



Admissions Policy

(Whole School Including EYFS)

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Responsible:	Headmaster, Registrar and SLT		

Orley Farm School (the 'school') is a co-educational independent day school in Harrow for pupils from ages 4 to 13. The Headmaster is responsible for admissions and the operation of this policy.

1. Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- i. To ensure compliance with the school's charitable purpose;
- ii. To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent with this charitable purpose and fair to applicants; and
- iii. 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.

2. The Entry Procedure

- a. Orley Farm School is an academically selective school. Selection is based upon academic merit which is assessed through an entry assessment, interactions and discussions with the child, references and other relevant information from the applicant's previous school.
- b. The usual point of entry to the school is at the Reception year (4+) although pupils may be accepted at other points, if places are available.
- c. For the purposes of entry applicants' ages are calculated according to UK custom. However, exceptions may be made under special circumstances following a discussion with the Deputy Head Academic and with the approval of the Head.
- d. Occasionally, it might be appropriate for the school to offer a place in a year below the applicant's age would normally imply. Parents or guardians will be consulted before such an offer is made, but the decision as to the appropriate year for the applicant, taking into account all the relevant circumstances, is a matter for the Head, whose decision is final.
- e. Applicants for admission into Reception should register by the 7th November of the year preceding the desired year of admission. The school's Registration Form is available on the school's website and from the Registrar.

3. Equal Treatment

- a. The school's aim is 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. We are also committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and supported. We recognise that diversity alone is not enough; inclusivity ensures that every member of our community is respected and has equal opportunities to thrive.
- c. The school is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, or social background. We uphold the principles of equality by safeguarding all protected characteristics.
- d. Please see the school's [Equal Opportunities Policy](#) for further information.

4. Special Educational Needs

- a. The school does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The school welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.
- b. Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential pupils. We require parents of children with special educational needs, disabilities or allergies to discuss their child's needs with the school before they sit the entrance exam so that we can make adequate provision for them. Parents should provide with the Registration Form full details of all relevant information, including a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report if they have one. This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the school can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. If information that is known is not disclosed, in full, at the point of registration any place subsequently offered may be withdrawn.
- c. Where a prospective pupil is disabled, the school will discuss 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 school, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.
- d. There may be circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the school.
- e. Sometimes, the situation of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the pupil starting at the school. The school requires parents to be pro-active in updating the school as to any significant changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a pupil's place at the school. However, the school may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a pupil's circumstances change materially. It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming in their communications with the school about any material change to their child's circumstances.

5. The Application Process

- a. Parents who are interested in their child being educated at Orley Farm School are emailed an information pack comprising of a *prospectus*, *tour dates and necessary forms* and encouraged to visit the school prior to registration.
- b. The school offers the following two methods of 'experiencing' Orley Farm:
 - i. Prospective School in Action Mornings are currently held each term on some Wednesday mornings (09.30– 11.00) at which groups of parents – by appointment – are shown around the School by the Head. The tour ends with refreshments and a question and answer session with senior pupils from our School who talk about their experience of school life.
 - ii. We hold one Open Morning in the Autumn Term and another in the Summer Term which can be held either on a Saturday or Friday morning. During these Open Mornings prospective parents visit the school and are shown around by senior pupils: the morning starts with a tour and there is a presentation by the Head. Parents have the opportunity to see lessons taking place.

- c. For entry at 4+, parents of applicants must complete a Registration Form and pay the appropriate Registration Fee which should be received by 7th November prior to the year of entry. For parents of applicants at all other years, the specific timings will depend upon when vacancies become available. Parents must complete an application form and provide a copy of the child's most recent school report. The applicant will be invited to the school for an assessment at which point the registration fee will need to be paid.

6. The Assessment Process

- a. For the 4+ assessment process, parents will be required to complete a parent questionnaire, provide details of their child's current Nursery and supply a copy of their child's Birth Certificate and a recent photograph.
- b. Assessment for Reception Year entry usually takes place on three days in January and involves all members of staff associated with the Pre-Prep Department. Children are seen in groups of about ten: the younger being seen earlier in the day where possible. Each child is seen in a group setting and individually and a range of assessments will give a comprehensive profile of attainment and aptitude; this is supplemented by a report from the Nursery School. We maintain a warm, relaxed atmosphere during this time so that children (and waiting parents) need not feel anxious. The Head aims to be available across the assessment days to meet with prospective parents.
- c. Entry for children in other years involves age-appropriate assessment (primarily in English and Maths) and time socialising with their peers, undertaken by the Heads of Section and/or Deputy Head Academic.
- d. No specific preparation for our entrance tests is needed; all applicants start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

7. Waiting List

Occasionally, the school maintains a waiting list for pupils that have passed our assessment but for whom we do not have an immediate place. Should a place become available, the school will notify parents or guardians in the order listed.

8. Selection

- a. The preconditions for admission are that:
 - i. The applicant is of the appropriate age and sufficient maturity;
 - ii. The school is able to provide adequately for any special educational needs (if any) the applicant might have; and
 - iii. The school, having made reasonable adjustment, has the capacity to cope with any disability the applicant might have.
- b. The academic criteria for selection in Orley Farm School are as follows:
 - i. A satisfactory performance in the assessment at the school; and
 - ii. A positive recommendation from the applicant's present school or nursery (if applicable).

The aim of the process is to identify potential. The school is looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The school has strong traditions in music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

- c. Orley Farm School will only offer places to pupils we feel will benefit from the education we can offer. The relationship between the school and parents must be one of mutual trust and respect and hence, if the parents are not supportive of the school and the way it is run, then the child would not benefit from the educational experience and journey we offer and this would give us reason to decide not to offer a place.
- d. Letters offering places will normally be sent out within one month of the Assessment along with our Terms and Conditions (parental contract) and a Form of Acceptance. Parents or guardians will be asked to accept the offer, complete and return the Acceptance Form and pay the confirmation fee within two weeks. If no response to an offer has been received within the time specified in the offer, the school will assume that the offer has been declined and the place may be offered to another applicant from the Waiting List.
- e. Letters will also be sent out within one month of the Assessment to the parents or guardians of applicants who have not been offered a place or been offered a place on the waiting list. Some applicants may be offered a conditional place which requires a meeting with the Head of Pre-Prep before an official offer is given. These are given when the applicant has done reasonably well however there has been an element of the assessment that needs further discussion.
- f. The school will not consider unsuccessful applicants for reassessment within a year of the initial assessment.

9. Sibling Policy

- a. The school has no sibling preference policy although most siblings join us at the school. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the school judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.
- b. The school does not offer a sibling discount on school fees.
- c. The school cannot guarantee that siblings will be assigned to the same teacher or placed within the same named class. Class placements are determined individually to best support each pupil's unique educational needs.

10. Scholarships

The school only offers Academic, Music, Drama, Art, Technology, Computing and Sport Scholarships for pupils in Year 7. Assessments for these are held in the Summer Term of Year 6. If an application is made in time, joining pupils may be invited to apply.

11. Bursaries

- a. The school's [Bursary and Hardship Awards Policy](#) is available on the School website.
- a. Bursaries may be made available to parents/guardians of children entering any year group of Orley Farm School although awards for entry into the Pre-Prep section (Reception, Y1 and Y2) will normally only be made under exceptional circumstances. Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Governors after a place has been offered.
- b. Bursaries are means tested and parents or guardians will be required to provide detailed financial information and may be interviewed by an independent third party in relation to their application.

12. Financial Information

Any applicant for a place at the school, including those who apply for bursary support and overseas applicants, may at the discretion of the school be required to provide additional financial information and/or undergo checks to confirm that they are able to pay the School's fees (or any percentage of the fees still payable if a bursary is granted).

13. Overseas Applicants

The school welcomes overseas pupils, who can study at the school provided that they have the legal right to enter and study in the UK. However, the school does not sponsor Visas.

14. Religious Beliefs

The school welcomes applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.

15. School's Terms & Conditions

The terms upon which the school educates each child are set out in the school's Terms and Conditions which are on the school's website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

16. Complaints

The school's Complaints Policy is on the school's website and can be sent to prospective parents on request. The Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

17. Records and Review

- a. Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the school's Privacy Notice and Data Retention Policy.
- b. The school will not hold the personal data of applicants' parents or their child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be no more than 12 months following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain for longer may include if the parents express an interest in the applicant re-applying for any reason at a later date, or to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.