
SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS

Reviewed April 2016

Review Date April 2017

INTRODUCTION

Saint Nicholas School welcomes children to the school from all backgrounds and all walks of life, including children of all faiths and none. The criteria for admission to the school are applied equally and fairly to all applicants. The final decision as to whether a child is accepted for entry rests with the Head and the Governors.

1. REGISTRATION AND ADMISSION

Registration of children for entry into either our Pre-School or Reception classes may be undertaken at any time following the birth of the child. Early registration is recommended in order to avoid disappointment. Parents may, however, choose to join a waiting list if all places have been filled in a particular age group. Registration is a simple process of completing and returning the registration form to the school, together with the appropriate registration fee which is non-returnable.

Children of school age may be registered at any time but it must be appreciated that assessments, interviews and previous school reports will be taken into consideration for children applying to join the school after the start of the reception year.

The Admissions Secretary will always be pleased to discuss availability of places at the school. In this respect, please do not hesitate to write to the school, or telephone, in order to gain further information and to make an appointment to discuss such matters specific to your son or daughter.

2. ADMISSIONS AND DISABILITY

See Disability & Access Plan Policy

- All offers of a place at the school depend upon prospective children meeting the School's entry criteria.
- The School must feel reasonably sure that throughout the child's time at the school, it will be able to educate and develop the prospective child to the best of his/her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the child's peers.
- The School policy is to apply these criteria to all children and potential children, regardless of any disability of which it is made aware by parents. The School has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled child or potential child at a substantial disadvantage compared with other children who are not disadvantaged because of disability.
- Saint Nicholas School requires parents to inform the School in respect of the disability of a prospective child in the relevant section of the application form.
- In assessing any child or prospective child, the School may take such advice and require such assessments eg, Educational Psychologist's report, and recommendations as it regards as appropriate.

3. ENTRY PROCEDURES

3.1 Entry into EYFS

Children may join Pre-School from the age of two and a half years. Children may join a Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. It is the school's expectations that children are toilet trained and out of nappies before starting the EYFS.

3.2 Entry at Year 1 and above

Places do become available from time to time throughout Years 1 to 9 and waiting lists are in operation. Children may join the school at any time of year, although it is usual to commence at the beginning of a half term. The school does not normally consider application for children to join later than the start of Year 10. As the school is

coeducational throughout, applications may not be considered in cases where two-thirds or more of the children in the year group are of the same gender as the applicant. For older children, the school accepts applications from children who are of average or above-average ability. Admissions decisions are based on performance in an assessment of academic ability and references from current schools will also be taken into account.

3.3 Tours of the school

Prospective parents are invited to tour the school to experience our unique learning environment and to experience our caring ethos before they register their child.

3.4 Registration

Parents must complete the registration form and pay the non-refundable registration fee before an assessment day can be arranged and in order to join the waiting lists.

3.5 Assessment days

Following the registration of a child, arrangements will then be made for the child to spend a day in the school for informal assessment of academic ability. The purpose of the assessment day is to judge whether the child has the potential to benefit from the kind of education which Saint Nicholas School provides.

3.6 Offer of places

Following an assessment day firm places are allocated in order of joining the waiting lists, with the exception of siblings of children already at the school who get preference. Early application is therefore strongly advised.

3.7 Acceptance deposit

When parents accept an offer of a place they are asked to make a firm commitment to the school by completing and signing an Admission Form and paying an acceptance deposit. The place is not confirmed until the fee is paid. At that point, a child's place is reserved and the parents accept the school's terms and conditions, including an undertaking to pay a term's tuition fee, subject to proper notice of withdrawal from the admissions list.

If the child does not subsequently take up their pre-reserved place in the school, the acceptance fee is forfeited. The Acceptance Deposit will be retained in the general funds of the School until the pupil leaves and will be repaid as a credit without interest after the final payment of fees or other sums due to the School on leaving.

3.8 Failure to take up an accepted place

A term's fees (less deposit/s held) will be immediately payable by the parents if, for any reason, they cancel their acceptance of a place less than a term before entry or the pupil does not join the School after a place has been accepted.

4. TRANSITION BETWEEN SECTIONS OF THE SCHOOL

Transition from Pre-School to a Reception class in the main school will be dependent the child satisfying our expectations of behaviour and progress

Subject to satisfactory academic progress and conduct there is automatic transition from lower school to middle school and from middle school to upper school.

5. CHILDREN WITH SEND

In view of the small class sizes, children with minor learning difficulties can be accommodated. However the school does not accept applications from children with an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP).

6. CHILDREN FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS NOT THEIR PRINCIPAL LANGUAGE

For children whose principal language is not English the school will assess the child's competence in English before any offer of a place s made.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with the school's aims, its equal opportunities policy and the school's Learning Support Policy.

7. EQUALITY ACT

The school recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010:

- not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- to publish an Accessibility Plan.

The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his or her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles, by:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

We do not have to provide auxiliary aids (i.e. a special piece of equipment such as a hearing loop) or services (i.e. arranging additional support such as a designated classroom assistant). However at the discretion of the school and with parental agreement additional support may be arranged at an additional cost to the parents,

8. FEES

It is the policy of the school to keep fees at a realistic level commensurate with good educational practice, thus ensuring stability, continuity and the maintenance of the best service possible to parents and children. The Governors will always endeavour to give a term's notice of any change in fees, but they reserve the right to increase the fees without a term's notice in the event of circumstances over which the Governors have no control. Fees are usually adjusted once a year in September.

8.1 What the fees cover

Pre-School

Fees are inclusive of tuition, educational visits and trips, stationery, teaching materials PE and games lessons. Fees do not include uniform, optional before- and after-school club, lunch and snacks.

Main school

Fees are inclusive of tuition, before-school care from 7:30 am, educational visits and trips (excluding residential trips in the UK and overseas), lunch, stationery, textbooks (although a charge will be made if they are damaged or for any reason not returned), teaching materials, swimming lessons, games and all most after-school clubs and activities.

Fees do not include uniform, after-school club and homework clubs, tuition in instrumental music, dance and sport lessons given by visiting teachers and individual learning support lessons.

8.2 Pupils' personal accident insurance scheme

All pupils within the scheme at no additional cost as the termly premium is incorporated within the current fee structure. Cover commences for each pupil from the first day of the first term, including the duration of the uninterrupted journey to the school. Cover will continue until the pupil leaves.

8.3 Payment of fees

Parents accept responsibility for all fees, including disbursements, on the child's behalf.

Pre-School

The fees of each term and any extras for the previous term are payable on or before the first day of the term for which they are due by direct debit. The Schools' direct debit scheme enables fees to be paid either termly on the first day of term or in 3 monthly instalments each term.

Main school

The fees of each term and any extras for the previous term are payable on or before the first day of the term for which they are due by direct debit. The Schools' direct debit scheme enables fees to be paid either termly on the first day of term or in 9 monthly instalments commencing on 1 September and ending on 1 May.

The School does accept payment of fees in advance, the actual calculation depends upon the specific circumstances. Details may be obtained from the Bursar. The School is unable to offer any discounts for siblings or other special groups.

8.4 Absence from school

School fees cannot be refunded for any part of a term for which a pupil is absent through illness, accident, or other cause. Parents are advised to consider joining a School Fee Protection Scheme.

8.5 Withdrawals

A full term's written notice is required before the withdrawal of a child or the removal of a child's name from the list of admissions. It must be stressed that in default of the required written notice, a full term's fees will be charged. It is important to realise that such notice must be presented to the Head by the first day of the term at the end of which a child is due to leave or, in the case of withdrawal from the admissions list, the term before entry.

A half term's written notice is required before the discontinuance of any extra-curricular subject.

8.6 Exclusions from school

The Head has the right to order a child to be excluded from the school, either permanently or temporarily, if that child has committed a grave breach of discipline, or for the protection of other children or in the interests of the school as a whole. In this event, no claims will be accepted for the return or any portion of the fees payable for that term.

The Head may require a child who is making poor academic progress owing to persistent lack of effort or manifest incapacity to leave on a full term's written advice of notice.

No reduction or remission of fees is given in cases of absence. In the event of the contract between the parents and school becoming incapable of fulfilment by the school owing to a supervening event beyond its control, the school will be entitled to retain all fees already paid and to recover those not paid in full.

9. BURSARIES

For full details see the *Means-tested Bursaries Policy*

Bursary awards are subject to annual repeat testing of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances. Awards are made on the basis of the School's Scale of Awards, which sets out award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances. The Scale of Awards is reviewed and revised annually by the School Accountant to reflect any changes in fee costs, and is approved by the Governors. The Scale of Awards is financed through a limited fund financed through surplus income and interest (and occasionally capital) from a small endowment fund and is set each year by the Governors. As the sums are relatively modest, not all applications will be successful. Though awards are generally tied to this scale, they may be varied upwards or downwards depending on individual parents'/guardians' circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and like factors), compassionate or other pertinent considerations.

Requests for financial support usually fall into two categories:

- Existing children where a change in parents'/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.
- New applicants to the school, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees.

10. DISCLOSURES.

The school reserves the right

- to establish from any previous school that fees have been paid in full before accepting a child.

- to pass on information about unpaid fees to the child's next school if the child is transferred.