



Hazelwood School

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

*This Policy includes the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. **Applications** for admission to Hazelwood School can be made at any time. However, for Reception to Year 8 there are limits upon numbers under the School's policy on class sizes, which aims for class sizes of no more than 20 pupils unless in stated exceptional circumstances when class sizes can be stretched to 21 children. These circumstances exclusively cover the admission of a sibling whose brother and/or sister can be accommodated elsewhere within the School or the child of a teacher employed to begin work at the School. Such exceptional circumstances apply equally to places offered before the start of, and during, a School year.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), numbers are limited due to room sizes and staff ratios. Therefore, in any age group, those who apply and satisfy the admissions criteria will be offered places in order of registration. For both School and Nursery, siblings of children already attending Hazelwood (and still in attendance on the date of joining) will be given priority as well as those children intending to progress through to Hazelwood School. Pupils are encouraged to start in September although special circumstances may allow a start date at an alternative point in the academic year.

- 1.2. **Offers** of admission to Hazelwood are made individually and at the discretion of the Head, who will consider not only the criteria noted below but also other matters that may be relevant in any individual's case. Places are offered subject to a taster day assessment. Offers of admission to the EYFS are made individually and at the discretion of the Assistant Head (with responsibility for Early Years) or Nursery Manager in consultation with the Head of Hazelwood.
- 1.3. **Equal Treatment** Hazelwood welcomes children from all different backgrounds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our School community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all Hazelwood pupils to attend chapel and/or School assemblies.
- 1.4. **Disability** Hazelwood will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children with disabilities. When a disability or special educational need is made known to us, we will consult with parents and subject to paragraph make reasonable adjustments to our admission procedures and arrangements to enable a child, if they are able, to satisfy our admission requirements.

If a pupil is disabled we have a series of duties in respect to them. In particular we will:

- Not discriminate against the pupil directly, indirectly or in relation to a consequence arising from the pupil's disability.
- Not victimise or harass the disabled pupil.
- Make reasonable adjustments to prevent the disabled pupil from being put at a substantial disadvantage.

**1.5 Educational Adjustments** In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act we seek to ensure that those with special educational needs are not treated less favourably or put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission. The School will take all reasonable measures to support a child and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility to the curriculum where required. Hazelwood does not have the expertise on the staff team to provide for the needs of pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties. However, the School does have a Learning Support Department which works in conjunction with the teaching staff and the parents to support, in certain cases, a range of mild difficulties. Additional support with specialist staff may be arranged, at the parents' expense, in order for a pupil to maximise their potential or fully access the curriculum. The Head has the right to refuse admission of a pupil, if in their professional judgement, the School cannot provide adequately for a pupil's special educational needs.

## **2 PROCEDURES**

**2.1 Entry points** These procedures apply for points of entry as shown below:

**2.1.1 EYFS (*Nursery Places*)** Children will be admitted in order of registration. No formal assessment is made at this point of entry. Siblings of children already attending Hazelwood (and still in attendance on the date of joining) will be given priority as well as those children intending to progress through to Hazelwood School. Children are required to attend a minimum of 3 sessions per week (4 sessions in Starlings, Wrens and Wagtails). Following confirmation of a place and agreement of a start date (preferred as September), the EYFS staff will contact the parents of the child to arrange settling sessions.

**2.1.2 EYFS (*Reception Places*)** For Reception pupils, children are offered a place based upon the date that they registered. Existing Nursery (Skylarks) children will be expected to continue through to Hazelwood School unless two terms' notice is given as per our Terms and Conditions. Siblings of children already attending Hazelwood School will receive priority. The children will be observed on their visits prior to joining to ensure they will be able to access the curriculum and that they can thrive at the School. A copy of their nursery report and learning journey (if available) will also be taken into consideration.

**2.1.3 Years 1 & 2** For pupils wishing to join Years 1 and 2, there will be informal assessments of numeracy and literacy as part of a taster day. A copy of their latest school report is also taken into consideration as well as their behaviour and attitude on their visits to Hazelwood School.

- 2.1.4 *Entry to the Prep School* For pupils wishing to join the Prep School in Years 3-8, the following criteria will be applied:
- 2.1.4.1 An assessment of their ability in English, Mathematics and Verbal Reasoning and Non Verbal Reasoning.
  - 2.1.4.2 Feedback from staff on taster days.
  - 2.1.4.3 A copy of their latest school report and possibly a character reference from their previous school
  - 2.1.4.4 Disability assessments (if applicable).
- 2.2 **Awarding of Places** Places will be awarded in line with this Policy, and applicants meeting the following the criteria set out below:
- 2.2.1 All children will need to perform to the required standard in the assessments and observations. Ultimately it is at the Head's discretion.
  - 2.2.2 Siblings of children already at Hazelwood (and still in attendance on date of joining) will be given first priority in the order in which their registration forms and registration fees were received.
  - 2.2.3 Children without siblings will be awarded any remaining places in the order in which their completed registration forms and registration fees were received.
  - 2.2.4 All families will be kept informed of the availability of places. Where a waiting list situation arises i.e. where the School anticipates all places will be taken up between transitioning children and those already registered, parents will be informed at the time of their initial enquiry. They will be placed on a waiting list and will be informed immediately both of their position on it and when/if a place becomes available.
  - 2.2.5 In the case of key points of entry, assessment days and the offers of places will be made by December prior to the September start date. Once these places have been offered and accepted, they cannot be withdrawn by the School even if the School receives additional applications including those from siblings.
  - 2.2.6 In line with the Consumer Rights Act 2015, parents have 14 days after accepting the place and paying the deposit, to change their mind without any financial liability.
- 2.3 **Entry Tests** The School sets its own tests in certain core/option subjects as appropriate.
- 2.4 **Interviews** There may be a general interview to explore the candidate's interests, attitude to school, personal qualities, ability to contribute to the school community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the School.
- 2.5 **Character Reference** The Head of the candidate's current school may be asked to provide a written reference as to the candidate's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the school community, talents and interest, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, or a disability.
- 2.6 **Candidate's Age** Very occasionally, the School may offer places to pupils one year ahead or behind their standard year group if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School. This is normally in the case of an overseas pupil whose formal education started at a later age. Normally, the School believes that a child is best served by being amongst its peer group.
- 2.7 **Special Circumstances** The School recognises that a child's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- 2.7.1 If they are unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from their school.
- 2.7.2 If there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement.
- 2.7.3 If there is a relevant educational history, for example education outside the British system.
- 2.7.4 If they have a disability or specific learning difficulties.
- 2.7.5 If English is not their first language.

In any of these cases, the School may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the pupil's current school (including samples of work) or any family history of dyslexia, as is considered necessary to make a fair assessment.

- 2.8 **Disclosures** Parents must, and at the time of completion of the Acceptance Form disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties. A Confidential Information Form is made available as part of the Acceptance Pack. If any such known or suspected circumstances arise subsequently, parents should notify the School in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.
- 2.9 **Additional Factors** If Hazelwood School is oversubscribed and we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our admission requirements, after all appropriate allowances and special consideration has been given, we may give preference to:
  - 2.9.1 A child who already has a sibling at Hazelwood or whose sibling or parent is a former pupil at Hazelwood School.
  - 2.9.2 A child whose parent is a current member of our staff.
  - 2.9.3 A child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude seeking entry to Hazelwood School.
  - 2.9.4 For Nursery entry, Hazelwood reserves the right to give preference to those parents whose child will progress to the Reception class.

Further consideration of entry into Hazelwood School are contained within the Terms and Conditions sent out to parents with the Offer of a Place letter.

## **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES**

(for Reception – Year 8)

### **Introduction**

1. Ensuring that the School adopts and follows efficient admissions procedures is essential to the legal status of a child's presence at school. It underwrites the Terms and Conditions under which any pupil attends Hazelwood, and under which any parent has a proper expectation of the School. As a result, the School has a responsibility to follow procedures with the utmost care to ensure the welfare of the child and to safeguard the interests both of the parents and the School and to employ appropriate and qualified staff for the purpose of overseeing and delivering the Admissions process.

### **Management**

2. The School's admissions process will be monitored by the Board of Governors and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as and when appropriate. Day-to-day management of the procedure is delegated by the Director of Admissions.

### **The Registrar (Currently the Director of Admissions, Marketing and Communications)**

3. The Registrar will have the responsibility for managing the admissions process. In particular the duties of Registrar will include:
  - Maintaining a Register of prospective parents to allow the School to plan effectively for the future both in financial and logistic terms.
  - Organising and running Open Days for prospective parents.
  - Following up all expressions of interest in the School with the aim of converting interest into a confirmed place or places at School.
  - Conducting the administration of prospective parents in preparing them for entry to Hazelwood by processing appropriate documentation. (See paragraph 4).
  - Advising the Board of Governors and SLT of the pupil numbers situation and trends at their meetings as required.
  - Having an intimate knowledge of local nursery schools, play groups and other competitors.
  - Advertising the School in appropriate media with pre-agreed messages.
  - Assisting the Head in arranging visits to the School, by individuals or groups of parents.
  - Assisting the Head in other PR initiatives as required.
  - Maintaining the Marketing budget.

### **The Procedure**

4. The following procedure is to be adopted to ensure an efficient admissions process. Only in exceptional circumstances will the process and timings of its delivery be subject to change:
  - 4.1 *Pre-Registration* Parents who show an interest in a place at the School for their child or children will be invited for a private tour or to attend an Open Day event, followed by an email with the option to complete an online Registration Form.

4.2 *Registration* Once a parent had submitted the Registration Form with the appropriate registration fee, the Registrar will acknowledge receipt of the Form, place it in the appropriate Year Group admissions file and log the entry onto the admissions database in receipt order. If they wish to do so, parents may inspect the School's policies once they are fully registered and have paid the appropriate fee. Once the registrations database is full to maximum of 20 in any class, a waiting list in receipt order will be maintained and parents on that list are to be advised accordingly. (Taster Day visits will be organised at appropriate times to allow the School to assess prospective pupils.)

4.3 *Offer of a Place* Providing a place remains for a registered child, the Registrar will, by the December prior to the September start date, arrange for the Letter of Offer to be sent to the parents. This will include a copy of the Terms and Conditions, an Acceptance Form and the School's Privacy Notice(s) which the parents will return to the Registrar if they wish to take up the offer, with the required deposit together with any documentation required by the Acceptance Form.

Prior to the pupil starting at the School, forms are sent to the parent for completion. These include Medical Information and Consent Form, Pupil ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Years 1-8) and a Direct Debit Form. These are to be returned, completed, before the start of the term in which the child is due to join the School. Their information is shared with relevant individuals and captured on the School database.

Waiting lists are to be maintained throughout this process. Should an Offer of a Place be rejected, the first name on the waiting list is to be offered that place, and so forth.

4.4 *Acceptance* Once a parent has returned the Acceptance Form, the Registrar is to ensure that it has been signed by the appropriate parties. The Acceptance Form represents each parent's agreement to the School's Terms and Conditions and forms the basis of a legal contract between the parties. It is to be kept in the pupil's file. The deposit (online transfer) will be received by the Director of Finance who will make arrangements to start a pupil account and to credit the value of the deposit to that account

Once the Acceptance Form together with all required documents and the deposit has been received, the parents of future pupils will be bound by the School's Terms and Conditions. In line with the Consumer Rights Act 2015, parents have 14 days after accepting the place and paying the deposit, to change their mind without any financial liability. Any child who is subsequently withdrawn, even before the start of their time at the School, will be subject to the full term's notice. Failure to abide by this notice period could result in the levy of a term's fees in lieu of necessary notice. Once any outstanding fees are paid, the deposit is returned.

4.5 The most recent school report together with any information regarding special educational needs is requested from the current school as well as an ICAS Common Transfer Form to obtain further information, including confirmation on whether there have been any safeguarding concerns relating to the pupil, to ensure a smooth transition. This information is shared with teachers and other relevant individuals as appropriate. It is then stored in the pupil's confidential file (hard and soft copy).

4.6 If there are safeguarding concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will continue the discussion directly with the transferring school. The School's procedures relating to safeguarding will be followed.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

SEND Policy

SENDA Policy

Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions, Discipline and Exclusions Policy

Safeguarding Policy

**Ratified by the Compliance Committee on 28 February 2025 and Full Board on 12 March 2025**