

# WHOLE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

## 1 Introduction

The principles relied on in the selection of students for admission are designed to ensure that the School will remain a Catholic school. As a Catholic school, the School undergoes denominational inspections by the Diocese of Brentwood. Applications for admission will be considered from parents and guardians who are in sympathy with the mission, ethos and aims of the School and whose child will benefit from the academic curriculum of the School.

### 1.1 Mission & Ethos Statement

New Hall, a Catholic boarding and day school,  
provides **the best start in life**, enabling students  
to meet confidently the challenges of the wider world.

Here **academic excellence** is achieved in surroundings  
where relationships are based on  
**care, trust and respect**.

We **welcome** students from many traditions,  
building a Christian **community** that has at its heart  
**prayer and service** to others.

### 1.2 Aims of the School

1. **To give students an experience of life in a Christian community**
  - affirming each individual as a unique part of God's creation, and nurturing in each person a sense of dignity and self-worth
  - fostering caring relationships, a sense of team spirit, and respect for others
2. **To inspire students to develop their God-given gifts and talents to their full potential**
  - intellectual
  - spiritual
  - social and emotional
  - aesthetic and physical
3. **To provide a broad and balanced education, rooted in the School's Catholic foundation, which is responsive to and supportive of the needs and aspirations of the individual**
  - fostering intellectual curiosity, a desire to seek truth, and a life-long love of learning
  - enabling students to discover their own strengths and weaknesses, to learn from 'failures', and to develop the self-discipline and determination to persevere, in order to pursue their goals in a rapidly changing world
4. **To enable staff to be aware of the values and vision of the School and to give them support and encouragement to carry out their professional duties and responsibilities in the pursuit of excellence, with pride and commitment**

## **2 Criteria for Nursery places (ages 1-4)**

All parents/guardians are expected to be supportive of the Catholic ethos of the School. Listed below are the various priority categories for places, although there is no fixed weighting or ranking. Priority for a place may increase with the number of criteria met:

1. religious commitment (see below)
2. siblings of current New Hall students or siblings joining simultaneously
3. teaching and boarding staff children
4. distance from the Nursery, with priority given to those living closest
5. intention to progress to the Pre-Prep Division, subject to meeting the entrance criteria
6. number of days per week

In so far as selection for a place is based on the religious commitment criterion, the following order would apply:

1. Catholic baptised children of practising Catholic families
2. Children of Catholic families
3. Children of other Christian denominations who are practising their faith

For points 1 & 2 above, a copy of the Baptismal and a *Certificate of Practice* from the Parish Priest is required to verify a child's Catholicity.

For point 3 above, evidence confirming membership of that Christian denomination or faith, signed by the appropriate minister of religion or faith leader.

The following questions (in no particular order) will be considered for all applicants:

1. Can the School meet the educational needs of the child within the context of the resources available?
2. Are the parents in sympathy with the mission, ethos and aims of the School, as expressed in the curriculum, the co-curriculum and the religious values at the heart of the School?
3. Does it appear that the child will be happy at New Hall?

## **3 Criteria for places in Reception to Year 13 (ages 4-19), scholarship and awards**

The School is selective and offers are made based on entrance assessments, interview and current nursery/headteacher's report or reference. Students must have a good behaviour record, showing kindness, courtesy and respect towards others, and a positive attitude towards work.

The School has more applicants than places for points of entry, so assessment is competitive. As an academically selective School, most children offered places at 4+, 7+, 11+ and 16+ will be above national standards for age-related attainment.

All students admitted to the School, and their parents/guardians, are expected to be supportive of the Catholic ethos of the School. Religious Education (RE)/Theology, liturgy, prayer, worship in Chapel, religious assemblies and Sunday Mass for boarders are all essential parts of School life. Attendance and involvement in these areas are expected and students/parents may not opt out of any of these. All students in the Girls' & Boys' Divisions take GCSE RE, which is part of the New Hall core curriculum. The New Hall School uniform and dress code in Sixth Form is important. Consent from the Principal is required for any variation, including the wearing of additional items; any requests should be made via the relevant Head of Division.

Listed below are the various priority categories for places, although there is no fixed weighting or ranking. Priority for a place may increase with the number of criteria met:

1. religious commitment (see below)
2. academic ability
3. boarders (Years 3-13), with full or 4+ nights flexible boarders prioritised
4. siblings of current New Hall students or siblings joining simultaneously

In so far as selection for a place, bursary or scholarship is based on the religious commitment criterion, the following order would apply:

1. Catholic baptised children of practising Catholic families
2. Children of Catholic families
3. Children of other Christian denominations who are practising their faith

For points 1 & 2 above, a copy of the Baptismal and First Holy Communion Certificates and a *Certificate of Practice* from the Parish Priest is required to verify a child's Catholicity.

For point 3 above, evidence confirming membership of that Christian denomination or faith, signed by the appropriate minister of religion or faith leader.

The following questions (in no particular order) will be considered for all applicants:

1. Can the School meet the educational needs of the child within the context of the resources available?
2. Are the parents in sympathy with the mission, ethos and aims of the School, as expressed in the curriculum, the co-curriculum and the religious values at the heart of the School?
3. Does it appear that the child will be happy at New Hall?

The offer of bursaries, scholarships and awards shall be made in accordance with the current policy, which is reviewed annually.

Where waiting lists operate for places into a particular year group, the admissions criteria above will apply when selecting a child, should a vacancy occur. In addition, children of teaching and boarding staff may be prioritised if this is important for recruitment/retention of staff.

#### **4 Main points of entry to New Hall School**

##### **Nursery Division (ages 1-4)**

1. Nursery (age 1-3)
2. Pre-School (age 3+ i.e. the academic year in which a child has their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)

##### **Pre-Prep Division (ages 4-7)**

1. Reception (age 4+)

##### **Preparatory Division (ages 7-11)**

1. Years 3-6 (ages 7-11)  
Day places, if available; additional places are reserved for full and 4+ nights flexible boarders

##### **Girls' & Boys' Divisions (ages 11-16)**

1. Year 7 (age 11+)  
The majority joining at this stage come from other schools
2. Year 9 (age 13+)  
Priority is given to applicants from 13+ preparatory schools and boarders

##### **Sixth Form Division (ages 16-19)**

1. Year 12 (age 16+)

New Hall encourages children in independent preparatory schools to remain in their current school until the end of the final year and to seek transfer to New Hall at the appropriate entry point. New Hall will endeavour to limit admissions to a maximum of three students from a single year group in another independent preparatory school, who seek transfer into New Hall's Pre-Prep or Preparatory Division within one academic year. A significant number of external places is always made available at 11+, 13+ and 16+. However, children seeking junior boarding from 7+, whose current school does not offer this provision, are welcome to apply for Years 3-6 entry.

Please note that there are places reserved in the Senior Division for 13+ entry and separate scholarships are available at 13+, in order to provide for students transferring from preparatory schools that have provision up to 13+. The assessments may be completed in Year 8, or earlier in Year 6 if preferred, and any offer made will be for a place at the start of Year 9.

## **5 Admissions Process**

Parents are strongly encouraged to register for a place at New Hall as early as possible and there is no limit on the number of years in advance. For the Nursery, children may be registered from birth. There is no need to re-register for a subsequent Division once a child has been registered at New Hall School. All applications should be made via the Admissions Department (see website).

If their child has any special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the parent must provide the School with all relevant information, prior to entry. Copies of any specialist reports (e.g. speech and language; educational psychologist report) must be provided, as well as information relating to any access arrangements that may be required e.g. due to a disability. After their child joins the School, parents are expected to provide the School with a copy of subsequent specialist reports within two weeks of the parent receiving the report, so that students can be supported in the best way possible.

### **5.1 Nursery Division (ages 1-4)**

Entry to the Nursery is by application to the Admissions Department or via the Nursery Manager. A tour and a parent meeting may be arranged. There is a minimum requirement of two days per week in Nursery, and three days per week in Pre-School.

### **5.2 Pre-Prep Division (ages 4-7)**

Entry to Reception and Year 1 (Michaelmas Term) is by a parent meeting and a trial session, held at the School. A reference will be requested from the current nursery/school if applicable.

Parents are welcome to register their child to enter Years 1/2 in the Pre-Prep Division. If a space arises, a child will be selected from the waiting list, considering the criteria listed in Section 3 above. For places in Year 1 (Lent/Trinity Term entry) and Year 2, assessment is by a parent meeting and a trial session, held at the School. A reference will be requested from the current school. In addition, there will be assessments in the core curriculum areas of English and Mathematics. Should a place not become available for a child's requested term of entry, the application will roll over to the next term until a place becomes available. At this point, those on the waiting list will be reconsidered for the place.

### **5.3 Preparatory Division (ages 7-11)**

Entry to the Preparatory Division is by assessments in the core curriculum areas of English and Mathematics. For external applicants, there will also be a trial day, which includes a parent meeting. A reference will be requested from the current school/Division. If an

application is being made for a boarding place, a taster boarding session will be arranged where possible.

Parents are welcome to register their children to enter Years 3-6 in the Preparatory Division. If a space arises, a child will be selected from the waiting list, taking into account the criteria listed in Section 3 above. Reserved full or 4+ nights boarding places are available from Year 3 onwards.

Should a place not become available for a child's requested term of entry, the application will roll over to the next term until a place becomes available. At this point, those on the waiting list will be reconsidered for the place.

#### **5.4 Girls' & Boys' Divisions (ages 11-16) - 11+ entry**

Entry to the Girls' & Boys' Divisions at Year 7, the start of Middle Division, includes assessments and an interview.

All candidates will complete the Independent Schools Examinations Board (ISEB) Common Pre-Tests, with assessments in Verbal Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning, English and Mathematics. These are adaptive online tests, which can be completed only once in an academic year. Resits are not available. Students are able to sit the ISEB Common Pre-Tests at their current school, or, if this is not available, at New Hall. We ask that these assessments are taken in the November prior to entry.

Students will be interviewed by a senior member of staff. At the beginning of the interview the students will be asked to give a three minute presentation on a topic/performance of their choice. Students will also complete a creative writing task.

A reference will be requested from the current headteacher.

Scholarships and awards are available at Year 7 entry. Please refer to the Bursaries & Scholarships Policy for further information.

It is highly recommended that all candidates attend the Year 7 Taster Day in the October prior to entry. There is also an information session for parents on this day.

If a space arises during Year 7 or Year 8, a child will be selected from the waiting list, taking into account the criteria above. Students will be assessed using CAT4 online assessments, an interview with a senior member of staff and a reference from the current headteacher.

#### **5.5 Girls' & Boys' Divisions (ages 11-16) - 13+ entry**

Entry to the Girls' & Boys' Divisions at Year 9, the start of Upper Division, includes an assessment day. Students will sit CAT4 online admission assessments. Students will also complete a balanced argument writing task.

Students will be interviewed by a senior member of staff. This may be conducted in person, on the assessment day, or via video call. Interviews begin with a three minute presentation from the student on a topic/performance of their choice. There will also be a short parent meeting.

A reference will be requested from the current headteacher, together with a copy of the most recent school report.

Scholarships and awards are available at Year 9 entry. Please refer to the Bursaries & Scholarships Policy for further information.

Applications from pupils who attend traditional 13+ preparatory schools may sit assessments in Year 8, or from Year 6 if preferred, and any offer will be for a place at the start of Year 9.

#### **5.6 Sixth Form Division (ages 16-19)**

External students will need to provide a letter of application/personal statement. Entry to the Sixth Form is by an interview with the Head of Sixth Form or another senior member of staff. A reference will be requested from the current headteacher, together with a copy of the most recent school report. GCSE mock and predicted grades or equivalent will be taken into consideration. Students will need to achieve a minimum of three grade 7s and two grade 6s overall at GCSE or equivalent. Most subjects require a minimum of a grade 7 (or equivalent) at GCSE in order to take the subject at A Level (see the [Sixth Form Subject Information Booklet](#) for details).

Scholarships and awards are available at Sixth Form entry. Please refer to the Bursaries & Scholarships Policy for further information.

It is highly recommended that all candidates and their parents attend the Sixth Form Admissions Evening in the October prior to entry.

All overseas students are required to sit entrance examinations, including in Mathematics and English. Examinations may take place at one of the following locations: the current school; with an agent; at the local British Council Office; or at New Hall School. English proficiency is assessed using the PASSWORD online tests and through interview (via Zoom where required). For Sixth Form entrance, an IELTS score of 6.0 or above or scores of 5.5 or above on the PASSWORD Knowledge and Essay are typically required.

There is no appeals process and the decision of the School's Admissions Committee is final.

<b>6 Transfer between Divisions</b>
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There is no automatic transfer between Divisions at New Hall, although priority is given to existing children in the School, subject to the relevant entry assessments.

#### **6.1 4+ Internal Entry to the Pre-Prep Division**

New Hall's Pre-Prep Division is selective. We expect that the majority of pupils will progress from our Nursery to our Pre-Prep Division. Places for the Pre-Prep Division will be confirmed in writing by 8 December, prior to the year of entry. In some circumstances, we may not offer a child a Pre-Prep Division place. In such situations, the School will communicate to parents the academic or behavioural reasons why the pupil has not been offered a place in the Pre-Prep Division. Children for entry to Reception will be expected to be working at or above the appropriate stages of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

#### **6.2 7+ Internal Entry to the Preparatory Division**

New Hall's Preparatory Division is selective. We expect that the majority of Pre-Prep Division pupils will progress to the Preparatory Division at New Hall. The School will communicate to parents the academic or behavioural reasons should a pupil not be offered a place in the Preparatory Division.

Parents of Year 1 pupils will, by the end of Year 1, be given an indication as to whether their child is meeting the required behavioural expectations and academic standards to progress into the Preparatory Division. All parents of Year 1 pupils will receive confirmation as to whether or not their child will receive an offer of entry into the Preparatory Division, by 8 December in Year 2. Any offer of a place in the Preparatory Division is conditional on continued progress and satisfactory behaviour.

#### **6.3 11+ Internal Entry to the Girls' & Boys' Divisions**

New Hall's Girls' & Boys' Divisions are selective. See above for the entrance criteria.

Priority is given to:

1. Pupils from New Hall Preparatory Division applying for Year 7 entry
2. Pupils from New Hall's sponsored academy, Messing Primary School, applying for Year 7 entry

#### **6.4 16+ Internal Entry to the Sixth Form**

New Hall's Sixth Form is selective. Priority for entry to the Sixth Form is given to Year 11 students in New Hall's Girls' & Boys' Divisions.

Students are interviewed in the Michaelmas Term of Year 11 (usually by the Head of Sixth Form or the Head of Upper Division). Students must have a good attitude towards academic work and have demonstrated kindness, courtesy and respect towards others.

All students must meet the overall minimum entry requirement of three 7s and two 6s at GCSE (or equivalent). Many subjects require a minimum of a grade 7 (or equivalent) at GCSE in order to take the subject at A Level (see the [Sixth Form Subject Information Booklet](#) for details).

Following the GCSE mock examinations, students meeting the minimum entry requirements will be offered a place in New Hall Sixth Form, subject to continued good conduct and attitude to learning. Those not meeting the minimum entry requirements in the GCSE mock examinations will be offered a place in New Hall Sixth Form, subject to them meeting the entrance requirements in the final GCSE examinations, continued good conduct and attitude to learning.