



# NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## **NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY**

At Northampton High School a selection process operates at all points of entry. All Northampton High policies and procedures take account of GDST policies. The Head's decision on all admissions and scholarships is final.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the GDST Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **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. GDST Admissions Policy**

The admissions policy of the Council of the Girls' Day School Trust (the "GDST") is that:

- The GDST is committed to equal opportunities in education and does not unlawfully discriminate regarding entry. Admissions to GDST schools will adhere to the GDST's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The GDST is firmly committed to offering a single-sex education for girls. In our experience, students in girls' schools are less constrained in their choice of subjects, show a greater propensity to take risks and innovate, perform better in examinations, have more opportunities to show leadership, and are less likely to conform to gender stereotypes. For these reasons, GDST parents and students choose a predominately single-sex environment over other available options.
- GDST schools are broadly selective. Places are offered to prospective pupils on the basis of their potential to thrive in the educational environment provided.
- 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. The assessments and examinations will be accessible to all candidates, with people from all backgrounds able to participate fully.

- Due consideration will be given to prior educational experience in making any decision on the offer of a place. In exceptional circumstances, schools may adjust their established selection processes, provided that there is sufficient justification in doing so and the alternative procedure adheres to principles of equality, fairness and transparency.
- Reasonable adjustments to entrance assessments will be made for applicants with special educational needs and/or disabilities in order that all applicants are assessed fairly. Parents are required to provide full details to the School upon application if their child has external or in-school learning support, an educational psychologist's report, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a disability, allergy or medical condition, to enable the School to make provision, if appropriate. A place will only be offered if the school believes that it can appropriately support a pupil's learning or other needs effectively and that admission is in the best interests of the applicant.
- Special consideration may also be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. prolonged illness or bereavement).
- The school relies on the integrity of the admissions procedure and therefore the truthfulness of the information provided by the applicant's parents, as well as the requirement to disclose any information to the school which may be relevant to the application process such as any learning difference or disability. Where relevant information is not disclosed or proves to be false or misleading the school reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place which may have been granted, deny the applicant admission, or where a child has already been admitted, request that the child is withdrawn from the school.
- 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. 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 other suitability criteria being met. Trust pupils not initially successful in securing a place may where possible be given priority over other external candidates on the waiting list. A transfer cannot be made to any of the Academies sponsored by the Trust.
- The final decision regarding admissions rests with the Head. There is no right of appeal against their decision.
- The school reserves the right to refuse entry to a pupil whose parents have, in the past, failed to meet in full their fee obligations to the school in relation to another child already enrolled at the school.
- A pupil (other than a boarder) must reside with her parent/s or legal guardian while attending the school, or with someone else approved by her parent/s or legal guardian and the Head. Pupils whose parents are overseas must have an educational guardian in the UK and parents must notify the school of the name and address of the guardian.
- A pupil must have the right to study in the UK for the duration of her enrolment at the school. The school will request evidence of this during the admissions process, normally in the form of a British or Irish passport or valid visa documentation. The school reserves the right to rescind an offer where the right to study cannot be evidenced.
- As set out in the Trust's parent contract, continuity of education is anticipated throughout each age range and transfer at key stages will be automatic unless, in the opinion of the Head, the pupil will not benefit

from continuing to be educated at the school or has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or behaviour for continuation or for entry to the next stage.

- Each GDST school sets out in its registration the age range of students it is legally allowed to make provision for. Major age range changes are subject to approval by Council. Admission will last until the student completes year 13 unless the parent contract comes to an end sooner.
- Within these guidelines schools may determine their own admissions policies, which will set out their individual selection criteria.
- Information provided as part of an application will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation. The privacy notice available at [www.gdst.net/privacy-notice](http://www.gdst.net/privacy-notice) explains what information is collected and how it is used.
- Applicants should be registered by the applicant's parents, including, where parents are separated, each parent with parental responsibility. Each parent with parental responsibility will ordinarily be entitled to information regarding their child's application (unless, for example, there is a court order that suggests otherwise).

This policy shall apply to all GDST schools, save for Academies sponsored by the GDST.

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 pupils who meet the necessary criteria. Scholarships and bursaries are available subject to availability of funding. Usual entry points are at Nursery, Reception, 7+, 11+, 13+ and 16+, but pupils are admitted at other times when vacancies occur.

### **Nursery and Reception**

Entry into Nursery may take place at any point in the year following a child's second birthday. Children are expected to visit the setting with their parents and meet the Head of Junior School or Head of Early Years. Children 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 they 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 children are expected to spend a morning with the class prior to receiving the offer of a place.

### **Year 1 to Year 6**

For entry into Years 1 to 4, the Registrar will invite children to spend the day in school as a 'taster day', to fully participate in classroom-style lessons with their prospective year group. Children will also meet with the Head of

Junior School, have the opportunity to read a book of their choice to the Head of Junior School and discuss their learning.

On some occasions, applicants for Years 3 and 4 may be invited back into school to complete further assessments, in addition to the 'taster day'.

Applicants for Years 5 and 6 will be invited to participate in a 'taster day'. The Registrar will also arrange a 2 hour assessment session for the applicants on a subsequent day. In addition to the assessments, the applicants will attend an interview with the Head of Junior School, and read to her a book of their choice.

The school welcomes enquiries from parents at non-standard times and for all points of entry to Year 1 to Year 6, and will arrange to assess children on an individual basis, following registration, throughout the year as appropriate.

In usual circumstances, pupils automatically transition from the Junior School to Senior School.

#### **i. Year 7 to Year 10 (11+ to 14+ assessment)**

Testing usually takes place in January for entry in September of the following year, though can be throughout the year (after 1 October). Online assessments in Maths, English, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning, Creative Comprehension and Puzzle Solving 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.

It is the intention of the school to make its selection procedures equally accessible to all candidates regardless of religion, ethnicity, disability or background unless the school cannot reasonably make the adjustments required to cater for their needs. Parents are requested to inform the Head in writing of any particular circumstances which might affect a candidate's application.

In usual circumstances, pupils in the Junior School will automatically transition into the Senior School. Year 6 pupils' places for Year 7 will be confirmed in the autumn term of Year 6 for a seamless transition into Senior School.

The school does not publish details of results of admissions tests and, in accordance with data protection legislation, is not obligated to disclose examination scripts. We reserve the right not to disclose candidates' assessment marks or their place on the merit order.

Preparation in advance for admissions assessments is not recommended and the school never releases copies of sample or past papers.

Any meetings with prospective parents do not form part of the selection process, but are to enable the school to provide information, answer any questions, and give an opportunity to state any reason why their child may not perform at their best in the selection process.

Parents are asked to inform us of their ethnic background to help us monitor our admissions processes over time and support us in further ensuring that our systems and procedures are enabling and inclusive to all applicants.

This is not part of the selection process, and there is no disadvantage to a girl if her parents decline to provide this information.

## **ii. Year 11 (15+)**

Applicants at this age are only accepted in exceptional circumstances (such as the closure of another school). The school report and current GCSE courses are taken into careful consideration.

## **iii. Year 12 and 13 (16+)**

Entry to Sixth Form from Year 11 is automatic unless the pupil's GCSE performance is below standard due to poor work ethic, absenteeism or failure to abide by the school's expectations in terms of work rate and effort. Pupils whose performance is adversely affected by illness, bereavement or other personal problems, will be treated sympathetically.

Entry to the Sixth Form is usually based on at least six grade 7s at GCSE along with minimum grade 6 in English and Mathematics (or the equivalent in international qualifications). In all cases, pupils 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.

Entry to Sixth Form for external candidates: we generally require a grade 6 or above at GCSE (or equivalent) for the subjects to be studied at A Level; entrants are expected to have a minimum of six GCSEs at grades 7 - 9 and offers will be made conditional on achieving these grades. Please note for Sixth Form entry we require a minimum of grade 6 in English Language (or the equivalent English qualification). An entrance examination paper (non subject-specific) may be required, administered in examination conditions either at Northampton High School or at the candidate's current place of study. The school will make direct contact with any previous school(s) or educational establishment(s) to request a confidential written reference. This will ask for comments on academic progress to date, involvement in the broader life of the school, general behavioural standards, and specific i/GCSE predicted grades. Collectively, all this information allows the school to make an informed decision as to whether it is the right school academically for each applicant, to meet the needs of its pupils.

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 of study.

## **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 Head, 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 judgement 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.

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.

Under the current GDST 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 siblings 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.

### **Arrangements for Pupils with SEND**

The Trust has established guidelines for its schools on responding to pupils with special educational needs ("SEN"), which are explained in the Trust's Inclusion Policy. All schools have a written policy setting out their approach to identification/support and highlighting any additional costs to parents.

Our Learning Enhancement Coordinator works with the Admissions Department to support arrangements for pupils with SEN sitting entrance examinations.

In this policy “disability” has the meaning set out in the Equality Act 2010, that is, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments to address the individual needs of all pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities as explained in its guidance on the non-premises aspects of disability legislation. Northampton High school has its own accessibility plan, which sets out a structured programme to increase access over time to its facilities, curriculum, and provision of information.

Policy reviewed: September 2024

Policy reviewed by: May Lee, Head

Next Policy Review Due: September 2025