

Admissions Policy

Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep Berkhamsted Senior Schools & Sixth Heatherton

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Scope of this policy

1 This policy outlines the School policy on Admissions.

2 Aims

2.1 The aims of this policy are:

- 2.1.1 To ensure compliance with the charitable purposes of the Berkhamsted Schools Group (The School). The School is a Church of England Foundation with a Christian ethos and is a selective school for pupils aged 3 to 18.
- 2.1.2 To identify and admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will most contribute to and most benefit from the ethos and activities of our School Community. We will only admit a child who has met the academic criteria.

3 Equal treatment

- 3.1 We welcome children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. 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.
- 3.2 All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, gender reassignment or any disability. Candidates will also be treated equally in respect of their parents' age, sex, or marital or civil partnership status.
- 3.3 We expect all of our pupils to attend our chapel, church services and School assemblies which are fundamental to our Christian ethos and to attend lessons in Religious Studies. Exceptions to this are rare, with circumstances described in the School Collective Worship Policy, which is available on the School Website and can be supplied in writing on request.
- 3.4 Boarding places are limited by places in a house designated for girls, and a house designated for boys. Places offered for boarding will therefore be specific to the gender which a pupil presents at interview and assessment, and no guarantee can be made of boarding space in the other house if a pupil requests such a change.

4 Disability, Special Educational Needs and Access Arrangements

- 4.1 The School is inclusive and welcomes applicants with disabilities and special educational needs. The School currently has limited facilities for the disabled. The School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately.
- 4.2 The School needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and to take full advantage of the education provided at the School. Parents of a child who has any

disability or special educational needs should provide the School with full details prior to the admissions procedure, at registration, and certainly before a child is assessed for a place in the School.

The School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with particular needs, the School can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to ensure that the application procedure is accessible for the child and that the School can cater adequately for the pupil should an offer of a place be made.

- 4.3 The School will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments in accordance with the School's obligation under equality legislation. For example, the School may be able to provide an examination paper in large font for a visually impaired pupil.
- 4.4 All Access Arrangements for entry to the Senior Schools are allocated based on evidence of need and will follow the guidance as laid out by JCQ Regulations which are updated annually. In addition, all Access Arrangements must be the pupil's *'normal way of working'* in class.
- 4.5 Similarly, if special education needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the School will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments in order to allow the child to continue at the School.

5 Accessibility

- 5.1 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

6 Extent of this Policy

6.1 Definition of Schools

- 6.1.1 **Prep Schools:** For the terms of this policy, Berkhamsted Pre-Prep and Berkhamsted Prep are considered one school.
 - 6.1.1.1 Admission to Berkhamsted Pre-Prep entails admission to Berkhamsted Prep so long as the criteria for progression are met (See the Progression Policy).
 - 6.1.1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Berkhamsted Pre-Prep do not need to apply for a place at Berkhamsted Prep.
 - 6.1.1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Berkhamsted Pre-Prep must give at least one term's written notice in accordance with Berkhamsted's terms and conditions if they do not intend for the child to progress to Berkhamsted Prep.
 - 6.1.1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Berkhamsted Prep School and Heatherton do not need to give one term's written notice if they do not intend for the child to enter Berkhamsted Boys or Berkhamsted Girls (but note 6.1.4 below).

6.1.2 Heatherton School:

6.1.2.1 Admission to Heatherton Pre-Prep entails admission to Heatherton Prep so long as the criteria for progression are met (See the Progression Policy).

6.1.2.2 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Heatherton must give at least one term's written notice in accordance with the terms and conditions if they do not intend for the child to progress to the next year group.

6.1.3 Senior Schools: For the terms of this policy, Berkhamsted Boys, Berkhamsted Girls and Berkhamsted Sixth are considered one school.

6.1.3.1 Admission to Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls entails admission to Berkhamsted Sixth so long as the criteria for progression are met (See the Progression Policy).

6.1.3.2 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls do not need to apply for a place at Berkhamsted Sixth.

6.1.3.3 For the avoidance of doubt, parents of a child at Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls must give at least one term's written notice in accordance with Berkhamsted's terms and conditions if they do not intend for the child to progress to Berkhamsted Sixth.

6.1.4 Accepted Offers: once parents have accepted a place and paid a deposit at any of the Berkhamsted Schools, they are required to give a term's notice if they wish to cancel that place. In cases where parents cancel a place after the beginning of the preceding term, fees in lieu of notice (for what would have been the child's first term) will apply.**7 Admission Criteria****7.1 Criteria for Entry**

7.1.1 The School admits children who fulfil the academic requirements of the School and who will most benefit from, and contribute to, the breadth of the opportunities offered.

8 Overview and Principles

8.1 Our admission procedure has five elements:

8.1.1 Academic Entry Assessments

8.1.2 Interviews

8.1.3 Character References, including a co-curricular participation form

8.1.4 Observational assessments for EYFS entrants

8.1.5 Holistic Assessment exercises (for entry into Years 7, 9 and 12) which may include, but are not limited to:

- 8.1.5.1 Problem solving exercises
- 8.1.5.2 Creative writing
- 8.1.5.3 Practical leadership exercise
- 8.1.5.4 Group academic discussion
- 8.1.5.5 Presentation
- 8.1.5.6 Drama exercise
- 8.1.5.7 Sports activity
- 8.1.6 Disability Assessments (if applicable)
- 8.2 Pupils who are already in the Berkhamsted Schools Group system are given priority for places over and above applicants from outside the School.
 - 8.2.1 Applicants for Stepping Stones places from Berkhamsted Day Nursery will be given priority over external applicants, so long as they meet the entrance criteria.
 - 8.2.2 External applicants are assessed for the balance of places at Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls School after account is taken of the pupils progressing from Heatherton and Berkhamsted Prep (who have no such assessment).

9 Entry Points

- 9.1 The School considers applications to all year groups, subject to availability of places. Applications to enter the School after the commencement of either the GCSE (Year 10 and 11) or A Level (Year 12 and 13) courses of study, however, are only considered under exceptional circumstances.
- 9.2 These procedures apply at the main points of entry: Early Years, 7+, 9+, 11+, 13+ and 16+ and also to candidates for occasional vacancies in any other year group.

10 Entry Criteria for Early Years and Key Stage One (Pre-Prep) and Heatherton

- 10.1 Early Years (EYFS and Pre-Prep) and Key Stage One
 - 10.1.1 It is expected that children will have the necessary social and developmental skills to be able to access the Early Years Curriculum. These will be assessed during a meeting with senior Pre-Prep / Heatherton staff, including for entry from BDNL. If this assessment suggests specialist help is required, guidance as to how to access advice will be given.
- 10.2 Admission to Year One
 - 10.2.1 Will be on the basis of EYFS assessments, an informal assessment day / morning where assessments in literacy and numeracy will be carried out, and school reports, where available.
- 10.3 Admission to Year Two
 - 10.3.1 Will be on the basis of an informal assessment day / morning where assessments in literacy and numeracy will be carried out, and school reports, where available.

10.4 Admission to the Early Years and Key Stage One for children who have satisfied the entry criteria in 10.1.1 above will be prioritised as follows:

- 10.4.1 Children of staff with a contract of employment with Berkhamsted Schools Group
- 10.4.2 Children who are in the Day Nursery wishing to remain at Berkhamsted Pre-Prep
- 10.4.3 Children who have a sibling already in the Berkhamsted Schools Group
- 10.4.4 Places will then be allocated to pupils in date of registration order.

11 Entry Criteria for Key Stage Two (Prep and Heatherton)

11.1 Admission at 7+

- 11.1.1 Will be on the basis of an informal assessment day where assessments in literacy and numeracy will be carried out, and School Reports, where available.
- 11.1.2 Attendance at a 'Stay and Experience Day'

11.2 For admission to other year groups

- 11.2.1 The School sets its own assessments as appropriate and in line with admissions set out in 11.1.1.

12 Examination & Other Entry Criteria for the Girls' School, Boys' School and Sixth

12.1 Admission at 11+

- 12.1.1 Candidates for admission at 11+ from Berkhamsted Prep and Heatherton will be admitted on the basis of recommendation of the Headteacher¹, without specific assessment. If difficulties with this are expected, guidance will be given by the Headteacher during Y4 and Y5, and by the end of Y5 at the latest. The School will not offer a place to a pupil who is not believed to be able to manage the curriculum offered, with all reasonable adjustments made.
- 12.1.2 Candidates from other schools take the Common Pre-test online assessment, set by ISEB, which includes Maths, English, Verbal and Non-verbal Reasoning sections, during the Michaelmas Term of Y6 according to the deadlines published annually.
- 12.1.3 Selected candidates are invited to participate in a 'Holistic Assessment Day' during which they will be assessed on some or all of the exercises listed in section 8.1.
- 12.1.4 Offers are made subject to the 'satisfactory completion of courses at their

¹ The academic standard of admission is a pastoral issue: pupils will not be admitted to the Senior School from Heatherton or Berkhamsted Prep where the receiving Headteacher has cause to believe that doing so may be harmful to the wellbeing of the child, specifically if they may be at risk of being left behind by the curriculum of the School or where there are strong pastoral reasons not to recommend the Senior School for the child.

current school' for pupils who wish to enter the Berkhamsted School at Y7.

12.2 Admission at 13+

12.2.1 Candidates take a bespoke online assessment, set by ATOM Admissions, in English, Maths, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning during the Michaelmas Term of Y7.

12.2.2 Candidates are also invited to participate in a 'Holistic Assessment Day' during which they will be assessed on some or all of the exercises listed in section 8.1.

12.2.3 Offers are made subject to the 'satisfactory completion of courses at their current school' for pupils who wish to enter the Berkhamsted School at Y9.

12.2.4 Additional Admissions procedures and criteria may apply to candidates who require the School to sponsor their application for a visa to study in the UK.

12.3 Admission at 16+

12.3.1 Candidates will be required to achieve a satisfactory performance at GCSE, to be determined from time to time by the Principal. Candidates will normally be required to attend an assessment day / morning in the Michaelmas Term of Y11. The assessment is comprised of the following: a character-strengths-based interviews, a presentation followed by a small-group discussion, and a verbal, non-verbal, spatial and quantitative reasoning test, and during which they will be assessed on some or all of the exercises listed in section 8.1.

12.3.2 Overseas students, once registered, are required to sit an online assessment and complete an online form with questions on the subjects they wish to study at A Level.

12.4 For admission to other year groups

12.4.1 The School sets its own assessments in certain core/option subjects as appropriate.

13 Interviews and Examinations

13.1 General Interviews

13.1.1 Whenever possible, there will be a general, one-to-one 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. For many pupils, this interview will be integrated into a Holistic Assessment Day.

13.1.2 For children above the age of 5 who are interviewed online, the School may seek to interview the pupil via video-conferencing software, such as Microsoft Teams, and parents will need to submit photo-identity documents to confirm the pupil being interviewed is the prospective pupil. At the start of the video interview, the School's interviewer may obtain confirmation that the prospective pupil is in the same room as a parent or guardian who will be

present during the whole interview (for younger pupils), or the call may be recorded (for both younger and older pupils).

13.2 Entrance Examinations

13.2.1 It is School policy not to return candidates' entrance test scripts to the candidates, the parents, their current prep school or any third party. The School reserves the right to destroy all papers after the final acceptance date.

13.2.2 It is School policy not to make the marks of tests or holistic assessments available to the candidates, the parents, the prep school or any third party, although feedback on specific areas of strength and weakness may be given.

13.2.3 Letters to parents will outline one of three Options:

- has been offered a place at Berkhamsted
- has been placed on the Waiting List
- has not been offered a place at Berkhamsted

14 Character Reference

14.1 The Headteacher of the candidate's current school will 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. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at the school (such as NFER or SATs) and predicted grades at GCSE (if appropriate).

15 Candidate's Age: "Out of Year" Applications

15.1 Very occasionally, we may offer places to pupils one year ahead or behind their standard year group if, as a matter of professional judgement, we consider that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School.

16 Special Circumstances

16.1 We recognise that a candidate's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

16.1.1 If he/she is unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from his/her school.

16.1.2 If there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement.

16.1.3 If there is a relevant educational history, for example education outside the British system.

16.1.4 If the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties.

16.1.5 If English is not the candidate's first language.

16.2 In any of these cases, we 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 we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

17 Disclosures

- 17.1 Parents must disclose, as soon as possible, any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties. See also the School Special Educational Needs Policy and Administration of Medicines Policy (supplied in writing on request).
- 17.2 When accepting the offer of a place, parents will be required to confirm:
 - 17.2.1 that no other person with parental responsibility is required to consent to the child joining the School; or
 - 17.2.2 details of all others with parental responsibility for the child.

18 Progression

- 18.1 Progression through the School is dependent upon satisfactory academic attainment at respective stages of the Curriculum. While progression from one section of the School to another can never be guaranteed, we endeavour to make decisions on entry with the expectation that pupils should be able to progress through the School.
- 18.2 The criteria for progression are outlined in the **Progression Policy**.

19 Acceptance of a place

- 19.1 An Acceptance Deposit is required by all applicants (including 'Internal Applicants') to secure a place in the School.
- 19.2 A proportion of the Acceptance Deposit will be credited against the first Term's Fees and the remainder will be retained in the general funds of the School until the Pupil leaves.
- 19.3 When the offer of a place is made, parents will be given a maximum of **four weeks** (20 working days) to accept the place in writing and to pay the Acceptance Deposit, unless the dates are set by national agreement. After this time the offer of the place shall be withdrawn and the place offered to another family. Parents may re-register (at no cost), taking a new place at the bottom of the waiting list (see below).
- 19.4 Parents who return the acceptance form and the Deposit entirely by means of distance communication (i.e. by post, fax or electronic communication) without a face-to-face meeting with a member of the School staff, may cancel the acceptance within 14 days of the date of the acceptance form. However, parents should note clause 6.1.4, having accepted a place, they are then bound to give a term's notice if they wish to relinquish.
- 19.5 All offers are made subject to satisfactory completion of the relevant period of time at their current school. The permanent or temporary exclusion of a pupil by their current school between the date on which an offer is made and their arrival at the school will invalidate the offer. Waiver of this clause is exclusively at the discretion of the Principal.

20 Declining a Place and Ongoing Registration

- 20.1 If a parent declines an offered place, their registration for the School lapses. If they subsequently choose to reapply, they will need to pay a registration fee at that point. In effect, declining a place is a form of deregistering.
- 20.2 However, if a prospective pupil is not offered a place, their registration will be rolled forward to the next opportunity to apply unless parents request their details are removed from the admissions list.

21 Date of Registration

- 21.1 Date of Registration is defined as the date on which the School receives the registration form **and** the registration fee.

22 Siblings

- 22.1 For the terms of this policy a sibling needs to fulfil all of the following criteria:
 - 22.1.1 A brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, or step-brother/step-sister from a legally recognised parental relationship.
 - 22.1.2 A sibling is educated in a school in the Berkhamsted Schools Group at the time of application, or who has, at the time of application, been offered, accepted and paid a deposit for entry into one of the Group's schools.
 - 22.1.3 The sibling will still be educated in a school in the Berkhamsted Schools Group when the applicant joins the school. i.e. An applicant who has an elder sibling in Year 13 when applying will not be considered a sibling in the terms of this policy.

23 Stepping Stones: Oversubscription criteria

- 23.1 Stepping Stones is oversubscribed. We will give preference to applicants in the order of priority outlined in paragraph 10.4 above.

24 All other Entry points: Oversubscription criteria

- 24.1 The School is oversubscribed.
- 24.2 Entry to Heatherton, Berkhamsted Prep and Berkhamsted Pre-Prep
 - 24.2.1 Places will be allocated to those who meet the academic criteria for entry until the year group is full. Pupils may be tested in batches.
- 24.3 Entry to the Senior School at Y7, Y9 and Y12:
 - 24.3.1 Candidates at Berkhamsted Prep and Heatherton will be offered places at the Senior School providing a minimum academic criterion being met, and subject to good reports.

- 24.3.2 Candidates from outside the Berkhamsted Schools Group will be ranked in order of their performance in the entry assessments. At the margin, and on the waiting list, we will allocate places in the order established both by the outcome of the Holistic Assessment Day and the criteria below:
- 24.3.2.1 A child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude.
 - 24.3.2.2 A child whose parent has a contract of employment with the Group.
 - 24.3.2.3 A sibling.
 - 24.3.2.4 Date of Registration.
- 24.3.3 The above criteria are subject to a minimum academic criterion being met.
- 24.3.4 Entries to the Boys School and to the Girls School will be considered separately by the Heads of the respective schools.

25 Waiting Lists

- 25.1 In the event of oversubscription, the school will run a waiting list.
- 25.2 Places from the waiting list will be allocated in the same way as places in the School in the paragraphs above.
- 25.3 In the event of the offer of a place in the School, the parents will be given a maximum of two weeks (ten working days) to accept the place in writing and to pay the acceptance fee. After this time the offer of the place shall be withdrawn and the place offered to another family (unless the offer is before the national acceptance day and for Y7 entry, in which case the normal deadline will apply). Parents may re-register, taking a new place at the bottom of the waiting list should it be open.

26 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- 26.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies on the retention and destruction of records.
- 26.2 A confidential admissions record will be kept for each candidate.
- 26.3 Admissions register
- For pupils admitted to the School, the School will:
- 26.3.1 maintain admissions register; and
 - 26.3.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points
- in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).
- 26.4 The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which will explain how the School will use personal data about pupils and parents. The privacy notices are published on the website.

27 Notice, Relocation and Returns

- 27.1 If a pupil leaves the School and plans to return at a later date (e.g. because of relocation overseas), notice of withdrawal must be given in accordance with the School's terms and conditions and the parents must re-register the child and, assuming the entry criteria are met, take a new place on the waiting list for their return. The School reserves the right to charge another registration fee for pupils who will be returning to a different educational stage (reflecting the different contracts entered into by parents for children aged 0-3, 3-11 (primary phase) and 11-18 (secondary phase)).
- 27.2 Parents may retain a place for a pupil whilst they are abroad by paying for the place at the full fee rate for the time that they are abroad.
- 27.3 Parents should be aware that the School cannot guarantee that the pupil shall return to the same form, house or academic sets as before.

Appendix One: Timelines for Entry

I Timeline for Entry to Stepping Stones

- 1.1 Places will be offered to pupils in the year prior to entry to Stepping Stones. Places will be offered by **the first week of December**.
- 1.2 The School requires written acceptances and acceptance deposits by **the second week of January**.
- 1.3 In the event of an offer of a place in the School being made outside this timeline, the parents will be given a maximum of **two weeks** (ten working days) to accept the place in writing and to pay the acceptance fee. After this time the offer of the place shall be withdrawn and the place offered to another family. Parents may re-register (at no cost), taking a new place at the bottom of the waiting list.

2 Timeline for entry to Heatherton's Early Years

- 2.1 Once a child has been registered for a place, parents will be invited to visit the school with their son or daughter to meet the Early Years staff prior to the offer being made. This will take place approximately 10-12 months prior to the point of entry.
- 2.2 Places will be offered after the visit and written acceptances and deposits are required within two weeks of the offer date (deadline will be specified in the offer). After this time, the offer shall be withdrawn and the place may be offered to another family. Parents may re-register (at no cost), taking a new place at the bottom of the waiting list.
- 2.3 If a pupil is registered within 10 months of the point of entry, the admissions process will commence as soon as possible after the pupil registration has been received.

3 Timeline for I1+ Entry to Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls for Internal Applicants

- 3.1 Offer letters to applicants who are pupils at Berkhamsted Prep and at Heatherton ('Internal Applicants') will be sent out during the **week before Michaelmas Half-term**.
- 3.2 The School requires written acceptances and acceptance deposits for 'internal applicants' by **the first day back after the Michaelmas Half-term**.
- 3.3 Internal Applicants who meet the required standard are given priority on offer of places, so long as the offer of the place is taken up by the required acceptance date.
- 3.4 If parents of 'internal applicants' are offered a place for a child and this is not taken up by the required acceptance date, then the offer of the place shall be withdrawn and the place offered to another family. Parents may re-apply, but applications will be considered alongside 'External Applicants' (see below).

4 Timeline for 11+ Entry to Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls for External Applicants

- 4.1 Applicants who are NOT pupils at Berkhamsted Prep and at Heatherton ('External Applicants') take their 11+ Entrance Assessment in the first half of the Michaelmas Term.
- 4.2 The School requires written acceptances and acceptance deposits for 'external applicants' by the national agreed acceptance date, which is **the first working day in March**. Earlier responses are welcome as it will enable us to offer unwanted places to those on the waiting list. In the case of a family notifying the school in writing (this includes notification by email) within three working days of their offer being made of their decision **not** to take up a place at the School, 50% of the Registration Fee will be refunded to the family.

5 Timeline for 13+ Entry to Berkhamsted Boys and Berkhamsted Girls

- 5.1 Applicants take their 13+ Entrance Assessment in the second half of the Michaelmas Term.
- 5.2 The School requires written acceptances and acceptance deposits by the first Monday of the Lent Term of the year before the year of entry.

6 Timeline for 16+ Entry to Berkhamsted Sixth for UK applicants

- 6.1 Interviews take place from **1st November**.
- 6.2 Offers will be made after **1st December** in accordance with national independent school agreements.
- 6.3 The School requires written acceptances and acceptance deposits within a maximum of four weeks (or 20 working days) of the date of the offer.