



Joining St Bede's Preparatory School

Admission Policy - January 2011

"Our children achieve results by experiencing things for themselves, learning to work as a team and by exposure to challenge. This equips them for the unexpected, with the knowledge they've learnt properly embedded, not quickly forgotten. Seeing a child develop in this way makes us very proud."

Mr Nick Bevington, Headmaster

Introduction

St Bede's Preparatory School is a co-educational, non-selective school, offering

Nursery places - for children aged 3 months to 4 years
Pre-Prep - for children aged 4 to 6 years old (Reception Years 1 & 2)
Prep - for children aged 7 to 12 years old (School Years 3 - 8)

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 the Admissions Team on tel. +44 (0)1323 746443 prep.admissions@stbedeschool.org

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

Procedure

i. 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 £50. (Many parents choose to register 12-18 months or more in advance.)

You will then receive a letter from us confirming receipt, and explaining the next steps in the process.

ii. First visit to the school

We invite all parents/guardians to visit the school and to meet the Headmaster, Mr Bevington. The interview is a chance for us to get to know you - and for you to ask us questions.

You can either bring your child with you, or arrange to bring him/her at a later date - as you wish. Older children will have an informal interview with the Headmaster and be expected to answer simple questions about their favourite subjects, interests, aspirations etc.

(Steps 1 and 2 can happen in either order.)

iii. Taster day

Registered children can ask to have a taster day (or over night stay for potential boarders). In this case, the child will join a class of pupils the same age.

During the day we will gently assess your child's abilities. This will enable us to determine, for example, appropriate sets for English, Maths, or to identify children who may join our Gifted and Talented Programme or need extra support lessons.

iv. School reports and references

Once you tell us you would like to proceed with the admission, we will ask for your child's latest school reports, including national curriculum attainment levels. We will also ask for a reference from your child's current Headmaster.

International students may need to provide evidence of their English languages skills. (See section 3.)

In some cases, we may request an Educational Psychologist's report, before we take the application further.

v. Formal Offer

We will write to you to confirm whether we can formally offer your child a place.

To accept the place, you will be asked to fill out a Final Entry Form, and return it with a deposit by a given deadline. (Please read the conditions carefully as they set out your legal obligations with regards fees and terms of notice.)

vi. Information for New Starters

We will write to you to confirm receipt of your Final Entry form and deposit.

We will also send you a New Starters' Pack - full of information about joining the school, including details of uniform, transport, school rules and behaviour policy. Letters of welcome are sent to new pupils a few weeks before they join us and boarders receive a copy of the boarders' handbook.

2. Special considerations

- **Nursery and Pre-Prep**

We review the progress of all new children admitted to the Nursery and Pre-Prep at the end of their first term with us. This is to check that we, as a school, are able to provide care and education appropriate to their needs - which is especially important if the child has had no previous experience of schooling.

- **Gifted and talented pupils**

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

We assess all our pupils on arrival in the school. Academically gifted children are put into accelerated learning sets in the relevant discipline, where they are encouraged to work more quickly and in more depth than their peers. Gifted and talented children are also given the opportunity to study additional subjects, such as Ancient Greek and Spanish.

Children who excel at non-academic subjects are put into master classes, which again allow them to develop their skills at a higher level than their peers and to interact with other children of a similar ability at local, county and national level.

- **Learning support**

St Bede's offers a thriving, supportive environment to 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, please share this information with us during your first conversation with us. We will then ask to see a copy of a recent Educational Psychologist's Report and/or Statement, or request that one be done.

We may also ask to speak directly with the teachers at your child's current school, and also ask your child to have an assessment with our head of Learning Support, Mrs Janet Jenion.

Our only condition is that the child can meaningfully access the school's curriculum for his or her age group, with the support we are able to provide. (We are a mainstream school. If you are seeking more specialised support, you may find the following web sites of use: www.isbi.com/isbi-searchform.asp www.crested.org.uk/pages/schoolslist.htm)

Please note: we have a limited number of places for children with learning support needs. Learning support lessons are charged for as an extra.

3. International students

We have a number of international children at St Bede's - presenting a wonderful opportunity for pupils 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, and may temporarily cap recruitment from particular countries as necessary.

- **English as an Additional Language**

All international students must demonstrate a good command of the English language, relevant to their age group, before we will offer a place. To this end, we may ask your son/daughter to

do our written English Language Test, and/or telephone interview (if we are unable to meet the child prior to making an offer.)

If your child does not speak English as his/her first language, it is like they will need ongoing support from our 'English as an Additional Language (EAL) Department. From conversation lessons, to work on vocabulary and grammar, and general friendly support, the EAL Department will help your child to adapt to life at St Bede's, and make the most of the experience. Please note: EAL lessons are charged for as an extra.

On the rare occasion that a child seems to be struggling - whether it's due to living far from home, or other reasons - the Headmaster will discuss the situation with you as parents. We reserve the right to remove the child if we feel that St Bede's is not an appropriate learning environment.

- **Which year group?**

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

- **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.

4. Scholarships and means-tested awards

Scholarships are available for students entering Year 5 and Year 7 and must be applied for in advance. Application forms, deadlines, and further details are all available in our Scholarship Brochure.

We also offer a limited number of means-tested bursaries to enable especially deserving children to experience a St Bede's education.

Scholars and children receiving bursaries are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of conduct and effort. Assistance will only be maintained as long as this remains the case.

5. How we make decisions

We want every one of our pupils to flourish both academically and on a personal level. Our teaching and our extra-curricular timetable are designed to help pupils become well-rounded, confident young people.

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

- **Interviews**

We invite all prospective pupils and their parents/guardians to visit the school and have an informal interview with the Headmaster, or a member of his Senior Management Team. This is a chance for both parties to get to know each other.

For example, we might ask your child questions about:

- favourite subjects,
- hobbies and interests outside of school
- holidays etc.

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

In addition, we may well invite you to meet with the following people:

- Headmaster of the Senior School
- Head of the Gifted and Talented Programme
- Head of Learning Support
- Deputy Head / Director of Studies / Head of Junior School
- Head of the Pre-Prep
- Relevant heads of departments or class teachers.

Demand for appointments is high, and we may not always be able to accommodate your request for a visit, especially if at short notice. Please plan ahead to avoid disappointment!

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.

- **Commitment to the school**

We look for students who are going to participate fully in school life - whether that means being an academic 'high flyer', joining a choir, becoming a prefect, or playing for one of the school's 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.

Finally, we promise to do our best to accommodate applications from siblings of current and past pupils - as long as you meet our application deadlines, and we are able to provide an appropriate education for your child's needs.

(After joining, any child unable to adhere to school rules, may have their position reviewed by the Headmaster. Parents are expected to take all reasonable steps to support both their child and the school on the issue of behaviour management. This is to ensure that all individuals benefit from the right to an education that is not adversely affected by the behaviour and /or actions of other parties.

- **Auditions for the Legat Dance Programme**

Entry onto the Legat Dance Programme is by audition only. If you would like your child to audition, please request an audition application pack from the Admissions Team and return it completed with references, audition fee and medical forms.

6. Waiting lists

Any child who finds that the school is full at their time of application 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.

As nursery places are especially sought after, we ask parents to pay a deposit of £400 in order to confirm their place on the waiting list. This money will be returned if we are unable to offer a place. (More detailed guidelines about nursery applications is available on request - talk to Mrs Lynette Bonell, Admissions.)

7. Comments, compliments and complaints

Please refer all comments, compliments or complaints related to our admissions process to Mrs Charlotte Rattray, [Director of Admissions](#), in the first instance.

If, after these discussions, you would like to refer your point to the headmaster, please do so by letter to: Mr N Bevington, Headmaster, St Bede's Preparatory School, Duke's Drive, Eastbourne East Sussex, BN20 7XL.

8. Our promise to you

- **Support throughout the application process**

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 Admissions Team, you may find it helpful to talk to a Housemaster, or a specific subject teacher... 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 (means-tested bursarial support) 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 Senior School. 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.

- **Transparency and equal opportunities**

All proper procedural and contractual courtesies will be observed regarding the matter of transfer from the previous school. St Bede's will not be party to unprofessional and/or private arrangements with parents in the event of parental dissatisfaction with their current school. St Bede's operates a transparent policy regarding admissions and recruitment; we will not seek to approach pupils inappropriately or secretly from other schools nor will we undermine the character or practices of other schools, either in the maintained or independent sector.

We hope that you will agree our admissions practices are managed honestly, transparently, and in full respect of individual rights. We believe in equal opportunities for all potential pupils able to meaningfully access the curriculum we offer, irrespective of race, gender, religion or physical ability.

We follow the Independent Association of Prep Schools' code of conduct with regards to admissions. (For more information see IAPS www.iaps.org.uk/)

9. Your next steps

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

Mrs Lynette Bonell,
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St Bede's Preparatory School, Duke's Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 7XL
Tel. +44(0) 1323 746443
prep.admissions@stbedesschool.org