

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

---

As one of the 26 schools of the Girls Day School Trust, Sheffield High School follows the Council's Regulations for admission which state:

"GDST schools shall be open to all pupils deemed by the Head to be capable of benefiting from the education provided at the school and of contributing fully to the life of the school. Admission is usually dependent of achieving an acceptable standard in an assessment or examination appropriate to the age group and academic pace of the school. Such examinations and tests are expected to be free of bias, as set out in the Equal Opportunities Policy. Due consideration should however be given to educational experience in assessing pupils' achievement of an 'acceptable standard', and to maximising access for pupils to whom the school can add value. In relation to the junior department and preparatory schools, candidates will be admitted who are considered likely to progress through the usual pathways for pupils attending the school. In most cases in the all through context this will be the standard required to enter the senior department in due course, or to follow a range of complementary transfer routes. In relation to the senior department, candidates will be admitted who are likely to qualify for further education at post 16. In relation to the sixth form, entry is governed by the school's published criteria. These include, typically, 6-8 good grades at GCSE and specified GCSE grades (B or A) in subjects chosen for A level study".

Sheffield High School educates girls who are, for the most part, of average and above average ability. The school aims to provide a challenging academic education together with a curriculum which helps to develop its pupils morally, spiritually and creatively.

Sheffield High School is a fee-paying independent school, but seeks to be as accessible as possible to all able girls, regardless of their parents' ability to pay by the provision of scholarships and bursaries at 11+ and 16+.

The key criterion for admission, in addition to the availability of places, is the girl's ability to access the curriculum of the school. Usual entry points are at 4+, 7+, 11+, 14+ and 16+, but girls are admitted at other times when vacancies occur. Admission to the school is based on performance in an assessment, on interview with the Headmistress or Head of Junior Department and if transferring from another school, a report from the previous school.

All applicants for admission are considered for a place without prejudice for their special needs, whenever it is possible to provide the help necessary.

### **Junior Department**

Assessments at 4+ take place in the autumn term prior to entry. At 4+ we are looking for the potential to learn rather than what has been learnt. This is established via a series of short assessments that cover all aspects of learning such as Mathematics, language, social, physical and creative skills and a knowledge and understanding of the world. The assessments are taken in a nursery style environment that enables the child to feel relaxed and able to perform.

Admission into other year groups in the Junior Department is based on performance in English (reading, comprehension and creative writing) and Maths (based on KS1 or 2 work).

### **Senior Department**

Applicants who have registered for admission into Year 7 are invited to sit the entrance test along with girls currently in Year 6 at the school on a Saturday morning early in January. The test comprises 2 parts: English (comprehension, grammar and extended writing) and Maths (based on National Curriculum KS2 Mathematics and includes number and algebra, shape and measures and data handling).

Places are offered approximately 2 weeks after the test, based on performance in the examination and taking into account a report from the applicant's current school. Scholarships are awarded based on performance in the entrance examination and Bursaries are awarded based on financial need.

Applicants for available places in other year groups are invited into school on a school day to take a cognitive ability test in English, Mathematics and non verbal reasoning appropriate for that year group. A reference is also requested from the applicant's current school. Results of the test are usually given between 1-2 working days. If an applicant does not reach the required standard in one of the tests she will be given the opportunity to retake the test if she wishes at a later date.

### **Sixth Form**

Applicants to the Sixth Form are invited into school to meet the Headmistress and the Head of Sixth Form and to attend the Sixth Form Taster Day. Places are offered based on the candidate obtaining 7 GCSEs at grades A-C with at least grade B in the subjects to be studied at A level and a satisfactory reference from the current school. For students applying from International schools a satisfactory performance in a sixth form entrance test in Mathematics and English is required as well as a reference from the current school.

### **Key Stage Transfers within the School**

Continuity of education is anticipated throughout the age range and at the key stages of transfer unless in the opinion of the head, after due deliberation, the pupil will not benefit from continuing to be educated at the school or has not attained a sufficiently high standard of work to benefit from continued education at the school. Factors such as poor behaviour or lack of motivation on the part of the pupil may be taken into account. If there is a likelihood that a pupil will not be able to transfer to the next year, a term's notice of withdrawal will be given.

At the end of Key Stage 1 if a girl is showing signs that she may not reach the appropriate standard for transfer to the Senior School, the Head of Junior Department will discuss this with the parents and suggest any remedial help that may be needed. The progress of the pupil will continue to be monitored and parents will be informed verbally and in writing by the end of Year 5 if it is unlikely that their daughter would not cope with the curriculum of the Senior School, unless she attains clearly identified standards. Parents should be given clear advice on how the school will support the pupil and monitor progress.

For transfer from Key Stage 4 to Sixth Form, parents of girls who are showing cause for concern are advised in writing after the GCSE mock examinations of the entry criteria to the Sixth Form.

Within the sixth form, transfer from Y12 to Y13 is dependent on satisfactory performance in AS examinations. Usually a minimum of grade D is required at AS in order to continue with a subject to A2. If a student does not reach this standard, discussions will be held between the Head/Deputy Head or Head of Sixth Form and the student and her parents to agree on the most appropriate programme of study for the student.

A pupil cannot take up her place at the school until parents have signed and returned the Parent Contract Form (Form F7).

*Reviewed December 2010*