



NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

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ADMISSIONS POLICY

COVID-19 update - Visits to the school may not be possible. Meetings with the Headmistress or Head of Early Years may take place remotely (e.g. via Zoom or telephone call). Assessments may be carried out remotely under test conditions at home.

1. Equal Opportunities

Northampton High School is a member of the Girls' Day School Trust. The Council of the Girls' Day School Trust is committed to equal opportunities in education. Admissions to GDST schools will adhere to the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Admissions: Council Policy

As one of the 25 schools of the Girls Day School Trust, Northampton High School follows the Council's policy for admissions which states:

GDST schools shall be open to all pupils considered by the Head to be capable of benefiting from the education provided at the school and of contributing fully to the life of the School (as more particularly described below);

- Admission is usually dependent on achieving an acceptable standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the age group and academic pace of the school (as set out below). Such examinations and tests are expected to be free of bias in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Due consideration should however be given to educational experience in assessing pupils' achievement of an 'acceptable standard', and to maximising access for pupils to whom the school can add value;
- In relation to junior and prep schools, candidates will be admitted who are considered likely to progress through the usual pathways for pupils attending the school. In most cases in the all through context this will be the standard required to enter the senior school in due course, or to follow a range of complementary transfer routes;
- In relation to senior schools, candidates will be admitted who are likely to qualify for further education at post 16;

Northampton High School aims to provide an ambitious, stimulating and stretching academic education together with a curriculum which helps to develop its pupils morally, spiritually, physically and creatively.

Northampton High School is a fee-paying independent school, but seeks to be as accessible as possible to all able girls, regardless of their parents' ability to pay by the provision of scholarships and bursaries at 11+ and 16+. The key criterion for admission, in addition to the availability of places, is the girl's ability to access the curriculum of the School. Usual entry points are at Nursery, Reception, 7+, 11+, 13+ and 16+, but girls are admitted at other times when vacancies occur.

Nursery and Reception

Entry into Nursery may take place at any point in the year. Pupils are expected to visit the setting with their parents and meet the Nursery Manager. Pupils attending our Nursery will receive an offer to join our Reception class in the September after their fourth birthday, unless the professional judgement of the Head of Junior School is that she will not be able to flourish in the School. In such circumstances, a term's notice will be given to parents. Individual guidance is given by the Head of Junior School or Head of Early Years about progression arrangements for girls born between 1 April and 31 August.

Entry into our Reception class in September for external applicants is possible following a visit and meeting with the Head of Junior School; a waiting list will be formed if places are over-subscribed. Entry into Reception class is also possible at other times in the year, typically after a school holiday, and girls are expected to spend a morning with the class prior to receiving the offer of a place.

Year 1 to Year 6

Testing takes place throughout the year by appointment through the Registrar. Tests in reading, English (spelling grammar and comprehension) and mathematics are administered. Applicants also spend time in a class with their peer group. Places are offered taking into consideration entrance test scores as well as prior school experience and academic potential. Those offered places into Year 6 are given an automatic place into the Senior School when the time comes.

Year 7 to Year 10 (11+ to 14+ assessment)

Testing usually takes place for entry September of the following year in January, though can be throughout the year (after 1 October). Tests in English and mathematics are administered, plus an interview. Standardised tests are used and it should be noted that applicants are normally required to achieve a standardised score of around national average or above, to be offered a place. Reports from current schools are used to help make judgements where necessary. Pupils currently attending the Junior School are offered a place into the Senior School when they are in Year 5. Where clear evidence that appropriate achievement and progress is not available by that stage, we would usually require a pupil to sit the 11+ assessment.

Year 11 (15+)

Girls at this age are only accepted in exceptional circumstances. The school report and current GCSE courses are taken into careful consideration.

Year 12 and 13 (16+)

Matriculation requirements for entry to the Sixth Form are set at five grade 6s at GCSE along with minimum grade 6 in English and mathematics (or the equivalent in international qualifications). By negotiation with the Director of Sixth Form and the Deputy Head Academic, matriculation guidelines may be varied if appropriate courses can be designed for individual students. In all cases, students who fail to achieve a Grade 4 GCSE English or Maths are required to retake the examinations at the next available session until a passing grade is achieved. Individual subjects may set expected minimum requirements, generally grade 6 where a GCSE subject is needed for further study, however, occasionally grade 7 might be deemed necessary. This information is published in the Sixth Form Programme Guide.

In the Sixth Form, pupils usually choose 3 to 4 A Levels across a range of subjects, along with an academic enhancement element to create a comprehensive portfolio.

Key Stage Transfers within the School

Continuity of education is anticipated throughout the age range and at the key stages of transfer unless, in the opinion of the Headmistress, after due deliberation, it is clear that the pupil will not benefit from continuing to be educated at the School. Factors such as poor behaviour or lack of motivation on the part of the pupil may be taken into account. If there is a likelihood that a pupil will not be able to transfer to the next year, a term's notice

of withdrawal will be given. In such cases, parents will be given clear advice on how the School will support the pupil and monitor progress. For transfer from Senior School to Sixth Form, parents of girls who are showing cause for concern will be advised in writing and an agreed monitoring programme put in place to support the pupil and inform guidance given about the feasibility of transfer to the Sixth Form.

Transfers between GDST schools

There is no automatic right of transfer from one Trust school to another; however, the transfer of existing Trust pupils between Trust schools, for example as a result of relocation or the need for boarding facilities, may be arranged.

Whilst every effort will be made to support parents in following up such enquiries, any transfer will be subject to:

- The availability of a place; and
- The professional judgment of the school in which a place is being sought of the ability of the pupil concerned to benefit from such a place, given the overall nature of the intake, as cohorts do vary from one school to another and from one year to another.

Arrangements governing transfer will usually vary according to phase. A pupil wishing to enter Year 7 or the Sixth Form will be expected to follow the normal procedures for admission. For mid-year admissions or admissions other than to Year 7, arrangements will depend on the circumstances. The key issue to be considered is that the requested transfer is educationally in the best interests of the child concerned.

It is not a requirement that the pupil being transferred must sit and pass the standard entrance test. The Head of the school being asked to accept the pupil is obliged to consult the Head of the pupil's existing school and obtain a clear view about their ability and potential. If considered necessary to give a clear picture of the pupil's performance, the school may ask the pupil to sit the standard entrance assessment but this should be considered an exception and should not be automatically applied.

Under the current Council policy, where places are available in the relevant year group, priority over external applicants will be given to pupils transferring from another Trust school, subject to the above criteria. It is also hoped that existing Trust pupils not initially successful in securing a place may, where possible, be given priority over other external candidates on the waiting list.

Application from siblings

We are always pleased to receive applications from sisters of current students. Such applications are treated in the same way as any other application, each on its merits, and we do not give automatic entry on the basis of a sibling relationship.

Headmistress

Reviewed November 2020