

# Admissions Policy

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## 1. Aims and Policy Statement

The Mill Hill Education Group ('the Group') is the trading name of The Mill Hill School Foundation. The aims of the Group are to provide excellence in education, support pupils on their journey from childhood towards adulthood and instil self-discipline, a sense of responsibility, leading to the highest possible standards of behaviour and consideration for others. The Group currently comprises of ten Schools. This Admissions Policy applies to all prospective pupils of Abbot's Hill School (including Nursery, Pre-Prep, Prep School and Senior School). The policy aims to ensure a clear and transparent admission process that is rooted in fairness and equality and to outline the requirements for entry to Abbot's Hill School.

### Authority and Circulation

This policy has been authorised by the Court of Governors of Mill Hill Education Group. Its status is advisory only. It is addressed to prospective parents, pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

### Policy Statement

The **aims** of this policy are:

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes, which are to promote and provide for the education of pupils of any age
- To identify and admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to, and benefit from, the ethos and activities of the Group community. The Group will admit only children who have met the required criteria

## 2. Equal Treatment

The Group's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, which enriches our School community. Each School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background. The Group's ethos has its origins in the non-conformist Christian values of its founders, but it welcomes pupils regardless of their faith/no-faith background.

## 3. Disability, Learning Difficulty/Disability and Special Educational Needs

The Group welcomes pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), provided the School can make any necessary reasonable adjustments to offer the support they require, and the School is physically able to accommodate them.

In order to determine the necessary support both during the admission process, and if an offer is made, we require parents of children with physical/mental disabilities or SEND to inform the School (when submitting the Registration Form) of any special circumstances that fall under this umbrella. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a medical report if they have one.

The School strongly advises an early meeting with the SENDCo for the parents of children with SEND to discuss

special arrangements or provision that may be needed, to enable the School to assess whether this can reasonably be accommodated.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School. The School site is extensive and consists of older buildings that are not easily accessible for those with physical disabilities.

In exceptional circumstances, an offer may be withdrawn and the Acceptance Fee returned if further information becomes available prior to a child starting at the School such that the School cannot make reasonable adjustments to accommodate them in sufficiently accessing the curriculum.

#### **4. Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language**

Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL), are assessed for their standard of English during the application process and will typically be expected to have a good level of fluency. The results of their assessment will determine if they require an adapted curriculum to meet their needs and abilities. Lessons in EAL are provided for those pupils who need it, either in small groups or individually, as appropriate.

#### **5. Scholarships and exhibitions**

These are typically awarded to students joining Year 7 (11+). They are designed to reward excellence, celebrate exceptional talent and recognise the commitment a student is prepared to make to the School. Scholarships are subject to continuous progress reviews and are held for the time the student remains at the School.

#### **6. Bursaries**

A small number of means-tested bursaries are available to students who join in Year 7. This is occasionally extended to students joining other year groups, subject to approval by the Governors. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the Charity Commission Guidance. The financial support remains in place throughout a pupil's career, but each award is reviewed annually and may be adjusted in the light of any changes to financial circumstances.

#### **7. Siblings**

Most siblings join Abbot's Hill however, admission is not automatic. There may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

#### **8. Procedure Summary**

##### **Registration**

There are four main points of entry into the School: 6 months (Nursery), 4+ (Reception), 7+ (Year 3) and 11+ (Year 7). Pupils entering our Rising 4 provision will have automatic entry into our Reception Class as long as their needs can be met.

Transferring from the Prep School to the Senior School is the norm, but there may be cases where the considered view of the Head of Abbot's Hill is that this is not in the best interests of the child or School. The reasons for this may be that the child's level of academic performance suggests they will struggle with the academic demands of Abbot's Hill School, or there is a pattern of unsatisfactory behaviour. In the former case, it is expected that internal assessment/s will have been periodically shared with parents, and discussions will normally take place with the Head in Year 5/6 to allow parents to consider alternative options.

## A. Admission to Abbot's Hill Nursery

If a place is sought for Nursery, the Head will not generally need to see the child before admission. The Nursery Manager oversees these admissions.

## B. Admission to Pre-Prep

Pupils being considered for a place in Reception will attend a taster morning and spend time in Rising 4s during which there will be an informal assessment with the Head or member of PSLT. In order to be offered a place or put onto the waiting list, children are required to demonstrate age-appropriate development during the assessment and a natural interest in learning. The child is given access to a range of play-based activities and is observed by a member of the teaching staff to assess their social and emotional development, independence (age appropriate), speech and language, mathematical and phonological awareness, motor skills, coordination and behaviour bearing in mind the child's age and first language.

The taster day will also normally include an informal interview with the parents that will cover such matters as the child's development, nursery or playgroup experience, if applicable, and any areas of strength or special needs. Consideration will also be given to any reports from his or her previous nursery if applicable.

In the event of occasional places becoming available in Year 1 and Year 2, these are offered subject to an informal interview and an assessment of the child on a taster day spent in their current year group.

## C. Admission to the Prep School

The main entry point to Abbot's Hill Prep School is Year 3 (7+).

Children will attend a taster day with their current year group or a small group of similar age children. This taster day will also normally include an informal interview with the parents that will cover such matters as the child's development and current School experience, if applicable, and any areas of strength or special needs. Consideration will also be given to any reports from their previous settings, and if applicable, a written reference from their current setting.

The children are assessed on their vocabulary, ability to listen, concentrate and interact socially with their peers, in both a formal and informal setting. Assessments measure cognitive ability in reading, mathematics and spatial awareness. A short piece of prose is written to demonstrate the child's understanding of writing techniques, spelling and punctuation. Pupils wishing to join in Year 5 & 6 will be assessed using CAT

assessments.

## D. Admission to the Senior School

The main entry point to Abbot's Hill Senior School is Year 7 (11+).

### Entry to Year 7 (11+)

Entry for external candidates for Year 7 involves taking the ISEB Common Pre-test as an assessment and an informal interview with members of the Senior Leadership Team. Written references from the child's current School will also be requested.

Parents are required to inform the School if their child has any physical/mental challenges or SEND before they sit the entrance exam.

If the number of 11+ (Year 7) external applications significantly outweigh the number of available places the decision of which applicants to offer places to is the responsibility of the Head, taking account of all available information. The main factor in this is academic test results, however, a holistic approach is taken using all the assessment results, plus considerations such as whether the child is at an existing Group School and/or whether there are siblings already at the School/s.

## E. Entry at other points

Any chance vacancy places that may arise are offered based on age-appropriate tests, interviews and assessments.

The Group of Schools offer a continuity of education. Admission and entry will be subject to the availability of a place and the pupil satisfying the admission requirements at the time. Progress to the next stage of education in the Group is dependent upon the required conduct and academic progress of the pupil, as determined by the relevant Head; where the Head has concerns about the suitability of the child to progress through the Group, they will arrange a meeting with parents to discuss this, providing sufficient notice for parents to consider alternative options. The School reserves the right not to accept any child with a record of disruptive or challenging behaviour.

Pupils will be considered as candidates for admission and entry to the School when the Registration Form has been completed and returned to us and the non-returnable registration fee paid.

Offers of places will be made in writing. Parents accept the offer by completing the Acceptance Form, confirming their acceptance of the School's Terms and Conditions (Parent Contract), and returning it to the School with the Acceptance Deposit by the date outlined in the offer letter. Failure to respond by the given deadline may result in the place being offered to another prospective pupil and loss of the previous priority given under the admissions criteria. The Head's decision relating to all matters of admissions is final.

Priority is given to pupils coming from MHEG prep schools i.e., St Joseph's in the Park, Lyonsdown and Keble, who have been recommended by their Head. Details of the progression through MHEG Schools are set out in paragraph X.

## F. MHEG Prep School Pathway to MHEG Senior Schools

### **Pathway for Prep School Pupils**

Pupils attending the previously stand-alone prep schools of Keble, St Joseph's in the Park, and Lyonsdown may have the opportunity to receive conditional offers for 11+ and 13+ places at Mill Hill Education Group (MHEG) senior schools without sitting the standard entrance exams.

Offers will be based on a Head's recommendation, reflecting academic suitability, good character, and internal assessments, including standardised scores collected by the prep schools. This collaborative process ensures that each offer is tailored to the pupil's abilities and potential.

- **11+ Offers (Y7 Places):** Issued in the Spring Term of Year 5 for entry to senior schools: Abbot's Hill, Kingshott, and Belmont, Mill Hill Prep.
- **13+ Offers (Y9 places):** Issued in the Spring Term of Year 6 for entry to Abbot's Hill, Kingshott, and Mill Hill School. Chance vacancies for Year 9 places may also be available in Year 7 and Year 8.

### **Conditions of Offers**

All offers are conditional upon:

- Continued academic progress
- Consistently good behaviour
- Engagement in a positive and proactive manner throughout the remainder of their time in the prep school

These conditions ensure that the pathway aligns with the Mill Hill Education Group Schools' commitment to academic excellence and personal development.

### **Wellbeing, Enhanced Learning and Transition Support**

The removal of entrance exams for MHEG prep pupils prioritises their wellbeing. This pupil centred approach promotes uninterrupted learning for the pupils and reduces stress during key transition periods, providing families with peace of mind. Not requiring pupils to do endless practice tests frees up curriculum time for more meaningful, deeper learning opportunities. Pupils know and understand more about their subjects and have a stronger platform for GCSE. Early offers, coupled with ongoing support and a range of transition opportunities, ensure a seamless transfer to senior school.

### **For Pupils Not Meeting Recommendation Criteria**

Pupils for whom the Head does not recommend an early offer in Year 5 (11+) or Year 7 (13+) may still sit the respective senior school entrance exams. These exams will be supported by a detailed school reference to ensure a fair opportunity for placement in MHEG senior schools.

## 9. Overseas Applicants

We welcome overseas pupils to join the Group Schools, provided they have the correct permission to be in the UK.

The School asks for a copy of the prospective pupil's birth certificate or passport as part of the admissions process. Where a pupil is not British, and their family states they do not need a Visa, we will need to see and take a copy of the pupil's passport together with a parent's passport/or residence card and/or Visa to ascertain that they have the correct permission to be in the UK.

## 10. Further Information

### Special Circumstances

The School recognises that a candidate's performance in assessments may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- If he/she is unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from his/her School
- If there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement
- The context of their educational history, for example, education outside the British system
- If the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties
- If English is not the candidate's first language

In any of these circumstances, the School may request further information it considers necessary to make a fair assessment.

## 11. Waiting Lists

Some of the Group Schools are oversubscribed so waiting lists are a feature of the admissions process. After taking account of appropriate allowances and special consideration, places will be offered to pupils on the waiting list based on the holistic judgement of the Head, comprising:

- Performance in the entrance assessments, including any particular skills and aptitude
- Suitability for the School environment reflected in group work, interviews and social interaction
- Existing relationship to the Group (sibling who is already a pupil, attendance at another Group School, parent who works at the Group, parent who themselves attended the School)
- References / reports from current School

Thereafter the Admissions Team arranges a suitable start date, sends out the welcome pack and organises for the relevant fee invoice to be prepared.

## 12. Review

This Review: Spring Term 2025

Next Review: Spring Term 2026

This Policy was reviewed and approved by the Education Committee of the Court of Governors on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025.