

Admission Procedures (including EYFS)

Introduction

The admissions procedures aim to ensure that:

- Criteria are clear, fair and objective
- The admission arrangements contribute to raising standards
- Parents have easy access to helpful information
- Admissions procedures take account of learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Equality Act 2010).

Statement of Purpose

At Gad's Hill we aim to enable our students to enjoy school and to achieve good academic qualifications in line with their potential. We also endeavour to develop those personal attributes and qualities which will help guide them on their journey through life. It is our intention that our students leave Gad's Hill as pleasant, articulate, mature, confident and self-reliant young people. These attributes are often as important as academic qualifications in equipping young people with the skills and enthusiasm to make their way in the world and to achieve success.

As such, our curriculum is designed to foster academic success but also to enable a child's personal development and to make their time at school a pleasant and enjoyable one. As well as academic lessons our children will take part in competitive team games, drama productions, music concerts, trips and visits, serve others and (in the senior school) as CCF cadets take part in a range of military and adventurous training.

It is our expectation that parents and children joining our school subscribe to our aims, objectives and common purpose (as described above) and in becoming members of the Gad's Hill community will support and take part in all that the school has to offer.

Selection criteria

At Gad's Hill we place as much importance on social development as we do on academic success. We want our pupils to be well qualified and we will work hard with them and their parents to make sure that our children achieve good academic results. However, we recognise that success in life is not solely due to any academic qualifications gained but also often a reflection of personal qualities. Employers value confidence, maturity, self-reliance, team-work, the ability to get on with people, communicate effectively and to look the part.

We select children of all academic abilities, who we believe will work hard, contribute to the life of the school, achieve academic results in excess of their natural ability and become a good advertisement for the school and all that we stand for. We expect that parents support the school's aims, objectives and purpose.

Class Sizes

Class sizes are restricted to a maximum of 20 pupils. In exceptional circumstances, the Headmaster, after due consultation with staff and the approval of the Chair of Governors, may increase an individual class capacity to 21 in response to the circumstances at the time.

General

There are two ways in which parents may apply for a place at Gad's Hill.

Most applicants join the school via the main entry points at KN/Nursery (pre-school), KR/Reception, or Shell/Year 7. Entry at these ages usually involves a large group of applicants with those children selected commencing school at the start of the Autumn Term.

The second means of entry is that of a casual admission to any year group to fill a vacancy. This may occur at any time during the academic year.

Applications Procedure

1. The school holds several open days each year to give interested parents the opportunity to see the school. Prospective pupils and their parents are welcome to visit the school at any time by prior appointment.
2. Parents wishing to consider the school for their child should contact the Admissions Manager via the school office or use the website to request a prospectus.
3. Parents interested in applying for a place should complete the online registration. In order to complete the registration a £40 payment must be made online when submitting the form. The registration fee is a non-returnable charge to cover the administration costs in processing the application. When registering your child it is important to indicate clearly the year group and year of entry that you are registering for as this will determine which class and year of entry your child's application is assigned to. Should you wish to amend this at any time you must first inform the Admissions Manager. Your registration date will then be updated to this new revised date and time and placed on the new list accordingly.
4. The pupil and their parents will be offered the opportunity to visit the school and meet with the Headmaster for a tour and informal interview.
5. Assessment of the pupil's ability, potential and suitability will take place by interview, academic assessment and taster day. A taster/assessment day enables the child to attend school for the day and gives him/her the opportunity to judge for him/herself whether the school is suitable and for the school to assess their academic ability and general aptitude of the child. For potential KN and KR pupils a member of the Nursery department will visit the child's current Nursery and/or conduct a home visit. If the Nursery department feel that the child would make progress and we can meet their needs at Gad's Hill School they will be invited in for a taster session.
6. Providing both the school and the applicant wish to proceed then an offer of a place will be made in writing. The parents will then be required to read the accompanying terms and conditions of entry before signing the acceptance form (which is a legally binding contract) and to return this to the school by the stated deadline together with a deposit before a place is guaranteed.
7. A deposit is held against a child not taking up their place or defaulting school fees in which case it will be forfeited. Otherwise it is returned to parents when the child leaves the school. Full details regarding deposits and liability with respect of fees-in-lieu-of notice, are explained in the school's standard terms and conditions, which are available upon request and provided to parents when an offer of a place is made.

Admission Criteria

Children will be offered a place providing they meet the school's standards with regard to the following admission criteria:

Ability: An assessment of the child's academic ability or attainment in comparison with his/her age cohort. This is measured by teacher assessment and/or by examination depending on the age of the child. Parents should disclose any relevant information, (such as an Educational Psychologists report) which would enable Gad's Hill School to judge if we are able to meet the specific needs of a pupil.

Potential: A measure of the child's ability to make academic progress at an age-appropriate rate. This is measured by interview, teacher assessment and/or examination or school reports.

Suitability: A measure of the child's enthusiasm, behaviour, work ethic, willingness to learn and general conduct. This is done through interview, or by teacher assessment. We will also obtain a copy of the child's most recent school report and request a pupil reference from current school.

Parental Support:

The parents' willingness to support the aims, objectives and ethos of the school is measured through interview with the Headmaster.

Date of Registration/ Waiting Lists / Sibling Candidates/Returning Pupils:

All applications for places at the school whether at a key entry point or as a casual admission will be processed in order of date and time of registration. Online registrations are received immediately once the payment has been completed.

Applicants with a sibling already at the school will be given priority for assessment followed by date of registration for all other applicants. If the applicant has a sibling who has accepted a place at Gad's Hill but not yet started, they will be given priority for assessment after those with existing siblings.

Should a year group be full then all applicants will remain on the database until a vacancy arises. If a place becomes available then a child with a sibling at the school will be called first followed by date of registration. Should there be several siblings on the list then the sibling registered first will be called. For the purpose of this policy, children will be deemed to be siblings if they have at least one common parent, either biological or legally adopted.

An applicant who is applying and stating they have a sibling connection must either have a sibling already at the school or a sibling who has accepted a place at the school and who has guaranteed their place by paying the deposit. Children applying at the same time as their siblings do not receive priority.

Any former pupils wishing to return to the school will need to re-apply by registering in the normal way.

Procedures

1. Casual Admissions

Parents may apply for their child's admission to the school at any time and for any age group. If there are vacancies then their application will proceed. If there are no vacancies then they will be placed on the database and contacted if a place becomes available.

The applicant will be invited in to attend a taster/assessment day and a pupil reference and a copy of their most recent school report will be obtained from the current school by our Admissions Manager. Providing they meet the schools admission criteria they will be offered a place. If they do not meet the criteria then the next candidate on the list will be invited forward and so on.

2. Group Admission Procedures

There are three key entry stages at the school. These are Nursery (KN), Reception (KR) and Year 7 (Shell). These age groups attract a large number of applications and therefore the admission arrangements are more formalised.

KN Nursery (Pre-School)

Parents who register their child for the academic year starting after their 3rd birthday will be given priority on admissions into the nursery over children who are registered for entry before their 3rd birthday.

The first round of admissions will usually take place in the summer term before the year of entry for children who turn 3 before 31st August. Children who turn 3 after the 1st September will be placed on a waiting list until the availability can be determined and may be invited in for a taster session during the autumn term for a late autumn/spring term start. If a place is not available they will be re-registered for admissions into the following academic year.

Parents are welcome to choose the number of sessions they require to suit their needs. However it is recommended that they attend at least 3 sessions (one session = one morning or one afternoon) per week to ensure sufficient curriculum material is covered. Fees are payable per session (details of current fees are available from the school office and website). Parents may register their child at any time from birth up until the 31st March before the academic year of entry. Parents registering their child after this date will be placed on a waiting list until all other applications have been processed.

For potential KN pupils a member of the Nursery department will visit the child's current Nursery and/or conduct a home visit. If the Nursery department feel that the child would make progress and we can meet their needs at Gad's Hill School they will be invited in for a taster session prior to their admission.

Children should be toilet trained and dry (though we understand that accidents happen). Places and sessions are then allocated according to the assessment criteria and in order of registration.

Early Years Funding

The school makes available places that are funded by the local authority for up to 15 hrs/week. These local authority funded sessions are available each afternoon, Monday to Friday, 12.10 – 3.10pm providing there are vacancies. All other sessions, including morning sessions, lunches, pre and after school care are outside of the scope of the early years funding scheme and are subject to fees being charged.

KR Reception

Children commence their formal, full-time education at this stage and join Reception in the August before their fifth birthday. Priority for places in Reception are given to existing pupils in the nursery and it is anticipated that there will not be any places available for external applicants. However, Parents who wish to apply for entry directly into Reception may register their child at any time from birth until the 31st January the year they are due to start school and the admissions team will contact the first on the list should a place become available.

For external applicants for KR a home or Nursery visit will take place prior to a taster day being arranged. Children in the existing Nursery class (KN) will be assessed for suitability to progress into KR. If there are places available then external candidates who meet the school's admission criteria will then be offered a place in the Reception class and asked to confirm their acceptance by a published cut-off date.

Places will not be guaranteed after that date unless parents have signed & return our acceptance form and paid a deposit.

Year 7 (Senior School entry) Applications

There are a maximum of 60 places available with three forms of up to approximately 20 pupils. Parents should apply for admission by 31st October for their child to be considered for a place although casual applications will be considered throughout the academic year or until all places are full.

Criteria for entry are;

1. Current Pupils in Remove (Year 6)
2. Applicants who successfully secure a Charles Dickens Scholarship
3. Applicants who apply via direct registration or who are unsuccessful in securing a Charles Dickens Scholarship and who attend a successful taster/assessment day. Taster/assessment days will be arranged in order of registration

Existing Gad's Hill Remove (Year 6) pupils are automatically offered a place in the senior school and so do not need to formally apply. Should Year 6 parents not wish to take a place they must inform the school in line with our standard terms & conditions.

There are two main channels of application for external candidates wishing to apply for a place in Shell (Year 7);

1. Charles Dickens Academic Scholarship

During the summer term, before Year 6 commences, local Year 5 children will be invited to register for the Charles Dickens academic scholarship assessment. Parents who want their child to sit the exam should complete the online Charles Dickens Scholarship Registration form and pay the £40 fee.

Each year we will offer a number of scholarships, worth up to 100% fee assistance towards tuition fees. These scholarships are open to any pupil from any school, independent or public sector. Candidates who register to take the scholarship examination will be required to attend Gad's Hill School to sit an academic test which will comprise of English, Maths and non-verbal reasoning. Students who show a high academic ability may subsequently be offered a place in Shell (Year 7)

here at Gad's Hill with an accompanying scholarship which will see fees be reduced by up to 100% for the duration of that child's secondary education here (subject to the usual conditions attached to any scholarship award). Scholarship offers will usually be posted to families within 2 weeks of the date of the examination. Those wishing to accept their place and subsequent Scholarship should do so before the deadline as stated in the offer letter. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the Scholarship offer being withdrawn and the child will be required to attend a taster/assessment day in order to secure a full fee paying place. Scholarship applicants who do not receive an award may be offered a place at Gad's Hill School, dependent on a successful taster/assessment day.

2. Direct Registration

Parents interested in applying for a place in the Senior School for their child can register at any time prior to the academic year of entry.

Parents of external candidates are advised to register their child by completing the online registration form which should be accompanied by an administration fee of £40. This places the child on the admissions list for the year of entry. At the beginning of the autumn term of Year 6 we will invite those candidates who are already registered to attend the Charles Dickens academic scholarship although it is not compulsory. Those not wishing to sit the academic scholarship exam will be invited in for a taster and assessment day in October/November and must accept that priority for places is given to successful scholars. Assessment may involve academic tests, and will also take into account informal assessments of a child's non-academic ability, attitude and potential as observed during the course of the day.

In addition to the academic scholarships, we are happy to welcome candidates wishing to pursue a non-academic scholarship. These are reviewed on an ad-hoc basis and are dependent on a successful academic assessment and taster day, as described in the Direct Registration procedure.

All successful Year 7 applicants, whether via Direct Registration or Academic Scholarship, will receive an offer in writing. At the conclusion of the assessment processes, those candidates who have met the school's assessment criteria as outlined above will receive an offer of a Year 7 place. Their parents will be asked to confirm their acceptance by a published cut-off date. Places will not be guaranteed after that date unless parents have signed & return our acceptance form and paid a deposit. Those pupils who are not selected for entry will be informed and advised to apply to other schools.

Pupils who apply for admission after the above assessment processes will have their application processed in the same way as described in the Casual Admission process.

Staff responsible: PS

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Governor responsible: John Myatt