

This policy was reviewed in: **June 2023**

This policy is due to be reviewed in: **May 2024**

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS

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Purpose of the policy

The purpose of the Admissions policy is to ensure that the procedures used during the admissions process are consistently applied and understood by all those involved.

Entrance Criteria and Ability Profile

Applicants must demonstrate good-average ability and above in our entrance assessments, have a supporting reference from their current school and have had an interview with a senior member of staff. All places offered at Pipers Corner are made in order of date of registration, once an applicant has met our entrance criteria.

Age on entry

Students are admitted to Pipers Corner in all year groups, excluding Years 11 and 13 usually at the beginning of school terms but, as necessary, throughout the year if there are spaces. Most students join the School at the beginning of Pre-Preparatory, Preparatory or Senior School (including Sixth Form). Students are assessed in the year of entry according to their date of birth, however the School reserves the right to recommend a different year of entry in consultation with the family.

Pre-Registration

Prior to registering their child for entry, it is recommended that prospective parents visit the School. Opportunities to visit include annual Open Days and individual parental tours which are available throughout the working week during term time. Whenever possible, students in the Sixth Form accompany visitors on their tour, which can be followed by a meeting with the Headmistress subject to availability and the point of entry families are considering. Students with Individual Learning needs are required to declare these at the point of registration.

Registration

Parents are able to register their child for a place at any time. Parents who wish their child to be considered for entry are asked to complete the School's registration form and pay a non-refundable registration fee of £150. On receipt of the completed form and registration fee, a student is formally registered and the Admissions Team will advise of a student's registration date.

Allocation of places

For Years 6, 7 and 12 we assess all those students who are registered. When the number of students applying for places exceeds the number of places available, the criteria for entry is as outlined above in "Entrance Criteria and Ability Profile" and places are offered in order of date of registration. Those not immediately securing an offer are placed on a waiting list. After the acceptance deadline has passed for the initial wave of offers, we approach those students on the waiting list in order of date of registration. Outside of Years 6, 7 and 12, assessments are only offered when a place becomes available. At the point of registration, parents will be advised as to the likelihood of a place becoming available.

Accepting a place

The offer of a place, once all assessment criteria have been met, must be accepted before the deadline given by the School. If there is a delay to acceptance, without full disclosure, the School reserves the right to withdraw the offer, before offering it to another student. For the legal and financial commitments, associated with accepting a place at Pipers Corner, prospective parents should refer to the Terms and Conditions document issued with all offers. Additional copies are available upon request at the point of offer. Acceptance of a place at Pipers Corner is dependent on the settlement of all financial obligations (where applicable) at a current school.

Declining a place

Students offered a place, which is subsequently turned down, will be required to re-register (requiring an additional registration fee and a new registration date) if they wish to be considered for a place at a later date. Any family wishing to withdraw acceptance of a place, is required to give a term's notice to avoid being liable for a full term's fees.

No offer

Students not meeting the required assessment criteria are given the opportunity to retain their registration date and can apply again for another year of entry.

Admissions Process

All of those invited to be assessed will be asked to complete an online application form. Parents are required to submit a digital photo of the student, a recent school report and to make any individual learning and medical declarations.

Admission to the Pre-Prep Department

Reception to Year 2

The Head of Pre-Prep and Prep assesses prospective students during a half-day or full-day familiarisation visit to the School. Prospective students spend time in lessons with the appropriate year group and levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills are reviewed. Following the visit, the Head of Pre-Prep and Prep submits a report to the Headmistress and it is on the basis of this report that offers are made, subject to receipt of a satisfactory reference from any current nursery/school.

Admission to the Prep Department

Years 3-6

The Head of Pre-Prep and Prep assesses prospective students during a half or full-day visit to the Prep Department. All prospective students are interviewed by the Head of Pre-Prep and Prep and asked to complete specific English and Mathematics exercises. These assessments are set to reflect the levels of learning students at that age would be expected to have achieved, and as a result no additional learning or reading is required. Each assessment is one hour long.

During their time in school students also attend lessons during which staff assess general levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills.

For entry into Year 3, prospective students spend time in lessons in the Pre-Prep department with the appropriate year group and levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills are reviewed. Following the visit, the Head of Pre-Prep and Prep submits a report to the Headmistress and it is on the basis of this report that offers are made, subject to receipt of a satisfactory reference from any current nursery/school.

For entry into Years 4-6, the Head of Pre-Prep and Prep completes a report of the visit after considering both their own assessment and the input of the teachers who have worked with the prospective student. This report is submitted to the Headmistress and it is on the basis of this report that offers are made, subject to receipt of a satisfactory reference from the current school.

For entry into Years 3-5 assessment visits are usually arranged on an individual basis. For Year 6 entry a group assessment day is normally arranged during the Autumn Term preceding the September of the year of entry.

Admission to the Senior School

Year 7

Year 7 entry is by entrance examination which will take place in the January of the year of entry. Prospective students spend a morning at School taking entrance tests in English and Mathematics. They are also interviewed by the Headmistress or a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the Autumn Term preceding the year of entry. The results of the assessments, together with the interview feedback and reference from the previous school, are the basis on which the Headmistress makes offer of a place. Offers will be made the middle of January and the deadline for accepting a place is 1 March in the year of entry.

Years 8–10

Students are considered for entry to these year groups when places become available. Students are invited in to be assessed in order of their date of registration. The assessment will involve spending a day at Pipers during which they are asked to sit assessment papers in English and Mathematics and they also meet with the Head of Year or a Senior member of academic or pastoral staff. They attend lessons with their relevant peer group so we can observe them in a classroom setting and they can get a feel for our School environment. The results of the assessments, together with the progress report from the previous school, school reference and any feedback from the lessons students attend, provide the basis on which the Headmistress makes the offer of a place.

In Years 8-10 where, in addition to core subjects, there are also choices to be made regarding the optional subjects available, the School will make reasonable steps to try and accommodate a student's choice of subjects. However, the School reserves the right to refuse access to subjects when planned classes are full.

Pipers Corner School also offers deferred Year 9 entry to students who are currently educated in Prep Schools which go to the end of Year 8, allowing students to complete their final two years at their Prep school – deferred places are only offered in Year 7. The admissions process is such that students are assessed when they are in Year 6, alongside students in the same year group looking for Year 7 entry (see above for the Year 7 entry process). Students applying for deferred entry cannot apply for a bursary or a scholarship. They must declare their intention to defer before the admissions process begins, we cannot accommodate requests to defer after the entry assessment has been taken.

Year 12 entry

The Sixth Form at Pipers Corner is open to all students as well as students who have attended other schools. Students entering the Sixth Form need to have achieved at least five GCSEs grades 9-4 (including Mathematics and English). It is necessary to have a minimum of a Grade 6 in the majority of subjects a student is hoping to study at A Level – more information about the required grades can be found in the Sixth Form Course Guide, which is available upon request.

Applicants from other schools are invited to attend an entrance interview in the Spring Term with the Headmistress, a Deputy Head or the Head of Sixth Form. Any offer of a place will be based on the entrance interview, predicted GCSE grades and a reference from a student's current school. The number of offers made will be subject to the availability of Sixth Form places and this varies year-to-year.

In most cases, students will be able to study the A Level subjects they have chosen, subject to meeting the specific criteria, but this is subject to timetabling constraints and class capacity.

Any student whose actual grades fall below that of the required level as stated in the Sixth Form Course Guide will need to discuss subject options with the Deputy Head Academic.

Special circumstances

We recognise that the performance of candidates in an assessment may be affected by particular circumstances, for example if:

- They are unwell when taking tests or have had a lengthy medical-related absence from their school
- There are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement
- There is relevant educational history, for example education outside the British system

Transparent communications between a prospective family and the School is vital to ensure we can take into consideration any extenuating circumstances.

Individual Learning Support

Students with mild neurodiverse needs may be offered places at Pipers Corner, subject to meeting the School's ability profile. The exception to this is in those cases where the School is unable to meet the specific needs of the student within the standard provision of our Individual Learning department and curriculum and therefore it is not in the best interest of the child to be offered a place at Pipers.

All prospective students are asked to provide evidence of any Educational Psychologist assessment, or similar report, if applicable, prior to assessment for consideration by the Head of Individual Learning. Evidence submitted will be used to determine any required access arrangement for the admissions process. All new joiners will be subject to additional charges for Individual Learning Support. Our Individual Learning Department cannot review individual documents until a student is registered.

Scholarships and Bursaries

Scholarships are available for entry into Year 7 and 12 along with means-tested bursaries. We also offer means-tested bursarial support for students joining in Reception,

Year 7

Year 7 Scholarships are available for entry into the Senior School in the following areas: Academic, Art, Drama, Music and PE.

Scholarships can be applied for in isolation or in conjunction with a means-tested bursary. Means-tested Bursaries are available up to a maximum of 100% of fees (including any Scholarship award) – although maximum fee reduction awards are only awarded in exceptional circumstances. There is a non-refundable £100 charge for the means-tested bursary assessment, as this review is conducted by an outside agency. The fee remission offered for a bursary is reviewed on an annual basis and may vary depending on any changes to the financial circumstances of the family.

Successful bursarial awards are only made in conjunction with a successful scholarship award.

In addition, the Jessie Cross Award – is a means-tested award of up to 100% of fees. The Jessie Cross Award is available to those who are currently educated in a maintained primary school and who show promise in a number of areas. A student applying for this award is required to apply for a means-tested bursary for which there is a non-refundable £100 charge.

Sixth Form

Sixth Form Scholarships are available in the following areas; Academic, Art, Design and Technology, Music, Performing Arts and Physical Education.

Means-tested bursaries are also available and can be applied for in isolation. Means-tested Bursaries are available up to a maximum of 100% of fees (including any Scholarship award) – although maximum fee reduction awards are only awarded in exceptional circumstances. There is a non-refundable £100 charge for the means-tested bursary assessment, as this review is conducted by an outside agency. The fee remission offered for a bursary is reviewed on an annual basis and may vary depending on any changes to the financial circumstances of the family.

Reception

The Jessie Cross Foundation Award is a means-tested award of up to 100% of fees, although maximum fee reduction is only awarded in exceptional circumstances. There is a non-refundable £100 charge for the assessment, as this review is conducted by an outside agency. The fee remission offered for a bursary is reviewed annually and may vary depending on any changes to the financial circumstances of the family.

See also the School's Policy on "Scholarships, Bursaries and Discounts".