

## Admissions Policy

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trustees of Hollygirt School apply their regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend the school following the systems and procedures outlined in this policy.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 We are an inclusive school and welcome children from all backgrounds and faiths.
- 2.2 All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.
- 2.3 The only restrictions we place on entry are those of suitability, availability of places and availability of finance and visa status where applicable. It is our wish to allow all successful candidates to have a place at Hollygirt School, however this is not always possible when demand exceeds the number of places available. The number of bursary places is restricted by the funds available in any one year. The Board of Trustees decide how much funding is available for bursaries and these are only currently offered for Year 7 entry.
- 2.4 We aim to ensure that students who join Hollygirt School will thrive in our environment. Our aim is to admit students based on what the school considers best for the individual child and family. We always need to be sure that we can keep children safe and have the resources available to do this.

### 3. The Standard Number

- 3.1 The standard number is the number of children the school can accommodate within the bounds of providing a safe and comfortable environment. This number is reviewed regularly with the aim of remaining consistent to our small class size ethos. Hollygirt has capacity to accommodate up to 300 students.

### 4. The Application Process

- 4.1 Registration for entry can be made at any age. We are happy to take in-year admissions. You may wish a visit to experience the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Hollygirt as a part of the process. A tour can be booked at any time - in addition we hold Open Day (whole school) events and regular Stay and Play sessions (EYFS).
- 4.2 An official Registration Form and fee must be completed. Forms and information can be found on our website ([www.hollygirt.co.uk](http://www.hollygirt.co.uk)), by request by calling our main reception desk on 0115 958 0596 or by emailing our Admissions team. We also reserve the right to request a copy of a child's birth certificate or passport. Students are usually only considered for the year group their chronological age determines but on occasion this may change. Their social and emotional wellbeing is at the centre of these decisions.

- 4.3 We will request a reference from a child's current school. We expect parents to notify the current school of an admissions request to Hollygirt.
- 4.4 An offer of a place will be made in writing once the school believes we are the right school for the child. Usually the Head will meet with all prospective students and parents.
- 4.5 Once an offer of a place has been made by the Head, parents must both accept the offer by completing an Acceptance Form (issued with offer letter) and by paying the required deposit by the date indicated in the offer letter. By signing and returning an Acceptance Form, you are confirming your place and become contractually liable and also agreeing to our Standard Terms and Conditions a copy of which is sent with offer letters and can also be found on our website.
- 4.6 Deposits, which are held until the child leaves the school, are non-refundable in the event of a withdrawal of acceptance. Parents may wish to consider leaving their deposit as a voluntary donation to the school in order to support further bursary students and should let the Bursar know in writing if they wish to do so.
- 4.7 We are not able to admit any student until all financial obligations to any other school have been met in full. We reserve the right to seek confirmation of this from any previous school/s.

## 5. Entry Procedure

- 5.1 The student will have the opportunity to tour the school and will normally attend at least one Taster Day. This can be split into shorter periods of time over a few days. We will work this out on a case-by-case basis but would not exceed more than 5 taster days.
- 5.2 Kindergarten/Reception Class (Early Years Foundation Stage – EYFS)  
There is open admission from age 3 depending on availability of places and readiness for a structured environment. Readiness is defined as the ability to manage feeding and toileting independently and to be capable of understanding and complying with basic instructions. We try to be flexible with Kindergarten hours and will discuss the best structure for each child on a case by case basis. Reception places are full time. We will accept Government funding for up to 30 hours per week (effective from September 2022) for full time Kindergarten students from the term after the student turns 3 years old.
- 5.3 Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage One – KS1) / Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Key Stage Two – KS2)  
Admission is dependent on the availability of places and readiness for a Hollygirt education. Children spend a Taster Day with us, joining their peer group on a regular school day. Their social skills, attitude to learning, behaviour and an indication of their academic ability will be assessed by teaching staff although no formal tests will be taken.

All students in the Prep School are guaranteed a place in the Senior School. Students in Year 6 can take our scholarship exams in verbal and non-verbal reasoning in order to be considered for an Academic Scholarship for Year 7.

Students with exceptional creative, artistic or musical ability may be considered for an Arts Scholarship in Year 5, Year 7 and Year 10. This may consist of paid music lessons or a small discount on fees (at the discretion of the school).

#### 5.4 Year 7 (Key Stage Three – KS3)

The Entrance Day for students who will normally be 11 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> August in the year of entry to the Senior School takes place during the previous Spring Term, usually mid-January. The Entrance Day is not a formal assessment. The students will be placed into small groups and take part in a number of lessons with key teachers which will give us an indication of their abilities, aptitudes, and attitudes to learning and social skills. Additionally, each student and family will have an interview with the Head. Places are offered to students who display qualities which suggest they will respond to a Hollygirt education. Offer letters will be sent out as soon as possible after the Entrance Day and parents are asked to reply by mid-March. Scholarship and bursary places are awarded in a timely fashion. Waiting list places are also offered if demand exceeds available places.

#### 5.5 Years 8, 9 and 10

Students seeking admission to Years 8, 9 and 10, when there is a vacancy, spend a full day in school with the relevant peer group during which their abilities, aptitudes, attitudes to learning and social skills are assessed. They will also meet with the Head on this day.

A reference will be requested from the current school.

For entry to Year 10, students should be able to access a GCSE curriculum.

#### 5.6 Mid-Year 10 and Year 11

It is unusual for a student to transfer to Hollygirt during or at the end of Year 10. In exceptional circumstances where a very similar curriculum has been followed, students will be interviewed by the Head to ascertain whether moving school at this irregular stage is in the student's best interest.

#### 5.7 Admission of Students with Special Educational Needs

The Head and Admissions team will discuss the benefits of the small school with small classes, the unique ethos and environment at Hollygirt and outline what the school is able to do (and what it cannot do) to accommodate the identified needs. Any Special Educational Needs or Learning Disabilities or Difficulties (SEND) that a child has, or may have are considered when an admissions application is made. Parents should tick the appropriate box on the Registration Form. Parents must apply for a place under these circumstances by submitting the required details and providing as much information as possible, including an up-to-date report from an educational psychologist, if appropriate.

The process will be managed through careful and considerate communication in order to ensure that Hollygirt is the right school for each student/family. In some cases, a trial period may be agreed in order to further assist all parties in making a decision.

In the rare eventuality that the child is not settled or progress is not being made at the end of the agreed trial period, the school and parent may reciprocally agree to terminate the contract, and in this circumstance the notice period would be waived.

If the school feels that it cannot meet the needs of the child because of the nature of need or insufficient school resources that would compromise the safety of the child, we will not be able to offer a place.

## **6. Financial Support / Bursaries**

- 6.1 A limited number of means-tested bursaries are available on entry to Year 7. Bursaries may also be available to students in the case of unexpected financial hardship, either for a short period of time or to enable a student to complete a GCSE course when it is not in their best interest to transfer to another school.

The Trustees will decide on any level of financial support to be offered by March preceding September entry. Documentary evidence must be provided in all cases. A copy of the bursary application procedure can be obtained from the Admissions Manager or Bursar and should be submitted with a student's Registration Form and fee (£60). Please note bursaries are offered in line with the school's available funding and not all applications will be accepted. Currently we do not offer financial support to students in the Prep School.

## **7. Academic Scholarships**

- 7.1 Academic Scholarships are available on entry to Year 7 to students who we believe have the capacity to reach the highest grades and to be ambassadors for the school. In addition to the Entrance Day, they will be invited in to school to sit some formal assessments which may include verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests. This will take place in January, following the Entrance Day. Hollygirt will make recommendations of suitability to some following the Entrance Day but parents may opt for the additional testing if they believe it is appropriate for their child. Academic Scholarships award up to 25% reduction of basic fees for the five years a student will remain in Senior School. These are not means-tested but are subject to specific terms and conditions of award.

## **8. Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)**

- 8.1 Hollygirt has a small number of students on EHCPs, some of which are funded by the local education authority.

## **9. Overseas Applicants**

- 9.1 Currently, Hollygirt is able to accept students from the European Economic area and Switzerland. If a parent has a Tier 2 Visa and is working for an approved licensed employer granted by the UK Home Office we are able to accept applications for their children to study at Hollygirt for the duration of their employment. However, we are not able to provide CAS for Tier 4 (child) student visas at this time.