



Croydon High School GDST
Whole School Admissions Policy
(For entry September 2023 onwards)

Responsibility for review: Director of External Relations / Head

Last review: September 2023

Next review: July 2024

This policy informs practice in the Senior and Junior Departments of the School including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Croydon High School is an independent day school for girls. It is part of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), the largest educational charity in the country with twenty-five schools. Croydon High School offers a rich academic education and a broad extra-curricular programme for girls aged from 3 to 18.

Girls are admitted to all year groups in the Junior School, including the nursery and reception class within the Early Years Foundation Stage, and to Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 in the Senior School every September. However, we will consider applications made at any time during the year if places are available within the entry year group, with the general exception of Years 11 and 13.

We are committed to equal opportunities in education. No girl at, or applicant to, the School receives more, or less, favourable treatment on grounds of race, nationality, colour, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, religion or creed.

We seek to admit girls whom we consider to be capable of benefiting from the education provided at the School and of contributing fully to the life of the School, and who have the level of intelligence and the personal attributes to flourish in this environment.

Our concern is to act in a girl's best interests and to foster good relations with parents and guardians.

Registration

Early registration is advised for entry at all ages. There are Open Days throughout the year to which we invite prospective pupils and their parents; personal visits can also be arranged at other times. The School is happy to accept registrations at any point, however far in the future a pupil plans to join us and pupils of all ages may also be accepted into the School out of the usual 'cycle' of applications into Years:

Nursery, Reception, 3, 7, 9 and Lower Sixth. Regardless of when the application or offer is made, the School welcomes but does not require acceptance of the offer before 1st January in the year prior to the academic year of entry, meaning deposits can be refunded if the place is rejected before this date.

Applications are only accepted on the School's application form. A non-refundable registration fee of £100 is payable to the School on application, and a deposit of £750 is payable on acceptance of a place. Letters offering places also give a deadline for acceptance. This registration fee and sometimes also the deposit may be waived, at the Head's discretion, for applicants for a bursary place.

The deposit will be returned to parents when their daughter leaves the School subject to all books and equipment being returned in good condition and all fees having been paid.

Applications must meet the requirements of the UKVI and our Admissions team will be able to assist in this process. If and when a place is offered, evidence of a valid visa or other relevant immigration permission will be required for all candidates who are not British or Irish citizens.

Senior School Procedures

Our admission procedure has the following elements:

- Competitive entry tests
- Interviews or discussion activities suited in style to the year group of entry, for example, as part of a group discussion for Year 7 or a discussion with Deputy Head (Sixth Form) for Sixth Form.
- Character and academic references. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at school, e.g. NFER and SATs, and predicted grades e.g. at GCSE, as appropriate. A candidate's application will not be prejudiced if a reference is not forthcoming from the current school
- Disability assessments (if applicable)
- For those who qualify for extra time in tests and assessments and have both a report from an Educational Psychologist AND are authorised for extra time following a discussion with our SENDCO, extra time will be allowed in entrance tests in line with guidelines set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). This report or indeed, any information that comes through this channel, is not used to help determine academic suitability but rather to provide for the prospective pupils' needs appropriately.

The School may operate a slightly different admissions process for those joining outside of the normal entry points but this will be clarified by the Admissions Registrar on application.

The preconditions for admission are that:

- The Applicant is in sympathy with the ethos of the School
- The Applicant has met the academic criteria
- The Applicant is of the appropriate age and sufficient maturity
- The Applicant's learning difficulties and/or disabilities (if any) can be supported effectively and in the best interests of the applicant
- The current school reports satisfactory attitudes and conduct
- The reference may also include the results of tests taken at school, e.g. NFER and SATs, and predicted grades e.g. at GCSE, as appropriate
- A satisfactory interview at Croydon High
- Fees (if applicable) at the present school have been paid

The preference factors subject to the above are:

- That the Applicant has special aptitudes or gifts. The School is looking for well-rounded and balanced girls and those with exceptional abilities in sports, music, drama and the arts
- Croydon High is the first choice of school

If we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our requirements after all appropriate allowances and special consideration has been given, we may give preference to a girl:

- who already has a sister in the School

- whose mother is a former pupil here
- whose parent is a current member of staff

Where twins apply to the School their applications will be considered separately but in the event of one twin being successful and the other unsuccessful, the Head will consult their parents before making offers, to avoid unnecessary distress. Twins will generally be placed in different classes.

Arrangements may be made for an overseas applicant to sit entrance papers under supervision in her current school. Candidates reaching the required standard will be invited to attend for an interview.

Occasionally we may offer places to girls one year ahead or behind their standard year group if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the girl.

For entry to the Junior School, a girl's age within the year group, especially if one of the youngest, may be taken into consideration.

Some candidates may not receive immediate offers but will be informed that they have been placed on the waiting list. Offers will be made to them, in rank order, if places become available.

The Head's decision on admission is final.

Equal treatment

We welcome girls 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 our School community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion, area of residence or socio-economic group. We expect all of our pupils to attend our School assemblies.

Accessibility

In accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy, the School will make reasonable adjustments to the admissions process for candidates with special educational needs/disability (SEND) or medical diagnosis.

Specialist reports will be required along with evidence from their current school that reasonable adjustments are their normal way of working. This is in line with the current policy on Exam Access Arrangements set by The Joint Council for Qualifications.

The Head of Academic Support and Neurodiversity works closely with our Admissions team to ensure that the School can offer the provision required should that candidate be accepted. For successful candidates who have specific needs, the School will undertake to make reasonable adjustments for their barriers to learning in so far as these can be met, given the nature and character of the School.

- Parents should contact our Admissions Team to discuss any special arrangements which would

be required in respect of the assessment process.

- Parents must, as soon as possible in the application process, inform the School in writing of any particular known or suspected special circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties, or other circumstances so that the School may make an assessment of suitability as to whether it can meet these needs.

Junior School Assessments & Offers

Parents seeking admission for their children are welcome to have a tour of the Junior School. Those wishing to make an application should complete the registration form and return it to the Junior Admissions Registrar with a cheque for the registration fee.

Assessment

Early Years

Girls can be admitted into the Nursery in the term in which they turn 3.

Candidates for admission at 3+ and 4+ are invited to spend part of a day in the Early Years classes. During this time an assessment will be made of the girls' general abilities and their personal and social development and behaviour to ensure they are sufficiently developed. Admission into Nursery is dependent on the child being able to manage toileting with minimal support.

Entry at Year 1 and above

Candidates for admission at Year 1 and above are invited to spend a morning or a day in the Junior School. Candidates are always assessed for the year group appropriate to their chronological age. During this time at School, an assessment will be made of the girls' personal and social development and behaviour as well as their progress to date in Literacy and Numeracy.

The entry assessment will involve a review of the pupil's ability in:

- Reading comprehension
- Mathematics

Parents are requested to inform the Head of Junior School in writing of any circumstances which might affect a candidate's application e.g., IEP, Educational Psychologist's report, unusual family situation etc. Professional evaluation allows for some reduced performance on vocabulary related tests, where children have English as an additional language.

We do not provide specimen papers as all questions relate to the National Curriculum.

Following assessment, parents will be informed by letter as to whether or not their child will be offered a place in the Junior School.

Upon receipt of an offer letter, parents are asked to confirm their acceptance by returning the completed forms and enclosing a deposit, which is retained until their daughter leaves the School.

Senior School Assessments & Offers

For the Senior School, both internal and external applicants must follow an entry procedure.

Transfer from Croydon High Junior School at 11+

Unless otherwise indicated, transfer of Junior School pupils to the Senior School is anticipated. Where it is deemed that the girl is academically unsuited to the Senior School, discussions will be held with parents in the Spring Term of Year 5 or earlier. Parents are notified in writing by the end of the Spring Term in Year 5. **Girls deemed academically able to transfer will not be required to sit the Entrance Examination.** The only exception to this rule is when a girl is wishing to be considered for academic scholarship or bursary. She will then be expected to sit the Entrance Examination. Girls who join the School during Year 6 may be expected to sit the Entrance Examination for transfer to the Senior School. This is at the discretion of the Head of the Senior School.

External candidates: entry at 11+

Visitors' Afternoons for 11+ entry are held throughout the year prior to entry in September. Open events for girls currently in Year 5 also take place in the year prior to application. An Open Morning, including a tour of the School with a pupil guide, takes place in the Autumn Term preceding the entrance examination.

Year 7 entry assessment is by written examination in December/January before entry in September. The closing date for registration is in November.

Parents are invited to contact the Admissions Registrar or visit the School website for details of all these events.

The Assessment process for Year 7

Girls applying for entry at Year 7 from external schools and those girls from the Junior School who are required or have applied to sit the test for scholarship assessment, or at the Head's request, will attend an assessment day in December or January. They will sit an adaptive online test designed to assess ability in skills such as numeracy, problem solving and vocabulary. There is no special preparation required and no specimen papers are available.

In addition, girls will take part in a learning exercise where they experience a classroom lesson and are asked to complete a written exercise based on the skills and content taught in the lesson. Girls will also take part in an informal discussion exercise with a small group, including a member of the senior teaching staff.

All girls are automatically considered for academic scholarships which are awarded to girls who perform best in the Entrance Assessment. At Year 7, we may also offer an Exhibition Award to pupils who demonstrate a high level of talent or ability but to whom we do not award a full scholarship. This is usually remunerated by a one-off payment, usually of £500.

Entry at Other Years

Individual applications will be considered throughout the year for entry at Years 7-10 subject to entry testing appropriate to the age group.

Entry to the Sixth Form

Girls applying for a place in the Sixth Form must have a minimum of 6 GCSE passes at grade 6 (or equivalent) or above and have met the subject specific criteria for the A Level subjects chosen.

For entry to the Sixth Form from September 2024, the entrance requirement has been set at 40 points.

The points represent the numerical values of GCSE grades, for example, a grade 9 will count for 9 points, grade 8 for 8 points and so on, and a pupil's total points are calculated using their best six grades.

Transfer for existing Croydon High School pupils is anticipated unless, in the opinion of the Head, the pupil has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work and behaviour to enable her to benefit from continuing her education at the School. If this is the case, then in the case of Year 11 girls the parent will be advised, in writing, of the standards to be attained in the GCSE examination to qualify the girl for entry to the sixth form as soon as is reasonably practicable after the mock GCSE examinations and in any event no later than the end of the Spring term before the examinations.

Entry is also subject to suitable references from the current school and interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team in all points of entry in addition to the criteria set out above.

Transfer from Lower Sixth to Upper Sixth courses is anticipated unless, in the opinion of the Head, the pupil has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work to enable her to benefit from continuing with the A levels. In such cases, a pupil may be asked to repeat Lower Sixth.

In exceptional cases it may not be beneficial for a pupil to continue her education at the School.

Scholarships

All scholarships are awarded at the Head's discretion.

• Academic Scholarships and Exhibition Awards at Year 7 and Sixth Form

Academic Scholarships may be awarded to both internal and external candidates joining the School at 11+ or joining the Sixth Form. References from the previous school will be requested for any external applicants and these pupils will also attend an interview, usually with a member of the Senior Teaching Team.

Scholarships at 11+ are automatically considered on the basis of the entrance examination in December.

The Sixth Form Academic Scholarship is called the *Neligan Scholarship* and scholarship examinations are usually held in November in the year preceding entry into the Sixth Form. The pupils select the subjects in which they wish to be examined; usually they select subjects they intend to study at A level but it is recognised they may change their mind about subject choices and in doing so, they would not affect the award of the Neligan Scholarship. We may also carry out a more general skills test as part of the overall assessment for both internal and/or external candidates. We may also offer Exhibition Awards to candidates who perform well on an individual scholarship paper but less well overall and to whom we are, therefore, unable to award a full scholarship. Candidates are advised that the one-off sum of the Exhibition Award is only awarded to pupils who continue with that subject to A or AS level or as an EPQ topic and they should therefore choose their subjects carefully.

We are often asked about the suitability of applications for a scholarship and we give the following guidance to support parents and pupils in making the decision whether or not to apply; a Neligan Scholar would, typically, be a pupil who is on track to achieve all, or nearly all, grade 8s or 9s in the GCSE examinations.

- **Academic Plus Scholarships at 13+ for entry in to Year 9**

Academic Plus Scholarships are awarded to girls joining the School, usually from a school in the state sector at 13+. They are based on an entrance examination, which usually takes place in February, as well as an assessment in Art & Design, Music, Drama or Sport.

All academic scholars are expected to maintain excellent effort and academic achievement in their studies.

If awarded a scholarship at 11+ or 13+, this award will continue for the duration of the pupil's School life at Croydon High but both bursaries and scholarships are dependent upon continuing satisfactory progress and good conduct.

Recipients of bursary awards will be asked to provide evidence of their financial circumstances on an annual basis to confirm that the bursary is still appropriate to need. Assuming this remains the case, individual bursaries will continue to be awarded until the end of Upper Sixth.

- **Performance Scholarships and awards in Art, Drama, Music and Sport at Year 7 and Sixth Form**

These scholarships are awarded to pupils joining the Senior School at 11+ and who are successful in the entrance examination and also to girls joining the Sixth Form. As stated above an Academic Plus Scholarship, combining one of these awards with academic ability may be awarded to applicants at 13+.

- **At 11+**

Music Scholarships are awarded on the basis of an audition and interview. Candidates for music scholarships are expected to have reached a high standard on an orchestral or keyboard instrument or in singing. While it is not compulsory for candidates to have taken any examinations of the Associated Board Examination or equivalent, we offer as a helpful guide for parents that we expect candidates to be performing at around the level of a Grade 4 player/singer.

It is expected that the recipient is prepared to make a significant contribution to the musical life of the School, including performances.

Candidates for the **Sports Scholarship** are expected to have reached a high standard in at least one sport. They are required to attend an interview with the Director of Sport and an assessment of practical skills will be carried out. The award of a Sports Scholarship is made on the understanding that the recipient is prepared to make a significant contribution to the sporting life of the School.

An **Art Scholarship** is awarded on the basis of art assessment and presentation of an Art portfolio. It is expected that the holders of the Art Scholarships will play a full role in the life of the School.

A **Drama Scholarship** is awarded following a drama workshop which will consist of group work and

some role-play.

The School reserves the right not to award scholarships in a particular year. Girls transferring from Croydon High Junior School are considered for scholarships on the same basis as external candidates.

- **Head's Award**

The Head's Award is given to candidates who obtain a scholarship in more than one area. It carries no extra financial weight but serves as a recognition of excellence in two or more scholarship categories.

- **Performance Scholarships at Sixth Form**

Art, Drama and Sports awards will have a related interview and assessment. In the case of Drama, Sport and Music, scholarships may be awarded to Sixth Formers who do not intend to continue with this academic subject at A level. This is possible because the School's co-curricular programme offers sufficient opportunity for girls to contribute and lead in these areas.

In the case of Art, it is more difficult for scholars to contribute and show leadership through the extra curricular programme and therefore Art scholars are expected to continue with a related A level, EPQ topic or art portfolio option in order to qualify for this scholarship.

- **'Jacqueline du Pré' Music scholarship**

This scholarship is available to a talented musician (internal or external candidate) joining the Sixth Form. Applicants will be required to attend an audition and interview and must be of at least grade 7 standard in their chosen instrument. Auditions will take place in November in the year preceding entry into the Sixth Form. It is expected that the holder of this scholarship will play a full and leading role in the musical life of the school and it is recognised that it is possible for scholars to do this even if they do not study Music at A level.

Applicants for all awards and scholarships may also sit a general paper similar to that used for an academic scholarship.

Scholarships of all categories may be withdrawn if, in the opinion of the Head and GDST, the girl or a parent has not complied with the obligations associated with a scholarship, or if the pupil has fallen below the required standards of conduct and progress.

If a pupil holds a Music Scholarship from Year 7, the Jacqueline du Pre Scholarship title can be awarded on an honorary basis.

- **Exhibition Awards**

As with Academic Scholarships, Exhibition Awards may also be offered to pupils who demonstrate a high level of talent or ability but to whom we do not award a full scholarship. This is usually remunerated by a one-off payment, usually of £500. Whether holders of Exhibition Awards benefit from scholar programmes or attend scholar events is usually a moot point, given the aim of our programmes is typically non-elitist. This said, the need to limit numbers in activities sometimes means that 'scholars' are invited to participate in an activity or a trip either first or solely. When this is the case, holders of an Exhibition Award should be considered 'scholars' as much as resources allow.

- **Scholarships for pupils already at the School**

Although the main entry points for scholarships are at 11+ and 16+, it is recognised that girls develop at different rates and that some pupils already attending the School may enjoy – and be deserving of – the benefits of the scholars’ programme. Some pupils may, therefore, be awarded an ‘honorary’ academic or performance scholarship at the end of Year 8. Pupils do not apply for this award; it is automatically given as a result of internal tracking and monitoring processes.

The award of such a scholarship for an internal pupil usually carries no financial reward but does allow the pupil access to all elements of scholars’ programme and recognises their exceptional contribution or talent.

The award of any scholarship to pupils already at the School is at the Head’s discretion.

Bursaries

Croydon High School offers a small number of means-tested bursaries for girls applying for entry at 11+ and Sixth Form from families with modest means who meet the financial criteria set by the GDST. Parents will be sent the necessary bursary application forms on request once their application has been received and will be informed in the offer letter whether a bursary application has been successful.

Applicants for the bursary should be aware that securing GDST eligibility for a bursary is the first step in the process and does not guarantee the award of one. The second (and final) step relates to performance on the tests and interviews or observed activities.

Bursaries may be withdrawn if, in the opinion of the Head and GDST, the pupil or a parent has not complied with the obligations associated with a bursary, or if the pupil has fallen below the required standards of conduct and progress.

Pupils who are offered bursary places automatically become academic scholars. A girl may also hold a bursary and a performance scholarship together. Where a girl is awarded a bursary, any additional scholarship awards may be honorary.

Bursary eligibility is assessed annually, and parents should therefore be aware that if their financial circumstances change, the value of the bursary or, indeed, their eligibility for it may change.

Key stage transfers

As set out in the GDST parent contract (Form F7), continuity of education is anticipated normally throughout each age range (i.e. the Junior and Senior Schools) and at the key stages of transfer unless in the opinion of the Head after due deliberation, 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. **A minimum of one term’s written notice will be given and fees in lieu of notice will not be charged in respect of any pupil who has been sent a letter notifying them that transfer into the next stage may not be possible.**

References and reports

We liaise closely with the pupils' current schools and require the Headteacher of an applicant's school to provide a confidential report. A confirmed place is not normally offered until such a report has been received, however, no pupil would be disadvantaged in the recruitment process because they did not have a report.

We ask parents and schools to provide any information which will help us to make our decision about suitability for each candidate. In the case of candidates with a SEND profile, we ask for any information regarding the need for individual support, including copies of assessments from educational psychologists to be highlighted and shared with the School by parents. These do not usually help us to determine academic suitability but, rather, to ensure we can accommodate individual needs within the School's structures and processes.

Parents considering transferring their daughter from another school must inform the other school of their plans to enter their daughter for our examination and must fulfil all financial obligations to the previous school in order to qualify for entrance.

Offers

The decision to admit each pupil is taken by the Head. Each application is carefully considered. In the case of entry to the Sixth Form (Lower Sixth) places are always conditional on attainment of specified GCSE grades.

If a pupil is offered a place for entry for the following September but parents ask to defer entry to a later year, the pupil may be required to re-sit the examination, in which case a registration fee is payable again. Places are not automatically held over.

We do not publish details of results of admissions' tests. Furthermore, parents are not entitled to see the examination scripts as these are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The offer of a place, or not, is made by letter.

Acceptance

Parents who wish to accept an offer are required to sign an agreement accepting the terms and conditions of the GDST. Parents, or those assuming parental responsibility, are required to sign the parent contract (Form F7) accepting responsibility for the payment of fees even if fees are payable by another party. This acceptance form refers to a number of School policies and these are available on request.

A pupil cannot start until the parent contract has been signed and returned. While many prospective pupils decide to accept their place immediately, we do not require parents to accept places before the GSDA/HMC deadline during the previous academic year before they will join the school (usually the first Monday in March).

Inter GDST school transfer

There is no automatic right of transfer from one GDST school to another; however, the transfer of existing GDST pupils between GDST schools, for example as a result of relocation or the need for

boarding facilities, may be arranged.

Any such transfer will be subject to the availability of a place; and the professional judgment 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.

Fees

Fees are set each year by the GDST and the School and are non-negotiable.

Guardianship and Residence Requirements

It is a requirement of entry that pupils must live in or near London with a parent or guardian or other person approved by the Head while they are studying at CHS. Pupils whose parents are overseas must have a guardian in this country. Parents must notify the School of the name and address of the guardian.

If and when a place is offered, evidence of a valid visa or other relevant immigration permission will be required for all candidates who are not British or Irish citizens.