BUTE HOUSE
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

Person responsible	**Head**
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1. Introduction and Aims

This Policy applies equally to admissions into the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception Class), Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as taught at Bute House Preparatory School (the School).

The normal age for admission is either at four years, via a ballot system, or at seven years, via 7+ assessment, and the first requirement for admission is registration on the appropriate form, which can be found on the website.

Before making an application, it is expected that parents will have sought to understand the School's non-competitive academic ethos and be able to demonstrate a commitment to its approach.

The School accepts registrations for, and places pupils in, their correct academic year. Requests for pupils to be placed outside of their correct academic year may be considered by the Head in consultation with the Head of Phase and the parents, and actioned only if the School believes it is in the best interests of the child. Some senior schools may not accept pupils at 11+ out of their usual academic year so this needs to be taken into consideration when making a decision.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Positive Behaviour Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Learning Enrichment Policy and the Parent Contract - available on the website.

The aim is to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to apply for a place for their daughter at the School and to admit children who will benefit from, and contribute to, the ethos and activities of the school community including the School's charitable work. Evaluating potential, teachability and curiosity are equally important in the assessment process at 7+. No parent or pupil will be discriminated against – see section 4 on Equality, Diversity and Disability.

2. Scope and Responsibilities

The Head, alongside the Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head and Assistant Head, Heads of Phase, Registrar and Assistant Registrar are responsible for the admissions process. All final decisions on admissions rest with the Head. The Governing Body assumes overall responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

3. Equality, Diversity and Disability

The School will undertake to do all that is reasonable to ensure its culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to applicants who have disabilities, and to comply with the legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, in order to accommodate the needs of applicants.

Admission to part of the School is selective. The School must feel confident that a prospective pupil will benefit from the education offered so that there is no reasonable doubt at the time of admission that she will have a complete, happy and successful school career.

Both at the application stage and also later in the admissions process, parents should notify the School of any disability or special educational needs affecting their daughter of which the School should be aware. The parents of a child with an existing Learning Difficulty and Disability,

Educational Psychologist's report and/or an Educational Health Care Plan (or Educational Statement) are requested to submit copies of such papers to the Registrar, who will then consult with the Learning Enrichment Coordinator. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis.

Applications for a place at the School will be considered on the basis that reasonable adjustments have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's special educational needs and/or a disability.

The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, it will not be able to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs. The School shall inform the parents of the decision and provide details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

If the School becomes aware of special educational needs and/or a disability after admission, it will do all that is reasonable to assist the pupil, which may include making reasonable adjustments.

If the School feels it cannot provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the parents may be asked to withdraw the pupil, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with the acceptance deposit returned. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

Applications from parents from all backgrounds, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion, disability, social background and culture are welcomed.

Every pupil accepted at the School will be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities. Every pupil should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi-ethnic society and in the wider context of an interdependent world.

4. Admissions Register

A confidential admissions register is kept for each candidate in accordance with data protection legislation and the School's privacy notice (*see the rights of users*) available on the website.

The School maintains an admissions register for pupils accepted at the School and informs the local authority (Hammersmith and Fulham) of any pupils added to, or deleted from, the admissions register, in accordance with the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.*

5. Admissions Process

An introductory morning meeting to explain the ballot procedure and the ethos and aims of the School is arranged during the Autumn Term for parents who are registered for entry at 4 years old. There is a similar meeting during the Autumn Term for parents of 7+ entrants. Four Open Days are held during the Summer Term. Two of the mornings are for 4+ applicants and two for 7+ applicants; however, this is flexible as required in order that as many prospective parents as possible can attend.

All parents whose daughters are drawn in the ballot or who are called back for interview after the 7+ assessment, who have not had the opportunity to tour the School, will be invited to an Open Morning or given a personal tour.

Reception (4+)

Entry to Reception at 4 years old is through a ballot which is drawn from registrations received before the published closing date.

Parents register their daughters by completing a registration form which may be sent to the School any time from the birth of the child to 30 September of the academic year (i.e. 1 September to 31 August) in which the child will become 3 years old. Registration forms must be accompanied by a copy of the child's birth certificate and the registration fee of £150 plus VAT. All registrations are then entered into the ballot at the appropriate time.

The ballot is drawn by the Chair of Governors in the October two years prior to the year of entry. The Head, The Registrar and a representative from the School's auditors are also present. There are 24 pupils in the Reception class so the number of names drawn in the ballot varies each year, depending on the number of siblings who qualify for a place (see section below Procedure for Siblings). In addition to the names drawn for entry, a further twelve names are drawn to create a waiting list. Subsequently, if a place becomes available in Reception or Years 1 or 2, and there are no siblings waiting, the place will be offered to the next person on the drawn waiting list.

All four-year-old entry registrations will be held in their correct year groups and entered in the ballot at the appropriate time. All successful families are invited to the School to meet the Head or a senior member of staff. Unsuccessful families are informed as soon as possible, and their daughter's name will automatically be transferred to the waiting list for entry at age seven years. Following the meeting with the Head, a formal offer is made and should be accepted within 2 weeks. The deposit should be paid within this time frame to secure the place.

Procedure for Siblings

The School's sibling procedure is as follows: if a child, who is registered for the 4+ ballot, has a sister currently in the School, or a sister who was in the School at the time she was registered, then she will be eligible for a place in Reception. If the ballot has already been drawn, the younger child has priority over the normal waiting list if a place becomes available in Reception, Years 1 or 2. If there is more than one sibling on the waiting list, the School will offer to the sibling who was registered first in chronological date order. Each registration carries a sequential number, assigned on the date of registration and a place will, therefore, be offered to the sibling with the lowest registration number.

There is no sibling policy for entry at 7+; if the candidate is the sister of a child already in the School, she has to pass the assessment on her own merit.

Entry at 7+

Parents register their daughters by completing a registration form which may be sent to the School any time from the birth of the child to 31 October of the academic year (i.e. 1 September to 31 August) when the child will be 7 years old. Registration forms must be accompanied by a copy of the child's birth certificate and the registration fee of £150 plus VAT. Children who were unsuccessful at 4+ do not need to be re-registered at 7+, however there is an additional assessment fee of £125 plus VAT to be paid, along with the completion of an Assessment Confirmation form, before each child can become a confirmed candidate for 7+ assessment.

Children who are entered for 7+ undergo a bespoke assessment created by the School. The process includes Maths and English activities appropriate to the Year 2 curriculum. Some elements are covered during an assessment morning held in January (this may be online or on site) and others during an interview for those children selected to move forwards to that stage. Applicants are divided into small groups of children with similar months of birth whether the test is online or on site. There are at least two adults supervising, helping and observing each group. During the assessment, the children are encouraged to ask for help if they need it. It is acknowledged that, having come from a wide range of schools, children will have been taught in different ways and some of their strengths and weaknesses are more likely to be a reflection of this, rather than of their potential. Information about the process will be shared at the September 7+ Information Meeting held for parents of children in Year 2 at their current schools.

Following the assessment, approximately 80 children are invited back for interview. Each child has a short interview with a senior member of staff and will be asked some questions, standard to all, as well as reading from a selection of books and discussing the text. Clear notes are kept on each interview and a standard form completed. Parents then meet with the senior member of staff to discuss their aspirations for their daughter and ask questions Approximately 48 places are offered and a waiting list of up to twelve pupils is created. When an offer is made, this should be formally accepted and the deposit paid within a 2- week timeframe to secure the place. If an offer is not accepted during this time frame, the school reserves the right to withdraw the offer and offer to the next pupil on the waiting list.

Occasional Places (Lower School & Middle School)

Occasional places are very rare but, in such cases, siblings will be given priority consideration. Entry into the Middle School occurs following an assessment and interview, a process similar to that for 7+. Candidates must still pass the assessment and are not guaranteed a place.

Children who are offered a place at the School will usually begin at the start of the following term; there are exceptions to this in specific circumstances and at the Head's discretion. Children are not admitted into the Upper School (Years 5 & 6) because it does not give them enough time to settle into the School and gain the most out of the teaching before moving on to their senior schools.

6. Admissions Criteria

The School will only make an offer of a place if one is available and in order to be considered for admission, the candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Successfully drawn in the ballot (4+)
- Successful performance in the School's assessment tasks and second stage interview relative to other applicants (7+ and Middle School)
- Demonstrate a commitment to the School's ethos and that the child will make a positive contribution to the school community
- Any special needs and/or disabilities have been discussed with the School and can be met by the School
- If English is not the first language, candidates must demonstrate that they have a satisfactory level of spoken and written English in order to engage in the curriculum and School life, and parents agree to additional EAL support if it is deemed necessary (see EAL Policy)
- If an offer of a place is made and there are conditional requirements – for example, regular small group support or 1:1 support for either English or Maths, parents must agree to support the School's recommendation
- All fees due at the candidate's current school, if applicable, have been settled
- The candidate has the legal right to live and study in the UK and plans to progress through the School; subject to the child meeting the required standards of behaviour and achievement, and the School continuing to be able to meet their needs (the School does not sponsor Tier 4 student visa applications)

7. Monitoring and Review

The Head, Senior Leadership Team, Head of Middle School and Registrar will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy, and associated procedures, and training is provided on a yearly basis to all staff involved in these procedures. The Policy will also be subject to critical review by the Governing Body on an annual basis. The date of the next review is shown on the first page.