

## HIGHGATE

### **14+ Admissions Policy and Procedures for candidate entry from September 2017**

*This policy aims to explain how applications for places at 14+ (Year 10) are handled, and sets out the arrangements for written tests and interviews and the criteria by which places and financial assistance are offered. Details of the School's ethos, curriculum, pastoral care, co-curricular provision, together with contact details for the Admissions Coordinator.*

Highgate admits academically able pupils who have a love of learning and are willing to rise to the challenges of a fast-paced, exciting curriculum, who also seek to contribute to the extra-curricular life of the school and who enjoy learning and working in a community to the benefit of all its members. Applications from pupils of all social and cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

#### **Policy and Procedures**

##### **1 Entry to Highgate**

Entry is by means of academic interviews. Candidates must be in the equivalent of a Year 9 class at the time of the test. Applications should be submitted by the dates published on the School website, and are welcomed from candidates in independent or state schools.

- a: The academic interviews, in literacy and numeracy (English and Mathematics)
- b: General Panel Interview with a senior member of Admissions or Middle School
- c: The confidential report from the candidate's current school.
- d: The candidate's ability to demonstrate proven and future commitment to the co-curricular life of a school.
- e: Siblings of pupils already at Highgate and children of staff and Governors (see paragraph 6).

Candidates are assessed relative to all other candidates applying in that particular year.

##### **2 Places, bursaries and scholarships available each year**

For entry in 2018, places will be available for approximately 10 pupils (girls and boys) who will join about 160 pupils from our Year 9.

Fee remission, other than for bursaries, music scholarships (see 'Information on Scholarships') and awards made prior to September 2013, has been phased out in favour of means-tested bursaries which allow children whose parents/carers would not otherwise have been able to meet the cost of fees, to come to Highgate. The Admissions Officer (Widening Access) (BursaryOffice@highgateschool.org.uk) can provide information on the number of bursaries held by pupils in the School at any one time.

Preference will be given to bursary candidates who currently attend state schools. There would need to be particular and unusual circumstances for us to award a bursary to a child attending an independent school.

### **3 Test interviews**

We aim to gauge candidates' academic ability, their intellectual curiosity, their instincts and attitudes to the co-curricular life, their teachability and their interpersonal skills in order to choose those who will most benefit from what we have to offer at Highgate, in and out of the classroom. Staff interviewing will include senior members of the Mathematics and English Departments, the Deputy Head (Academic), the Head of Middle School, the Director of Admissions and other members of the Senior School staff.

### **4 Offers**

Once interviews have taken place, the 14+ Admissions Panel, chaired by the Director of Admissions, meets to recommend candidates to whom offers (places and scholarships) should be made. Offers are made at the end of March prior to entry, and places must be accepted by the end of the Lent Term—precise dates for each year will be published online. A deposit of £5,000 is required at this point, £4,500 of which will be deducted from the first term's fees payable in August 2018.

### **5 Final Selection Procedure**

The Selection Committee (consisting of the Head the Director of Admissions, the Deputy Head (Academic), and the Bursar) convenes to decide collectively to whom offers, including prizes and scholarships, will be made. The Bursar will be asked to advise on the financial circumstances of candidates whose parents or carers have applied for bursarial assistance. The decisions of the Selection Panel are final and are not subject to appeal.

### **6 Siblings policy, Children of Staff and Governors of the school**

Parents and carers should be aware that there is no guarantee or expectation that a sibling or a child of Highgate School staff or governors is offered a place.

Although we give particularly careful consideration to them, we do not give them places on the basis of their being a sibling or a child of Highgate School staff or governors. Because of the competitive entry procedure to the School, each child is assessed on his or her individual merits. If we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our entrance criteria, we may give preference to siblings or children of staff or governors or former pupils or children with a particular skill, talent or aptitude. Children are assessed relative to all other candidates applying in that particular year.

The Director of Admissions writes to the parents and carers of siblings applying for places prior to the entrance tests to explain the admissions policy above with particular regard to siblings.

### **7 Specific learning difficulties (SLD) and special or particular circumstances**

Highgate welcomes applications from all who have the ability and aptitude to access Highgate's academic curriculum, providing those with any SLD or special/particular circumstances (for example

physical or mental health conditions) can be offered the support they require from the School and can be accommodated within the constraints imposed by the School's historic and listed buildings and dual-site.

Early and open communication with the School about all matters which may be relevant to a prospective pupil's education is essential. If parents/carers are in any doubt about what might be relevant they should contact the Director of Admissions directly prior to making an application for a place. Parents or carers are expected to indicate any SLD or special/particular circumstances which a child may have when the application for a place is made. This allows appropriate consideration to be given to any reasonable provision that may need to be made for the child before any entry test/interview, and parents and carers should be aware that insufficient notice of any relevant matter is likely to mean consideration cannot be given to any provision that ordinarily would have been considered in such circumstances. Parents/carers will be asked to provide a copy of a medical report or educational psychologist's report and/or any other pertinent information to assist with such consideration, for example, large print material, extra time, use of laptops or other special arrangements.

Early and open communication also allows the School to discuss thoroughly with parents/carers and, if necessary, their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil and whether these will be sufficient to enable the School to provide for the prospective pupil's needs. The School feels it is more helpful to parents or carers and prospective pupils to undertake this assessment prior to the entry test/interview where feasible but, at the very least, it needs to be undertaken before any offer is made. The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, it will not be able to provide adequately for the prospective pupil's physical, educational and other relevant needs. In these circumstances parents/carers shall be informed of the reasons why a place is not offered.

Failure to disclose information about SLD or special/particular circumstances before a place is offered may trigger a review of any offer of a place and may lead to its withdrawal if the School will not be able to provide adequately for the prospective pupil's physical, educational and other relevant needs once all reasonable adjustments have been made. In addition, subject to the circumstances, the School reserves the right to refuse an applicant from attending any entry test/interview if relevant matters were not disclosed in a timely manner but come to light without adequate notice and this means that the School cannot now make adjustments which would ordinarily have been considered in such circumstances for the entry test/interview, particularly if without adjustments it is considered the applicant may have a significant adverse impact on other children attending the entry test/interview.

Candidates with English as an additional language will need to demonstrate that they have a sufficient command of English to cope with a curriculum which is delivered in English. Allowances will, of course, be made and parents/carers are invited to seek guidance from the Director of Admissions.

## **8 Educational agencies**

We deal exclusively with parents or guardians or carers of prospective candidates, and not with educational or third party agencies throughout the admissions process

## **9 Complaints**

In the event that a parent or carer wishes to make a complaint about the way in which their child's application has been handled (in other words, the admissions process), they should write to the Head setting out the reasons for the complaint before the end of the term in which the assessment took place. The Head will examine the grounds for the complaint and will respond in writing, guided by the deadlines specified in the Complaints Procedure, setting out his decision and the timetable for any further steps which may include a recommendation to the Secretary to the Governing Body that an Appeals Panel be convened involving one or more Governors. Appeals against admissions decisions are not accepted.

## **10 Future policy changes**

This policy may be amended at any meeting of the governing body, in which case the revised policy would operate from the start of the following academic year.

S M James

Director of Admissions September 2017