



Admissions Policy

This policy applies to:

Whole College (including EYFS)

Person(s) responsible for the policy:

Head of College

Review dates:

Last review June 2026

Next review June 2027

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 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 for Open Events 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 and Open Weeks

Prospective parents and students are encouraged to first attend an Open Morning (for the Senior School) or an Open Week (for the Prep School) as the best way to learn more about the school, view its facilities, meet a wide range of pupils and staff, and to see the College in action on a normal, busy school day. With dates throughout the year, all Senior School Open Events include a personalised pupil-led tour, informative talks, and the chance to meet academic and admissions staff, as well as our Head of College. Individual visits are also available to the Senior School in term time; please contact the admissions team for availability.

Visitors to the Prep Open Week will receive a personalised tour from the Head, or another senior member of staff. Individual tours of the Prep School are also available throughout the term; prospective parents should contact the Prep School's Admissions & Marketing Officer to book a tour.

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. 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.

4. 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. Offers will be shared with all individuals with parental responsibility for a child, each of whom will be required to formally accept the place, unless specific circumstances indicate otherwise. As such, we may request further information at this stage to clarify parental responsibility and family circumstances. 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.

5. Acceptances

All individuals with parental responsibility are required to provide written acceptance of the College's standard terms and conditions, unless family circumstances mean this is only required from one parent/guardian. 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.

6. 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.

7. New Pupil information

Prior to joining the College parents will receive detailed joining information via the 'Parent Portal'. Parents are required 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 Senior School's assessment processes 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.

Information about each pupil's assessments will be stored securely and confidentially in the Admissions database.

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. Depending on the year group of entry, children may be invited for two taster days. During the taster day (s) the child will spend time with their current year group as well as undertaking some formal and informal assessments.

Senior

Year 7 (11+)

Following registration, candidates applying for an 11+ place are invited to attend an Engagement Day at the College. This experience day enables pupils to gain a sense of life at the College and allows us to

get to know them. On the day, candidates will complete assessments in English and Mathematics, as well as participating in a *Getting to Know You* session with a member of the academic leadership team. The 11+ assessment usually takes place in November prior to the September of entry (in Year 6).

In all cases, candidates' suitability for the College is also assessed using their two most recent school reports and any other relevant educational documentation that must be submitted during registration (such as EP reports). A confidential reference will also be requested from each candidate's current school.

Year 9 (13+)

Following registration, candidates are required to sit the ISEB Common Pre-test and their marks be made available to the College. Post ISEB, selected candidates will be invited to an Engagement Day held in the February of Year 6. This experience day enables pupils to gain a sense of life at the College and allows us to get to know them. On the day, candidates will complete assessments in English and Mathematics, as well as participating in a *Getting to Know You* session with a member of the academic leadership team.

Late applicants, post Year 6, are welcome to apply for places where there is availability. Late applicants will complete the same assessments as applicants in the normal 13+ admissions cycle, with the exception of applicants in Year 8, who will complete cognitive ability tests instead of the ISEB Pre-Test. There is no Engagement Day option for late applicants.

In all cases, candidates' suitability for the College is also assessed using their two most recent school reports and any other relevant educational documentation that must be submitted during registration (such as EP reports). A confidential reference will also be requested from each candidate's current school.

Offers are made before the Easter holidays of Year 6 with acceptances requested by the end of the academic year in Year 6.

Once offers have been made, Common Entrance results (or equivalent end of Year 8 assessments) are used for setting purposes only and are not required as a condition of entry.

Sixth Form (16+)

Following registration, candidates applying for a 16+ place are invited to attend an Assessment Day at the College. On the Assessment Day candidates will complete cognitive ability tests, and depending upon their course of study, may also sit assessments in Maths and/or English. All pupils will also have a short interview with a senior member of academic staff.

In all cases, candidates' suitability for the College is also assessed using their two most recent school reports and any other relevant educational documentation that must be submitted during registration (such as EP reports). A confidential reference will also be requested from each candidate's current school.

Offers are made before the Christmas holidays of Year 11, with acceptances requested by mid or end of January, depending upon whether applications are for boarding or day places respectively.

Please note where candidates are completing GCSEs, offers will be made subject to them achieving minimum GCSE grade requirements in the subjects they wish to study at A Level or IB Diploma. The list of required grades can be requested from the Admissions team, is also published on our website and is reviewed annually.

Offers for candidates not sitting GCSEs will be unconditional.

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 complete our entrance assessments, as described in the above sections, either at their current school (if appropriate), the offices of a lawyer or at the British Council Offices. Candidates are alternatively welcome to join the relevant 11+ or 13+ Engagement or 16+ Assessment Day, in person at the College. All assessments conducted remotely will include a virtual 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.

For overseas students who need visa sponsorship to study in the UK, please see the separate policy on the Recruitment, Admission and Monitoring of Sponsored Visa Students, which can be requested from our international admissions team.

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 many sets of siblings who are students at the College and we will always try to accommodate applications from siblings of children who are already enrolled as pupils. However, please note admission for siblings 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 future success in a changing world. .

In order to enable talented children who, for financial reasons, would otherwise not be able to benefit from an Ardingly education, we are able to offer a limited number of means-tested bursaries to pupils who have secured a scholarship or equivalent award. Scholarships and awards may be offered at key transition points for excellence in academic studies, music, art, drama, dance and sport. Applications for means-tested bursaries must be made in parallel to a scholarship application.

Additionally, a limited number of transformational bursaries are available via the Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation.

More information about both scholarships and bursaries can be found on the College website.

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 at the College, who will 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 assessments so that we can make suitable provision for them. Parents should provide a copy of any relevant specialist reports at the point of registration e.g. reports from an educational psychologist, specialist assessor or a medical report. Where the reports support a request for specific access arrangements, for example for extra time or typing, 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 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, 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.

E – Scholarships and Bursaries

Scholarships

The College offers Senior School 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 section. These are open for application to both internal and external prospective students.

The College also offers 11+ Family of Schools Scholarships to students at Great Walstead School who will move to Ardingly College in Year 9. These Family of Schools awards are available in academic subjects, Music and Sport and are held in Years 7 and 8 at Great Walstead, then from Years 9 -11 at the College.

The Prep School offers a small number of academic and sport scholarships in Year 3, which are held until the end of Year 6.

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 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.

Scholarships will only be awarded to pupils who have passed the College's entrance assessments and have been offered or accepted a place. Scholarships are tenable for the duration of the pupil's current stage of education: to the end of Year 6 for 7+ awards, Year 11 for 11+ and 13+ awards, and Year 13 for 16+ awards. Where a pupil progresses to the next stage of at Ardingly, awards will be reviewed for continuation however renewal is not guaranteed.

Bursaries

The College's Bursary Programme enables a small number of talented pupils who, for financial reasons, would not otherwise be able to benefit from an Ardingly education, to attend the College. Parents who will struggle to afford tuition fees should apply for a bursary in parallel to their child's scholarship application, so that the outcome of both is known in the same timeframe. Bursary applications outside of this time frame can only be considered if there are unallocated bursary funds remaining.

Detailed information about bursaries is available in the Bursary Policy, which is published on the website.

APPENDIX 1

Early Years Admissions and Session Allocation Policy, September 2026

Session times:

- 8.00 am – 12.45 pm Morning (including lunch)
- 8.00 am - 4.30 pm Nursery Normal Day (including lunch)
- 8.00 am – 6.00 pm Nursery Long Day (including lunch and tea)
- EYFE Sessions Afternoon
1pm - 4:30 pm

Requirements of our Nursery:

*(the **Morning** session counts as **one session** whilst the **Day** Session counts as **two sessions**)*

Pre-Nursery (*Ducklings*): children attend at least four sessions*

Nursery (*Lambs*): children attend at least four sessions*

Pre-School (*Piglets*): children attend at least four sessions*

**Children accessing EYFE funding only are recommended but not required to attend a minimum number of sessions.*

Session Allocation and Priority in the Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception:

One of the main aims of the Nursery and Pre-School is to prepare children for their later learning at Ardingly College, and so we give priority for places (and sessions) to children who are intending to complete their education through the School. Priority for allocating sessions within the Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Pre-School will go to those children we know are going on to our Reception, and who have indicated this on their Session Form. These children will gain a foundation in our methods and routines to take with them as they progress through the Pre-Prep. However, although we cannot always guarantee to give everyone precisely what they want in the way of sessions, we try to meet parents' needs as best we can.

Children wishing to join at Reception, will be offered two Familiarisation and Assessment sessions in our 'Piglets' class during the year prior to their start date. One session will be for a morning only and the second will be for a whole day. Subject to these sessions and a reference from their current nursery setting, a formal offer of a place in Reception will be made.

Children joining during the academic year will need to express their preference with regards to session choices in Pre-Nursery, Nursery or Pre-School when they come for their Familiarisation and Assessment sessions. If these sessions are available, they will be held for a limited time. These

sessions will then be confirmed on completion of the Admissions process. Should the required sessions not be available alternatives will be offered.

Usual number of places in each session:

To maintain staffing levels and ensure the quality of our provision is appropriate, the following limits to numbers of children per daily session apply:

- In **Pre-Nursery (Ducklings;** the academic year in which your child turns 2 and **Lambs;** the academic year in which your child turns 3) we are limited to **36 children** per session
- In **Piglets, 'Pre-School'** (the academic year in which your child turns 4) we are limited to **22 children** per session

As we have limited places in the two Nursery classes (Ducklings and Lambs) and the Pre-School class (Piglets), we will allocate places in priority order as detailed below, but choice of sessions cannot be guaranteed:

Priority Places:

- Those who book a place for 50 weeks a year and 4+ full days per week
- Those who have older siblings in Ardingly College (Senior, Prep or Nursery)
- Those who are going through to Reception and require 4+ full days per week

Booking of sessions run on a "*first-come-first-served*" basis and is completed for the whole of the next Academic Year (September to August) in March/April. Places will be allocated and confirmed in April.

On occasions it is possible to book extra one-off sessions, if there are spaces available. These additional sessions will then be added to your end-of-term account. However, it is not possible to swap pre-booked sessions.

Please note: Once you have requested a session for the term and this has been confirmed by email from nurserysessionbookings@ardingly.com that session will be reserved solely for your child for the rest of the academic year. Should you need to change the booked session, you will be required to give, or pay, a full term's notice.

If you wish to change sessions or withdraw your child from Pre-Nursery, Nursery or moving up to Reception a notice period of one full term is required, in writing.

Sessions Booking Process

Session forms will be sent out in March both to current parents and to those parents who have accepted places for their child. These forms will be sent from nurserysessionbookings@ardingly.com and all correspondence relating to session forms must be communicated via this email.

If places cannot be offered for the parents preferred sessions, then other sessions may be offered. Parents will have 3 working days to confirm the sessions offered to them by email to nurserysessionbookings@ardingly.com, after this the sessions may be offered to others. The email from parents confirming their acceptance for the sessions offered will be used for billing purposes.

Any changes to booked sessions will require a terms notice. In the unlikely event that we need to change your child's booked sessions a terms notice will be provided, and other sessions may be

offered.

Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE)

From September 2025 Ardingly College will be a provider of Free Early Years Education for three-year-old children. These children are eligible to receive a maximum of 570 hours Free Early Years Education per year (15 hours per week for 38 weeks). At Ardingly College we are not able to offer the full 570 hours per year due to our school term dates and session timings. Our EYFE sessions are held in the afternoons only from 1pm until 4.30pm. To claim this free childcare, a West Sussex County Council (WSCC) 'Parent Declaration Form' must be completed and returned to our Nursery Manager, at least six weeks before the beginning of the term following your child's third birthday.

Please note, the school reserves the right to withdraw from the scheme at any time and will endeavour to give one term's notice of our intention.

APPENDIX 2

Early Years Funded Entitlement, September 2025

Our Early Years Funded Entitlement (EYFE) pattern of delivery is 1pm – 4.30pm Monday to Friday. A maximum of 3.5 hours per day can therefore be used towards the total 15 EYFE hours per week. EYFE hours are offered for 34 weeks of the year (during term time only). We reserve the right to make recommendations regarding sessions or to prioritise families looking for longer attendance on our waiting list.

The notice period for amending and transferring EYFE hours is four weeks.

Deposits for children accessing EYFE only are refundable shortly after headcount (usually three weeks after the beginning of the joining term).

Non-refundable registration fees are not applicable to children accessing EYFE only. We do not charge extra for consumable items including food. Please note that we do not provide nappies, nappy cream or suncream but ask that all parents bring their own. Please notify us if your child has any dietary or allergy needs; we will provide suitable alternatives for them.

We use any available funding from the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and the Disability Access Fund (DAF) to support the individual needs of eligible children and ensure they can fully access and benefit from our Early Years provision. The EYPP is used to enhance the learning experiences of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, for example by providing targeted support, additional resources, or staff training. The DAF is used to improve access and make necessary adjustments for children with disabilities, such as purchasing specialist equipment or making environmental adaptations. To claim these funds, we require parents to provide specific information, including their National Insurance number or proof of certain benefits (for EYPP), and confirmation of Disability Living Allowance entitlement (for DAF). Decisions about how best to use the funding are made in collaboration with parents, key workers, and our Head of Learning Enhancement, ensuring the support is tailored to the child's needs and has the greatest possible impact on their development and wellbeing.