



# Admissions Policy

**Review cycle:** Two Years

**Last Review Date:** Mar 2021

**Next Review Date:** Oct 2022

**Staff responsible:** Lucy Walton (Registrar & Director of Communications)

**Governor responsible:** Meredith Brickwood, Chair of Governors

**(This policy applies to the whole School including EYFS)**



## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

### **GENERAL**

Willington School is an independent preparatory school with around 230 pupils and small class sizes. On 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the Governors announced exciting changes for the future of Willington. These comprise:

1. From September 2020, Willington will open a co-educational Nursery and will introduce girls into Reception.
2. From September 2021, we will become an 11+ school with all pupils leaving at the end of Year 6 to their Senior School.
3. By September 2026, we will be a fully co-educational school for pupils aged 3 to 11.

Willington seeks to develop its pupils in a wide range of areas, including physically, personally, morally and culturally, through a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the Willington School motto, 'We learn not for School but for life'.

Families are invited to visit the School, either by booking a private appointment with the Headmaster which, if required, may be an online Zoom meeting, or attending an Open Morning.

It is a requirement of our admissions policy that we meet all families and children before offers of places are given (see Entry Procedure below).

### **THE ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE – EARLY YEARS**

From September 2021, we are offering the 15 hours Free Entitlement Funding for all eligible pupils from three years old. The hours for this offer are 8.30am to 11.30am from Monday to Friday (three hours daily). Parents are not able to use the funding for education outside these hours. Additional hours each day will be charged according to the current fee for the Early Years. For parents wishing their child to attend for just the 15 hours provided, there will be a limit of three pupil places each academic year. There will be a waiting list for any pupils above this allocation, with siblings given priority and a first-come-first-served basis after that.

From September 2020, most pupils will join the School at the age of 3 into Nursery, or at the age of 4 into Reception with others joining up to the age of 7 into Year 3.

Registration - prospective pupils may be registered for admission at any time after birth. The Registration Form, available online at [www.willingtonschool.co.uk/registration](http://www.willingtonschool.co.uk/registration), should be completed and submitted with the non-refundable Registration Fee of £150.

### **Entry into the Nursery (3+)**

All children registered for the Nursery will be invited to attend a Nursery Session in the Spring Term prior to starting. This session allows us to ensure that the child will thrive in our unique environment. Offers of places will be sent to families following these sessions. We aim to take 16 children into our Nursery. Places will be allocated with the School's co-educational status in mind and following the return of the signed Parent Contract and deposit payment. Once all available places have been allocated, later applications will be added to a waiting list. If circumstances dictate, home visits will be carried out in lieu of a Nursery Session. Children joining the Nursery are expected to transition to our Reception class, unless under exceptional circumstances.



### **Entry into Reception (4+) for September 2022 onwards.**

All children registered for Reception will be invited to attend a Stay and Play Session, 18 months in advance of their expected start date. This session allows us to ensure that our academic environment is right for a child to progress happily and successfully, taking into consideration individual learning styles and relevant reports. Offers of places will be sent following these sessions. We will typically offer around 20 places into Reception, as children from our Nursery will be automatically enrolled into this year group. Places will be allocated with the School's co-educational status in mind and following the return of the signed Parent Contract and deposit payment. Once all available places have been allocated, later applications will be added to a waiting list.

### **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE - OCCASIONAL PLACES**

Parents looking for places outside the normal entry points of Nursery and Reception should contact Lucy Walton to determine space availability. Academic assessment for occasional places in Year 1 and above is required in order to ensure a prospective pupil can access and benefit from our broad curriculum at an age appropriate academic level. The application and assessment process includes:

1. Registration
2. Recent report from the present school
3. Attendance at a Taster Day/Morning within the proposed cohort
4. Satisfactory completion of standardised assessments in both Maths and English
5. Confidential pupil reference from present school, confirming satisfactory attitude and conduct on the part of parents and applicant.

Remote assessments may be offered to applicants overseas, or, where circumstances dictate. In order for new joiners to fully participate in our programme of 11+ preparation, we do not accept new pupils to Years 5 and 6, unless under exceptional circumstances.

### **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE - YEAR 3 (7+)**

Due to the number of applicants for places at 7+, pupils will be invited to attend a formal review morning in the Autumn Term of Year 2 based on the standard application process for occasional places (see above). Pupils will also undertake a team building activity and an interview with a senior member of staff. Places will be awarded on the basis of space availability, assessment results and feedback from members of staff.

### **CLASS SIZES**

Willington pupils benefit from small class sizes with a preferred maximum of 18. However, in exceptional circumstances the school may make it possible for a class to exceed this if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the children involved.

### **EQUAL TREATMENT**

Willington School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion, disability or social background. The School's aim 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. A limited number of means-tested Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for



deserving pupils, whose parents might otherwise be unable to afford the fees, to attend the School. Further details are available from the Bursar on [bursar@willingtonschool.co.uk](mailto:bursar@willingtonschool.co.uk).

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY, LEARNING SUPPORT & SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

We welcome pupils with SEND or Learning Support needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support they require. All pupils must meet our admissions criteria and be able to access and benefit from our broad curriculum at an age appropriate academic level.

Relevant reports, such as Educational Psychology or medical reports and school or nursery reports should be submitted at registration for review by the SENCO. Provision will be made, where necessary, for Access Arrangements to be put in place for entrance testing.

### **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

We are proud to be a school with a diverse community. To meet the demands of our academic curriculum, pupils must have enough familiarity with English to pass our entrance requirements.

### **OUT OF YEAR**

We expect all pupils to enter our School in the appropriate year with their peers. The year is determined by the age of the pupil on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Therefore, pupils born on 1<sup>st</sup> September will be the oldest in the year group and pupils born on 31<sup>st</sup> August will be the youngest in the year group. Where parents wish to make out-of-year requests, the School will require details of exceptional circumstances and will assess these on a case-by-case basis.

### **SIBLINGS**

Willington has a strong family ethos. Siblings are offered priority places to the Reception and Nursery, subject to the usual entry requirements being met.

We currently have about 50 younger pupils receiving the sibling discount of 10% of the fees.

### **MEANS-TESTED BURSARIES**

The School offers a limited number of means-tested Bursaries, either for potential pupils whose parents declare in advance that they would otherwise be unable to afford the full fees, or for current pupils whose family circumstances change unexpectedly. Levels of bursary support awarded take into account the family income and assets, the family circumstances and the pupil benefit. In the most extreme circumstances, Bursary support can be as much as 100% of the fees. Parents who might need Bursary support should email [bursar@willingtonschool.co.uk](mailto:bursar@willingtonschool.co.uk) for an application form.

### **RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

Although Willington School has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief and it welcomes pupils from all religious backgrounds.



## **SCHOOL'S CONTRACTUAL TERMS & CONDITIONS**

Copies of the School's contractual terms and conditions are available on the School's website and will be sent to parents as part of the admissions process.

## **COMPLAINTS**

The School hopes that parents and pupils do not have any complaints about the School's admissions process; but copies of the School's complaints procedure are available on the website and can be sent to parents on request.

Review period:           Annual

Review by:           Registrar