



Joining St Bede's Senior School

Admission Policy – December 2009

“At St Bede's we have an unswerving commitment to bringing the best out of every student. Each young person has something exceptional to offer, a talent to express, successes to find. Our job is to help unfold those talents and interests.”

Dr Richard Maloney, Headmaster.

Introduction

St Bede's Senior School is a co-educational, non-selective school for pupils aged 13 and upwards. This document explains how to apply for a place and what our policy is on specific aspects of admissions. If you have any questions, please contact: Miss Charlotte Johnson, Director of Admissions, tel. +44 (0)1323 443 838 admissions@stbedesschool.org

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1. How to apply for a place – a quick overview

1.1. Visit the school and meet with the headmaster

We invite all parents/guardians to visit the school with their child(ren) and to have a short interview with the headmaster. The interview is a chance for us to get to know you – and for you to ask us questions.

1.2. Fill out the Initial Application Form and pay the registration fee

This form is available online or as a paper form sent to you by request. It should be returned to the admissions office with the registration fee of £60.

Many parents choose to register 12-18 months or more in advance.

If your child has been assessed as gifted and talented or with specific learning needs, please indicate this on the form.

You will then receive a letter from us confirming receipt. This letter will say if we have a place available for your child and give instructions as what to do next.

1.3. Send us copies of your child's recent school reports

You will be asked to send us copies of your child's recent school reports. Although we are a non-selective school, we still need an idea of your child's academic strengths and weaknesses. We share this information with teachers so that pupils can be put into sets and given extra attention where necessary.

In addition, international students need to provide evidence of their English languages skills – follow link for details.

1.4. Return the Final Entry Form and deposit to confirm your place by a set deadline

In November, we ask all parents/guardians who have registered their child with us for the next academic year, to confirm their decision.

To do this, you will need to return the Final Entry Form we send you and pay a deposit. This must be done by the deadline we give you – otherwise we cannot guarantee your child a place, and we may have to place your child on a waiting list.

- The deadline for entry in September 2010 is January 15th 2010.
- The level of deposit we require for September 2010 is as follows:

	UK	International
Day students	£700	£1500
Boarding students	£1000	£1500

2. Special considerations

2.1. Moving from Year 8 to Year 9

Moving to Senior School, whether as a day or a boarding student, is a big step. To help the transition go smoothly, we recommend that parents bring their child(ren) to one of our Open Mornings. In this way, your child plays a part in deciding which school is right for them – and can begin to look forward to the start of year 9 and all the opportunities that await him/her.

If your child currently attends St Bede's Prep School, please check that he or she is registered as wishing to transfer to the Senior School. You can do this by speaking with the Senior School's Director of Admissions, Charlotte Johnson.

If your child takes the Common Entrance (CE) Exam at his/her prep school, please send us the results. We will use this information to help place your child in the right teaching sets, however it won't influence our admissions process. (See 'How we make decisions' for more information on how we make offers.)

2.2. Joining the Sixth Form

At St Bede's we offer a wide range of different programmes; it is vital that students are able to find the programme which best suits their demands and their ability.

'A' Levels: Students joining the sixth form who intend to follow a conventional programme of study (that is, one built around following three or four A Level courses) would normally be expected to have an overall minimum of 5 GCSEs at grade C or above, and to ideally have A* - B GCSE results in each subject they wish to continue with at 'A' level. Most students will achieve far in excess of this.

In addition to these requirements, students wishing to study Maths and Further Maths at A level must normally have an A* or A in Maths at GCSE.

Vocational qualifications: For students wishing to study vocational qualifications – such as BTEC Music or NVQ Level 1 & 2 in Horse Care and Riding – entry requirements will depend on the individual's overall programme of study.

For example, you might wish to combine a BTEC with two AS levels and an extra GCSE. In these cases, please discuss your situation with us.

Tell us your GCSE results - You are required to send us confirmation of your child's GCSE results before the start of the autumn term. Please contact our Director of Admissions immediately if your son or daughter's results do not meet our entry requirements. We promise to look at each case individually.

'Gifted and talented' pupils - If your child is academically very able, or has been assessed as 'gifted and talented', he or she stands to benefit from our Curriculum Enhancement Programme. Please indicate your wish to find out more on our Initial Application Form and provide us with any relevant supporting information. For example, your child may have taken a Maths GCSE several years early and would like to continue to 'A' level. Our Curriculum Enhancement Programme allows us to customize a child's learning in this way and develop their full potential.

St Bede's is a member of the National Association for the Gifted Child.

Learning support - St Bede's offers a thriving, supportive environment to all those who need a bit of help to achieve their best.

If your child has been diagnosed with dyslexia, dyspraxia or any other learning difficulty, this information must be revealed on the Initial Application Form. We will then contact you for more information to ensure that we can support your child's needs fully through our Learning Support Department.

For example, we may ask for a copy of your child's Educational Psychologist's Report, or ask to speak directly with teachers at your child's current school. We may also invite you to meet with our head of Learning Support, Mrs Clare Mander. Our only condition of entry is that the child is able to study meaningfully towards GCSE and A level exams, with the support we have available.

Rest assured: all personal data and information provided will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

3. Scholarships and means-tested awards

Scholarships are available for students entering Year 9 and Year 12 and must be applied for in advance. Application forms, deadlines, and further details are all available in our Scholarship Brochure.

If you are seeking any financial relief in addition to the Scholarship award, the St Bede's School Trust requires the completion of a 'Statement of Financial Circumstances Form' which can be requested from the Director of Admissions.

Alternatively, you can simply apply for a means-tested award (often referred to as a bursary) at any point prior to, or during your child's school career with us, by completing the above mentioned form.

Please rest assured: all financial information will be treated sensitively and in complete confidence.

4. International students

Students come to St Bede's from all over the world. In fact, we currently have over 40 different nationalities at the school. This gives the campus a wonderfully vibrant, international flavour.

English as an additional language - All overseas students must demonstrate a good command of the English language, relevant to their proposed course of study, before we will offer a place.

If a student doesn't have a recognised language qualification, such as 'IELTS' or the 'IGCSE English as a Second Language', we will offer our own testing appropriate to the student's desired level of entry. And, in the case of some European education systems, we will accept reports from the student's current school instead of these exams – please check with us.

We want our students to succeed. To this end, we will not accept anyone whose knowledge of English is too weak for the course they wish to study.

Please note: We reserve the right to re-test students' knowledge of English on arrival at St Bede's.

If, on arrival, we find that a student's level of English has dropped significantly from the time of testing, we may have to change his or her study course. This might include asking someone enrolled to study 'A' Levels to first join the Pre-Sixth for a year, or to reconsider his or her choice of subjects. In very extreme cases, we may ask the student to withdraw.

Which year group? - We understand that most international students will not have followed the British system of schooling. Nevertheless, many students will be able to directly enter the year group for their age. We will look at the student's most recent school reports, qualifications, and level of English, and make a decision based on this information.

For example, international students wishing to do 'A' levels will probably not have GCSEs. This is not a problem - as long as your child can demonstrate that he or she has reached an equivalent standard.

And, for sixth form students who don't quite meet our entry requirements, we recommend our Pre-Sixth Course as a foundation year before starting 'A' levels.

For students whose birthdays would place them in years 9, 10 and 11, it may be possible to join a lower year group in order to manage the demands of learning in another language. Please discuss this option with the Director of Admissions if you think it applies to your son or daughter.

Student recruitment agencies - Student recruitment agencies offer information and advice to students wishing to study overseas. As a school, we work with a number of agents operating across the Far East, Europe and South America. We are equally happy to work with you as a family directly.

How many international students are there at St Bede's? - Approximately 20% of all students are international - presenting a wonderful opportunity for our young people to learn about different cultures, develop international friendships and widen their view of the world.

International students come to St Bede's to experience life at an English boarding school, to work towards their academic goals, and, in many cases, to improve their knowledge of the English language.

To this end, we are careful to maintain a healthy ratio of British to international students in each year group and within each school house. (Parents frequently tell us how important this is.) Please confirm acceptance of your place quickly, in order to avoid disappointment.

5. How we make our decisions

St Bede's is a non-selective school. We accept students of all abilities to study towards GCSE and Sixth Form courses. ¹

However, we still 'select' our students in a broader sense.

We want every one of our students to flourish both academically and on a personal level. Our teaching and our extra-curricular timetable are designed to help students become well-rounded young adults, with lots to offer.

We consider all of the following, when deciding whether to offer a place:

Interview with the headmaster, Dr Richard Maloney

We invite all prospective students and their parents/guardians to visit the school and have an informal interview with the headmaster. This interview will last approximately half an hour and is a chance for both parties to get to know each other.

For example, Dr Maloney might ask your child might questions about:

- Favourite subjects,
- Future university or career plans,
- Interests outside of school, etc.

And you, of course, will probably have a few questions for him!

Please note: we understand that this is not always possible for international students to visit us in advance, especially if the family lives far overseas. In these cases, we may request a telephone interview with the student to get a better sense of his/her abilities, interests and personality, before making an offer.

School reports and references - We ask parents/agents to provide us with copies of the child's most recent school reports and any exams he or she may have sat (e.g. Common Entrance, GCSEs etc).

These will give us crucial information about your child's education so far, his/her attitude towards school and general motivation to learn. We may request your permission to speak directly to the headmaster/mistress of your child's current school if we have any queries.

International students must demonstrate a good command of the English language relevant to their proposed course of study – See English as an additional language

¹ Our only condition of entry is that the child is able to study meaningfully towards GCSE and Sixth Form exams, with the support we have available. We advise students with more profound learning needs to apply to schools that offer a more specialised curriculum. A searchable database of such schools can be found at <http://www.isbi.com/isbi-searchform.asp>

Commitment to the school - We look for students who are going to participate fully in school life – whether that means joining a choir, becoming a prefect, or playing for one of the school's many sports teams.

We also look at your child's intended length of stay with us, and will prioritize applications from those students who wish to spend the rest of their school career at St Bede's. (We will only consider requests to stay for less than a year in special circumstances and if there is space available.)

Finally, we promise to do our best to accommodate applications from siblings of current and past pupils – as long as our application deadlines are met.

Auditions for the Legat Dance Programme - Entry onto the Legat Dance Programme is by audition only. The Legat Dance programme is especially intensive, and is for students wishing to pursue a professional dance career, or a related profession.

If you would like your child to audition, please request an audition application pack from the Director of Admissions and return it completed with references, audition fee and medical forms.

6. Waiting lists

Late applicants who find that the school is full can request to be put on our waiting list for either a boarding or day place.

We will then contact you immediately a place becomes available. You will be asked to confirm your acceptance of the place and to pay the deposit by a set date. If we do not hear from you by this deadline, we will offer the place to another student.

7. Comments, compliments and complaints

Please refer all comments, compliments or complaints related to our admissions process to Miss Charlotte Johnson, Director of Admissions, in the first instance.

If, after these discussions, you would like to refer your point to Dr Richard Maloney, headmaster, please do so by letter to: Dr R Maloney, Headmaster, St Bede's School, Upper Dicker, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 3QH

8. Our promise to you

We know how important it is to choose the right school for your child. It's a decision which takes time, and needs a lot of thought.

As a school, we will work together to help you the best we can – whether this means providing the facts or offering advice and guidance. For example, as well as talking with the Director of Admissions and the Headmaster, you may find it helpful to talk to the head of year about subject choices, or, to meet the professional coach that teaches swimming... please, just ask us!

We will do our best to give you all the information you need, when you need it - and this support will continue throughout the application process.

Protection of your personal information - All personal information disclosed during the application process will be carefully stored and only shared with those members of the school staff who have need of it as part of their job.

For example, confidential financial details relating to an application for fee remission (money off fees) would only be seen by the committee which assesses means-tested awards. This would typically include the Headmaster, the Business Manager, a representative of the governors, and the Head of the Preparatory School (if relevant.)

Alternatively, if a child suffered from an extreme allergic reaction, his or her medical details would be shared by the school nurse with the student's teachers, so that prompt action could be taken if necessary.

If you have any concerns about how we will use and store the information you provide us with, please raise this with us.

9. Your next steps

If you would like to discuss the possibility of your child joining St Bede's School, please contact:

Miss Charlotte Johnson
Director of Admissions
St Bede's Senior School
East Sussex
BN27 3QH
Tel. +44 (0)1323 443 838

admissions@stbedesschool.org

If you would like to book a time to visit the school and meet with the headmaster, please contact:

Ms Maria Leigh
School Secretary
Tel. +44 (0) 1323 843 252

maria.leigh@stbedesschool.org

Please note: At certain times of the year you may need to wait several weeks for the next free appointment to see the Headmaster. Please book ahead to avoid delay.