

The Grammar School at Leeds Admissions Policy-2015/2016

The Grammar School at Leeds is committed to admitting academically talented pupils from across the region. The school is mindful that it was founded to create excellent education opportunities to enable children to achieve their potential and provides some financial support for children from less wealth off backgrounds. This admissions policy outlines how the school makes offers, allocates bursaries and its provision for Special Educational Needs (SEN).

1.0 Admissions

Admission as a student of the Grammar School at Leeds is subject to the policy outlined below.

1.1 Admission to the Grammar School at Leeds is by means of assessment for Rose Court (Nursery to Year 2 inclusive) and an examination for Years 3 – 9.

1.2 Progression from Reception to Year 1, Year 2 – Year 3, Year 6 – Year 7 and Year 11 – Sixth Form, whilst usually the norm, is not guaranteed and will depend on the pupil meeting the required academic criteria at each stage. It may also include an assessment for Specific Learning Needs if the school deems it necessary.

1.3 Admission to the Grammar School for Year 10 is by means of a series of assessment interviews with faculty leaders. Subject to the candidate's circumstances and at the Principal's discretion, a written examination of attainment and an assessment for Specific Learning Needs may also be required.

1.4 The entrance procedure for most Years also includes receipt of a satisfactory report from the candidate's current school.

1.5 The school takes into account a range of information when deciding to make an offer including the outcome of assessment, interview performance, school report, pupil conduct during the admissions process and any other information it deems relevant in establishing whether the school is able to provide the best environment for a child to achieve his or her potential.

1.6 The school must also consider its duty of care to staff and other pupils when deciding to make an offer to ensure that it continues to foster a community where everyone is treated with respect, dignity and courtesy at all times. If, during the admissions process information comes to light that in the school's opinion would jeopardise this, the school has the right not to proceed with an application.

1.7 The Grammar School at Leeds does not normally accept admissions for Year 11 or Year 13.

1.8 Admission to the Sixth Form from Year 11 and for external candidates is conditional upon GCSE results and takes account of a proven record of appropriate attitude and determination or reports from the previous school and performance at interview.

1.9 The entrance assessments for most years take place in the first half of the Spring Term each year, although some later admissions may be available.

1.10 A limited number of means-tested bursaries are available at Year 7 and Sixth Form, offering some financial assistance to those parents for whom the payment of full fees would be impossible and for whom the inability to pay would prevent their child attending the school.

1.11 Where the number of pupils eligible for admission exceeds the number of places available a reserve list may be drawn up. Candidates will be placed on the reserve list in rank order based on the entrance procedures outlined above. As places become available they will be offered at the discretion of the Principal but will follow the general admissions criteria.

1.12 Typically 20 new pupils will be admitted into Year 3 and 100 new pupils will be admitted into Year 7.

1.13 Teaching groups are normally 16-24 maximum up to and including Year 11. Teaching groups within the Sixth Form are usually between 10 – 15.

1.14 At the Principal's discretion, students who have previously been excluded or asked to withdraw will be considered for re-entry after a minimum of 2 years and will be subject to the above assessment procedures. Other factors will also be considered including the likely impact on other pupils and staff.

1.15 Pupils who leave school and subsequently seek to be re-admitted will be subject to the same admissions procedure as new pupils.

1.16 If an application is found to be fraudulent or information is withheld which the school deems to be relevant when assessing a pupil for admission the school reserves the right to make the application null and void.

1.17 Appeals against decisions relating to admissions should be made in the first place to the Admissions Manager

1.18 The admission procedures will not unfairly discriminate against any pupil.

2.0 Admission into the Sixth Form

2.1 There are three criteria which must be satisfied by all candidates for entry into the Sixth Form at the Grammar School at Leeds.

- a. Academic achievement and potential – all candidates should have obtained at least 6 GCSEs at A*, A or B grades. A or A* grades are normally expected (and in some cases are required) in the subjects that will be studied at AS or A2.
- b. Industry and determination – candidates must have demonstrated that they are capable of working to deadlines and meeting academic expectations of their teachers, commensurate with their potential.
- c. Attitude – candidates' school record during the Years 10 and 11 must indicate a readiness to work hard and to accept the authority of the school willingly.

2.2 Candidates ability to meet these criteria will be gathered through interview and school reports(including predicted grades). Those who fail to meet any of these criteria will not normally be admitted to the Sixth Form.

2.3 In some exceptional cases, those who fail to meet these criteria may be admitted to the Sixth Form. In such cases, transfer from Lower Sixth to Upper Sixth will then be conditional upon the pupil's record during the Lower Sixth and upon AS examination results.

2.4 These criteria will be reviewed from time to time and adjusted if necessary in order to maintain the high standards of effort and achievement generally associated with students at the Grammar School at Leeds.

3.0 Special Educational Needs Admissions Procedure

3.1 The admission policy acknowledges that the school selects for admission those children judged best able to benefit from the education offered at the Grammar School at Leeds. The criteria used in the entrance procedures will seek to maintain the academic standards of the school.

3.2 Parents can indicate if their child has a physical disability, a learning difficulty or English as an additional language by ticking a box on the application form. Parents of pupils with a formal statement of special needs should indicate by ticking this box, specifying what the special educational needs are, and referring the school to the LEA concerned.

3.3 In the event of the box being ticked, the Admissions Manger will make contact with the parent to gather background information on the child's needs. In the case of statemented pupils the LA which has issued the statement will be contacted.

3.4 Parents of the child may be invited into school for further discussion with the Head of Learning Support. Key questions will be asked regarding the nature of the child's needs.

3.5 For children with physical disability, reference should be made to the school's 'Accessibility Plan' and, where necessary, to specialist organisations regarding reasonable adjustments so that these may be made.

3.6 For children with learning difficulties, parental requests about the entrance examination will be considered but not automatically acceded to if special consideration of written papers can enable the child to have a more normal experience of the entrance exam.

3.7 In the entrance examination reasonable adjustments will be made available (but not obligatory).

3.8 All invigilators will be made aware of the identity of any children in their group with learning difficulties, and of what those difficulties are (where known), in order to be alert to any signs of distress, unease or incomprehension.

3.9 Clear instructions will be given to all invigilators about how to make the procedure of the examination equally accessible to all.

3.10 In all other respects the pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities must be treated in such a way as to avoid making them stand out from their peers or embarrass them.

3.11 Markers will be made aware of those children with learning difficulties. Every effort will be made to ensure that the mark given reflects the child's ability and potential.

3.12 When examination results are analysed by both the Junior School and Senior School, those candidates with learning difficulties will be highlighted and papers will be re-assessed by the Head of Learning Support and/or the year group staff to ensure that the assessment of the candidate is fair and reasonable.

3.13 In the final meeting of staff to consider offers, note and due consideration will be taken of any candidate whose performance may have been affected by a learning difficulty. However, if reasonable adjustments have been put in place during the assessment process and the candidate fails to meet the academic standards of the examination, the school retains the right not to offer the candidate a place regardless of disability.

3.14 At present, our physical facilities for the disabled are limited but we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the school's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children who have disabilities and to comply with our legal and moral responsibilities under equality legislation in order to accommodate the needs of applicants and pupils who have disabilities.

4.0 Awarding of Bursaries

4.1 The application form for pupils entering the school at Year 7 and Year 12 invites parents to seek further information about assistance with fees. Those requesting information are sent a bursary application form to complete.

4.2 Applicants are asked to provide evidence for their family income from all sources for the past year. This includes:

- a. salary/wage of all family members
- b. income from family business if self-employed
- c. investment income
- d. rent from property

4.3 Account is taken of the essential outgoings including:

- a. mortgage
- b. school fees for other children
- c. outstanding debts including overdrafts and loans

4.4 So far as is possible an understanding of the family need is established taking account also of:

- a. whether both partners are working or could work
- b. if currently not working, whether efforts are being made to find work
- c. other assets
- d. relatives who may be in a position to assist with school fees

4.5 The above information is taken into account when considering whether assistance can be offered.

4.6 The maximum assistance that can be offered is related to total family income and assets. As a guide, bursaries are unlikely to be awarded where total family net resources (taking into account income, savings, and other means which could be used to fund fees) exceeds £40,000 pa.

4.7 Only new applicants for Year 7 and 12 will be considered for bursaries. Children who are returning to the school after a period away will only be considered as new applicants for bursary purposes once a period of two or more years has passed since their last day.

4.8 For those seeking assistance as a result of changed circumstances during the child's school career, the level of need is established from the information provided. Consideration is also given to whether the need for assistance is likely to be short-term or long-term and the stage of schooling of the child(ren) concerned. Any assistance in this regard will come from a separate Hardship Fund rather than the Bursary Fund.

4.9 At the time of the Year 7 entrance examination the number of those applying for assistance with fees exceeds the number that can be supported from the various sources available. In this situation the results of the Entrance Exam, interview, school reports and the means-testing outcome are used to rank the candidates to identify those who should be made a bursary offer.

4.10 Although it is the norm for bursary awards to continue throughout a pupil's career at The Grammar School at Leeds, subject to an annual financial review, there is an expectation that the level of academic performance will continue as at the time of the award offer.

5.0 Appeals

5.1. Any parent wishing to question a decision not to admit their child to The Grammar School at Leeds should in the first place raise the matter in writing with the Admissions Manager

5.2 The Admissions Manager will respond to the concern in writing within five working days, giving the reason for the decision.

5.3 Examination scores and the record or evaluation of any interviews remain confidential to the school. Any report from the Head of the child's present school remains confidential.

5.4 If the parent feels that concerns have not been fully and fairly considered, they should write to the Chairman of the Governors who will refer the complaint to the school's Appeals Committee. The convenor of this committee is always a member of the governing body who is not Chairman, assisted by two other members of the governing body. It is their task to look at issues in an impartial and confidential manner.

5.5 The parents wishing to appeal against an admission decision must give written notice of the reasons for the appeal.

5.6 The committee convenor will invite the parent(s) to a meeting. This will be attended by the Principal and another senior member of staff involved in the admissions procedures. Parents will be asked if there are any papers they would like to have circulated beforehand. They will be able to bring a companion with them. Legal representation would not be appropriate.

5.7 The hearing

- a. The committee will ask the Principal to put the case for his decision.
- b. The parents will be invited to question the Principal.
- c. The committee will ask the parents to put the case for appealing against the Principal's decision.
- d. The Principal will be invited to question the parents.
- e. The Principal will be asked to sum up the school's case.
- f. The parents will be asked to sum up their case.

5.8 Members of the appeal panel may ask questions at any time if they require clarification or further information. Notes of the meeting will be taken by the Clerk to the Governors. These notes remain the property of the Appeals Committee and will not be made available to the parties to the appeal.

5.9 After the hearing the convenor will reach a decision about the appeal and will notify parents of the outcome together with the reasons for that decision in writing within seven days of the meeting.

5.10 At the conclusion of the procedure, all parties should feel secure in their understanding of the reasons for the decision and be satisfied that, notwithstanding its outcome, the hearing has been a fair one.

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