



Durham High School

Admissions Policy

This policy applies to the Whole School and is published to parents and pupils

Reviewed: November 2022
Next review: September 2023

This policy should be read in conjunction with: SEND Policy, the Equal Opportunities Policy; Gender Identity Policy

Durham High School is a girls' independent school educating girls aged 3-18. It aims to provide a challenging academic education, together with a curriculum which helps to develop its pupils morally, spiritually and creatively.

The School is firmly based on Christian principles and warmly welcomes pupils of all faiths or none.

Durham High School is a fee-paying independent school, but seeks to be as accessible as possible to all girls in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

In line with our Gender Identity Policy, Durham High School only admits pupils whose birth sex is female.

The School offers support to girls who prove to have mild specific learning difficulties and also seeks to be as accessible as possible to those with physical disabilities (see SEND Policy). Arrangements for tests are also made with the intention of ensuring that no candidate is unfairly disadvantaged, and, where practicable, reasonable adjustments will be made to cater for individual needs.

Pre-Prep and Prep Department

In Pre-Prep and Prep Departments, it is recommended that girls attend a taster day at School prior to assessment. For the assessment, girls will spend either a further half day or full day in School, depending on their age, during which time they will be assessed in the classroom setting. We take great care to ensure that girls find this an enjoyable activity. In our selection process we also take account of the report provided by the applicant's current school, where appropriate.

The main entry points at Pre-Prep and Prep are in Nursery (from the age of 3), Reception and Year 3; we admit pupils to other Year Groups as long as they are not already full.

Senior Department

The main entry points at Senior Department are in Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12; we admit pupils to other Year Groups as long as they are not already full.

Girls joining Year 7 sit an Entrance Examination, usually in January of Year 6 and girls who are successful in the Entrance Examination are invited to attend French Club in the Spring Term, to encourage new friendships and Welcome Day in the Summer Term. In our selection process we also take account of the report provided by an applicant's current school. The selection process may occasionally take place at other times of the year in circumstances such as relocation.

The same general format is followed for entry to Years 8, 9 and 10 with testing arranged on an individual basis.

Entrance of new starters into the Sixth Form is gained on the basis of testing and GCSE results. Girls are required to attain at least 6 GCSE Grade 9-6 or equivalent (including English and Mathematics) and normally a Grade 6 in the subjects they wish to study at A Level, or in related subjects (with the exception of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics, which require a Grade 7 or above).

Parents of applicants are asked at the time of application whether their daughters have any special requirements or needs for the selection process, including the assessment and examination days, and we do our best to make reasonable adjustments to meet these needs during the admissions process. On entry to the School, further investigation and assessment into new pupils' needs is undertaken, and appropriate adjustments put in place.

Sibling Policy

The School has on roll a number of siblings and applications from siblings of current pupils are welcome and are considered on the same basis as applications from all other applicants.

Out of age applications

We consider applications from pupils who are not in the Year Group which most closely matches their chronological age, on a case by case basis. We consider the academic attainment and potential of the pupil, as well as her pastoral and personal development and how well she would be able to fit into the Year Group for which an application is being made.

Transfer arrangements

Transfer from Nursery to Reception is generally automatic.

Transfer from Year 6 to Year 7 (Senior Department) is generally automatic. In the rare case where there are reasons why a pupil in the Prep Department would not be well advised to transfer to Senior Department, this would be discussed with the parents at a much earlier stage and academic targets for transfer would be set before the end of Year 5.

Transfer from Year 11 to Year 12 (Sixth Form) is generally automatic provided that the girl achieves the Entrance Requirement for Sixth Form. In rare cases where the School has concern about a girl being able to achieve this level, we will discuss this with parents during Year 10. Targets for public examinations will be set as far in advance as practical and subsequent transfer will be conditional on attainment of these targets.

Durham High School for Girls seeks to attract able, enthusiastic and gifted pupils who can make a real impact on the life of the School. For this reason, various Scholarships and Bursaries are available.

DHS Scholarships and Bursaries

Governors' Scholarship

One *Governors' Scholarship*, worth 100% of fees per annum, ie an entirely free place at the High School, is awarded for seven years to an able girl joining Year 7 whose parents could not otherwise afford tuition fees.

Academic Scholarships

There are a number of *Academic Scholarships* which are awarded to those girls who perform best in the January Entrance Examinations. These scholarships are awarded for seven years (11+) or five years (13+) and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see below), up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

Music Scholarships

Music Scholarships are offered to suitable 11+ and 13+ applicants. At 11+ girls should be Grade 3 standard, or higher, on at least one instrument or voice. At 13+ girls should be Grade 5 standard, or higher. Auditions take place shortly after the day of the Entrance

Examination. Music Scholarships may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see below), up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

Performing Arts and Drama Scholarships

These *Scholarships* are offered to suitable 11+ and 13+ applicants. Applicants should have substantial performing experience, either in or out of school. Auditions take place shortly after the day of the Entrance Examination. These awards may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see below), up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

Sports Scholarships

Sports Scholarships are awarded to girls through evaluation of sporting performance at 11+ and 13+. Applicants should be competing to a high standard both in and outside of school. Physical ability, enthusiasm, leadership, teamwork skills and potential are taken into consideration. Assessments take place shortly after the day of the Entrance Examination. These awards may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see below), up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

Governors' Bursaries

A significant number of *Governors' Bursaries* are available at 11+ and 13+ and may be worth up to 50% of the current fees per annum. These are based on a means tested form and awarded to parents of girls who are normally in the top half of the ability range but cannot afford full fees. Bursaries are reviewed annually.

Barbara Priestman Scholarship

The *Barbara Priestman Scholarship* is awarded annually at 11+ from the Sir John Priestman Charitable Trust. This scholarship is intended for daughters of practising Christians of any denomination. Candidates for this scholarship sit a Religious Studies test shortly after the Entrance Examination. The award may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see above) up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

Clerical Bursaries

Daughters of clergy receive an automatic 10% fee remission per annum which may be supplemented in appropriate cases by a *Governors' Bursary* (see above) up to a usual maximum of 50% fee remission.

All DHS Scholarships can be withdrawn at the discretion of the Principal if progress, behaviour, and/or a girl's attitude to work is unsatisfactory, and if the conditions of the award are not met.

Adjustments to Admissions procedure in exceptional circumstances

During any period when the School is unable to carry out its standard admissions process for those pupils wishing to join Durham High School, the School will seek to carry out entrance assessments remotely through telephone interviews with pupils and/or parents depending on the pupil's age. Pupils looking to enter Senior Department may also be required to complete online assessment tests. A copy of a pupil's most recent full report sent to parents by the pupil's current school will also be requested from the parent where appropriate.

For pupils who are offered a place at Durham High School and who join us at any time while under these circumstances, the school will continue to monitor the pupil's progress at the end of each Key Stage at Pre-Prep and Prep Departments and for entry into Senior Department and into Sixth Form. In the rare case where there is a concern about a pupil

moving to the next key stage or entering into Senior Department or Sixth Form, the school will raise this with parents as early as possible.

Pupils from Overseas

Durham High School welcomes pupils from all over the world and values their contribution to the life of the School. Applications will be considered for pupils aged 3-18, provided they have entered the UK as dependents of their parents or legal guardians.

As a Student sponsor, the School take a proactive approach to ensure it meets the sponsorship duties as set out in the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) guidance documents and will make reasonable efforts to assist pupils and parents to comply with the UK Government's requirement on visa entry for children who wish to come to the UK to study. However, responsibility for making a visa application to allow their child to attend Durham High School rests with the parents. The School cannot assist with resolving visa related issues other than those under Child Student or General Student either for a current pupil or for a child who is proposed to be admitted.

General Information

- Durham High School has a Sponsor Licence with UKVI (Licence No: 6M66CMBB4).
- Upon contact from a parent or guardian, and alongside our recruitment process, the School will undertake sufficient research to satisfy ourselves of their citizenship and therefore their right to study. Issues concerning Student visa requirements will be raised at the earliest opportunity.
- As a selective school and in order to ascertain academic ability and language skills, all applications must be supported by entrance assessment, a report from a pupil's current school and an interview, in order to confirm that Durham High School is the right setting for your child.
- The School is required to photocopy a pupil's passport and visa/BRP, as well as proof of entry to the UK in the form of an entry stamp or boarding card, on the first day of term (at the latest) or the first day that the pupil arrives at the School.
- The School must be notified if your child has obtained a new passport.
- The School will keep independent visa files on each international pupil which may be inspected by the UKVI at any time.
- All absences must be authorised by the Principal. All unauthorised absences will be reported to the UKVI. This includes pupils who arrive late at the beginning of term or leave early at the end of term.
- Parents must adhere to the term dates when booking international flights and provide travel arrangements/details to the Admissions Team.
- When a pupil leaves the School, this will be reported to the UKVI. We must report to UKVI that a pupil has finished their course (eg at the end of GCSE or A Level), although the pupils may have a certain amount of time to stay in the UK after their course has finished and before their visa expires.
- A pupil cannot make their Student visa application more than three months before the start of their course.
- If a student turns 18 years old, they can carry on with their course until their permission to stay ends. If they want to undertake further study in the UK, then they will have to apply for another visa under the General Student category.

Sixth Form Entry Requirements

- The academic year begins in September
- Overseas Sixth Form applicants should attain the equivalent of Girls are required to attain at least 6 UK GCSE Grade 9-6 or equivalent (including English and Mathematics) and normally a Grade 6 in the subjects they wish to study at A Level, or in related subjects (with the exception of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics, which require a Grade 7 or above).

This is often difficult to equate to overseas examination results and in these circumstances, the school will undertake an academic assessment for the candidate.

- Confirmation of overseas examination results should be emailed to Durham High School by the student's current school as soon as they are known.
- The Principal has discretion to relax these requirements if it is believed that a particular student would benefit from the education offered at Durham High School Sixth Form.
- A favourable academic reference from the applicant's current school is required.
- An A-level subject options form should also be completed and returned to the Admissions Team.

English Language Tests

Sixth Form applicants who are aged 16/17 years, applying for Student visa, must achieve IELTS Overall Score 5 or above in all components. After joining the School, all overseas students must show progression in their English fluency.

Sixth Form applicants who are over the age of 18 must achieve IELTS [Overall Score 5] to satisfy Home Office General Student Visa conditions.

It is important to establish that the applicant has a good command of the English Language and will be able to cope with the challenge of learning in this high- achieving School where all lessons are delivered in English. We recommend applicants visit www.ielts.org for further information with a view to gaining an appropriate level for UK university entry which may follow Sixth Form study. Many universities request IELTS Level 6, 6.5 or 7.

Annual fee charges are published on the Schools' website and are regularly updated.

New Pupils from Overseas

Durham High School must receive the following before a Certificate of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) can be issued:

1. A copy of the parents' and pupil's passports.
2. A completed Overseas Application Form, with the personal statement completed by the applicant where applicable.
3. A non-refundable application fee (paid in UK Sterling)
4. An Advance Deposit fee of annual fees is needed to secure the place as well as Advance Annual Lunch fees.

Once the completed paperwork and fees have been received the application for a CAS is made online and a CAS certificate will be issued to enable parents to apply for a visa. A CAS number is valid for six months.

If a visa application is refused, a copy of the refusal letter must be sent to the School. Similarly, if the family decide not to apply, the School must be notified in writing with an explanation of the decision.

Monitoring Attendance

In the interests of pupils and to minimise disruption to learning, Durham High School closely monitors attendance.

All pupils are required to join the School on the day appointed and may not be absent from School except for medical reasons, without prior permission. Holiday dates are published well in advance and parents/guardians should be aware that holiday must not be booked outside of these periods.

The Schools hours are 8.40am until 3.55pm however, pupils are expected to be in school before these times as registration is taken at the start of the School day and again following lunch.

Pupils who have to leave school during the course of the day for medical, dental appointments etc, must sign out at the School Office and, sign back in on their return.

In the case of absence through illness, parents/guardians are requested to call the School by 9.00am on the first day of absence. If the absence is likely to last for more than one day, it is helpful if parents/guardians give some indication of the probable length of absence. If a pupil is recorded as absent and we have not received a message, we will contact parents/guardians primarily to ensure the safety of the child. Upon returning to school, pupils will need a parental/guardian note stating the dates of absence and nature of illness.

In the case of prolonged absence through illness, parents are requested to notify the School as soon as possible as to the nature of the illness and the probable duration of the absence. Cases of infectious illness should be reported at once.

UKVI will be notified of any absences that are unauthorised and exceed 10 days.

In order that the School can undertake its duties as a sponsor and notify UKVI accordingly, Parents/Guardians must notify the School of the following:

- The pupil withdraws from their course before they travel to the UK.
- The pupil embarks on a course with a different sponsor/institution.
 - The pupil needs to delay their start date before entering the UK but after entry clearance has been granted.
- The pupil is unable to enrol on the agreed date i.e. missed flight, illness, or decision not to come to the UK.
 - The pupil is refused entry to or right to stay in the UK.
- The pupil wishes to defer their studies once they have entered the UK.
- Any change in circumstances i.e. change of course, place of study, residential address, guardianship arrangements, working.