



Admissions Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

Independent Day School

Our Lady of Sion School

Last Reviewed: September 2023

Frequency of Review: Annually

Next Review Due: September 2024

This policy has been authorised by the Governing Body of Our Lady of Sion School. It is addressed to prospective parents and pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

Policy Statement

1. The Aims of this Policy are:

- a. To ensure compliance with the school's charitable purposes. Our Lady of Sion School has a Roman Catholic foundation, inter-faith tradition and is a selective school for pupils aged 3 -19 years.
- b. To identify and admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community. We will usually only admit a child who has met the academic criteria. However, where there is an obvious pastoral need that we can support to benefit the academic and emotional wellbeing of the child, admission will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

The school's charitable objects (as published in charitycommission.gov.uk) are as follows:

To advance and promote education and training, by the provision and conduct of an interdenominational day school or schools for boys, girls, and young adults and insofar as it is incidental or ancillary to the advancement of education, such other purpose for the benefit of the local community as shall be exclusively charitable.

2. Equal Treatment:

The school's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our school community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school. Our Lady of Sion School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social or financial background.

3. Disability and Special Educational Needs:

The school does not discriminate in any way regarding entry. The school has limited facilities for the disabled, but we will welcome pupils with disabilities provided that our site can accommodate them safely with access to the education provision. The school welcomes pupils with special educational needs providing that its learning support department can offer them the support that they require. However, we strongly advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the school before they sit the entrance exam so that the school can make adequate provision for them. Parents should provide a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report if they have one. The school will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at the school.

The school needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the education provided at the school. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational needs should provide the School with full written details at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place.

The school needs this information so that, in the case of any child with particular needs, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the admission process and if an offer of a place is made.

The school will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. Similarly, if special education needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the school will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at the school.

Accessibility: This policy can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.

4. Procedures Summary: Our admission procedure for candidates from Year 3 upwards has three elements:

- a. Entrance tests
- b. Interviews
- c. References

5. Entry Assessment: These are as follows:

- a. There are no formal entry assessments for the Nursery, Reception, Year 1, or Year 2.
- b. Year 3 - 6 candidates take entrance assessments, set by the school, in Literacy, Numeracy and Reasoning. It is not required if the candidate is transitioning from Y6 to Senior School.
- c. Years 7-10 candidates take entrance tests in quantitative, verbal, and non-verbal reasoning.
- d. Sixth Form entry is dependent upon GCSE results, or an entrance exam if these are not available.

6. Interviews: These are of two kinds:

- a. General interview: In all cases there will be 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.
- b. Option interview: At 16+ there may also be an "option interview" to explore a candidate's academic ability in a particular subject. For certain option subjects (such as Art) candidates may be asked to submit samples of their work.

7. Reference: The Head of the candidate's current school will be asked to provide a written reference as to the candidate'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. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at the school (such as NFER or SATs) and predicted grades at GCSE (if appropriate).

The reference will also ask for copies of the last two school reports.

8. Candidate's Age: Very occasionally, we may offer places to pupils one year ahead or behind their standard year group, if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School.

9. Special Circumstances: We recognise that a candidate's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- a. if they are unwell when taking tests or have had a lengthy absence from their school;
- b. if there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement;
- c. if there is a relevant educational history, for example, education outside the British system;
- d. if the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties;
- e. if English is not the candidate's first language.

In any of these cases, we may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the pupil's current school (including samples of work) or any family history of dyslexia, as we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

- 10. Disclosures:** Parents must as soon as possible disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's physical and mental, health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties.
- 11. Additional Factors:** If the school is oversubscribed and we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our admission requirements after all appropriate allowances and special consideration has been given, we may give preference to:
 - a. a child who already has a brother/sister in the school or whose parent is a former pupil here;
 - b. a child whose parent is a current member of our staff;
 - c. a child with a particular skill, talent, or aptitude.

12. Scholarships

At Our Lady of Sion School, scholarships (in general) do not hold a monetary value.

However, there are three exceptions to this rule:

- Ratisbonne Scholarship – Junior School (Reception to Year 6)
- Louise Humann Scholarship – Year 9 & Year 10 entry into the school
- Sapere Aude Scholarship – entry into VISion (Sixth Form College).

For more information regarding these processes, please consult the appropriate policy (via our website or contact the School Bursar directly).

Related Documents:

Accessibility Plan
Scholarship Policy
Bursary policy

Approved by Chair of Governors September 2023