



# Sydenham High School

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## Admissions Policy Whole School: Senior School/Prep School: EYFS, KS1 and KS2

### 1 Introduction

As a member of the GDST Sydenham High School is committed to equal opportunities in education and adheres to the GDST Admissions and Equal Opportunities Policies.

### 2 Aims and objectives

We are an inclusive school that welcomes pupils from all backgrounds.

The restrictions we place on entry are those of biological sex, academic ability and the ability to play a full part in the ethos of the school. If the number of pupils applying for entry exceeds the number of places available, we use the procedure set out below to determine whether a pupil is accepted or not.

The level of ability of a pupil or any special needs that she may have play a part in the admissions policy of this school whilst paying due regard to the Disability Equality Act. Every effort will be made to accommodate a child's needs where this is possible, including in arrangements for entrance tests (see section 5).

At Senior School all applications are treated on academic merit including those pupils applying with an EHCP, and confirmation of a place is subject to a satisfactory report from the candidate's current school with respect to her work, her attitude and her behaviour

### 3 Process

The school publishes information on its website, including an online prospectus, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school. Applications should be made online through the school's website and should be completed by the date stipulated on the website. A non-refundable deposit is required for all applications.

\* See Appendix A – GDST Admissions Policy

#### Prep School

The school notifies parents about the assessment dates as soon as the applications have been received.

#### 4+ (Reception)

Pupils enter school in the academic year they become five. There is usually only one admission date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the school year). Parents who would like their daughter to be admitted to this school during the year she is five should complete the necessary application by the closing date in November prior to the September entry.

Assessments usually take place in the November and January prior to September entry, but can be arranged at other times if parents are requesting a different transfer date.

### **7+ (Year 3)**

Pupils enter school in the academic year they become eight. There is usually only one admission date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the school year). Parents who would like their daughter to be admitted to this school should complete the necessary application by the closing date in November prior to the September entry.

### **Infant class size**

Infant children (aged four to seven) are taught in classes with a maximum number of 22 children.

### **Senior School**

The school acknowledges receipt of applications and notifies parents of interview dates as soon as a completed application form has been received.

Pupils usually enter Senior School in Year 7. Applications should be made during the Autumn term of Year 6.

All Academic Scholarships are awarded on the basis of performance throughout the entrance assessments in the November of year 6. Bursary applications are assessed by the GDST and are awarded based on parental income, assets and the child's performance in the entrance assessments.

Each school has a cash-limited budget each year and so inevitably awards cannot be made to all those who qualify on academic grounds. After the exams the Head will write to successful candidates with the offer of a place and at the same time indicate whether a scholarship is to be awarded, or a bursary is available.

The Entrance Examination takes place in the January prior to September entry and consists of an examination in both Maths, English and Verbal Reasoning. Every girl is interviewed.

Interim entry assessments can be arranged throughout the year if a vacancy is available in the appropriate year group.

### **Conditions of entry**

Entry is conditional on a candidate meeting the required standard in the Application, Interview, Entrance Examination and subject to a satisfactory report/file from the candidate's current school both with regard to academic achievement, attendance and behaviour whilst attending that school.

We reserve the right not to disclose candidates' exam marks or their place on the merit order.

It is not school practice to make available copies of Entrance Examination question papers or to return or photocopy candidate's scripts, or print online examination responses where applicable. However, sample papers may be downloaded from the school's website.

If we do not offer a pupil a place at the school it is due to:

- a candidate not meeting the required standard in the Entrance Procedure
- an unsatisfactory report from candidate's previous school
- a professional judgement taken at interview or during school interaction that a candidate's behaviour would adversely affect group dynamics in the classroom
- the school being oversubscribed and having no places available in the year group

### **Candidates with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

If a candidate has a current or draft EHCP, this must be sent to the school as part of the application process. Parents / guardians are advised to speak with the school registrar in the first instance.

Candidates who have an EHCP should follow the standard admissions procedure. However, parents/carers should be aware that unless formal consultation between the school and the local education authority is carried out, we may be unable to make a decision as to whether need(s) can be met.

Candidates with an EHCP are required to meet the school's academic standards and must sit the entrance examination.

## **4 Continuity of education for pupils at Sydenham High School**

Continuity of education is anticipated normally throughout each age range (i.e. the Prep and Senior Schools) and at the key stages of transfer (for example from Prep to Senior School and entry to the Sixth Form). However, this will not apply if, after due deliberation, it is the opinion of the Head that the pupil will not benefit from continuing to be educated at the school or has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or behaviour for continuation or for entry to the next stage. If this is the case then:

- No less than one term's written notice will be given to the Parent/Guardian/Carer on or before the first day of that term.
- In the case of Year 6 – Year 7 transfer the parent will be advised in writing before the end of Year 5 of the standards to be attained for entry into Year 7. If the transfer is not considered desirable at least one term's written notice will be given.
- It is expected that pupils transferring from Year 11 to 12 will have met the relevant entry requirements for their chosen A level subjects. Sixth Form applicants should expect to achieve a minimum of seven GCSE passes at grades 9 to 5 in the summer before entry, including a minimum of a grade 5 in both English Language and Mathematics.

## **5 Candidates requiring access arrangements for the entrance examinations**

Parents seeking examination access arrangements for a candidate must indicate this at the time of application and send written details to the Admissions team, subsequent to submitting their application online.

Parents must:

- Provide evidence that the requested arrangements are the candidate's 'normal way of working' in their current setting. This may take the form of an official letter from a senior teacher or the SENDCo at the candidate's school.
- Evidence of the need for these arrangements.

The Learning Support Department will consider all requests and the school will contact parents to discuss the child's needs and suitable arrangements if required. In all cases, parents will be notified of the school's decision regarding examination access arrangements in advance of the examination.

Candidates who have a current cognitive assessment (i.e. from an Educational Psychologist) specifically recommending extra time will usually be granted this. The assessment must have taken place within 26 months of the date of the examination and comply with JCQ regulations.

A candidate with a specific physical disability or chronic and long term medical condition may be allowed a similar time concession if supported by a specialist report from an appropriately qualified professional, e.g. a hospital consultant or a paediatrician. We will also make every effort to ensure that any physical needs are met. In all cases, parents are required to provide evidence that this is their daughter's normal way of working within their current setting. This may take the form of:

Candidates with extra time and/or another specific requirement usually sit their exam in a smaller venue.

Exam concessions cannot be arranged, nor concession arrangements altered, after the end of the Autumn term.

## 6 Other

A pupil transferring from another GDST school will be considered a special case unless she is applying for entry in Year 7. In other year groups she will normally have priority over other applicants. She may still be required to sit tests in certain subjects to decide which teaching groups to place her in.

If two candidates meet all of our requirements and yet insufficient places are available, we may give priority in the order of a) siblings of pupils currently attending the school b) pupils transferring from other Trust schools c) siblings or children of former pupils of the school. In the event of twins or multiples applying to the school where one or more children are unsuccessful, the Head will consult with parents in advance of making any offers.

A pupil will not be admitted to the school if there are outstanding fees to be paid to another school. The school also reserves the right to refuse entry to a pupil whose parents have, in the past, failed to meet in full their fee obligations to the school in relation to another child already enrolled at the school.

Admittance may be summarily refused if it is found that a parent has deliberately misinformed the school about matters relating to the entrance procedure or the candidate's behaviour and attitude.

The passport of all children enrolling at the school will be checked before a child commences at the school. In the absence of a passport, a birth certificate should be submitted.

## 7 Appeals

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the school. The Head's decision on admissions will be final in all cases.

**Related policies:**

[Exclusion Policy](#)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **GDST ADMISSIONS POLICY**

#### **Admissions: Council Policy**

The admissions policy of the Council of the Girls' Day School Trust (the "GDST") is that:

- The GDST is firmly committed to offering a single-sex education for girls. In our experience, students in girls' schools are less constrained in their choice of subjects, show a greater propensity to take risks and innovate, perform better in examinations, have more opportunities to show leadership, and are less likely to conform to gender stereotypes. For these reasons, GDST parents and students choose a predominately single-sex environment over other available options
- GDST schools are broadly selective. Places are offered to prospective pupils on the basis of their potential to thrive in the educational environment provided
- Admission is usually dependent on achieving an acceptable standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the age group and academic pace of the school. Such examinations and assessments are expected to be free of bias, and due consideration will be given to individual needs and prior educational experience in making any decision on the offer of a place
- The final decision regarding admissions rests with the Head, who reserves the right to decline to offer a place on grounds other than academic potential (e.g. a pupil's record at a previous school)
- Within these guidelines schools may determine their own admissions policies, which will set out their individual selection criteria
- Each GDST school sets out in its registration the age range of students it is legally allowed to make provision for. Major age range changes are subject to approval by Council. Admission will last until the student completes year 13 unless the parent contract comes to an end sooner.
- In all circumstances, including where a receipt is required for visa purposes, a parent contract (form F7) must be fully completed and submitted to the Fees Department, together with confirmation of the deposit payment (form F30), before the pupil can join the school.

This policy shall apply to all GDST schools, save for Academies sponsored by the GDST.