admissions officer.

#### **10. SCHOLARSHIPS**

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.

#### **11. 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 Head of Finance. Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets (even if separated/divorced). The level of support varies according to parental need; but can extend to 100% remission in cases of proven need. A home visit may be conducted by the Group Finance Director 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.

#### **13. COMPLAINTS**

We hope that families do not have any complaints about our admissions process; but copies of the School's complaints procedure can be accessed on the school's website or sent to families upon request.



**14. REVIEW** This policy will be reviewed on a two-year rolling programme.

Reviewed by	Headteacher /Operations Manager		
Dates Reviewed	June 2022		
Date of Next Review	June 2024		
Governing Body Approval	Yes/No	Signed/Dated	
Website/App	Yes/No	ISI	Yes/No
Staff Handbook	Yes/No	Parent Handbook	Yes/No