



ADMISSIONS POLICY

Our Mission

Farnborough Hill welcomes all into our community, where we aim to live Christ's Gospel values joyfully and wholeheartedly, forming each individual to fulfil her potential and face the future with wisdom, strength and dignity.

Introduction

Farnborough Hill is an independent Catholic day school for girls aged 11 – 18. Our purpose is to educate girls and we endeavour to promote academic excellence and independent learning whilst supporting personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The ethos of the School is rooted in the Catholic tradition but we welcome pupils from other religious faiths as well as those of no faith. This policy reflects the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001), the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Admissions Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Behaviour Policy
- Bursary and Hardship Awards Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Privacy Policy
- SENDA Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- provide clarity to prospective parents of the criteria and procedures followed for admission into the School in various Year Groups
- outline to prospective parents the scholarship opportunities available to potential pupils
- confirm to prospective parents the School's policy for those pupils who may have Special Educational Needs or Disability

Admissions Criteria

Admission to the School is based on criteria designed to maintain and improve the School's educational ethos. Farnborough Hill is an academically selective school which also fosters high standards in co-curricular activities such as Art, Drama, Music and Sport. Places are only offered to pupils who have the ability and the commitment to rise to the challenges of our broad and balanced education. We want each girl to enjoy her experience of school life so that she is ready to play a full and responsible part in the wider community. Girls are admitted on the basis that Farnborough Hill will be able to educate and develop the individual to the best of her potential. The aim is for every girl to experience a happy and fulfilling school life and to become a confident, articulate young woman, able to take her place as a responsible member of society.

Admission to Farnborough Hill is by entrance assessment, current school reference and interview. Decisions on admissions are made by the Headmistress, on behalf of the Governors. Once academic ability has been

established by success in the entrance assessment, places are offered based on the following criteria, in order of importance:

1. Roman Catholic
2. Sister/daughter of a present or former pupil
3. Academic performance
4. Date of registration

Visiting the School

We recommend that applicants and their parents visit the School before they register their daughter. Information about how to arrange a visit can be found in the Admissions section of the School's website.

Taster days are available on request to pupils joining Years 8-10 and the Sixth form and normally take place after a place at the School has been offered. Candidates who wish to attend a taster day before they have been offered a place must submit the online registration form first. Taster days for pupils joining Year 7 take place in the summer term of Year 5 only.

Registration

Registrations should be made using the School's registration form on the School website. A non-refundable registration fee of £120 is payable when applying for a place. Registration forms must be submitted by those with parental responsibility, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

School reference and report

Prior to the entrance assessment, we will contact an applicant's current school to request a confidential report on her academic record, co-curricular activities, attitude and conduct. We will also take careful note of other information including attendance records, additional support offered by the school and any outstanding fees (if applicable). The School will not offer a place until a satisfactory reference has been received.

For pupils joining Years 8 – 10, a copy of the pupil's latest school report will also be requested.

11+ Scholarships

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and celebrate exceptional talent which would benefit and inspire the Farnborough Hill community.

Scholarships are available for girls entering Year 7. Most awards and scholarships granted are valued at 5% or 10% of the termly fees, with higher awards reserved for exceptional candidates. The exception is the Sports Scholarship which awards a grant for sport related expenses to successful candidates.

Candidates for scholarships at 11+ are required to pass the entrance assessment before being considered for a scholarship. Only candidates who have taken the entrance assessment on the main assessment day will be eligible to take subsequent scholarship assessments and must take the scholarship assessments on the appointed day(s).

Academic scholarships are awarded for outstanding academic ability. Pupils are shortlisted for Academic Scholarships at 11+ on the basis of outstanding performance in the entrance assessment and will then be invited to take the scholarship examination and interview.

Candidates may apply for the Sports, Drama, Art and Music Scholarships at 11+ and will be shortlisted for the scholarship assessment on the basis of their scholarship application. Sports Scholarships are awarded on the basis of performance in a range of physical tests, Art Scholarships by tests and sample work and Music and Drama Scholarships are awarded on the basis of audition. All scholarship applicants will be interviewed by the head of the appropriate department.

Whilst candidates may be considered for a scholarship in more than one field, only one scholarship will be awarded to any individual. The Deplanck Scholarship (worth 25% of fees), may, however, be awarded to candidates who show outstanding ability in multiple fields (Academic, plus one of either Art and Design, Drama, Music or Sport).

Scholarships are tenable for seven years subject to a satisfactory annual review of progress. The exception is the Art and Design and Sport Scholarships. The Art and Design Scholarship is reviewed at the end of Year 8, when Art is no longer a compulsory subject. If Art is not studied as a subject in Year 9/10 then the scholarship and its associated funding will end. The Sport Scholarship is reviewed annually, and scholars may move within the three scholarship tiers or step away from the programme according to their performance and contribution. Current pupils may also join the Sport Scholarship programme at the discretion of the Director of Sport and Headmistress. All scholars are expected to play a full part in relevant co-curricular activities.

Entry to Years 8 – 10

Subject to availability, pupils may be admitted to Years 8, 9 or 10 and the same criteria for entry are applied as at Year 7. If a Year Group is full, candidates must be registered for the assessment to be placed on the waiting list.

Transfer from other senior schools can be made at any point in the academic year. The exception to this is Year 10 where pupils would be expected to join the Year Group no later than half term of the Autumn Term. No scholarships are available for entry in Years 8 or 10 (with the exception of deferred Year 9 candidates). If a Year Group is full, candidates must be registered for the assessment to be placed on the waiting list.

Deferred entry into Year 9

Each year we offer a small number of deferred places to Year 6 pupils looking to join the School in Year 9. Pupils must be registered with the School by the November deadline in Year 6 and sit entrance assessments in Year 6. A deferred place will be offered only to those pupils who we are confident will adapt to senior school at this later stage and is conditional on a final reference and report from the current school in Year 8.

Should demand for places exceed available space or we decide that a Year 9 deferred place is not the best option for a pupil, the School may offer a place in Year 7 or invite the pupil to further assessment during Year 8.

Academic and Sports Scholarships are available to pupils joining Year 9 on a deferred basis. Pupils must sit their entrance assessment on the main entrance assessment day in Year 6 to be eligible for consideration for a scholarship. Pupils are invited to the Academic Scholarship assessment on the basis of performance in the entrance assessments. Potential Sports Scholars will be awarded on the basis of a supplementary application form and practical assessment in Year 8 and must have accepted their place at Farnborough Hill to be eligible for consideration.

Entry to the Sixth Form

Places are offered in the Sixth Form on the basis of interview, academic progress to date and confirmed achievements at GCSE. The minimum entry requirement is six good passes (9 – 6 or equivalent) at GCSE. Candidates from outside the British education system who are not able to take GCSEs will need to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge of their chosen subjects to be able to follow the A level courses.

Applicants are invited to sit the open assessment for the award of Sixth Form Academic Scholarships which are made on the basis of academic excellence. Other Sixth Form scholarships and awards are available for Sports and the Creative and Performing Arts.

Application deadlines apply for Sixth Form Scholarships and are available on the School's website. Non-scholarship applications are welcomed throughout the year although A level subject combinations may be more limited for those applying after February.

Special Needs

We aim to provide a safe educational environment in which all pupils can access the curriculum, make a positive contribution to the life of the School and achieve their potential. The School is particularly aware of the needs of those children with disabilities and works to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are not treated less favourably. For pupils with diagnoses of special needs who, under the Equality Act 2010, have an identified physical or mental impairment that is substantial and long-term, and which impacts with an adverse effect on day-to-day activities, the School aims to put in place reasonable adjustments to aid pupils' learning and attainment.

Due to their Grade I listed status, many of our school buildings have limited facilities for disabled pupils but all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate pupils with disabilities and to comply with our responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) and the Equality Act 2010.

There may be exceptional 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 her health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the School.

Farnborough Hill accepts pupils with a variety of learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The School also offers places to pupils who have other difficulties such as physical disabilities, motor co-ordination problems, visual impairment, auditory impairment, ADD/ADHD and emotional problems.

The School's admissions process makes provision for the disclosure of disability and special needs. Parents are requested to contact the School to discuss their child's special needs prior to registration. Extra time will be given in the entrance assessment if appropriate and the special need must be verified by a medical specialist or an Educational Psychologist's report or reflect a child's normal way of working at their current school. In doing so the School therefore fulfils an anticipatory duty as defined by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. A failure of a parent to divulge learning support/disability at the point of registration constitutes a justification under the act for discrimination. Where a parent requests confidentiality regarding a learning support/disability this request limits what the School can provide in making reasonable adjustments. Under these circumstances the School has the right to decide the balance of confidentiality and possible, and reasonable, adjustments for inclusion.

The Learning Support Department is available to work with those pupils who have reached the required academic standard in the entrance assessment but who need some help with general or specific learning difficulties to reach their full potential. We may also recommend additional support for pupils who have English as an additional language with a peripatetic specialist, and this would be arranged and overseen by the Head of Learning Support. Referrals for support are made via the pupils' Head of Year.

The School Nurse takes a similar responsibility for supporting pupils with a physical disability, liaising closely with the Head of Year and teaching staff.

Entrance Assessment Results

We do not provide assessment results to parents but the Headmistress and Director of Admissions are always willing to discuss individual performance with the Head of a girl's current school.

Appeal Process

Should parents wish to appeal against the decision not to admit their daughter, they should put their case in writing to the Headmistress. Should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome, they should contact the Chair of Governors, via the School. The School's *Complaints Policy* is not available for use by prospective parents.

Formal Offers of Places

Formal offers of places (firm and waiting list) are made in writing on completion of entrance procedures. Parents of any applicant who is not offered a place are similarly notified in writing. On receipt of an offer, parents are asked to confirm in writing their acceptance, return the acceptance papers and pay a non-refundable acceptance deposit of £500 which will be credited less any outstanding amounts on the pupil's final account. Offers of places after the deadline for 11+ entry (March before Year 7 entry) must be accepted within seven days. Thereafter, the School reserves the right to offer the place to another candidate.

The School reserves the right to turn down an applicant when the optimum in terms of available places or other practical constraints are reached, or when in the School's opinion an applicant would not flourish, or because adjustment to cater for specific needs cannot reasonably be made, or when the School believes that the applicant will not take part in school life joyfully and wholeheartedly.

Joining Arrangements

Careful attention is given to the allocation of pupils into their respective Form Groups, in particular upon joining in Year 7 at 11+. The School will consider several factors in this process to ensure Form Groups are well balanced and that girls are offered every opportunity to integrate themselves fully into school life.

Such considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring a mix of abilities
- Ensuring assignments to Houses are balanced across Forms
- Pupils' home locations
- The placement of twins, and girls from specific friendship groups, into separate Forms

Where subjects are set, pupils who join outside of the main entry points at 11+ and 16+ will be placed into the closest set appropriate to their ability where there is space to accommodate them. Set allocations are reviewed at specific points during the academic year.

Unforeseen Circumstances

In the event of restrictions brought about by pandemic or other unforeseen or emergency event, the School reserves the right to make any necessary adjustments to its admissions dates and procedures to comply with current regulations or to ensure the safety of the School community and its wider members, including prospective families. Details of any adjustments will be communicated to families at the earliest opportunity.

Where entrance assessments are required to be taken at the School in accordance with the regulations set down by the assessment provider, all due regard will be given to the health and safety of the staff and candidates.

Farnborough Hill is committed to broadening access to the School by offering means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees. Please refer to the School's *Bursary and Hardship Awards Policy* for further information on the process and eligibility criteria used for allocating awards.

Records and Review

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's *Privacy Notice*. The School will retain personal data securely and only in line with how long it is necessary to keep for a legitimate and lawful reason.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Director of Admissions and Marketing and the Headmistress.

The next review is due in September 2026.