

## Admissions Policy

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| <b>ISI Regulation</b>      |                                                              |
| <b>Reviewed by</b>         | Fionnuala Kennedy, Head & Harry Fryer, Head of Junior School |
| <b>Date</b>                | September 2026                                               |
| <b>Date of Next Review</b> | September 2027                                               |

The WHS Admissions Policy reflects the Girls' Day School Trust (the "GDST") Admissions Policy and should be read in conjunction with it, as well as with the GDST's Equal Opportunities Policy. Both are located on the GDST Hub information site [here](#).

### Overview of Admissions at WHS

Wimbledon High School admits girls who fulfil the academic requirements of the school and will benefit from the opportunities offered and contribute fully to the life of the school. Except for entry at 4+ where admissions are managed by Ballot, any girl between the ages of 5+ (Year 1) and 16+ (Year 12) is eligible for entry provided she meets the academic requirements of the GDST and WHS and provided that there is a vacancy. In exceptional circumstances (such as the closure of another school) girls may be admitted to the beginning of Year 13 without entrance tests, though school reports and predicted grades must be of the required standard.

Girls are currently admitted at 4+, 11+ and 16+. Admissions processes for the three main points of entry take place in the Autumn Term in the year prior to proposed entry. An occasional vacancies waiting list is held for other entry points and students are assessed at point of application. The selection procedures are adjusted according to the age of the applicants to ensure a balance of comfort, fairness and rigour.

### Admissions: GDST Council Policy

The admissions policy of the Council of the Girls' Day School Trust (the "GDST") is that:

- The GDST is committed to equal opportunities in education and does not unlawfully discriminate regarding entry. Admissions to GDST schools will adhere to the GDST's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The GDST is firmly committed to offering a single-sex education for girls. In our experience, students in girls' schools are less constrained in their choice of subjects, show a greater propensity to take risks and innovate, perform better in examinations, have more opportunities to show leadership, and are less likely to conform to gender stereotypes. For these reasons, GDST parents and students predominately choose a single-sex environment over other available options.
- GDST schools are broadly selective. Places are offered to prospective pupils on the basis of their potential to thrive in the educational environment provided.
- Admission is usually dependent on achieving an acceptable standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the age group and academic pace of the school. The

assessments and examinations will be accessible to all candidates, with people from all backgrounds able to participate fully.

- Due consideration will be given to prior educational experience in making any decision on the offer of a place. In exceptional circumstances, schools may adjust their established selection processes, provided there is sufficient justification in doing so and the alternative procedure adheres to principles of equality, fairness and transparency.
- Reasonable adjustments to entrance assessments will be made for applicants with special educational needs and/or disabilities in order that all applicants are assessed fairly. Parents are required to provide full details to the school upon application if their child has external or in-school learning support, an educational psychologist's report, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a disability, allergy or medical condition, to enable the school to make provision, if appropriate. A place will only be offered if the school believes that it can appropriately support a pupil's learning or other needs effectively and that admission is in the best interests of the applicant.
- Special consideration may also be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. prolonged illness or bereavement).
- The school relies on the integrity of the admissions procedure and therefore the truthfulness of the information provided by the applicant's parents, as well as the requirement to disclose any information to the school which may be relevant to the application process such as any learning difference or disability. Where relevant information is not disclosed or proves to be false or misleading the school reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place which may have been granted, deny the applicant admission, or where a child has already been admitted, request that the child is withdrawn from the school.
- There is no automatic right of transfer from one GDST school to another; however, the transfer of existing GDST pupils between GDST schools, for example as a result of relocation or the need for boarding facilities, may be arranged. Where places are available in the relevant year group, priority over external applicants will be given to pupils transferring from another GDST school, subject to other suitability criteria being met. GDST pupils not initially successful in securing a place may, where possible, be given priority over other external candidates on the waiting list where all other suitability criteria are equal. A transfer cannot be made to any of the Academies sponsored by the GDST. The final decision regarding admissions rests with the Head. There is no right of appeal against their decision.
- Any student who has given notice and subsequently leaves to attend another school, either in the UK or overseas, or for home education, is not entitled to preferential consideration for any occasional vacancy application in the future and must adhere to the admissions process as any other candidate.
- The school reserves the right to refuse entry to a pupil whose parents have, in the past, failed to meet in full their fee obligations to the school in relation to another child already enrolled at the school.
- A pupil (other than a boarder) must reside with her parent/s or legal guardian while attending the school, or with someone else approved by her parent/s or legal guardian and

the Head. Pupils whose parents are overseas must have an educational guardian in the UK and parents must notify the school of the name and address of the guardian.

- A pupil must have the right to study in the UK for the duration of her enrolment at the school. The school will request evidence of this during the admissions process, normally in the form of a British or Irish passport or valid visa documentation. The school reserves the right to rescind an offer where the right to study cannot be evidenced.
- As set out in the GDST's parent contract, continuity of education is anticipated throughout each age range and transfer at key stages will be automatic unless, in the opinion of the Head, the pupil will not benefit from continuing to be educated at the school or has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or behaviour for continuation or for entry to the next stage.
- Each GDST school sets out in its registration the age range of students it is legally allowed to make provision for. Major age range changes are subject to approval by Council. Admission will last until the student completes year 13 unless the parent contract comes to an end sooner.
- Within these guidelines schools may determine their own admissions policies, which will set out their individual selection criteria.
- Information provided as part of an application will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation. The privacy notice (available at [www.gdst.net/privacy-notice](http://www.gdst.net/privacy-notice)) explains what information is collected and how it is used.
- Applicants should be registered by, or with the agreement and understanding of, the applicant's parents, including, where parents are separated, each parent with parental responsibility. Each parent with parental responsibility will ordinarily be entitled to information regarding their child's application (unless, for example, there is a court order that suggests otherwise).
- This policy shall apply to all GDST schools, save for Academies sponsored by the GDST.

### **Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) Considerations**

We are firmly committed to inclusivity and to giving every child the best possible start in life. Irrespective of their special educational needs or disability (SEND), we consider all children for admission to the school who have the ability and aptitude to access our academic curriculum. Pupils whose SEND needs can be met by our curriculum are welcome, provided that we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support that they require.

Before the deposit is paid for a 4+ place (or before the point of assessment for 11+, Sixth Form or an Occasional Vacancy), parents must disclose to the school any known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, development, allergies, disabilities, behaviours and/or learning difficulties. The school reserves the right to subsequently withdraw any place offered based on incomplete disclosure of known or suspected SEND circumstances. Based on such disclosures the school will confirm whether it is able to fully meet the needs of the child.

Where a child's SEND is identified, or develops, after the child has started at the school, we will endeavour to continue to support the child as long as:

- we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support they require, and
- we believe it is in the best interest of the child and of the school community to remain at the school.

Where, in our judgement, either of these conditions no longer apply, we reserve the right to withdraw a place at the school. In such circumstances, we will do what we reasonably can to support parents in finding alternative schooling for their daughter. Parents have the right to appeal against an unsuccessful application using the school's Complaints Procedure.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

English as an Additional Language (EAL) applicants are subject to the same admissions procedures as other applicants, as appropriate to the chronological age of the applicant at the time of applying to WHS. Where an assessment is required for an occasional place, EAL specific issues that undermine performance will be taken into consideration during marking. However, such EAL needs must be declared on the application form in advance. Access Arrangements, such as allowing the use of a bi-lingual dictionary, are also made where applicable as requested by parents upon application to the school. This policy supports the school in meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Junior School Admissions Policy**

Reception (4+) is the main entry point into the Junior School. Occasional places may sometimes become available in other year groups throughout the Junior School (Years 1-6).

### **School Starting Age (Junior School)**

In the majority of cases, we believe that it is within a child's best interests – educationally, socially and emotionally – to be educated within their usual year group, meaning that they would start school in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. There are some exceptional instances when it may be appropriate for a child to defer their start to school, particularly if they were born prematurely and so would normally have fallen into a later year group, or if they have a diagnosed educational or medical reason, for which they would benefit starting school in the following year.

We review any requests for deferred or out of year entry into the school on a case-by-case basis and make a holistic judgement based upon the best interests of the child, from both an educational and pastoral perspective.

### **Entry at Reception (4+) – By Ballot**

Entry into Reception is managed through our 4+ Ballot Process. Applications may be made for entry at 4+ at any time from birth, until the last working Friday of the September in the year preceding the prospective pupil's entry into the school (one year prior to starting school) with emphasis on the fact that no priority is given to early applications. The application fee is determined by GDST office and is published on the school website as well as on the admissions platform. The application fee is non-refundable.

The Ballot draw will take place in the October after applications for that year group close. In order for their daughter to be entered into the Ballot draw, parents must have:

- Completed an application for their daughter and paid the application fee by the stated closing date; and
- Visited the school at one of our 4+ Open Events. (We strongly recommend a visit takes place during the 12-month period preceding the ballot draw for their daughter's year of entry. This is to ensure that all families applying for the ballot have had a recent opportunity to tour the school and ask any questions they might have.)

Completed an application for their daughter and paid the application fee by the stated closing date; and

- Visited the school at one of our 4+ Open Events. (We strongly recommend a visit takes place during the 12-month period preceding the ballot draw for their daughter's year of entry. This is to ensure that all families applying for the ballot have had a recent opportunity to tour the school and ask any questions they might have.)

If a family wishes to register their daughter for the Reception class after the published closing date, the child will not be considered for the ballot draw for Reception and will, instead, be added to the occasional vacancy enquiry list for Year 1 entry the following year.

### **Reception Ballot Sibling Policy**

At the date of ballot, those girls who have applied before the published closing date and who have a sibling(s) currently attending WHS, will be eligible for a sibling place and will be offered a place before any spaces are offered to those drawn in the Ballot.

Whilst highly unlikely, if there are more sibling applications than places available in the Reception class, a Sibling Ballot will first be drawn, respecting the Ballot process described below, and sibling offers will be made using this drawn list. Names remaining on the drawn sibling list will be added to a sibling waiting list, which will have priority over the non-sibling drawn waiting list. The sibling waiting list will be valid as described in the waiting list arrangements below.

Any siblings who do not apply before the closing date will not be eligible for the Ballot and will be invited to make an Occasional Vacancy enquiry.

### **Reception Ballot Sibling Policy for New Occasional Vacancy Pupils**

The younger sisters of any girls who have accepted Occasional Vacancy (OV) places for the following September would only gain automatic places in our Reception class under our Sibling Policy if the ballot for their year group had not yet been drawn at the time of the offer being accepted. If a successful OV candidate accepts an offer to join the school while their younger sister is on the Reception waiting list, the younger sister will be moved to the top of the Reception waiting list.

### **Ballot Process**

The Ballot will be drawn in the October prior to entry into school. The draw will be made in the presence of the Chair of Governors, the Head and the Junior School Head, the Registrar, and a



representative from the School's Auditors. The Auditor will attest that the procedure is fair and follows due process. The ratified results will be final.

There are 48 places available in Reception and our aim is to have a balanced spread of birth dates throughout the year group. To ensure this, the applicants are listed in birthdate order then divided into four equal groups and placed into four ballot draw boxes from which they will be drawn in turn.

Once sibling places have been allocated, the Ballot draw will take places as follows:

- The names of all candidates will be placed in the appropriate draw box depending on their date of birth.
- The Chair of Governors will draw one name at a time from each draw box in turn until no more remain.

In the instance of twins (or multiples), when the first sister is drawn, the other sister(s) will be automatically added next on the ballot draw list.

### **Offers and Acceptance of a place**

Following the Ballot draw, families will be informed as to whether they have received an offer or if their daughter has been placed on the waiting list. Families in receipt of offers must accept the place by the specified deadline by completing and returning the signed Parent Contract and paying the applicable non-refundable deposit payment. Should parents subsequently withdraw their acceptance, deposits will not be refunded, and fees in lieu may also be payable. Parents should carefully review the terms of our parent contract before signing and accepting a place at the school. Deposits are held until the end of a pupil's final term in the school and will be refunded within 12 weeks of her leaving, less any sums owing to the GDST or the school at the time.

Any offers not accepted by the specified deadline will expire and the place will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

### **Waiting List Arrangements**

The applicants remaining after offers are made will be added to a waiting list in the order they were drawn. If a place subsequently becomes available in the Reception class, up until the summer half term of that year, the place will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

Candidates may remain on the waiting list to be considered for any places that arise during the Reception academic year. The waiting list will close at the summer half term of that academic year. After this, parents will be invited to make an Occasional Vacancy enquiry for their daughter to be kept informed of any places in subsequent years as they arise and invited to take part in the relevant assessment.

### **Occasional Vacancy Entry at any other Year group in the Junior School**

If a vacancy arises in any other year group in the Junior School (Years 1-6), all families who have expressed interest in the relevant year group will be invited to make an application for their child to attend an assessment. Entrance assessments will take the form of age-appropriate subject tasks and group activities. These assessments require in person attendance; if overseas candidates are unable

to attend in person on the scheduled assessment day, we will make reasonable efforts to find an alternative date and time for them to attend in person and these applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Senior School Admissions Policy**

#### **Transfer to the Senior School from WHS Junior School**

Wimbledon High School is a high achieving school with an impressive academic record. As a through-school, we work hard to maintain a close partnership between the Junior and Senior Schools and believe wholeheartedly in the powerful benefits of a 4-18 education. We hope and expect that all girls entering the school at age 4, will move through into our Senior School and Sixth Form and we do our very best to help all girls to achieve their potential.

In the Autumn term of Year 5, pupils attending the Junior School will be offered an unconditional place in the Senior School subject only to their remaining at WHS as a current student through to the end of Year 6. Prior to this, parents will be kept informed of their daughter's progress throughout her time at WHS. Should progress not match up with expectations, we will work with parents to implement an appropriate plan of action for support and improvement. On the rare occasion there are ongoing concerns about the suitability of the Senior School for a child, the School will seek to work with the family to agree an alternative school that would best suit that child's individual needs, and offer all advice and support of other applications, to ensure the best outcome for the child.

#### **Admissions Tests for Entry into the Senior School (Internal Applications)**

In Year 6, all pupils are required to sit the same 11+ entrance tests as all external candidates. This is in order to develop a consistent and complete benchmark for the year group, and to ensure that all entrants to Year 7 have experienced the same process.

#### **Admissions Tests for Entry into the Senior School (External Applications)**

Assessments are carried out in controlled conditions for entry at 11+ and 16+. Places are offered on the basis of rank order following a range of assessments.

#### **Occasional Vacancy Entrance into the Senior School**

If a vacancy arises in any year group between the points of entry listed above, applicants may sit an entrance test. This will take the form of written tests where the standard of comparison is with the appropriate cohort within the school.

#### **Entry to Sixth Form from Year 11 (Internal Applications)**

Entry to Sixth Form from Year 11 is automatic unless the student's GCSE performance is poor due to poor work ethic, absenteeism or failure to meet deadlines and to abide by the school's expectations in terms of work rate and effort. Students whose performance is adversely affected by illness, bereavement or other family problems, will be treated sympathetically. Students are always considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Entry to Sixth Form (External Applications)**

For external candidates, we require grades 8 or 9 at GCSE (or equivalent) for the subjects to be studied at A Level, dependent on the subject in question and the exam board sat; entrants are also expected to have a minimum of eight GCSEs or iGCSEs at grades 6 - 9 (maximum two grade 6's) and offers will be made conditional on achieving these grades.

Please note: for Sixth Form entry we require an average English Language (IELTS) score of 7 or above and a grade 6-9 in English Language GCSE or equivalent English qualification.

### **Siblings**

The school does not have a sibling policy outside of 4+ entry through the Ballot draw. However, if two candidates are equal in all other ways, preference will be given to the sister of a girl already in the school.

### **Ethnic balance**

The written papers determine those who qualify for entry at all entry points, except for 4+. The ethnic background of applicants (those who accept places) is recorded for monitoring purposes. Our aim is to, where possible, have a school which reflects the diversity of our local area.

### **Transfer from other GDST schools**

Applicants from other GDST schools will be treated in the same way as all other candidates and will be required to sit the same tests and interviews. Both Kensington Prep and The Study Prep Schools, our sister Prep Schools, have their own 11+ pathway with GDST schools in London, but are subject to the same tests, interviews and offer criteria as other external candidates for entry to Wimbledon High School.

### **The examinations**

All examinations are set in English and are designed to be culturally neutral or accessible to applicants from different cultures. We aim to give girls from all educational backgrounds and experiences the chance to shine in the assessment process. We use assessed group tasks, alongside written assessment tasks, to help us maximize access to all pupils regardless of their school experience to date.

If the candidate has a specific learning difficulty (certified by an Educational Psychologist) and meets the JCQ requirements for the award of extra time in public exams, she will be allowed the appropriate amount of extra time in her written entrance tests. Other reasonable accommodations will also be made as per their Educational Psychologist Report recommendations.

### **Overseas candidates**

Overseas applicants are required to sit our entrance assessments under supervised conditions either under an appropriate body (such as the British Council) or their current school. The same standard of ability is applied whatever the previous system under which the candidate has been educated.

### **Offers and Acceptance of a place**

Following the 11+ and 16+ assessments, families will be informed as to whether they have received an offer or if their daughter has been placed on the waiting list. Families in receipt of offers must accept the place by the specified deadline by completing and returning the signed Parent Contract,



alongside a non-refundable deposit payment, as detailed in the offer letter. Should parents subsequently withdraw their acceptance, deposits will not be refunded *and fees in lieu may also be payable. Parents should carefully review the terms of our parent contract before signing and accepting a place at the school.*

Deposits are held until the end of a pupil's final term in the school and will be refunded within 12 weeks of her leaving, less any sums owing to the Trust of the school at the time.

Any offers not accepted by the specified deadline will lapse and the place will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

### **Bursaries and Scholarships (Senior School Only)**

WHS follows the GDST policy in awarding and allocating bursaries and scholarships. The GDST policy is as follows:

The GDST is committed to:

1. Broadening access to the brightest but most financially disadvantaged girls.
2. Attracting the most talented girls both academically and across a broad range of extra-curricular activities (e.g. drama, music, sport).
3. Giving Heads flexibility in the allocation of scholarships and financial assistance.

### **Bursaries**

Bursaries are awarded by the GDST, following application by parents and assessment of financial need.

The GDST offers bursaries to provide a life-changing opportunity for bright but financially disadvantaged girls who would otherwise never have a chance of receiving an independent education.

- Schools will target an amount up to 5% of gross fee income except where the school community is funding a bursary in another way.
- The minimum bursary award for new entrants is 30%
- Bursaries are most commonly awarded at the main entry points into the Senior School, at Years 7 and 12. Bursaries are not available at the Junior School. Post bursary applications into the Senior School can be considered in the case of material change and with the support of the Head.
- Bursaries are reassessed each year, unless a candidate is in a public examination year (Year 10 or 12) where assessments are biennial. Bursaries are awarded in rank order of performance in entrance examinations (subject to the discretion of Heads where exam performance may not reflect a girl's true potential).
- Schools should seek out the most deserving bursary candidates – especially those in more affluent areas – and target making most of the awards at 90-100% of fees.

- Schools will provide appropriate support to girls in receipt of bursaries of 95% or more, e.g. incidental expenses including lunches, uniforms, curriculum trips and travel to and from school.

### **Scholarships**

Scholarships are a form of discount offered by GDST schools to attract the very best girls (art, academic, drama, music and sport) irrespective of their means. The achievements of these girls do much to enhance the life and reputation of the school.

- Every school may allocate up to 2% of fee income on scholarships and financial assistance
- Within that limit, the number and value of scholarships is within the discretion of Heads
- Scholarships awarded will be reassessed at the key stages of Senior School: end of lower school (Year 9) and end of middle school (Year 11). Only scholars who are underperforming due to lack of effort or engagement will have scholarships removed, and this will be in full liaison with the family in advance.
- Scholarships may be awarded at any amount up to 50% of fees (GSA/HMC limit) though most scholarships are likely to be 5% or 10% reductions.
- Heads can provide emergency assistance from within their 2% Scholarship allocation to families suffering unexpected financial hardship.

### **Implementation**

- Existing Bursary and Scholarship allocations will be taken into account in terms of the new allocations that the school can afford to make.
- The School will be responsible for managing its own budget for total bursaries and scholarships expenditure throughout the life of the award.