



ADMISSIONS POLICY

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Bolton School Girls' Division is an academically selective, independent, day school for girls from year 7 to Year 13.

The Girls' Division welcomes applicants from all backgrounds - see the section on Equal Opportunities below.

The main points for entry into the Girls' Senior School, under the Headship of Mrs Kyle, are 11+ (Year 7) and 16+ (Sixth Form).

Admission to other year groups is dependent on there being vacancies.

Entry to the school is on a competitive basis: admission is subject to the availability of a place and to the candidate meeting the entry requirements at the time. The process involved at Year 7, Years 8-11, and at Sixth Form is outlined below.

Please note that the Head of Division's decision in accepting or refusing a candidate into the School is final. In order to ensure fairness and to protect the integrity of the system, results of assessments, including the Entrance Tests and the interview, are not discussed with parents or made public.

Whilst girls attending the Bolton School Junior School (Hesketh House) do not have automatic entry to the Senior School at 11+, their parents will normally be informed in Years 5 and/or 6 if they are unlikely to pass the Entrance Exam.

In order to move from Year 11 into the Sixth Form, pupils currently at the school should normally achieve at least six passes at Grade 6 (or the equivalent if iGCSEs or similar have been taken). They must have at least a Grade 5 in English, Maths and a single Science/ part of the Trilogy Science Grade.

Application Procedure (11+ and midstream entrants)

Entrants into Year 7

A maximum of 125 places is normally available for Year 7. Parents of girls who wish to apply for a place at Bolton School, including girls transferring from Hesketh House Junior School, should complete the Application Form, a copy of which can be downloaded from the website or requested from School. The Application Form must be returned to School before the stated closing date for applications. There is a non-refundable application fee for all applicants (other than those applying from Hesketh House) and this must be included with the Application Form for the application to be considered. Girls applying for a means-tested Bursary or a non-means tested Scholarship must indicate this on their Application Form at the time of applying.

All those girls whose parents have submitted the Application Form and who have paid the application fee will be invited to take part in this Entrance Testing Day at the School. The Entrance Testing Day takes place in the January or February prior to a September admission. The date each year can be found on the website.

Please note that, if a girl in Year 5 takes the Entrance test early, her result will be assessed for entry with her Year 7 cohort, but she will not be allowed to re-sit the examination again before entering. Therefore, you are advised not to enter your daughter early for the Entrance Test.

Girls normally sit Entrance tests in the following: English, Maths, and Non- Verbal Reasoning. These papers are set and administered by 'GL Assessment'. Details of how to purchase examples of GL Assessment Papers are provided on their website. Girls are recommended to try out some past papers but not to spend excessive time going through previous examples at the expense of other, more worthwhile preparation. reading.

There is no 'pass mark' for the Entrance tests: the examination is a competitive one and candidates are selected 'in rank order' so, each year, the pass mark changes depending on the ability of the cohort and the difficulty of the test. However, as a rough indication of the required standard, we would expect your daughter's primary school teacher to be saying that your daughter is performing at least at the 'expected standard' and, preferably, that she is 'exceeding year group expectations' if you are applying for a full fee place. If your daughter is applying for a bursary-assisted place or a scholarship, then she must be performing well above expected year group expectations if she has a realistic chance of success: there is a lot of competition for both Bursaries and Scholarships.

Girls applying for a bursary-assisted place (a means-tested scholarship) or a non-means- tested scholarship may be subject to further testing, either on the Entrance Testing Day or on subsequent testing days, depending on the demand for such places.

Girls whose performance in the Entrance Test suggests that they may be a suitable candidate for entry in Year 7 but about whom there are some academic reservations (for example a borderline score in one area) may also be subject to further testing.

Please note that, before the Entrance Testing Day, a written report is requested from your daughter's current school. For this reason, it is vital that parents who wish to make an application should first discuss this with their daughter's current Headteacher.

The Entrance Tests are designed to gauge girls' potential, rather than prior teaching. After the Entrance Testing Day, one of the following will take place:

- You will receive an invitation for your daughter to attend an interview at a given time and date- the overwhelming majority of girls applying for a full-fee place will be interviewed, alongside those girls applying for a bursary/ scholarship who have performed well in the Entrance Tests ; If you have indicated on the application form that you require financial support but your daughter's results indicate that you will not be offered such support, you will be contacted to find out if your acceptance of a place at the School is dependent on such support. If your daughter can only accept a place at School if she is in receipt of a Bursary, she will not be offered an interview;
- You will receive a letter saying that your daughter will not be offered a place.

Interviews will include questions on her interests and opinions and her attitudes towards as well as experience of a range of situations. If your daughter is applying for a bursary or a scholarship, she will be invited to a second interview which will test her reasoning further.

In preparation for the Interview, girls are advised to read from the Girls' Division Reading List, which can be found on the website; it is particularly expected that girls applying for a bursary or scholarship will have read from this list and the books chosen are designed to be available from local libraries to aid this process.

Following the interviews, and in agreement with the Manchester Consortium of Schools, offers of places are posted at the beginning of March. Any offer of a place is accepted by return of a completed Acceptance Form by the stipulated date and accompanied by an Acceptance Deposit, which is retained until your daughter leaves School. Please note that, by accepting a place, you are entering into a contract with Bolton School and, should you then decide that your daughter is not joining us in September, you will be liable for Fees in Lieu of Notice for the Autumn term.

Entrants into Years 8-11

Applications for year groups other than Year 7 or Sixth Form are considered at any time, with the intention of making a decision within a few days of the applicant sitting a test. The number of places available will vary according to student numbers at the time. Applicants for entry into these year groups will be asked to sit an online test and/ or tests in Maths and English. They will be interviewed by the Head of School and/ or the Head. A reference from the current Headteacher will be sought and we will also ask the applicant to provide us with her most recent school report. Please note that Bursaries and Scholarships are not normally available for entry into these years, although a Bursary may in very rare instances be awarded to a candidate who is of exceptional academic ability and whose family income meets the criteria (below), subject to the availability of funds and at the discretion of the Head.

Senior School Assessments (Sixth Form)

Assessments for 16+ take place in February or March prior to a September admission. Full-fee candidates will be invited to spend part of the day in school. Candidates who have indicated that they require financial support in the form of a Bursary will be asked to provide additional information prior to being invited for assessment in school.

All candidates are asked to bring their school reports (including GCSE predictions), record of achievement (if appropriate) and Mock Examination results when they attend the Sixth Form Entrance Day. Candidates considering Art or Technology must also bring in a portfolio. Offers will be based on an interview with a member of the School Management Team, an interview with at least two Heads of Department, the candidate's performance in an online test (designed to assess potential) and the school reference. Any offers made at this stage will be provisional until the GCSE results are known. The minimum requirement for entry from outside Bolton School into the Sixth Form is at least six passes at Grade 6 (or the equivalent) or above at GCSE or an equivalent qualification. External candidates must have at least a Grade 5 in English, Maths and a Science (including part of a Trilogy award). External candidates will normally be expected to have a grade 7-9 in a subject chosen for 'A' Level if they have taken that subject to GCSE.

Bursaries, Scholarships and Other Financial Support

Bursary support is normally available only to students applying to join the Girls' Division at 11+ and at Sixth Form. Bursaries are, in effect, means-tested Scholarships and are awarded after consideration of both family income and a student's academic merit, as seen in the Entrance Examination, interview and in any further testing which is carried out. Once the Head has made the decision on academic grounds that a girl deserves to be in receipt of a Bursary, then the Clerk and Treasurer's Office will assess her family's income and decide how much that Bursary should be worth. Bursaries are awarded up to 100%, the amount being dependent on family income. (Further information about approximate financial thresholds for bursary allocation can be obtained from the Clerk and Treasurer's Office).

Those pupils who join the school in Year 7 on bursarial support continue to receive this financial aid until the end of Year 11 so long as they remain eligible on financial grounds and whilst their conduct and attitude to learning are appropriate (see below). Those pupils who join the school in Year 12 on bursarial support continue to receive this financial aid until the end of Year 13, so long as they remain eligible on

financial grounds and whilst their conduct and attitude to learning are appropriate (see below). Bursary support may be available to internal candidates moving from Year 11 into the Sixth Form after consideration of family income and a student's academic merit and commitment, as demonstrated in the previous years in School. Internal candidates may be required to attend an Interview with the Head and/or other Senior Members of Staff prior to the awarding of such support. They will also be expected to fill in the Bursary Application Form.

It is expected that pupils who are in receipt of a Bursary will set a positive lead to other pupils in their year group and in the School, both through their academic example and their commitment to the curricular and extra-curricular life of the school. Bursarial grants may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Head or the Clerk & Treasurer, in the event of unsatisfactory work, conduct, failure to pay fees or supply accurate financial assessment information that is requested each year or failure to fulfil the terms of the Parent Contract. They may also be withdrawn if, in the view of the Head, a pupil is not playing a positive role in the life of School through engagement with her studies and in making an active contribution to the wider life of the community.

A Scholarship scheme for pupils entering the Senior School at 11+ has been in place since September 2015. Scholarships are aimed at those candidates who perform most successfully in the Entrance Examination and at Interview and who are able to demonstrate that they will make a significant contribution to the academic and wider life of the School. These Scholarships are not means-tested and are awarded at the discretion of the Head when all information from the Entrance procedure, including School references, has been considered. They are awarded until the end of Year 11 but may be removed if a girl fails to set a positive lead to other pupils in her year group, both through her academic example and commitment to the curricular and extra-curricular life of the school. Please note that Scholarship awards are honorific; unlike Bursaries, they are of nominal financial value.

Since September 2020, Sixth Form Scholarships are now also available. They may be re-awarded to existing Scholars, awarded to new Scholars from girls joining the Sixth Form from Year 11, or awarded to new Scholars joining the Sixth Form from other schools.

Please note that a Bursary and a Scholarship can no longer be held together: parents are required to decide whether they are applying for a means-tested Bursary or a non means-tested Scholarship for their daughter.

Temporary financial support may also be found for current students whose parents suffer hardship during the child's time at School. In such circumstances, families should contact the Clerk and Treasurer's office. In addition, the Head's Fund is used for existing pupils to ensure that all children can take part in curricular school visits and some extra-curricular activities, regardless of means.

Equal Opportunities

In its dealings with pupils, Bolton School Girls' Division will have regard only to the merits, abilities and potential of the individuals concerned and not to their colour, ethnic origin, age*, socio-economic background, disability**, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction.

* Subject to the School's regulations on pupil admission, which are reviewed from time to time to ensure they are appropriate for achieving the School's objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

** Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that children with a disability can participate fully.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the School will take appropriate measures when admitting pupils to ensure that those with protected characteristics, including disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are fairly treated.

The term 'girl' is used to describe any pupil whose biological sex and the gender they were assigned at birth is female. If a girl attending the Girls' Division decides to transition and makes the School aware of this, support and guidance will be provided and the School will act in consultation with the child and their parents, with the welfare of the child and the smooth continuance of their studies placed uppermost. (Please note there remains a requirement to register a transgender pupil under their birth sex (unless they have a gender recognition certificate)).

Access Arrangements

When requested by a parent any access arrangements will be discussed before any assessment including entrance examinations. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they can do without affecting the integrity of the assessment process. Access arrangements are the principal way in which the School complies with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the applicant;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the applicant and the other applicants.

The evidence of need required by the School will vary depending on the access arrangement(s) discussed. Each case will be considered on its own merit.

As an example of the evidence we will require to make reasonable adjustments whilst preserving the integrity of the assessment, a request for 25% extra time would only be granted where there is a current Local Authority Statement of Special Educational Needs; an Education, Health and Care Plan or primary school SEND support information. Information from the applicant's current educational setting will be required which details the applicant's normal way of working and the applicant's current educational setting may be consulted directly about those needs.

Arrangements for Misbehaviour and Exclusion

Full details of the rules and regulations in force in the Girls' Division Senior School are shared with pupils and parents in School and are contained in the Girls' Division Behaviour Management Policy. A copy of these may be obtained by parents prior to a child taking up a place in School or may be seen on the website.

Parents sign the 'Terms and Conditions' when they apply for a place at the School and this document contains specific contractual information about misbehaviour and exclusions. An up-to-date copy can be obtained from the Clerk and Treasurer's Office at any time.