



## WHOLE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

**Please note that admissions dates and processes referred to may be subject to change as a result of disruption caused by unavoidable circumstances, such as Covid-19 regulations.**

### **Aims of the Admissions Policy**

JAGS ('the School') is an academically selective, independent, girls' day school, educating around 1100 girls from Reception (EYFS age 4) to Year 13 (age 18). Within the umbrella of JAGS, James Allen's Junior School educates the 300 younger pupils: girls from age 4-7 years in the Pre-Prep School and from age 7-11 years in the Prep School. The School encourages applications from children from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social backgrounds who are intellectually curious, who would benefit from the academic education which JAGS provides and who would contribute fully to JAGS and the wider community.

### **Equal and Fair Treatment**

It is of paramount importance to the School that all applicants are and will be treated equally, fairly and in accordance with the relevant law, throughout the admissions process and will not be unlawfully discriminated against on the grounds of their (or their parents') race, colour or nationality; ethnic or national origin; actual or perceived religion or belief (or lack thereof); disability; social background; actual or perceived sexual orientation or their gender reassignment; or any protected characteristic, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

### **Data Protection**

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice. The school will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be no more than 6 months following an unsuccessful application but reasons to retain for longer might include: if the parents express an interest in the candidate re-applying for any reason at a later date, or in the potential candidacy of another sibling or to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.

### **Points of Entry**

The main points for entry into the School are at 4+ (Reception) and 7+ (Year 3) to the Junior School and to the Senior School at 11+ (Year 7) and 16+ (Sixth Form). Admission to other year groups is dependent on there being chance vacancies.

## **Application Process**

### **Registration**

Applicants will be considered as candidates for admission to the School once registration has been completed in full. This includes, for the avoidance of doubt, completion of an online registration form, submission of a copy of the applicant's full birth certificate, passport, UK visa (if held) and a photograph, as well as payment of the non-refundable registration fee, currently £125 for UK based applicants (or £200 for overseas applicants). The registration fee may be subject to annual review, and is waived for those applicants to the Senior School in receipt of Pupil Premium or Universal Credit.

### **Junior School**

For 4+ entry to the Pre-Prep School and 7+ entry to the Prep School, parents must complete their child's registration between 1 September and 5 November of the year preceding prospective entry. These deadlines may be subject to review and change from year to year, and parents should check the school's website for current information. Applicants registered for 4+ who are not offered a place at the Pre-Prep School will need to reapply at the relevant time to be considered for a 7+ place at the Prep School or for a chance vacancy at any point within the Junior School.

### **Senior School**

Where entry is sought to the Senior School (11+, 16+ and Chance Vacancy entry), parents may apply from the start of the Summer Term and must complete their registration by 4pm on 31 October for 11+ and Chance Vacancy entry, and by 4pm on 15 October for 16+ entry in the year preceding possible entry. These deadlines may be subject to review and change from year to year, and parents should check the school's website for current information.

It is the responsibility of the applicant's parents to ensure that registration is completed, in full, on or before the published closing date. The School is not able to accept late applications for registration.

## **Chance Vacancy Applications**

### **Junior School**

Chance Vacancies occasionally arise outside of the formal points of entry to the Pre-Prep School (4+) and the Prep School (7+). It is possible to apply to join the Chance Vacancy List by submitting a completed Chance Vacancy Application Form to the Junior School Registrar. Registration fees are payable for Chance Vacancies in the same way as for admission into standard entry points.

## Senior School

For Chance Vacancies in the Senior School, registration must be completed and applications made by 4pm on 31 October in the year preceding possible entry. The School will not know the final number of available spaces until early spring, when offers are made. Late applications may be considered within year but are subject to any late availability of places.

## Admission and Assessment

### Rights of Separated Parents

Applicants should be registered by the applicant's parents, including, where parents are separated, each parent with parental responsibility. Each parent with parental responsibility will be entitled to, and will receive, information regarding their child's application, the application process and the child's assessment, unless there is documentary evidence of a court order being in place, preventing this and/or where parental responsibility has been revoked or lost.

### Siblings and Staff Children

Entry to the School is competitive; JAGS has no sibling, family or staff preference policies. Siblings of current or past pupils, or children of staff at the School will undergo the same assessment and selection process as all other applicants to the School, in line with its policy of equal and fair treatment for all applicants.

## Entry Requirements

Admission is subject to the availability of a place and to the candidate meeting the academic entry requirements at the time. The assessment will include age-appropriate testing and, in the case of applicants applying for a 7+ place in the Junior School or for a place in the Senior School, we will hold interviews with our Head of Junior School, Head of JAGS, or a member of the School Leadership Team. The provision of a satisfactory reference from the Head of the applicant's current school or nursery is also required. The reference request will ask for details of the applicant's academic and co-curricular performance or achievements, or in the case of our younger applicants at 4+, age-appropriate information about their ability and recent progress within the seven areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Places will be offered to those who achieve the best results in the School's own assessments and who satisfactorily meet these additional requirements. Offers are made on the dates advertised which may vary from year to year. The Head of JAGS and the Head of the Junior School make the final decision as to whether or not an offer of a place will be made to an applicant. There is no right of appeal against their decision.

Some candidates who are not offered a place, but who performed well, may be placed on a Waiting List. Should a vacancy arise before the start of the relevant academic year, they will be considered on the basis of their results in the School's assessments and an offer of a place may be made. The Waiting List may remain open until the September following the School's entrance assessments.

## **Age of Applicant**

The School may consider it appropriate, in certain exceptional circumstances, to offer a place to an applicant one year ahead or behind their accepted year group. This would be where particular potential has been shown in the relevant entrance assessment and it is considered to be in the best interests of the applicant.

## **Learning Differences and Disabilities**

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the School complies with its responsibilities and will make reasonable adjustments to the School's assessment procedures for those with identified special educational differences and/or disabilities, in order that all applicants are assessed fairly. Parents are required to provide full written details to the Senior School or Junior School Registrar when applying to the School if their child has external or in-school learning support, an educational psychologist's report, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or a medical condition, to enable the School to make provision, if appropriate. Failure to disclose such information as soon as possible in the admissions process could result in an offer of a place being withdrawn. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards appropriate to enable it to consider what reasonable adjustments (in line with JCQ guidance) can and need to be made during the admissions process and if an offer of a place were to be accepted. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. In cases where the limit of reasonable adjustments available to the School would not meet the pupil's needs then that discussion would take place as early as possible in the registration and application cycle to ensure parents have sufficient time to look for suitable alternative schools where the pupil concerned could thrive.

## **Disclosure**

The School relies on the integrity of the admissions procedure and therefore the truthfulness of the information provided by the applicant's parents as well as the requirement to disclose any information to the School which may be relevant to the application process such as any learning difference or disability. Where relevant information is not disclosed or proves to be false or misleading the School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place which may have been granted, deny the applicant admission, or where a child has already been admitted, request that the child is withdrawn from the School.

## **Progression through the School**

The vast majority of pupils' progress from one section of the School to the next. However, in certain circumstances, where a pupil is not able to fully access the curriculum, the School may recommend that another school would be more appropriate. In these circumstances, the School would work with and support the parents and pupil to help them find a different school where the pupil concerned can thrive.

### **Transfer from the Pre-Prep School to the Prep School**

The expectation is that children attending the Pre-Prep School will transfer to the Prep School, subject to their demonstrating that they will be able to progress well with the demands of the Prep School curriculum. If it is felt that a pupil in the Pre-Prep will not thrive at the Prep School, the School would support the pupil and the pupil's parents in finding an alternative school which would better suit their child's learning and where they would flourish.

### **Transfer from the Prep School to the Senior School**

The expectation is that children attending the Prep School will progress to the Senior School at 11+, subject to their meeting the required standard of performance in Years 5 and 6. Year 6 pupils sit the same assessments as external applicants, as a measure of progress only, and may be considered for an Academic Scholarship in line with external applicants to the Senior School. Prep School pupils may apply for Senior School Art, Music and Sports Scholarships in the same way as external applicants and may also apply for a bursary. If it is felt that a pupil in the Prep School will not thrive at the Senior School, the School would support the pupil and the pupil's parents in finding an alternative school which would better suit their child's learning and where they would flourish.

### **Transfer into the Sixth Form**

The expectation is that pupils attending the Senior School will progress to the Sixth Form following their GCSE examinations and there is no separate application process for internal transfer into the Sixth Form. However, there is a minimum entry requirement for transfer into the Sixth Form based on GCSE results and any internal pupil who does not meet this will be invited to meet with the Head or Deputy Head Academic and Head of Sixth Form in August to discuss next steps. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the school to support the pupil and their parents in finding an alternative school which would better suit their learning. Should there be a concern during Years 10 and 11 that a pupil is unlikely to meet the necessary entry requirements for Sixth Form study at JAGS, the School will work with the parents to help them find a different school where the pupil can thrive.

Each subject has its own entry requirements (based on GCSE results) for study in the Sixth Form for both internal and external candidates. These requirements are reviewed and updated regularly. External candidates for the Sixth Form who are successful at the Entrance Examination and interview stage will receive a conditional offer based on GCSE results.

## Terms and Conditions

Admission to the School is subject to the Standard Terms and Conditions current at the time and to any reasonable amendments made to them from time to time.

## Overseas Applicants

Applicants living abroad may, subject to appropriate invigilation arrangements being in place, be able to sit the 7+ and Senior School Entrance Examinations at their current school. Ideally applicants will attend the School for any interviews or further assessments which may be required, including for any scholarships, but where this is not possible alternative arrangements may be made, where feasible.

The School is a day school and offers no boarding places. The School only accepts pupils who reside with their parent(s) or legal guardians in a location close enough to travel from home to school and back daily. The School does not provide visas to enable overseas students to come to the UK to study. Applicants and pupils must meet the appropriate UK government visa requirements in place at the time.

## Junior School Assessments for 4+ and 7+ Entry

These take place in the December (4+) and January (4+ and 7+) prior to a September admission. Parents should note that entry is competitive.

- At 4+, an assessment is undertaken by specialist, qualified Early Years staff. During this process, the children take part in number and phonics activities on a 1:1 basis, as well as playing games to give some insight to their general aptitude. All activities are chosen to reflect pre-school experiences which the children will most likely have encountered, and time is also built in for the children to engage in free play and enjoy a story. The School aims to assess children alongside others with a similar birth date. A written report is requested from their current nursery.
- At 7+, applicants are tested in English, Mathematics and computer-based Reasoning as well as participating in a group activity. Applicants who have achieved the required academic standard are invited back for short Mathematics and Reading tests, and an interview with the Head of Junior School or a member of the Leadership Team. A written report is requested from the child's current school.

## Senior School Assessments for 11+ Entry

The 11+ admissions programme for external candidates commences in the Autumn Term in the form of Welcome Mornings, and culminates with an online Entrance Examination for all candidates which must be completed by early January, prior to a September admission. Parents may register from the start of the Summer Term when their child is in Year 5 until the end of October when they are in Year 6.

- During the Welcome Mornings applicants are observed in groups, occupied in a variety of activities. They also have an interview with a senior member of staff, and complete a creative writing task.
- The Entrance Examination consists of online papers in Verbal Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning, English

and Mathematics, and is designed to gauge intellectual potential, not to test what they have learnt at their junior school. The online paper can be sat either in the candidate's own junior school, another senior school to which they are applying which uses the same assessment tests or, where this is not possible, at JAGS. A window of time is specified in which the online test must be completed. Academic Scholarship assessments take place after the Entrance Examination and the strongest candidates from the Entrance Examinations are invited back for these.

- A reference is requested from an applicant's current school prior to an offer being made.

## Senior School Assessments for Sixth Form Entry

Admission to the Sixth Form depends on the results of an Entrance Examination, which consists of a thinking skills test and essay and a 1:1 interview. Any offer of a place is conditional and applicants will also be required to meet certain requirements in their GCSE results. References from the applicant's current school are requested at the time of applying and are taken into consideration as part of the entrance process. The examination is held in the November of the year preceding prospective entry.

## Chance Vacancy Assessments

### Junior School

Chance Vacancy assessments for entrance to the Pre-Prep or Prep School take place only when a space becomes available within an academic year group which the School wishes to fill. Applicants on the Chance Vacancy List are invited to attend an assessment. At the Pre-Prep School, applicants will be assessed age appropriately, according to the relevant Year group. At the Prep School, applicants will be assessed in English, Mathematics and they will sit a computer-based Reasoning Test, and will be invited to an interview with the Head of Junior School or a member of the Leadership Team. Offers are made to applicants who best meet the academic criteria. A reference is requested from the successful applicant's current school.

### Senior School

Chance Vacancy assessments for entry at 12+, 13+ and 14+ are held in early January of the year of prospective entry. They involve an Entrance Examination consisting of papers in English, Mathematics and an online CAT4 Reasoning test. References are requested from an applicant's current school and candidates who perform well in their entrance assessments are invited back subsequently for one on one interviews. Offers are dependent on academic ability and available space within the relevant Year group.

## Special Consideration

There may be circumstances when an applicant's performance in the School's Entrance Examinations or assessments may be impaired by specific circumstances which warrant special consideration to be given. These may include, for example:

- Illness which may have included an extended absence from the applicant's current school.
- A close family member's serious illness at the time of the assessment or recent bereavement.
- The applicant has been educated overseas.

In these circumstances, the School may request written evidence (including medical evidence, if relevant) supporting any request for special consideration to be given in order that the School may make a fair assessment of the applicant's particular impairment and the extent to which this may have impacted on the applicant's performance.

## Senior School Scholarships

Academic, Music, Sport and Art scholarships are available at various entry points to the school; details of this are listed on the school website. Academic scholarship awards are usually valued at £1000, to be deducted from the School's annual tuition fees. Music Scholars will also receive an award towards instrumental tuition fees. Scholarships are not available in the Junior School.

## Bursaries

Means-tested James Allen's Bursaries are available across all Year groups in the Senior School for those who will have difficulty paying the fees. Applicants applying at the relevant entry point may apply for scholarships in addition to a bursary and may be awarded both. Bursaries are not available to Junior School pupils. Further information on bursaries is provided on the admissions page of the school website.

## Fees and Deposits

The offer of a place may be withheld where fees remain unpaid or there is history of late payment of fees for a sibling who is or was previously at the School. The School also reserves the right to enquire of an applicant's previous or current school as to whether all fees have been paid and to withdraw an offer of a place if fees are outstanding. An Acceptance Deposit is payable when parents return the Acceptance Form to the School, accepting the offer of a place at the School. The Acceptance Deposit will be retained in the general funds of the School until the pupil leaves and will be repaid (less any outstanding charges) by means of a credit without interest shortly after the pupil leaves the school, unless the Parent wishes to donate the Acceptance Deposit to the School's Bursary Fund. Details of current deposits are listed on the school's website.

As entrance to the Sixth Form is dependent on GCSE results, the acceptance deposit will be returned should an external applicant not meet the required GCSE grades necessary to take up their chosen A level courses. If an applicant withdraws their acceptance of a place prior to GCSE results then they would not meet the criteria for the return of the deposit and this would be retained by the school. The applicant may also be liable for a term's fees in lieu of notice if their withdrawal of the acceptance of a place falls after the first day of the summer term preceding entry in September.



## **Changes to this Policy**

It should be noted that this policy may need to be varied from time to time in order to comply with the law, government guidance, local or national public health circumstances, or the requirements of the DfE in place at the relevant time and/or as may be required by the Head and the School's governors.

## **Definition**

Throughout this policy, the term 'parents' should be taken to mean a child's parents or legal guardians.