



Admissions Policy

November 2023

1. Introduction

The Aims of this Policy are:

- 1.1 to ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes, which are to promote and provide for the education of pupils aged from 3 to 18;
- 1.2 To identify and admit children who will benefit from a St Chris education and who will contribute to, and benefit from, the activities and ethos of the St Christopher School community. St Christopher School will admit only children who have met the required criteria.

2. General

- 2.1 St Christopher School is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged from rising 3 to 18. The School has approximately 530 pupils, 45 of whom are boarders. St Chris is non-denominational, multi-cultural and academically inclusive and pupils have a broad range of abilities.
- 2.2 Deciding on the right school for your child is very important. We very much hope that you and your child will make an in person visit to St Christopher School to experience the School's unique culture.
- 2.3 We hold a number of Open Day events each year and also offer private visits, details of which are published on our website: <https://www.stchris.co.uk/admissions/open-days/>
- 2.4 The Admissions Department is responsible for all admissions enquiries and visits to the School. All enquiries should be made through the Junior or Senior School Registrars who can be contacted on +44 1462 650947 or by emailing admissions@stchris.co.uk.
- 2.5 Pupils are admitted to St Christopher School as **fee-paying day pupils** at any age from the academic term they turn 3 to the age of 18 as follows:
 - Nursery (Monte), ages rising 3 to 4
 - Junior School, ages 4 to 11
 - Senior School, ages 11 to 16
 - Sixth Form, ages 16 to 18
- 2.6 Pupils may also be admitted to St Christopher School as **fee-paying boarding pupils** from age 11 (Year 7) to 18.



3. Equity

- 3.1 St Christopher School aims to 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.
- 3.2 St Chris is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

4. Admissions Procedure Summary

- 4.1 St Chris is an academically inclusive, non-selective school and pupils have a broad range of abilities. Our admissions process, detailed below, is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.
- 4.2 Students undergo age-appropriate assessments prior to entry to determine their current academic level for when they arrive at the school, to help us to identify any gaps in their learning that require support and additional resourcing, and to ensure that they are able to access our curriculum.
- 4.3 Admission decisions are also based on the school receiving a suitable reference from an applicant's current or previous school.
- 4.4 Professional judgement about a pupil's suitability rests with the Head who alone is responsible for offering places. Where a place is not offered to a pupil there is no right of appeal.

5. Points of Entry

- 5.1 St Christopher School offers a continuity of education from Early Years (from the term a child turns 3) to Upper Sixth (Year 13).
- 5.2 The usual points of entry into the Nursery (from the start of the term that a child turns 3); and then at 4+, 11+, 13+ and 16+.
- 5.3 The school may also have occasional places at other ages; please contact the Admissions Department for details.
- 5.3 We accept registration up to three years before entry.
- 5.5 When there are places still available, applications and assessments may be made mid-year. The School does not generally accept pupils into Year 11 or Year 13, or after the first half-term of the academic year in Year 10 or Year 12.



6. Registration

- 6.1 Following your visit to the School, if you would like to apply for a place then the first step in the admissions process is for parents, or those with parental responsibility, to register for a place at the School by completing the registration form on the St Chris website: <https://stchris.openapply.com/>.
- 6.2 This includes the payment of a registration fee, which is non-refundable.
- 6.3 At this stage we also ask for the submission of the applicant's most recent school report.

7. Assessment Process

7.1 Nursery and Junior School

7.1.1 Entry to Nursery and Reception

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 observed during a Stay and Play Taster Session, where parents stay with their child. In the Nursery these sessions are one hour long, and for Reception, children stay for 1.5 hours including lunch.

7.1.2 Entry to Year 1 to Year 4

Children are invited to a Taster Day (half a day in Year 1, a full day in Years 2 to 4) where they will join their age-appropriate class for the day. Pupils will complete age-appropriate benchmarking assessments in English and mathematics. Staff observations, school reports and references will be taken into consideration.

7.1.3 Entry to Years 5 and 6

Children are invited to a Taster Day where they will join their age-appropriate class for the day. Children also undertake an online Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) as a benchmarking assessment. Staff observations, school reports and references will be taken into consideration.

7.2 Entry to Senior School

7.2.1 Years 7 to 10

Applicants for the Senior School are invited to an Assessment Morning in the school year before they start which either takes place in February each year for September entry or on a normal school day for entry at other points.

The purpose of the Assessment Morning is for the School to benchmark and determine their current academic level for when they arrive at St Chris and to ensure that they are able to access our curriculum. The Assessment Morning will also gauge their attitude to learning and their willingness to contribute to the wider life of the School.



As part of the Assessment Morning applicants:

- Undertake an online Cognitive Ability Test (CAT);
- Take part in a lesson to enable them to experience learning at St Chris;
- Undertake an informal conversation with a senior member of staff for us to get to know them, and for them to get to know us.

We will also ask for a reference from the candidate's current school, including their disciplinary record.

No specific preparation for the CAT or interview is needed, however applicants can bring with them an item linked to a hobby or interest that they would like to talk about at interview.

7.3 Entry to Sixth Form: Year 12

Sixth Form applicants are invited for an interview with the Head or Deputy Head.

Normally we would consider the candidate's projected or actual GCSE results. Generally we expect candidates to obtain at least five GCSEs at grade 5 and above in order to follow an AS/A level programme, with at least grade 6 in the subjects selected for studying at A level, or in relevant subjects where a student is starting a subject from scratch (such as Psychology or Business Studies). We reserve the right to alter these expectations on a case-by-case basis.

Those not undertaking GCSEs will need to show suitable ability.

8. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- 8.1 St Christopher School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding admission.
- 8.2 St Chris takes pride in supporting students who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 8.3 The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs and/pastoral needs, provided that we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them after reasonable adjustments have been made. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with a disability and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.
- 8.4 Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential pupils. In order to determine the necessary support during the admission process and if an offer is made, we require parents of children with special educational needs, specific pastoral needs, disabilities or allergies to discuss their child's needs with the school **when they complete the Registration Form for a place at the school**, and **before** they have undertaken any of our assessments.



- 8.5 At the point of completing the Registration Form parents **must disclose** any known or suspected needs or diagnoses relating to their child's health, wellbeing, abilities or behaviour. This includes any known or suspected pastoral issues relating to their child's physical or mental health, their wellbeing, social interactions, bullying or wider family circumstances. It also includes any issues that may impact on their suitability to board if they are applying for a boarding place.
- 8.5 On registration for a place parents must submit full details of all relevant information. This includes but is not restricted to an educational psychologist's report; any medical letters or medical reports (for example from a GP, consultant or counsellor); an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP); an Individual Pupil Plan (IPP) or a similarly named plan for an individual pupil's behaviour, learning or pastoral support.
- 8.6 Parents must also inform the School of any involvement by specialist/external agencies, such as CAMHS, private counselling or other therapies. This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made, and also so that the School can ensure that their child will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others.
- 8.7 The deadline for submitting this information for the following year is published in advance on our website: <https://www.stchris.co.uk/admissions/how-to-apply/>
- 8.8 Failure to submit all relevant information by the deadline may mean that the School cannot provide the support required for a child when they start, or may lead to the offer of a place being withdrawn by the School.
- 8.9 Where a prospective pupil is disabled, the School will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at the School, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.
- 8.10 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.
- 8.11 Where a place is offered but 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 and benefiting from the learning environment, the offer may subsequently be withdrawn and the Admissions Deposit returned.
- 8.12 It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.



- 8.13 The SEND Department is fully involved in the admissions process at St Chris and makes a full assessment of all information submitted by parents/carers. They may wish to speak to the child's current school, the SEND Co-ordinator or another person who has been named in the information provided by parents, and where necessary your permission will be sort for this.
- 8.14 If it is concluded that we can reasonably meet the needs of a child, we will progress the prospective pupil to the appropriate assessment stage for their age group. If it is concluded that we cannot reasonably meet the needs of a child we will inform the parent/carer as soon as possible so that they have time to reasonably consider alternative option for their child.
- 8.15 Please note that we do not allow the parents of prospective candidates to contact the SEND Department directly to discuss their child's SEND; all discussion must be co-ordinated via the Admissions Department in order for us to ensure a fair process for all applicants.

9. Overseas Applicants

- 9.1 We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at St Christopher School provided that they have the legal right to enter and study in the UK and that they have a relative or responsible adult (guardian) living in the UK with whom they can stay for some weekends, more details of which are contained in the School's Terms and Conditions.
- 9.2 The minimum offer for a period of time at the School is half an academic term. The School is a Points Based System (PBS) Tier 4 sponsor registered with the UKVI, and adheres to all current regulations and best practice in fulfilling its sponsorship duties.

10. Assessment Process for Overseas Applicants

- 10.1 For those applicants applying from overseas, students applying for Years 5 to Year 10 are asked to sit the CAT under exam conditions arranged with the pupil's agent, or at the British Council Office in the pupil's home country.
- 10.2 For those applicants entering Sixth Form (Year 12) who have not taken GCSEs and are wishing to study A level Mathematics or Physics, candidates are asked to sit the School's mathematics paper, which must be sat under exam conditions arranged with the pupil's agent, or at the British Council Office in the pupil's home country.
- 10.3 For all overseas applicants an online video interview will be arranged with the Head.

11. Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language

- 11.1 Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) are assessed for their standard of English on application to the School where appropriate, to assess the



level of EAL support they need and to determine whether this can reasonably be provided.

- 11.2 For pupils where English is an Additional Language, the first step after registration is an online English language assessment.
- 11.3 Our partner organisation Bespoke English Language Testing contact the pupil's agent or family (whichever is most appropriate) to arrange an online video interview.
- 11.4 For 11+ and 13+ entry we would expect candidates to be at Preliminary English Test ('PET') level (B1 Preliminary).
- 11.5 For 16+ entry we require an equivalent level of English to International English Language Testing System ('IELTS') band score 5.5.
- 11.6 The pupil's curriculum may be adapted to suit their needs and abilities. Lessons in EAL are provided for those pupils who need it, either in small groups or individually, as appropriate.

12. Boarders

- 12.1 Applicants for boarding places will also be considered based on their suitability to board, with further information requested by the Registrar if necessary. The Head of Boarding will be fully consulted before an offer is made.

13. In Year Applications

- 13.1 In-year applications are subject to the same process as applications made within the normal process (usually for the following academic year), with specific additions (see points 13.2 – 13.4 below).
- 13.2 Applicants for an in-year place should check first with the Admissions Department as to the availability of places. If places are available, the usual Registration and Assessment process applies (see points 6 and 7 above).
- 13.3 Finally, the School will request that a candidate come in to spend one or more Taster Days (Junior School) or a Taster Week (Senior School) with us before we progress to the Offer stage (point 14).
- 13.4 Our Admissions Department will follow the process as outlined above and this will not be altered for individual circumstances. Under no circumstances should parents expect or request that the normal application process is changed or accelerated.



14. Offer and Acceptance

- 14.1 Applications will result in one of three outcomes:
- The candidate has been offered a place at St Christopher School
 - The candidate has been placed on the waiting list
 - The candidate has not been offered a place at St Christopher School
- 14.2 When the offer of a place is made, parents will be given a deadline by which the place must be accepted. After this time, the offer of the place may be withdrawn and the place offered to another family.
- 14.3 To accept a place, parents or parties with parental responsibility must sign the Acceptance Form and return this to the School together with the Admissions Deposit.
- 14.4 All further documents and information that the School requires before a pupil starts can be found on the St Chris admissions portal under the checklist.
- 14.5 Before the official start date, the Admissions Department send out Welcome Packs to parents/carers containing all the information needed for starting at the School.
- 14.6 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 may invalidate the offer. Waiver of this clause is exclusively at the discretion of the Head.
- 14.5 A child may not start as a pupil until the School is in receipt of: references from the child's current school (where applicable); the signed Acceptance Form; all required pre-joining paperwork; the Admissions Deposit.
- 14.6 Candidates who are unsuccessful in their application are informed verbally by the Registrar, followed by the decision in writing.

15 Waiting Lists

- 15.1 Where a year group is oversubscribed, we run a waiting list.
- 15.2 We arrange our waiting list in the order of date of registration and give priority to:
- siblings of children who are already at the School or who have a sibling joining the School in the same admissions cycle;
 - A child who has requested a weekly/full boarding placement
 - A child whose parent is a member of staff employed by St Christopher School
- 15.3 In line with the School's coeducational status, waiting lists are separated by gender to ensure our coeducational balance is maintained.



16 Sibling Policy

Most siblings join us at St Christopher School. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different environment.

17 Progression

17.1 St Chris is a through-school and pupils' progress is reviewed at key transition points – for example between Nursery and Reception, between Junior and Senior School, between Senior School and Sixth Form.

17.2 From time to time, there may be occasions where, in the School's professional judgement, moving up is not appropriate. In these cases, the School will be in ongoing discussion with the family regarding their future school.

18 Scholarships

St Christopher School offers the following scholarships:

- 18.1 Academic Scholarship
- 18.2 Art Scholarship

19 Purpose of Scholarships

Scholarships are designed to reward academic or artistic excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a 10% reduction in the fees throughout their time at St Christopher School.

20. Application for an Academic Scholarship

All candidates for Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 are automatically considered for the Academic Scholarship, which is awarded on their performance in the entrance assessments, and for Year 12, on their GCSE results.

21. Application for an Art Scholarship

21.1 Candidates for Year 7, 9 and 12 can apply for an Art Scholarship. This involves completing the Art Scholarship Application Form and submitting it to the Admissions team by the deadline published on our website:
<https://www.stchris.co.uk/admissions/scholarships/>

21.2 The Admissions Department will also request a reference from the applicant's current art teacher or another person who has supported their work.

21.3 Applicants are then invited for an Art Scholarship interview with the Head of Art, when they will be asked to bring in a portfolio of their work to discuss alongside a more general talk about their interests and experiences in the creative arts.



- 21.4 Scholarships are held for the duration of a pupil's time at the School, provided his/her conduct and progress is satisfactory.
- 21.5 A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

21. Financial Assistance (Bursaries)

- 21.1 St Christopher School is committed to ensuring that pupils who would benefit from an education at St Chris are not excluded from entering the School owing to their financial circumstances by offering means tested financial support with school fees to pupils who meet the School's admissions criteria.
- 21.2 Details on fee assistance can be found on the school website, together with the Bursary Policy: <https://www.stchris.co.uk/admissions/financial-assistance/>

22. Financial Information

- 22.1 Any applicant seeking a place at the School, including those who apply for bursary support and overseas applicants may, at the discretion of the School, be required to provide additional financial information and/or undergo checks to confirm that they are able to pay the School's fees (or any percentage of the fees still payable if a bursary or scholarship is granted).
- 22.2 Where parents are transferring into St Christopher School from another independent school which is a member of the Independent Schools Council (ISC), a place may not be confirmed until the School receives confirmation that there are no outstanding debts to the previous school.

23. School's Terms and Conditions

The terms upon which the School educates each child are set out in the School's Terms and Conditions which are on the School's website and will also be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

24. Records and Review

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

25. Complaints

The Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

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