

PENNTHORPE ADMISSIONS POLICY

THIS POLICY INCLUDES THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE



ISI Code:	15a Admissions Policy
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1. INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 Applications for admission** to Pennthorpe can be made at any time. However, there are limits upon numbers under the School's policy on class sizes, which depends upon the age group and the required ratios of staff to pupils. In the Early Years, numbers are limited due to room sizes and staff ratios. Therefore, in any age group, those who apply and satisfy the admissions criteria will be offered places on a "first come, first served" basis until the maximum class size has been reached. Pupils are encouraged to start at the beginning of a term, although if circumstances allow a mid-term start date can be arranged.
- 1.2 Offers** of admission to Pennthorpe are made individually and at the discretion of the Head, who will consider not only the criteria noted below but also other matters that may be relevant in any individual's case. Offers of admission to the Early Years are made individually and at the discretion of the Head.
- 1.3 Equal Treatment** The Pennthorpe community welcomes children from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our School community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, gender, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all Pennthorpe pupils to attend School assemblies.
- 1.4 Disability** At present, Pennthorpe's facilities for children with disabilities are limited, but we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children with disabilities. When a disability or special educational need is made known to us, we will consult with parents and make reasonable adjustments to our admission procedures and arrangements to enable a child, if he/she is able, to satisfy our admission requirements. In the Early Years, we adhere to the SEN code of practice.

If a pupil is disabled, we have a series of duties in respect to them. In particular, we will:

- Not discriminate against the pupil directly, indirectly or in relation to a consequence arising from the pupil's disability.
- Not victimise or harass the disabled pupil.

- Make reasonable adjustments to prevent the disabled pupil from being put at a substantial disadvantage. Such adjustments may include providing specific equipment or extra staff assistance and making changes to timetables to ensure all teaching rooms are accessible.

1.5 Educational Adjustments In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act we seek to ensure that those with special educational needs are not treated less favorably or put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission. The School will take all reasonable measures to support a child and will make adjustments to ensure accessibility to the curriculum where required. Pennthorpe does not have the expertise on the staff team to provide for the needs of pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties. However, the School does have a Learning Support Department who can work in conjunction with the teaching staff and the parents to support, in certain cases, a range of mild difficulties.

Pennthorpe aims to give support and understanding to any pupil who wishes to take, or has taken, the steps to present themselves in a gender different to the gender assigned to them at birth. Pennthorpe is committed to being fair and inclusive and will not discriminate against a pupil who is undergoing, or who has undergone, gender reassignment. Support will be given to those undergoing gender reassignment and will be agreed based on the individual needs of the pupil involved. Appropriate support will therefore vary on a case by case basis.

Additional support with specialist staff can also be arranged, at the parents' expense, in order for a child to maximise their potential or fully access the curriculum.

2. PROCEDURES:

2.1 Entry points

These procedures apply for points of entry as shown below:

Pre-School: Honeypot and Beehive (2 and 3 years)

Children will be admitted in order of registration on a first come, first served basis. Siblings of children already attending Pennthorpe will be given priority. Entry is non-selective.

In the term prior to entry, parents and pupils will be invited to join a 'stay and play' session in the Honeypot and Beehive in order to meet the teachers, whilst familiarising themselves with the environment at Pennthorpe.

Honeypot and Beehive have limited spaces, 12 in Honeypot and up to 24 in Beehive. Children are required to attend a minimum of 3 sessions per week in Honeypot and 5 sessions in Beehive. Following confirmation of a place and agreement of a start date, the Registrar will contact the parents of the child to confirm sessions and wrap around care requirements.

Reception: (4 years)

Entry into Reception (age 4+), is automatic for those moving up from the 'Beehive' unless specific learning needs have been identified that cannot be reasonably met at Pennthorpe. Spare places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Children are invited to attend a taster session prior to joining Pennthorpe, during which time their needs can be assessed. Places will be offered on a first come, first served basis at this stage. Where places are not immediately offered, a second taster session may be arranged, or further information from parents sought. Maximum numbers in each Reception class are 16.

Pre-Prep and Prep School: (5 to 13 years)

Entry into Years 1-8 is automatic for those moving up from the year below. Any remaining places are then allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Maximum class sizes for Y1-8 are set at 20.

Entry to Pennthorpe remains largely unselective throughout the school. The following criteria will be applied to ensure Pennthorpe may be able to meet the child's needs:

- An assessment of their ability in English, Mathematics and Reasoning;
- Feedback from staff on Taster days;
- Confidential reports may be required from their previous school;
- Disability assessments (if applicable);
- The presence of a sibling already at Pennthorpe or a previous family connection;
- Positive, open conversations with parents;
- The family indicates a willing commitment to continue with their child's education all the way through Pennthorpe.

Children for entry from Year 1 to 8 are required to spend a full day at the school. During this time at school, an assessment will be made of the prospective candidates' personal and social development, and behaviour as well as their progress to date in Literacy and Numeracy to ensure a smooth transition into these year groups.

We encourage each applicant to spend at least one session (EYFS) or whole day (Y1-8) with us prior to the offer of a place. This gives us the opportunity to administer entry tests and to observe the pupil in the classroom setting. Importantly, it also gives the pupil an opportunity to have a brief experience of the school, to meet his or her future classmates, and so to allay some of the anxieties that often accompany a move to a new school. A preliminary visit incurs no obligation on either side.

2.2 Entry Assessments

The entry assessment will involve a review of the pupil's ability.

Our entrance tests are designed to assess a pupil's literacy and numeracy skills, along with his or her academic potential. This is within the context of the Pennthorpe curriculum and of the entrance examination requirements of the senior independent schools to which the majority of our pupil's transfer. None of the tests administered require any special preparation.

Years 1-3: During the Taster Day, some informal testing will take place in Literacy and Numeracy. Each child will also be observed at work and at play.

Years 4-8: In years 4-8 pupils will undertake some testing in Maths, Reading, Spelling and Reasoning.

2.3 Awarding of Places

Places will be awarded following the criteria set out below:

- All children will need to perform to the required standard in the assessments and observations. Ultimately it is at the Head's discretion.
- Siblings of children already at Pennthorpe will be given first priority in the order in which their registration forms and registration fees were received.
- Children without siblings will be awarded the remaining places in the order in which their completed registration forms and registration fees were received so long as they meet the conditions of the remaining criteria.
- All enquiring families will be kept informed of the availability of places. Where a waiting list situation arises i.e. where the School anticipates all places will be taken up between

transitioning children, those who have secured their place with a deposit as well as those who are already registered, parents will be informed at the time of their initial enquiry. They will be placed on a waiting list and will be informed when/if a place becomes available.

- A child's future place may be secured by a deposit, in which case a place will be held until such a time as the mutually agreed start date. Where a future place has been secured by a deposit, a waiting list situation may arise, even if the maximum number of children attending has not been reached, in anticipation of the future place being filled.

2.4 Entry Assessments

The School sets its own assessments in certain core/option subjects as appropriate.

Character Reference

The Head of the candidate's current school may be asked to provide a written reference as to the candidate's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the school community, talents and interest, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, or a disability. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at the school (such as NFER or SATs).

Candidate's Age

Very occasionally, the School may offer places to pupils one year ahead or behind their standard year group, if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement, that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School.

2.5 Special Circumstances

The School recognises that a candidate's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- If he/she is unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from his/her school.
- If there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement.
- If there is a relevant educational history, for example education outside the British system.
- If the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties.
- If English is not the candidate's first language.

In any of these cases, the School may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the pupil's current school (including samples of work) or any family history of dyslexia, as is considered necessary to make a fair assessment.

2.6 Disclosures

Parents must, as soon as possible, disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties.

Failure to disclose this information could result in the offer a place being withdrawn.

2.7 Additional Factors

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

- A child who already has a sibling in the School or Early Years or whose sibling or parent is a former pupil at Pennthorpe.

- A child whose parent is a current member of our staff.
- A child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude seeking entry to Pennthorpe.
- Those parents whose child will progress from the Honey-pot and Beehive to the Reception class at the School.

3. FEE ASSISTANCE:

The Head and Governors are committed to ensuring, through the provision of means-tested bursary assistance, that the education offered to the children of fee-paying parents is also made available to some children whose parents would not otherwise be able to send their children to Pennthorpe.

3.1 Entrance Bursaries

These may be offered to children on joining Pennthorpe.

They are normally available for entry at 7+ or above. Bursaries are subject to annual means-test review including a home visit and financial background checks and are conditional upon continued satisfactory conduct.

Parents of current Pennthorpe pupils may also apply for a temporary hardship award if, unavoidably, they find themselves in difficulties with meeting the fees. Such awards are also means tested and subject to annual review as above. Further details can be sought from the Bursar.

3.2 Braby Awards

Pennthorpe may award scholarships for pupils entering Year 7.

These awards are named after Pennthorpe's founding brothers Herbert and Sidney Braby who moved the school to its current site in Rudgwick in 1948. Awards may be given for **excellence** in any of the following areas:

- Academic
- Performing Arts
- Sport
- Art
- Music
- DT

Candidates offering all round strengths in two or more areas will also be eligible for awards.

All external candidates will complete the school's usual entrance procedures including CAT4 testing and trial day in school. Current school reports, confidential references and performance in an interview with the Head or a member of the SMT will also be considered.

All candidates will be expected to be of a standard to take scholarships on entry to senior school. All awards will be made by the end of January in the year prior to entry. Late applications may be considered with the permission of the Head.

3.3 Sibling Discounts

No discount is offered for the second child.

Sibling discounts are available for families with three or four children. They are not means-tested. However, those parents whose financial situation is such that they are willing to forego a sibling discount will be invited to have the discount funds placed into a special Endowment

Fund, the sole purpose of which will be to provide free places at Pennthorpe for children from the least well-off families.