

Ewell Castle School

Admissions Policy



1. Introduction

Ewell Castle School is an Independent Day School providing for boys aged 3 to 18 years and girls aged 3-11years, The school has a Church of England foundation that welcomes pupils of all faiths. Admissions are at the discretion of The Principal or nominated Deputy. Selection criteria are employed at certain ages. This policy endeavours to take into consideration, as appropriate, the legal frameworks set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the subsequent Codes of Practice for Admissions and Appeals. The policy also reflects, in part, the Admissions Policy of the local admissions authorities.

2. Aims & Objectives

This policy aims to:

- 2.1 ensure a simple clear, fair and objective admissions policy;
- 2.2 enable parents to make informed preferences in the choice of school for their child.
- 2.3 inform parents as to their rights with respect to admissions and appeals including those children with special educational needs or disabilities;
- 2.4 identify the School's inclusion policy in respect of the integration of excluded children;
- 2.5 comply with all relevant legislation and guidance in relation to equal opportunities;
- 2.6 be sensitive to the timetables, deadlines and common dates set for the admissions process by the local admissions authorities and independent schools' code of practice;
- 2.7 clearly describe our over-subscription criteria and how they are applied;
- 2.8 explain what is expected from parents, and what the parent can expect from the School at each stage of the admissions process;
- 2.9 provide the name and details of the school contact for the provision of further information.

3. REGISTRATION

Registration of a child for Ewell Castle may be made at any stage. Early registration (for any age) ensures priority placement on Registration List. Interview/assessment is undertaken according to Registration List order, subject to availability of places. For Entry Procedures see separate section.

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4. SELECTION CRITERIA

4.1 Academic

A prospective pupil may be required to give evidence of satisfying certain academic criteria, particularly in Year 5 and above. This could be achieved through assessed using the School's own written papers, by authorised feeder school report and/or by other means to be specified.

[The School supplies information annually of achievements in external examinations at KS2, KS3, KS4, AS and A levels which are published in the (secondary) school performance tables around November and January each year. We recognise that these raw statistical tables and, perhaps more importantly, other value-added tables will be factors in the consideration by parents/guardians towards determination of their preferred school.]

4.2 Non-academic criteria

The ability of a prospective pupil to benefit from and contribute to the life of the school will be a contributory factor in selection. These factors will be assessed by academic but also non-academic means. Personality and sociability are two key elements. For the Senior School entry, character, work ethic, aptitude for sport (particularly those directly relevant to the life of the school) and the arts (music, drama and art) are taken into consideration.

4.3 Summary of criteria

By the means/factors above, the school aims to achieve a balanced entry in order that a cohort has strengths in the academic and non-academic areas.

5 Specific arrangements - Entry

All applications, assessments & offers of places for entry to the Junior & Senior Schools are undertaken on a rolling programme ie. there is no specific day for entrance examinations. [This does not apply to scholarship assessments. See below for detail.] This enshrines the principle that if a pupil is deemed suited [see para.4.1/4.2] to Ewell Castle then, subject to selection criteria being satisfied and places being available, an offer will be made.

5.1 Age/Stage

Applicants are usually considered for the cohort defined by their date of birth/age. There may be circumstances however whereby, with parent's agreement, the place offered is for a year ahead/behind their age. The main criteria will be what stage/year is most suitable for the progress of the individual child/student. Examples of considerations are: academic standard, 'young for the cohort' eg. June-August birthday, fluency in English.

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5.2 Entry to Early Years & Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (3 years of age +)

Children will be invited into school for a half-day in the term before commencement to establish whether they are ready to start Nursery education. Children will be invited into school for a day or half-day in the term before commencement to establish that they are comfortable within the environment.

5.3 Entry to KS2 (7+, Year 3)

Similar criteria apply as above however some assessment may now be undertaken in the course of the day/half-day to identify how the child is able to manage the expectations. Boys seeking to join at this stage are also being assessed in relation to standards required for entry to the Senior School at 11+.

5.4 Entry to KS3 (11+, Year 7)

Assessment for candidates is undertaken according to the registration list beginning in the Autumn Term prior to commencement (Sept) according to the School's own papers in English* (Comprehension & Essay) and Mathematics. These papers will be readily accessible to pupils working at level 4 or above.

5.5 Entry at 13+ (Year 9)

5.5.1 This applies primarily but not exclusively to applicants from Preparatory Schools, who will be assessed by the Common Entrance Examination, in the majority of cases, in June (prior to commencement in Sept). It is expected that pupils will reach a minimum standard of 50% at Common Entrance in core subjects of Mathematics, English and Science. [See 'Offer of Places' for pre-test arrangements for earlier offers.]

5.5.2 Assessment for non-Common Entrance candidates will be according to the School's own papers in English* (Comprehension & Essay) and Mathematics. These papers will be readily accessible to pupils working at level 5/6 or above.

5.5.3 Interviews (and assessments for non-CE candidates) will be undertaken beginning in the Autumn Term prior to commencement.

5.6 Entry at 14+ (Year 10)

Assessment for candidates will be according to the School's own papers in English* (Comprehension & Essay) and Mathematics. These papers will be readily accessible to pupils working at level 6 or above. Assessments and interviews will be undertaken in the Autumn term prior to commencement (in the following Sept.) or later.

5.7 Entry at 16+ (into the Sixth Form)

Assessment for candidates will be according to the School's own papers in the subjects sought for study at AS level and, if necessary, an English assessment. Assessments and interviews will be undertaken in the Autumn term prior to commencement (in the following Sept.), or later. Candidates will be expected to be predicted to achieve a minimum of five GCSE awards A*-C, with B grades in the subjects to be followed, or in associated subjects.

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5.8 Other

- 5.8.1 all prospective parents/guardians will be invited to meet with the Principal or Head of School
- 5.8.2 all pupils applying to the Senior School will normally undertake an interview with the Principal or Head of School.
- 5.8.3 a reference will be sought from the Head Teacher of the current school for any applicant to Ewell Castle.
- 5.8.4 if a pupil is considering moving from another Independent school we ask that the courtesy is extended to the Head of the current school of advising him/her of the interest/application, before a reference is sought by Ewell Castle.
- 5.8.5 parents/guardians of prospective pupils are requested to provide copies of recent school reports (at least the last year at current school)
- 5.8.6 entry to KS4 after the commencement of the GCSE course (at 14+) and to AS/A level courses after the commencement of Sixth Form (16+) is not encouraged, however arrangements can be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.8.7 * see separate arrangements for the assessment of English for pupils for whom English is an alternative language (EAL).

6. Specific Arrangements – Scholarships and Bursaries

6.1 Scholarships and Bursaries (incl. hardship grants)

6.1.1 Scholarships are available for pupils entering the Senior School at Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+) and to the Sixth Form (Year 12, age 16+) and are awarded for fixed periods ie. for 5/3/2 years respectively. Ewell Castle recognises the value of acknowledging and promoting excellence in certain fields, and the status of 'scholar' is significant.

6.1.2 Scholarships are available in the areas of Academic, Art & Design, Drama, Music and All-Rounder. The maximum award is a 20% remission of fees, other awards being 10% or 5%. Applicants must satisfy the school's entry criteria. In the case of academic scholarships a separate competitive examination is sat on a specified date. Separate specific assessments are arranged for the categories of Sport, Art & Design, Drama, Music and Sport. Applications will also be supported by authorised testimonials and/or references.

6.1.3 Scholarships are awarded for Years 7-11 and separately for the Sixth Form, and are subject only to commitment and conduct expected of a scholar in the specific area of the award and to life at school in general incl. towards academic studies.

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6.1.4 Bursaries are awarded, in line with the School's policy on Public Benefit. Ewell Castle seeks to offer means tested awards for children/families in accordance with The Charity Commission's principles that for a fee charging school (charity) :

- the opportunity to benefit is not unreasonably restricted by the ability to pay fees, and that;
- people in poverty are not excluded from the opportunity to benefit.

From September 2010, there are annually two places offered on entry to the Senior School at Year 7, with 100% remission of fees. In these cases contributions towards other costs are also addressed eg. lunches, uniform, 'curriculum trips'. Other awards will have a maximum of 50% remission of fees. Applicants must also satisfy the School's entry criteria and all awards are also subject to the availability of funds and places. Details of other grant awarding trusts and foundations are publicised.

6.1.5 The school's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time of application/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, in which case hardship grants may be offered, subject to means tested criteria and the availability of funds.

6.1.6 Bursaries are offered for the duration of a pupil's education at the school subject to:

- (a) financial circumstances remaining unchanged;
- (b) conditions identified on the declaration made on the Confidential Statement of Financial Circumstances;
- (c) Evidence of support sought from other sources eg. other trusts & foundations.

An annual review of financial circumstances is undertaken.

6.2 Remission of school fees for staff

6.2.1 Children of permanent members of staff at Ewell Castle benefit by a 50% (maximum) remission of fees unaffected by award of scholarship or bursary. Nevertheless, such children may be awarded scholarship status. The remission is reduced pro rata for a part-time member of staff. The pupils are subject to the same selection criteria as in section 4.

6.2.2 Ewell Castle currently enjoys a reciprocal arrangement with Greenacre School whereby at any one time up to two children of members of staff may benefit from the remission of fees for staff as above.

7. *Special Arrangements – Other*

7.1 Over-subscription and over-subscription criteria:

Over-subscription criteria are used when more parents have expressed a preference for the school in a particular school year than the School has available places. The School believes these criteria are clear, fair and objective.

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7.2 Pupils with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD) Special Educational Needs or English as an Alternative Language (EAL)

7.2.1 Admission to Ewell Castle is selective however we are able to offer places to pupils with some LDD, SEN or for whom EAL is appropriate. In such cases, a copy of a valid report from a teacher with a SpLD qualification, from an Educational Psychologist, or other Specialist, or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), should be submitted to the Registrar who will then consult with the Principal/Head of School and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) who leads the Learning Support Department.

7.2.2 Failure to disclose this information may result in the school being unable to offer an adequate level of support. If a pupil is accepted into the school with known specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) or Disability, a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or English as an Additional Language, the School has a duty of care to meet the needs of that pupil within reasonable expectation. The School will then agree with the parents and the pupil how such needs can best be met.

7.2.3 The entry criteria are applied, however compensation is made in respect of the precise nature of the disability/need eg. location and/or nature of assessment, use of ICT or time permitted.

7.2.4 A separate Learning Support (SEN/LDD) Policy is available.

7.3 Overseas applicants

7.3.1 Ewell Castle welcomes overseas pupils residing with parents or guardians in this country. Whilst occasionally short term study programmes are available, the school expects overseas pupils to complete whether ever possible a complete course of study eg. KS4 (Years 7-11) or Sixth Form (Yrs 12 &13).

7.3.2 It is usually expected that an overseas pupil is in the country to undertake entrance assessments. In certain circumstance alternative arrangements can be made.

7.3.3 In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Ewell Castle a certain initial level of fluency in the English language (written & spoken) is required.

7.3.4 A separate EAL Policy is available.

7.4 Siblings

The School welcomes applications from siblings. They are assessed in the normal fashion, but may be given preference against a candidate of equal aptitude in the assessment process; the school reference will also be taken into account. A nominal remission of fees is currently made.

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7.5 The policy in respect of excluded children

Any pupil permanently excluded from another school will be considered for entry to Ewell Castle subject to the usual selection criteria however the Principal will take into account the reason for exclusion and regard for the potential impact upon the existing pupil body and upon the reputation of the school, by the inclusion of such a pupil. If an excluded pupil is accepted into the school the Head of Year (Senior School) or Form Teacher (Junior School) will take particular care with the induction process in respect of this pupil, so as to ensure supported introduction of the pupil.

7.6 The Planned Admission Numbers:

The School's planned admission numbers are the actual minimum numbers that the school intends have on roll in this School Year (nb. roll dependent upon level of applications and subsequent offers, increased acceptances may lead to increased classes and hence increased number.

Junior School: Nursery	32	(Mornings or All day, in Sept.)
Reception to Yr6	32/16	(2/1 classes)
Senior School: Year 7 (11+)	51	based upon three classes of 17
Yr 8	51	
Yr 9 (13+)	66	based upon three classes of 22
Yr 10	66	
Yr 11	66	
Yr 12 (16+)	40	
Yr 13	40	

The School admits pupils from other schools at any age, although standard entry points are Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 3 (7+), Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+), Year 10 (14+) and Year 12 (16+).

8. Offer of Places

The Code of Practice sets out principles agreed by each constituent association of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) in relation to pupils attending, or seeking to attend, schools in membership of one or more associations. (Ewell Castle is a member of SHMIS and IAPS – both associations within ISC.) LEA procedures at 11+ are also acknowledged. Offers are made according to planned admission numbers at:

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- **3 to 10 years** (Junior School) - as available
- **11+**
A first tranche of places will be offered in the Autumn term prior and places not offered and accepted by the first week in March (publication date of LEA school selections) will be offered, according to availability, to those on the waiting list according to selection criteria. (There is no ranking eg. application date, employed prior to application of criteria)
- **13+**
Pre-tests are set in Spring term (5 terms from commencement). Places will only be offered/secured up to three terms prior to commencement (Sept). Most commonly interviews and offers for Common Entrance places will be made in the Autumn Term (3 from entry) prior to commencement (Sept) – conditional or unconditional. Non-CE places are also most commonly made from this time. Initial offers must be accepted by the first week in March.
- **16+**
Places may be secured up from Sept (3 terms from entry).
Places are likely to be conditional upon GCSE results, as para. 5.6 above.
- **otherwise**
It is hoped to offer places, according to availability, within two weeks of interview/assessment.

9. After Acceptance

9.1 Acceptance is accompanied by a non-returnable deposit. This figure is currently: £200 (Nursery/Reception), £750 (13+), otherwise £500 – except for all overseas pupils for whom the deposit is a full term's fees. This deposit is however deducted from the final term's fees.

9.2 If a place is subsequently declined, the first term's fees are also liable unless the School has been able to fill the accepted place by 1 September or date of commencement, whichever is the latest.

9.3 If commencement is in September (beginning of the school year) the Registrar/Secretary of the Junior School will be in contact to supply parents with further detail incl. term dates, uniform list, New Parents' Meetings (June). If commencement is at an alternative time, term dates & uniform list etc. will be conveyed in an appropriate time frame. Parents/Guardians will be required to complete Confidential Pupil Information Sheet.

10. Induction (external arrangements)

10.1 Transfer documentation will be received from a pupils' former school.

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10.2 For pupils joining at the beginning of a new school year a New Parents' Reception is held in the summer term. For Senior School pupils there is also an induction day in June/July. For Junior School pupils a day in school with the appropriate year group was part of the assessment procedure, however further separate and individual arrangements can be made as appropriate.

10.3 For pupils joining mid-year, separate arrangements are made.

10.4 A further New Parents' Reception is arranged in the first half of the autumn term.

11. Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints regarding our admissions process and procedures however the school's complaints procedure is available to you, in which you should write in the first instance to The Principal.

12. School's contractual Terms & Conditions

See the published Conditions of Entry and Acceptance

13. Equal Treatment

13.1 Ewell Castle welcomes pupils from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of the school and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, orientation, property, birth or other status.

13.2 Ewell Castle has a Church of England foundation and we expect all of our pupils to attend our Church Services and School Assemblies – which may take the form of an act of collective worship, unless permission not to do so has been agreed with the Head of School. However, we welcome equally pupils with other faiths and indeed we offer the opportunity for pupils to practice their own faiths eg. for Jews, Hindus & Muslims.

14. Contact

For the provision of further information contact : Mrs D Bellenger (School Registrar) on admissions@ewellcastle.co.uk or 020 8394 3561

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