

# Admissions Policy & Procedures



## A. Introduction

1. London Christian School ("LCS") is an independent Christian day school in Borough, London, for pupils aged between 3 and 11. The school is fully co-educational.
2. The Governors are responsible for admissions and the operation of this policy.
3. The aims of this policy are:
  - (i) To ensure compliance with the School's stated aim and core values.
  - (ii) To identify applicants whose academic and other abilities appear to match the ethos and standards of the School and whose personal qualities suggest they have the potential to contribute sufficiently to the school community and benefit from the many opportunities that are offered here.
  - (iii) To ensure that all applicants to the school are treated fairly.
4. LCS welcomes children from all backgrounds and it is entirely contrary to the Christian ethos of the school to discriminate against prospective pupils on the grounds of race, religion, gender or socio-economic group.
5. The selection criteria and interview procedure is determined and reviewed from time to time by the Governors of the School. Those involved in selection and interviewing are appropriately qualified.

## B. Admissions Process

1. Parents or guardians of prospective applicants are encouraged to attend, or to arrange a visit to LCS. All visits to LCS will normally include a tour and a meeting with a senior member of staff. The aim of this part of the process is for parents or guardians to assess the suitability of the school for their child.
2. Parents or guardians who wish to apply for a place must complete an 'enrolment form' for their child and send it to the school with the £60 enrolment fee. The school accepts just over double the number of enrolment forms as there are places in a class. The school accepts enrolment forms at any point in the year. Submission of an enrolment form does not guarantee a taster day and interview.
3. Parents or guardians of applicants with special educational needs or disabilities (see section G below), must describe these to LCS on the enrolment form. Wherever possible, full written details, including copies of reports prepared by educational psychologists, must be sent to LCS with the enrolment form.
4. Once a completed enrolment form has been received by LCS, the enrolment process is complete. The admissions process may be progressed further, to include a nursery observation visit or taster day (in which their child spends a day in the school) and a Governor's interview (for the parents or primary caregivers). Parents will be informed in this instance.
5. If appropriate, LCS will seek a written reference from the applicant's current school or nursery.
6. In the case of entry into the Early Reception class:
  - i. The admissions process for September entry will begin in the preceding January. Subject to a successful nursery observation visit or taster day at LCS (to be arranged between February and March preceding entry), offers will be confirmed by the end of March.
  - ii. All parents will be updated on their child's admission status as appropriate.
  - iii. Offers are not made at one given time but rather on a rolling basis.

- iv. Nursery observation visits/taster days and Governor's interviews will take place for more children than there are places and therefore do not guarantee a place in the Early Reception class.
- v. Parents to whom a place in the Early Reception class (to start in September of the coming academic year) is not offered will receive notification as soon as possible. These students will remain on the enrolment list and parents will be notified should a place become available in the pertinent year group.
- vi. Whilst we would expect most children in Early Reception to move into our Reception class it should be noted that a place in Early Reception does not guarantee transfer into Reception.
- vii. The classroom teacher will regularly meet with parents in Early Reception in order to establish whether the school can meet the long term needs of each child in a sustainable way.
- viii. Parents are given the 'Transfer to Reception' application form soon after they enrol at LCS and the completed form should be returned to the Registrar as soon as possible.
- ix. Parents or guardians will be informed no later than the end of the Autumn Term of Early Reception whether a place will be available for Reception in the following September.
- x. On the occasion that the school is unable to offer a place for the following year, the classroom teacher and Headteacher will be happy to discuss the best course of action for the child's further education.

7. In the case of entry into the Reception class:

- i. The admissions process for September entry will begin in the preceding November. Subject to a successful nursery observation visit or taster day at LCS (to be arranged between November and January preceding entry), offers will be confirmed by the end of January.
- ii. All parents will be updated on their child's admission status, as appropriate.
- iii. Offers are not made at one given time but rather on a rolling basis.
- iv. Nursery observation visits/taster days and Governor's interviews will take place for more children than there are places and therefore do not guarantee a place in the Reception class.
- v. Parents to whom a place in the Reception class (to start in September of the coming academic year) is not offered will receive notification as soon as possible and before the end of the Spring Term preceding the September entry. These students will remain on the enrolment list and parents will be notified should a place become available in the pertinent year group.

8. Parents or guardians who receive an offer will be asked to accept the offer by completing and returning the 'Acceptance Form', which includes a declaration of support for the LCS's 'core values', within 2 weeks. If no response to an offer has been received within the time specified in the offer, the School will assume that the offer has been declined and the place may be offered to another applicant.

9. On acceptance of a definite place at the school, a deposit of £1000 is required. The deposit will be refunded at the end of the pupil's final term once any additional invoices for the term have been paid. Parents agree to give a term's notice in writing of their son or daughter leaving the school. Failure to give such notice will result in the forfeit of the deposit. Parents will also be charged the upcoming term's fees if sufficient notice has not been given. The notice must be given to the Headteacher by the first day of the child's last term. So for example:

- i. The parents of a child whose last day at LCS is Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014 (the end of the Autumn Term 2014) need to have given written notice to the Headteacher by Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014 (the first day of the Autumn Term 2014).

However, if this is impossible due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Headteacher as soon as possible. You will still forfeit your deposit but, in some circumstances, we may consider reducing the amount of the following term's fees payable, or you can apply for a 'Grant Towards Leaving Fees'. Please note that if for any reason a child leaves the school part way through a term, they will nevertheless incur the full term's fees.

10. Fees due for the child's first term must be paid no later than one full term before the pupil's start date.

11. Parents or guardians of a child who has not gained a place at the school will be informed as soon as possible. If a child fails to gain a place because their class is full, then they will remain on the enrolment list and will be contacted should a place become available in the pertinent year group.

12. Admissions record: LCS will keep a confidential 'Admissions Record' of each applicant.

### **C. Late Admissions Timetable**

1. In the event of a short period of time between an initial enquiry and the pupil's start date e.g. a last minute holiday enquiry, the Late Admissions Timetable will be used to accommodate applicants.

2. Providing there are places in the appropriate year group LCS is happy to consider last minute applications.

3. The procedure for late admissions is as follows:

- Last minute enquiries are expected to fill in an enrolment form in the first instance.
- If possible a tour will be arranged as soon as is reasonably possible.
- An interview will be arranged as soon as is reasonably possible, with the Headteacher and where possible a Governor. The prospective pupil will be asked to attend the interview if possible.
- Subject to the above procedure a conditional offer may then be given and payment of the school deposit will be required by return.

4. The conditions for accepting the child will be as follows:

- If the requirements in the Admissions Timetable as seen above in B3, B4, B5, B6 and B7 are met.
- If it is not possible to schedule a taster day before the proposed start date the pupil will start at the beginning of term and the first day of school treated as a taster day.
- Any other information the Headteacher deems necessary.

5. The offer of a place will be confirmed at the end of the pupil's taster day.

6. If a place is confirmed, full fees will be required by return.

### **D. Entry Points**

1. The usual entry points are at year 0 (3+ and 4+), although pupils may be accepted at other points if places are available.

For our early years setting (ages 3-5), LCS has opted to take up an exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

2. For the purposes of entry applicants' ages are calculated according to UK custom. LCS does not rigidly apply the 1 September birthday watershed for determining the applicant's eligibility for entry, but an applicant whose birthday falls after 1 September in the year of entry will need to demonstrate that he/she is of sufficient maturity to cope with the academic and social demands of the School.

3. Children are accepted into the Early Reception class from 3 years old, at the discretion of the Headteacher and subject to a successful nursery observation/taster day and interview. Entry is at the start of the Autumn Term.

4. When enrolling a child who is younger than 4 years, the following procedure is followed:

- When the child begins school, the attendance of their first week can consist of 5 half days (8.45am-1pm).
- The staff and parents will meet to review the child's transition at the end of the first week of school. A decision will be made by the teacher on a case by case basis, in close consultation with the parents, as to how much attendance at school will be in the best interests of the child. Decisions will be made based on assessments conducted in the first week of school.

- Progressive steps are taken toward their reaching the expected full-time education by the time they turn 4.

Staff will make informal assessments of the child's:

- Spoken language
- Receptive language and ability to respond to instruction
- Physical tiredness
- Concentration and focus on tasks
- Fine/gross motor co-ordination
- Emotional well-being

5. Occasionally, an applicant may have fallen behind in his/her education due to illness, time spent abroad, etc. In such a case, LCS may offer a place in a year lower than the applicant's age would normally imply. Occasionally, LCS may also offer an outstanding applicant a place in a year ahead of his/her chronological age group. Parents or guardians will be consulted before such an offer is made, but the decision as to the appropriate year for the applicant, taking into account all relevant circumstances, is a matter for the Governors and Headteacher whose decision is final.

## **E. Selection**

1. The conditions for admission to LCS are as follows:

- The applicant is of appropriate age and sufficient maturity.
- LCS is able to provide adequately for any special educational needs that the applicant may have.
- LCS, having made reasonable adjustment, has the capacity to cope with any disability the applicant may have.
- The receipt of an applicant's current school and / or nursery reports.
- The parents or guardians of the applicant are supportive of LCS's aim and core values.
- A satisfactory interview between LCS and the applicant's parents or guardians has taken place.
- A satisfactory nursery observation visit/taster day has also taken place. If, during this informal observation, the best educational decision for the child is unclear, an offer of a place will not be made. Further evidence will be gathered from discussion with the parents and where necessary, a referral to an educational psychologist will be made. Parents should inform the school immediately if they are pursuing the referral for their child and should give an estimated time that reports will be made available. The report will be used to inform decisions regarding the offer of a place. A further Governor's interview will be held following the school's receipt of the report.

2. In the case where an application is unsuccessful, LCS is not obliged to state or explain its reasons.

## **F. Interview with parents**

1. The aim of the interview is to explore some of the criteria set out above. The style of the interview is intended to be informal and natural.

2. The interview provides a further opportunity for families to decide upon the appropriateness of the school for their child. It also enables LCS to learn a little more about the family and their child.

3. The interview is carried out by a senior member of the academic staff.

4. During the interview, parents or guardians will be asked about their understanding and support of LCS's aim and core values.

## **G. Special Educational Needs and Disability**

1. LCS has limited facilities for the disabled but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*. LCS hopes to be able to cater adequately for pupils with disabilities by making reasonable adjustments to the school facilities.

2. Parents or guardians of an applicant who has a disability and/or a special educational need should provide the Governors with full written details when applying for admission. Where possible, this information should be sent to the school at least one week before the applicant's first visit to the school.

3. LCS will use this information to assess the applicant's needs and make sure the school can provide adequately for the applicant throughout the admission process.

4. LCS will consult with parents or guardians about the adjustments which can reasonably be made for the applicant both during the admission process and later as a pupil.

5. In the event that LCS decides it cannot sustainably provide for the long term needs of a pupil who attends the school, the classroom teacher and Headteacher will consult with the parents on the best course of action for the child's education, which may include transfer to an alternative school.

#### **H. Payment of fees**

1. Fees must be paid in full before the start of each term. The only exception is when a child first begins at LCS when fees are due one whole term in advance.

2. Payments by standing order can be made in nine monthly instalments beginning on the first day of July before the academic year begins. (9 equal instalments of 1/3 of the terms fees payable as follows):

- 1<sup>st</sup> July; 1<sup>st</sup> August; 1<sup>st</sup> September for the Autumn term's fees
- 1<sup>st</sup> October; 1<sup>st</sup> November; 1<sup>st</sup> December for the Spring term's fees
- 1<sup>st</sup> January; 1<sup>st</sup> February; 1<sup>st</sup> March for the Summer term's fees

3. Should a child begin during the academic year, fees for the entire term (or the remainder of the term during which the child begins at school) must normally be paid in full before the child commences.

4. The £1000 school deposit must be paid in full upon acceptance of a place at the school. The deposit will be refunded at the end of the pupil's final term once any additional invoices for the term have been paid. Parents agree to give a term's notice in writing of their son or daughter leaving the School. Failure to give such notice will result in the forfeit of the deposit. Parents will also be charged the upcoming term's fees if sufficient notice has not been given. The notice must be given to the Headmistress by the first day of the child's last term (please see B9 for examples).

However, if this is impossible due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Headteacher as soon as possible. You will still forfeit your deposit but, in some circumstances, we may consider reducing the amount of the following term's fees payable, or you can apply for a 'Grant Towards Leaving Fees'. Please note that if for any reason a child leaves the school part way through a term, they will nevertheless incur the full term's fees.

5. Fees must be paid by standing order or direct bank transfer (with the child's name as a reference), cheque or banker's draft. We do not accept cash for fees.

6. Should a cheque bounce the school will charge parents a £15 administrative charge in addition to the charge levied by the bank.

7. Should a child leave the school and payment of fees remains outstanding, LCS is obligated to pass on information about unpaid fees to their new school.

#### **I. Bursaries**

1. Bursaries may be available on entry to LCS. Current parents or guardians who are experiencing genuine financial difficulties may apply to the Governors for a bursary.

2. Bursaries are means tested and parents or guardians will be required to provide detailed financial information and may be interviewed by the Governors in relation to their application.

3. The award of a bursary is tenable for 12 months, but may be renewed thereafter. Both the level of bursary and the financial circumstances of the parents or guardians will be reviewed annually. The award of a bursary is entirely at the discretion of the Governors.

#### **J. Child Care Vouchers**

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) regulations and the provision of child care vouchers are clearly linked. EYFS favours play based learning over the more focused stimulus and structure that we offer at London Christian School. To accept the vouchers for fees would mean adhering completely to the EYFS regulations, which would significantly change the distinct teaching and learning experience that our children thrive in and our parents value.

2. Child care vouchers can be used to pay for any after school clubs.

Policy approved by Governors, July 2015.