



ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

Admissions POLICY

September 2021

Reviewed September 2021
Next Review Date: September 2022

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's School seeks to provide an education firmly founded on Christ and the Catholic faith.

Spiritual and moral principles are nurtured in a way that is reflected in daily life.

Within a happy and caring environment and based on the recognition of the dignity and worth of every child, high standards are expected and pursued. Intellectual development is emphasised and fostered along with the pursuit of academic excellence.

St Mary's values the unique contribution of every child within the school community.

St Mary's aims to encourage an active partnership between home, school, parish and the wider community.

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body applies the procedures in the admissions policy fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend St Mary's School.

GENERAL

St Mary's School Hampstead is an independent school for girls from ages 2 years 9 months to 11 years. The School currently also admits boys in our Nursery classes. From September 2022, after a phased transition to accommodate the boys already registered at the School, our classes will solely include girls. There will be no change to the outstanding educational opportunities provided for boys who remain at the School until this time.

The School has a capacity of 300 pupils. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your child will visit St Mary's School Hampstead. We hold a number of open events in each term which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School's Admissions Registrar on 0207 435 1568/1868 or email admissions@stmh.co.uk to arrange a visit. If it is not possible to hold open events or arrange school visits because of circumstances beyond the School's control, then the School publishes on its website the alternative arrangements in place.

AIMS

St Mary's School seeks to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities. All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.

The only restriction placed on entry to the School is that of number, however children may be required to undertake an academic assessment to inform us of their ability at point of entry, particularly to the Upper School. Should the number of children applying for entry exceed places available, the following criteria are applied to determine the offer of a place in order of priority:

- Siblings;
- Catholicity - Roman Catholic children or children from a family where at least one parent is Roman Catholic. The Governors reserve the right to require production of Baptismal certificates;
- Other factors that the Headmistress may reasonably take into consideration.

It is our wish for parents to find a place for their child at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND DISABILITY

St Mary's School Hampstead's aim is to encourage applications from prospective pupils with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Generous bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. The School's provision for bursaries is described below.

St Mary's School Hampstead is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's or their parents' race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, any disability or social background. Candidates will also be treated equally in respect of their parents' age, or marital or civil partnership status.

St Mary's School Hampstead does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential pupils. We require parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities to discuss their child's needs with the School before he/she attends a taster day so that we can make adequate provision for him/her. Parents should provide a copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report if they have one. This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that he/she will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure his/her health and safety, and the health and safety of others.

The School will discuss thoroughly with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the School, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that his/her health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the School.

BURSARIES

St Mary's School Hampstead's bursary programme is generous and is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet St Mary's School Hampstead's entry criteria to take up a place here. The School offers means-tested awards annually to entrants at the usual points of entry, where the parents have indicated during the admissions process that they require financial support. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published on the School's website from time to time. Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need; but can extend to full fee remission in cases of proven need.

Bursaries are normally offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the School. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

The School's practice is to allocate its entire available bursary funding on entry. The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the time that their child is being assessed will not require financial support throughout the time that their child attends the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

Our bursary policy can be viewed on our website or can be obtained from the Admissions Registrar.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATIONS

St Mary's School is a Roman Catholic Independent Preparatory School and it determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the Governing Body and the Trustees.

The School website informs parents how to apply for a place at the School.

Application and registration does not, in itself, guarantee a place at St Mary's School. The School will notify parents of the decision once all applications have been considered. The fees are clearly shown on our website and are reviewed every year.

There are currently three admission dates per year, early in September, January and April (i.e. when the term begins). Should children wish to start during the School year, and a place is available, he or she will be admitted at the start of a school week.

Parents considering seeking a place at St Mary's School are requested to contact the School to arrange an appointment with the Headmistress. Such parents will also be given a tour of the School (with or without their child) prior to their child being admitted. No children are admitted until personal contact has been made.

Parents of children attending schools in the local area are asked, as a matter of courtesy, to discuss with the Headmistress the reasons for seeking a possible transfer to St Mary's School.

It is expected that all children who are admitted to St Mary's School remain at the School until their son reaches the end of Nursery and/or their daughter reaches the end of Year 6. It is clearly most advantageous for the children and their learning if they remain in a stable and secure learning environment for the whole of their primary education. Children will gain greatly from the complete "St Mary's experience" by remaining at the School for the full period of time available to them.

ADMISSIONS APPEALS

A child may not be offered a place at St Mary's School because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the School to increase beyond acceptable limits. Should parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they may do so by writing to the Governing Body, which will consider any such appeals. The decision made by them is binding for all parties concerned.

THE STANDARD NUMBER

The 'standard number' is the number of children the Governing Body considers the School can accommodate in each class. The standard number for our School is 18 in each Nursery class and 20 in classes from Reception to Year 6. This number is kept under review. The Governing Body reserves the right to change this number should circumstances require.

ACCEPTANCE OF SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

All parents and children (where applicable) are expected to have read the St Mary's School Parent Contract and to accept these expectations.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and reviewed every three years or as necessary in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our school or within the local area.

SCHOOL'S TERMS & CONDITIONS

The School's Terms and Conditions are on the School's website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

COMPLAINTS

The School hopes that parents and pupils do not have any complaints about the School's admissions process; but copies of the School's Complaints Procedure are available on our website and can be sent to parents on request.

RECORDS AND REVIEW

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notices. 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.