



# HEATHFIELD SCHOOL

## Admissions Policy

<b>Policy Area:</b>	General
<b>Relevant Statutory Regulations:</b>	ISSR Part 6, 32(3)(a)
<b>In accordance with:</b>	Girls Schools Association ("GSA") Admissions Policy
<b>Key Contact Personnel in School</b>	
<b>Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:</b>	Director of Marketing and Admissions
<b>Version:</b>	2025.01
<b>Date updated:</b>	06 May 2025
<b>Date of next review:</b>	01 September 2026

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

### Introduction

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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 daughter is extremely important and a personal visit is invaluable.

### Admissions Events

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**Open Mornings and Private Visits:** Heathfield holds termly Open Mornings throughout the year, which provide a general introduction to the School. Each Open Morning has a limited number of spaces to allow for a personal and engaged approach, reflecting the nature of the School. This is normally the best way to visit Heathfield as a prospective family for the first time. Such visits involve a presentation by the Headmistress, speeches from current pupils and a tour of the School. The tour is guided by older pupils who are encouraged to talk directly to the candidate, and the family will be given a prospectus and other key admissions information.

Several "Meet the Head" events are held each term. Numbers are limited to four to eight families at a time (or per group) who will be welcomed by the Headmistress before having a tour of the School by the Admissions team.

Details of these events are published on the School's website.

Alternatively parents have the option to book an individual private visit on a mutually convenient date. Tours of the School will usually be carried out by a member of the Admissions team and a meeting with the Headmistress can be arranged.

For further details please contact the Admissions department on 01344 898342 or email [admissions@heathfieldschool.net](mailto:admissions@heathfieldschool.net).

**Education Taster Day:** A Taster event is offered, where possible, for all prospective Form I (Year 7) students, prior to Assessment. This event aims to give prospective pupils a chance to meet some of the Heathfield staff and supplement their learning with lessons in subjects such as Science, English, PE, Art and Drama.

**New Joiners Day:** Every pupil registered for Form I, II and III entry will be invited to one of the School's New Joiners Days in the term preceding their year of entry. Not only does this day give prospective pupils an opportunity to experience the teaching and lessons at the School, it also provides an opportunity to meet other girls who will be in their year group and to start making friends.

## **Registration**

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Registration must take place before the admissions procedure begins. The School recommends that parents register as early as possible to enable their daughters to enjoy maximum exposure to all invitations and events leading up to the Entrance Assessment. The School maintains one registration list per Year Group, split into day, part time, weekly boarding and full boarding. For UK girls joining at 11+ and 13+, this is by way of an Assessment Day which takes place in the November prior to entry. Girls may also choose to sit an 11+ assessment two years prior to entry for a 13+ deferred entry place.

The registration form, available on the School's website and in the School's Prospectus, must be completed and submitted with a non-returnable registration fee of £240 including VAT.

## **The Entry Procedure**

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

## **Admissions Criteria**

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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.

Pupils attending the previously stand-alone prep schools of Keble, St Joseph's in the Park and Lyonsdown, may now have the opportunity to receive conditional offers for 11+ and 13+ places at MHEG senior schools without sitting the standard entrance exams.

Offers will be based on the Prep Head's recommendation, reflecting academic suitability, good character and internal assessments, including standardised scores collected by the prep schools. This collaborative process ensures that each offer is tailored to the pupil's abilities and potential.

**11+ Offers:** Issued in the Spring Term of Year 5 for entry to senior schools: Abbot's Hill, Belmont Mill Hill Prep, Heathfield School, Kingshott and Westbrook Hay School.

**13+ Offers:** Issued in the Autumn Term of Year 7 for entry to Abbot's Hill, Belmont Mill Hill Prep, Heathfield School, Kingshott and Westbrook Hay School.

### **Conditions of Offers**

All offers are conditional upon:

- Continued academic progress
- Consistently good behaviour
- Engagement in a positive and proactive manner throughout the remainder of their time in the prep school

These conditions ensure that the pathway aligns with the MHEG Schools' commitment to academic excellence and personal development.

### **Wellbeing, Enhanced Learning and Transition Support**

The removal of entrance exams for MHEG prep pupils prioritises their wellbeing. This pupil centred approach promotes uninterrupted learning for the pupils and reduces stress during key transition periods, providing families with peace of mind. Not requiring pupils to do endless practice tests frees up curriculum time for more meaningful, deeper learning opportunities. Pupils know and understand more about their subjects and have a stronger platform for GCSE. Early offers, coupled with ongoing support and a range of transition opportunities, ensure a seamless transfer to senior school.

### **For Pupils Not Meeting Recommendation Criteria**

Pupils for whom the Prep Head does not recommend an early offer in Year 5 (11+) or Year 7 (13+) may still sit the respective senior school entrance exams. These exams will be supported by a detailed school reference to ensure a fair opportunity for placement in MHEG senior schools.

### **Offer of a Place**

Offers of places at MHEG senior schools will be made in writing. Parents accept the offer by completing and signing the Acceptance Form, confirming their acceptance of the School's Terms and Conditions (Parent Contract), and returning it to the School with the Acceptance Deposit by the date outlined in the Offer letter. Failure to respond by the stated deadline may result in the place being offered to another prospective pupil and loss of the previous priority given under the admissions criteria.

The Head's decision relating to all matters of admissions is final.

## **Admission at 11+ and 13+ Entry**

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Candidates will be assessed using the computer based CEM ("Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring") entrance assessment designed to assess numeracy, verbal, and non-verbal ability. It is designed to evaluate potential rather than knowledge. Tutoring or preparation is therefore unnecessary. Further information regarding CEM can be found at [www.cem.org](http://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, in the School's opinion, adversely impact the School community or where the School cannot meet the candidate's individual needs.

## **Admission to the Sixth Form**

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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 the Headmistress and/or Head of Sixth Form.

The School will review a confidential 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, in the School's opinion, adversely impact the School community or where the School cannot meet the candidate's individual needs.

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 Offer**

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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 reserves the right to give preference to:

- a child who already has a sibling 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 admission of any candidate in the absolute at the discretion of the Headmistress.

## **Waiting List**

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In the event that a Year Group is over-subscribed, parents may be offered a waiting list place.

## Deferred Entry

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Prep school pupils are offered the opportunity to undergo the assessment at 11 years of age 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 seek a final reference to ensure the candidate's progress remains satisfactory and reserves the right to withdraw an offer where this is not the case.

## Scholarships

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

- Academic
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Photography (Sixth Form only)
- Sport

All applicants to the School, in addition to current pupils, are invited to apply. Scholarships awarded in Forms I and III remain in place until the end of Form V. Sixth Form scholarships are applied for separately.

Scholars must demonstrate significant levels of academic, creative, or sporting enthusiasm, achievement and potential. An award carries with it title and prestige and gives the holder access to our scholarship programme to further their potential. There is no monetary award or remission of fees.

Scholars make significant contributions to the school and will develop their skills and potential through support from their personal mentor. 11+ and 13+ subject scholars will be required to follow the relevant subject to GCSE level to retain the scholarship, Sixth Form subject scholars should follow the relevant subject at A Level. Scholarship holders are entitled to wear a green tie (Forms I-V) or a Scholarship badge (Sixth Form).

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.

Further details and an application form are available on the Scholarship section of the School's website.

## Acceptance of Offer

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After the pupil's assessment 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

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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 subject to the Terms and Conditions provided to parents within the offer letter.

## **Equal Opportunities**

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The School's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. The School accepts applications and admits pupils irrespective of their race, ethnic or national origin, linguistic background, pregnancy or maternity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief or special educational needs and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered. The School will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way. The School believes this approach enriches its 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 is committed to equal treatment for all.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ("SEND")**

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The School has due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and accepts registrations 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 advises parents of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities to discuss their child'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 has the ability to fully support those needs. Costs for additional specialist individual needs tuition at 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 and/or a Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist or a report from CAMHS. The school at which the pupil is currently attending, should confirm that 25% extra time is their normal way of working. At registration, parents should provide a copy of any such reports to support their application. Any report submitted should be dated no earlier than two years from the date of assessment. It will be at the discretion of the school to award any additional time at assessment if a report is older than two years. 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.

## **Sibling Policy**

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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.

## **Bursaries**

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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**

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The School welcomes overseas pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, including overseas pupils and those with English as an Additional Language provided they have a guardian in the UK, who is 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 runs a short-term study programme during the Summer Term; all other 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. The School also 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**

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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. Tuition in English as an Additional Language can be arranged, the cost of which will be added to the parent's bill as required.

## **Religion**

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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 pupils of all religions to practise their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that there is compulsory community Chapel attendance throughout the week (usually 2-3 times a week) which all pupils attend, and on a Sunday for boarders only. All pupils are expected to attend morning assemblies, and special services such as the Carol Service or on Remembrance Day.

## **Data Protection**

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The School takes its responsibilities for personal data very seriously and has a policy in place to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 incorporating the General Data Protection Regulations ("GDPR").

## **Related Policies**

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- Accessibility Policy
- Bursary Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disability Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Guardianship Policy
- Overseas Student Admissions and EFL/EAL Policy
- Privacy Policy for Prospective Pupils
- Record keeping Policy
- Scholarship Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Transgender Policy