



Admissions Policy

This policy applies to:

Whole College (including EYFS)

Person(s) responsible for the policy:

Head of College

Review dates:

Last review Sept 2025

Next review Sept 2026

Introduction

Ardingly College (the College) is an academic independent day and boarding school in West Sussex for pupils aged between 2 and 18 years.

Ardingly is a forward-thinking school in a traditional setting. Our mission is for every child to lead enjoyable and fulfilling lives; to make the most of their talents at school and be ready for the world beyond.

Our educational aims:

We have distilled each of these six World Ready components into one over-arching strategic aim, as we look towards 2030. We aim to:

- Build a culture of care that supports every child.
- Ensure every student reaches their full academic potential.
- Enable every child to find and develop a co-curricular passion.
- Equip students with the employability and enterprise skills to succeed in a rapidly changing modern workplace.
- Help students engage constructively to form their own perspectives on complex societal issues, while always respecting other viewpoints.
- Broaden students' horizons through meaningful connections locally and globally.
- Fulfil the College values of Engagement, Compassion, Resilience and Collaboration (Senior School), Adventurous, Generous, Curious and Ingenious (Prep School).

The admissions process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our academic curriculum and co-curricular education, and to make a positive contribution to the life of the College. As no school can support every child, entry and progression is by formal academic assessment in addition to an overall consideration of a child's suitability to study at the College.

The College comprises two schools:

- The Prep School is for pupils from Nursery to Year 6.
- The Senior School is for pupils from Year 7 to Year 13 (Upper Sixth).

The College also runs an on-site Nursery on a session basis.

The usual points of entry are into Nursery, Reception, Year 3, Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12, although candidates are welcomed and considered for other entry years subject to availability of places.

A - The Admissions Process

First Enquiry

Prospective parents are asked to contact the Admissions department and to register via the College website.

Details of this enquiry are kept on the Admissions database.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important and the College believes that visiting the school is invaluable. The below clearly outline the process.

1. Open Mornings

Prospective parents and students are encouraged to first attend an Open Morning as an initial way to get to know more about the College, view its facilities, meet the teachers and all see all relevant departments and meet a current Ardingly College student on a personalised tour. These are held for each relevant entry year point, Prep, 11+, 13+ and 16+. For other entry years we ask parents to attend the nearest age entry point open morning.

2. Registration

Having established a firm interest in admission to the College, all prospective parents and applicants are encouraged to register their interest. Registration is understood to be a serious expression of interest. It does not commit a parent to accepting a place, nor does it commit the College to offer one. Parents may register a child at any age.

To apply for a place, parents or guardians of applicants must complete a Registration Form and pay the appropriate Registration Fee (see current fees list).

3. Individual visits

Visits to the school are organised through the Admissions office for registered pupils.

In the Prep School, the Head of Prep will give the parents and prospective pupils a tour of the relevant school. In Senior School parents and prospective pupils will have tour with a member of staff and will meet either with the Head or a member of the SMT to discuss their interest in the school.

Individual visits are the start point for building the relationship between the prospective pupil and their parents with the school. We therefore require pupils to attend these visits with their parents and do not arrange parent-only visits unless in exceptional circumstances.

4. Assessment

The assessment process is specific to each entry year. Assessment may include aptitude tests for essential academic skills, interviews, in class peer assessment, school reports and references. All processes and timelines are outlined in detail on the website.

Assessment for Nursery and Early Years may include observation of the child and a variety of written and verbal assessments, depending on the age and understanding of the child and their proposed point of entry.

5. Offers

Before the due entry date, parents or guardians of pupils who have successfully completed our entrance assessment will be sent a letter from Admissions offering a place on behalf of the College.

Parents who are divorced or separated are requested to complete a 'family circumstances' form and if applicable, details of a court order regarding custody of the child.

When the number of offers for a particular year reaches capacity the year list will be closed, and a waiting list will be brought into operation. The waiting list will be reviewed after the closing day for acceptances.

All offers are made at the discretion of the Head of Prep School or the Head of College.

6. Acceptances

All parents accepting an offer of a place at the College must provide written acceptance of the College's standard terms and conditions. Copies of the College's Terms and Conditions are on the College website and will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process. We encourage parents to read these carefully.

A confirmation of entry deposit is required to secure the place (amount shown on current fees list) by the date set out in the offer letter. The deposit is held on account until the pupil completes their education at Ardingly College and is offset against the final invoice.

Confirmations received after the closing date cannot be guaranteed a place at the College.

Deposits are non-refundable.

7. Confirmation

Following receipt of the acceptance form and deposit, the Admissions department will write to the parents or guardian to confirm the applicant's place.

For children entering the Nursery, the College will contact parents or guardians to confirm the sessions available.

8. New Pupil information

Prior to joining the College in the Trinity Term, parents will receive detailed joining information via the 'Parent Portal'. Parents are asked to submit all forms and information prior to their child starting at the College.

B - The Assessment processes

The assessment processes aim to identify academic ability and potential, positive engagement in school life and with peers, and suitability to study at the College.

No specific preparation for the entrance tests is needed. All candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude and extra-curricular skills.

The dates for the assessment process for the current year are published on our website and the closing date for acceptances. The College will offer places to candidates from our waiting list after the closing date for acceptances.

All applicants are required to register prior to sitting the relevant assessment.

A confidential form of Admissions Record will be completed for each applicant.

Prep

Nursery to Year 2

Following Open Week attendance and registration, prospective pupils are invited for a familiarisation visit which may include assessments appropriate to their age. These visits may take place at any point in the term. Where possible, the Head of Prep School will meet all prospective parents and children during Open Week.

Children seeking admission to Nursery and Reception will be invited to join the relevant group for a short familiarisation visit appropriate to their age and development. For Nursery children this visit is normally held during the term prior to entry.

Children seeking admission to Years 1 and 2 will be invited to spend part of their familiarisation visit with their prospective class, during which formal and informal assessments will take place.

Please see the Appendices to this policy which set out details of our Early Years Admissions Policy (Appendix 1) and Early Years Funding Entitlement (Appendix 2).

Years 3 – 6

Following Open Week attendance and registration, prospective parents are invited to arrange for their child to come in for a taster day.

Senior

Year 7 (11+)

Following a visit to an Open Morning, registration and an individual interview and personalised visit to the school, candidates applying for a 11+ place are invited to attend an assessment day at the College. Assessments include English, Mathematics, and cognitive ability testing. The day also involves problem solving and team building activities. The 11+ assessment normally takes place in November prior to the September of entry (in Year 6).

Year 9 (13+)

Following a visit to an Open Morning, registration and an individual interview and visit to the school, candidates applying from UK prep schools are required to sit the ISEB Common Pre-test. Candidates sit these online tests at their prep school between October and December, and their marks are made available to the College.

Selected candidates post ISEB are then invited to an assessment day held in the February of Year 6. Candidates applying from outside the UK or from the state sector are invited to sit the College's assessment papers in Maths, English, and Verbal Reasoning. These can be sat in their native country under examination conditions as seen fit and approved by the College.

In all cases, the College requires copies of the applicant's last two sets of reports, plus a confidential reference from the applicant's current school.

Offers are made in the March of Year 6 with acceptances requested by mid-June of Year 6. Once offers have been made, Common Entrance marks are used for setting purposes only and are not required as a condition of entry.

Year 10 or Year 11

External candidates are invited to sit the College's assessment papers in Maths, English and Science. Copies of school reports and school references are also required. Candidates will also be required to attend a live or MS TEAMS interview with the Head of the Middle school or another senior member of academic staff. Offers are made ongoing on an individual basis.

Sixth Form (16+)

External candidates applying for Sixth Form entry for IB, AL or BTEC are invited to attend an Open Morning, register, sit a CAT test, and assessment papers in Maths, English, and where relevant a science paper. An assessment day includes an interview with the Head of Sixth Form or another senior member of academic staff in November for entry the following September. Copies of school reports and school references are also required. Offers are made in mid- December.

Please note to enrol on our A Level or IB Diploma courses, students are required to achieved minimum GCSE grade requirements in the subjects they wish to study at A Level or Diploma level. The list of required grades can be requested from the academic office and is reviewed annually.

Candidates not sitting GCSEs will be assessed separately via the College's 16+ entrance tests.

Candidates who are unable to make the November assessment day will be required to follow the same process and sit the same assessments virtually in an approved and agreed location and attend a live MS TEAMS interview with the Head of Sixth Form or another senior member of academic staff. This is on an exceptional case basis.

The College retains discretion over students' subject choices in the Sixth Form and provides guidelines on aptitudes for studying specific subjects (outlined in the A Level and IB subject course booklets) in order that all students can make good progress in their Sixth Form courses and complete them successfully.

Overseas applicants

The College welcomes overseas pupils as boarders.

Overseas applicants may sit our entrance assessment either at their current school (if appropriate), the offices of a lawyer or at the British Council Offices. Entry is subject to successful assessments, copies of school reports, school references and an interview with a senior member of academic staff.

It is a condition of entry that all overseas boarders have a guardian living in the UK who can act as a point of contact and assistance in an emergency. More details are contained in the School's Terms and Conditions and our guardianship policy.

Parents of overseas applicants should appreciate that the College does not run a short-term study programme and expects overseas pupils to finish a complete course of study such as Years 9-11. For applicants who are interested in the Year 11, Pre-Sixth Form course, at the end of the course we would expect successful pupils to move through to the Year 12 IB course.

Fluency in English

In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of the College, pupils must be fluent English speakers. The College's expectations of fluency are determined by the year of entry and age of the applicant. English fluency is assessed as part of the admissions assessment process.

Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense.

Sibling policy

We have several siblings at the College. However, please note admission is not automatic, and there may be occasions where the College may not offer a place based on assessment of a student's academic profile and needs for support.

C- Equal opportunities

Religious beliefs

The College welcomes applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith, and does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief. Attendance at timetabled Chapel services is expected and compulsory unless exemption has been requested by parents on the grounds of religious belief and approved by the Head of the relevant school.

Equal treatment

The College's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with a diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Generous bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the College's admission criteria to attend. If you wish to apply for a means-tested bursary, further information is available once a scholarship has been awarded, via registration@ardingly.com

The College is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background.

Special Educational needs

Ardingly College welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities that are offered and can flourish in the caring environment of the school. Treating every child as an individual is important to us and we welcome students with a specific learning difficulty and/or disability, provided that our Learning Support Department can provide them with the support they require. At Ardingly College, we believe that all students should be treated equally, irrespective of age, race, gender, religion or disability. Our Learning Support Policy has been drawn up in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act and we are committed to making all reasonable adjustments to ensure that every student is able to take a full part in the academic and activities programmes available. We do not, however, have the facilities or resources to offer highly specialised support and intensive treatment.

We require parents of students with a specific learning difficulty and/or disability to discuss their children's requirements with the school before they sit our entrance exam so that we can make suitable provision for them. Parents should provide a copy of a specialist report from, e.g. an educational psychologist, specialist assessor or a medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or word processing, so that we can make sure that the appropriate arrangements can be made. Parents must declare any specific learning difficulty and/or disability clearly on the registration form.

Each student with a specific learning difficulty and/or disability requires special consideration and treatment. We discuss thoroughly with parents (and their medical advisers if appropriate) what adjustments can reasonably be made for their children.

Parents can obtain copies of the College's Learning support and disability policy on our new website.

Additional Learning support

As far as possible, the College seeks to identify special educational needs at the point of admission and will communicate to parents during the admissions process the additional academic support, and the

associated costs required. Requirements for additional tuition in Learning Support or general support to study and/or English as a Foreign Language may be stipulated as a condition of admission.

D- Internal Progression

The College aims for pupils joining the school in any year group to be able to continue and complete their education at the College. For this purpose, children already enrolled are not expected to prepare for or sit additional entrance assessments as they progress through the year groups and between the Prep and Senior schools.

Prep School pupils progress through the year groups without formal progression requirements. All pupils are expected to maintain satisfactory learning progress and standards of engagement and behaviour. Academic or pastoral concerns will be flagged with parents and support provided within reasonable resources. Beyond Year 2, 1:1 in-class support is not usually deemed to be a reasonable expectation to enable pupils to meet progressions standards, and so is not provided for this purpose.

11+ Senior School places for children already enrolled in the Ardingly Prep School are confirmed in Year 5. To ensure that all children have made suitable progress for continued study in the Senior School, pupils are tracked through regular informal classroom assessments and are not required to sit additional Senior School entrance assessments.

Children joining the College in Year 6 are offered a confirmed Senior School place with their place in the Prep School.

Progression from the Fifth Form to the Sixth Form is subject to achievement of minimum published GCSE grade requirements per subject and satisfactory reports and school behaviour record during the GCSE course.

BTEC courses are understood to require less content learning for examination, with a greater emphasis on modular and project assessment. Hence students wishing to study BTECs at Ardingly College are not required to achieve a set GCSE grade requirement but should have achieved a grade 5 in both Maths and English Language.

Internal progression is understood to be a sensitive process, and all reasonable steps are taken to make an objective assessment of each child's progress and suitability for progression to the next stage. Based on these assessments and advice from teachers, decisions on progression are at the discretion of the Head of College.

Section 3 – Scholarships and Bursaries

Scholarships

The College offers Scholarships at 11+,13+,16+ for excellence in academic subjects, Music, Sport, Art, Dance (not 16+) and Drama. Details of Scholarships and relevant dates are published on the College website under the Admissions tab. These are open to internal and external prospective students.

Please note that scholarship award holders are expected to meet certain expectations for each award to support them to engage fully, develop their potential and contribute to positively to the College. These expectations are shared with award holders and parents so that there is transparency on expectations. Scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the College's Terms and Conditions.

Purpose of Scholarships

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a percentage reduction in the fees throughout his/her time at the College. In addition, music scholars are offered free tuition in musical instrument[s]. Parents are asked to indicate on the Registration Form when they are applying for entry whether they wish to apply for a scholarship.

We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will struggle to afford tuition fees to apply (at the time of registration of their child) for a means-tested bursary. Deadlines for bursary applications are published and must be met for a bursary application to be processed.

Scholarships can only be awarded to pupils who have passed the College's entrance examination and been offered a place. Scholarships are held for a 5-year duration, provided his/her conduct and performance is satisfactory.

11+ and 13+ scholarships are valid up to the completion of GCSEs. The Head of Middle School conducts a review of Year 11 scholarship holders in January and parents are subsequently advised of the continuation or otherwise of their child's award.

Academic Scholarships

Candidates who apply for academic scholarships sit a separate entrance exam and are invited for both academic assessments and an interview with either the Head of the College or the Deputy Academic Head.

Music Scholarships

Candidates must obtain a specialist reference from their current Head of Music in addition to a reference from their current Head of School. They will be required to audition and have an interview with the Ardingly College Director of Music, or a member of the music department as part of the scholarship process. Music scholars are expected to demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to music and to contribute to the musical life of the College consistently, including attendance at school music events at the request of the Director of Music.

Sports Scholarships

Sports scholarships are awarded to outstanding sportsmen/women who have achieved a high level of competence in one or more sports. Candidates will be assessed and interviewed by the Director of Sport and will be expected to demonstrate qualities of leadership and team play and sports ability of

a very high order. Candidates will be required to provide a specialist reference from their current Sports Head at their School. Sports scholars are expected to contribute to the sporting life of the College consistently and to a good standard, including availability at key school sports events at the request of Heads of Sport.

Bursaries

The College's bursary programme is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet College's entry criteria to take up a place here. All bursaries are means- tested and both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of financial support varies according to parental need and the College's available funds. Before the offer of a bursary is confirmed, a visit to the family at their home may be required.

The family is required to provide accurate information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the College. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.

Bursaries are only offered to families who are resident in the UK.

The College's bursary policy can be obtained from the Registrar/Finance Manager.

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