



WELLINGTON COLLEGE

Document Control

Title of Policy:	Admissions Process and Policy
Policy/Procedure Owner	Ed Venables
Date Last Reviewed:	September 2020
Policy Ratified by Governors:	

Wellington College Admissions Process and Policy

I. Introduction

Wellington College (**Wellington** or the **College** or **we** or **us**) is a co-educational independent school for around 1080 pupils aged 13-18. Most pupils (80%) board with the remainder being day-pupils. Annually, 190-200 pupils join Wellington at 13+ (Year 9), with a handful of 14+ (Year 10) places also available most years. Furthermore, around 50 pupils join the Sixth Form each year at 16+. *Ad hoc* places may be available at other times, but this is rare.

2. Visiting Wellington College

Most families will wish to visit the College before registering their child formally for entry and we consider this to be an invaluable part of the process. There are three ways of doing this (when virus protocols allow us to welcome visitors) :

- A. **Visitors Days.** These are our main open mornings and take place on Saturdays every term. In total, we run seven Visitors Days per year with a specific 16+ Visitors Day in September. Around 125 families attend each Visitors Day, and a typical programme includes a presentation by the Master with members of the senior team speaking and a Q&A session with a pupil panel, a tour of the school with a current pupil, and lunch in the dining-hall. Places on Visitors Days can be booked via our website.
- B. **Master's Receptions.** These are smaller, more intimate and informal open mornings, often used by parents for a second visit. Two Master's Receptions are held every term with around 30 families in attendance. The Master, James Dahl, introduces his vision for Wellington and then an informal Q&A is followed by a tour of the campus. Senior staff and HMs are on hand to help answer questions. Places on Master's Receptions can be reserved by contacting the Admissions Office.
- C. **Small group Visits.** On many days throughout the academic year, we can accommodate much smaller group visits from prospective families. These are primarily designed for overseas families, and occasionally UK-based families, who are unable to attend a Visitors' Day or Master's Reception. These visits can be arranged by contacting the Admissions Office and usually consist of a meeting with the Director of Admissions, Deputy Director of Admissions or Registrar, as well as a tour of the school with a Lower Sixth College Ambassador.

Demand for Wellington is currently very strong so parents should contact the College at the earliest possible opportunity to arrange a visit to ensure that a convenient time can be arranged.

3. Registering for Wellington

All prospective pupils interested in Wellington must be formally registered. A non-refundable fee of £300 is payable upon registration. We may be able to waive this fee for those families seeking substantial bursarial assistance and ask that contact is made with the Admissions Office for us to process this.

The deadline for registering for 13+ entry is 30th June of Year 5, i.e. three years before the intended year of entry. All 13+ registration is completed online in the Admissions section of the Wellington College website.

It is possible for us to assess late 13+ candidates but families should be aware that there will be limited choice of boarding Houses if their child is successful in winning a place following a late application.

Families interested in 14+ entry should contact the Admissions Office to check for availability of places.

Prospective pupils applying for 16+ entry will also find an online registration form on the College's website. A four-month registration window runs from 1st June until 30th September a year before the intended year of entry.

4. The Admissions Process

For 13+ entry, the process is split into two separate stages.

Stage 1: All registered candidates sit the ISEB Common Pre-test - an age-standardised and adaptive series of tests in English, Maths, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning. References are also requested from current schools. This takes place in October/November of Year 6.

Stage 2: Long-listed candidates (selected on performance in the ISEB test and reference) are invited to an Assessment Day in January/February of Year 6. Assessment Days aim to demonstrate an academic Wellington day and consist of a series of 'lessons', some collaborative, problem-solving activities and an interview with a senior member of staff.

Conditional offers are made in March of Year 6. These offers are conditional solely on candidates receiving a positive reference of performance and behaviour from their current school at the end of Year 8.

Late Assessment: For those families who, for one reason or another, miss the original deadline for entry, late assessment options in Year 7 and Year 8 are also available. Those candidates applying in Year 7 (having registered by June 30th of Year 6) follow the same two stage process detailed above. If any candidates apply after June of Year 6 for 13+ entry, they may be invited to participate in an admissions process determined by the College at the time usually consisting of just one stage.

The June 30th registration deadlines for 13+ entry are required to allow us to register the candidates with ISEB for the Common Pre-test. We may accept some late entries where candidates will not sit the Common Pre-test but requests for this must come from the Headteacher of the candidate's current school and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

For 14+ entry, candidates take written papers in English and Maths, and possibly some baseline tests to assess cognitive ability across different areas. Candidates are interviewed by the Director or Deputy Director of Admissions and a reference is requested from the current school. Offers will not be made until this process has been followed and so it is imperative that candidates inform their current school that they are sitting entry examinations at Wellington.

Offers are made on an *ad hoc* basis.

For 16+ entry, the process is split into two separate stages.

Stage 1: All candidates upload their latest set of school reports and a personal statement as part of the online registration process. This takes place during the registration window which runs from 1st June until 30th September a year before the intended year of entry (Year 10 in the UK).

Stage 2: Long-listed candidates (selected on the strength of their school reports and personal statement) are invited to an Assessment Day in November of Year 11. Assessment Days consist of: academic papers in three subjects which candidates intend to take in the Sixth Form; an interview with a senior member of staff; a group lesson and a Harkness discussion session. References are also requested from the current school of all long-listed candidates.

Offers are made on 1st December of Year 11. These offers are unconditional, but candidates must be aware that sixth form subject selection in many subjects will be dependent on certain grades at GCSE (or equivalent qualification) having been achieved. Specific requirements are explained in the Subject Choices booklet available in the Academic curriculum section of the College website.

5. Selection Criteria

Wellington is an academic school with high academic standards, but the College also believes passionately in all-round education; selection for entry is therefore not simply based on academic considerations (although there is a requirement for all individuals attending the College to meet a minimum academic threshold, as determined by the College from time to time). Potential for growth in the five areas of the Wellington Identity (in **bold** below) therefore form a large part of the Admissions team's decisions:

- A. **Intellectual, inspired and independent** learners. Successful candidates will have met the College's minimum academic entry requirements. At 13+, this is measured by the ISEB pre-test and references from the current school. For 16+ entry, successful candidates should secure predominately grades 9 and 8 grades in their GCSE or iGCSE subjects, with at least an 8 in the subjects they wish to continue in the Sixth Form, especially in Maths, any Science or any Modern Language.
- B. Successful candidates will also have displayed, during the admissions process, a desire to contribute broadly across the co-curriculum during their time at the College, so they will develop themselves fully as an **individual**.
- C. Successful candidates will also have displayed, during the admissions process, the right character and personality for life in a very busy boarding school environment. This includes traits such as tolerance, **independence, inclusivity**, grit and resilience.
- D. At the heart of everything at Wellington are our **College Values** (Kindness, Courage, Respect, Integrity and Responsibility) and we pay close attention to these during our assessment process.

6. Waiting List

At all points of entry Wellington operates a Waiting List and candidates who do not receive an immediate offer will frequently be placed on our Waiting List. We only include candidates on the Waiting List if we realistically think there is a chance of a place emerging for them. Not everyone on the Waiting List will eventually be offered a place but we will do our best to be as open and transparent as possible about the chance of a place being offered at any time. We do not rank the Waiting List and will not give an absolute position on the Waiting List. We do this because we aim to maintain a diversity of talents, personalities and backgrounds at Wellington and will always seek to fill any place that becomes available with the most suitable candidate for that place. Places off the Waiting List are offered at the sole discretion of the Director of Admissions and the Master.

7. Sibling Policy

Many siblings join us at Wellington. Acceptance of a sibling is not automatic as we believe strongly that Wellington will not necessarily be the right school for every child and that a sibling may thrive better in a different academic environment. However, at 13+, if the younger sibling of a pupil currently at the College therefore, in the College's opinion, meets the selection criteria described in the previous section, then he or she will be prioritised for a place over a candidate who does not have a sibling currently at the College.

The College does not operate a sibling preference policy for 14+ or 16+ candidates.

8. Applications from members of the Wellington Community

The College appreciates that other members of the broader Wellington Community, and not just siblings, may wish to gain a place at the College. Applications from families with strong connections to Wellington College (e.g. Old Wellingtonian parents or grandparents, ex-members of staff) are therefore warmly encouraged. As with siblings, community connections do not guarantee the offer of a place, but they do form part of the decision-making process and, at 13+, will be prioritised over a candidate who does not have a similar connection to the College although would not be prioritised over a sibling. The College does not prefer those with a community connection for 14+ or 16+ candidates.

9. Equal Opportunity

In line with Wellington's commitment to inclusivity and diversity, the College's admissions procedures have been designed to ensure equal opportunities for admission to the College subject to the candidate meeting the academic standard required. Wellington will comply with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and codes of practice as issued by the Department of Education or other educational authority or regulatory body from time to time.

Specific Needs

Wellington welcomes pupils with disabilities, special educational needs and health and medical conditions provided that we can offer them appropriate support as they require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them, if relevant by making reasonable adjustments (if required).

We strongly advise parents of candidates with specific needs to discuss their child's requirements with the College at the time of registering their child (or, if such need arises at a later date, immediately upon becoming aware of such need) so that we can make any relevant reasonable adjustments (as required by law). If one is available, parents should provide the College with a copy of any medical or educational psychologist's reports.

A place will only be offered to a candidate with specific needs if we are confident that Wellington is an environment in which they can truly flourish and be happy from every perspective, able to successfully access the academic curriculum and partake in our extensive enrichment programme, including sports and other College events, in a fulfilling capacity. In addition, where additional or specific requirements are considered necessary and the candidate is offered a place at Wellington, the College will discuss with the potential pupil and their parents any steps and/or offer additional support that may be necessary to assist with the success of the candidate as required.

Religious beliefs

Although Wellington is a Church of England foundation, the College does not select for entry based on religious belief and it offers the opportunity for pupils to practise their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that attendance at timetabled lessons and sport on a Saturday is compulsory for all, that attendance at sports fixtures on a Saturday afternoon is compulsory for those selected to represent Wellington and that any boarders who have left the College on Saturday night are required to return before 8pm on a Sunday. There are also a number of closed weekends each year when all pupils or pupils from a certain year group are required to remain at College for the whole weekend.

Fluency in English

In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of Wellington, pupils must be fluent English speakers from the moment they enter the College. The standard required will be determined by the College. At 13+ entry, this is measured both via the English and Verbal Reasoning sections of the ISEB Common Pre-Test and also performance on the assessment day. Those applying for a place at 16+ must be predicted a level 6 grade or above at English language GCSE or a recognised equivalent exam or demonstrate fluency via the UKiset. Further details on UKiset can be obtained from the Admissions Office.

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

Right to study in the UK

No pupil will be admitted to Wellington unless they can demonstrate their right to study in the UK. The College is a sponsor for Tier IV Visas and can provide guidance on the process although will pass on any costs incurred in the process (including those of our representative) to the parents.

10. Overseas Applicants

Approximately 15% of boarders at Wellington (roughly 12% of the overall pupil body) reside overseas. Our overseas boarders reside in around 40 different countries and one-third come from ex-pat families. We welcome overseas boarders provided that the parents are able to appoint a guardian in accordance with our Guardianship Policy. Guardians are required to be over the age of 25, must be fluent in English and must live within a two-hour journey of College. Parents of overseas pupils should appreciate that we do not run a short-term study programme and expect overseas pupils to finish a complete course of study such as Years 9 – 11 or Years 12 & 13.

11. Bursaries

Through our Bursary Funds and commercial income, we offer a limited number of means-tested bursaries each year to candidates of exceptional abilities who need some fee assistance to attend Wellington. Awards can range from 10% to 100% of fees. Eligibility for an award is generally assessed at the time of an offer being made so that a family can accept the offer knowing that the required level of fee assistance is available. A bursary award made to a child does not mean that a sibling will also later be offered a bursary. When all other things are equal and two candidates of similar merit are being considered, a sibling of a child already admitted and/or a child of an OW will be preferred for financial support, but there should be no general expectation of such support as the main principle will be to ration bursaries by merit, making awards until the year's allocation of funds is fully utilised. An average year might see 20 bursary pupils be admitted with an average of award of c. 50% remission. Any family wishing to make a bursary application will be invited to apply as part of the broader admissions process and more details are available on the College's website. Bursary awards are not linked to scholarships.

12. Full Bursaries

The Prince Albert Foundation is a programme aimed at widening opportunities to families who would not normally consider or be able to access independent education, and for whom we can offer a genuine shift in opportunity. We have up to 40 fully funded free or heavily subsidised spaces at College at any one time and aim to grow this number through fundraising and commercial income from our international schools. Children who are eligible for Prince Albert Foundation awards are those whose family's financial or other circumstances mean that their need is greater than national average (i.e. will be on national average income or below and/or have some other qualifying need for boarding). The candidate must meet our minimum criteria for entrance, and we will assess potential as well as current achievement. The Prince Albert Foundation is not a programme designed to recruit pupils with specific talents. It is very unlikely that a pupil who already attends an outstanding or selective school or one already in the independent school system would be eligible. We will work actively with youth organisations, educational charities and through our own outreach activities to find suitable families and candidates. Direct approaches are also considered, and initial enquiries should be made to the Admissions office. Each sibling will be assessed to ensure that the College is the right place for them as well as to ensure they meet our minimum criteria.

13. Foundationers

In accordance with the College's original foundation, one aim of which was to provide education for the children of deceased military officers, the College continues to educate, free of charge, the children of deceased servicemen or servicewomen of Her Majesty's Armed Forces irrespective of rank and the orphan children of persons who, in the sole opinion of Governors, died in acts of selfless bravery. Initial enquiries should be addressed to The Bursar, Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7PU or via email to ljt@wellingtoncollege.org.uk.

14. Scholarships and Exhibitions

Scholarship awards reward excellence and celebrate outstanding potential and application across a number of different areas. Scholarships are available at both 13+ and 16+.

At 13+ Academic and Music Scholarships and Exhibitions are offered *before* entry to the College via an examination and interview process that takes place during Year 8. Candidates must be under the age of fourteen on 1st September of their intended year of entry. However, the College's seven highest academic accolades – our named Scholarships – are awarded at the end of the Third Form (Year 9).

Scholarships for Sport, Art, Dance, and Drama are also offered but not until *after* joining Wellington College, at the end of Third Form. Candidates who are likely to be interested in these Scholarships are, however, invited to attend an Inspire Day in the Lent term of Year 8. Inspire Days allow students to show their talent and work to date to our teachers and get a feel for the extension programme that will be available to them in Third Form and beyond.

Wellington is not able to award Scholarships at 14+ entry.

At 16+ Scholarships are offered in all the areas mentioned above.

Scholarship awards in themselves do **not** provide reduction in school fees. Music Scholarships afford parents free tuition in two instruments and free composition and Alexander Technique lessons.

More detail about the Scholarship and Inspire Day process is available on our website.

15. Transfers from Day to Boarding

Applications to Wellington are made either for a Boarding place or for a Day place. We consider these applications as separate pools of applicants. It is therefore not possible once a Day place has been offered to switch to a Boarding place. If a request is made to the Admissions Office in writing, we will retain the Day place and enter the candidate onto our Waiting List for a Boarding place. There will be no specific priority on the Waiting List for a boarding place but, as with all Waiting List candidates, we will offer as much guidance regarding likelihood of a place emerging as possible.

The Governors have stipulated that any Boarding places that open up if current pupils leave will be offered by the Admissions Office initially to new, external candidates. This means that it must be assumed that a transfer from Day to Boarding, once a pupil has started at Wellington, will not be possible. We will, of course, keep a note of all requests for transfers (if submitted in writing to the Admissions Office) and will do our best to facilitate them if, for whatever reason, suitable external candidates cannot be found.

16. The College's Terms and Conditions

A copy of Wellington's Terms and Conditions is available upon request from the Admissions Office.

17. Complaints

Wellington's Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

18. Data Protection

Personal data provided to Wellington during the Admissions process will be processed and retained with due regard to applicable data protection legislation and the College's Privacy Notice.

Ed Venables
Director of Admissions
October 2019

Updated September 2020 - EBRV