



Belmont School

Admissions Policy

1. Belmont is co-educational independent school for children from age 3 to 16. We are broadly non-selective although we take great care to offer places only to children who we feel will thrive at Belmont.
2. Deciding on the right School for your child is very important and we seek to make the process as enjoyable and productive as possible. We very much hope that you and your child will visit Belmont and we would always encourage you to attend one of our Open Mornings which take place throughout the academic year. These mornings give a general introduction to the School, and enable prospective families to meet children and staff on a normal working day. We also welcome families to visit our School on any morning during term time for an individual tour if you would prefer a more bespoke visit. In addition to meeting staff, touring the School and meeting pupils, you will also be able to spend some time with our Headmistress in a formal interview, which is not possible on an Open Morning.
3. In order to arrange a visit, please either complete a booking form on line by visiting our website www.belmont-school.org or by contacting our Registrar on admissions@belmont-school.org or by telephoning 01306 730852.
4. Admission to Belmont is open to all regardless of gender, race, religious, socioeconomic or cultural background. Admission to Belmont depends upon a prospective pupil meeting established educational standards and demonstrating a willingness to contribute to the life of our busy School. We are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in outdoor pursuits, music, drama, art, and sport and there are many other extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in helping a pupil to achieve and to maintain the happy environment at Belmont.
5. During the admissions process, the School will wish to assure itself that the pupil is likely to contribute positively to the educational experience of the peer group in the broadest sense and that his or her membership of that peer group would have no unacceptably adverse effect upon the educational experience of any other individual in the group as a whole. Equally, the School must feel that it is in the position to develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her abilities, in line with its general goals and with the standards achieved by the peer group.
6. The School's policy is to apply its admission criteria to all potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments so as not to place any applicant at substantial disadvantage compared to another by reason of disability. At this point in time, the physical nature of the School and its manner of operation is not congenial for those with impaired mobility. Its buildings, many of historical significance,

are spread across a large campus. In some cases, the listed building status will make it impossible to improve accessibility to particular buildings.

7. Selection Criteria

7.1 Date of registering an interest in the School

We accept pupils on a first come, first served basis and operate waiting lists on the same basis. However, once a place has been offered, it is held only for a period of two weeks after which the place will be reallocated elsewhere and the parents informed.

7.2 Sibling Links

Where possible, we will make every effort to accommodate siblings, however, no guarantee is made to offer every sibling a definite place.

7.3 Connection with the School

Where possible, we will make every effort to take into account any connection the family may have with the School.

7.4 Financial Considerations

The parents' ability to pay may be relevant and it is common practice to seek references about parents' payment history from any previous independent school attended.

7.5 Ability

Whilst the School aims to be academically non-selective and welcomes a variety of pupils, there are certain educational standards required in order to access the curriculum. These will be assessed through entrance tests, contributions during taster days, school reports and references, and discussions with the pupil and their parents.

8 The Admissions process is as follows:

8.1 Pupils will be invited to the School following the registration of the pupil. The registration fee is a non-refundable fee of £100 for UK pupils and £150 for international pupils.

8.2 There are three strands to the admission of new pupils: a meeting between the Head teacher and the parents, an assessment of the pupil's ability, and a "Taster Day" for pupils in Year 1 and above. Early Years pupils are invited to attend a Stay and Play or a Forest School session.

8.3 A formal reference from the current school will be obtained wherever possible, as well as all the last two year's reports.

8.4 Where possible the Head will interview pupils, otherwise the Head of Admissions will. For overseas pupils this may take the form of a Skype interview.

8.5 The academic assessment will take place during the Taster Day which is designed to allow the prospective pupil to experience life at Belmont. The academic assessment will focus on verbal and non-verbal reasoning, English and Mathematical skills. In cases of uncertainty, particularly around specific learning or emotional needs, further assessments may be administered, extending the number of Taster Days as required, or a visit to the School may be required for overseas pupils.

- 8.6 The Headmistress will write to the pupil's parents within five working days of the Taster Day with an offer letter, or will telephone the parents to explain why a place is not to be offered. If this is not possible the Head of Admissions will speak with the parents and arrange another date for feedback, pending further assessments.
- 8.7 A place can only be guaranteed once the School has received a deposit of £500 for UK pupils and £2,000 for international pupils. This deposit will be refunded should the pupil leave the School in Year 3 or above, provided due notice has been given according to our Terms and Conditions or when pupils have completed their education at the School, which is deemed to be the end of Year 11.

9 Learning Support and Special Educational Needs (SEND)

- 9.1 We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, provided that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require.
- 9.2 We welcome pupils with physical disabilities, provided that our site is appropriate for them. However, we advise parents of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before he or she attends taster days and/or sits entrance assessments so that we can be confident that we will be in a position to make adequate provision for him/her.
- 9.3 We will discuss thoroughly with parents, and their medical advisers, the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the School.
- 9.4 Limited numbers of places are available for those needing Additional Learning Support, and these will be allocated after the submission of a previous school report and/or a current Educational Psychologist's report or medical report, as well as the internal school assessment, if considered necessary.
- 9.5 Learning support is charged at a fee as detailed on the School website. Please note that Learning support will be delivered individually or in small groups depending on the needs of the pupils.

10 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- 10.1 Pupils for whom English is a second language will be admitted, provided they can access the mainstream curriculum, with appropriate support from the EAL department, if required.
- 10.2 The School reserves the right to ask for an English test to be completed before offering a place for such pupils.

11 Sibling Policy

- 11.1 Most siblings join us at Belmont. However, admission is not automatic, and there may be occasions where we advise that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic

environment. Additionally, siblings may have to join a waiting list if they are not registered in good time.

11.2 Our sibling discount is as follows: 10% for third child and 20% for the fourth child or beyond.

12 Belmont Scholarships

12.1 Scholarships are usually awarded, via our internal scholarship route or via the External Scholarship Competition. Our External Scholarship Competition is open to new pupils entering Belmont in Year 7 or Year 9. Subject to the quality of applications, we may offer scholarships in Sport, Music, Drama, Art, Design Technology, Information Technology or an All Rounder Scholarship (for which academic potential must be demonstrated in addition to at least once other discipline). Current expected levels are 130+ in academic standardised scores, county level sport or similar potential or above Grade 4 for music.

12.2 The External Scholarship Competition takes place in the Lent Term (January - March) of the year of entry. The scholarship application must be received by 1st December in the year preceding entry to Belmont. Candidates may not apply for a scholarship until a place has been offered through our usual entry process and a deposit has been paid.

12.3 However, Belmont reserves the right to offer scholarships in exceptional cases into other school year groups (from year 3 upwards), following assessments for excellence in Sport, Music, Drama, Art, Design Technology, Information Technology or an All Rounder Scholarship (for which academic potential must be demonstrated in addition to at least once other discipline).

12.4 Typically, a scholarship may be combined with a bursary in the case of financial need and in the event that the scholarship and/or bursary is not enough to meet requirement, the deposit will be returned to the applicant on request, and the pupil's place offered elsewhere. All external scholarships are means-tested. Where financial support is not required, a scholarship will be awarded in name only with no financial discount.

13 Bursaries

13.1 A limited number of bursaries are available and all are means tested. We offer two types of bursary:

13.2 Transformational Bursary for pupils who otherwise would never be able to send their child to Belmont and for whom such an opportunity would be life transforming,

13.3 Fee Assistance Bursary to enable prospective parents to bridge the gap between what they are able to contribute towards fees (the majority of the fee) and the full fee. In this situation, an external bursary company will assess the parental means to pay the fee including conducting a home visit to verify the information supplied in support of the Bursary and to gather any further relevant information before recommending a level of bursarial assistance.

13.4 In all bursarial applications, both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets, and where appropriate, other family members as well.

13.5 The level of support varies according to parental need.

13.6 Bursaries are reviewed every 12 months and the family is required to provide the latest information regarding its financial circumstances

13.7 Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or the School's ability to fund the bursary.

14 Religious Beliefs

14.1 Belmont is non-denominational and we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief. Nevertheless, Belmont's has its roots in the Christian faith.

14.2 We celebrate Christmas and Easter each year through productions, concerts and carol services which portray the Christian stories. Likewise, our assemblies have a Christian theme, as well as other themes on occasions.

14.3 Where pupils require it, arrangements to attend services and praying facilities can be made available to cater for most mainstream religions. Please discuss your needs with our registrar when applying.

14.4 We are able to offer a vegetarian diet and cater for most specific religious diets, such as Halal or Kosher, in addition to special diets for those who are allergic to certain foods. Such needs should be discussed prior to admission, and may involve an extra charge.

15 Equal Opportunities

15.1 Belmont is committed to Equal Opportunities for all, regardless of a candidate's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social/cultural background, and will strive to provide the best support available, in line with regulatory requirements.

15.2 With regards to academic and physical disability and the terms of the SEN and the Disability Act of 2001, the School's Admissions Policy states "Admission to Belmont depends upon a prospective pupil meeting established educational standards and demonstrating a willingness to contribute to the life of our busy School".

15.3 The School's policy is to apply its admission criteria to all potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments so as not to place any applicant at substantial disadvantage compared by reason of disability.

15.4 The Admissions Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

15.5 It is the intention that all academic courses/syllabi are made equally available to students of Belmont.

15.6 It is intended that the course content of all subjects taught and that all activity which makes up the wider curriculum of the School, support and where appropriate, actively promote the principles of equal opportunity.

- 15.7 In the pastoral role, the School undertakes actively to promote a culture of tolerance and understanding, and equal opportunities for all.
- 15.8 The following guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive, but give a strong sense of the climate in which we wish to work:
- a) School registers and all official group lists are published in alphabetical order, and in year order where appropriate,
 - b) Pupils' names are accurately recorded and pronounced correctly,
 - c) Individual staff titles are accurately recorded and used,
 - d) All pupils are given opportunities to achieve success,
 - e) All pupils are given the opportunity to contribute orally,
 - f) Teachers are aware of where pupils sit within the classroom and encourage a mix of gender where appropriate; classroom tasks should be shared out irrespective of gender,
 - g) Staff have high expectations of all pupils,
 - h) All pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum,
 - i) The School challenges stereotyping of subjects,
 - j) The School provides all children with opportunities for success,
 - k) The School seeks to offer pupils who may be disadvantaged financially the opportunity to take part in many activities and trips,
 - l) All pupils are aware of the extra-curricular activities and have the opportunity to participate if they wish,
 - m) Staff ensure that they promote positive images in both genders and cultures through their own attitudes and their own use of language,
 - n) The School's Anti Bullying Policy will continue to be implemented,
 - o) The School ensures that any sexual harassment is dealt with in a severe way,
 - p) Personal, Social and Health Education classes and tutor sessions provide pupils with opportunities to explore personal beliefs and attitudes, confront prejudice and stereotyping and to gain understanding of the issues concerning gender, race and religion in the context of the individual rights and responsibilities,
 - q) Wherever possible, books, learning resources and other teaching materials should reflect a non-discriminatory view of both genders and race/culture, promote positive images and contain non-sexist language.

16 Complaints

- 16.1 We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process. Nevertheless, a copy of the School's Complaints Procedure is available on the School's website or can be sent to you on request.

Author: Helen Skrine, Headmistress

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Approved by: Legal and Compliance Committee

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Approved by: Governing Body

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