

# **The New School at West Heath**

## **Policy on Admissions Procedure**

### **Introduction**

The Admissions Procedure has two parts. First there is the making of a judgement as to whether the particular student would benefit from a place at the New School – the granting of a fresh start. This is the responsibility of the Principal who will take as much advice as possible. Second there is the induction of the accepted students into the School community – the making of a fresh start. In this the whole school plays a part and not least the new student him/herself.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To identify those individuals who will benefit from a place at the New School
- To help these students to become accepted members of the school community and to participate in the social and academic life of the school

### **Strategies**

The procedure begins with a referral either from a sponsoring LEA or a parent. The Principal assesses these. The outcome is a rejection, a request for further information and clarification or an invitation to attend for an interview. The comments in the Admissions Criteria Policy should be noted here.

#### **1. Applications for a bursary**

Applicants for bursaries are asked to complete an application form for consideration by the bursary committee usually before an interview is granted.

#### **2. Interview**

The interview, which includes a walk around the school, is a very thorough process lasting some 2-3 hours. During this the Principal draws upon her extensive experience in coming to a judgement as to whether the applicant is someone we can work with. It is at the interview that a judgement has to be made about whether the paperwork tells the whole story. (In the case of a boarding application an interview with the Vice-Principal (Care) is arranged.)

This interview is important in establishing the beginning of a relationship between the Principal and the potential student. What the student thinks the Principal believes about him or her will become a significant influence in how that student performs at the school if accepted. If the student forms the conviction that the Principal really believes that he/she wants to make a fresh

start then at an emotional level a degree of trust is established. "This is someone I can do business with".

The rapport established between the Principal and the applicant is also an important indicator as to whether the potential student will respect the authority of the Principal during their school career.

The following are some of the things that are looked for:

- Is the student someone who is facing up to their difficulties and really wants a solution? A student who projects all the blame for past failures on others is unlikely to succeed with us as is a student who shows no desire for things to be better.
- Does the applicant show willingness to accept personal responsibility for the future? This does depend, of course, on the age of the student. A year 6 student requesting a place in year 7 will be considerably less mature than a year 10 student.
- How will this student fit in with the existing students? The impact on the social dynamics and existing relationship will have to be considered. This is a delicate judgement and issues such as potential bully or potential victim will have to be considered.
- What degree of self-knowledge does the applicant have about how he/she came to this point?
- What ambitions does the applicant have for the future? Does he/she have a strong desire for a fresh start and with an ambition to make good?

### 3. Tour

A guided tour of the school is provided conducted by students (sometimes the Head Boy or Head Girl).

- This gives an opportunity for the staff to observe how the youngster relates to his/her parents, teachers, current students and the facilities and opportunities at the school. Usually teachers will stop their lessons and spend a short time talking to the visitors both student and parents.
- The Principal will invite comments and observations from members of staff.

### 4. The Offer

- No youngster is barred for reasons of disability, race, religion or gender (see quality of opportunity policy.)
- An offer of acceptance is either for an unconditional or an assessment place.
- In the case of an assessment place specific targets are set and formal reviews are held at least once per term. Experience has shown that for some students a prolonged assessment period is very helpful in order to establish a consistent pattern of satisfactory behaviour. For some, the

knowledge that their place at the school is not irrevocable provides the incentive they need to comply.

## 5. Induction

- All new students have an induction period specifically designed for their needs. In the case of an entrenched phobic this will begin with home visits. One of the Teaching Assistants (a Student Welfare Worker, SWW) has a specific responsibility in this area.
- New students are sometimes inducted in groups when several start at the same time.
- For a time the SWW acts as a staff contact until the student is ready to be handed over to another member of staff.
- Details of the induction process for both day and residential students are set out in detail in a separate policy (q.v.).

<b>Admissions Procedure</b>	
<b>This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:</b> Admission Criteria, Curriculum	
<b>Appendices:</b>	
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