

## HIGHGATE

### Junior School Admissions Policy and Procedures for candidate entry from September 2018

*This policy aims to explain how applications for places at 7+ (Year 3) and 9+ (Year 5) are handled, and sets out the arrangements for written tests and interviews and the criteria by which places are offered. Details of the School's ethos, curriculum, pastoral care, co-curricular provision, together with contact details for the Junior School office (for Open Day details) are published on the School's website.*

Highgate admits academically able children 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 children of all social and cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

#### Policy and Procedures

##### 1 Entry to Highgate

Entry is by means of written tests and interviews. Children must be in the equivalent of a Year 2 class (for 7+) or a Year 4 class (for 9+) at the time of the test. Please note that the information pertaining to 9+ entry is relevant for 2019 entry only, after which the main point of entry to Junior School will be 7+ only.

An application form is available to download from the School [website](#) and should be submitted, with a passport photo and cheque (payable to Highgate School) for registration fee, to the Admissions Office by the date specified on the School website. Parents or carers unable to pay the registration fee by cheque are asked to contact the Admissions Office.

The written entry tests for 7+ consist of papers in Non-Verbal Reasoning, English and Mathematics. This is the first stage of the selection procedure: *Criteria for entry at 7+* (guidelines for the personal and academic aptitudes which pupils need to demonstrate at tests and interviews) are published on the School's [website](#) along with dates of the assessment day. The tests allow the School to identify children who should cope with the scholarly nature of the academic education offered by Highgate. A proportion of the children are then invited for interviews. The criteria by which children are chosen for interview are:

- a) Results gained in the written tests. It is anticipated that successful children will fare well in all aspects of the written tests but a child who fares poorly in one paper but strongly in another may be considered.
- b) The confidential report from the child's current school, where received.

Results of written assessments to gauge children's readiness for the Highgate curriculum are analysed to ensure that factors affecting learning maturity (e.g. age, gender) are taken into account. Children are assessed relative to all other candidates applying in that particular year.

9+ is similar in format, but contains no Non-Verbal Reasoning paper. *Criteria for entry at 9+* (guidelines for the personal and academic aptitudes which pupils need to demonstrate at tests and interviews) are published on the School's [website](#) along with dates of the assessment day.

## 2 Interviews

For 7+ entry, the expectation is to interview selected candidates after the written tests have been assessed and during a two-week period to ensure parity for all candidates. The interview is not a second academic test, but is an important factor in the selection process. The children are interviewed in groups and are given a task which is designed to be both stimulating and fun. The aim is to see how they work in collaboration with other children and how they co-operate as well as to test their listening skills and to see how they tackle problem solving. We aim to gauge candidates' intellectual curiosity, their instincts and attitudes to the co-curricular life of the School, their teachability, their inter-personal skills and their behaviour, during the interviews and at other times.

All pupils who apply for 9+ are interviewed and this takes place on the same day as the written tests.

Once interviews have taken place, the 7+ and 9+ Admissions Panel, chaired by the Head of Admissions, meets to recommend children to whom offers of places should be made.

## 3 Places available each year and financial assistance

For entry in 2019 at 7+ there will be approximately 70 places available for girls and boys who will join about 40 children progressing from the Pre-Preparatory School. For entry in 2019 at 9+ there will be approximately 20 places available.

Financial assistance for children at the Junior School is only available in exceptional circumstances; for example, following the death of a parent/carer after acceptance of a place. The School's limited funds for bursaries are otherwise committed to enabling older pupils to commence or complete their education at Highgate (see [policy](#) on financial assistance/ bursaries).

## 4 Final Selection Procedure

The Admissions Panel convenes to decide collectively to whom offers will be made. This committee is made up of the Head of Admissions, Principal of the Junior School (Director of Admissions), 7+ or 9+ Admissions Officer and Assistant Principal of the Junior School. The decisions of the Admissions Panel are final and are not subject to appeal.

Letters setting out the result of a child's application, sent on dates agreed between independent schools in the case of 7+, make clear the arrangements for any reserve list or for the acceptance of places and the payment of a deposit; details may be requested from the Junior School office.

## 5 Siblings policy

Given the number of applicants applying to Highgate each year and to ensure fairness to all those who apply, parents and carers should be aware that there is no guarantee or expectation that a sibling is offered a place. In addition, siblings are only invited to the interview stage should their performance in the written tests justify it.

Parents or carers of twins or other multiples applying for places together should be aware that the outcome of each child's application may differ from the other(s). Likewise, siblings applying at the same time for different entry points may receive different outcomes. If you would like to discuss managing this in advance, please contact the Head of Admissions.

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 with a particular skill, talent or aptitude. Children are assessed relative to all other candidates applying in that particular year.

The Head 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.

## **6 Acceptance of places**

Written acceptances, together with a deposit cheque for £3000, need to be **received before 12 noon on the deadline date stated in the offer of place letter**. After that time we may automatically offer the place to another candidate.

## **7 Feedback**

Although some general guidance and advice may be provided on request, it is not practicable to provide detailed feedback on a child's individual performance. The School does not return test papers to candidates nor divulge specific scores or those of other candidates.

## **8 Reserve list**

We operate a reserve list at both 7+ and 9+ and may be able to make firm offers to one or two children from that list. Once the academic year preceding entry is completed then the reserve list is closed. Any occasional places that become available after this date are dealt with entirely separately.

If a child is unsuccessful in an application to Highgate, it is highly unlikely that the School will accept another application for an entry point any sooner than two years after the original anticipated entry point. This allows time for the child to develop and progress and ensures they are not subject to excessive testing.

## **8 Occasional Places**

The Head of Admissions will seek to fill occasional places created by the departure of pupils prior to Year 7 unless the year group in question is above or at the optimal size for the good running of the School. Please see the Occasional Places Admissions Policy, available on the School website, for full details.

Only in very exceptional circumstances will places be offered for Year 6 for reasons other than major changes in a family's personal circumstances.

## **9 Transfer of Highgate Junior School pupils**

The Principal of the Junior School confirms passage to the Senior School when the child is in Year 6, subject to good academic and behavioural track record in the Junior School. Details of entry criteria for the Senior School are to be found in the 11+ Admissions Policy, published on the School website.

## **10 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 or carers are in any doubt about what might be relevant they should contact Head 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. 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 and 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 which may include, 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 and 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 or 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 meaning that the School cannot now make adjustments which would ordinarily have been considered in such circumstances for the entry test/interview. This is particularly likely 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 and carers are invited to seek guidance from the Head of Admissions.

## **11 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.

## **12 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 entrance test was sat. 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.

### **13 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.

L Eaden, Head of Admissions  
September 2018