



WISBECH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Admissions Policy (A1)

Scope:	Whole School (including Boarding)
Release date:	December 2021
Author:	Head of Marketing and Admissions
Reviewer:	Headmaster
Approval body:	Board of Directors
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Linked documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Registration Form
- Acceptance Form
- Parent/School Contract
- SEND Policy (A2)
- SEND 3 Year Accessibility Plan (A15)
- Complaints Policy (A14)

Acronyms

SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
WGS	Wisbech Grammar School
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
CAS	Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies
CAT4	Cognitive Abilities Test Fourth Edition
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EAP	English for Academic Purposes

Availability

This Policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the School website, and a printed copy may be requested from the Admissions Team.

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Introduction

Wisbech Grammar School is a selective co-educational school for children aged 3 – 18. The School has strong traditions in sport, drama, music, art and community activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

The School is segmented into a number of clear stages, including

- Kindergarten (ages 3 - 4),
- Preparatory School from Reception (age 4) to Prep 6 (age 11),
- Senior School from 1st Form (Year 7 at age 11) to 5th Form (Year 11 at age 16) and,
- Upper School/6th Form from Lower 6th (Year 12 at age 16) to Upper 6th (Year 13 at age 18).

The main entry points are

- Kindergarten in the term following a child's 3rd birthday,
- Reception from the start of the academic year in which a child turns 5,
- Prep 1- 5 from the start of the academic year,
- 1st Form, 3rd Form and Lower 6th from the start of the academic year,
- However, children often join throughout the academic year where there are places available.

We understand that choosing the right school and having the right support for your child is a big decision and we aim to make the admissions process as simple and smooth as possible for our prospective families.

We believe that a personal visit is invaluable. Whatever year group you are looking for, we encourage you to arrange a visit to our School. Every visit is unique but they will take place during a normal school day and often last around 2 hours; this includes a tour of either Prep or Senior School and discussions with a member of the Senior Team. Tours are conducted by current pupils, so there is an opportunity to ask questions and find out as much as possible about the School.

After your visit, if you want to progress through the admissions process with a prospective pupil you can register by completing our Registration Form and paying a non-refundable registration fee. The School's Registration Form is available on the School's website, <https://wisbechgrammar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Registration-Form-2020-Edition.pdf> or from the Admissions Team.

Our dedicated Admissions Team are here to ensure you have a seamless journey at the different entry points and are on hand to explain our entrance procedures, scholarships, bursaries and to organise a visit. Please contact the School's Admission Team on 01945 586 750 or admissions@wisbechgrammar.com

This policy sets out the principles on which prospective pupils will be considered for admission to any stage of the School.

Admissions Principles

The good of the pupil is at the heart of all decisions that are made at WGS. Our selection process is therefore set out to ensure that those children that join us will fully benefit from all that the School has to offer and in turn will bring benefit to the wider school community.

All pupils are admitted with the expectation that they will continue with us for the remainder of their school life through to the end of the 6th Form. Prospective pupils will therefore be considered for both their point of entry and upcoming points of transition to subsequent stages.

Wisbech Grammar School is an academic institution at its core and so all prospective pupils will have an academic assessment conducted in a manner appropriate to their age. The aim of the process is to identify potential. No specific preparation for the academic assessment is needed, all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

WGS also believes in an all-round education that inspires, and as such it values other talents that its pupils may have. Therefore the admissions process will incorporate elements that go beyond an academic assessment, and whilst these will be tailored to each specific individual they may include one or many of the following:

- A parental interview with a member of the Senior Team,
- A review of recent school reports,
- A reference from the Head of the current school,
- A pupil interview with a member of the Senior Team,
- A pupil taster day in the classroom, on the sports pitch or performing arts studio. The Taster Day experience enables an assessment of the child's social skills and their response to the learning environment that WGS offers. It aims to ensure that all our pupils embody the ethos of the School to provide an inspiring educational experience.

The Headmaster (or for admissions to the Kindergarten or Prep School the Senior Deputy Head of the Prep School) is responsible for deciding whether to offer a place to a prospective pupil. This decision will be based on whether we have space in that year group and the outcome of all elements deemed appropriate for that specific prospective pupil. The process has been designed to ensure that a full understanding of a pupil's talents and needs is reached before any final decision is made to offer a place.

The School reserves the right not to offer a place to a pupil if it believes;

- That it cannot properly meet the child's educational needs, or
- That the child would not benefit from the School's education, or
- That the child is unlikely to meet the criteria for acceptance to the next stage of the School or
- That their presence might have a detrimental effect on other pupils or the wider school community.

Where such a decision is to be challenged the normal complaints procedure of the School should be followed which can be accessed by visiting our website <https://wisbechgrammar.com/about-us/policies-isi-reports/>

Progression Into The Next Stage Of The School

Whilst every effort is made to assess a pupil's capability, making such judgements in the earlier years may be difficult and on some occasions there will be pupils who do not meet the criteria for progression to the next stage of the School, for example into the Senior School or into the 6th Form. However, any decision to refuse such progress will be made

- With timely, documented and open discussions with the parents, and
- With regard to the best educational interests of the child concerned.

Sibling Entry

Many siblings join us at WGS but admission into the School is not automatic. There may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is more likely to thrive in a different academic environment.

Equal Treatment

Wisbech Grammar 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 the world today.

The School is committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 and developing a culture of EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) within the School.

We are committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a prospective pupil's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background.

Special Educational Needs

The School welcomes pupils with special educational needs providing that the Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with disabilities provided that our site can accommodate them with reasonable adjustments. For further information, please refer to the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Policy (A2) available on the School's website or upon request.

Children admitted into the School from Prep 3 - 5th Form will also have a Dyslexia Screener as part of their entrance assessment.

Bursary Awards

WGS is committed to ensuring access to its fast-paced, rewarding and challenging academic curriculum for boys and girls from the widest possible range of backgrounds. The School has a bursary fund that has made it possible to provide financial assistance to pupils who would not otherwise be able to take up the offer of a place, allowing them to achieve their full potential.

The School's practice is to allocate its entire available bursary funding on entry. The School asks that parents who wish to apply for a bursary should declare their intention when registering. The School will assume that where there is no application for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed that they will not require financial support whilst attending the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

A Bursary Factsheet is available on the website, <https://www.wisbechgrammar.com/bursaries/>, and a Bursary Application Pack can be requested at the point of registration from the Admissions Team.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

Bursaries are allocated for between 5% and 85% remission on fees. In some exceptions 100% is available. Bursary support is linked to academic performance.

Scholarships & Exhibitioners

The Schools' Scholarship programme recognises a very high level of achievement in a competitive examination or assessment. The award enables the pupil to carry the title 'Scholar' and includes an element of financial support. There are three entry points: 1st Form, 3rd Form and Lower 6th Form.

The two types of Scholarship on offer are Academic and All-Rounder.

- Academic Scholarships are awarded on the basis of the very strongest academic performance assessed by the entrance exam or internal exam and supported by predicted grades, interview and by references from the Head of the child's current school
- All-Rounder Scholarships are awarded on the basis of strong academic performance as well as outstanding performance in one of the following disciplines: Art, Drama, Music (all entry points) or Sport (3rd, 4th and 6th form only).

Exhibitioners are selected at the end of Prep 6, 2nd Form and 5th Form based on academic performance in either their end of year exams (Prep 6 and 2nd Form) or public GCSE exam (5th Form). There is no financial reward for Exhibitioners but we would expect them to apply for a Scholarship at the next entry point.

Scholarship applications are normally required in November for consideration for the following September. Application forms and assessment dates can be found on the website in the Admissions section or by request at the point of registration from the Admissions Team.

School's Contractual Terms and Conditions

The School's contractual terms and conditions are set out in the Parent/School Contract which will be made available to parents alongside the Acceptance Form. Once the

Parent/School contract has been signed, parents must give a full term's notice, otherwise, they are liable for a terms fees. A copy of the Parent/School Contract can be requested from the Admissions Team.

Records and Review

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice and Data Retention Guidelines.

The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will fall in line with our Data Retention Guidelines for Parents and Pupils following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain for longer might include: if the parents express an interest in re-applying at a later date, or in the potential application of another sibling; or to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.

Appendix 1 - Application Of Assessment Principles In Specific Circumstances

EYFS Entry (Kindergarten and Reception)

Admission to EYFS is based on a home or nursery visit followed by an informal assessment through observation of the child in the classroom alongside pupils of the same age. The observation will be of informal play in a small group and include elements such as socialising and interaction with teachers and pupils.

Prep School Entry

Pupils will spend two days in the appropriate class and their potential will be ascertained. The Taster Day experience enables an assessment of the child's social skills and their response to the learning environment that WGS Prep offers. It aims to ensure that all our pupils embody the ethos of the School to provide an inspiring educational experience.

Academic assessment for Prep 1 and Prep 2 will be through paper assessments in reading, writing and number skills as well as participation in lessons.

Academic assessment into Prep 3 to Prep 6 will be assessed through online assessments in English, Maths as well as their participation in lessons. A Dyslexia Screener will also be taken in part of this assessment.

Senior School Entry

WGS hosts a specific academic assessment day in the autumn for those looking to join the School for 1st Form (Year 7) entry in the following academic year. This date is published on our website. The School is happy to receive registrations after this date, and the Admissions Team will work with parents to arrange a suitable date for the assessment to take place. If after this time, places may be limited and therefore strongly advise to register as early as possible.

Academic assessment will be through CAT4 assessments and a creative writing exercise. A Dyslexia Screener will also be taken. Academic and All-rounder Scholarships are available at 1st and 3rd Form entry. Sport Scholarships are available at 3rd and 4th Form entry only.

6th Form Entry

Academic assessment will be on the basis of GCSE predictions and results. Pupils wishing to enter the 6th Form to study A-levels or BTEC's, should have a minimum of 7 GCSEs, including English and Mathematics, at levels 5 or above and at least three, usually in the subjects to be studied, at level 6 or above. Pupils with lower grades may still be offered a place in the 6th Form to study alternatives to A-levels dependent upon individual areas of expertise and aptitude.

Pupils will be invited to meet with the Head of 6th Form and appropriate subject specialists for an assessment of their potential in the subjects they wish to study. The Headmaster or member of the Senior Leadership Team will also interview all prospective 6th Form pupils. Academic Scholarships and All-Rounder Scholarships are available into the 6th Form.

Overseas Pupil Entry

WGS welcomes overseas pupils into the School. Overseas pupils are required to apply for a Tier 4 visa which provides them with the right to study in the UK. The School must have an appropriate CAS allocation available that can be allocated to the pupil and which will enable them to apply for the Tier 4 visa.

The School is able to welcome pupils who reside with a relative or legal guardian living in the UK where it has an appropriate CAS allocation available.

In addition, the Senior School has a partnership with a Chinese agent through which it is able to offer Chinese nationals accommodation in a boarding facility or with a homestay family. Any interested parties will be directed to our International Director for support with the admissions process.

Pupils from overseas will sit a Maths and English test, designed to test both their academic level and their ability to cope with academic study in a language not their own. They will also be required to produce relevant reports and testimonials from their current school. There will be a WeChat or face to face interview with the Headmaster or Senior Deputy Head Prep School.

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Wisbech Grammar School, pupils must demonstrate a good understanding of the English language. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) can be arranged at the parents' expense.