



Exeter Cathedral School



ADMISSION TO THE SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This document aims to set out the criteria and procedures for admission to Exeter Cathedral School. In addition, it offers guidance for parents whose children who have a disability or special educational needs.

Prospective parents are advised to read this policy in connection with the following School policies which are available on the School website (www.exetercs.org) or from the School Registrar. Large print copies are also available on request: *Safeguarding, Collective Worship, Guardian Families, Ethos and Aims, Code of Conduct, Pupil Attendance, Disability, Learning Support and Homework.*

Prospective parents should be aware of the Christian ethos and worship which is so central to the School, but with the knowledge that if they do ask for the withdrawal of their child from acts of worship in accordance with the 1944 Education Act, arrangements can be made for this.

Awards and Fee Remission: The School's policy detailing *Awards and Fee Remission* is available in the School prospectus, on the School Website and from the School Registrar and Finance Secretary. Fee assistance takes no account of an applicant's gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disability or social background. All bursaries are subject to the satisfactory completion and return of an annual statement of means.

Policy Objectives

- To make it possible for children who would benefit from the opportunities afforded by ECS to do so;
- To maintain and develop the Christian Foundation of the school;
- To facilitate the recruitment of choristers of the highest quality, irrespective of parental means;
- To ensure that the School recruits the optimum number of pupils consistent with the duty to safeguard the interests of all members of the School community.

Admission Criteria: Admission to Exeter Cathedral School depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible, improve the educational and general standards for all its pupils, commensurate with the School's ethos and aims. The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers.

The School's criteria for admissions are:

- that a prospective pupil achieves sufficient results during a "taster" / assessment day to satisfy the Head that he or she can cope with the general pace of learning at the School. An individual's economic status, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and in most cases disability (see below), do not form part of this selection process;
- that a satisfactory report is received from a pupil's current school (not applicable for Nursery and Reception aged pupils)'
- that a prospective pupil, in the judgement of the Head, shows sufficient aptitude, commitment and willingness to benefit from the educational opportunities on offer at the School;

- that the School is able to meet the needs of a prospective pupil without impairing the education of other pupils;
- that there are sufficient vacancies in the appropriate year group, Cathedral Choir or boarding house;
- that candidates for the Cathedral Choir satisfy the requirements of both the Cathedral department of Liturgy and Music and the School as to their suitability to be a chorister and a pupil of the School;
- In the case of an applicant for the Nursery class, parents are able to give an assurance that lavatory training has been satisfactorily completed by their child.

Special Educational Needs and Disability: This guidance should be read in conjunction with the School's *Learning Support Policy*. The aim of this guidance is to ensure compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and follows guidance issued by the Disability Rights Commission and the Independent Schools' Council.

The School is open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment. The School's policy is to apply the above criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability* of which it is aware, and not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability. All applications will be judged fairly and the School will consider any reasonable adjustments which our small learning support team may be able to provide in order to cater for the child's disabilities.

** For the purposes of this guidance, 'disability' includes any pupil or prospective pupil whose mobility, hearing, sight or other physical functions are impaired, or who exhibits other special educational needs, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, or significant behavioural or emotional problems.*

When applying for a place, parents are asked to discuss with the Head the nature and extent of any disability. The Head may request copies of any assessments or relevant medical reports. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. In assessing a prospective pupil in relation to the criteria above, the School will consider each case on an individual basis and make any reasonable adjustments. The School is happy to consider any pupil with sufficient aptitude for a place at the School and no group is excluded *per se*. However, parents may wish to be aware of certain factors before deciding whether Exeter Cathedral School will be a suitable school for their child.

- **Physical layout of the School:** In common with many other schools, Exeter Cathedral School consists of many separate and historic buildings which cover a reasonably wide area; none are currently provided with lifts. In order to provide specialist facilities, most subjects (in Years 4 and above) are taught in subject areas and the more senior pupils therefore move from classroom to classroom and building to building in the complex site between lessons. However, some parts of the School are accessible to those with a level of impaired mobility and the School is therefore happy to consider such prospective pupils.
- **Sport and physical education and activities:** Sport and physical education are a significant part of the programme at Exeter Cathedral School. However, there is no absolute requirement for any pupil to take part in any or all such activities if, by reason of disability, parents do not wish them to or they are advised not to. In such cases, the School will endeavour to provide appropriate alternatives but cannot guarantee such provision. Alternatively, parents may (with the Head's permission) wish to take their child out of School on their designated games afternoons, for example, to attend physiotherapy. Every effort will be made to accommodate a pupil with a disability on school trips and expeditions, especially those which form a part of the academic curriculum. However, each case will be assessed separately and the School reserves the right to refuse a place on a trip if it considers that it cannot provide for the welfare of the pupil concerned or if other pupils or staff might be placed in a position of danger.

- **Sight or hearing-impaired pupils:** Prospective pupils who are sight or hearing-impaired are welcome to apply for admission. The School foresees no problem with admitting a pupil who needs to use an individual hearing system, but sufficient time would need to be allowed for appropriate staff training in advance.
- **Specific learning difficulties:** Parents are asked to advise the Head at the time of application if their child has a diagnosed specific learning difficulty and to send the Educational Psychologist's report to the School in advance of the taster day. Children with a specific learning difficulty will be allowed additional time and other assistance as required in any assessments undertaken. The School has a small Learning Support team who are able to work with pupils on a one-to-one basis. This service is designed to assist those pupils with mild learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia. Parents are advised that these lessons are separately chargeable. Please see the School's *Learning support Policy* (available on the School website or via the School Registrar) for further details.
- **Behavioural or emotional problems:** Pupils with a history of behavioural or emotional problems may be accepted into the School. The School may require a medical examination to be carried out and, if any medication is prescribed (e.g. Ritalin), parents must ensure that medical advice is followed. As with all disabilities, each case will be considered on an individual basis. However, the over-riding consideration in this case will be whether the presence of a pupil with behavioural or emotional problems in the School will impair the education of other pupils (for example, by occupying large amounts of staff time) or put other pupils or staff directly or indirectly at risk. The Head Master, who is responsible for safety and discipline in the School and for the day-to-day running of the School has the right to request the removal of a pupil in such circumstances and where in his opinion it is in the interests of the pupil and/or the School. By signing the terms and conditions of the School the parent/guardian acknowledges and accepts the authority of the Head Master at all times.
- **Disclosure:** In order for the School to consider what reasonable adjustments it may need to make for each individual pupil, full disclosure by parents of any medical reports, educational, psychology or psychiatric assessments, or any other relevant information, in advance of any application is essential. All prospective parents will be asked to complete a form detailing any issues or concerns known at the time of application. In cases of doubt, parents should consult the School in advance of any application. In the event of parents disclosing relevant information of which they were already aware after accepting a place, or being discovered to have deliberately withheld such information at any stage during or after the admissions process, and the School is unable to make reasonable adjustments to cater for the pupil, the School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, if the pupil has already joined the School, to ask the parents to withdraw the child.

Admissions Procedure

Children may join the School in any year group, depending on place availability. The earliest possible entry to the School is in the Nursery Class during the term a child reaches the age of three. There is a maximum number of places in each year or teaching group. Parents should be aware that waiting lists are often in operation, particularly in the youngest year groups, and early registration is therefore advised. The School Registrar will be very pleased to offer guidance with this.

Visit and Registration: Parents are very welcome to make the initial visit either with or without their child(ren). The visit will include a meeting and tour of the School with the Head (and sometimes with some pupils). A completed registration form together with a £75 registration fee should be submitted to the School as soon as possible. Parents should be aware that places in our Pre-Preparatory Classes are booked some time in advance, therefore early registration is advised.

“Taster” / assessment day: The taster day is an opportunity for your child to spend a normal day with the pupils in his or her current year group and will include all the activities that happen during any chosen day. The day is designed to give children the opportunity to get to know their peers, teaching staff and to familiarise themselves with the School buildings. If your child has a particular interest (drama, swimming) the taster day can be arranged on a day when this activity takes place. Pupil mentors are assigned to take special care of visiting children. Children spending a taster day in the Nursery – Year 2 will be informally assessed by the form teacher during the course of the day. Children in Year 3 and above will also undertake some

assessments in English, Reading and Mathematics with the form teacher or another senior teacher. No preparation is needed for this. These assessments will not take the form of a formal examination as we want children to be relaxed and confident so that we can assess their level of ability. Identical opportunities are afforded to the child to ensure equal footing for all applicants.

Request of report from current school: All placed offered are subject to a satisfactory and favourable report from a child's current school (not applicable for Nursery or Reception aged children).

Admission Process for Cathedral Choristers: Auditions for the Cathedral Choir may take place at any time, by appointment, if there are vacancies in the Choir to be filled. The main voice auditions take place in February each year, for entry the following September, or occasionally, more immediately. Children seeking a Chorister place also undertake general entrance assessments in reading, English and mathematics. Voice trialists who are already members of the Cathedral School follow exactly the same procedures as external candidates. If a choristership is offered it is conditional upon the pupil remaining in the School and Choir until the age of 13 (the completion of Year 8).

Offer of a place: Following a taster day the Head will contact the parents to discuss the day's events from both the School, the parents and the child's perspective and to answer any remaining questions. If all has gone well a verbal offer of a place will be made, which will be followed up in writing.

Acceptance of a place: This is requested, in writing, together with a non-returnable deposit of £250 which is payable before a pupil joins the School. This deposit is held as a credit against the final fee account that is presented after a pupil leaves the School.

No child will be refused entry on the grounds of ethnicity, race, gender or social background

Appeals: An application for admission may be refused if, in the opinion of the Head:

- It is not possible for the School to provide an appropriate education for the prospective pupil
- The admission of the applicant is likely to jeopardise the safety and/or education of other pupils and/or jeopardise the good name and reputation of the School

Or if:

- In the case of an applicant for the Nursery class, parents are unable to give an assurance that lavatory training has been satisfactorily completed by their child.

Any appeal with regard to admission should be made in writing to the Head.

Policy Responsibility: The Head is responsible for setting and reviewing the Admissions Policy and Procedures and for all decisions on admission and scholarship, with opinions sought from the Director of Curriculum and Learning and other colleagues as appropriate. The School Registrar is responsible to the Head for administrative matters pertaining to admission. The Finance Secretary is responsible to the Head for the administration of scholarships and bursaries. The biennial review of this policy is the responsibility of the Governors' Academic Committee.

Monitoring and Review: The Head will report to the Governing Body at least once per term on the current numbers and pending applications for admission and may seek advice on the implementation of the policy from the Governors' Academic or Pastoral Committees at any time.

Last review: September 2013