

HIGHGATE SCHOOL

3+ Admissions Policy and Procedures for candidate entry from September 2010

This policy should be read in conjunction with the advice about admissions and the Frequently Asked Questions section available on the website. It aims to explain how applications for places at 3+ (Nursery) are handled, and sets out the arrangements for assessments 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 School Secretary, who arranges Parent Tours, 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. All three schools which make up the Foundation assess candidates' strengths in these areas. Applications from pupils of all social and cultural backgrounds are welcomed.

Policy and Procedures

I Entry to Highgate Pre-Preparatory School

Entry is by means of practical assessment. Applications should be submitted between March and June in the year before entry.

We have several applicants for each of the expected 32 places offered in the Nursery each year. In view of this, not all applications to the Pre-Prep can be accepted.

If an application is accepted for registration we will write to the parents or guardians of the child in the Michaelmas Term prior to the child's possible entry to the Nursery to give them an appointment to bring their child to school for a short assessment. This visit will take place between September and February in the year prior to entry. Visits are arranged largely in order of the applicants' birthdays, so that older children are seen earlier in the year whilst younger applicants are seen later.

The practical assessment is comprised of a series of play based tasks to assess learning readiness. The child, accompanied by one parent or carer, will spend approximately twenty minutes with the Principal where he or she will be asked to carry out play based tasks which are presented in an informal, relaxed way. The child will then meet the Nursery Teacher and will take part in some further activities. There will also be an opportunity for free play.

The areas assessed include perceptual, manipulative, social, mathematical and language skills. However, we would like to emphasise that we use play materials for these assessments and aim to make the procedure an enjoyable one for the child.

PRE-PREP

2 Learning difficulties

Parents or carers are expected to indicate any learning difficulties or special educational needs which a candidate may have. Reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate the needs of those children with special educational needs.

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 Principal.

3 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.

4 Transfer of Highgate Pre-Preparatory School pupils

Transfer from the Pre-Prep to the Junior School is not automatic and will depend on the child meeting the entry criteria which include the School's judgement of the suitability of Highgate's curriculum for each child. The Principal of the Junior School confirms passage to the Junior School in the November prior to transfer, subject to good academic and behavioural track-record in the Pre-Prep School.

5 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 entry assessments and can demonstrate that they will benefit from a place in the school.

6 Financial assistance

Financial assistance for children at the Pre-Prep is only available in the exceptional circumstances, for example the death of a parent after acceptance of a place. The school's limited funds for bursaries are otherwise committed to enabling older students to commence or complete their education at Highgate. We do not participate in the government's funded places in early years education (nursery grants) scheme.

6 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.

7 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
August 2009