



# ST FRANCIS SCHOOL

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY (I1)**

### **GENERAL**

St Francis School is a co-educational independent school for pupils from ages 0 to 13. 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 Francis. We usually hold a number of open events throughout the year, 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 Team on 01672 563228 or email [admissions@stfpewsey.co.uk](mailto:admissions@stfpewsey.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.

### **THE ENTRY PROCEDURE**

St Francis is a non-selective school. Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.

The usual points of entry are at Nursery, Reception or Year 3. The School may also have occasional places at other ages and we have pupils who join the school at all ages, depending on availability of places. Please contact the Admissions Team for details.

There is no deadline for applications, although to have the best possible chance of entry it is advised that registrations are submitted as soon as is practical. The School's Registration Form is available by contacting a member of the admissions office on [admissions@stfpewsey.co.uk](mailto:admissions@stfpewsey.co.uk).

### **EQUAL TREATMENT**

St Francis's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Bursaries are available to the parents/guardians of external candidates who may have thought independent education was an unrealistic possibility because of their circumstances. The School's provision for bursaries is described below.

St Francis is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

St Francis 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

supported equally. The life of the School is enhanced by inclusive policies but equal importance must be given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

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 so that appropriate measures can be put in place for any entrance assessments. Parents must provide with the Registration Form 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 their child will be able to access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others.

Where a prospective pupil is disabled, the School will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become 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 their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School.

**Before a place is offered at the School (and preferably prior to application):**

Parents must disclose to the School any on-going discussions, with either the current educational setting or external agencies, and known circumstances relating to their child's health, development, allergies, disabilities and learning difficulties. The School reserves the right to subsequently withdraw any place offered based on incomplete disclosure of known or suspected SEND circumstances.

Based on such disclosure, the School will confirm whether or not it is able to fully meet the needs of the pupil and provide them with a safe and inclusive environment. Where a pupil's SEND is identified, or develops, after they have started at the School, we will endeavour to continue to support them as long as we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support they require and that we believe it is in the best interest of the child and of the School community for them to remain at St Francis.

Where, in our judgement, any of these conditions no longer apply, we reserve the right to withdraw a place at the School. In such circumstances, we will use our reasonable endeavours to support parents in finding alternative arrangements in which to learn.

**THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The aim of the process is to identify potential. St Francis is 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 music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

No specific preparation for our entrance tests is needed; all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude and extra-curricular skills.

Assessment for Reception is based on informal observation of play and interaction in small groups when prospective pupils are visiting for a taster morning/day.

Assessment for Years 1 and 2 is based on observations of pupils during lessons with teaching staff when prospective pupils are visiting for a taster morning/day.

Assessment for Year 3 and above, is based on observations of pupils during lessons with teaching staff when prospective pupils are visiting for a taster morning/day. Candidates for entry will also undergo computer-based testing.

We interview all candidates as part of our assessment process for each age group.

References will be sought from the Head of a candidate's current school as part of the assessment process.

### **SIBLING POLICY**

Most siblings join us at St Francis. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

St Francis offers a select number of scholarships (called Hemery Awards) for pupils entering into Years 7 & 8 only who demonstrate excellence in:

- Academic subjects
- Music, Art, Drama, Sport

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

#### **Purpose of Scholarships**

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar may be offered a small reduction in the fees throughout their time at St Francis. Any further fee discount will be means-tested.

We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply (at the same as registration of their child) for one of the School's means-tested bursaries described below.

#### **Academic Scholarships**

External candidates who apply for academic scholarships as part of the Hemery Award assessments sit the same assessments as those who sit for the awards internally. Scholarships are held for the duration of a pupil's time at the School, provided his/her conduct is satisfactory. All candidates will be interviewed in addition to sitting assessments in:

English, mathematics, reasoning and INCAS tests.

#### **Music Scholarships**

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability. Candidates must obtain a specialist reference from their current music teacher(s) in addition to a reference from their current Head. They will be required to perform short pieces on their instrument(s) and to complete a written paper, together with aural and practical tests. There will also be interviews with the Director of Music, or a member of the music department. They will be expected to demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to music and will be expected to make a contribution to the musical life of the School throughout their time at the School.

Music scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have passed the School's entrance assessments.

## **Sports Scholarships**

Sports scholarships are awarded to outstanding, all-round sportsmen/women who have achieved a high level of competence in a range of sports and who show potential. They will be assessed and interviewed by the Director of Sport and will be expected to demonstrate qualities of leadership and team play of a very high order. Candidates will be required to provide a specialist reference from their current sports coach(es). They will be expected to make a contribution to the sporting life of the School throughout their time at the School.

Sports scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have passed the School's entrance assessments.

## **BURSARIES**

St Francis is committed to broadening access to the School by offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees, in line with the School's charitable objectives. The value of a bursary is dependent on the ability of the School to meet the means-tested needs of the prospective parents.

Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published in the School's Bursary Policy. Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need; but occasionally can extend to full fee remission in cases of proven need and where funds allow. Before the offer of a bursary is confirmed, a member of staff or external assessor appointed by the School may visit the family at their home. Bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on parental circumstances.

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.

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

The School's Bursary Policy can be obtained from the Bursar [bursar@stfpewsey.co.uk](mailto:bursar@stfpewsey.co.uk).

## **OVERSEAS APPLICANTS**

We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at St Francis provided that they have the legal right to enter and study in the UK and they have a relative or responsible adult living in the UK with whom he/she can reside during term time as St Francis is a day-only school. However, parents of overseas pupils should appreciate that we do not run a short-term study programme.

## **FLUENCY IN ENGLISH**

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of St Francis, pupils must be fluent English speakers. Normally pupils should have been educated in the English medium for a number of years before coming to the School.

## **RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

St Francis welcomes applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.

Although St Francis has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for all religions to practise their own faiths.

## **ADDITIONAL FACTORS**

If the School is oversubscribed and we have to decide between two or more candidates who meet our admissions criteria after all appropriate allowances and special consideration has been given, we may give preference to:

- a child who already has a sibling at the school
- a child who already attends Little Saints Nursery
- a child who is registered for entry into Reception or Years 1 - 8
- a child whose parent is a current member of our staff
- a child whose parent is a former pupil
- a child who holds a particular talent, skill or aptitude
- date of registration

## **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's Complaints Procedure for Parents is on the School's website and can be sent to prospective 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 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 e.g. no more than 6 months following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain for longer might include: e.g. 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.

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