



1. Aims of this policy

- a. To inform interested parties of the admissions process at The Chorister School.
- b. To demonstrate compliance with the School's charitable purpose as a School providing independent education for boys and girls aged 3 to 13, and ensure fairness to all applicants
- c. To meet the legal requirement to have an admissions policy that gives a clear account of the entry procedures [see Education Act 2002, School Standards and Framework Act 1998, School Admissions Code 2014, and Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010].
- d. To ensure that all admission decisions are made by a process free from any discrimination.

2. Usual points of Admission

- a. The most common points of admission are at the ages of three, four, seven, eight and eleven. However, in accordance with the inclusive ethos of the school, applications for entry at other times are welcomed, if places are available.
- b. Transition between the different parts of the school is outlined in the relevant area of this policy.

3. Admissions Process

- a. Parents may visit the School, either on Open Morning or a personal visit, for a tour of the School and an informal conversation with the Headmaster. To arrange a visit or attend an Open Morning parents should phone the school on 0191 3842935 or send an email to registrar@thechoristerschool.com.
- b. Following the visit parents can register their child by completing and returning the registration form, together with the (non-refundable) registration fee (£60). The Registration Form is available on the school's website or from the Registrar. At the appropriate time the child is invited to spend a trial day (or half day in Pre-School, Purple and Silver children) in School.
- c. The Registrar keeps a list of registered children, their dates of birth, and preferred start date. During the term prior to entry the Registrar will contact the parents of registered children to ask them to sign and return a copy of the School contract, together with a covering letter confirming their desire to enrol their child at the School, and the deposit.
- d. Before the child starts at the School the parents are asked to complete the necessary forms, including a health questionnaire.

- e. The aim of the assessment process for admissions is to identify potential. The Chorister School is looking for pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the world, stretching beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in music, drama, art, public speaking and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing the well-balanced, confident individual.
- f. No specific preparation for entrance tests is needed, all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

4. Equal Treatment

- a. The Chorister School aims 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.
- b. The Chorister School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background.

5. Special Needs

- a. The Chorister School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The Chorister School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, providing we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them.
- b. We strongly advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with The Chorister School before they sit the entrance exam so that adequate provision can be made. Parents should provide a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report, if they have one.
- c. The Chorister School will discuss thoroughly with parents (and their child's medical advisers if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at The Chorister School.

6. Scholarships

a. Kingsley Galimore Scholarship

Scholarships are offered at entry to Year 7 (Form Five). Up to two scholarships a year may be awarded to pupils of outstanding all-round ability. Applications are open to internal and external candidates.

Applicants should offer Academic entry and also another two entries from Music, Art or Design Technology, and Sport.

The school reserves the right not to award scholarships in any given year if it is felt that the criteria have not been met. The value of each scholarship is variable, up to a maximum of £1000 per annum.

It is a condition of acceptance of a scholarship that the pupil remains at the school until the end of Year 8, personal circumstances notwithstanding.

b. Mark Julian Smith Scholarship

One scholarship is awarded to an internal candidate who has achieved an exceptionally high academic standard in all subjects in the 5th Form, but most particularly in mathematics.

c. Chorister Scholarships

Choristerships are awarded to pupils aged 8 to 13 to sing in Durham Cathedral Choir.

Awards are made following a Chorister Audition.

Successful candidates receive a 50% Scholarship as a boarding pupil.

Chorister pupils are required to remain at the School until the end of Year 8 (Form 6).

Further information is available from the Registrar.

d. Bursaries

Some bursaries may be available where exceptional circumstances make it impossible for parents to meet the full fees. Further information is available on application to the Headmaster.

7. Overseas Applicants

We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at The Chorister School as a boarder provided that they have a relative or responsible adult living in the UK with whom he/she may stay for some weekends, more details of which are available from The Registrar.

8. Admissions to the Pre-School (for children aged 3-4)

- a. Pupils in the Pre-School are expected to attend at least five sessions per week (a session being a morning or an afternoon). Children will only become eligible for a place once they have reached their third birthday. Admission to the Pre-School can be in either during the Michaelmas Term or January. Occasionally, if there are spaces, a later admission date will be considered.
- b. The allocation of sessions is made by the Registrar, in consultation with the Head of Early Years Foundation Stage and the Pre-School Class teacher. Every effort is made to accommodate the parents' first choice of sessions.
- c. Whilst we do not formally assess a child entering the Pre-School, we do ask the parents about their child's general development prior to them starting.
- d. The transition from the Pre-School to the Pre-Prep is generally assumed, unless parents give due notice as per the contract, or if we feel the Pre Prep will not best suit the needs of the pupil, but the vast majority of our pupils do continue into the School.
- e. The Headmaster's decision on the priority of admissions is final and binding, but in the event of a waiting list presenting competition for places, siblings of children already attending The Chorister School will usually take priority over new families. The Registrar will confirm the offer of the place in writing, and request the parents to indicate which sessions they would like their child to attend.

9. Admissions to the Pre-Preparatory School (for children aged 4-7)

- a. As most of our pupils transfer from the Pre-School into the Pre-Prep opportunities for places can be more limited. Parents will be advised if their child is to be placed on the waiting list for a place.
- b. Prospective entrants are invited for a trial day in School, during which the assessments, in Maths and English, are completed. These assessments ensure the suitability of The Chorister School education for the child, and inform the appropriate placement of and support given to the child if a place is offered. Children will also be assessed based on observing informal play in small groups.
- c. The Registrar will contact the child's previous school for a reference and School reports.
- d. Following the assessment and reference, the Headmaster will discuss the offer of a place with parents, and practical arrangements for transfer will be made.
- e. The Headmaster's decision on the priority of admissions is final and binding, but in the event of a waiting list presenting competition for places, siblings of children already attending The Chorister School will usually take priority over new families.

10. Admission to the Prep School (for children aged 7-13)

- a. This is the age at which Boarders and Choristers are accepted into the School. Places are also available for Day Pupils.
- b. Prospective entrants are invited for a trial day in School, during which the assessments are completed and the child will be interviewed by a member of the Senior Staff. These assessments ensure the suitability of The Chorister School education for the child, and inform the appropriate placement of and support given to the child if a place is offered.
- c. Whilst visiting the School for the trial day, prospective Choristers have an audition with the Master of the Choristers, Sub-Organist and Headmaster. We advise the parents of prospective Choristers to arrange for a preparation audition session with the Director of Music at The Chorister School prior to audition.
- d. As part of the assessment process prospective Choristers and Boarders also spend a trial night in the Boarding House.
- e. The Registrar will contact the child's previous school for a reference and School reports.
- f. Following the assessment and reference, the Headmaster will discuss the offer of a place with parents, and practical arrangements for transfer will be made.
- g. The Headmaster's decision on the priority of admissions is final and binding, but in the event of a waiting list presenting competition for places, siblings of children already attending The Chorister School will usually take priority over new families.

11. Complaints

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

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Next review date: September 2018