



# Admissions Policy

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## Introduction

Wycombe Abbey is an academically selective independent boarding school (with a limited number of day places for candidates living within a 15 mile radius of the School) for girls aged 11 to 19. Entry is at the ages of 11 (Year 7), 13 (Year 9) and 16 (Year 12). There may occasionally be places in intermediate year groups. Applicants will be considered for admission to the School on the basis of the School's Admissions Policy and in accordance with the School's Equal Opportunities policy.

## Equal Treatment

We encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. A number of bursaries are available for girls whose parents could not otherwise afford to meet the full cost of fees. Wycombe Abbey is committed to equal treatment for all. The School will treat every application for a place at the School in a fair and open-minded way. For further information, please refer to our Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy.

## Special Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Enhancement Department can offer them the support they require. We also welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that our site can accommodate their needs. However, we advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their daughter's requirements with the Director of Admissions before she attends the assessment day so that reasonable adjustments can be made on the day of the tests. Parents should provide a copy of an up-to-date Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or other special arrangements. For further information, please see our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

## Selection

Although Wycombe Abbey is an academically selective School, we are looking for well-rounded pupils with potential, a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word and interests that stretch beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils are admitted on the basis of ability as determined by the assessment, interview and at the Headmistress's discretion.

Pupils will not be admitted outside their appropriate year group unless in exceptional circumstance and following discussion with the Director of Admissions.

## Entry Process

Registered candidates for 11+ and 13+ must attend an assessment day at Wycombe Abbey. Each girl's performance will be considered by the Headmistress, the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Director of Admissions. Successful 11+ candidates will take Common Entrance examinations, the pass mark for which may be subject to change from year to year. The top cohort will be invited to sit Scholarship examinations in late January/early February. 13+ candidates sit Common Entrance examinations but candidates may, alternatively, seek entry via the Scholarship examinations held in late January/early February.

Entry at 16+ is competitive, subject to the number of places available, and is a two-stage process. Candidates are required to sit a UKiset test and submit their latest school report in the first instance. Successful applicants will then be invited to come to Wycombe Abbey for an interview and tests in the November prior to entry.

A reference from every candidate's current school is also requested and checks undertaken to ensure fees at the current school have been paid. Checks will also be undertaken with reference to the UK Government's financial sanctions lists.

### **Scholarships**

Academic and Music Scholarship and Exhibition awards are of limited financial value but carry considerable prestige. Tenure of an award will normally be for the scholar's entire career at Wycombe Abbey, but is subject to regular review and is conditional upon satisfactory progress and performance. Full details of the Scholarships available to external and internal candidates are available from the Director of Admissions and are published on the School's website.

### **Acceptance of a Place**

Places must be accepted and a deposit paid by the due date. The deposit will be off-set against the final invoice, or other sums, due to the School on leaving and any remaining balance will be repaid to the parents. Full details can be found with the standard Terms and Conditions available on the School's website.

### **Means-tested Bursaries**

Wycombe Abbey is committed to broadening access to the School by offering means-tested bursaries to children of parents permanently resident in the UK to enable as many as possible of those who meet the School's entry criteria to take up a place. Families are asked to complete a Bursary Application Form and where applicable, both parents are required to provide proof of their income, assets and expenditure. The level of support varies according to parental need but can extend to full fee remission in cases of proven need and may sometimes also provide for additional expenses. All applicants' families will be visited at home by an external, independent assessor appointed by the School. Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time and reviewed annually. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the School.

### **Siblings**

Many siblings join us at Wycombe Abbey. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions when the School judges that a sister is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

### **Overseas Applicants**

We welcome overseas applicants at Wycombe Abbey, provided they have an appointed guardian living in the UK with whom they can stay during Short and Long Leaves from School or in case of an emergency. Candidates are also expected to undergo the same entry and assessment processes as UK-based applicants. For further information on our English Language requirements, please see our EAL policy.

Those applicants who require a Tier 4 (Child) Student Visa will be required to satisfy the School's criteria and UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Tier 4 Policy Guidance in order to proceed. The responsibility for the visa process rests with the applicants and their parents.

### **Religious Beliefs**

Although Wycombe Abbey has a Christian ethos, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief and we offer provision for other faiths. There is compulsory Saturday morning school and all pupils are expected to attend week-day morning service and Sunday Evensong in Chapel, together with a number of other services throughout the year.

### **Appeal Procedure**

If a parent believes that his/her daughter has been unfairly rejected by the School, he/she should write first to the Headmistress outlining the reasons for concern. The Headmistress, or a senior colleague nominated by her or the Director of Admissions will then provide an explanation and/or reconsider the earlier decision. The Headmistress will write to explain her final decision. Whether or not the parents have a child currently at the School, in respect of a child who is a new applicant, the parents and School are not in a contractual relationship at this stage, so this reconsideration does not take place as part of the School's Complaints Policy.

### **School's Terms and Conditions**

A copy of the School's Terms and Conditions is available on the School's website and is made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

The school will only make the offer of a place if there is a place available. In order to be considered for admission to the School applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be of sufficient maturity and appropriate age to participate in all aspects of School life
- be supported by a recommendation from the Head of their current school in terms of academic achievement, motivation and extracurricular involvement

- perform strongly in the entrance examinations and interviews relative to other applicants
- if English is not their first language, candidates must demonstrate a satisfactory level of spoken and written English in order that they can engage and participate fully in all aspects of School life
- any learning difficulties or special needs have been identified to the School by the parents and the School can meet the needs
- full disclosure of any other issues that the School should be aware of
- all fees due at the applicant's present school have been paid
- where an applicant's family is not resident in the UK, an appropriate guardian has been arranged.

### Records

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection policy. The School will not hold personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for lawful purpose.

Member of staff	Director of Admissions
Last review date	January 2020
Next review date	January 2021
Council Committee	Staff Development & Safeguarding

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