
Admissions Policy

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Note: 'The Head' is used through this policy to refer to the Head of the whole school except where the matter concerns only Willow Lodge (Infant School) or Junior School when it can be assumed to imply 'The Head of the Infant & Junior School'

1. Admissions

- 1.1 Admission as a student of The King's School is subject to the policy outline below and progression through the different stages of the school is as outlined in **Appendix A: Transition Between Schools**.
- 1.2 Admission to the Senior School for years below the Sixth Form is by means of the entrance examination which include an examination of attainment in English and Mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests and interview.
- 1.3 Admission to the Junior School is by assessments in English, Mathematics and non-verbal reasoning tests.
- 1.4 Admission to Willow Lodge Infant School is by play assessments for entry in to Reception. Entry into Y1 and Y2 is by English and Mathematics tests and observation.
- 1.5 Admission to the Sixth Form for external candidates is conditional upon GCSE results and takes account of reports from the previous school and performance at interview.
- 1.6 The formal entrance examinations and assessments for the Junior School (Years 3-6) and Senior School (Year 7) and Willow Lodge Infant School (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) take place in the first half of the Lent Term each year.
- 1.7 Applications received for places in these years after the closing date for the entrance examinations may be considered subject to spaces being available.
- 1.8 Entrance tests for candidates seeking admission to other years are arranged to suit the circumstances of the candidates and are dependent on spaces being available.
- 1.9 Details of the entrance procedures may change from time to time. Details of the current procedures are available on the school website (www.kingschester.co.uk).
- 1.10 Where the number of pupils eligible for admission exceeds the number of places available, a reserve list may be drawn up. As places become available they will be offered to those on the reserve list at the discretion of the Headmaster or Head of the Infant and Junior School. At an appropriate time after the examinations, the reserve list will be closed and candidates offered the opportunity to be re-assessed and considered in the future.
- 1.11 A candidate's position on the waiting list is determined by the date their request to join the waiting list of a year group was received. If a space becomes available, the candidates will be contacted in order of the date of their enquiry and given reasonable opportunity to sit the entrance test before the next candidate on the waiting list is contacted. The period of time given to take up the opportunity of sitting the entrance test is at the discretion of the Headmaster or Head of the Infant and Junior School. A candidate will be removed from the waiting list if this offer is not taken up.
- 1.12 Around 44 pupils will be admitted at age 4+ into Reception. Around 66 pupils will be admitted to Junior School years. Around 104 pupils will normally be admitted into Removes at age 11+ (Y7). Around 15-25 external students will normally be admitted in to the Sixth Form.
- 1.13 Teaching groups are normally 22 in the Infant School, 15-24 in the Junior School and around 26 in the Senior School. In the Sixth Form the teaching groups are normally between 9-15 students.

- 1.14 Appeals against decisions relating to admissions should be made in the first place to the Head or the Head of the Infant & Junior School, please see section 4 – *Admissions Appeals*.
- 1.15 The admissions procedures will not unfairly discriminate against any pupil.

2. Bursary provision

- 2.1 A very limited number of means-tested bursaries are available to external candidates for entry to Removes or Sixth Form only. These bursaries are awarded based upon full financial evaluation of the family's circumstances and where a family has disposable income which could be used to contribute to school fees, it would be expected that this is done. The awards can be between 10%-100% for those parents for whom the payment of full fees would be impossible and for whom the inability to pay would prevent their child attending the Senior School or the Sixth Form. We are always heavily oversubscribed for these awards therefore it is important that families have an alternative school planned should their bursary application prove unsuccessful.
- 2.2 The school's decision in the allocation of bursaries is final and there is no right of appeal. Applications for bursaries are accepted on this basis. For more information, please see the *Bursary Policy* on the website.

3. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision

- 3.1 The King's School has good provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities, and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010, The King's School will not discriminate on the grounds of disability. It is important to note that, without an EHC Plan or Statement, The King's School, as an independent provider of education, is not part of the Local Authority 'local offer'. Consequently, The King's School is unable to access Local Authority run specialist support services in school.

To understand more about the provision for children with SEND at The King's School please ask to see our parent FAQ document from the Admissions Manager and our SEND Policy on the website, or contact Sarah Glass, Director of Learning Support: sarahglass@kingschester.co.uk

4. Admissions Appeals

- 4.1 Any parent wishing to question a decision not to admit their child to The King's School should, in the first place, raise the matter in writing with the Head.
- 4.2 The Head will respond to the concern in writing within five working days, giving the reason for the decision.
- 4.3 Examination scores and the record or evaluation of any interviews remain confidential to the school.
- 4.4 If the parent feels that concerns have not been fully and fairly considered, they should write to the Chair of Governors who will refer the complaint to an appeals committee. The convener of this committee is always a member of the governing body who is not the Chair, assisted by two other members of the governing body. It is their task to look at issues in an impartial and confidential manner.
- 4.5 The parent wishing to appeal against an admission decision must give written notice of the reasons for the appeal.

- 4.6 The committee convener will invite the parent(s) to a meeting. This will be attended by the Head and another senior member of staff involved in the admissions procedures. Parents will be asked if there are any papers they would like to have circulated beforehand. They will be invited to bring a friend along with them. Legal representation would not be appropriate.
- 4.7 The Hearing:
- a. The committee will ask the Head to put the case for the school's decision
 - b. The parent(s) will be invited to question the Head
 - c. The committee will ask the parents to put the case for appealing against the school's decision
 - d. The Head will be invited to question the parent(s)
 - e. The Head will be invited to sum up the school's case
 - f. The parent(s) will be asked to sum up their case.
- 4.8 Members of the appeal committee may ask questions at any time if they require clarification or further information. Notes of the meeting will be taken by the Clerk to the Governors. These notes remain the property of the appeals committee and will not be made available to the parties to the appeal.
- 4.9 After the hearing the convener will reach a decision about the appeal and will, within seven days, notify the parent(s) in writing of the outcome together with the reasons for that decision. At the conclusion of the procedure, all parties should feel secure in their understanding of the reasons for the decision and be satisfied that, notwithstanding its outcome, the hearing has been a fair one.
- 4.10 Bursaries are a means-tested financial award allocated as described in section 2 – *Bursaries*. There is no appeal process in respect of Bursary awards.

Appendix A: Transition Between Schools

1. Guiding Principle

Our guiding principle is to ensure that children offered places at The King's School are happy and can work at a level in line with the pace of learning. We recognise that King's is not always the right school for every pupil at every stage in their school life. Whilst most children who join us move seamlessly through the four schools, we will not recommend this for every child if we feel they will be uncomfortable with the next stage of their education.

2. General principles

- Children are selected for Infants, Juniors and Seniors on a set of assessment criteria which aim to show future potential.
- Success in other elements of their personality or extra-curricular interests are not considered in the assessment.
- Siblings are not given preference and performance is based on each individual child alone.
- Parents will be advised in the October, at the very latest, before the year the child is due to move to the next school, if there are concerns about transition.
- The school will work with parents to advise and support finding a suitable alternative school.
- Pupils' written reports will not indicate likelihood of progress to the next school. This is not the correct channel for such comments. Reports are by their nature positive, ambitious documents.

3. Transition from Infants to Juniors

- We expect most of the children in the Infant School to move seamlessly through to the Junior School provided behaviour and progress is in line with expectations.
- Where progress and/or behaviour are not in line with expectations, parents of children in Infant 2 will be contacted in the October of the year before transition, at the very latest and supporting evidence of the concern discussed.

4. Transition from Juniors to Seniors

- For entry into Removes, Junior School children who have joined us in J1, J2 or the first half term of J3, can assume automatic entry to Seniors, provided that their behaviour and progress is in line with expectations. Parents will be asked to officially accept their child's senior place by the Christmas before the year of entry.
- Children joining the Junior School after the first half term in J3 or who join at any time in J4, will complete a reduced entrance assessment, rather than the full entrance exams currently taken alongside external candidates. They will sit the Maths and English papers, in the more familiar surroundings of the Junior School, on the entrance exam day in January. Parents of these children will be offered places within days of the assessment results being known.
- On the rare occasions where progress and/or behaviour are not in line with expectations, parents will be contacted in the October of the year before transition (Michaelmas Term J4), at the very latest, and supporting evidence of the concern discussed. In such cases Junior School staff will help parents in choosing and preparing children for an alternative school for their child. Parents can opt for their children to take a reduced entrance assessment which will be competitively assessed alongside the external applicants. Places are offered as per the details in the next section and there is no advantage given to Junior School pupils. In this instance, we would strongly advise parents to have another school as a back-up plan, in the eventuality that an offer is not made.

5. The Senior School Examination process

- In most years there are 104 places offered with approximately 50-65% of these offered as unconditional places to Junior School pupils.
- There is no pass/fail level. Offers of places are given in order of performance and competition for places varies every year. Therefore, in effect, this means a child at a certain level may get a place in one year but not another year.
- We do have a reserve list for places. In some years no places are offered from the reserve list and in other years many may get places.
- Bursaries and Assisted places are available for entry in Removes. More information about bursaries can be found by contacting: admissions@kingschester.co.uk or reading our helping with fees leaflet: <https://www.kingschester.co.uk/admissions/> And the Bursary Policy. Please see section 1.13 above for more details.

6. Transition from Senior School to Sixth Form

Admission to the Sixth Form is by interview for external candidates. There are three criteria which must be satisfied by all candidates for entry into the Sixth Form at King's:

- Industry and determination – students must have demonstrated through their 'Effort' or 'Attitude to Learning' Grades that they are capable of working to deadlines and meeting academic expectations of their teachers, commensurate with their potential.
- Attitude – students' school behavioural record, including detentions, during the Fourth Year and Fifth Year (Yrs 10 and 11) must indicate a readiness to work hard and to accept the authority of the school willingly.
- Academic attainment – a minimum entry requirement of seven GCSEs of which at least four need to be at grade 7 (A) and three at grade 6 (B) or above. Grade 7 (A) is required in each of the four subjects that will be studied at A Level for all students. Grade 8 (A*) is needed for Further Maths. Students are required to have a minimum of grade 4 (C) in both Maths and English Language.

The Heads of Houses and Tutors see all Fifth-Year pupils and discuss potential issues with them and parents from the beginning of the Fifth Year.

Students failing to meet these criteria may be admitted to the Sixth Form following consultation with the parents. If admission is granted, students must expect to have to give undertakings for their future work and/or conduct and to meet specific work targets during the Lower Sixth. Parents will be fully involved during the process.

7. Progression from Lower Sixth to Upper Sixth

For all students, progression from Lower Sixth to Upper Sixth will be conditional on their record during the Lower Sixth and upon internal examination results. Students must have obtained at least CCD grades, or equivalent, in their best three A level subjects in order to qualify automatically for the Upper Sixth. Students who have not achieved these grades may be offered the opportunity to re-sit their exams; if their results do not improve, students may be offered the chance to repeat the Lower Sixth year.

These criteria will be reviewed from time to time and adjusted if necessary in order to maintain the high standards of effort and achievement generally associated with students at The King's School.