

Woodbridge School Admissions Policy (inc EYFS)

This policy is a Legal Requirement and an ISI Reporting Standard

References

- A. Education Act 2002
- B. School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- C. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010
- D. Schools Admission Code 2010

General

Woodbridge School (including Woodbridge School Prep and Woodbridge School Senior) is a co-educational independent school for pupils from ages 4 to 18. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit us. We hold a number of open events throughout the year which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School's Admissions team on admissions@woodbridgeschool.org.uk or +44 (0) 1394 615041 for the Senior School or +44 (0) 1394 382673 for the Prep School to arrange a visit.

The Entry Procedure

Woodbridge School is a selective school, with selection based upon academic merit as well as alignment with the School's values, at all levels of entry. Please see the assessment section of this policy below for further details. We will base decisions on entry upon all the information available to us including entrance test results, school reports, school references and interviews.

The usual points of entry are at aged 4+ into reception, aged 7+ into year 3, aged 11+ into year 7, aged 13+ into year 9 and aged 16+ into year 12. The School may also have occasional places at other ages. Please contact the Admissions team for details.

In order for an applicant to be eligible to sit Woodbridge School's entrance exams (Senior School) or to have an assessment at Woodbridge School Prep or Pre Prep, they must first be registered with the School. This is achieved by **both** parents, or those with legal parental responsibility, completing and signing the application form and returning it to the Admissions team, together with the registration fee (currently £50 for day pupils and £100 for boarders). A child **must** be registered with the School before an application for an award or bursary can be considered.

Applicants for Reception should register by the end of the Michaelmas Term in the academic year preceding the year of entry. Nursery visits and the Assessment Morning occur during the Lent Term.

Applicants for 7+ entry (Year 3) should register by the end of the Michaelmas Term in the academic year preceding the year of entry. Applicants applying after this date, and where a year group is full, will be placed on a waiting list.

Applicants for admission to the Senior School should ideally register by November of the year preceding the desired year of admission. The School's application form must be signed by either **both** natural parents, or those with legal parental responsibility.

Equal Treatment

Woodbridge School's aim is to encourage applications from prospective pupils with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for tomorrow's world. Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School.

The School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an applicant's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background. The School's provision for bursaries is described below.

Special and Support Needs

Woodbridge School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them the support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them.

Parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities must discuss their child's requirements with the School before the child is assessed (see below) so that we can make adequate provision on the assessment day. Parents should provide with the application form, a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical / behavioural / diagnostic report if they have one and any other relevant information or reports.

Staff will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the School. Non-disclosure or incomplete disclosure of known specific learning difficulties and/or mental disabilities can lead to termination of the Parent Contract.

Parents must also disclose at the point of application, any information about the child which would assist the School in ascertaining the child's learning and pastoral support needs. Even where a child does not have a diagnosed special educational need, physical or mental disability, parents are required to disclose any support the child has received at a previous school, or outside the school setting, to ensure the child will receive all the support they need and their needs can be met. If parents require guidance on this, they should discuss with the Admissions team in the first instance, who can put them in touch with the Learning Support team if necessary. Non-disclosure or incomplete disclosure of known learning and pastoral support needs, can lead to withdrawal of an offer, or in some cases the termination of the Parent Contract.

The Assessment Process

The aim of the process is to identify potential. Woodbridge School is looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in music, drama, community activities and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

The preconditions for admission are that:

- the School is able to provide adequately for any specific learning difficulties and learning and pastoral support needs (if any) the applicant may have; and
- the School, having made reasonable adjustment, has the capacity to cope with any disability the applicant may have.

The academic criteria for selection are:

- a satisfactory performance in the assessment/examinations at the School; and
- a positive recommendation from the applicant's present school or nursery (when applicable).

The School will only offer places to pupils that it is felt will benefit from the education that it can offer. The relationship between the School and parents must be one of mutual trust and respect and hence, if the parents are not supportive of the School and the way it is run, the child would not benefit from the education and this would give a reason to decide not to offer a place.

The offer of a place is dependent upon successful completion of all aspects of the assessment process.

No specific preparation for the entrance tests/assessments is needed; all applicants start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

Prospective pupils for the Pre-Prep are assessed for entry through an Activity Assessment session. Entrants to EYFS/Reception are visited in their nursery / home setting in advance of participation in an age-appropriate Assessment Morning. A report from the child's current nursery or school is also requested, where applicable and references from the applicant's previous setting will inform the decision of an offer.

Entrants into Pre-Prep Key Stage One are assessed by participating in a Taster Day during which age appropriate work including reading, writing and maths is completed. Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.

Applicants for Woodbridge School Prep Key Stage Two are assessed throughout the year by participating in a Taster Day during which age appropriate work including a CAT4 assessment and a piece of English writing and a Maths exercise is completed. An informal discussion with the Head of Woodbridge School Prep and references from the applicant's previous school inform the decision of an offer.

Results of 100+ in CAT4, age appropriate spelling & reading scores, or 50% in exam results are the expected minimum for entry or age appropriate responses in EYFS / KSI. Conditional offers may be made in exceptional circumstances to pupils whose results are below the expected level however; these pupils may need to be reviewed by the SENCo.

At the Senior School those entering at Years 7-10 (ages 11-14) are required to complete an entrance test, designed specifically for their age groups. Applicants will also be required to have a taster session as well as an interview with the Head. A confidential reference will also be sought for each applicant from their current school.

The School's offer of places into Year 12 is conditional upon an applicant achieving a minimum of six '6' grades and two '5' grades at GCSE, including a minimum of a grade '7' in the subjects proposed for study at A Level.

We interview all applicants as part of our assessment process for each age group with the exception of Pre-Prep.

The dates of the School's entrance tests for the Senior School are published on the School's website, together with the closing dates for applications for Awards and Bursaries. Those registered for entry to Woodbridge School Prep will be contacted directly to have a Taster Day arranged. The Pre-Prep assessment date is also communicated directly. Registered Reception applicants are invited to attend an Assessment Morning following the nursery visit. The date will be communicated directly to parents.

Results are posted to families as soon as possible together with a closing date for acceptances following receipt of the reference from the current setting. If further assessment or consultation is required as a result of the assessment process, parents will be informed and this timescale may be altered. We will offer places to applicants from our waiting list after the closing date for acceptances. You must accept or decline the offer of a place by the closing date. Failure to do so may result in the automatic withdrawal of the offer.

If, during their time at Woodbridge School, it is felt that transfer to the next stage would not be beneficial for the pupil, parents will be contacted in advance of this to discuss alternative options.

Sibling Policy

Most siblings join us at Woodbridge School. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment. If a sibling meets our entrance criteria, they will be given preference.

Awards (Scholarships)

We offer Awards at entry into Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 each year in the following categories:

- Academic (based on the entrance assessments)
- Music
- Drama
- Sport
- Chess
- Art (encompassing photography, fashion and sculpture)
- All-round ability (based on the entrance procedure)

The number of Awards varies from year to year depending on the results of the entrance tests. Awards are made to those entering the Senior School (including Woodbridge School Prep Year 6 pupils), as well as to current pupils moving into Year 9. Some may be awarded on merit as current pupils pass from Year 11 to the Sixth Form.

Purpose of Awards

Awards are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. Awards may be made on an honorary basis (i.e. with no fee reduction), or on a fee reduction basis. With the latter, the Scholar is offered a reduction in the tuition fees for his/her time at the Senior School at Woodbridge School, subject to the normal terms and conditions of the award and parent contract. In addition, Music Scholars are offered free tuition on the musical instrument[s] they play, and Art Scholars have access to extra tuition via Peri Tutors. Parents are asked to indicate on the application form whether they wish to apply for an Award. Details of the arrangements will be sent to all who express an interest.

We encourage parents of Scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees, to apply at the same time for one of the School's means-tested Bursaries described below, when they register their child.

Duration of Awards

In most cases, an Award will be valid throughout a pupil's duration at the School, subject to continuous feedback and an annual review. Awards will continue at the discretion of the Head, with input from the relevant Head of Department, subject to sustained high standards of effort and attainment.

All Woodbridge School Scholars and holders of Awards are expected to uphold the values of the School and the highest of standards, demonstrating exceptional commitment, effort, attitude and behaviour at all times. If they fall below these standards, the Head may determine that an Award be removed.

Academic and All-round Awards

Applicants are not able to apply for Academic or All-round Awards. Academic Awards are made as a result of the tests sat at entry to the Senior School or, for Year 12 applicants, as a condition of predicted GCSE results and the interview process. Year 12 applicants will be asked to verify their GCSE results in the August prior to their entry in September. A conditional Award offer may be reviewed if the applicant has not achieved the required GCSE grades. Academic Awards are only available at Senior School entry and for those entering Year 7, Year 9 or Year 12.

All-round Awards are made as a result of the entrance procedure in its entirety but will also take into account an applicant's other Award applications and interests too.

Awards are usually held for the duration of a pupil's time at the School, provided his/her conduct and performance are satisfactory and that his/her GCSE results merit its continuing into the Sixth Form.

Music Award

Music Awards are available for entry into Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12. They are awarded to outstanding musicians who play any instrument and/or sing with exceptional ability or show real potential. Applicants must obtain a specialist reference from their current instrumental/vocal teacher in addition to a reference from their Head or current Director of Music.

They will be required to perform two pieces on their main instrument and one piece on a second instrument or sing. Year 7 applicants will also be required to prepare and sing a short song. We may also assess a candidate's aural ability and/or sight-reading skills. There will be an informal interview with the Director of Music and audition panel, where we will get to know your child and their individual musical experiences and desires. We are looking for applicants who have a genuine enthusiasm for, and commitment to, their music making and most importantly who display potential.

All Music Award holders are expected to make a contribution to our extensive ensemble and performance programme throughout their time at Woodbridge School and be an ambassador for the wonderful world of music. It is a requirement of the Award that Music is studied to at least GCSE level.

Music Awards will be made only to pupils who have passed the School's entrance examination.

Sport Award

Sport Awards are available at entry to Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12.

We are looking for talented, all-round sportsmen and women who demonstrate ability and also potential in the School's main sports. Applicants will participate in a sport assessment day involving a number of team sports and physical assessments. Applicants should provide a reference from a current coach in their preferred sports.

Successful applicants will be expected to perform to their highest standard and show passion and commitment to sport at the School. They will exhibit a positive attitude to all aspects of PE and Games lessons, extracurricular practices and fixtures. Sports Scholars will strive to be role models and develop their leadership skills in order to inspire their peers.

Drama and/or LAMDA Award

Drama Awards are available upon entry at Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 and are awarded to applicants with considerable dramatic ability. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their involvement in projects and performances, inside and outside of school, but more importantly on their participation in a performance during the workshop as part of the application process. Applicants will be asked to prepare a solo speech and participate in a group workshop with other applicants.

Those who are awarded a Drama Award may sometimes, but not always, receive in addition a LAMDA Award which will entitle the applicant to one free LAMDA lesson per week.

For those applicants not successful in achieving a Drama Award, a LAMDA Award may be made. In financial terms, a LAMDA Award is the equivalent to one free LAMDA lesson per week.

Drama Awards will be made only to pupils who have passed the School's entrance examination. It is a requirement that those in receipt of a Drama Award study Drama as a curriculum subject and are heavily involved in the extra-curricular life of the department.

Art Award

Art Awards are available on entry at Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 and are made to those applicants who possess both a passion and considerable talent concerning Art in either one particular area or in a breadth of disciplines. We understand that the nature of young artists is diverse and that some are driven to excel in a narrow field whilst others flourish in numerous pathways of production. We don't have a house style and invite applications from innovators in their chosen fields. We have an open mind and will judge each submission on its own merit.

Applicants will be asked to submit a portfolio containing examples of their art works created over the last school year which will be assessed by the School's Art department staff. Initial applicant selection will be made by looking through the digital submitted work after which suitable applicants will be invited to attend a scholarship workshop with other applicants. It is a requirement of an Art Award that the applicant should study Art as a curriculum subject. At GCSE and A-Level we have two separate pathways for Fine Art and Photography, an art scholar would study at least one of these if not both if appropriate. For such an art scholar we see this as a highly desirable opportunity to heighten the level of their expertise in two rather than one area of artistic production.

Furthermore we are looking for A-Level artist applicants who want to study more than one art based A-Level. We can offer one two or three art based A-levels because of the structure of our sixth courses. We have highly driven applicants that are excelling in this manner and achieving places at world class art institutes on leaving Woodbridge School. We would most welcome this sort of applicant into sixth form.

Art Awards will be awarded only to pupils who have passed the School's entrance examination.

Chess Award

Chess Awards are available on entry at Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 and are available to those with considerable ability who also have a definite commitment to chess at the School. Applicants will be interviewed by the Head of Chess during which he/she will ask for a demonstration of expertise in an opening, basic endgame understanding and ask the applicant to complete a tactical ability test.

Applicants will only be considered for an Award if they have played in rapid or longplay chess tournaments previously and in doing will have already obtained an English Chess Federation (ECF) grade or FIDE rating.

Chess Awards may also include free tuition for one chess lesson each week. For those applicants not successful in achieving a Chess Award, a Chess Lesson Award may be made. In financial terms, a Chess Lesson Award is the equivalent to one free chess lesson per week.

Chess Awards will be awarded only to pupils who have passed the School's entrance examination.

Bursaries

Woodbridge School's Bursary programme is designed to make it easier for as many as possible of those who meet our entry criteria and have been offered to take up a place here. The School offers means-tested Bursaries annually to entrants at the following points of entry to Woodbridge School: Year 3 at Woodbridge School Prep and Years 7, 9 and 12 at the Senior School. Under exceptional circumstances, bursary applications for other points of entry may be considered. Bursary application forms are sent to parents who have indicated on the application form that they require financial support. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published on the School's website. **Both natural parents, or those with legal responsibility,** are required to provide proof of their income and assets.

The level of support varies according to parental need; but those awarded at Year 3 entry at Woodbridge School Prep will usually be for a maximum of 50% fee remission and in cases of proven need, awards of full fee remission may be made at Senior School entry. Woodbridge School uses the expertise of a financial company to process all bursary applications received. Before the offer of a bursary is confirmed, a staff member from the company is required to visit the family at their home to discuss the bursary application. It may also be necessary for parents to have a further meeting with the Director of Finance at the School.

All bursaries are subject to an annual assessment of parental financial means and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on the outcome of the assessment. Both parents are required to provide fresh information about their circumstances for each year that their child attends the School. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income, as well as if a pupil's attitude, progress or behaviour has been deemed unsatisfactory.

Bursaries are offered only to families who are resident in the UK.

The School's practice is to allocate its entire available bursary funding on entry. The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed, will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances. Similarly if a bursary application was declined and parents decided to send their child on a full fee-paying basis, it is the School's expectation that they will not need financial support in the future except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

Bursaries are highly competitive. Our full bursary policy can be viewed on the School's website..

Overseas Applicants

The School welcomes overseas pupils who can study at Woodbridge School as a boarder provided they have a suitable guardian. Please see our Guardianship Policy for more information. Parents of overseas pupils should appreciate that the majority of international pupils wishing to study at Woodbridge School finish a complete course of study such as Years 9-11, Years 12 and 13 or Years 9-13 with only a minority wishing to study for the minimum period of 2 terms.

Fluency in English

Applicants whose first language is not English must be able to prove that they have the academic potential to complete the chosen course of study and that their English is adequate for the subjects they wish to study. Pupils' English as an Additional Language (EAL) needs will be assessed in advance of entry. This will involve a request for a Skype interview if the applicant has not visited the School during their application process. EAL lessons will be timetabled if appropriate. Woodbridge School boarding fees include group EAL lessons however, it may be recommended that individual lessons may be required which will be arranged at the parent's expense.

Religious Beliefs

Although Woodbridge School has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for all to practise their recognised own faiths. However, parents should be aware that there is compulsory attendance at some events with religious content, e.g. the annual Founders' Day service.

School's Contractual Terms & Conditions

To accept a child's place parents will be asked to sign to the School's Parent Contract which incorporates them agreeing to the School Rules. They will be asked to pay a deposit (currently £500 for day pupils, £1,000 for UK and EU boarders and a term's fees for non-EU boarders); this sum will be held on account and refunded against the child's last fee account with the School. Once a place has been accepted, parents are bound by the Parent Contract and School Rules and become liable for fees due from the term of entry.

Copies of the Parent Contract and School Rules are on the School's website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

Complaints

The School hopes that parents and pupils do not have any complaints about the School's admissions process; but a copy of the School's complaints procedure is available on the School's website and can be sent to parents on request.

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