

Admissions Policy

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Responsible for Initiating Review of Policy	SLT
Committee to Review	Governors
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Related Policies	2e SEND – whole school statement 2e (i) SEND Policy EYFS 2e (ii) SEND Policy Prep School 2e (iii) SEND Policy Senior & Sixth Form 17b School Accessibility Policy 17bi. School Accessibility Plan

Burgess Hill Girls is a selective independent school for girls between the ages of 4 and 18 years. There are day students and boarding students, the latter from Year 7 upwards. The school operates a nursery, under the name of Burgess Hill Nursery, for boys and girls aged 2.5–4 years. All admissions are in line with the Early Years statutory requirements.

The school consistently achieves excellent academic results at GCSE and at A Level and looks for candidates who will cope with the demands of the academic programme as well as making the best use of all opportunities the school has to offer.

LIST OF KEY TERMINOLOGY:

Nursery – 2.5 to 4 years old

Prep School – Reception to Year 6

Senior School – Year 7 to Year 11

Sixth Form – Year 12 to Year 13

Main School – Up to Year 13, excluding Nursery

OVERVIEW:

The admissions policy of Burgess Hill Girls is that:

- The school is committed to equal opportunities in education.
- The school 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.
- The school welcomes a diverse range of students, providing opportunities for a wide variety of learners. 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. Such examinations and assessments are expected to be free of bias, and due consideration will be given to individual needs and prior educational experience in making any decision on the offer of a place. In exceptional circumstances, the school may adjust their established selection processes, provided that there is sufficient justification in doing so and the alternative procedure adheres to principles of fairness and transparency.
- The final decision regarding admissions rests with the Head, who reserves the right to decline to offer a place on grounds other than academic potential (e.g. a student's record at a previous school)

- Admission into Main School will last until the student completes year 13 unless notice is given in writing to the Head with one term's notice.
- In all circumstances an acceptance form must be completed before the student can join the school.

ENQUIRIES

It is recommended that prospective students and their parents/guardian visit the school before making an application. Video calls are available for families located overseas.

REGISTRATION

Applicants for Burgess Hill Nursery are required to complete an online registration form and make payment of a £90 registration fee (non-refundable).

Applicants for Burgess Hill Girls are required to make payment of a £180 registration fee (non-refundable). This is with the exception of applicants who are only making an application for the BOLD Award which provides a fully funded day place to the successful applicant.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

A family who have multiple children in main school at the same time are entitled to discount as follows (please note that any children in the nursery will not be included).

- Two children – 10%
- Three children – 15%
- Four children – 20%

ENTRY INTO NURSERY

Once a Nursery registration form and registration fee have been received the child will be placed on the holding list. The Nursery Manager would then be in touch at least one term prior to the family's ideal start date to confirm whether a place will be offered.

Places are offered in the following priority order:

Priority for Nursery places is given to girls. Girls who have committed to join the Pre-Prep & Prep will receive priority on Nursery places.

Boys and girls may attend for up to five 'school days' or 'long days', during school term dates or 51 weeks a year.

Where there is a high demand for Nursery & Main School registrations the less likely we will be able to accommodate exact requests.

ENTRY INTO PREP SCHOOL

All students admitted to the Prep School are assessed in a way appropriate to their age group. It is understood that students sitting entrance assessments may have come from a range of schools, and that all may not have had the same opportunities. For this reason, offers of places are not given purely on the results of assessment. Previous school reports are also considered as part of the application process.

Once in the Prep School, a student will have a place for entry into the Senior School subject to their successful performance in the academic selection process. During Year 5, if there are any concerns regarding a student's ability to access the Senior School curriculum, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head of the Prep School and the Head of the Senior School to discuss the situation and the options available.

ENTRY INTO SENIOR SCHOOL

External entry to Years 7, 8, and 9 is determined by nationally standardised computer adaptive assessments (CAT4) and the school's own additional papers in Mathematics and English.

Entry into Year 10 or 11 can be considered but is dependent on a student's educational background and subject selection. Students joining these year groups must demonstrate high academic abilities. Entrance testing will again consist of a CAT4 test, and the school's own papers in Mathematics and English.

The results of the assessments for all year groups, together with a report from the current school, are used to assess whether the school can provide an appropriate curriculum and cater for the needs of the individual student. On occasion an informal interview with a member of the Senior Leadership team may also be required.

PRE-TESTING FOR SENIOR SCHOOL

Pre-testing can be arranged for students in Year 5 onwards to secure a place in Senior School. Pre-testing consists of a CAT4 test and a written task. If a provisional offer is made then the student would still be required to sit the annual entrance exams the year proceeding their start date, to help the school construct sets. The scholarship assessment process would also take place at this time.

ENTRY INTO SIXTH FORM

Entry to the Sixth Form is based upon an initial screening using CAT4 (Level G) during the application process, a candidate's subsequent performance at GCSE or equivalent, an interview with the Head of Sixth Form and a reference from the applicant's current school. Candidates should gain a minimum of a Grade 5 in both English Language and Mathematics, and a further five GCSEs graded 6/7 or above. Where outcomes are below this threshold the decision of an offer lies with the Head of Sixth Form. Those students applying for a drama, art, music, or sport scholarship must achieve the required academic level to be considered.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

If English is not a student's first language, they will only be admitted to the school on demonstration that their English is strong enough to permit them to study successfully. EAL students applying for a place in Senior School or Sixth Form will sit an EAL Paper (in place of the standard English paper), Mathematics paper and a CAT4 test. An online or in-person interview will also be conducted. They will then be assessed again on arrival at the school. Additional EAL lessons may be organised for them and parents billed accordingly.

SHORT-STAY BOARDING ALLOCATION

Students who apply for our short-term boarding courses (minimum of one term) are not required to sit entrance examinations. Assessment is based on the student's most recent school report, a reference from their current school and an online or in-person interview.

In the interest of preparing effectively for their arrival, we require short term boarding students who speak English as a second language to take an English Language assessment prior to their arrival.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

Prep School Scholarships:

Prep School academic and music scholarships are available for students moving into year 5 or year 6. If awarded these are valid until the end of year 8.

Senior School Scholarships:

Students looking for entry into year 7 or Year 9 can apply for art, drama, music, and sport scholarships. Applicants who take part in the entrance exam assessment day will automatically be considered for an academic scholarship based on the results of their entrance papers. If awarded these are valid until end of year 11.

Sixth Form Scholarships:

Students looking for entry into Sixth Form can apply for academic, art, drama, music, and sport scholarships. Applicants from a state school can apply for the BOLD Award, which is a 100% fully funded day place into Sixth Form. If awarded Sixth Form scholarships are valid until the end of year 13.

Bursaries (available for day students only):

The school's bursary programme is generous and is designed, as far as practicable, to make it possible for those who meet the entry criteria to take up a place at the school.

The school offers means-tested awards annually to students at the usual points of entry. Bursaries are means-tested by an independent assessor, and they require parents to provide proof of their income and assets.

The level of support varies according to parental need; most bursaries awarded are typically in the range of 10% to 50% but can be higher in exceptional circumstances.

Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide recent information about their circumstances for every year that their child attends the school. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms of the award or otherwise in accordance with the school's terms and conditions.

The bursary policy can be obtained from the Director of Finance and Operations.

MID-YEAR START

Students can join mid-year, subject to availability. Entrance testing, if applicable, would be arranged on an individual basis. It is not possible for students joining mid-year to be considered for a scholarship unless they join the school at a point in which the annual scholarship assessments have not yet taken place.

KEY STAGE TRANSFERS

Arrangements for transfer between key stages (e.g. from prep school to senior school or senior school to sixth form) are subject to the school's terms and conditions.

Continuity of education is anticipated normally throughout each age range (i.e. the prep and senior schools) and at the key stages of transfer unless in the opinion of the Head after due deliberation the student 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. A minimum of one term's written notice should be given and fees in lieu of notice should not be charged in respect of any student who has been sent a letter notifying them that transfer into the next stage may not be possible.

Any communication of this kind would normally have been preceded by several discussions (and follow up confirmation in writing) with parents about their daughter's progress and any targets to be met should transfer be in doubt.

Factors such as poor behaviour or lack of motivation on the part of the student or a complete breakdown of the necessary relationship of trust and confidence between the family and the school may be taken into account. As a term of the parent contract, parents and students agree to be bound by the school rules and to support the school in maintaining its ethos and good standards of behaviour.

Specific procedures for certain key stages of transfer are summarised below:

Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

As well as the regular evaluation of a student's progress, the school Head should formally review the progress of students at the end of Key Stage 1:

- to identify students who were admitted to the nursery and who have not made satisfactory progress; and
- to pick up early warning signs that students may not reach the appropriate standard for transfer to the senior school.

It is unlikely that parents will wish to remove a child at this stage, but the Head of the school will keep clear channels of communication with parents as soon as they are aware of any potential issues with transfer and to put any necessary remedial plans in place. If they do not contact parents at this stage, they will continue to monitor the student formally, with a view to talking to parents no later than the end of Year 4 if there are continuing concerns.

Any discussions with parents will be followed up in writing and the letter should contain:

- a clear notification if a transfer is not recommended.
- an indication of the student's current level of attainment and position in relation to the peer group.
- the standards to be attained on transfer; and
- an indication of what strategies have been agreed.

Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3

In the case of Year 6 to Year 7 transfer, parents will be advised in writing before the end of Year 5 of the targets to be attained for entry into Year 7. If transfer is not considered appropriate no less than one term's written notice must be given. However, the school will communicate with parents as soon as they are aware of any potential issue with transfer, and to consider the issues with particular care if the student has special educational needs or a disability.

The written notification at the end of Year 5 will be preceded by a meeting. Parents will be given clear advice on how the school will support the student and monitor progress. Parents will subsequently be advised on any progress.

If the student has not attained the clearly identified standards, the Head will write to the parents immediately and in any case no later than the spring half term, to confirm that in the opinion of the Head the student has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at the school and that therefore formal notice is being given.

Post 16 Transfers

Transfers into the Sixth Form are subject to meeting entry requirements for A-Level study, please see above, together with a meeting with the Head of Sixth Form.

ACCEPTANCE

To accept the offer of a place parents or guardians are required to review the terms and conditions, make payment of the deposit, and complete the acceptance form. The only instance in which a deposit is not required is for the recipient of the BOLD Award (this is a dedicated award that offers students from state schools to apply for a fully funded day place in the Sixth Form).

The acceptance form must be signed by all parties with parental responsibility, if this is not possible then a cover letter and supporting documentation must be provided; the school will then advise accordingly.

The deposit amount will be indicated on the acceptance form.

NOTICE PERIODS

Admission into Main School (see list of key terminology at the top of this document) will last until the student completes year 13 unless notice is given in writing to the Head with one term's notice. This is to be given before the first day of a term and expiring at the end of that term. One term's notice must also be given in the instance of a student changing boarding status. Failure to provide the required notice will result in fees in lieu of notice equating to one term's fees.

Nursery notice must be given in writing to the Nursery Manager, and received with at least eight weeks written notice, for cancellation of a place or reduction of current sessions at the Nursery. Failure to give written notice will result in fees in lieu of notice equating to two months' fees.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The school encourages applications from candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for today's world. Burgess Hill Girls is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community. The school recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law, in line

with the 1976 Race Relations Act and in line with the Equality Act 2010; all candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their or their parents' age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, language, religion or belief, national or social origin, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The school has due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and welcomes applications from students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The school requires parents of children with suspected or confirmed special educational needs (e.g., with an educational psychologist's or other specialist assessor's report, educational health care plan, specific learning need or physical disability) to discuss all potential requirements at the point of registration so that reasonable adjustments can be considered.

The school will make reasonable adjustments such as additional time for prospective and scholarship students, provided that the school has been informed in advance and there is documented evidence of need, such as an educational psychologist's assessment or an assessment by a teacher with recognised specialist SEN qualifications.

A place will only be offered if it is considered that the school is a suitable environment, and the Learning Support department in its resources, expertise and timetable has the space and ability to fully support these needs for the duration of the child's time at the school. With the exception of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for public exams, all costs for additional specialist individual needs provision will be borne by the parents.

The school also welcomes students with disabilities provided the site can meet their needs.