

# QUEEN'S COLLEGE, LONDON



## **Admissions**

*POLICY DOCUMENT*

## **Admissions and Admissions Policy *Staff Handbook ref: 4***

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

When selecting new girls we endeavour to ensure that possible candidates and their parents have the opportunity at open days and at interview to discover whether the College meets their particular needs and priorities.

Until the opening of Queen's College Preparatory School in September 2002 we did not have our own feeder school. The autonomous nature of the Prep School means that we do not expect all its girls to proceed to the College, but when the numbers of the girls in the Prep School have built to its maximum capacity we would hope that up to a third of our entry would be internal candidates. Entry from the Prep School to the College is not automatic, girls taking the same examination as external candidates. We value the diversity of schools from which our girls join us and we seek to maintain the excellent relationships which we have built up with a wide variety of schools across the capital.

We aim to create a community of pupils who will flourish in an environment where the emphasis is on the development of the individual, self-reliance and independence of mind, and the imagination and courage to take risks.

We welcome:-

- girls who will benefit from stimulating teaching and enjoy the freedom to develop their own particular strengths, without feeling constrained to conform to a mould
- outstanding candidates who value academic excellence rather than competitive success
- less able candidates who, in a non-competitive atmosphere, will discover their own strengths and find the confidence to develop beyond their own expectations

We value in candidates an interest in the world around them, an ability to interact well with their peers and their teachers, and a wish to take their place in a dynamic, supportive and friendly community.

All candidates are given equal consideration regardless of race or creed. The proportion of our intake from the maintained sector reflects the balance of applicants between maintained and independent schools; in the selection procedure some allowance is made for the fact that some girls are specially prepared for the entrance examination and others are not. We emphasise that we are looking for signs of promise at least as much as achievement.

The nature of the College building presents some problems to any girl with a physical disability, but girls from such disabilities are not precluded from applying and being given equal consideration in the selection procedure. Girls with various medical conditions are well catered for. Girls with specific learning disabilities are accepted provided they appear able to hold their own academically; specialist help is offered after a further screening on entry.

## **PROCEDURE**

The Admissions Secretary is responsible for the application procedure, registering of applicants and arranging interviews.

## **ENTRANCE AT 11+**

Queen's College is a member of the North London Independent Girls' Schools' Consortium, which sets common papers, to be taken on the same date in January, offering candidates a wide choice without having to sit numerous examinations. Heads of the mathematics and English departments of the sixteen consortium schools meet each year to draw up the papers and to establish marking schemes. Lists of candidates and their marks are circulated between all the schools in the consortium. This examination is taken by around 1600 girls each year and the great majority of the candidates will therefore apply to at least four consortium schools, as well as to independent schools outside the consortium and schools in the maintained sector. Occasionally, after discussion between her parents and the Principal, and/or the Headmistress of Queen's College Preparatory School, a girl may apply only to Queen's College.

There is a three-form entry with a maximum of sixty places.

Selection is on the basis of an interview with the Principal, a reference from the candidate's school and examinations in Maths and English

All candidates are interviewed by the Principal, beginning in late October and finishing if possible before the written examination, so that each girl is interviewed without previous knowledge of her academic status. Each girl is asked to bring with her a piece of work, completed at school or at home, of which she is proud. The aim of each interview, however, is to move beyond the original piece of work into unfamiliar territory, sometimes using books or the internet, in order to discover the candidate's willingness and ability to learn. Parents are then invited to join their daughter and may ask any questions they like at this stage.

Considerable importance is attached to 'feeder' school reports but communication with the feeder school heads is often on a personal basis. A good relationship has been established with heads in the preparatory and primary schools that send us candidates and they are generally frank in their assessment of their candidates.

Candidates who have performed well in the written examination and who have indicated that they would like to be considered for a music award (equivalent to the cost of instrumental tuition on one instrument) are invited to Queen's to play their instrument(s) to a member of the music department. Here again, evidence of musical promise is given more consideration than the actual examinations which have been taken.

Similarly, candidates who show enthusiasm and promise in Art, and who have performed well in the written papers, are invited to a practical test for assessment for an Art scholarship, which successful candidates retain throughout their time at Queen's.

The results of the examination (offer, waiting list or rejection) are issued in late February/early March and families have a week in which to decide whether or not to accept the place offered. In this time there is much individual discussion with the families and schools of girls who hold a place on the waiting list.

## **ENTRANCE AT OTHER AGES**

The mobility of the population of central London means that vacancies may occur at other ages, and individual candidates are tested on application. A standardised paper is set in maths, and the college sets its own papers in English and French (or another MFL if this is more appropriate). Sympathetic consideration is always given to the circumstances of the candidate's previous education and, in particular, to the fact that English may not be her first language.

## **ENTRANCE AT 16+**

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Entry to the Senior College has been a long and successful tradition at Queen's and several girls always join us at this stage. Candidates are interviewed by the Head of the Senior College. Reports are requested from their current school with some likely indication of GCSE grades. Offers are usually made soon after interview and once references have been received, conditional on gaining a minimum of 50 points at GCSE (A\* - 8, A - 7 and so on), with A's or B's in the subjects to be studied at A Level, or related subjects, and at least grade C in English and Mathematics. As an alternative mode of entry, particularly for girls coming from overseas, a firm offer may be made on the basis of short tests done in each of the chosen subjects.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

### **Scholarships into the Senior College**

Scholarships are awarded for two years to girls continuing into or entering the Senior College. They are awarded on the basis of academic merit determined by the results of the Scholarship Examination and interview which take place annually in November. Although the titles of the named scholarships (Plumptre, Arnott, Merz, Florence, Katharine Mansfield), relate to donations and legacies, the funds are now provided from the college scholarship funds. The criteria on which the named, and thus larger, scholarships are offered are now obsolete, but it is usual to give the Merz scholarship to a girl who proposes to specialise in science

### **Scholarship examinations**

Senior Scholarship examinations are held in November for internal and external candidates. A number of awards (up to about 20% of the value of the tuition fees) are made each year (one is usually given for each of art and music). In recent years the majority of candidates have been awarded to girls moving into the Senior College from the Junior College at Queen's.

### **Bursaries**

Parents of girls in II Juniors, proposing to enter the Senior College, are also invited to apply for means tested bursaries, which may be given in addition to a scholarship. The Principal and Bursar review these applications, on behalf of the Council. Bursaries which were previously awarded under the aegis of the Old Queen's Society are now administered by the Council of the College.

Means-tested bursaries, up to a value of 100% remission, may also be given on entry to the College, or when financial constraints make the payment of fees difficult.

Younger sisters of girls of girls who had held a government assisted place, who qualify academically for admission, are automatically offered a means-tested bursary, but this does not carry the additional benefits (clothing, transport) of the AP scheme.

**This policy is reviewed each year by the Council of Queen's College at its AGM.**