



**ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
&
BLUEBIRD NURSERY**

Admissions Policy

Revised September 2023

By the Headmaster and SLT

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Introduction

St Hilda's Prep School is an independent day school for girls aged between 4 and 11, with a co-ed Nursery for boys and girls aged between 2 and 4, which seeks to provide an excellent, well balanced academic education within a progressive and supportive learning environment.

St Hilda's is committed to treating all children with the same level of affection and respect whatever their skills, attainment, disabilities, or differences.

The School welcomes applications from all sections of society and is non-discriminatory in line with the Equality Act (2010), Equality Duty (guidance) 2011 and our Equal Opportunity Policy.

Aims

The purpose of this admissions policy is:

1. To explain how to register for a place at this school and nursery
2. To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent and fair to applicants
3. To identify applicants whose academic and other abilities appear to match the ethos and standards of the School and whose personal qualities suggest they have the potential to contribute sufficiently to the school community and benefit from the many opportunities that are offered here

Active Campaign

All prospective parent details, from the first visit, are held in the Active Campaign database. This database enables the admissions team to handle all the admission processes electronically.

Pre-Registration Procedure

On an initial enquiry to the School, a potential parent will be placed in contact with the Admissions Team. They will request details of the child's name, address, and date of birth and answer any general queries, provide marketing information about the school and direct parents to the website as a valuable source of information about the School and to register for a visit to the school.

School Tours: The School holds School In Action events throughout the year to enable families to visit the School and experience what it has to offer. Information regarding the School In Action and other events are posted on the website. Parents can also book an individual tour of the School and or Nursery with the Headmaster or members of the Senior Leadership Team.

Registration and Reservation of Places

Interested parents register their child by completing the online registration form and submitting a non-returnable registration fee.

Parents are required to make clear on the School Registration Form, any identified learning need, disability, or medical conditions and supply appropriate information to enable the School to properly consider whether any adjustments may be necessary.

Entrance Criteria

The usual entry point to the school is at the Reception Year (4+), although pupils may be accepted at other points if places are available.

Entrance points to the nursery are applicable from your child's 2nd or 3rd birthday.

Admission is based on:

1. A satisfactory report from the prospective pupil's previous school or nursery (if applicable)

2. The successful completion of entry assessments from Reception to Year 6
3. The completion of a signed declaration by parents of the prospective pupil which informs the school of all known special educational needs of the prospective pupil
4. The completion of the entrance procedure as set out below.

On taking up of a place an entry is made in the school's admission register, (in line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

St Hilda's school reserves the right to refuse entry and progress into any year from Nursery to Year 6 if the school's structure, in the opinion of the Headmaster and relevant teacher does not meet the educational, pastoral and social needs of the pupil concerned.

Admissions Procedure for the Bluebird Nursery setting

Children are invited to attend a settling in session where they mix in a small group of similarly aged children.

The initial visit is a chance for both parties to get to know each other. Parents have the opportunity to meet the Nursery staff and see their child play in the setting, before committing to paying the deposit.

Where a place is unavailable, the child will remain on the 'continuing interest' waiting list by default, unless the parents choose to withdraw them. Parents should note that there is still a chance that a place may become available due to further movement within the nursery, or because the initial round of first offers may not reach formal acceptance stage.

Nursery Funding (NEG)

We are a provider who offers a free place entitlement to 3 and 4 year olds, funded by Hertfordshire County Council. The free entitlement is for 15 hours per week for 40 weeks for the year. It is only applicable from the term following the child's third birthday up until they reach compulsory school age. If you want a place for the 15 free hours only, these are offered in the afternoon, across 3 days or 5 days per week and is subject to availability.

Admissions Procedure 4+

Children are invited to attend an assessment session where they mix in a small group of similarly aged children. Play based activities are used to assess each child. The school aims to observe these activities for key development milestones which indicate school readiness; speech and language, the ability to follow simple instruction, the ability to play purposefully and to show awe and wonder when read a story.

The school will always try to make allowances for children who are young in their age group.

The assessments usually take place in November with offers made soon after. All parents are given the opportunity to meet with the Headmaster and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

In the event that we are oversubscribed and have more applicants than spaces, we will select pupils on the basis of a 'good fit' both socially and academically, within the existing cohort.

All admissions are at the discretion of the Headmaster.

Occasional Places

Occasional places in other age groups may sometimes be available throughout the School. Children are invited to come in for a 'taster day' during which they will take part in some Maths and English activities, as well as spending time in their prospective classroom. Reports from the Headteacher of the previous school are requested and parents are encouraged to discuss anything that would be relevant to their child's education and potential entry into the school.

It is the parents' responsibility to notify the Headteacher of the child's current school of their intention to apply elsewhere. Information pertaining to the child's academic, social and attendance behaviour and attainment will be sought from the current school at the assessment stage, and the Headmaster's final decision is subject to a satisfactory school report.

Bursaries

St Hilda's will only offer bursaries in exceptional circumstances. If a current parent encounters financial difficulty, they need to discuss this with the Headmaster in the first instance, followed by the Finance Director. The Finance Director is available to discuss the possibility of means-tested financial support with families who may need it. The support would vary according to parental needs and both parents are required to provide proof of their incomes and assets.

Offer of a Place and Deposit

An offer of a place at the School will be made by way of a formal offer letter from the Headmaster to the prospective parents, which may be subject to such conditions as specified. Accompanying the offer will be a copy of the Acceptance Form and the Terms and Conditions. In order to accept the place, the Acceptance Form must be completed and signed (signatures are required from each of those with parental responsibility) and the required deposit paid. The Terms and Conditions are to be retained by the prospective parents for their information.

The offer letter will also include a deadline for the return of the contract and deposit and you will be required to pay the non-returnable deposit in full by this date in order to secure your child's place. Failure to return the deposit by this date may mean that your child's place is offered to the next prospective pupil on the waiting list.

Acceptance of a Place

A place is allocated for a prospective pupil when the Acceptance Form has been completed with the required deposit payment.

The offer of a start date is subject to Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) agreement criteria whereby parents of new pupils are required to have discharged all obligations at their existing schools.

Waiting Lists

Although all applications will be given careful consideration, priority may be given to siblings of current pupils in cases where places are limited.