

# Wellington College

## Academic Year 2023 - 2024



### Document Control

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Policy should be reviewed annually and review details included in italics at the end of the policy together with the initials of who reviewed the policy. Any amendment mid-year also to be tracked at the bottom of the policy.

All policies to use the font Gill Sans MT font size 11.

# 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 1100 pupils aged 13-18. Most pupils (80%) board with the remainder being day-pupils. Annually, roughly 200 pupils join Wellington at 13+ (Year 9), with approximately fifteen 14+ (Year 10) places also available. Furthermore, around 65 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 four ways of doing this, all of which can be booked via our website:

- A. **Visitors Days.** These are our main open mornings and take place on Saturdays every term. In total, we run five Visitors Days per year. Around 125 families attend each Visitors Day, and a typical programme includes a presentation by the Master and a Q&A session with a pupil panel, a tour of the school with a current pupil, and the opportunity to meet senior staff over a coffee at the end.
- B. **Master's Receptions.** These are a smaller, more intimate and informal version of our Visitors Days, often used by parents for a second visit. Two Master's Receptions are held every term with around 30 families in attendance. Following a tour of the campus the Master, James Dahl, introduces his vision for Wellington followed by an informal Q&A. Senior staff and HMs are on hand to help answer questions.
- C. **College Tour Days.** We run two College Tour Days a year with one taking place in each of the Michaelmas and Summer terms. As with Visitors Days, they take place on a Saturday morning. Families are taken on a tour of the school by a current pupil and then have an opportunity to meet with the Master and senior members of staff.
- D. **College Ambassador Tours.** On most Mondays and Fridays throughout the academic year we host more informal, student led, small group tours of the College after which members of the Admissions Team will be able to answer any questions you have.

Demand for Wellington is currently very strong so parents should arrange a visit via the *Visiting Wellington* page on our website at the earliest possible opportunity 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 are able to waive this fee for those families who may be entitled to substantial fee assistance (greater than 90%) and this route is explained clearly on the registration pages of the website.

The deadline for registering for 13+ entry (Year 9) is 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

Families interested in 14+ entry (Year 10) should register their child via the College website. Registration will open from June in the year that their child is in Year 8 until the end of October of Year 9.

Prospective pupils applying for 16+ entry (Year 12) will also find an online registration form on the College's website. A four-month registration window runs from June in the year that their child is in Year 10 until mid-September of Year 11.

Any children registered after the dates set out above for 13+ may be considered in accordance with the relevant Late Assessment process set out below. Whilst early registration does not increase a child's chances of getting a place at Wellington, most places are available through the standard route rather than the late assessment process. Late registration is likely to impact on House placement with limited, if any, by choice available.

#### 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. This takes place in October/November of Year 6. References are also requested from current schools in early October to be received by mid-November. Parents are responsible for registering their children for the ISEB Pre-Test and all necessary information for this will be communicated after the closing date of registration.

**Stage 2:** Long-listed candidates (selected on performance in the ISEB test and reference) are invited to an assessment morning or afternoon in January/February of Year 6. Our aim is to demonstrate an academic Wellington day which consists of a series of 'lessons' and some collaborative, problem-solving activities. An interview with a senior member of pastoral staff will take place virtually on a different day. Those candidates (mainly overseas) unable to travel to Wellington will be offered an additional virtual interview that will be more academic in nature.

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. A deposit is requested (to be paid by October of Year 7) for the place to be secured.

**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 30th June of Year 6) follow the same two stage process detailed above with assessment days taking place in March of Year 7. If any candidates apply after June of Year 7 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 30th June registration deadlines for 13+ entry are required to allow us time to request references from schools and to explain to parents how 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**, the process is split into three stages.

**Stage 1:** At registration, pupils are asked to upload their latest school report and a brief personal statement.

**Stage 2:** In mid-November, pupils will be asked to complete a series of short exams (ATOM tests) in Maths, Reading Comprehension, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning. These can be completed online at home.

**Stage 3:** Long-listed candidates will be invited to a virtual pastoral interview and will attend an assessment afternoon in January at Wellington which will consist of a series of 'lessons' and some collaborative, problem-solving activities. (overseas candidates will be able to have a second virtual, academically focused interview). In early December, we will write to current schools to request a reference and so it will be imperative that candidates inform their current school that they are sitting entry examinations at Wellington. Offers will be made after this process and then on an ad hoc basis if additional places come up.

**For 16+ entry,** the process is split into several 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 1<sup>st</sup> June until mid-September a year before the intended year of entry (Year 10 - Year 11 in the UK).

**Stage 2:** All candidates are invited to sit exams in a certain timeframe but will be completed electronically with no need to attend Wellington College.

**Stage 3:** Long-listed candidates (selected on the strength of their school reports, the personal statement and exam results) are invited to a virtual pastoral interview and attend an assessment day at Wellington in November of Year 11 (overseas candidates will be able to have a second virtual, academically focused interview). The day at Wellington will consist of an academic lesson, a group discussion, other activities and the opportunity to spend time informally with current pupils. References are also requested from the current school of all long-listed candidates at the end of October.

Offers are made on 1<sup>st</sup> December of Year 11. For candidates taking GCSE/iGCSE examinations in due course, our expectation is that pupils achieve an average of at least a 7. Those wishing to pursue Maths, Sciences or Modern/Classical Languages for A Level or at Higher Level for the IB Diploma must achieve an 8 or 9 (or an A\*) in those subjects; otherwise, we require students to achieve a 7 (or A grade) or above in the subjects they will study in the Sixth Form. These expectations apply to current Wellingtonians and new pupils joining the College for Sixth Form alike.

## 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 many areas therefore forms 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 and will have demonstrated an ability to participate fully in the academic life of the college.
- B. The College has strong traditions in music, drama, art, sport, debating, community activities, CCF and academic enrichment in addition to the core academic curriculum. Successful candidates will also have displayed, during the admissions process, a desire to contribute in a range of interests during their time at the College.

- 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 independence, responsibility, self-motivation, inclusivity and resilience, all of which are critical for pupils to be able to thrive at the College.
- D. At the heart of everything at Wellington are our **College Values** (Kindness, Courage, Respect, Integrity and Responsibility) and we pay close attention to the demonstration of these during our assessment process as well as looking to ensure that prospective pupils and their families will support the College in developing these in our community.

## 6. Waiting List

At all points of entry Wellington operates a Waiting List and a number of candidates who do not receive an immediate offer will be placed on our Waiting List. We only include candidates on the Waiting List if we realistically think there is some 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 (and places in the term immediately prior to entry) are offered at the sole discretion of the Director of Admissions and the Master. Active consideration of the Waiting List continues until the start of the term before they would be due to start at the College (when fees in lieu of notice become due at most schools). If a family would like their child to remain in consideration during the Summer Term or after their child would have been due to start with us, had they been offered a place, they should let the Admissions Team know.

A child on the Waiting List will only be offered a place for the point of entry for which they initially applied. If a family wishes their child to be considered for a subsequent point of entry, they must apply in the usual way in accordance with the processes set out in this policy.

## 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, 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**

Wellington's aim is to encourage 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. Generous fee assistance is offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the College's admission criteria to attend the College. The College's provision for fee assistance is set out below.

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 complies with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and any guidance issued by the Department of Education or other educational authority or regulatory body from time to time. An Equal Opportunities for Students and an Additional Health Needs policy are available on the policy section of our website.

We require 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). This is so that the College can consider and, if necessary, consult with parents and the prospective pupil about the adjustments that can reasonably be made to ensure that prospective pupils can access the Admissions Day and that those offered places enjoy the events offered between them receiving the offer of a place and joining the College and thrive from their first day at the College as well as ensuring their health and safety and that of others.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

The College welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs provided that we can make reasonable adjustments to offer them appropriate support, cater for any additional needs and accommodate them within the College site. Parents are required to provide a copy of any medical or educational psychologist's reports in respect of their child at the time of registering their child or, if after such date but before their child starts at the College, immediately upon receipt.

We aim to ensure that all of our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn. 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 co-curricular and other College events, in a fulfilling capacity. If additional or specific requirements are considered necessary, the College will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers and social workers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he or she is offered a place at Wellington, to ensure that they will not be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

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 broad range of education offered across the academic and co-curricular sphere in a boarding school community, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we reserve the right to withdraw a child's offer of a place at Wellington.

### **Religious beliefs**

Although Wellington is a Church of England foundation, the College does not select for entry based on religious belief but welcomes prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith and offers those of other faiths the opportunity to practise their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that attendance at timetabled lessons and activities on a Friday and 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 assessment. Further details on UKiset can be obtained from the Admissions Office.

Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parents' 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 Child Student and Student 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. Fee Assistance**

Through our Bursary Funds and commercial income, we offer a limited amount of means-tested fee assistance 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. An award of fee assistance made to a child does not mean that a sibling will also later be offered fee assistance. 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 or someone

with a Community connection will be preferred for financial support, but there should be no general expectation of such support as the main principle will be to ration fee assistance by merit, making awards until the year's allocation of funds is fully utilised. An average year might see 20 pupils be admitted with fee assistance with an average of award of c. 50% remission. Any family wishing to make an application for fee assistance will be invited to apply as part of the broader admissions process and more details are available on the College's website. Fee assistance awards are not linked to scholarships.

Families who are seeking (and awarded) financial assistance of less than 90% of the fees will be required to pay a registration fee and the full deposit and administration fee (if they are offered a place) for awards of less than 75% discount in fees. Where a place together with financial assistance of 75% or more is offered, families will pay 25% of the deposit and administration fee (over time if necessary) if accepting a place. Payment of the deposit and administration fee is not required for fee assistance greater than 90%.

## **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 scholarships 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 or to the Head of the Prince Albert Foundation. 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 COO, Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7PU or via email to [admissions@wellingtoncollege.org.uk](mailto:admissions@wellingtoncollege.org.uk) with a request for the email to be forwarded to the COO.

## **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.

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. Dance and Drama Scholarships offer free tuition and further information is available on our website. More detail about the Scholarship process is available on our website.

### **15. Transfers following an offer being made**

Applications to Wellington are made either for a Boarding place or for a Day place. We consider these applications as separate pools of applicants and offer places accordingly. Therefore, once an offer has been made, it is not usually possible to switch from Day to Boarding or vice versa.

If a family does wish to switch, they must make a written request to the Admissions Office who will consider whether to place the family on the Waiting List for a Day or Boarding place (as relevant). Pupils who have already been offered a place are not given priority over other candidates already on the Waiting List or candidates going through the Late Assessment process. As with all Waiting List candidates, the Admissions Office will offer as much guidance regarding likelihood of a place emerging as possible. We appreciate that some family's circumstances may change unexpectedly between applying for a place at Wellington and their child starting with us (for example, moving overseas or the death of a parent). We will still not be able to prioritise those families over other families on the Waiting List but, if a place does become available) we will be more sympathetic to this type of situation than those families who have changed their mind as to the type of education they want for their child or feel their child is suited to.

The House system – and the sanctity of that system - is at the heart of Wellington College. We know that which House they are in is very important to both our prospective pupils and their parents. When allocating Houses, a number of factors are considered to make the Houses as balanced and well-rounded as possible. Once a pupil has been allocated a House, it is not usually possible to switch Houses. Whilst a written request for change of House can be made to the Admissions Office, if spaces subsequently become available in other suitable Houses, when allocating that space, priority will be given to those on the Waiting List or Late Assessment candidates with the space only being offered to a pupil who has already been allocated a House if, in the sole discretion of the Director of Admissions, that is considered to be the best way of achieving the aim of balanced, well-rounded Houses.

Once a pupil has started at the College, any requests for a change of House should be made to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and will only be possible in exceptional circumstances of pastoral need and if there is a space in a suitable House. Existing pupils will not be considered for places which become available at 14+ or 16+ as those places are reserved for external candidates applying for those places through the process outlined above.

## **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.

**Phil Mann**  
**Director of Admissions**  
**December 2023**