

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 St Christopher School is a co-educational independent school for pupils from ages 3 to 18. The School has 550 pupils, 50 of whom are boarders.

2. EQUAL TREATMENT

- 2.1 The aim of St Christopher School is 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.
- 2.2 St Christopher School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background. The School's provision for scholarships and bursaries is described in this document.
- 2.3 St Christopher School has no religious affiliation and welcomes applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.

3. ENTRY PROCEDURE

- 3.1 St Christopher School has a selection procedure which is not solely academic, but which does include consideration of past and current academic ability, performance and potential.
- 3.2 Our selection process 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.
- 3.3 The usual points of entry are at Nursery (from the beginning of the term that a child turns 3), Reception (4+), Year 4 (8+), Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+) and Year 12 (16+).
- 3.4 As we are a growing school, the numbers of places available can vary each year, and we aim to be as open as possible about these. If you require further details about a specific year group, you can contact the Registrar to discuss further. The School may also have occasional places at other ages; again, please contact the Registrar for details.
- 3.5 The Head has the final decision on all admissions to the Nursery, Junior and Senior School (although in practice admissions to the Nursery and Junior School are delegated to the Head of the Junior School.) Other members of the Senior Management Team are involved as appropriate.

4. ENQUIRY & VISIT STAGE

- 4.1 The Registrar handles all admissions enquiries and visits to the School, and all enquiries should be directed through the School's Admissions office.

- 4.2 Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit St Christopher School.
- 4.3 We hold open events in the Autumn and Summer Term which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website.
- 4.4 In addition, and importantly, we welcome private visits by prospective parents/guardians and their children at other times.
- 4.5 The Admissions office can be contacted on +44 1462 650947 or by emailing admissions@stchris.co.uk.

5. REGISTRATION

- 5.1 A child's formal application to St Christopher School begins with submission of the Registration Form, Fee and their most recent school report. We also approach the current school for a personal reference.
- 5.2 Once this stage is complete, the pupil moves to the assessment stage. Please note that the School reserves the right not to progress a child's application based on the outcome of the current school reference or report.
- 5.3 We accept registrations up to three years before entry. Specific deadlines for the following year of entry are available on our website, where Registration Forms and other information can also be found under Admissions.

6. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 6.1 **Nursery**
For children applying to join the Nursery we do not pre-assess pupils. Instead, children are invited in to the School with their parents/guardians for a familiarisation visit, lasting an hour.
- 6.2 **Junior School – Reception to Year 3**
Assessment involves coming to spend a normal school day with their age group in class. This involves an informal numeracy and literacy assessment with the class teacher, who will also observe informal play and group work.
- 6.3 **Junior School – Year 4 to Year 6**
Assessment involves coming to spend a normal school day with their age group in class, where the class teacher will observe informal play and group work. As part of the day children will also sit an online CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) which takes approximately 1.5 hours, and have an informal interview with the Head or the Deputy Head.
- 6.4 **Senior School**
Assessment involves coming in for an Assessment Morning on a school day. The day starts at 8.30am and finishes at 1.30pm. Candidates sit an online CAT (Cognitive Ability Test), English paper and have an informal interview with a member of the Senior Management Team.

6.5 **Sixth Form**

- 6.5.1 Sixth Form applicants are invited for an interview with the Head or the Head of Sixth Form.
- 6.5.2 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.
- 6.5.3 Those not doing GCSEs will need to show suitable ability.
- 6.5.4 In practice, the vast majority of entrants into our Sixth Form gain significantly better results than the minimum requirement.

6.6 **Overseas Applicants**

- 6.6.1 The first step after Registration is an English language assessment.
 - 6.6.2 Our partner organisation Bespoke English Language Testing will contact the pupil's agent or family to arrange an online video interview and English language test within a week of Registration.
 - 6.6.3 For 11+ and 13+ entry we would expect children to be at Preliminary English Test ('PET') level (B1 Preliminary).
 - 6.6.4 For 16+ we require an equivalent level of English to International English Language Testing System ('IELTS') band score 5.5.
 - 6.6.5 All children will be assessed individually and feedback given.
 - 6.6.6 Candidates wishing to study mathematics or physics at A-level must also sit a separate maths paper, issued by the School, which must be sat under exam conditions arranged via the pupil's agent, or the British Council Office in the pupil's home country.
- 6.7 Successful completion of this stage leads to an online video interview with the Head, Richard Palmer, which is the final step in the process.
- 6.8 The dates for the assessment process for the current year are published on our website, together with the dates that results are posted to families and the closing date for acceptances.

7. OFFER STAGE

- 7.1 Offers are made in writing with deadlines for the submission of acceptance paperwork.
- 7.2 The Acceptance Form and payment of the Deposit secures the place at St Christopher School.
- 7.3 Candidates who are not successful in their application are informed verbally by the Registrar, followed up by the decision in writing.

- 7.4 Nearer the time of starting at St Christopher School, the Admissions office send out Starter Packs to parents/guardians containing all the information they need to begin at the School.
- 7.5 Before the pupil's start date, questions are best directed to the Admissions office, unless otherwise stated. All new starters are also invited to attend settling-in or transition sessions.

8. SIBLING POLICY

- 8.1 Most siblings join us at St Christopher School. However, admission is not automatic and siblings must apply to the School via the normal process (please see Assessment Process.)
- 8.2 Where there is one place available in a specific year group and there is a choice to be made between a candidate with a sibling at the School, and one without (both having completed the application and assessment process), the sibling will have priority.
- 8.3 There may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment and ultimately it is the decision of the School as to which candidates are offered places.

9. INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

- 9.1 St Christopher School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry.
- 9.2 St Chris takes pride in supporting students with Individual Needs and we are proud to do so. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, providing we can reasonably offer them the support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them.
- 9.3 We strongly advise parents of children with special educational needs, specific pastoral needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the Admissions office before beginning an application so that we can make adequate provision for him/her to take part in the admissions process.
- 9.4 At the point of registration, we ask parents to disclose any known or suspected difficulties or diagnoses relating to their child's health, wellbeing, abilities or behaviour.
- 9.5 At registration parents must submit all relevant and up-to-date information to the Registrar. This could include a medical letter (for example from a GP or consultant); an Educational Psychologist's report; an Education, Health and Care Plan ('EHCP'), or other type of medical report.
- 9.6 The deadline for submitting this information is published far in advance on our website under Admissions, and it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that it reaches us by that date.
- 9.7 The Head of Individual Needs is fully involved in the admissions process at St Christopher School, and makes a full assessment of all information submitted by parents/guardians. They may wish to speak to the pupil's current school, the SEN Coordinator or another person who has been

named in the information provided, and where necessary your permission will be sought for this.

- 9.8 If it is concluded that we can reasonably meet the needs of a child within an existing year group and with the facilities and staffing that we have available, then we will progress a pupil to the appropriate assessment stage for their age group. If we do not, we will inform the parent/guardian as soon as possible so that they have the time to consider alternative options for their child.
- 9.9 Please note that we do not allow the parents of prospective candidates to discuss their child's individual needs directly with the Head of Individual Needs; all discussions must be held with the Registrar in order for us to ensure a fair process for all applicants.

10. SCHOLARSHIPS

- 10.1 St Christopher School offers the following scholarships:

- Academic Scholarship
- Art Scholarship

10.2 Purpose of Scholarships

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

10.3 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.

10.3 Application for an Art Scholarship

Candidates for Year 7, 9 and 12 can apply for an Art Scholarship. This involves filling in the Art Scholarship Application Form and submitting it to the Admissions team by the deadline published on our website.

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

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

- 10.4 Scholarships are held for the duration of a pupil's time at the School, provided his/her conduct and progress is satisfactory.

- 10.5 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.

11. BURSARIES

- 11.1 St Christopher School's bursary programme is designed to ensure that as many pupils as possible of those who meet our entry criteria are able to take up a place here.
- 11.2 The School offers means-tested awards annually where the parents/guardians have submitted the relevant application form with supporting evidence by the deadline published on our website.
- 11.3 Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria outlined in the application form. Both parents/guardians are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to need, but can extend to full fee remission in cases of proven need.
- 11.4 Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time and reviewed annually. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for each year that their child attends the School and a bursary is requested. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.
- 11.5 The School's practice is to allocate its entire available bursary funding on entry. The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.
- 11.6 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.

12. OVERSEAS APPLICANTS

- 12.1 We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at St Christopher School as a boarder provided that he/she has a relative or responsible adult (guardian) living in the UK or European Economic Area with whom he/she can stay for some holidays, more details of which are contained in the School's Terms and Conditions.
- 12.2 The minimum offer for a period of time at the School is half an academic term.
- 12.3 The School is a Points Based System (PBS) Tier 4 sponsor registered with the UKVI.
- 12.4 Pupils from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland, wishing to apply for a place at St Christopher will need to be issued with a Certificate of Sponsorship by the School. In order for us to do this we will need to confirm a number of criteria, including willingness to study, the ability to pay the School's fees, and the student's intention to study lawfully in the UK. We are required to keep records of attendance and report these directly to the UK Visa and Immigration ('UKVI').
- 12.5 Please note that in order to cope with the academic and social demands of St Christopher School, pupils must speak a proficient level of English and where their standard is considered insufficient, we would require them to attend English as an Additional Language ('EAL') lessons each week at an additional cost.

13. SCHOOL'S TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 13.1 Copies of the School's Terms and Conditions are on the School's website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

14. COMPLAINTS

- 14.1 Copies of the School's Parental Complaints Procedure are on the School's website or can be sent to parents on request.

Rhiannon Butlin
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Governors September 2018