

Admissions Policy and Entrance Procedures

This Policy applies to the whole school and is published to staff, pupils and parents

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1. General

Longridge Towers School is a co-educational independent school on the outskirts of Berwick upon Tweed, for pupils from ages 3 to 19. The School has over 300 pupils, 8 of whom are boarders. Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We very much hope that you and your family will visit Longridge. We hold two open events each year, which give a general introduction to the School. Details are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their children at other times. Please contact the School's Registrar, Mrs Burns on 01289 307584 or email mburns@lts.org.uk to arrange a visit.

The aims of this policy are to ensure compliance with the School's charitable purpose, to provide education of the highest possible quality to pupils from a wide spectrum of abilities, to identify and admit children who will benefit from the broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community.

2. The Entry Procedure

- 2.1. Longridge Towers School is not a selective school on an academic basis, although our entry procedure is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School. Academic ability is assessed to ensure the School can make a proper provision for children and is based upon an entry assessment, an interview at the School and references from the candidate's previous school.
- 2.2. Applicants for admission should normally register by 30th June of the year proceeding the desired year of admission. The School's Registration Form is available on the School's website and from the Registrar.
- 2.3. There are six main steps in the entry process to Longridge Towers School:
 1. Come and visit us.

The best way to get a feel for Longridge life is to see the School in action. Contact the Registrar to request a visit to the Junior Department or the Senior School - either on an individual basis or an Open Morning.
 2. Register.

After visiting, you can make your interest in the School clear by registering with us and by sending us a recent school report. Please complete our Registration Form and return it to the Registrar with a copy of your child's full birth certificate and a Registration Fee per pupil. If there is a waiting list, and no place becomes available, the Registration Fee will be refunded. It is non-refundable in all other cases.
 3. Arrange a Taster Day.

Pupils can arrange to spend a day, or two, in School to experience life in School for themselves. These visits are arranged with the Registrar in conjunction with the Head and/or the co-Head of the Junior Department.
 4. Sit the entrance assessments (and scholarship exams if applicable) and attend an interview
 - Assessment for Junior Department is based upon informal observation in School and reports from previous schools. All other candidates for entry sit papers in English and Mathematics which are designed for their age group.

- Candidates for entry at 16+ sit papers in the subjects they propose to study at AS or A2. Our offer of places into Year 12 is conditional upon attaining a minimum of six GCSE passes at Level 4 (or four National 5 passes at grade C or above), and an expectation that children will achieve Grade B or Level 5 in the subjects proposed for study at AS and A2.
- We interview all candidates as part of our assessment process for each age group (apart from Reception). Your child will also be invited to attend an interview with the Head, the Head of the Junior Department or a senior member of staff. In all cases this interview will explore the applicant's interests, attitude to school, personal qualities, and ability to contribute to the school community.
- Scholarship Examinations: Longridge Towers School offers a limited number of scholarships for excellence in academic subjects, Music, Art and Sport. These are available for entry in September for pupils entering each year from J5 (Year 5) upwards, with the exception of examination years (Years 11 and 13). Examinations are held at the end of November. Closing date for applications is two weeks before the examinations. Application forms are available from the start of October.

5. Receipt of Character Reference.

The Head of the applicant's current school will be asked to provide a safeguarding and written reference as to the applicant's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the School community, talents and interests, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, has an EHCP or a disability. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at the school (such as SATs) and predicted grades at GCSE. We make offers once entry requirements have been met and character references have been received from a candidate's current or previous School.

6. Accept your offer.

If you fulfil the entry requirements, we will make you an offer of a place. To confirm that Longridge is your first choice of school, you will be asked to complete an Acceptance Form and to pay a deposit. The acceptance deposits are as follows: £350 (Day) £500 (UK and EU Boarding) Full Terms Fees (Non-EU Boarding). This is payable within three weeks of a firm offer of a place. Where the acceptance deposit is not paid by the due date, the School reserves the right to allocate the place to another candidate.

- 2.4. Once you have accepted your offer, we will send you information on everything you need to know, from school uniform to induction dates.
- 2.5. The School holds their main scholarships and assessments for pupils entering Year 5 and above in November each year but also offer individual assessments throughout the year, subject to availability.

3. Equal Treatment

- 3.1. Longridge Towers School's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. The School's provision for bursaries is described below.
- 3.2. Longridge Towers School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

4. Special Needs

- 4.1. Longridge Towers School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.
- 4.2. Parents are required to provide with the Registration Form full details of all relevant information, including any reports (including any educational psychologist reports, medical reports or other relevant expert third party reports), materials or information about their child's needs, and this may include any final or draft EHC Plans. This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about any adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to meaningfully access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others.
- 4.3. Where parents of a prospective pupil feel their child requires adjustments, the School will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments proposed and whether they can reasonably be made for the child if they were to become a pupil at the School.
- 4.4. There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the School.
- 4.5. Sometimes, the situation of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the pupil starting at the School. The School requires parents to be pro-active in updating the School as to any significant changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a pupil's place at the School. However the School may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a pupil's circumstances change materially. It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.

5. The Assessment Process

- 5.1. The aim of the process is to identify potential. Longridge Towers School is looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The School has strong traditions in music, drama, art, community activities and sport. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.
 - Assessment for Junior Department is based upon informal observation in School and reports from previous schools. All other candidates for entry sit papers in English and Mathematics which are designed for their age group.

- Candidates for entry at 16+ sit papers in the subjects they propose to study at AS or A2. Our offer of places into Year 12 is conditional upon attaining a minimum of six GCSE passes at Level 4 (or four National 5 passes at grade C or above), and an expectation that children will achieve Grade B or Level 5 in the subjects proposed for study at AS and A2.
 - We interview all candidates as part of our assessment process for each age group (apart from Early Years). Your child will also be invited to attend an interview with the Head, the Head of the Junior Department or a senior member of staff. In all cases this interview will explore the applicant's interests, attitude to school, personal qualities, and ability to contribute to the school community.
- 5.2. No specific preparation for the entrance assessments is needed, all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.
- 5.3. We will offer places to candidates throughout the year. For year groups in which all places have been allocated waiting lists will be introduced, and prospective pupils will be informed at the point of acceptance of a Registration that there is a waiting list.

6. Special Circumstances

6.1. Candidate's Age:

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

6.2. Unforeseen Circumstances:

- 6.2.1. We recognise that an applicant's performance during our assessment procedure may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

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

- 6.3. In any of these cases, we 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) as we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

7. Sibling Policy

- 7.1. Most siblings join us at Longridge Towers School. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School judges that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment. Longridge Towers School has no sibling preference policy.

8. Scholarships

8.1. Longridge Towers School offers a limited number of scholarships for excellence in:

- Academic subjects
- Music
- Sport
- Art

A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions. All scholarships are made on the basis that a pupil's conduct and academic progress remains satisfactory.

8.2. Purpose of Scholarships:

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered an annual reduction in the fees at Longridge Towers School. Parents are asked to indicate on the Registration Form whether they wish to apply for a scholarship. Details of the arrangements will be sent to all who express an interest. We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply for one of the School's means-tested bursaries.

8.3. Academic Scholarships:

Candidates who apply for academic scholarships may be exempt from sitting the normal entrance examinations, if they have succeeded in the academic scholarship. Scholarship Awards are made for either two or three years. All candidates will be interviewed by the Head, and will take a verbal reasoning test in addition to sitting papers in English and Mathematics. For Year 12 entrants, candidates will sit three papers in their chosen subjects. Candidates choosing to be examined in Art will be required to make available a portfolio of their original work.

8.4. Music Scholarships:

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability. Candidates must obtain a specialist reference from their current Head of Music in addition to a reference from their current Head. They will be required to perform two short pieces and to complete a written paper, together with aural and practical tests. They will also be interviewed by the Director of Music, or a member of the Music Department. He/she will be expected to demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to music and will be expected to contribute to, and promote, the musical life of the School throughout their time at the School. Music Scholarships will be made for either two or three years. Awards can be re-applied for and it is hoped that they will be held consecutively. Music scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have passed the School's entrance examination.

8.5. Art Scholarships:

Candidates wishing to apply for the Art Scholarship will need to demonstrate passion and commitment to art, both in and out of school. Artists will be required to show exploration in art and a willingness to grow and improve their skills. The assessment for the scholarship will be in three parts, demonstrating a diverse approach to art. Scholarship Awards are made for either two or three years.

Candidates will be required to prepare for the following:

Portfolio: This is to be handed in to accompany the Scholarship application. Candidates should submit a portfolio to include a maximum of twenty items. These items can include work from school or produced elsewhere, showcasing the candidate's interests and experimentation. We accept any medium, for example drawings, photography, computer art, doodles and crafts.

Workshop: Candidates will be invited to attend an afternoon at Longridge Towers School in the art room, to produce a piece of work timed representation from direct observation within a set time frame. A range of materials will be available for use.

An informal interview: Candidates will also attend an informal interview with the Art Teacher (s) and candidates will be asked to explain some of their portfolio pieces, talking about their ideas and motivation behind the pieces. Candidates should be able to discuss their work with enthusiasm and be able to make age-appropriate connections to artists/movements.

8.6. Sports Scholarships:

Sports scholarships are awarded to outstanding, all-round sports pupils who have achieved a high level of competence in sport. He/she will be assessed and interviewed by the Head of PE and Sport. They will be expected to demonstrate qualities of leadership and team play of a very high order. Candidates will be required to provide a specialist reference from their current Director of Sport. They will be expected to make a contribution to the sporting life of the School throughout their time at the School. Sports Scholarships will also be made for either two or three years. Awards can be re-applied for and it is hoped that they will be held consecutively.

Sports scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have sat the School's entrance assessments.

9. Bursaries

9.1. Longridge Towers School's bursary programme is designed to make it possible for pupils whose parents cannot afford a full fee to take up a place at the School. The School offers annually a number of means-tested awards, called bursaries, to new entrants. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria established by the Awards Committee. Parents are required to provide full details of their financial circumstances and the School reserves the right to use an independent company, where appropriate, to assess the applications. The level of support varies according to individual financial circumstances.

9.2. Bursaries are usually offered for 12 months at time and the parents of those in receipt of bursaries are asked to complete a renewal application annually. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

9.3. A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

10. Financial Information

10.1. Any applicant for a place at the School, including those who apply for bursary support and overseas applicants, may at the discretion of the School be required to provide additional financial information and/or undergo checks to confirm that they are able to pay the School's fees (or any percentage of the fees still payable if a bursary or scholarship is granted).

11. Overseas Applicants

11.1. We welcome overseas pupils, who can study at Longridge Towers School as a boarder if they have a relative living in the UK or appoint a guardian. This is covered in more detail in the School's Terms and Conditions. However, parents of overseas pupils should appreciate that we do not always run a short-term study programme and the expectation is that overseas pupils will a complete course of study such as Years 9-11, or Years 12 -13 although shorter terms will be considered.

11.2. Fluency in English

- 11.2.1. In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Longridge Towers School, pupils must be fluent English speakers. Normally pupils should have been educated in the English medium for at least two years before coming to the School. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense with a qualified teacher at school.

12. Religious Beliefs

- 12.1. Longridge Towers School welcomes applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.
- 12.2. Although Longridge Towers School has a Christian ethos, the School does not discriminate for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it offers the opportunity for Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims or any other faiths to practise their own faiths.
- 12.3. However, parents should be aware that there are occasional compulsory Saturday morning events and that all pupils are expected to attend the annual end of term Founders' Day service. School assemblies take place several times a week and are conducted within a broadly Christian framework.

13. School's Terms and Conditions

- 13.1. Copies of the School's Terms and Conditions are on the School's website and within the Parent Contract and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

14. Complaints

- 14.1. The School's Complaints Procedure is on the School's website. It applies to current parents. The final decision about admission of any pupils lies with the Head, with these decisions being final and with no right to appeal.

15. Records and Review

- 15.1. Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the School's Privacy Notice and Retention Schedule for Documents.
- 15.2. The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be no more than six months following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain for longer might include: if parents express an interest in the candidate re-applying for any reason at a later date, or in the potential candidacy of another sibling; or to deal with any on-going matters or queries arising from the application.