



THE
PORTSMOUTH
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

The PGS Admissions Policy

Contents

1. General Information.....	3
2. Admission to the School.....	4
3. Scholarships and fee-assistance	7
4. Awarding Access Arrangements in Entrance Assessments.....	8
5. Remote Assessment.....	9
6. Key Stages of Transition	9
7. Related Policies	10
8. Allocation of Tasks and Version Control.....	11

The PGS Admissions Policy

1. General Information

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Portsmouth Grammar School (the School) is an academically selective, co-educational, independent through-school, educating pupils from 2 ½ years to 18 years.
- 1.1.2 The PGS Pre and Junior school offer the foundations for a successful and rewarding secondary education, placing emphasis on an excellent attitude to learning, numeracy and literacy skills in a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment. Pupils from our Junior School are joined by a similar number of children from a wide range of other schools in Year 7 and spend two years in our nurturing Middle School, before being joined by further pupils joining us at Year 9.

1.2 Entry Points

- 1.2.1 The traditional entry points are at Pre-School, Reception, Year 3, Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12. However, there is the opportunity for children to assess to join at any stage if space allows. Each academic year is treated as a discrete admissions cycle. Offers made are not transferable between admissions cycles or from one entry point to another. Out of cycle applications will replicate the normal admissions process as much as possible to ensure fairness of treatment and comparability of standards to all applicants.
- 1.2.2 For the purposes of determining the correct Year group, the School generally follows the UK convention of a 1 September birthday watershed for determining the applicant's eligibility for entry. Any deviation from this will be considered on a case by case basis taking into account all the relevant circumstances.

1.3 Pre-application visits

- 1.3.1 Deciding on the right school for a child is very important and the School would recommend that prospective parents and applicants visit the school prior to an application. There are various Open Events throughout the school year and the details of these can be found on the school website. If preferred, applicants and prospective parents can make an appointment to visit the school privately, these can be arranged through the Admissions office by contacting Admissions@pgs.org.uk

1.4 Application and Assessment

- 1.4.1 The school requires parents or guardians of all applicants for all Years to complete an application form and pay the registration fee of £100 (Pre-School) or £120 (all other years). The registration fee is non refundable, irrespective of whether or not the applicant actually completes the entrance assessments.

1.4.2 The Portsmouth Grammar School is committed to operating a fair and transparent admissions policy that provides an equal opportunity for all children to have their potential identified in line with principles of equality and equity as far as possible. To ensure that an applicant is not disadvantaged we ask prospective parents at the point of application to provide a copy of an educational psychologist's or medical report if they have one.

1.4.3 Pupils are admitted on the basis of their attitude to learning, potential and ability as determined by the entrance assessment process described below (including, where relevant, references from current and/or previous schools). We aim to make the selection process as friendly and relaxed as possible. The School's decision is final, although where appropriate the School may agree to a review being conducted ahead of a final decision by the Head.

1.5 Sibling Policy

1.5.1 Many siblings join us at The Portsmouth Grammar School. However, admission is not automatic because of a previous family connection and all siblings will need to go through the admissions process as detailed in the next section. The school does not offer any sibling discount on fees.

2. Admission to the School

2.1 The main criteria for selection for external applicants to the school are:

2.1.1 Satisfactory performance in the relevant entrance assessments and, for Sixth Form entry, the expectation is to achieve grade 7/A or above at GCSE or IGCSE in subjects to be studied at A Level, and at least six strong passes, the equivalent of a grade 5/B in their other subjects (see also paragraph 2.10 below).

2.1.2 Satisfactory performance in the interview exercise, taken either at school or in a virtual setting

2.1.3 A positive, confidential reference from the applicant's present school; particularly satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of applicants and their parents or guardians. The reference requests all-round achievement, conduct, attitude to school life and academic performance.

2.2 The school reserves the right to make amendments to the assessments undertaken by applicants at any point throughout the admissions process as required.

2.3 At intermediate points of entry, a selection of the processes below may be used in accordance with individual circumstances. All candidates receive formal notification of acceptance or otherwise in accordance with HMC guidelines. A deposit is payable in order to formally accept the offer of a place.

2.4 Pre-School Admissions

2.4.1 The aim of the Pre-School is to prepare children, both academically and pastorally, for entry to The Junior School and to ensure a positive transition into the Reception classes. The EYFS (Pre-School) accepts Early Education Funding (EEF) for 15 hours per week until the child enters Reception. These sessions are available as:

5 x am or pm sessions (1 per day)

or

3 x am sessions with the 1 hour lunch session and 1 x am or pm session (hot lunches charged additionally)

2.4.2 Flexibility of session times will be offered to parents who access non-EEF funded hours.

2.4.3 The Admissions team will support parents through the application process which includes:

- (a) A tour of the Pre-School
- (b) An invite to an initial Stay and Play session
- (c) Support with booking session once the offer of a place has been made subject to availability
- (d) Settling in session prior to the agreed start date

2.4.4 When ratios within the Pre-School are met, it may be necessary to operate a waiting list. Parents will be made aware of this on application.

2.5 Entry at 4+ (Reception)

2.5.1 External entrants to Reception will be assessed at any time in the preceding year. The assessment will consist of age appropriate and play based activities with the Reception Lead who will observe how the child interacts and participates in the activities in a relaxed and supportive environment. These activities might include:

- (a) Following simple instructions given by the teacher
- (b) Playing a memory game such as Kim's Game
- (c) Using construction toys to build something for a purpose
- (d) Drawing a picture of a person
- (e) A sorting activity

2.5.2 Based on these observations a recommendation to the Head of the Junior School will be made as to whether or not the child should be offered a place.

2.6 Entry at 5+ to 9 (Year 1 – Year 5)

- 2.6.1 Pupils may be assessed at any point during the year. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 are invited to PGS to attend a Taster Morning in their current year group. They will undertake an assessment with the Head of Pre-School and Infants who will make the final decision on a formal offer.
- 2.6.2 Children in Year 3 and above are asked to complete assessments in Mathematics, English, Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning. Standardised scores are derived and compared with the national standard, cohort average and Year group guidelines to determine suitability for a formal offer. They would usually also have a short, informal interview with the Head of the Junior School and we encourage them to spend some time with their prospective peer group to enable us to understand their attitude to learning and school and interactions with their peers.

2.7 Entry at 10+

Any pupils wishing to join the Junior School in Year 6 will be required to sit an adapted 11+ assessment as set out below.

2.8 Entry at 11+

At 11+ candidates sit assessments in English, Mathematics, Creative Comprehension, Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning, and on a separate date, close to these assessments, candidates are also interviewed. References from a candidate's current school are usually requested shortly before the 11+ assessments.

2.9 Entry at 13+

- 2.9.1 At 13+, candidates sit assessments in English, Maths, a Modern Language and Non Verbal Reasoning and, on a separate date close to these assessments, candidates are also interviewed.
- 2.9.2 The School may arrange for 13+ candidates to have taken our 11+ Entrance Assessments as a pre-test. This enables the school to manage carefully the number of places available in Year 9, and has the benefit of enabling families to plan ahead with confidence. Candidates who have pre-tested successfully receive an offer of a conditional place, subject to a satisfactory performance in the 13+ assessment. In such circumstances, a deposit will be payable in order to secure that conditional place.
- 2.9.3 Late applications for entry into Year 9 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and offers will be subject to the same criteria described already, and the availability of places.

2.10 Entry at 16+

At 16+ external candidates are asked to attend for assessment day in the Autumn Term prior to joining. They will sit assessments in Reading Comprehension and Non-Verbal Reasoning, and they are also interviewed. If successful they will be made conditional offers taking into account their predicted GCSE grades. The school would usually expect candidates to achieve a grade 7/A or

above at GCSE or IGCSE in subjects to be studied at A Level, and at least six strong passes, the equivalent of a grade 5/B in their other subjects. References from the candidate's current school or college will also be requested before an offer is made.

2.11 International Entry

- 2.11.1 International pupils are accepted into the Sixth Form under our Child Student Sponsor Licence. The Admissions procedure is the same as for other Sixth Form applicants with the additional requirements of:
- (a) A copy of the applicant's birth certificate
 - (b) The applicant's latest school report
 - (c) A copy of the photo page of the applicants' passport as well as that of their parents
 - (d) Applicants will need to demonstrate their current level of spoken and written English, this will normally be done by a means of an English Language assessments and/or an online interview
- 2.11.2 If a candidate is not sitting GCSE's or equivalent then further subject specific assessments may be necessary before a final decision on an offer to study is made.
- 2.11.3 The fee structure and deposit arrangements for the school's international admissions are different from that of domestic applicants. For any applicant requiring a Child Student Visa there will be an Acceptance Fee of £1000. Full details can be found in the international admissions section of the school website or from the Admissions department.
- 2.11.4 The school is not a boarding school but we can introduce international applicants at 16+ to a homestay provider who will arrange accommodation and guardianship.

3. Scholarships and fee-assistance

- 3.1 Candidates for Years 7, 9 and 12 entry are able to apply for scholarships in Art, Drama, Music and Sport; details of the process of applying for these are published separately on the website and will be made available when requested. Remission of fees for scholarships are usually at either 6% or 3%. The school focusses the pupil experience on the development of skills and enrichment within the scholarship subject.

- 3.2 Academic Scholarships are not applied for and are awarded automatically by the school following outstanding performance in the assessment process. At 11+ we invite a selection of candidates to an Academic Scholarship day following the main assessment day. Academic Scholarships will be awarded to candidates who demonstrate intellectual curiosity and an ability to apply knowledge and skills.
- 3.3 Means-tested Fee Assistance can be applied for via our website. It is awarded based on financial need and performance in the entrance assessments. Any fee assistance awarded in Year 7 will last until Year 11 and must be reapplied for transition into the Sixth Form. However, if at the discretion of the Head the school decides that insufficient effort is being made to take advantage of the School's provision, the School may terminate the fee support at the next year-end, giving not less than one full term's notice in writing. The school will also request a yearly declaration to verify enduring need for fee assistance, which would be removed or adjusted should an applicant's financial circumstances improve.
- 3.4 The school does not award fee assistance or scholarships to applications out of the usual admissions cycle.
- 3.5 Co-curricular scholarships awarded for Year 7 last for Years 7 & 8. Those awarded for Year 9 last for Years 9 to 11 and those awarded for Year 12 last for the two years of the Sixth Form.

4. Awarding Access Arrangements in Entrance Assessments

- 4.1 The School is committed to the individual treatment of all children and, to this end, of ensuring equal access and opportunity for all candidates for entry into the school in line with principles of equality and where possible equity; it will, as far as is possible, make reasonable adjustments to its applications procedures as necessary. Further information can be found in the PGS Equal Opportunities Policy for pupils.
- 4.2 The provision of special arrangements for a paper or assessment must be based upon the ongoing support that an individual candidate is normally and/or currently receiving. This may include access to equipment or materials that are part of their normal current working practice but do not provide an unfair advantage over other candidates. Evidence of such support or working habits is likely to be required in support of any such requests and a covering letter from their current school may suffice in this respect depending on the circumstances.
- 4.3 Candidates with specific additional educational needs may be allowed extra time for the completion of a paper or assessment; formal diagnostic evidence, such as that provided by an educational psychologist or specialist assessor, is required in order for such a request to be considered. The tests used to produce evidence for any such request should be as up-to-date as possible, age-appropriate and fully standardised. The criteria used to assess the merits of such requests are based on those provided by JCQ (['Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties'](#)) which are updated every September.

5. Remote Assessment

- 5.1 In the case that, due to external circumstances, such as a family relocating from overseas, it is necessary for entrance assessments to take place remotely, rigorous arrangements will be in place to ensure that these offer a fair picture of pupils' capabilities. Usually, we will contact the current overseas school to conduct the assessments on their premises at a convenient time. Interviews may take place remotely.
- 5.2 Care will be taken to ensure that pupils understand the format of assessments and access arrangements will continue to be applied to any candidate who qualifies.

6. Key Stages of Transition

- 6.1 It is a principle of the school that formal application is only required at the point of entry. It is assumed that a pupil will then automatically transition through the school, provided progress and conduct are satisfactory. If it is not the intention to transition through at any point then parents need to give one term's formal notice to the Head.

6.2 Pre-School to Reception

Pupils who attend the Pre-School are included in the School's programme of Continuous Assessment to enable a smooth transition to Reception. The Pre-School Lead and the child's Keyworker consistently monitor the child's progress and development with robust assessment procedures. Any concerns for entry to Reception are discussed with parents in the Autumn Term preceding entry, although most pupils are entering Pre-School on the premise that they will, be carrying on into Reception and will need to give one term's notice to the Head if they are not intending to transition.

6.3 Year 6 to Year 7

The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School (PGJS) pupils are not required to sit the 11+ Entrance Assessments. Instead, their places in Year 7 are awarded on the basis of Continuous Assessment, informed by a regular series of standardised and teacher assessments. In the unlikely event that there are concerns that a pupil may not manage the transition into Year 7 in the Senior School successfully, parents will be made aware of the School's concerns during Year 5 and a programme of support agreed. Progress will be monitored throughout Year 6 and, if entry to the Senior School is confirmed, in Years 7 and 8. Parents receive formal written confirmation of Senior School places at the end of the Autumn Term in Year 6 this confirmation will include any co-curricular or academic award being offered.

6.4 Year 11 to Year 12

As with external candidates, pupils are usually expected to achieve a grade 7/A or above at GCSE in subjects to be studied at A Level and at least six strong passes, the equivalent of a grade 5/B at GCSE, in other subjects, though there may be some flexibility in this regard depending on individual circumstances. If there are concerns that a pupil may not achieve a performance at GCSE equivalent to this, or that they may not be suited to Sixth Form study at The Portsmouth Grammar School, parents will be made aware of the school's concerns during Year 11 and a programme of support agreed. Confirmation of a pupil's place in the Sixth Form is usually then

made by the achievement of the appropriate GCSE grades in the summer. Further information about this process and the support provided by the Senior School is provided separately to parents when their child is in Year 11.

7. Related Policies

7.1 See also the following policies and documents:

- 7.1.1 The PGS Accessibility Plan
- 7.1.2 The PGS Disability Policy for pupils and the public
- 7.1.3 The PGS Equal Opportunities Policy for pupils
- 7.1.4 The PGS Additional Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- 7.1.5 PGS Prospectus/ Sixth Form Prospectus & Course Guide
- 7.1.6 The PGS Financial Assistance with Fees Policy

8. Allocation of Tasks and Version Control

Allocation of Tasks

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Assistant Head (Admissions and Partnerships)	As required, and at least annually
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	The Marketing and Admissions Office	As required, and at least termly
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by the GDPR	The Marketing and Admissions Office	As required, and at least termly
Receiving/ reviewing input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	The Marketing and Admissions Office	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Assistant Head (Admissions and Partnerships)	Annually

Version Control

Date of adoption/approval of this policy	17 th May 2024 (Governing Body - Education Committee) (updated 9-1-25)
Date of last review of this policy	23 rd April 2024 (Senior Management Team)
Date for next review of this policy	Spring Term 2025
Policy author (SMT)	Assistant Head (Admissions and Partnerships)
Status	ISI requirement (external website)
Report	Academic and Educational Report

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