



## Admissions Policy

This policy, which applies to the whole school, inclusive of boarding, is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

**Owner:** Director of External Relations

**Approving Body:** Teaching and Learning Committee

**Date of last Review:** January 2026

**Date of next Review:** January 2027

Linked Polices, Procedures and Resource Materials:

- Bursaries, Scholarships and Fee Discounts Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Data Retention and Storage Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- EAL Policy
- Educational Guardianship Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Schedule of Fees
- SEND Policy

## CONTENTS

OBJECTIVE .....	1
THE ADMISSIONS REGISTER AND DATA PROTECTION .....	1
THE ENTRY PROCEDURE.....	2
11+ AND 13+ ASSESSMENTS .....	2
SIXTH FORM ASSESSMENT .....	3
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.....	3
EQUAL TREATMENT .....	3
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY .....	4
SIBLING POLICY .....	4
SERVICE FAMILIES .....	4
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.....	4
OVER-SUBSCRIPTION OF PLACES .....	4
CONTRACTUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	5
UKVI CHILD STUDENT VISA GUIDANCE .....	5

### **OBJECTIVE**

To identify students who will benefit from the education that is offered at Woldingham School (the 'School') and contribute to the school community.

Woldingham is an independent boarding and day school for girls aged 11 to 18. The school is an academically selective school with a broad intake range. The School is looking for intellectually curious, well-rounded students with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum.

This policy serves as the definitive source of the procedures governing the School's admissions process, and may be consulted by all prospective families to understand how admissions decisions are made.

### **THE ADMISSIONS REGISTER AND DATA PROTECTION**

As part of the admissions process, the School will record student data including, name, preferred name, sex, date of birth, parental and address details and whether the student will be attending on a day or boarding basis, as required by the Independent Schools Standards.

The School will also hold at least one emergency telephone number and where reasonably practicable, the School's preference is to hold details of at least two emergency contacts for each student.

Woldingham School takes its responsibilities for personal data very seriously and has policy and procedure in place to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 incorporating the General Data Protection Regulations [GDPR].

Full detail of how your data is used can be found on the Woldingham School website in the Privacy Notice (<https://www.woldinghamschool.co.uk/policies.html>).

### **THE ENTRY PROCEDURE**

Applications begins with registration details and a non-refundable registration fee. Families are requested to register their daughters at least one year in advance, although it is understood that this is not always feasible. Prospective families are emailed with details about assessments at the appropriate time in the admissions calendar.

The usual points of entry are at 11+, 13+ and 16+. Academic and co-curricular scholarships are available, as are bursaries (refer to the Bursaries, Scholarships and Fee Discounts Policy). Candidates for 13+ may apply for either standard or deferred entry. Occasional places at 12+, 14+ and 15+ may be available.

The assessment days are held in the Autumn Term and decisions are sent by email in December. Once the formal acceptance of a place is received, this completes a legally binding agreement, and a security deposit is required (refer to the Schedule of Fees).

All applicants are expected to attend the assessment day at Woldingham School, although where circumstances do not permit this, the School can help to arrange alternative testing dates and/or locations.

References are sought for all applicants from their current head teacher in line with GSA and HMC guidelines.

### **11+ AND 13+ ASSESSMENTS**

The 11+ assessment process requires applicants to take the online 11+ ISEB Pre Test either at the applicant's school or at Woldingham. All applicants will then attend Woldingham School on the set assessment day to take a short, creative writing paper and have an interview with a member of staff.

The English and Mathematics 13+ assessments are broadly in line with the National Curriculum KS3 and are online tests in English, Maths and Science. All candidates are also interviewed by a member of staff.

13+ deferred entry offers are conditional upon the student continuing to make satisfactory progress at their current school. Students who accept a 13+ deferred place are required to sit the standard 13+ assessments in the autumn prior to entry; this is solely to enable setting and consideration for academic scholarship awards. They may also apply for co-curricular scholarships in the autumn prior to entry and will be considered alongside the standard 13+ entry and internal candidates.

### **SIXTH FORM ASSESSMENT**

Candidates are assessed in English, Maths and general comprehension (Science or Humanities). Following this, they are examined in up to two of their A Level subject choices. They are interviewed by a senior member of staff and a report from the candidate's current school is requested.

Successful candidates are expected to achieve at least 8 GCSEs, at an average of grade 5.5. Grade 7 or better is normally required to take Mathematics, Sciences or Languages to A Level. Grade 6 or better is expected for all other subjects chosen for A Level.

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Applications from those permanently resident outside the United Kingdom are welcomed provided that the student

- has a relative or legal guardian living within an hour travelling distance to Woldingham in the UK, and
- is able to stay with the relative or guardian for some weekends.

Please see the Educational Guardianship Policy for more details.

Candidates are required to undergo the same entry tests as UK-based applicants. Entrance assessments can be sent to a student's current school, the British Council or an accredited agent's office if attendance at the assessment day is impossible, but it is recommended that prospective families visit Woldingham at some point prior to entry.

The school assesses all non-native English speakers. Alternatively, students can provide one of the following certifications of English language ability: UKiset, IELTS or a Certificate in Advanced English (Cambridge University).

### **EQUAL TREATMENT**

Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. Woldingham School is committed to equal treatment for all and complies with the Equalities Act 2010,. Applicants will be considered regardless of race, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or social background. (refer to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY**

The School does not discriminate in any way regarding entry. Woldingham School welcomes students with physical disabilities provided that our site can cater for them. The School welcomes students with neuro-individual characteristics, provided that our Learning Enhancement department and our teaching and residential staff can offer them the support that they require. Woldingham School is set up to provide suitable learning support for students with a range of neuro-individual needs, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or slower cognitive processing.

Woldingham School follows the SEND Code of Practice. The welfare and educational needs of a student will be identified before they enter the school and the adjustments that can reasonably be made to meet them will be agreed with parents and, if appropriate, their medical advisers. A student's needs will be regularly reviewed.

Parents are required to complete the 'Individual Needs' section of the registration form and, if their child has such requirements, the School asks that copies of any relevant reports (including educational psychologist reports, medical reports or other relevant expert third party reports, materials or information) about their child's needs be submitted along with the initial application.

Parents should ensure that any report submitted is dated no earlier than 26 months from the date of the exam. The School encourages prospective parents and students with individual needs to meet with the School's Head of Learning Enhancement before taking the entrance assessment.

## **SIBLING POLICY**

Many siblings join Woldingham School. However, admission is not automatic, and there may be occasions where it is judged that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment, however, wherever possible, the School will aim to keep families together.

## **SERVICE FAMILIES**

A generous fee discount is available for those members of the Armed Forces and the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office who qualify for the Continuity of Education Allowance (refer to Schedule of Fees).

## **RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

Woldingham School is a Catholic school welcoming girls of all faiths or none. Parents should be aware that students are expected to participate in assemblies, attend Mass and to take GCSE Religious Studies (Theology) in Year 11.

## **OVER-SUBSCRIPTION OF PLACES**

In the event of over-subscription of places, the following entrance criteria will apply and in

this order:

- Results of admissions tests, interviews, report from current school and ability to integrate into the school community as evidenced on assessment days.
- Preference given to those students whose siblings are at the school or have been at the school or who are children/grandchildren of alumnae.
- Preference given to those who are applying for a boarding place.
- Preference given to students whose families are practising Roman Catholics.
- Preference will be given on compassionate grounds if the individual or family situation means that the student would benefit from the outstanding pastoral care at Woldingham School.

### **CONTRACTUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

These are available on request from the Admissions Department.

### **UKVI CHILD STUDENT VISA GUIDANCE**

**(addendum to Admissions Policy)**

#### **STATEMENT**

Woldingham School is delighted to be able to welcome international students. Students without a British passport or who do not have a separate right to study in the UK must apply for a Child Student Visa.

Woldingham School holds a Child Student Visa license issued by the Home Office and can sponsor such applicants.

The School, in its duties, will:

- comply with UKVI latest legislation and sponsorship responsibilities and co-operate with the Home Office.
- take all reasonable steps to ensure every student at Woldingham School has permission to reside and study in the UK.
- recognise that the Admissions Department has a responsibility to ensure, as far as practicable, the safety, wellbeing and protection from exploitation of the children which the school sponsors, remaining alert to the possibility that these students have a higher liability to child trafficking.
- recognise the importance of working with accredited and referenced third party agencies and the important role they play when communicating with families who do not have English as their first language ensuring that there is a full comprehension of parental consents.
- Ensure, as far as is practicably possible, the residential and safeguarding teams within the school are aware that sponsored students may need additional care and support in terms of their safety and wellbeing and this is reflected in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Woldingham School has a contractual agreement with Sable International for the provision of

UKVI advice and processing of all student visa applications on behalf of the School.

## **COMPLIANCE AND SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Recruitment procedures:**

- Evidence of intention to study, academic suitability and financial means to support student whilst attending Woldingham School
- Copy birth certificate and/or passport
- Retain evidence of entrance tests and immigration history.
- Ensure that all applicant pupils have the unconditional right to enter, remain and study in the UK for the duration of an education course offered by the school.

### **Monitoring**

- All students are expected to arrive for the first day of term and leave on the last day of each term to meet the migrant's visa obligations. Should this not be the case, the parents/guardian are requested to apply for permission from the Deputy Head Operations or the Head.
- Academic and residential staff have a responsibility to follow the school's Attendance Policy including carrying out the reporting duties within.

### **Record keeping**

A hard copy securely kept in Admissions Department office and/or electronically on the school's management information system:

- A centralised system exists to record all travel arrangements for each visa sponsored student travelling to and leaving school campus.
- Woldingham School is required to hold a hard and/or electronic copy of a student's current passport, visa and/or copy of the migrant's UK biometric card.
- Parent and guardian contact details for all students are annually checked-historic contact details kept in records.
- Sight of the date stamp entry or e-visa and boarding pass to ensure that the student has entered the UK to ensure the validity of their visa and therefore have permission to study. Dates should be recorded.
- E-gate users - evidence must be produced such as copy e-tickets and/or boarding pass.
- Record of attendance and absence by academic and house staff.
- History of travel arrangements by house staff and transport manager.
- All school reports thereby providing evidence that the sponsored student is fulfilling their purpose of stay.
- Maintain spreadsheet record of CAS assigned/used and notes.
- Woldingham will securely store passports for safekeeping only; students are able to access their passports whenever needed.
- The school has a 3 month alert via our management information system for passport and visa expiry. The Admissions office will then contact the parents at 90 days, 60 days

and 30 days as necessary.

- All documentation to be kept for the duration of the sponsorship period plus one year or until a compliance officer has examined and approved them, whichever is the longer period. Documentation no longer required is shredded.

### **Child Student Visa Sponsorship**

- Once a place has been formally accepted the school will issue one Child Student Visa CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance of Study) in support of a student's visa application. The school must have a signed copy of the acceptance form along with the acceptance deposit.
- A photocopy of the student's current passport is required, supported by their birth certificate if available.
- Parental consent letter confirming consent to the arrangements for the child's travel to, and reception and care in, the UK.
- It is good practice for Child Study Visa students to evidence credibility interviews/meetings. This will also reinforce the course details and inform the student of the school ethos and locality. All study visa students should either have visited or be interviewed online by the Admissions Department or the Head of EAL.
- Record on MIS or copy evidence of assessments/qualifications/references/reports used as part of the admission process.
- A student progressing and transferring to the next academic course must have used their CAS before course start date. Careful monitoring of this situation should occur.

### **Reporting**

- Advise when a new Authorising Officer has been appointed and any changes to key personnel.
- The school responds to the Home Office's points-based system where we are required to report international students who fail to enrol when expected or who are absent for 10 expected consecutive missed contacts (a contact point is defined as morning registration and afternoon registration in one day), those who are excluded via the school's discipline or attendance policy or breach the conditions of permission to stay.
- Meet the requirements to maintain our Sponsor License by ensuring that the % CAS issued resulting in refusal must be less than 10% of the School's total allocation. ensure that 90% CAS used convert to a visa issued and enrolment to the school and 85% complete their course to the anticipated end date. Failure to meet these targets will result in suspension of UKVI sponsor license.
- Report annually to School SLT.

### **Home Office Compliance Inspections**

- Annual in house or immigration lawyers pre-inspection audits to ensure compliance – Admissions, Attendance, HR, Head of Boarding, Head of IT and Data Protection Officer.
- Ensure that the relevant personnel are available including the Authorising Officer.
- Maintain all documents that the Home Office may require.

**Visa Migrant's Role**

- Responsibility to comply fully with providing information to the school as requested as a condition of their permission to stay and study in the UK.
- Provide proof of ability to fund migrant's course of study.
- Inform sponsor of any immigration history.
- Expectation that they attend as expected on the first day of term until the last day of term unless they have authorisation from the Senior Deputy Head.
- Parents are asked to adhere to the published term dates when booking international flights.
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact details for the student's appointed guardian and that contact is made prior to the student's first day.
- Ensure that the transport manager/key residential staff have all travel arrangement information.

<p>Mrs Sue Baillie Authorising Officer</p>	<p>Mrs Camilla Mair Director of External Relations/Key Contact</p>
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