
Policy: Criteria and Procedures for Entry to West Buckland School

“The highest reward for your toil is not what you get for it but what you become by it.”

John Ruskin

Introduction

We are delighted that you are considering West Buckland for your child and understand that choosing a new school can sometimes be a daunting task, especially for those new to Independent Education.

We place particular emphasis on pupils developing appropriate values. Our intention is that they will develop as young people through an all-round education in which the process, at least initially, is as important as the outcome. Our overriding aim is to prepare students to be men and women able to make a difference in the world. Our education recognises the importance of results but extends beyond the classroom. The pillars of our holistic education are to nurture children who are: caring, courageous, curious, creative, critical thinkers, confident and committed.

We welcome applications from pupils of all backgrounds. The school has a very strong record for value added. This means that many pupils, regardless of ability, strongly outperform expectation when compared to the national average, or that being at West Buckland School has made a difference to their performance.

We work hard to create a stimulating, caring environment for our pupils, one where they can fulfil their personal bests. We are looking for young people who will get the most out of, and enjoy, the opportunities that West Buckland provides – academic, sport, cultural, social – and who will make their own contribution to school life.

To achieve this we have developed an admissions process which doesn't just look at a pupil's academic ability, but also their potential and whether they will be happy here. We believe the process is fair and sensitive to individual needs. We warmly invite you to visit West Buckland either by attending one of our Open Mornings or by booking a personal tour.

All enquiries, visits, registrations and admissions to West Buckland School at all levels are communicated and managed via the Admissions Office on

Telephone Melanie Tennant 01598 760311 or e-mail: admissions@westbuckland.com

Further details are available on the school website and in our Information & Admissions Booklet.

Registration

Parents may register their child for entry to the school at any time by completing the Registration Form and paying a non-refundable registration fee. Registering a child does not guarantee admission or constitute an offer of a place at the school and neither does it in any way bind parents.

Admission Procedure

Whilst the school is proud to operate a broad and inclusive entry policy, it is nevertheless selective. Entry criteria is fair, applies to all external applicants and is set to ensure that all pupils joining us are able to access and thrive whilst studying the curriculum offered here. Pupils may join the school at any time but the usual points of entry are into Foundation Stages, Year 3, Year 7 and Year 12.

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Personal tours

Personal tours are run each weekday and provide an excellent opportunity to see the school on a working day; you can pop in and out of lessons, talk to current pupils and staff and even have a look at what is on the lunch menu for the day. Personal tours include a one-to-one meeting with either the Head of the Prep School or the Headmaster.

Open Days, Activity Days and visits

We would encourage parents to arrange a visit, meet the Headmaster and enjoy a personalised tour of the school and/or for the child to join one of our 'taster' days. In addition, we also run Open or Activity days. These happen in October and May as well as a bespoke Sixth Form introduction and information evening in October. Details of exact dates and times are available on our website or in the Information & Admissions Booklet.

International Admissions:

Students joining for less than one year are offered a place based on agent recommendation, including a school report, and their personal statement.

In addition to the above, for those wishing to enrol as a full-time student at West Buckland, they are interviewed, often by Skype, and asked to complete a Maths assessment.

Entry Criteria & Procedures:**Entry into the Nursery**

Children and parents should visit and arrange to spend a day or a half-day at the school, including time with the Headmaster and the Nursery manager, before a place is offered. The number of sessions and availability on certain days may vary but we try to accommodate the needs of the child and parents when offering a place.

Entry into a Prep School (Reception to Year 6)

Parents who would like their children to enter West Buckland Preparatory School at this stage are invited to the school on a normal working day. During the day the child we take part in normal timetabled lessons and teachers will observe and informally assess their attitudes to learning, potential to cope with the academic pace at West Buckland, behaviour and social skills.

Boarding is an important part of West Buckland School and for pupils that wish to board they will be given the opportunity to stay overnight and experience the boarding side of Prep School life.

Entry to the Senior School in Years 7 to 11

Students studying at West Buckland are expected to continue and have a place reserved for them at the natural transition points: into Senior School and again into Sixth Form. Where the Headmaster of the Preparatory School has concerns about the suitability of a Preparatory School pupil for entry into the Senior School this matter will be discussed with the parents. External candidates are required to complete an entrance assessment in Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning. The Headmaster will usually meet the child before offering a place at the school, and will request reports from his or her current school before offering a place at West Buckland.

For students whose first language is not English, there would be no expectation to study eight or more subjects at GCSE.

Entry to the Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at West Buckland is designed to prepare young people for life beyond school. We understand that this will take many different forms and will try to accommodate them all but students will need to heed advice about the best choice of subjects and courses to take.

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The school will work with the student, parents and relevant staff in making a judgement on the 'suitability' for each course, the exact requirements are outlined in our Sixth Form Booklet.

Advice to students who are already at West Buckland School will be given early in the course of Year 11. Should there be any concerns about a student's suitability for study in the Sixth Form, this will normally be discussed with the student and his parents no later than the Spring Term.

Before being accepted into the Sixth Form, on our standard A-level programme, we would normally expect you to have acquired a minimum of five GCSE passes at grade 5 or above on the new 9-1 grading scale. However, advice is based on individual circumstances. A prospective student for an individual A-level subject should achieve at least a grade 5 in that subject at GCSE. In some subjects (biology, chemistry, physics and modern languages), it will be expected that prospective students have achieved at least a grade 6 at GCSE. In mathematics it will be expected prospective students will have a minimum of a grade 7 at GCSE.

Entry to the Boarding Community at West Buckland School

Very often pupils benefit from boarding to enjoy the richness of school life at West Buckland. Flexi [two nights] and Weekly [four nights] boarding packages are on offer as well as the full boarding programme and include all accommodation, breakfast and supper.

Entry for Children with Specific Learning Requirements

West Buckland welcomes all pupils and we will try to accommodate any learning needs by discussing a suitable curriculum provision. A decision to offer a place in the school will be based on a judgement of the needs of the child, of how well the school can support the child, the availability of resources within the school and the numbers of other children accessing the Personalised Learning Department in a specific year group or class. Our priority is to match the right course for the child and the offer of a place will be contingent on this agreement.

Any specialised one-to-one support that is identified as being beneficial or enabling a pupil to meet the academic and social demands will be identified at assessment or any time. Extra support as outlined in our policy can be arranged at the parent's expense if needed.

Entry Stage	Criteria	Process
Nursery	None	Visit. Tour with Headmaster
Years R-6	Attitudes to learning Potential to cope with the academic pace Good behaviour and social skills	Visit Tour with Headmaster Taster Day Current school report
Year 7-11	Potential to achieve at least 5 GCSE passes at grade 5 or above. Determination to work hard and improve	Assessments in Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning. Meet with Headmaster Current school report
Sixth Form	Five GCSE passes at grade 5 or above and the necessary grades in chosen subjects	Offer based on current performance and potential. Meet with Headmaster Current school report

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Dates:

There are limited places available in Year 7. We host three assessment dates for up to 20 candidates, the first in November, from which academic scholarships are awarded. The second is in January and the third in March.

In addition to academic scholarships we offer sport, music, art and boarding awards, outlined below, as well as a generous bursary scheme, the details are available on request or via the website.

The scholarships assessments are carried out as follows:

		Application Deadline	Assessment Date
11+	Academic Scholarships & Entrance Assessment	Friday 9 November	Saturday 24 November
	Sport and Music	Friday 6 January	Thursday 26 January
16+	Art, Boarding, Sport and Music	Friday 6 January	Thursday 26 January
	Academic Scholarships	Friday 9 November	Saturday 24 November

Financial Assistance

The school attempts to make it possible for as many children as possible to benefit from a West Buckland Education; we are very proud that in the last year 30% of the students at West Buckland received bursarial support including 17 pupils through the Foundation programme (see below). In addition to staff fee remission and sibling discounts there are three other routes to secure financial assistance with the tuition fees. All awards are reviewed annually and are tenable until the end of Year 11, for 11+ and 13+ awards, or the end of Year 13 for 16+.

Please see our Awards section of our Information and Admissions Booklet for further information.

1. Scholarships. These are available at 11+, 13+ and 16+ for up to 50% of the fees. Pupils awarded a scholarship are entitled to apply for a means tested bursary if further assistance is needed.
2. Foundation Bursaries. Through generous donations of the OWBA [Alumni] we are able to offer two 100% free places to children in Year 6 for their education through Years 7-11. In addition, there are two 100% place for students to complete their Sixth Form studies here during Years 12-13.
3. Siblings. We are able to offer some financial assistance if parents wish for siblings to join the same school
4. Means Tested Bursaries, based on proven financial need, are offered at all entry levels to those pupils not otherwise able to afford to access West Buckland School. These are not dependent on the award of any type of Scholarship; they are made subject to the pupil in question meeting the appropriate entry requirement and by discussion with the Headmaster and on completion of a confidential statement of financial circumstances.

Confirmation

Following the entry procedure, in most cases a formal offer for a place will made after this stage. Where the Headmaster has concerns on any of the above, the child may be invited back for a second taster day for further observation, or more formalised assessments. Following this a formal offer will



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be made; an offer with conditions (such as SEN support) made or no offer of a place. Where no offer is made the school will provide feedback as to the reasons.

Acceptance of a place at West Buckland is confirmed through a refundable deposit and subject to them satisfying the relevant entrance requirements.

Author/Updated by: Headmaster and Registrar

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