

Admissions

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1 Policy Statement

Ewell Castle School is an Independent Day School for girls and boys aged 3 to 18. The School welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. Admissions are at the discretion of the Principal. Selection criteria are employed at certain ages to ensure that pupils can access the curriculum fully and thrive academically in terms of progress and achievement. This policy endeavours to take into consideration, as appropriate, the legal frameworks set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the subsequent Codes of Practice for Admissions and Appeals.

Ewell Castle School depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible, to improve, the educational and general standards for all its pupils commensurate with the ethos to which the School aspires.

The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his/her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. Furthermore, these criteria need to be met throughout the pupil's time at the School.

It is the School's policy to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any pupil or potential pupil with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage, compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

The School therefore asks the parents to give details of any known disability so that the School can assess its admissions criteria without prejudice. In assessing such applications, the School will act in line with its Disability Policy and in accordance with this it may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

2 Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to:

- 2.1 ensure a simple clear, fair and objective admissions policy;
- 2.2 enable parents to make informed preferences in the choice of a school place for their child.
- 2.3 inform parents as to their rights with respect to admissions and appeals including those children with special educational needs or disabilities;
- 2.4 identify the School's inclusion policy in respect of the integration of excluded children;
- 2.5 comply with all relevant legislation and guidance in relation to equal opportunities (Equality Act 2010);
- 2.6 be sensitive to the timetables, deadlines and common dates set for the admissions process by the local admissions authorities (including "National Offers Day") and independent schools' code of practice;
- 2.7 clearly describe our over-subscription criteria and how they are applied (including reserve lists);
- 2.8 explain what is expected from parents, and what the parent can expect from the School at each stage of the admissions process;
- 2.9 provide the name and details of the School contact for the provision of further information.

3 Registration

3.1 Registration

Registration of a child for Ewell Castle School may be made at any stage by the submission of a completed application form and payment of the registration fee. The Entrance Examination process is typically arranged in November for pupils applying to join the Senior School, and during the early part of the Spring Term for the Prep School. The Senior School assessment process is usually completed by end of January/ beginning of February for entry the following September, so early registration is advised (for any age) and ensures placement on the Registration List. Interviews and assessments are both undertaken as part of the School's admissions process. See Section 5 for Specific Arrangements for entry into the School.

3.2 Financial Considerations

At registration and at all stages in the process, the School reserves the right not to admit pupils where there is sound reason to believe that there are insufficient funds or where there is an unwillingness to pay the fees or such portion of the fee as is liable, after any scholarship or bursary is taken into account. The School employs the services of an objective third party assessment of assets for families applying for bursaries to assist in its decision-making process.

4 Selection Criteria

4.1 Academic

A prospective pupil is required to provide evidence of satisfying certain academic criteria. This will be achieved through assessment using numeracy and literacy tests, as well as an original writing exercise, by current school report and/or by other means to be specified, and is to ensure that the School can meet the needs of the individual pupil.

4.2 Non-Academic Criteria

The ability of a prospective pupil to benefit from and contribute to the life of the School will be a contributory factor in the selection. These factors will be assessed by both academic and non-academic means. Mind-set, age-related expectations for maturity and co-curricular commitment are key elements. For the Senior School entry, character, work ethic, aptitude for sport (particularly those directly relevant to the life of the School) and the arts (Music, Drama and Art) may be taken into consideration.

4.3 Summary of Criteria

By the means/factors above, the School aims to achieve a balanced entry in order that a cohort has strengths in the academic and non-academic areas.

5 Specific Arrangements – Entry

All applications, assessments and offers of places for entry to the Pre-Prep and Prep School are undertaken on a rolling programme; there is no specific day for entrance examinations, but they will take place during the Autumn or Spring Terms. In the Senior School, a formal Entrance Examination Day will typically take place towards the end of November:

- During the morning, pupils will sit the academic part of the assessment, encompassing mathematics, English and a standardised reading test.

- Candidates might be interviewed as part of the entrance process. All candidates who sit the academic part of the assessment process are automatically considered for an academic scholarship
- Those candidates who wish to be considered for other scholarships should remain for the afternoon of the assessment day, where they can be tested for up to two further scholarship opportunities

It is therefore required to register by the October deadline as published, for entry the following September.

5.1 Age/Stage

Applicants are usually considered for the cohort defined by their date of birth/age. There may be circumstances however whereby, with parents' agreement, the place offered is for a year behind their age. The main criteria will be what stage/year is most suitable for the progress of the individual child/pupil. Examples of considerations are academic standard, "young for the cohort", eg June-August birthday, fluency in English.

5.2 Entry to Nursery

Children for the Nursery will be invited into School for one or more short sessions in the term before commencement to establish their readiness to start their education in our Nursery setting.

5.3 Entry to Reception (4+), KS1 (5+, Year 1) and KS2 (7+, Year 3)

Children for Reception and above will be invited into School for a taster day before commencement to establish that they are comfortable within the environment.

Assessments are undertaken in the course of the day to identify how the child is able to manage the expectations of the curriculum. If a number of pupils has applied at the same time, an assessment day may be offered for the places available. This may happen in Year 5, going into Year 6.

5.4 Occasional Place - Entry to Key Stage 3

Assessment for occasional place applicants is undertaken throughout the academic year and consists of an English paper (original writing and comprehension) and a mathematics paper.

5.5 Entry at 13+ (Year 9)

All applicants will be invited to sit entrance assessments during the entrance assessment and scholarship day. Assessment for external applicants is undertaken during the Autumn Term prior to commencement of the following academic year and consists of an English paper (original writing and comprehension) and a mathematics paper.

Given the demand for places at Ewell Castle School, deferred entry into Year 9 is not offered.

5.6 Entry at 14+ (Year 10)

Assessment for applicants will consist of an English paper (original writing and comprehension) and a mathematics paper. They may be invited to a taster Session, during which they will have an interview with the Principal. Assessments and interviews will be undertaken when relevant to commencement. Depending on circumstances, mid-way entry to Y10 or Y11 is unusual and due consideration will be given to how much catching up will be required.

5.7 Entry at 16+ (into the 6th Form)

Following visits and interviews, offers will be made in late January/early February. Places will be conditional upon achievement of required GCSE results. Some pupils may choose to apply for places on GCSE Results Day or shortly after, for immediate September entry.

Applicants should be predicted to achieve a minimum of five GCSE Grades 9 to 5 (including English and Mathematics) with a minimum Grade 6 in the subjects to be followed, or in associated subjects, at A-level or BTEC; however, applicants wishing to study A-level Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics will require a Grade 7 in that subject and applicants wishing to study a Modern Foreign Language should preferably achieve a Grade 7 in their chosen language. Pupils will be invited to attend an interview with the Heads of 6th Form.

5.8 Other

- 5.8.1 It is recommended that prior to submitting an application, all parents and pupils will visit the School either at one of our open events or by separate appointment.
- 5.8.2 satisfactory references will be sought from the Head Teacher of the current school for any applicant to Ewell Castle School.
- 5.8.3 if a pupil is considering moving from another Independent School, we ask that the courtesy is extended to the Head Teacher of their current school of advising him/her of the interest/application, before a reference is sought by Ewell Castle School.
- 5.8.4 parents/guardians of prospective pupils are requested to provide copies of recent school reports (at least the last year at current school)
- 5.8.5 all pupils applying for a place in one of the School's sports academies are required to meet the academy sporting standards as well as the School's general entry requirements
- 5.8.6 entry to KS4 after the commencement of the GCSE course (at 14+) and to A-level courses after the commencement of Sixth Form (16+) is not encouraged; however, arrangements can be made in exceptional circumstances.

6 Specific Arrangements – Scholarships and Bursaries

6.1 Scholarships

- 6.1.1 Scholarships are available for pupils entering the Senior School at Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+) and to the Sixth Form (Year 12, age 16+) and are awarded for fixed periods i.e. for 5/3/2 years respectively. Ewell Castle School recognises the value of acknowledging and promoting excellence in certain fields, and the status of "scholar" is significant, recognised through special events and opportunities, such as "scholars' lunches."
- 6.1.2 Scholarships are available in the areas of Academic, Art, Drama, Music, Sport and Design & Technology. The maximum award is typically a 20% remission of fees, other awards being 15%, and 10%. Applicants must satisfy the School's entry criteria. Separate specific assessments are arranged in the Senior School for the categories of Sport, Art & Design, Photography (6th Form only) Drama, Music and Design & Technology. Applications will also be supported by authorised testimonials and/or references.
- 6.1.3 Scholarships are awarded for entry into Years 7 and 9 and separately for the Sixth Form. Their continuance is subject to the commitment and conduct expected of a scholar in the specific area of the award and to life at the School in general including towards academic studies. This encompasses all scholars being role models of the School's values and in representing the School as dedicated influencers, leaders and full participators.

6.2 Bursaries (including hardship grants)

- 6.2.1 Ewell Castle School seeks to offer means tested awards/bursaries for children/families in accordance with The Charity Commission's principles that for a fee charging school (charity):
 - the opportunity to benefit is not unreasonably restricted by the ability to pay fees, and that;
 - people in poverty are not excluded from the opportunity to benefit.Applicants must also satisfy the School's entry criteria and all awards are subject to the

availability of funds and places. Details of other grant-awarding trusts and foundations are available on request.

- 6.2.2 The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time of application will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the School – except in wholly unforeseen circumstances, in which case hardship grants may be offered, subject to means-tested criteria and the availability of funds.
- 6.2.3 Hardship grants may be awarded to existing pupils for a maximum of two terms only, the value of which is dependent upon the family's financial circumstances. Such awards are subject to the availability of funding and cannot be guaranteed.
- 6.2.4 Parents should be aware that the School would not typically provide financial assistance within the first two years of a pupil joining (other than being in receipt of a bursary on entry), since it is expected that sufficient financial resources exist to cover school fee commitments during this period.

Parents or guardians are encouraged to contact the Bursar as soon as they anticipate a change in their financial position.

- 6.2.5 Bursary applications must be submitted by the deadline as stated on the website for entry the following September. The School uses a specialist agency, Bursary Administration Ltd (BAL), to assess and re-assess the need for financial assistance. The assessment will include a home visit by the agency and considers parents'/guardians' circumstances (eg their savings, investments and realisable assets as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them, compassionate or other pertinent considerations). A copy of the report is made available to the family.
- 6.2.6 Whilst bursaries are offered for the duration of a pupil's current Key Stage of education at the School, they are subject to an annual review of parental means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental or other relevant circumstances including that:
- (a) any support provided from other sources, eg other trusts and foundations, has remained unchanged
 - (b) any conditions identified on the financial declaration remain unchanged.
 - (c) the pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been good
 - (d) parents have supported the School, for example by prompt payment of any contribution they are making to the fees.

An internal annual review of financial circumstances is undertaken. Before the commencement of each Key Stage, before the term's notice period, a formal review is undertaken, engaging the services of Bursary Administration Limited. Full cooperation is required from fee-payers to engage with this formal review process or the bursary award is at risk of being withdrawn.

7 Special Arrangements – Other

7.1 Over-Subscription and Over-Subscription Criteria

Over-subscription criteria are used when more parents have expressed a preference for the School in a particular school year than the School has available places. Following normal assessment, the following criteria will be taken into consideration: academic ability, proximity to School and sibling status.

- 7.1.1 Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Once all of the available places have been filled, we will operate a reserve list for the remaining pupils who have received an offer,

in the order that their acceptance is received.

7.1.2 If an application is made to a Year Group which is already full, parents/ guardians will be informed, at the start of the Admissions process, that they are applying for a “waiting list place.”

7.2 Pupils with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities, Special Educational Needs or English as an Additional Language

7.2.1 Admission to Ewell Castle School is dependent upon a pupil meeting the entry requirements stated previously. However, we are able to offer places to pupils with certain Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD), Special Educational Needs (SEN) or for whom English as an Additional Language (EAL) is appropriate. In cases of LDD or SEN, a copy of a valid report from a teacher with a Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) qualification, an Educational Psychologist or other Specialist, or an Education and Health Care Plan, should be submitted to the Registrar who will then consult with the Principal or a senior member of staff and the Head of Learning Support.

7.2.2 This information must be disclosed at the time of applying to the School. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of the offer or place.

7.2.3 If a pupil is accepted into the School with known Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) or Disability, Education and Health Care Plan, or English as an Additional Language, the School has a duty of care to meet the needs of that pupil within reasonable expectation. The School has a limit to the amount of additional support that can be provided, e.g. in class support, group lessons or 1-1 lessons. The School will therefore agree with the parents (and pupil as appropriate) prior to enrolment how such needs can best be met and whether the School can provide the additional support deemed appropriate, with or without additional cost incurred for the provision.

7.2.3 The entry criteria are applied; however, compensation is made in respect of the precise nature of the disability/need e.g. location and/or nature of assessment, use of ICT or time permitted.

7.2.4 A separate Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy is available.

7.3 Overseas Applicants

7.3.1 Ewell Castle welcomes overseas pupils residing with parents or guardians in this country. Whilst occasionally short-term study programmes are available, the School expects overseas pupils to complete the whole course of study e.g. KS4 (Years 7-11) or Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13). If a pupil is to reside with a guardian, residence must be registered by the School with appropriate external authorities in order to fulfil its duty of care.

7.3.2 It is usually expected that an overseas pupil be in the country to undertake entrance assessments. In certain circumstances, alternative arrangements can be made.

7.3.3 In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Ewell Castle School a certain initial level of fluency in the English language (written and spoken) is required.

7.3.4 A separate English as an Additional Language Policy is available.

7.4 Siblings

Siblings are assessed in the normal fashion, but may be given preference against a candidate of equal aptitude in the assessment and offer process; the current school reference will also be taken into account. A modest sibling discount of fees is currently made.

7.5 Policy in respect of Excluded Children

Any pupil permanently excluded from another school will be considered for entry to Ewell Castle School subject to the usual selection criteria. However, the Principal will take into account the reason for exclusion and regard for the potential impact upon the existing pupil body and upon the reputation of the School, by the inclusion of such a pupil. If an excluded pupil is accepted into the School, the Head of Year (Senior School) or Class Teacher (Pre-Preparatory (Pre-Prep) and Preparatory (Prep) Schools) will take particular care with the induction process in respect of this pupil to ensure supported introduction of the pupil. The Principal will meet with parents to outline expectations: a home-school agreement may be drawn up or a probationary period imposed, depending on the individual circumstances.

8 Offer of Places

The Independent School Council's Code of Practice sets out principles agreed by each constituent association of the Council in relation to pupils attending, or seeking to attend, schools in membership of one or more associations. (The Principal and the Head of the Prep School are members of The Society of Heads and the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) respectively – both associations within the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Local Authority (LA) procedures at 11+ are also acknowledged. Offers are made according to planned admission numbers at:

3 to 10 years (Pre-Prep and Prep School) - as available

11+

Following the entrance examination process during the Autumn Term, parents/guardians will be notified of the outcome (whether a place is offered or not) of their application, bursary or scholarship for their son or daughter by late January/early February, for entry the following September. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Once all of the available places have been filled, we will operate a waiting list for the remaining pupils who have received an offer, in the order that their acceptance is received. All offers should be accepted or declined by the deadline stated in the offer letter.

13+

Following the entrance examination process during the Autumn Term, parents/guardians will be notified of the outcome (whether a place is offered or not) of their application, bursary or scholarship for their son or daughter by late January/early February, for entry the following September. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Once all the available places have been filled, we will operate a waiting list for the remaining pupils who have received an offer, in the order that their acceptance is received. All offers must be accepted or declined by the deadline stated in the offer letter.

16+

Places may be secured from the September prior to entry (three terms).

Places will be conditional upon GCSE results, as paragraph 5.6 above and interview with the Heads of 6th Form.

9 Acceptance and Deposits

9.1 On acceptance of a place, a deposit is payable to secure the place. The levels of deposit currently applicable are:

- Entry to Nursery and Reception £500.00
- Entry into Years 1 to 13 £1,000.00
- Entry into Years 7 to 13 (overseas) One term's fees for applicants requiring visas or those whose parents are resident overseas)

The deposit is repaid by means of a credit without interest to the final payment of fees or other sums due to the School, after the pupil leaves the School once all School property such as books and text books have been returned and once the School is advised of the name of the pupil's leaving destination, i.e. the name of the new school/university/college. If a place is not taken up after Acceptance, the deposit is retained by the School.

The School operates a Year 13 Leavers' Deposit Donation Scheme and parents and guardians of all Year 13 students are asked if they wish to donate either part of, or the full amount of their deposit to the School to the Alumni Bursary Fund, where it will be directly used to aid Ewell Castle pupils experiencing financial hardship.

9.2 If a place is not taken up, the first term's fees are also payable unless a full term's notice has been given.

9.3 If commencement is in September (beginning of the academic year) the Registrar will be in contact to supply parents with further detail including term dates, uniform list, New Parents' Meetings, etc. If commencement is at an alternative time, term dates and uniform list, etc. will be conveyed in an appropriate time period. Parents/guardians will be required to complete a Confidential Pupil Information Sheet.

10 Induction (External Arrangements)

10.1 Transfer documentation will be received from a pupil's former school.

10.2 For pupils joining at the beginning of a new school year, a New Parents' Reception is held during the Summer Term for Senior and Prep School parents. For Senior School pupils there is also an induction day in September, the day before the academic year commences. For Prep School pupils, a day in school with the appropriate year group is part of the assessment procedure; they will also be invited to a "moving up" afternoon in June/July.

10.3 For pupils joining mid-year, separate arrangements are made.

10.4 A further Parents' Information Evening is arranged during the first half of the Autumn Term at the Prep School and the Senior School.

11 Concerns

Concerns regarding the admissions process and procedures should be raised with The Principal.

12 School's Contractual Terms and Conditions

See the published Acceptance Form and Parent Contract with the School.

13 Equal Opportunities

13.1 Ewell Castle School welcomes pupils from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of the School and the rights and freedoms of others. All applicants will be treated equally, irrespective of their or their parents' race, colour, religion and belief, nationality, ethnic status, class, gender, marital status, caring status, sexual orientation, learning difficulties and disabilities, age or other status or personal characteristic.

13.2 We expect all of our pupils to attend Church Services and School Assemblies – which may sometimes take the form of an act of collective worship – in exceptional circumstances, explicit permission not to attend must have been agreed with the Principal. However, we welcome equally pupils with other faiths and none, and indeed we offer the opportunity for pupils to celebrate their own faiths.

14 Contact

For the provision of further information, please contact Admissions: admissions@ewellcastle.co.uk.

15 Review and Development

15.1 Procedure

This document, together with the effectiveness of its procedures, is reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and Governing Board and as events or legislation change requires.

15.2 Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Complaints Policy
- Conditions of Entry and Acceptance
- Accessibility Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy