



ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

Admissions Policy (Senior and Prep)

SCHOOL MISSION

We are inspired by St Catherine of Siena, who said 'Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire', to form young women of confidence and compassion, ready for service and leadership in the world. We fulfil our mission through these values:

Community: a place of cheerfulness, dignity and tolerance, where all are welcome

Faith: a Christ-centred school with time for reflection; a culture of gratitude and friendship

Courage: with self-knowledge, resilience and integrity, and a readiness for challenge

Scholarship: where gifts are developed through curiosity, imagination and ambition

Service: commitment to others, to stewardship, and to justice and hope for all

Aims

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purpose as a Roman Catholic girls' school;
- To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent with this charitable purpose and fair to applicants;
- 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.

Registration

Early registration is advised for entry at all ages. There are Open Events throughout the year to which prospective pupils and their parents are invited, and visits can also be arranged at other times, particularly if the family has recently moved into the area. The School is happy to accept advance registrations for entry at any time.

PREP SCHOOL

At St Catherine's Prep, entry is possible at any point between Year 3 and Year 6, depending on vacancies. An offer of a place will only be made if an applicant meets the academic standards of the Senior School Entrance examination taken in Year 6.

A confidential reference will be sought from the applicant's existing school. An applicant's application will not be prejudiced if a reference is not forthcoming from the current school.

Procedure

Parents seeking admission for their daughter should complete the registration form, pay the registration fee and return the form to the Admissions Manager. They will then be invited to meet the Head of Prep and the Headmistress, and have a tour of the Prep Department and the School facilities.

Applicants for admission are assessed for the year group appropriate to their chronological age and potential pupils will often spend some time with the relevant year group.

An assessment will be made of the applicant's personal and social development and behaviour as well as her progress to date, to ensure a smooth transition into the class. The entry process will include age-appropriate tests, and involve a review of the pupil's ability in literacy and numeracy.

Parents are requested to inform the Admissions Manager in writing of any particular circumstances which might affect an applicant's application e.g. EHCP, IEP, Educational Psychologist's report, medical needs, particular family situation etc.

Following assessments, parents will be informed whether or not their daughter will be offered a place in the Prep Department. Upon receipt of an offer, parents are asked to confirm their acceptance in writing, enclosing a deposit, which will be retained until their daughter leaves the School.

The School will ensure selection procedures are equally accessible to all applicants regardless of ethnicity, disability or background. Professional evaluation allows for some reduced performance on vocabulary related tests, in cases where English is an additional language for the applicant.

Girls are not usually considered for admission unless they are the normal age for their year group on 1 September. Exceptions are only made where there are strong reasons for believing that this is in the applicant's best interest.

Providing they meet the entry requirements, sisters of existing pupils, and pupils who are Roman Catholic, will be given priority.

The Headmistress' decision on admission is final.

SENIOR SCHOOL

Transfer to the Senior School

Year 6 Preparatory pupils will be required to sit the Entrance Examination papers in order to assess their performance relative to external applicants; however, every Prep pupil has an automatic place in the Senior School, provided that, in the professional judgement of key staff, the School is able to provide an education that meets the needs of that child, and the child is of sufficient capacity to engage with and benefit from the educational provision in the Senior School.

Prior to this point, and in the event that a pupil is deemed to be unsuited to the Senior School, discussions will be held with parents in Year 5 or earlier to advise them on other options. The School and parents will work together to ensure a very good final year (Year 6) at St Catherine's and to assist transition to another school.

The Headmistress' decision on whether to admit a Preparatory pupil to the Senior School is final.

Entry to the Senior School

Entry to the Senior School is usually at Year 7 and Year 12, although occasional vacancies occur at other ages.

Open Events take place throughout the year. A tour of the School with a pupil guide is also available. Parents are invited to contact the School for details about all these events.

For external applicants, entry to the Senior School is by written examination in December before entry in September. The closing date for registration is in November. Places are offered on the basis of performance in the examination, a report from the applicant's present school, and an informal interview with the Headmistress. The applicant's current school will be asked to provide a reference.

Some applicants will not receive immediate offers but will be invited to join the waiting list. Following the deadline for acceptances, the Admission Manager will contact the parents of applicants on the waiting list and offers will be made to them, if places become available.

The School will ensure selection procedures are equally accessible to all applicants regardless of ethnicity, disability or background. Parents are requested to inform the Admissions Manager in writing of any particular circumstances which might affect an applicant's application.

Girls are not usually considered for admission unless they are the normal age for their year group on 1 September. Exceptions are only made where there are strong reasons for believing that this is in the applicant's best interest.

Arrangement may be made for an overseas applicant to sit entrance papers under supervision in her current school. Applicants reaching the required standard will be invited to attend an interview.

Providing they meet the entry requirements, sisters of existing pupils, former Prep pupils and pupils who are Roman Catholic, will be given priority.

The Headmistress' decision on admission is final.

Entry between Years 8 and 10

Where occasional vacancies arise, applicants are required to take appropriate entrance papers and attend an interview. Entrance to Year 11 or Year 13 is not usually possible.

Entry to the Sixth Form

The minimum entry requirement for the Sixth Form is normally six GCSEs at grades 6-9, including a grade 4 in Maths and English. Applicants generally gain a grade 7 in the subjects they wish to study at A Level; however, if a pupil is close to this level and shows aptitude and willingness in other ways, entry can be discussed with the Headmistress.

Selection

The preconditions for admission to St Catherine's Sixth Form are as follows:

- The applicant and her family are in sympathy with the Catholic ethos of the School;
- The applicant is of the appropriate age and maturity;
- The School is able to provide for the applicant's learning needs (if any);
- The present school reports satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of parents and applicant;
- Fees (if applicable) at the present school have been paid.

Selection is also dependent on the following:

- Success in the St Catherine's School Entrance Examination;
- A positive recommendation from the Head of the applicant's present school;
- A satisfactory interview at St Catherine's.

Providing they meet the entry requirements, sisters of existing pupils, and pupils who are Roman Catholic, will be given priority.

The School will ensure selection procedures are equally accessible to all applicants regardless of ethnicity, disability or background.

The Headmistress' decision on admission is final.

Scholarships and Bursaries

Academic scholarships are awarded on the basis of examinations and interviews (20% reduction on tuition fees). These are available to pupils joining the School at Year 7 and Year 12. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of the entrance examination (Year 7) or special assessments (Year 12) and are available to internal and external applicants. Scholars are expected to maintain an excellent effort and academic achievement in their subjects.

Art, Drama, Music and Sport scholarships are also awarded to pupils joining the School at Year 7 and Year 12. The criteria for each type of scholarship are laid down by the relevant department and are available from the Admissions Manager upon request. Applications for

Scholarships also require a letter of recommendation from the pupil's current teacher/coach and Year 12 applicants will be required to attend a scholarship day (November).

Girls who are awarded Scholarships will be expected to complete their education at St Catherine's. The School reserves the right not to award scholarships in a particular year. Girls will be eligible for scholarship examination/interview only if they are committed/firm applicants for the Senior School. Girls transferring from St Catherine's Preparatory to the Senior School are considered for scholarships on the same basis as external applicants. Girls moving from Year 11 to Year 12 at St Catherine's Senior School are considered for scholarships on the same basis as external applicants to the Sixth Form.

The Siena Scholarship is a special, all-rounder scholarship available for four years: Years 3-6, and Years 10-13. This scholarship rewards those who demonstrate academic achievement, show a commitment to co-curricular skills and events, and embody the values of the School in their leadership and service of others.

Means-tested bursaries are also available. Parents will be provided with the necessary bursary application forms on request once their application has been received and will be informed at the same time as the offer letter whether a bursary application has been successful. Girls transferring from St Catherine's Preparatory School to the Senior School are considered for bursaries on the same basis as external applicants. Girls transferring from St Catherine's Senior School to the Sixth Form are considered for bursaries on the same basis as external applicants.

Scholarships and bursaries may be withdrawn if, in the opinion of the Headmistress, the pupil or a parent has not complied with the obligations associated with a scholarship/bursary, or if the pupil has fallen below the required standards of conduct and progress.

The Offer of a Place

The parents of each applicant and the Head of the present school will be informed whether a place is being offered or not. The School will not be obliged to state its reasons for the rejection of an applicant.

Where twins apply to the School, their applications will be considered separately. However, in the event of one twin being successful and the other unsuccessful, the Headmistress will consult their parents before making offers. Twins will generally be placed in different classes.

Sibling Discounts

A reduction of 5% is made in the case of the second, and 10% in the case of the third or subsequent member of the same family, all of whom are in attendance as fee-paying pupils at one and the same time.

The Admissions Register

Every pupil who joins the school must be entered in the Admissions Register with the following information recorded:

- Full name
- Sex
- Date of birth
- Name and address of parents/guardians and two telephone numbers
- Address of new or additional place(s) of residence of child, and date child began to reside there
- Full name of parent the pupil lives with
- Date of admission/readmission
- Name and address of last school
- Name of destination school
- Start date at destination school

All personal information is dealt with properly and securely and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other related legislation (please see the School's Data Protection policy for further information).

If a pupil of compulsory school age either joins the school after the normal entry points (start of Year 3, start of Year 7) or leaves the school before the normal exit points (end of Year 6, end of Year 11), the Education Welfare Service of LBRUT will be informed using their online referral form.

Every pupil must reside with a parent or legal guardian while attending the School.

Reviewed: September 2024
Next Review Date: September 2026