

Admissions Policy



Hollygirt

SCHOOL

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1. Introduction

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

We are an inclusive school and welcome children from all backgrounds and faiths.

All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.

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.

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

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.

4. The Application Process

Registration for entry can be made at any age. We are happy to take in-year admissions.

4.1 Visit

Prospective parents and pupils will be invited to visit our school and 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, regular Stay and Play sessions (EYFS) and specific Sixth Form Open Evenings.

4.2 Registration

An official Registration Form must be completed and fee paid. Forms and information can be found on our website (www.hollygirt.co.uk), by request by calling our main reception desk on 0115 958 0596 or by emailing our Admissions and Marketing Manager. We also reserve the right to request a copy of a child's birth certificate or passport. Pupils 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 Reference

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 Offer / Acceptance / Deposit

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, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, will meet with all prospective parents and pupils.

Once an offer of a place has been made by the Head or Head of Prep, parents must accept the offer by completing an Acceptance Form (issued with offer letter) and paying the required deposit by the date indicated in the offer letter. By signing and returning an Acceptance Form, parents are confirming their child's place and become contractually liable and agreeing to our Standard Terms and Conditions - a copy of which is sent with offer letters and can also be found on the school's website.

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.

We reserve the right to seek confirmation that all financial obligations to any other school have been met in full prior to the offer of a place.

5. Entry Procedure

The prospective pupil will have the opportunity to tour the school and will attend at least one Taster Day.

5.1 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. Kindergarten sessions are 8.00am to 1.00pm and 1.00pm to 6.00pm. Reception places are full time. We accept Government funding for up to 30 hours per week for Kindergarten pupils from the term after they turn 3 years old.

5.2 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 usually guaranteed a place in the Senior School. In circumstances where we feel this may not be appropriate, parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Head to discuss possible options. Scholarships are available for Year 7 entry.

5.3 Year 7 (Key Stage Three – KS3)

The Entrance Day for pupils who will normally be 11 on or before 31st 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. Pupils 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. 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.

5.4 Years 8, 9 and 10

Pupils seeking admission to Years 8, 9 and 10, when there is a vacancy, spend a minimum of one full Taster 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.

Following a Taster Day, staff will be asked to provide feedback on the above criteria.

5.5 Mid-Year 10 and Year 11

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

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

5.6 Sixth Form – Year 12 and 13

5.6.1 Submission of Applications

Whilst we accept applications all year round, applicants are encouraged to apply by the end of Autumn Term and accept provisional offers before February half term in order to best secure their subject preferences as there is more flexibility regarding subject offer and combinations.

5.6.2 Entry Requirements and Place Offer

In addition to the school application process and following a successful interview with the Head of Sixth Form, a provisional offer of a place will be made which is dependent on:

- the receipt of a satisfactory reference from the current school for external applicants;
- a sound performance in GCSE, with results being confirmed on GCSE Results Day;

Students joining at Sixth Form level are expected to have attained five or more GCSEs at grade 5 or above. Experience has shown that this level of prior attainment indicates a student who is able to cope with the demands of the Sixth Form curriculum. In addition, some subjects request the achievement of specific grades at GCSE level, which can be found on the individual subject overviews. Typically, we require at least a grade 5 in subjects to be continued. However, our approach is to consider each application individually, with offers being made accordingly. Usually, all applicants will also meet with the Head.

5.6.3 Acceptance of an Offer

Further to acceptance of an offer, students and parents will receive confirmation of the subjects that will be taken. If it is found that a course is not viable to run after a formal offer of a place has been accepted, for example due to staffing or course numbers and the alternative offered is not acceptable, parents will be released from this contract.

5.6.4 Results

Students will enrol on GCSE Results Day after they have collected their results. A meeting with the Head of Sixth Form will check results against the subject preferences to confirm that these are the appropriate courses to take in Year 12 and 13. If the requirements are met, the provisional offer will be confirmed straightaway. If there are concerns regarding entry level for individual subjects, we will discuss if a support plan can be provided or if suitable alternative options are needed and can be offered. If English Language and/or Maths have not been achieved at a grade 4, a resit programme will be an essential requirement of the study programme for the student. Payment of examination entry fees for resit courses will be met by the parents. There are up to four opportunities to retake examinations, and this applies in each case.

5.6.5 Overseas Applicants

For applicants to Sixth Form, a letter of comparability will need to be provided if the student has already achieved qualifications abroad other than GCSEs and iGCSEs. This can be obtained by the parents via the ENIC website and it will confirm the equivalency of the qualifications already obtained by the student. If qualifications have not been achieved, the possibility of a bespoke programme will be considered.

Refer to Section 5.7 regarding students with SEN.

5.7 Admission of Pupils 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 pupil/family. In some cases, a trial period may be agreed in order to further assist all parties in making a decision as to whether Hollygirt can fully meet the SEN needs of the pupil.

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

The school's bursary programme is designed to make it possible for as many as possible to take up a place here. A limited number of means-tested bursaries on a financial basis are available on entry to Year 7.

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 and Marketing Manager or Bursar. There is a £50 bursary application fee (in addition to the registration fee). 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 pupils in the Prep School.

Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time. Families are required to provide fresh information about their circumstances for every year that their child attends the school. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

7. Scholarships

7.1 Academic Scholarships

Academic Scholarships are available on entry to Year 7 to pupils 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 to sit some formal assessments which may include verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests. This will take place in January, following the Entrance Day.

Academic Scholarships award up to 25% reduction of basic fees for the duration of the pupil's time at the school. These are not means-tested but are subject to specific terms and conditions of award.

7.2 Sport and Music Scholarships

Sport and Music Scholarships are also available on entry into Year 7. We offer up to 10 Sport Scholarships annually, awarding up to a possible 10% reduction of basic fees. Additionally, we offer Music Scholarships offering 50% off music lessons in the pupil's named main instrument.

Applications for Sport and Music Scholarships are by way of a detailed CV with supporting evidence of ability. Applicants will be invited to an interview and for music applications, a short performance.

All scholarships are subject to specific terms and conditions of award and are reviewed annually.

8. Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)

Hollygirt has a small number of pupils with EHCPs, some of which are funded by the local education authority. EHCPs must be shared with the Admissions Manager prior to any possible admission process. The school's EHCP Co-ordinator and Admissions Manager will review the plan to ensure we are able to meet the needs. Once this review has taken place, we will invite the family for a meeting to discuss future possible placement. Failure to advise of an EHCP in application or draft stage once a place has been offered to the pupil, may result in removal of that place offer.

In order to be able to meet the individual needs of a plan, we limit the number of EHCP places offered in any one year group.

9. Overseas Applicants

Currently, Hollygirt is able to accept pupils 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.

10. Complaints

The school's Complaints Procedure is on the school website and can be sent to prospective parents on request. The Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.