



Dame Alice Harpur School

Admissions Policy

A detailed description of the admissions processes is provided in the inserts at the back of the prospectus. Our policy is to adhere to GSA guidelines of best practice and we work hard to maintain good relations with schools with whom we are in competition.

Entry to the Junior School

For the very youngest candidates, the most important thing is that we look for girls we believe will be happy, comfortable and successful at Dame Alice Harpur School. Fluency in reading is a major factor. Typically, the children who enter Year 3 have a reading age at least one year in advance of their chronological age. Sometimes, our judgment is that a child who clearly has considerable academic potential is not yet ready to join the school. In such a case, her parents are advised of our view and encouraged to register their daughter for entry the following year.

For entry to the Junior School, all candidates are first interviewed informally in groups of three or four by the Head of the Junior School. At a later date they will spend a day in school working alongside pupils of the same age. A mixture of taught lessons and individual work, which includes some standardised tests, allows the staff to assess a candidate's potential. By talking to each candidate about her work teachers are able to make a realistic judgment as to whether she has the potential to work comfortably at the standard we expect.

This assessment procedure, together with a report from the candidate's present school, helps us to identify those girls who will most benefit from the opportunities available in the Dame Alice Harpur Junior School.

Transfer from Junior School to Senior School

Transfer from the Junior School to the Senior School is on the basis of a recommendation by the Head of the Junior School. Transfer is not conditional upon a set-piece test, but upon a review of a girl's work and progress during Years 5 and 6. From time to time, the recommendation is that a girl should not make the transfer. In such a case, parents have always been alerted before their daughter reached the end of Year 5 that they should explore possible alternative secondary schooling in case a positive recommendation for transfer cannot be made. In the very few cases where transfer is not recommended (perhaps one or two girls over a four or five year period) we always offer active assistance and support in identifying and contacting a suitable alternative school.

Admission of external candidates for entry to Years 7, 8 and 9

All candidates are interviewed informally by the Headmistress and senior staff, in groups of three or four. Shortly after the interviews take place, entrance examinations are held early in the Spring Term and places are normally offered to girls showing evidence of at least average ability in English and Mathematics and for whom supportive reports have been prepared by their present Headteachers.



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Entry to Year 10

Occasionally it happens that we receive an enquiry for entry into Year 10 and if a vacancy exists we do consider a candidate for entry at this stage. Candidates sit English, Mathematics and Science papers. When the Headmistress has all the evidence available including a subject report from their present Headteacher, she decides whether or not to offer the candidate a place.

Entry to the Sixth Form

Entry to Sixth Form Each year a small number of girls join the Sixth Form as new entrants to the school. Girls wishing to join Dame Alice for the Sixth Form do not have an assessment day. Entry to the Sixth Form depends upon a satisfactory report from the candidate's present Headteacher and good GCSE results. Potential Sixth Form students are invited into school for a day to work alongside the Lower Sixth, meet the Head of Sixth Form and relevant Heads of Department. A candidate for Sixth Form entry will usually receive a conditional offer of a place following receipt of a supportive reference from her current school. The conditions relate to specific GCSE grade targets, which vary from subject to subject and, occasionally, from candidate to candidate. There is no "blanket" minimum GCSE qualification which ensures entry, though our expectation is that candidates will achieve better than five GCSE passes at Grades A*-C including GCSE grade B or better in the subjects she is continuing to A level.

Late applications / applications for mid-year entry

Where vacancies exist we do consider late, or mid-year, entry. We keep as far as possible to our normal assessment procedures, taking into account any particular urgency which applies in an individual case. A candidate is never admitted without reference to her present Headteacher.

Fee Assistance

Awards are available and allocated according to the criteria outlined in the relevant insert at the back of the prospectus. Demand for assistance is high and usually outstrips supply.

Academic Scholarships

At present, the school offers no academic scholarships. All fee assistance provided is based on the sole criterion of family income. When demand for assistance outstrips the funds, priority is given to girls who have performed well in the entrance examinations.