



Highclare School

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Highclare School aims to provide a safe, happy, healthy, positive and successful education for all of our pupils. The School always seeks to uphold the highest possible standards.

We seek to conduct all admissions in a fair manner so that prospective pupils are not discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins, or on the grounds of any form of special educational need or disability.

Highclare School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can reasonably 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.

The School respects the freedom and rights of all young people, but recognises that these must be carefully balanced with School regulations to protect the School community and ethos.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting. Highclare School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Admissions Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy document.

The decision to admit, or otherwise, is the responsibility of the Governing Body, but it is delegated on a day-to-day basis to the Head.

Early Years Foundation Stage (Pre-Prep)

(2 to 4 years ie Rising 3s – Cygnets - and Rising 4s - Swans)

Highclare welcomes all children between the ages of 2 and 4 years. The earliest that children may join is the start of the academic year (September), following their second birthday. All pupils in EYFS will be offered at least one familiarisation session prior to starting. Children will progress into each age related stage (joining Cygnets / Swans or moving from Cygnets to Swans) when Highclare staff consider it appropriate, based on an evaluation against established age-related targets.

A Swans contract for children attending Term Time Only will end on the last day of the Summer Term as advertised on the school website. A Swans contract for children attending Full Year will end on 31 August.

All children entering Swans are expected to be fully toilet trained.

Reception (4 - 5 years) – internal pupils

All children in our Pre-Preparatory Swans class have a provisional place in the Reception class, provided they continue to meet their developmental milestones. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis to parents who have submitted their reservation form and paid the necessary deposit* before the appropriate deadline.

The deadline for internal submissions will be communicated to parents each year. Beyond this point we will be filling any available slots with our external waiting list. Parents are still welcome to make their reservation after the deadline but may need to join the waiting list.

*If you withdraw your reservation before the deadline date as given on the offer letter (typically the beginning of March) the deposit will be returned to you, minus an administration charge of 5%. If you withdraw your reservation on or before 30 April, 50% of the deposit will be returned to you. For withdrawal on or after 1 May, the full deposit will be kept by the School.

If we withdraw the place as a result of your child not meeting their developmental milestones, a full refund of the deposit will be given.

Entry at Reception to Yr6 (5 - 10 years) – external pupils

Admission for pupils from other schools will be subject to an assessment and a satisfactory reference and report from the pupil's previous school, requested with parental consent. Please note that all children entering Reception onwards are expected to be fully toilet trained.

Reception Entry

External candidates for Reception will be invited to make an application and pay their deposit before the March deadline. Places will be allocated to internal parents first, with assessment days taking place throughout March for external candidates.

Once the deadline is reached, any available spaces will be filled with successful external candidates and a waiting list will follow once the class limit of 22 pupils has been reached.

Progress through the Pre-Prep and Preparatory School

Subject to satisfactory internal assessments, children will normally progress to the next year. However, if the child's progress causes any reason for concern, the Key Stage Coordinator, Assistant Head, or Head of Preparatory School will discuss with parents the ability of the child to cope with the academic rigour and expectations of the forthcoming year.

If the opinion of the Head or the Head of the Preparatory School is that a child has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at Highclare School, options will be discussed openly with parents. This may include educating the child out of their year group or within a different setting, or may require the removal of the child from School.

All admissions, except at the start of Reception, are conditional and subject to a one term probationary period.

Entry into Senior School and Sixth Form (11 - 18 years)

Pupils in Highclare's Preparatory School have a right of transfer to the Senior School. Applications are taken from external applicants at 11+. Scholarships are available. These will be awarded equally to internal and external applicants at the discretion of the Head, based on (i) performance in the assessment test/Preparatory School assessments or auditions, (ii) interview performance, (iii) satisfactory reference from current school / Highclare Preparatory School.

All admissions, except at the start of U3 (Yr7), are conditional and subject to a one term probationary period.

- Entry at 11+ for applicants from other schools is by:
 - An individual test (CAT) and English assessment
 - Each pupil will be invited into school with parents for an interview with the Head / Deputy Head of Senior School.
 - A satisfactory report and reference from the pupil's previous school with parental consent.
- Entry into other senior classes will be by:
 - An individual test (CAT) and English assessment
 - An interview with the Head / Deputy Head of Senior School: Academic / Pastoral
 - A satisfactory report and reference from the pupil's previous school

Progress through the Senior School – As in the preparatory school settings, pupils will progress automatically to the next year. However, if the pupil's progress or behaviour causes any reason for concern the Key Stage Coordinator, Deputy Head of Senior School: Academic / Pastoral, or Head will discuss with parents the ability of the pupil to cope with the academic rigour and expectations of the forthcoming year. If the opinion of the Head is that a child has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at Highclare School, options

will be discussed openly with parents. This may include educating the child out of their year group or within a different setting, or may require the removal of the child from School.

Entry into Sixth Form (16 - 18 years)

Students entering the Sixth Form will be expected to achieve at least 5 GCSEs (at grade 9 – 5). Pupils will normally be required to have achieved a 9 to 6 grade at GCSE level to follow that subject at A level. If the student's progress or attitude to learning causes reason for concern, the Head of Sixth Form, Deputy Head of Senior School: Academic, or Head will discuss with parents the ability of the student to cope with the academic rigour and expectations of the forthcoming year. If the opinion of the Head or the is that a child has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at Highclare School, options will be discussed openly with parents. This may include educating the child out of their year group or within a different setting, or may require the removal of the child from School.

Registration Fee and Deposit (all years except Pre-Preparatory and those transferring from Pre-Preparatory to Reception)

A non-refundable registration fee is payable on completion of the registration form for all prospective entries to the School. Registration is necessary to undertake formal assessment for entry, including taster days or written assessments.

If an offer of entry is made following assessment, payment of a deposit is necessary in order to secure the reservation of a place. The deposit includes a portion held until the child leaves Highclare School (assuming there are no monies owed to the School) and a portion will be credited to the first term's bill. If you choose to withdraw your reservation before the deadline date given on your offer letter the deposit will be returned to you, minus an administration charge of 5%. If you withdraw following the deadline given on your offer letter, the full deposit will be retained by the School.

If Highclare School withdraw the offer of a place, the full deposit will be returned to you.

Special Circumstances

We recognise that a candidate's performance may be affected by special circumstances, for example:

- Ill health
- Family circumstances, eg. bereavement
- A disability or specific learning difficulty
- If English is not the candidate's first language

We request that parents inform the school of any special circumstances which may affect their child's performance. The School may request further information such as an educational psychologist's report or a medical report in order to make a fair assessment.

Reasonable adjustments to entrance assessments will be made for applicants with special educational needs and/or disabilities in order that all applicants are assessed fairly. Parents are required to provide full details to the school upon application if their child has external or in-school learning support, an educational psychologist's report, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a disability, allergy or medical condition, to enable the school to make provision, if appropriate. A place will only be offered if the school believes that it can appropriately support a pupil's learning or other needs effectively and that admission is in the best interests of the applicant.

Eligibility

A pupil must have the right to study in the UK for the duration of their enrolment at the school. The school will request evidence of this during the admissions process, normally in the form of a British or Irish passport or valid visa documentation. The school reserves the right to rescind an offer where the right to study cannot be evidenced.

A pupil must reside with their parent/s or legal guardian while attending the school, or with someone else approved by her parent/s or legal guardian and the Head. Pupils whose parents are overseas must have an educational guardian in the UK and parents must notify the school of the name and address of the guardian.

The school reserves the right to refuse entry to a pupil whose parents have, in the past, failed to meet in full their fee obligations to the school in relation to another child already enrolled at the school.

Disclosures

The school relies on the integrity of the admissions procedure and therefore the truthfulness of the information provided by the applicant's parents, as well as the requirement to disclose any information to the school which may be relevant to the application process such as the child's health, allergies, any learning difference or disability. Where relevant information is not disclosed or proves to be false or misleading the school reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place which may have been granted, deny the applicant admission, or where a child has already been admitted, request that the child is withdrawn from the school.

Declining an Application

While Highclare School seeks to be inclusive, there are circumstances where the School may decline to offer a place or may be unable to proceed with an application. These reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Academic Suitability: If the Head determines that a pupil would not be able to meaningfully access the academic curriculum or thrive within the School's educational environment.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): If, after full consideration and consultation, the School determines it cannot reasonably provide the specific support, staffing, or facilities required to meet the child's needs without impairing the education of other pupils.
- Health and Safety: If the admission of the pupil would potentially put the health and safety of that pupil, other pupils, or staff at risk.
- Non-Disclosure: If parents withhold relevant information or provide inaccurate or misleading details during the admissions process regarding a child's needs, medical history, or prior school record.
- Availability: If the relevant year group is full and the School is unable to offer a place from the waiting list.
- References and Conduct: If the School receives an unsatisfactory reference from the candidate's current school, or if the conduct of the parents or the candidate during the admissions process is deemed inconsistent with the School's values and ethos.
- Financial Obligations: If the School becomes aware of outstanding financial obligations to a previous school that have not been settled.

Probationary Periods

All admissions, with the exception of Pre-Preparatory pupils, and September entry to Reception or U3 (Yr7) are made on a conditional basis, subject to a probationary period. During the probationary period, usually one full term, the parent has the right to withdraw the pupil without the usual contractual notice period or incurring fees in lieu of notice. Any fees paid in advance will also be refunded on a pro rata basis. The School may also withdraw the place during the probationary period, at the discretion of the Head. On occasion, the probationary period may be extended (to no longer than a further full term). The extension will be made in writing and specific reasons for the extension and targets for improvement identified.

Bursaries and Scholarships

Academic, Sport and Music Scholarships are available on entry at Year 7, giving up to 20% remission on fees. Academic scholarships are awarded on the basis of the entrance assessment results; sport and music by audition.

Scholarships may be awarded to pupils joining in other year groups at the discretion of the Head.

Sixth form scholarships are available and awarded for academic ability and for sport and attitude to learning. A Pre-Med scholarship is also offered.

All Scholars are expected to participate fully in the life of the school and in the case of specialist scholarships, will be expected to make a particular contribution in that area throughout their time at the school.

Means tested bursaries are awarded on entrance at Y7 and for Sixth Form. This financial assistance varies and will usually cover a maximum of 30% of school fees. In addition to this, the Highclare School Governors' Prize is a means-tested award to cover up to 100% of fees. See Scholarship and Bursary Policy for further details.

Application forms are available from the Admissions Department.

No combination of awards would normally exceed 50% of full fees and all awards will be reviewed annually.

All bursary awards may be subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. The school reserves the right to reduce or terminate the scholarship awards on giving a term's notice. Unsatisfactory performance or conduct could result in the award being reduced or terminated. Scholarships are awarded on the understanding that school fees are paid on time and in full. Failure to comply with this will result in the scholarship being withdrawn.

Highclare School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Highclare School welcomes applications from children of all backgrounds and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin or disability. The School is aware of its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and has a Disability Policy in Place.

Links with other policies:

- Accessibility Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Scholarship and Bursary Policy

These policies are available on request from the School

Confirmed by Board:	Review Cycle	Most recent review:
September 2013	Annual	September 2026