

HIGHGATE SCHOOL

16+ Admissions Policy and Procedures for candidate entry from September 2012

This policy should be read in conjunction with the advice about admissions (Admissions at Highgate: a simple fact-sheet) and the policy on financial assistance ('bursaries') available on the website. It aims to explain how applications for places at 16+ (Year 12) 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, who arranges Open Mornings, are published on the School's website

Aim of this Admissions Policy

Highgate School 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. All three schools which make up the Foundation use tests in order to assess candidates' strengths in these areas. Applications from pupils of all social and cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

Policy and Procedures

1 Entry to Highgate School

Entry is by means of academic interviews. Candidates must be in the equivalent of a Year 11 class at the time of the test. Applications should be submitted by 19th October in the year before entry and are welcomed from candidates in independent or maintained schools.

The academic interviews in four subject areas most likely to be the A levels which the candidate wishes to pursue take place on Saturday 5th November (the alternative date is provisionally the afternoon of 8th November). There is also a general interview. The criteria by which candidates are chosen for interview are:

- a: Results gained in the academic interviews. It is anticipated that successful candidates will fare well in all aspects of the academic interviews but a candidate who fares poorly in one but strongly in others will be considered.
- b: The confidential report from the candidate's current school.
- c: Predicted GCSE (or equivalent) grades.
- d: The candidate's ability to demonstrate proven and future commitment to the co-curricular life of a school.

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

2 Specific learning difficulties (SLD)

Parents or carers are expected to indicate any SLD which a candidate may have. Reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate the needs of those with a SLD. Any SLD report must have

been submitted with the application and by the deadline. Highgate's Learning Support Teacher will advise the Director of Admissions whether the educational experience and schooling are likely to be compatible with the candidate's SLD.

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.

3 Places, bursaries and scholarships available each year

For entry in 2012,, places will be available for between 35 and 50 pupils (girls and boys, although there are at least 25 places for girls). Means-tested bursaries (see advice on the website concerning the financial circumstances form) are available, according to need, for pupils in Year 12 Up to ten Sixth Form Academic Awards are available for outstanding candidates; the value of scholarships will be ten per cent of the annual tuition fee. Bursaries can be held in conjunction with Academic Awards. The Director of the Charity (robert.wilne@highgateschool.org.uk) can provide information on the number of bursaries held at any one time.

While the vast majority of offers are made in December following the 16+ assessments in November of Year 11, the School recognises that pupils will either change their minds or take time to make up their minds to move school, and that parents may relocate to the area at short notice. Late applications will be processed, but pupils applying after offers have been made and accepted need to understand that the School's ability either to make further offers or to accommodate subject choices may be constrained. Only exceptionally will applications for a place in Year 13 be accepted.

4 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 the Director of Studies, the Assistant Head (Sixth Form), the Director of Admissions and other members of the Senior School staff.

Once interviews have taken place, the 16+ Admissions Panel, chaired by the Director of Admissions, meets to recommend candidates to whom offers (places, prizes and scholarships) should be made.

5 Final Selection Procedure

The Selection Committee (consisting of the Head Master, the Director of Admissions, the Director of Studies 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

Although we give particularly careful consideration to siblings, we do not give them priority and are not always able to offer them places. 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 former pupils or children with a particular skill, talent or aptitude. Children are assessed relative to all other candidates applying in that particular year.

7 Applications from candidates not following GCSE

Adjustments will be made in assessing interview performance of candidates not following GCSE. Parents or carers should contact the Admissions Coordinator to give details of their child's Year 11 curriculum.

8 Staff children

Sons and daughters of members of staff at Highgate School will be subject to the same selection procedure as external applicants. Staff children may be admitted, provided they do sufficiently well in the written entry tests and at interview and can demonstrate that they will benefit from a place in the school.

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 Master setting out the reasons for the complaint before the end of the term in which the entrance test was sat. The Head Master will examine the grounds for the complaint and will respond in writing within 28 days, setting out his decision and the timetable for any further steps which may include a recommendation to the Secretary of the Foundation 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.

A.S. Pettitt
Head Master
June 2011