



STREATHAM & CLAPHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Person(s) responsible for this policy		Head, Head of Prep, and Head of Admissions	
Last review by	C Elliott H Loach (Prep)	Review date	September 2024
Date of next review		September 2025	

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Rationale

Streatham & Clapham High School is an independent and academically selective day school, welcoming pupils from all faiths, cultures, races and family background, proud of our cultural diversity as a community. We are happy to admit pupils with a disability, provided that both the parents and the school are confident that we can make appropriate provision for the pupil's needs. Disabled applicants will not be treated less favourably or unfairly during the admissions process, and adaptations will be made as far as is possible. We embrace diversity, welcoming applications for admission from all sections of society, and are non-discriminatory in line with the Equality Act 2010 and Equal Opportunities policy. There will be no discrimination on the grounds of age, religion or belief, physical ability or disability (including HIV status), race, nationality, ethnicity, family, cultural or linguistic background, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Admission to the school is dependent on the applicant's achieving the required standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the age group and academic pace of the school, as well as the availability of places. Due consideration will be given to an individual's educational experience and background in assessing pupils' achievement, and we aim to maximise access for pupils who will most benefit from the education that the school offers. All entrance examinations will be free of bias and will broadly reflect the expectations of pupils at the relevant stage in their education and development, regardless of background. Arrangements for entrance tests are made with the intention of ensuring that no candidate is unfairly disadvantaged, and, when appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to cater for individual needs.

The offer of a place is at the Head's discretion and they will consider all the factors listed above as well as their judgment as to whether a constructive relationship can be established and maintained between the school and the responsible parent(s)/guardians, as set out in the Parent Contract.

At Streatham & Clapham High School we aim to ensure that all pupils who are admitted to the school:

- will flourish in an environment of ambitious academic expectations which stimulates intellectual curiosity and independent study
- will achieve highly across a wide spectrum of learning opportunities within and beyond the curriculum
- will grow in confidence and determination as bold, ambitious and high achieving young women who will contribute richly to society

- will fulfil their potential and feel that they can be themselves, building strong friendships within the school community
- will embody our school values of kindness, respect, integrity and compassion

Aims and Objectives

At the point of admission to the school it is made clear to all prospective pupils and their parents that they are expected to work in partnership with the school for the good of the whole community, in a spirit of mutual honesty and respect. Parents must make full disclosure at the start of the admissions process of any known learning support assessment or identified need, or medical condition or disability, which could require specialist treatment, support or equipment, so that the assessment process is fair. Applicants for whom English is not their first language may be required to take a language proficiency assessment as part of the admissions procedure.

We seek to offer places to those whom we believe can contribute most positively to the school's community, and whom we can educate and safeguard within our teaching, pastoral and learning support structure.

Approximately 100 places will be available each year for entry to Year 7. Occasional places may be available for entry at Year 9 and other year groups. We welcome a small number of external candidates into the Sixth Form for Year 12 entry.

The school holds a confidential electronic Admissions Register, recording the full name, address, gender, parental/guardian details, telephone number and email address, date of birth, name of previous school and year group on entry of all applicants. This data is processed in line with appropriate data protection procedures and the GDST Privacy Policy.

Procedures – Senior School

Pupils who apply to the school must be able to meet the school's academic entrance requirements.

All prospective pupils must complete the school's application form and pay £150 registration fee in order to be considered for a place. The closing date for applications is around the last day of October. Specific dates will be advised on application and published on the website.

All applicants are required to submit a copy of their most recent school report through the Admissions plus system. We will also seek confidential academic references from every applicant's school.

All applicants to Year 7 will be invited to the school where they will undertake a group observation and creative writing task in November of Year 6 prior to the entrance test in December. This is intended to provide a broader, more holistic understanding of the skills, teamwork and potential of the applicants.

For entrance to the Senior School, the entrance test that is designed specifically for the age group in question. All external candidates for 11+ admission to SCHS sit the ISEB (Independent Schools' Examination Board) Common Pre-Test. The examination is an online and adaptive test comprising exercises in English, Mathematics, Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning. These are administered using the ISEB online service, and are taken by candidates at their current school, or at another school that uses the ISEB, or at SCHS.

Offers of places are based on examination performance (and group exercise and creative writing task (for Year 7), interview assessment (for Year 12 and other year groups), a satisfactory report from the candidate's current

school, a confidential reference, and a judgment as to the constructive relationship that can be established with the responsible parent(s) or guardians, as required in the Parent Contract. Collectively, this information allows the school to make an informed decision as to whether its offer is appropriate to the applicant. Offers will be sent out in February for entry to Year 7, and shortly after assessment for entry to other years. The acceptance deadline is in accordance with Girls' Schools Association's (GSA) regulations.

Means-tested bursaries and non-means-tested academic and specialist scholarships (in Art, Drama, Music and Sport) are offered in Year 7 and Year 12. Details regarding the application process are on the website or available by direct application to the school's Admissions office.

The breadth and depth of scholarships awarded each year varies with the quality of the applicants.

Academic scholarships are based on examination performance and are reviewed in Years 9 and 11

Candidates in receipt of a specific scholarship for Music, Sport, Drama or Art are expected to play an active role in these areas throughout school life in order to retain the award, and these awards are subject to formal review in Year 9 and Year 11.

A bursary may be given in addition to a scholarship.

Entry to Years 9 and 10, provided places are available, is subject to tests in English, Mathematics and Science; Year 10 is also subject to the availability of the desired i/GCSE options. The school rarely admits pupils to Year 11, as this is partway through the GCSE courses. Admission depends on the result of the tests as above and the school's ability to provide continuity of courses and will involve an interview with the Head or Deputy Head.

We are very proud that so many of our pupils choose to stay from Year 11 to join our prestigious Sixth Form, the jewel in our crown. Our sixth formers flourish as they step up to lead the school, maintaining a supportive continuity of education in a familiar environment with teachers who know them, but in the aspirational new surroundings of our bespoke Sixth Form Centre. Students are required to achieve specific GCSE results to determine which A Level courses they can follow, as described in the Sixth Form Handbook. The normal requirements are a minimum of 7 GCSEs awarded at grade 6 or above, to include Maths and English with grades 7 in the subjects to be studied for A Level.

The school welcomes applications into the Sixth Form from external candidates; a formal interview will be conducted by the Director of Sixth Form and the entry requirements are normally a minimum of 7 GCSEs graded 6 to 9, including Maths and English, and a minimum of a grade 7 in those subjects to be studied at A Level. Candidates will sit a critical thinking General Paper and those applying for an Academic Scholarship will also need to sit a subject-specific examination paper in a subject of their choice, normally taken at SCHS. Variation from this policy is at the discretion of the Head, Deputy Head or Director of Sixth Form. The school will make direct contact with any previous school(s) or educational establishment(s) to request a confidential written reference to include comment on academic progress to date, involvement in the broader life of the school, general behavioural standards, and specific i/GCSE predicted grades.

Inter-school transfer (GDST)

There is no automatic right of transfer from one Trust school to another. However, the transfer of existing Trust pupils between Trust schools, for example because of a family's relocation or the need for boarding facilities, may be arranged.

Whilst every effort will be made to support parents in such enquiries, any transfer will be subject to:

- The availability of a place; and
- The professional judgement of the school in which a place is being sought of the ability of the pupil concerned to benefit from such a place, given the overall nature of the intake. Cohorts do vary from one school to another and from one year to another.

Arrangements governing transfer will vary according to age. A pupil wishing to enter Year 7 or the Sixth Form will be expected to follow the normal procedures for admissions. For mid-year admissions or admissions other than to Year 7, arrangements will depend on the circumstances. The Head will consult the Head of the pupil's existing school and obtain a clear view about their ability and potential. If considered necessary to give a clear picture of the pupil's performance, the pupil may be required to sit the standard entrance assessment.

Procedures – Prep School

Visiting the school

We strongly recommend that parents and if possible, their daughter, visit the school prior to application. We have regular school day tours conducted by the Head or Deputy Head of the Prep School or a member of the Admissions team. We also have a Saturday Open Morning early in the autumn term which includes activities for the girls and demonstrations by existing girls as well as opportunities to meet the staff. Such visits play no part in the admissions process.

Making an application

Applications for registration are accepted from birth but we recommend applications for Nursery places are made by the time the girl is 2 ½ years of age (we take girls from the term after their 3rd birthday). We recommend that applications for Entry at 4+ and 7+ are made by early November in the year preceding September entry. Occasional entry places can occur in all year groups at any time of the year as families move out of the area. If there are spaces, applications for these places can be submitted at any time. If a place is not currently available then a girl will be placed on the waiting list.

Assessment

Once an application has been received, parents will be contacted to arrange an assessment. For entry at 4+ and 7+ these take place in November of the year preceding September entry. For entry at other times a convenient time will be scheduled. We recognise that girls may be shy or nervous and aim to make the assessment as enjoyable and stress-free as possible. It is our intention to ensure that the process is positive and a celebration of what the girls can do.

Parents are asked to indicate on the application form if the girl has any identified disability or learning needs in order that adaptations can be made to the assessment process if necessary. We pride ourselves on being inclusive in our offer.

Following assessment, a written report will be requested from the current nursery or school. This enables us to build a more detailed picture of a child's potential and achievement. We will always seek consent ahead of doing this.

Key entry points:

3+ to the Nursery

Girls enter Nursery the term following their 3rd birthday. The offer will be full-time only. Girls are invited to the nursery three to six months before entry to attend a 30-minute play session. They are observed by the nursery teachers who assess social and developmental skills.

4+ to Reception

Girls enter Reception classes in the September following their 4th birthday. There are a few additional places for external candidates at this age.

Girls are invited for an informal 1:1 assessment of around 45 minutes with the Foundation Stage Phase Leader in November of the year preceding entry. At this age we do not expect girls to have any formal education or knowledge and we assess them against the developmental expectations for their age.

Offers of places are usually made by early January and parents are asked to accept or decline the place by early February.

If there are further spaces available after this, the second wave of assessments will take place in the Spring Term.

7+ to Year 3

Girls enter Year 3 in the September following their 7th birthday. There are a few additional places for external candidates at this age as we expand from one form to two form entry.

Girls are invited for an assessment morning with the Head, Deputy Head and members of the Prep School staff in November of the year preceding entry. Girls are tested in English and Mathematics and their approach to learning is also assessed. They complete an age-appropriate piece of creative writing, a reading comprehension and a maths paper. They also participate in a fun team-building activity where teachers observe their skills of collaboration and interaction.

Offers of places are made usually by early December and parents are asked to accept or decline the place by February.

Assessment for entry to other year groups

Girls can join other year groups if there is a place available and they meet our entrance criteria. Girls are invited for an assessment by the Head or Deputy Head of the Prep School soon after the application has been received. The assessments are overseen by the Head of Admissions. Girls are tested in English and Mathematics and their approach to learning is also assessed in a manner appropriate for their age.

Offers of Places

Once a place has been offered parents have 4 weeks to accept or decline a place; the exception being entry at 4+ and 7+ when acceptance deadlines are coordinated with other local selective schools.

Once a place has been accepted, pupils are invited for an induction day in the term before entry and parents are invited back to the school to meet the Head of Prep.

Transfer from Prep to Senior School

The expectation is that in the normal course of events Prep School girls will be offered places at the Senior School. The exception is in those cases where the school's professional judgment is that the learning environment of the Senior School may pose difficulties for an individual Prep. School pupil, based on teachers' on-going informal and formal assessments of pupils' progress and their strengths and weaknesses. In these instances, the parents are alerted during Years 3 and 4 to these concerns, and discussions and meetings are then scheduled to consider the way forward, which might include providing extra support for the pupil concerned or looking at other options. All girls sit the entrance examination for the Senior School in Year 6, but the expectation is that, unless parents have heard to the contrary, an offer for the Senior School will be made.

Guidance is offered as to future options for schooling if a pupil is not transferring to the Senior School. A full term's notice in writing to the Head is required for any pupil planning to leave the school.

Procedures – Whole School

Allocation of Places

We are a popular school with a limited number of places and entry is competitive. In the event of having identical candidates and insufficient places for all, preference would be given in the following order:

1. Looked after pupils
2. Siblings of pupils currently attending the school
3. Pupils transferring from another Trust school
4. Pupils from families with links to Trust schools

The process of admission is further explained in the information booklet that accompanies the prospectus for both the Senior and Prep Schools. It is also on the school website and further information can be obtained by direct application to the Head of Admissions at the Senior School and Admissions Assistant at the Prep.

At whatever stage an offer is made, a pupil cannot start at a Trust school unless her parents have signed and returned the Parent Contract. All those joining the school must agree to abide by all the relevant school rules and policies.

The Admissions policy of Streatham & Clapham High School reflects its character and that of the local community and is congruent with the over-arching admissions policy of the Girls' Day School Trust.

The GDST is committed to equal opportunities in education and will not unlawfully discriminate against, or treat less favourably, any pupil at, or applicant to, its schools on the grounds of race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief (or lack thereof), gender reassignment, sexual orientation, or pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics'). The Trust will also not discriminate against, or treat less favourably,

any pupil at, or applicant to, its schools because they are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Streatham & Clapham High School is an academically selective school, and admission is dependent upon reaching the required academic standard. Prospective pupils with SEND will be admitted on the same basis, unless the school cannot reasonably make the adjustments required to cater for their needs.

Parents of children with SEND applying for a place at the school are invited to discuss the child's needs with the Head of Learning Support at an early stage, and the school may also contact the child's current school to gain further information. Each pupil is looked at as an individual case to see whether the school can effectively meet their needs. Every effort is made to accommodate a pupil's needs where possible, including in arrangements for entrance tests. Extra time is given if the child has at least one standardised score of 84 or below in speed of reading; speed of writing; or cognitive processing measures, in line with JCQ recommendations.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school will make reasonable adjustments to its provision to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not put at a substantial disadvantage to their peers. The nature of these adjustments will be determined in consultation with the child and her parents.

Identification and Assessment: Definitions

Disability is defined under the Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability if s/he "has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

Special Educational Needs are defined in the Children and Families Act 2014:

20.1 A child or young person has special educational needs if she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for her.

20.2 A child of compulsory school age or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if she:

- (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- (b) has a disability which prevents or hinders her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Streatham & Clapham High School is broadly selective and will have a relatively small proportion of pupils who would be considered to have special educational needs as defined by the Act.

Supported Learning Needs (SLN) is the designation used by the school for pupils who do not have SEN as defined by the Act but are nevertheless hindered in accessing the full curriculum and fulfilling their potential without tailored recognition of their needs and individual provision.

Pupils may have either a disability or SEN/SLN, or both. Not every pupil with SEN will qualify as disabled under the statutory definition; this will depend on the severity or extent of her needs. Children may have a disability/SEN/SLN either throughout or at any time during their school career and may have SEN/SLN in one or in many areas of the curriculum.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN/SLN. However, they may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties, neurological differences or disabilities. Equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or

disability. Some learning difficulties, neurological differences and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, if left unaddressed, may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. These children, however, are likely to have additional needs of a different kind and may well receive Learning Support for their language development.

The SEN Code of Practice outlines four broad areas of need which can help with identification:

Communication and interaction

6.28 Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to do, understanding what is being said to them, or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some, or all the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

6.29 Children and young people on the Autistic Spectrum are likely to have difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning

6.30 Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

6.31 Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

6.32 Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or physical needs

6.34 Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi--sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or facilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

6.35 Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Needs may co-exist across some or all of these areas and may change over time. Any assessment should ensure that the full range of a pupil's needs is identified, not simply the primary need.