



ADMISSIONS POLICY

References:

- A. Education Act 2002.
- B. School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- C. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
- D. ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools: Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements, September 2018
- E. Schools Admission Code 2010 –
<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/s/school%20admission%20code%202010.doc>
- F. ISBA Model Policy dated December 2011.

General

Vinehall School is a co-educational day and boarding independent school for pupils from ages 2 to 13. The School has approximately 220 pupils and children may board from Year 3 onwards.

We welcome applications from pupils of all social and cultural backgrounds so long as they are in sympathy with the general ethos of the School as set out in the Parents' Handbook, a copy of which is available on the Parent Portal on the School's website.

We admit pupils at all stages from Pre-Nursery through to Year 8.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit Vinehall. We hold a number of Open Days each year, which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact our Admissions Team on 01580 883090 or email admissions@vinehallschool.com to arrange a visit.

The Entry Procedure

Following a visit, parents wishing to register their children to start at Vinehall should contact our Registrar for further details.

Entry to the Pre-Prep, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1)

Parents fill in a registration form which they return with a registration fee (not required for Early Years Education Entitlement (EYEE) only children). They will receive acknowledgement on receipt of both the registration form and the fee.

Once the registration fee is paid, parents receive additional information. Parents of EYFS and KS1 children receive a Welcome Pack. The pack includes a covering letter and a Welcome Handbook for Parents; uniform lists and a medical form; an All About Me Booklet for EYFS children and an invitation for children to attend a taster session; a sessions letter for parents of children in Nursery and Kindergarten to select sessions and further information about clubs and activities such as After School Club.

A Welcome Event takes place in May for parents of children joining the EYFS the following September. The event is part social and part sharing of information. Parents are encouraged to attend in order to have another opportunity to meet the staff, find out more about a typical day and ask questions. The taster days usually follow the week after an initial observations of the child are made.

Children applying for a Nursery or Kindergarten place may attend on a part-time basis. Nursery children must attend two morning sessions as a minimum and Kindergarten three morning sessions. Parents can elect for their child to select some full days. As the year progresses it is expected that all children will increase their sessions; parents and staff discuss what is felt to be best for each child. Children are able to join the School once they become 2 years old. These children either join the Nursery or make up a separate Pre-Nursery group as appropriate, and may be joined by further 2 years olds mid-term if places are available.

Entry to the Prep School

Vinehall Prep School is non-selective academically. Any pastoral selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to access and to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School. The School must be confident that they are able to support the needs of all pupils.

Once prospective pupils for the Prep School are registered, parents receive a pack containing our standard Terms and Conditions, insurance scheme information, a copy of the School rules for pupils, various items of medical information, library thumbprint information and the following forms which all require completion and a signature from both parents (or a child's guardian/guardians):

- Medical form
- Photography consent form
- Social register form.

Overseas boarders will receive the following additional forms: UK Educational Guardian details and English as an additional language (EAL) agreement.

Applicants for admission should ideally register in the year preceding the desired year of admission. However, we appreciate that events such as moving house and other personal circumstances may necessitate an application at a much later stage.

Equal Treatment

Our 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. Generous bursaries may be offered to enable as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School.

Vinehall School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background. Our provision for bursaries is described below.

Special Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our small Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with disabilities provided that our site can accommodate them. We ask

parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School well in advance so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. In this case, parents must declare if the child has a statement of special educational need and we request a copy of any report by an outside agency.

We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the School. We may also request any relevant medical information.

The Assessment Process

The aim of the process is to identify potential. We are 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 and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

Pre-Prep, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1)

EYFS and KS1 children attend a taster morning or day preceding their entry into school. This enables the children to become familiar with the staff and learning environment. Time is put aside for parents to talk to staff about the children's individual needs and stages of development. Staff observations of the children and the All About Me Booklet for EYFS children are good starting points for discussion. If necessary the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for EYFS and KS1 children will be involved in discussion with parents in order to ensure that preparations can be made to offer the appropriate provision for the child. All information is collated by the class teachers or key persons and forms the basis of the EYFS Learning Journeys and Individual Learning Profiles (ILPs) in KS1. In addition records and/or reports are requested from any previous settings.

Prep School

Children are awarded places based on their reports from previous schools and discussion with the Headmaster. They are also invited in for a taster day to enable both the children's families and the School to determine that the School is a good fit for the child.

Scholarships and Bursaries

The Governors of Vinehall School are committed to broadening access to the School by offering financial assistance with the payment of schools fees to eligible parents/guardians in the form of bursaries and scholarships.

Eligibility for financial assistance is determined by an assessment of parental means and any award is subject to repeat testing of parental means each year. The level of assistance is made on the basis of the Vinehall School Scale of Assistance, which sets out award levels in relation to a family's financial circumstances.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to families who are not already part of the Vinehall community. The intention is to attract gifted and talented children who will enhance our community and provide them with a broad range of educational opportunities and training in preparation for 11+ or 13+ transfer to senior schools through a scholarship.

Scholarships are competitive and applications are welcome from pupils currently in Year 3 or above (i.e. for entry in Year 4 at the earliest). Scholarships are advertised in the local press and parents/guardians apply through forms available from the Registrar. Application forms should be submitted by the end of January so that they may be assessed in advance of the children's entry tests, which are held in February/March.

Successful candidates will be awarded a 10% discount on the fees, which may be augmented by a means tested bursary, if appropriate. Eligibility for further assistance, will be determined by an assessment of parental means. The application and assessment process for financial assistance is set out at Appendix 1, attached, and application forms are available from the Registrar.

Bursaries

Requests for bursary assistance usually fall into two categories:

- New applicants to the School, where a place has been offered but parents/guardians are unable to fund the tuition fees in full.
- Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting tuition fees and may result in the child being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

Eligibility for bursary assistance will be determined by an assessment of parental means. The application and assessment process is set out at Appendix 1, attached, and application forms are available from the Registrar.

Overseas Applicants

We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at Vinehall as a boarder provided he/she has a relative or educational guardian living in the UK with whom he/she can stay for some weekends. However, parents of overseas pupils should appreciate that we prefer not to run a short-term study programme, and prefer overseas pupils to finish a complete course of study, usually an academic year. In certain circumstances we will accept pupils for shorter periods and this should be discussed with Admissions.

Fluency in English

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of the School, pupils should be relatively fluent English speakers. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense.

Religious Beliefs

Although Vinehall is a Christian school, we do not select children for entry to the School on the basis of specific religious belief, or absence thereof. We are happy for everyone to follow the faith of their choosing and have the opportunity to practice their own beliefs. However, all pupils are expected to

attend assemblies, which will adhere to the School's Christian ethos, and 'Whole School' events such as the school Carol Service and the Remembrance Day Service.

School's Contractual Terms and Conditions

A copy of the School's Terms and Conditions will be provided to parents by the Admissions Team as part of the admissions process, which parents are required to sign and return.

Provision of Information

This policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the School's website or on request from the School office.

Notice Requirements

In all cases, with the exception of children funded solely by EYEE, if parents wish to withdraw their child from the School (other than at the normal leaving date), they are required to give the School a term's notice to that effect or pay a term's fees in lieu of notice.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process but the School's complaints procedure is available under Policies on the website or on request from the Headmaster.

Admissions Registers

In line with Statutory requirements, records will be kept of all those attending the School and any such records may be provided to the Local Authority in line with the regulations currently in force.

See also:

- Policy on Bursaries and Scholarships.