



Abbey Gate College

POLICY: Admissions	
Scope	Whole College
Responsibility	Head
Review & Update	November 2021
Governor Approval	Andrew Grime

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Policy Statement (1)

Abbey Gate College is a through-school and admits pupils from age 4 to 18. All prospective pupils must normally be of the correct age band for the year-group they propose to enter. The College is situated in beautiful, historic buildings and grounds, with restrictions on capacity; places in the College are, therefore, limited.

The College is selective and all pupils whose parents wish them to join are required to complete an age-appropriate entrance process. The decision as to whether a pupil is offered a place is based primarily on academic ability and the pupil's potential to cope with the demands of the curriculum offered. However, other factors may be sympathetically considered, such as a special talent or potential to develop. Above all, a pupil will be offered a place if, on consideration of all available and appropriate academic and personal information, it is reasonably believed that they will thrive and be happy at Abbey Gate College.

The College has a Christian foundation but is mainly secular in practice. The College admits pupils of all faiths and none.

The College also seeks to ensure that pupils will not be disadvantaged during the admissions process because of a learning difficulty or disability; please refer to our *SEND Policy* for further information on admission of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.

The Head has discretionary authority with regard to all admissions.

Abbey Gate College also ensures that the Admissions Register is maintained in accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulation 2006. The identity and right to study of all applicants is verified from their passport or, if no passport is available, the long form of their birth certificate before the admission process can be completed.

Policy Statement (2)

- 1) This policy applies to all members of the Abbey Gate College community, including those in our EYFS setting.
- 2) Abbey Gate College implements this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.
- 3) This policy is made available to all interested parties on the College website at www.abbeygatecollege.co.uk. It should be read in conjunction with the College's *Behaviour, Curriculum, Safeguarding, and SEND* policies.
- 4) Abbey Gate College is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the College's *Equal Opportunity* policy document.
- 5) This policy is reviewed at least annually, or as events or legislation changes require, by the College Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The deadline for the next review is no later than 12 months after the most recent review date indicated above.
- 6) The most recent updates were made on account of personnel changes.

Key Personnel

- 1) Craig Jenkinson: Head
- 2) Marie Hickey: Head of Infant & Junior School
- 3) Su Boyd: Admissions Officer

EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) Admissions

- 1) Assessments for the Foundation Stage take place throughout the year in which the child turns 4 years old.
- 2) Assessment days are allocated throughout the year.
- 3) Assessments consist of the prospective pupil joining a selection of the current Foundation pupils in the classroom. If, due to COVID-19, the prospective children are unable to join our classes, they will be assessed individually.
- 4) Structured activities are set out and the child is observed and assessed. Staff assess each potential pupil's ability to communicate, socialise, respond to instructions and work within the classroom, as well as identifying academic milestones.
- 5) This information is recorded throughout the session through observation by staff.

Infant & Junior Admissions (1) - Introduction

The Infant and Junior School is a small school and this is valued by parents. It is an inevitable consequence of our size that places at the school are limited. All pupils are, therefore, assessed before a place in the school can be confirmed.

If there are gaps in learning due to a pupil having come from a different educational setting this, along with any learning difficulties disclosed by parents, will be taken into account when assessing the pupil for entry.

An offer will be made subject to receiving a satisfactory reference from a prospective pupil's current pre-school/primary school. The Head of the Infant and Junior School can use discretion as to whether to wait for this reference before offering a place.

The Infant & Junior school may, at its discretion, require a period of attendance to be on a probationary basis, which may be due to academic or pastoral concerns or both. This is discussed with the pupil and the family at the time, and any offer letter states the initial duration of the probationary period. The school reserves the right to extend a period of probation if considered appropriate and necessary, and will confirm this with the family along with the reason for the extension. During or at the conclusion of this time, either party may terminate the contract without penalty beyond fees already paid.

Infant & Junior Admissions (2) – Infants (Years 1 & 2)

Prospective Infant pupils are assessed using material appropriate to their year group in English and Maths. The staff will also observe and assess the child's ability to communicate, socialise, respond to instructions and work within the classroom.

Infant & Junior Admissions (3) – Juniors (Years 3 to 6)

Potential Junior pupils are assessed using formal, standardised papers in: Maths, Comprehension, Spelling and Grammar and Reasoning. Staff observe the pupil's ability to

communicate, socialise respond to instructions and work within the classroom. If, due to COVID-19, the prospective children are unable to join our classes, they will be assessed individually.

References will be taken up with Nursery and school settings prior to offers being made.

Infant & Junior Admissions (4) – Transition to Senior School

Junior school pupils are not required to sit the entrance assessment for the Senior School; it is assumed that all Year 6 pupils will continue through to Year 7 and Senior School places are initially reserved on this basis. A term's notice must be given if any family's circumstances are such that this automatic transition from Junior to Senior will not take place.

Each child's progress is being continually monitored throughout the Infant & Junior School into the Senior School. However, if an Infant & Junior School pupil wishes to compete for an academic scholarship, they must take the entrance assessment in January, along with all external applicants; this is to ensure a consistency of data to support the decision.

It is also to be noted that if, in the opinion of the Head of the Infant and Junior School and Head of the College, a pupil's progress, attainment, or attitude is insufficient to cope with and thrive in the Senior School environment, with the associated curricular and co-curricular demands, a place at the Senior School may not be automatically offered. In such instance, the family will be informed with sufficient time for discussion and, as applicable, to source an alternative place of Senior education.

Senior School Admissions (1) – Years 7 to 11

- 1) Enquiries from prospective families are welcome at any time and should be directed to admissions@abbeygatecollege.co.uk.
- 2) All prospective families are encouraged to visit the College for a personal tour, and taster days can also be arranged for prospective pupils.
- 3) A Senior School open event takes place during the autumn term, and the date is published in advance.
- 4) For existing Abbey Gate students, as above, entrance into the Senior School is automatic, provided that they have progressed sufficiently to demonstrate that they will be happy and successful, given the Senior School's curricular, co-curricular, and behavioural expectations.
- 5) For the Senior School (Years 7-11), external applicants are admitted on the basis of their academic ability, such as will enable them to cope sufficiently well with the curriculum; as well as references and reports from their previous school(s), and an interview, all of which should indicate clearly that the pupil would thrive, be happy, and bring a positive influence to our College community.
- 6) Academic ability is measured by means of:
 - a. Standardised, tests in verbal, non-verbal, quantitative, and spatial ability (completed digitally);
 - b. Writing and mathematics assessments (completed in ink);
 - c. Interview (in person)

- 7) The Senior School Entrance Examination takes place in January, for entry into Year 7 the following September. A completed Registration Form and initial administration fee must be forwarded in advance.
- 8) Appropriate assessments are taken by external applicants in Years 8 – 11 at any time of the school year, as required. A completed Registration Form and initial administration fee must be forwarded in advance.
- 9) In the case of an applicant transferring to Abbey Gate College after the start of secondary education (ie above Year 7), the school may, at its discretion, require a period of attendance to be on a probationary basis, which may be due to academic or pastoral concerns or both. This is discussed with the student and the family at the time, and any offer letter states the initial duration of the probationary period. The school reserves the right to extend a period of probation if considered appropriate and necessary, and will confirm this with the family along with the reason for the extension. During or at the conclusion of this time, either party may terminate the contract without penalty beyond fees already paid.
- 10) In the Senior School, there are limited places available (up to 66 per year group in Years 7-11), organised in a 3-form annual intake. The decision of the College to offer places is final and, although general feedback may be given following application, individual and specific results are not shared.
- 11) Abbey Gate College does not release practice papers, but examinations are based on work covered in the Key Stage 2 curriculum in all education sectors, in order to ensure parity and fairness for all applicants.

Senior School Admissions (2) – Sixth Form

- 1) Entry into the Sixth Form at Abbey Gate College normally requires pupils to achieve at least five subjects at grades 9-6, including at least a grade 4 in English Language and mathematics, with no less than grade 6 (ideally 9-7 grades) in the subjects, or related, with which they wish to continue at A level.
- 2) Year 11 students transfer automatically into the Sixth Form, provided that they meet the above academic criteria. In addition, the student's record of conduct and attitude must match the appropriately high expectations of the College's Sixth Form and, as above, the College must believe that the student will be happy and thrive in our Sixth Form.
- 3) In a circumstance where an extraordinary curriculum arrangement is made and agreed by all appropriate parties, to accommodate a student's subject choices, and the student does not then take up the reserved place in September, fees will be charged in lieu.
- 4) External applicants for the Sixth Form are welcome and are expected, under normal circumstances, to have a strong academic profile at GCSE level, as above. References and reports will also be requested from the prospective student's current school.
- 5) If an applicant falls slightly short of the above criteria, a place may still be offered, but at the discretion of the Head and including an interview.

Scholarships

- 1) A small number of scholarships are awarded, to recognise commendably high achievement in specific areas.
- 2) Scholarship awards represent a percentage reduction in termly fees and are not dependent upon family income, nor are they negotiable.

- 3) The maximum scholarship award is 10% for any pupil.
- 4) Scholarships awarded in Year 7 remain with the student throughout their entire Senior School career, including Sixth Form, on the explicit condition that respective achievement in the scholarship discipline, as well as general conduct, remains appropriately deserving. This is annually reviewed in the spring term by the Head of Year and the College Leadership Team and a family is given a term's notice in writing of the intended withdrawal of the scholarship; a substantive, evident, and sustained improvement in a student's commitment to the scholarship discipline from this point may defer or annul the withdrawal.
- 5) Scholarships are available for Year 7 entry in:
 - a) Academic – up to 2 scholarships, 1 of which is reserved for pupils in our Infant & Junior School, based on the assessment outcomes of the Entrance Examination.
 - b) Music – up to 2 scholarships, based on the outcome of auditions held during the afternoon following the Entrance Examination:
 - i. The Daphne Herbert Choral Scholarship.
 - ii. The Music Exhibition Scholarship.

Music scholarships are conditional upon the continued commitment of the recipient to the musical, co-curricular life of the College.
- 6) Honorary scholarships may be awarded if a pupil is already in receipt of a scholarship for another discipline, or is already benefitting from a bursary or other reduction in fees.
- 7) The Head reserves the right to award a scholarship in one or more of the above disciplines to any student at any time in their school career, if the student does not already have the scholarship and their attainment in this discipline is of an evidently and notably high standard.

Bursaries

The College aims to provide financial support for families of pupils who would thrive and be happy at Abbey Gate, but for whom the fees present an obstacle to accepting the offer of a place.

Bursaries are available for entry from Year 3 upwards, covering up to 100% of the full fees. All bursary awards are subject to a system of means-testing that covers family income levels as well as other investments and capital assets. The criteria used to determine the amount that is awarded include, inter alia: the financial circumstances of the family; their annual disposable income; the equity in their residence; their other capital assets and investments; their existing levels of debt; and their financial commitments. The College reserves the right to make a home visit to discuss the financial circumstances of the family.

Bursaries are based on a sliding scale and the amount of the award is reviewed annually and/or when the College becomes aware of a change in parental circumstances. No commitment to provide bursary support is made for a period in excess of one academic year. Parents who qualify in one year must re-apply annually and only in improved financial circumstances, expect a reduced degree of support. Continued good conduct and contribution of the pupil to College life is also taken into account in the annual review.

Appropriate financial support for uniform and major College co-curricular trips may also be available, in order to ensure that full integration and access to the curriculum are maintained.

Individual bursaries are a matter of confidentiality between parents, the Head and the appropriate staff in the Bursar's Department.

The College is committed to:

- 1) Maintaining a promotions strategy, intended to reach those who might not be able to afford College fees, which clearly indicates the opportunities for financial benefit that are available.
- 2) Having, so far as possible, dedicated funds for fee assistance and supplement these funds from campaigns and other opportunities, as circumstances permit.
- 3) Setting annual budgets or targets for the number or amount of fee assistance than can be offered.

The Bursary scheme is managed by the Head within the framework of this policy and budget set by the Board of Governors. The Bursar is responsible for the conduct of the means testing assessments, for making recommendations to the Head and for all communications with parents. In the case of pupils joining the College between Year 3 and Year 6, bursaries are awarded following an academic assessment, and for those joining from Year 7 onwards into the Senior School bursaries are awarded following the College entrance examination.

Parents who seek bursary support in respect of a child joining the College from Year 3 are expected to apply in advance of submitting an application for a place. This is to enable appropriate offers of support to be made at the same time a place is offered. The cut-off dates for applications for bursary awards are openly advertised.

Assisted Places (Hardship Fund)

Under this scheme parents of children who are already at the College from Year 5 or upwards may apply for financial support if their financial circumstances change, leading to them being unable to fulfil their full financial commitments to the College. This financial assistance scheme (hardship fund) involves means-tested awards and is to allow children to continue their education at the College who might not otherwise be able to do so for financial reasons. Preference will be given to children in academic years when public examinations are taken, namely Year 11 and Upper Sixth form.

It is the responsibility of parents to contact the Bursary or the Head in advance of fee payment becoming overdue should they wish to seek to benefit from this scheme.

The Assisted Places scheme is managed by the Head within the framework of this policy and budget set by the Board. The Bursar is responsible for the conduct of the means-testing assessments and for making recommendations to the Head.

The degree of assistance is determined, managed, and reviewed in exactly the same way as for bursaries, detailed above.

Governors' Awards

In addition to scholarships, pupils have the chance to be awarded a special "Governors' Award" in recognition of an exemplary achievement or action, relating to any area of College life and demonstrating the College's ethos and values. Throughout the year a certain sum of money will be set aside for such awards, which will be of a small monetary value (for example a £50 voucher), but will be celebrated and publicised both within school and through the College's communication channels.

The sum of money set aside for Governors Awards will be agreed by the Finance committee each year when the budget for the next academic year is set.

Sibling Discounts

Sibling discounts apply automatically for pupils throughout the College, from Reception to Sixth Form. The sibling discounts are only applicable while an elder child remains on the College roll. The discount applies to siblings only and equates to 5% reduction in school fees.

Learning Enrichment

- 1) The College has a dedicated Learning Enrichment (SEND) department.
- 2) In the case of an applicant with specific academic or pastoral needs, a full professional report must be submitted in advance of any entrance assessment. Allowance will then be made during the entrance examination, but the overriding criterion for any offer of place will be the pupil's ability to cope with the College's academic and behavioural expectations, alongside the level of support able to be offered by the College within current staffing capacity.
- 3) Where English is not the pupil's first language (i.e. default language of spoken and written communication), this will be taken into consideration in our selection process and where possible a member of the Modern Foreign Languages Department will be available to assist in the administration of the entrance examination.
- 4) The College requires full disclosure of a child's needs prior to formal offer and acceptance of a place, along with confirmatory parental signature.
- 5) Further details in reference to all of the above, including EAL provision, are in our *Special Educational Needs* policy.

Accessibility

- 1) With regard to disability, the College aims to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled student at a substantial disadvantage compared to any student who is not disabled.
- 2) Parents of prospective pupils are asked to inform the Head or the Head of the Infant & Junior School in advance, when they apply for a place at the College, of any disabilities or long-term medical conditions and the implications thereof which the College should consider, either in the selection process or once a pupil has been accepted.
- 3) In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, and in considering any adjustments it might need to make, the College may take such advice and require such assessments, as it regards appropriate.
- 4) With reference, however, to accommodating the needs of any pupil with specific needs, for whom we can, at the initial point of admission, cater for adequately; if we determine,

after appropriate consideration, that we cannot continue to provide for that pupil, academically or pastorally, due solely to the limitations of the school's capacity which will not have changed since the point of entry, then we shall be permitted to request that parents withdraw the child without being charged fees in lieu of notice.

- 5) Further information is available in our *Accessibility, Equal Opportunities* and *Special Educational Needs* policies.

Waiting Lists

- 1) In the event that a particular year group is already full in the Junior School, students wishing to join will be placed on a waiting list. Once a place becomes available, an assessment will be offered to the child at the head of the waiting list.
- 2) On any occasion where the school intake into Year 7 is over-subscribed, places will be allocated on the basis of ability as assessed in the entrance assessments. In the event that the above is unable to distinguish between candidates, then school references and/or an interview will be taken into account.
- 3) At other times vacant places will be offered to the next applicant who fulfils the entry criteria. If there are no places available in a specific year, applications will still be encouraged and, once a candidate has attained the required standard in the relevant entrance assessments, a provisional place may be offered and the child placed on the waiting list. Once a place becomes available it will be offered to the child at the head of the waiting list.
- 4) If no vacancy arises within six months of the original assessment date, the reserve candidate may be required to be re-assessed for any future places that arise.

Admissions Register

The College complies with the following regulatory requirement, and from the beginning of the first day on which the College has agreed or been informed that the pupil will attend the College, an entry will be made in the College's admissions register in line with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006: Admissions registers [Regulation 3.(9)].

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have superseded the Regulations of 1995 and the amendments of 1997 and 2001. The relevant Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1751 is available at www.legislation.gov.uk.

For each pupil, the College's admission register must contain:

- a) name in full;
- b) gender - this should be birth sex unless the person has obtained a gender recognition certificate (not available under the age of 18)
- c) name and address of every person known to the proprietor to be a parent of the student (and an indication of the parent with whom the student normally resides, as well as which parents hold parental responsibility as defined by Section 3 Children Act 1989);
- d) at least one telephone number at which the parent with they live with can be contacted in an emergency;
- e) day, month and year of birth;
- f) day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- g) name and address of the school last attended, if any;
- h) an indication of boarding or day attendance (in schools which include boarders);

- i) name of the destination school (or additional school, in the case of dual registration) notified by a parent and the first date of attendance, where it is reasonably practicable for the College to ascertain this information;
- j) more than one emergency number for each pupil where reasonably possible.

It is to be noted that the admissions register is not a public document. Furthermore, the requirement to register a transgender pupil under their birth sex (unless they have a gender recognition certificate) does not prevent the College from treating the pupil for all other purposes as the being of the gender with which the child identifies.

The Admissions Register is completed and stored electronically in the school's MIS, managed by the Admissions Officer. There is provision for the register to show the name of title of any person making an amendment and the date the amendment is made. There is also provision for the electronic register and any print-out of the register, after a correction has been made, to distinguish clearly between the original entry and the correction. Copies are also held by the Head and the Head of the Infant & Junior School, as discrete and fixed monthly updates. Thus, the inclusion/deletion from the register is done according to the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

The College recognises its duty to inform the local authority, where a pupil is resident, if their name is going to be deleted from the register for the following reasons:

- a) the pupil has been taken out of College to be home educated
- b) the family has apparently moved away
- c) the pupil has been certified medically unfit to attend
- d) the pupil is in custody for more than four months
- e) the pupil has been permanently excluded
- f) the pupil has transitioned to another school

The College furthermore understands its broad duty to make/notify returns to their local authority for all non-standard admissions and departures, to know or be able to ascertain the correct local channels for doing so, to be able to evidence that if there have been any non-standard admissions or departures, the required notifications have occurred in accordance with local procedures. The College aims to work co-operatively with their local authority in making returns as requested and respond to reasonable enquiries where necessary. The College understands that it is a criminal offence not to report when so required. The College is also under a duty to provide information to the local authority for standard transitions if requested.

The College recognises that children missing education is a safeguarding issue, particularly when a child leaves with no known destination. For this reason, although the legal requirement under the registration regulations is met if the College reports to its own local authority, the College will also copy in the local authority where the child is normally resident. In relation to deletions from the register, the duty arises as soon as the grounds for deletion are met and in any event before deleting the child's name. As to non-standard admissions, the notification is to be made within five days of the entry on the admission register.

The College has the right under the regulations to delete a pupil for non-return within 10 school days after authorised leave of 10 school days or more, or after 20 school days unauthorised absence (in both cases, in the absence of illness or other unavoidable cause); however, the College and the local authority will firstly have jointly made reasonable enquiries as to the pupil's whereabouts and failed, prior to deletion. The College's right to remove a pupil will, in addition, be subject to the terms and conditions of the College's own school/parent contract.

The College is also obliged to notify the local authority when a child or pupil fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days (continuous).

The lawful grounds for removing a pupil, including the original ones above, and the information to be reported to the local authority, are set out in detail in both School Attendance 2019 and Children missing education 2016. The inclusion/deletion from the register is done according to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The Admissions Register is backed-up at least weekly and copies held for at least three years.