

This explains how you enter your child for Heathside, the full admissions process and how we allocate places.

Introduction

Heathside Preparatory School is a co-educational, non-denominational school for pupils aged from rising three to 11.

We welcome children into every year, depending on availability of places. Our main points of entry are:

- Cygnets (pre-Nursery): where we accept approximately fifteen children rising three. Children may join at the start of the term in which they turn three.
- Swans (Nursery): where we accept a few children aged 3, mostly in September.

Please note that few pupils leave the school early. If it is open to you, the best strategy for ensuring a place for your child is to register early for entry into Cygnets. If not, please contact us to discuss the availability of places.

The admissions process

The admissions process is designed to achieve a successful fit between the school and its pupils, by allowing the school to gain a realistic picture of the prospective pupil, and the pupil and parents to gain one of the school. The school is a successful learning community and it is important for you and your child that you understand and are sympathetic to the school's ethos and approach.

The first step is to register your child for entry: registration forms are available from the school office (020 7794 5857) or via the website (www.heathside.net). We recommend that you register at the earliest possible opportunity. There is a non-refundable registration fee.

The school will contact you to confirm your registration and, when appropriate, to let you know the situation regarding places and waiting lists. The next step is to send us a report from your child's current school or nursery. In most cases, we will arrange for you to meet a member of staff, and for your pupil to visit Heathside for a day (or half a day for Cygnets, Swans and Reception classes).

On the basis of the report, meeting and visit, we will assess your child as a potential pupil and, according to availability and admissions policy, we will contact you to advise you whether we can offer a place or not.

Allocation of places

The school is co-educational and non-denominational and is open to children of all races and backgrounds without discrimination.

We take these factors into account when offering places (in priority order):

- availability of a place
- your child's potential as a Heathside pupil (please see below)
- gender balance of the class
- children who have an existing relationship with the school: siblings of pupils or children of staff, for example (in waiting list order)
- new applicants (in waiting list order).

Waiting list order is determined by the date of registration for a particular class. Please understand that we cannot hold future places for early applicants, but we do use waiting list order to allocate them when they become available. It is therefore important to submit your registration form as early as possible.

How we (and you) decide if Heathside is the right school for your child

We want you and your child to know Heathside well before you make your decision. We also aim to get to know you and your child. We are honest with parents about Heathside and when we meet you we will do our best to help you understand our ethos and approach. We ask you to be honest with us and to be open about your child and what he or she needs.

We look for children who will thrive at Heathside and who will contribute positively to a school community that is creative, social and academic. Most pupils work at above (or well above) national average ability levels, but in assessing potential pupils we recognise a range of abilities (including academic ability, but also including creative, personal and social) and look for potential. We have an excellent tradition of discovering and harnessing hidden talents.

The visit is central to the whole admissions process. Prospective pupils normally spend one day at Heathside, attending classes and mixing with their peer group. The visit is arranged when a place is available or likely to become so, and the school report and/or the meeting with the parents indicates that Heathside may be a good fit for your child.

The visit is an opportunity for your child to experience Heathside for her- or himself. We use it to determine your child's readiness for the next stage of their education, his or her academic potential, learning profile and suitability for the approach we offer.

During the visit, we observe and assess how responsive your child is to teachers and to classmates, how easily s/he will integrate into the school community, how s/he responds to the demands of schoolwork, how willing s/he is to work independently and, if relevant, whether the school is able to meet any additional needs.

The school operates an inclusion policy, which enhances school life for every pupil, but any prospective pupil must be able to access the mainstream curriculum at an age-appropriate level. The school will make reasonable adjustments to cater for the needs of applicants while giving equal importance to ensuring that no other pupil's education is impaired. All parents are asked to complete a form detailing their child's requirements and any reasonable adjustments necessary for the child to be educated at Heathside. Where we require more information we may ask for an educational psychologist's or other appropriate professional's report.

The school has the final decision in all cases of admissions.

Accepting a place

If we offer your child a place, and you choose to accept it, your next step is to confirm your acceptance in writing, along with a deposit and commitment to the first term's fees. We will then make full arrangements for welcoming your child into the school.