



MILTON ABBAY SCHOOL

Admissions Policy	
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ADMISSIONS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Milton Abbey School is an Independent, co-educational, full-boarding and day school in Dorset for children aged 13 to 19. We take pride in our ability to nurture self-confidence in every child. In our beautiful countryside setting, pupils thrive, building strong friendships and enjoying a vibrant weekend and evening programme in our full boarding school. Sports every day and space to grow empowers pupils to approach all their commitments with a positive outlook, benefiting from balance in their day. With our small size and exceptional pastoral care, we develop a deep understanding of each pupil, working closely with parents to set ambitious goals and develop kind and successful individuals.

We offer a unique blend of traditional and vocational qualifications designed to inspire pupils and prepare them for positive futures. We focus on developing not only academic skills but also the attitudes and habits that lead to lifelong achievement. We balance support and challenge to ensure all pupils can experience success, through effort, whatever their starting point. We are committed to removing barriers to learning and equipping pupils with the strategies they need to succeed. Small classes with individual attention and differentiated teaching, the focus on achieving personal best and the specialist support of our Learning Development Department contribute to our pupils' success.

Milton Abbey's broad academic offer includes traditional GCSEs and A-Levels alongside more vocational Level 2 and Level 3 BTEC subjects. The range of subjects and qualification types within our academic offer ensures that we can offer each pupil a stimulating, accessible and stretching programme of study, with the right balance of challenge and support. Our focus is on the holistic development of each individual. Wellbeing underpins optimal development and achievement in all areas. We seek to provide an environment for our pupils that combines high challenge with moderate pressure.

We assess prospective pupils to determine whether they are ready and able to make the most of a Milton Abbey education, to meet community expectations of behaviour and participation and to make a positive contribution to community life. It is key for us that pupils accepted into our community have not displayed previous conduct which has been a behavioural issue primarily. Direct contact with a pupil's current or previous school will occasionally be made beyond the reference to establish an understanding of context to any stated behaviour or sanctions.

An inclusive school, Milton Abbey has a proud tradition of providing transformational education to young people, many of whom have identified learning differences, including dyslexia, dyspraxia or challenges with their attention, working memory or language processing. Many pupils do not have an identified learning difference but benefit from being educated in a small school in which they are individually known. We recognise that all pupils learn differently and seek to differentiate our teaching and our provision to meet the needs and interests of each individual.

The school is selective in that it only admits pupils whose learning needs it can meet, with reasonable adjustments. The admissions process is designed to ensure that the pupil's learning needs are understood by the school and can be met. In support of this, some pupils may be assessed through either a written or verbal academic assessment to ensure that they will thrive in our academic setting.

The school recognises its duties under the 2010 Equality Act, celebrates diversity and is committed to achieving equality for all. Those of all faiths and none are equally welcome in our community. The Abbey is central to our school life. Community worship is in the tradition of the Church of England.

We are committed to making the admissions process as fair, smooth and positive as possible for prospective pupils and their parents. Admission will be subject to the availability of a place and the satisfactory meeting of the admission requirements at the time of offer.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Prospective parents are encouraged to arrange a visit to the school between two and three years before the year of entry. Parents and prospective pupils are welcome at Open Days. In order to make an individual full Admissions Visit, parents must register their child for entry.

An Admissions Visit to the school usually includes a meeting with the Headmaster or Deputy Head, a member of our Boarding team, as well a tour of the school with one of our pupils and often other members of staff.

For families who wish to visit the school for a general overview, we offer families the opportunity to join us for an Open Day or an Introductory Visit. Once ready to have their child assessed for a place, parents are invited to register their child and come in for an Admissions Visit. An Admissions questionnaire will be provided to parents, as part of the registration process, to assist the school to determine whether the Lead SENDCo is required, and where appropriate, the Lead SENDCO will meet the child and parents.

Parents are welcome to express a preference for a particular boarding house but the school makes final decisions on boarding house allocation closer to the point of entry.

REGISTRATION

A child may be registered for admission at any time after birth. A non-refundable registration fee of £330 is charged and on receipt the child's name is added to the registered list to be considered for a place. Registration does not in itself guarantee a place at the school; the offer of a place is confirmed following the Admissions Visit, incorporating an interview with the Headmaster, Deputy Head or other member of the Senior Team, and receipt of a satisfactory school reference which includes recent cognitive scores. In addition to this, a copy of the child's recent school report will be required for information as well as the completed Admissions Questionnaire. Parents are asked to provide any reports including, where applicable, a recent Educational Psychology Report or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). In order for their child to progress in the Admissions process, parents must share documentation upon request. Upon Registration, a reference from the child's current school will be sought. At the time of Registration, the School will request documentation to confirm identity such as a passport copy. All registration documents must be reviewed by the school prior to the admissions interview taking place.

ACCEPTANCE OF A PLACE

Once an offer of a place has been given, parents are provided with the Terms and Conditions, Milton Abbey Aims and Expectations, as well as the Milton Abbey Values and Behaviour Expectations, and asked to accept the place within the deadline stated on the offer letter. In order to confirm the place, parents are asked to pay a deposit of £2000 and return the Acceptance Form. The deposit does not in itself guarantee a place at the school and entry is subject to candidates satisfying any entry requirements set out in the offer letter. If registration takes place within 18 months of the proposed date of entry to the school, the deposit is payable at the same time. The deposit is credited without interest to the final payment of fees or other sums due to the school. The order in which the list for any given year fills up is on a first-come first-served basis.

INTERNATIONAL PUPILS

All international pupils (those whose normal residence is outside of the United Kingdom or EU) are asked to confirm that Milton Abbey is their first choice and to pay a fee deposit of £2000. The deposit does not in itself guarantee a place at the school and entry is subject to candidates satisfying the entry requirements. In addition, no later than 28 days from the date of acceptance or two months prior to the date of joining the school, the Overseas Deposit, which is one full term's boarding fee, is required; whereupon the £2000 deposit is credited to the Overseas Deposit. Pupils accepted into the school within two months of the start of term will be asked to pay the Overseas Deposit only and not the £2000 Confirmation Fee.

A pupil of any age whose parents are resident outside of England must have an educational guardian in the United Kingdom who has been given legal authority to act on behalf of the Parents in all respects and to whom the school can apply for authorities when necessary. It is preferable for Guardians to be within a maximum of a three hours' drive of Milton Abbey School.

CHILD STUDENT VISA APPLICATION

Milton Abbey is a Child Student Visa Sponsor for UK Visas and Immigration (UKV&I) and therefore, licensed to support Confirmations of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for Child Student Visas. Parents/Guardians will be provided with the school's guide on the documentation required; only once the Milton Abbey Admissions Team is satisfied with the documentation provided, will the school proceed with the CAS application. There is a £600 administrative fee applied to each pupil's first bill following a successful CAS application and visa allocation.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Our usual entry points are in Third Form (Year 9) and Lower Sixth (Year 12) but places are available in other years occasionally.

Our offer will be based on a satisfactory current school reference, including CAT4 or equivalent cognitive test scores, and the prospective pupil's interview with the Headmaster, Deputy Head or other member of the Senior Team. Where a candidate's school does not offer CAT4 or standardised testing, we can make arrangements to provide the testing to schools if deemed necessary. In addition to this, a copy of the child's recent school report will be required for the Headmaster's information as well as the completed Admissions Questionnaire.

Should pupils be following the Common Entrance curriculum, offers will not depend on Common Entrance results. We will make it clear to applicants that we will expect them to maintain high levels of application throughout their prep education.

Parents must declare if their child has a behaviour record, learning difference or other disability so that reasonable adjustments may be assessed and any necessary and reasonable adjustments put in place for the admissions process.

We are often well equipped to support pupils with learning needs who have been assessed by an Educational Psychologist. Where this is the case, parents are required to provide this information well in advance of their visit, so that our Head of Learning Development can make informed decisions. An evaluation of the appropriate support can then be made in the light of the school's available resources. A charge is made for extra learning development sessions, the current rates of which are available upon request.

Should the Senior Team or Head of Learning Development see value in a visit to the child's current school as part of the admissions decision, this will be arranged with the parents' consent. The Learning Development Department may recommend that specific support sessions should be put in place upon entry, and this may be a condition of admission.

The school may ask parents to provide updated psychological reports for examination or other purposes. The school may also ask parents for permission to have the child assessed by an educational psychologist should there be a need for a more detailed understanding of their learning profile or to apply/re-apply for exam concessions where applicable.

During the admissions process, we will be in touch with the pupil's current school SENDCO for further information as appropriate to ensure that we are able to meet the pupil's needs, with reasonable adjustments.

As part of the Admissions process and for any Child Student Visa requirements, the opportunity to assess the child's English level so that we identify whether the child will require some level of EAL lessons to help support the child academically may be required. These lessons will be part of the school timetable and are taught by our team of English language teachers who have a wide range of experience teaching our international pupils of all levels, either to help them towards achieving a qualification in English (such as Cambridge Key, Preliminary, First or IELTS) or simply to help them interact more easily and rapidly in making friends and understanding the content of their other subject lessons. A charge is made for EAL sessions, the current rates of which are available upon request.

We work closely with Educational Agents, current schools and parents to ensure a smooth transition.

The school expects pupils to take an interest in the activities programme and contribute positively to the wider school community as an active participant. We look to see evidence of participation and effort in the school reference and during interview.

Sixth Form pupils are judged on individual merit regarding suitability for courses. We do not have specific minimum GCSE grades for entry, and we are always open to discussing individual cases. Where necessary, the opportunity to retake Maths and English GCSE during Sixth Form can be arranged. Prior learning may be required to access certain courses. Course choices are made in consultation with the Deputy Head Academic and Head of Sixth Form.

In addition to the above, a pupil with English as an additional language (EAL) should ideally have, as a minimum, English level B1 (equates to PET, Cambridge Preliminary English Test) for pupils entering Third Form (Year 9) and B2 (equates to FCE, Cambridge First Certificate in English) for those entering Lower Sixth (Year 12), although final decisions are made on an individual basis and assessed through our interview process.

SIBLINGS

Siblings will not be offered automatic entry but will have to fulfil our admissions criteria at the time of their entry, subject to the availability of a place. Siblings are entitled to a 5% discount on the fee during the period when the siblings are in the school together. Places in the same boarding house cannot be guaranteed for siblings, but parents' wishes will be taken into account where possible.

ADMISSIONS APPEALS

In the event that a place is not offered, parents will be informed. Any parent who wishes to appeal an admissions decision must write to the Headmaster as soon as possible after the decision not to offer a place has been communicated, and within seven days, setting out the reason for the appeal. The Headmaster will refer the matter to the Chairman of Governors who will communicate a final decision to parents within fourteen days of the decision letter.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are awarded on merit in the following categories:

- Academic Scholars who show passion and determination in specific subjects - including Performing Arts, Music and Drama - or across the curriculum.
- Sport Scholars who exhibit exceptional skill, leadership and commitment in one or more team sports including Rugby, Football, Cricket, Netball or Hockey. With sport every day there is no better school for children who excel in sport.
- Dorset Scholars who live locally in the county and will contribute as an all-rounder to the life of the school, while benefitting from our educational approach.

Scholarships will be reviewed on an annual basis and all scholarships are held on the basis of continued good effort, attitude and participation in school life, particularly in the award areas but in all areas of Milton Abbey School.

Scholarships at 13+ and 16+ generally carry a remission of 10%, 20% or 30% on published school fees but other levels may occasionally be awarded in conjunction with bursaries (see below) where financial need is demonstrated.

Parents who wish their child to be assessed for Scholarship should indicate this to the Admissions Department on registration. Scholarships may be awarded as part of the Admissions Visit, on the basis of interview and school reference, or pupils may be invited to attend a Scholarship Assessment, following their Admissions Visit, at the discretion of the Headmaster. Scholarships are not usually awarded to current pupils, so families must apply in advance of entry to the school.

BURSARIES

The school is committed to broadening access to those who might not otherwise be able to afford a Milton Abbey education. Means-tested, annually reviewed, bursaries are awarded on the basis of financial need and may either stand alone or be offered in addition to scholarships. Early application is advised. Further details can be found on the school's website.