

Admissions Policy

Withington Girls' School

September 2023

Withington Girls' School

ADMISSIONS POLICY

This is the admissions policy of Withington Girls School (**School**). The School is an academically selective school for girls aged between 7 and 18 years.

The aims of this policy are:

- to set out the particular of the School's policy on and arrangements for admissions to the School;
- to ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes;
- to describe how the School identifies and admits girls who will benefit from an academic education and other opportunities available at the School and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our School community;
- to ensure compliance with the School's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Scope, application and responsibility statement

The procedures set out in this policy apply at each of the main points of entry to the School and also to candidates for occasional vacancies in other year groups. We will only admit a child who has met the relevant admissions criteria as set out in this policy.

The procedures set out in this policy do not apply to existing pupils who are progressing through the School.

The Board of Governors as proprietor of the School has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's obligations under: Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Education and Skills Act 2008, Equality Act 2010 and Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice: [Children missing education](#) (DfE, September 2016), [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (DfE, September 2022); and [SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

Equality, diversity and disability

All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment or any disability. Candidates will also be treated equally in respect of their parents' age, sex, gender or marital or civil partnership status.

The School is inclusive and welcomes applicants with disabilities and special educational needs. At present, the School's facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited but the School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral and responsibilities under equality legislation in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.

Parents must inform the School on registration with full details of any known disability or special educational needs of their daughter which may affect her ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the education provided at the School.

The School shall determine any reasonable adjustments or alternative arrangements that may be required for the applicant to access the admission procedure based on the information provided, in accordance with the School's obligations under equality legislation. The School will consult with parents or guardians and other such persons or organizations as necessary in order to ascertain the child's particular needs and the nature of any additional or alternative arrangements which would be required to meet them if a place were to be offered.

Application Procedure

To register for a place, parents are required to complete an application form which is available on the School's website.

Any closing date for application to any of the School's examinations will be stipulated on the School's website and communicated directly to all who make admissions enquiries. An application will only be considered if accompanied by a non-refundable application fee, the level of which will be stipulated on the application form.

Current pupils who wish to progress from the Junior to the Senior School are not required to pay a second application fee.

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of their application as soon as reasonably practicable and in good time before the Examinations which traditionally take place in January each year.

The School's admissions procedure has three elements:

- entrance examinations/assessments (Senior and Junior School only)
- interviews (Senior School and Sixth Form only) and
- references.

References

For entry at all stages, the Head of the applicant's current school will be asked to provide a written reference as to the applicant's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the School community, talents and interest, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, or a disability.

Entrance Assessments for the Junior School

Entrance assessments are held for entry at 7+ and 8+ and, subject to availability of places, 9+ and 10+ in January each year. The candidates sit tests in English and Mathematics in form rooms; they may also take part in a taught task which involves interacting with staff on previously unseen material and allows staff to

gauge pupils' learning potential. The papers are set and marked by the appropriate form teacher. Every attempt is made to make the candidates feel at ease.

Subject to availability of places, applications are accepted from candidates at other times of the year to take the Junior School entrance assessment.

Entrance Examination for the Senior School (Year 7)

All candidates (including those from Withington Girls' School's own Junior School) take a Verbal Reasoning test, a Non-Verbal Reasoning test, and written papers in English and Mathematics. The English paper is in two parts, a comprehension and essay, while the Mathematics paper tests mathematical skills and problem solving.

The Mathematics test is set by the Head of Mathematics and marked by a panel of Mathematics and other staff; the English test is set by the Head of English and marked by a panel of English and other staff.

At all ages, entry papers aim to discover potential, not merely knowledge. Due consideration is given to the particular circumstances, educational, cultural and financial, of all candidates. The School attracts pupils from a large geographical area.

Following the Senior School examinations, selected candidates will be invited to interview with senior members of staff. All girls from Withington's Junior School will be interviewed if they wish to progress into the Senior School. This is a general interview to explore the candidate's interests, attitude to school, personal qualities, ability to contribute to the School community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the School.

Candidates not being called for interview following Senior School examinations will be informed in writing at the earliest opportunity that the School is unable to offer them a place.

Extraordinary Applications to Senior School

From time to time the School accepts applications from candidates who wish to join the Senior School at times other than the usual entry points at the beginning of Year 7 and beginning of Year 12.

Such applicants will be required to sit examination papers in Mathematics and English as set out above and, subject to demonstrating the required level of ability and/or potential in those papers, will be invited for interview with senior members of the teaching staff. Confidential references from their current School will also be required.

Application to the Sixth Form

A number of pupils enter the Sixth Form from outside the School. External applicants will be shortlisted for interview based on the reports from their current school and their predicted GCSE grades.

The interview takes place in the Spring Term and explores the candidate's interests, attitude to school, personal qualities, ability to contribute to the School community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the School. The candidate's academic ability in their subject choices for A Level will also be covered.

Applicants must achieve grades in their GCSE examinations which meet the School's minimum entry requirements for the relevant year. Relevant grade requirements are published on the School's website and are available before application on request, and all candidates will be informed of grade requirements as soon as practicable after submitting an application.

Admissions criteria

The admissions criteria are:

- success in the relevant entrance assessments and / or achieving the required GCSE grades, as appropriate; and
- satisfactory interview (if applicable); and
- a positive confidential reference from the applicant's present school (if applicable);
- ability and willingness to benefit from the School's broad and varied curriculum;
- commitment to the School's ethos as described in the School's aims; and
- an ability and willingness to make a positive contribution to the School community.

The School reserves the right to restrict the offer of places to candidates who we feel can benefit from the broad and varied curriculum offered and make a positive contribution to the School community.

All candidates must have the legal right to live and study in the UK or, where appropriate, will be sponsored by the School to do so.

The Headmistress's decision in accepting or refusing a candidate into the School is final. In order to ensure fairness and to protect the integrity of the system, results of assessments are not discussed with parents or made public.

It is assumed that pupils will automatically progress through the School, subject to their meeting the required standards of behaviour and progress and the School continuing to be able to meet their needs.

International pupils

Additional admissions procedures and criteria may apply to candidates who require the School to sponsor their application for a visa to study in the UK. Parents should contact the Admissions Department for further details.

Offers

Senior School offers for Year 7 places are sent by post on a date agreed with the Greater Manchester Consortium of Schools.

An offer of a place in Junior or Senior School is accepted by return of a completed acceptance form by the stipulated date and accompanied by an Acceptance Deposit.

Sixth Form offers are conditional on the achievement of the required grades at GCSE. Acceptance of the conditional place is by returning a completed reply slip by the stipulated date and payment of an Acceptance Deposit. If the required GCSE grades are achieved, a firm offer is made and the contractual acceptance form is completed. If the required grades are not achieved, the Acceptance Deposit is refunded.

Siblings

Some priority is given to siblings of pupils at the School at the proposed time of entry, although admission is not automatic and the candidate must meet the admissions criteria.

Financial Assistance

The school offers a number of means-tested bursaries to assist candidates joining the Withington in Years 5, 6, 7 and 12 whose parents are on low and middle incomes.

Parents must indicate on the application form if they wish to apply for a bursary and, if they choose to proceed with a bursary application, they will be required to complete a bursary application form in advance of the entrance examination/assessment for Junior and Senior School applicants or formal interview for Sixth Form applicants. The School will consider the applicant's entitlement to a bursary in its absolute discretion. The School will in almost all circumstances require a bursary assessment interview, either via a home visit or online, before deciding whether or not to award a bursary. The terms of any financial assistance will be communicated in the offer and will require to be complied with for the duration of the girl's attendance at the School. Bursary forms are completed annually in order to continue to assess the level of parental income and financial assistance required.

Please see the School's website for further information about bursaries.

Training

The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.

The School maintains written records of all staff training.

Record keeping and confidentiality

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

A confidential admissions record will be kept for each candidate.

Admission register

For pupils admitted to the School, the School will:

- maintain an admission register; and
- inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points

in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

Version control

Effective date of the policy	September 2023
Date of last review	Summer 2023
Date of next review	Summer 2024
Policy owner	
SMT	Jen Baylis
Board of Governors	Jane Allred