



HEATHFIELD SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

Policy Area:	General
Relevant Statutory Regulations:	ISSR Part 6, 32(3)(a)
In accordance with:	Girls Schools Association (GSA) Admissions Policy
Key Contact Personnel in School	
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:	Director of Admissions and Marketing
Version:	2021.01
Date updated:	01 September 2021
Date of next review:	01 September 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least biannually, and/or following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

COVID-19

Please note that due to Covid-19 restrictions, some admissions events such as taster days/sessions and assessment days may not run during the current circumstances or may be adapted to ensure the School remains Covid-secure at all times.

Introduction

Heathfield School ("the School") is an all girls' independent school offering boarding and day places for pupils from the ages 11 to 18. Deciding on the right school for your child is extremely important and a personal visit is invaluable.

Heathfield holds a number of Open Mornings throughout the year, which provide a general introduction to the School. Details of these and other events are published on the School's website. The School also welcomes prospective parents and their daughters at other times. The School is also happy to welcome prospective families for a personal tour. This can be arranged by contacting the Head of Admissions on 01344 898342 or emailing admissions@heathfieldschool.net.

The Entry Procedure

Heathfield School is an academically selective school. Selection is based upon academic merit which is assessed through an entry examination, an interview at the School, and references from the candidate's previous school. The School's selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded boarding education and to make a positive contribution to the life of the School.

The usual points of entry are at 11+/Form I, 12+/ Form II, 13+/ Form III and 16+/ LVI. The School may also occasionally have places at other ages.

Applicants should ideally register by 1 October of the year preceding the desired year of admission. The registration form, available on the School's website, must be completed and submitted with a non-returnable registration fee of £200.

Equal Opportunities

The School's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Bursaries are offered in order to enable as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School (subject to means testing). Heathfield School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, linguistic background, cultural background, religion and belief, gender or sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or maternity.

Special Needs

The School has due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and welcomes application from pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The School does not treat SEND pupils less favourably and will take reasonable steps to avoid putting SEND pupils at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission and education. The School advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their daughter's requirements with the School at the point of registration and application so that reasonable adjustments can be considered.

A place will only be offered if it is considered that the School is a suitable environment, and the resources and expertise of the Learning Support Department (Spectrum) has the ability to fully support those needs. Costs for additional specialist individual needs tuition at Heathfield School will be borne by the parents. The School also welcomes pupils with physical disabilities provided that the site can meet their needs.

In terms of assessment concessions, Heathfield can provide 25% extra time only where recommended by an Educational Psychologist (EP). At registration, parents should provide a copy of an EP's report or Diagnostic Assessor's report or a medical report to support their application. Any report submitted, should be dated no earlier than 2 years from the date of the assessment. If the information regarding special needs of which the parents/guardian are aware is not divulged at entry, this could result in an offer of a place being rescinded.

The School will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if she becomes a pupil at the School. Ultimately, any decision will be made in relation to other pupils, the School's need to maintain academic standards and whether any adjustments required would be reasonable.

Admissions Criteria

The assessment process is designed to identify pupils who will benefit from the balanced and well-rounded education offered by the School and make a positive contribution towards the life of the School. The aim of the process is to identify potential. The School is looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that include and stretch beyond the academic curriculum. The School does not select on the grounds of academic ability alone, but a satisfactory performance is required in the entry assessments to demonstrate a pupil's ability to access the curriculum offered at the School.

All applicants must have the legal right to live and study in the UK.

Admission at 11+ and 13+ Entry

Candidates will be assessed using a computer based CEM entrance assessment designed to assess numeracy, verbal, and non-verbal ability. The School has taken the decision to use this assessment since it is designed to evaluate potential rather than knowledge. Tutoring or preparation is therefore unnecessary. Further information regarding CEM (Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring) can be found at www.cem.org.

The School's objective is to make a complete assessment of each candidate's potential and character.

The assessment will also include an interview of approximately ten minutes with the Headmistress for which no preparation is required.

The School also requests a reference from the candidate's current school. The School reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants on the grounds of negative elements in the candidate's behavioural record that might adversely impact the School community or where the School cannot meet the candidate's individual needs.

A Taster Day is offered for all prospective Form I (Year 7) and Form III (Year 9) during the Summer term of Year 5, prior to the Assessment Day. This will include time spent in lessons, during which staff assess general levels of literacy, numeracy and social skills. Staff will also assess how the prospective pupil interacts with and integrates into the cohort and their commitment to the School's ethos.

The Headmistress has the overall authority to make a final decision to offer a place.

Admission to the Sixth Form

The School's offer of a place into Sixth Form is usually conditional upon a candidate achieving a minimum of seven GCSEs at Grade 4 or above, including English Language and Mathematics. Candidates must also meet the individual entry requirements for the subjects they are planning to study at sixth form (usually a Grade 6). All candidates for Sixth Form entry will attend an interview with a senior member of staff.

The School will review a confidential reference from the candidate's current school.

Candidates' interactions with peers and staff and their commitment to the School's ethos are considered during their visits to the School for interviews, scholarship assessments and taster visits.

Admissions Criteria

Pupils are admitted according to the process and criteria outlined above, however if the School needs to decide between two or more applicants who meet the School's admission requirements it reserve the right to give preference to:

- a child who already has a sister in the School;
- a child whose parent is a current member of staff;
- a child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude;
- a child whose parents wish the child to progress through all year groups to Year 13.

The School further reserves the right to decline admissions at the discretion of the Headmistress.

Sibling Policy

Heathfield School recognises the value of siblings being educated together, and most sisters do join the School. Sisters must meet the overall entry requirements but will be given preferential treatment over other candidates when they meet the entry standard and places are limited. However, there may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

Deferred Entry

Prep school pupils are offered the opportunity to undergo the assessment at 11 years for a deferred 13+ entry. This enables girls to remain in their 13+ prep schools secure in the knowledge that they have an offer of a place. The School will still seek a final reference.

Scholarships

Heathfield School offers scholarships in the following areas at 11+, 13+ and Sixth Form entry:

- Academic
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Photography
- Sport

All applicants to the School, in addition to current pupils, are invited to apply by letter. Scholarships awarded in Forms I and III remain in place until the end of Form V. Sixth Form scholarships are applied for separately. Candidates who meet the specified criteria are invited to a Scholarship Day in which they will be interviewed and take an academic paper or practical assessment, where appropriate.

Scholarships are awarded to girls who demonstrate significant levels of academic, creative, or sporting achievement. Scholarships holders are entitled to wear a green tie (Forms I-V) or Scholarship badge (Sixth Form).

Being part of our scholarship programme involves being mentored by a teacher in the relevant subject area who ensures each scholar makes the most of the enrichment and leadership opportunities the School has to offer.

Scholars are appraised termly against targets agreed with their mentor to ensure they are maintaining their performance in their scholarship area and involvement in relevant co-curricular activities. Any scholar who has been deemed not to have met their targets will not receive a financial award that term and, if they do not do so for two terms in a row, they will lose their scholarship altogether.

Scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have passed the School's academic entrance examinations. Further details are available on the scholarship section of the School's website.

Bursaries

The School's bursary programme is designed so that as many as possible of those who meet Heathfield School's entry criteria can take up a place here. All bursaries are externally assessed and means tested. Bursaries are only offered to families who are resident in the UK. Further details are available on the Bursary section of the School's website.

Overseas Applicants

Heathfield School welcomes overseas pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, including overseas pupils and those with English as an additional language (EAL), provided they have a Guardian in the UK, over the age of 25, and as long as they are committed to an English boarding school education. Further details are available on the Admissions section of the School's website.

The School does not run a short-term study programme during term time; all applications must be for no less than one year's stay, with a deposit of one term's fees required upon acceptance of a place. Heathfield School provides a Summer School during the months of July and August which is an excellent introduction to the School and boarding. The School prefers overseas pupils to finish a complete course of study, such as Forms III–V for GCSE, or Sixth Form for A Level.

Fluency in English

In order to cope and thrive with the academic and social demands of the School, pupils must be competent English speakers and able to access the English Curriculum. Normally pupils should have been educated in the English medium for at least one year before coming to the School. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged, the cost of which will be added to the parent's bill as required.

Religious Beliefs

Although the School has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for girls of all religions to practise their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that there is compulsory Chapel attendance throughout the week, which all pupils attend, and at the weekend.

Acceptance of Offer

After the pupil's assessment day and completion of all assessment activities (as outlined above), the Head of Admissions will send out offers to successful candidates. Parents should accept the offer on or before the acceptance deadline by lodging a completed Acceptance Form together with the relevant deposit. In the event that the School is oversubscribed, pupils will be placed on a waiting list. Therefore, a place cannot be guaranteed for a prospective pupil whose offer has not been accepted by the deadline specified.

Conditions of Admission

The decision whether to offer a place lies with the Headmistress and the School reserves the right to refuse entry if in the opinion of the Headmistress the pupil does not meet the School's entrance criteria. Acceptance of a place at Heathfield will be on the Terms and Conditions provided to parents within the offer letter.

Related Policies

- Accessibility Policy
- Bursary Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data protection Policy
- Disability Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Guardianship Policy
- Overseas Student Admissions and EFL/EAL Policy
- Record keeping Policy

- Special Educational needs and Disability Policy
- Transgender Policy