



ALPHA PREPARATORY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy relates to whole school procedures, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Aim

Alpha Preparatory School is a successful and thriving co-educational selective school, and it is our intention to organise our admissions process in a way that endeavours to be fair to all applicants. We do not discriminate on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexuality or background. In 2020, Alpha celebrated its 125th anniversary and, given the age of our main building, we are unable to cater for severely disabled pupils, but we do welcome children with a range of disabilities or learning needs for whom we can make reasonable adjustments. The admission process is designed for us to ensure that a child has the potential to thrive and be successful in our environment.

Entry Procedure for Nursery

Children are accepted into Alphabets, our school nursery, in the term in which they will be three. Parents are encouraged to make an initial enquiry and, if a place is available, they are sent a Registration Form. The Registration Form is also available to download from our website. To register their child, parents must return the Registration Form, along with a non-refundable registration fee of £90 (inclusive of VAT) and a copy of their birth certificate. Our Nursery Lead Practitioner, Mrs Ryan, will then contact parents to arrange a morning for them to visit and spend time in the nursery. Should the session be successful, a nursery place will be offered, which can be secured by the return of a deposit of £300. A home visit will be arranged, where possible, by the Head of Nursery before the child starts at Alphabets.

Entry Procedure for Reception

We encourage parents to visit our school website to get a feel for the school and what we offer. Parents should then make an initial enquiry and, if requested, they are sent a Registration Form. The Registration Form can also be downloaded from the school website.

Parents are welcome to make a visit to the school by contacting the school office to arrange an appointment. On arrival at Alpha, parents will tour the school, usually with our Head Boy and/or Head Girl. Parents will also have the opportunity to meet with the Headmaster or member of the Senior Leadership Team to ask any further questions they may have.

To register their child, parents must complete the Registration Form and pay the non-refundable registration fee of £90 (inclusive of VAT). This guarantees that their child will be on the list for assessment and possible entry to the school in the September after the child turns four years of age.

Assessments are held in the second half of the Michaelmas (Autumn) Term, usually in mid-November, preceding entry to the school. Therefore, children who wish to join in Reception 2025 will be assessed in November 2024. Children are invited to attend in small groups, and we sometimes group children from each nursery together where possible.

Assessments are overseen by the Headmaster and carried out by our Nursery Lead Practitioner, Head of EYFS, the school's Deputy Head and/or other experienced staff. We assess the children's visual memory, auditory memory, language development, pencil control and social skills. We acknowledge that most children who attend assessment will not yet have turned four and, therefore, a careful note is made of their age on the day of the test.

While the assessment is taking place, parents are given a tour of the school by our Year 6 pupils, who will provide the parents with a view of the school from a pupil's point of view. We like prospective parents to see the school on a normal working day and we always try to keep as close to our usual timetable as possible. After the tour, on a formal assessment day, parents have an opportunity to speak with the Headmaster over coffee in the library where he will explain our admissions procedure to the parents and answer any questions they may have. In this way, we hope to give prospective parents all the information they need to make an informed decision when results are issued.

On rare occasions, we may contact the feeder nursery if the child was upset or unwell on the morning of the assessment, or if we suspect that the child has under-performed for some other reason.

Siblings of current pupils are given priority. We aim to offer siblings a place at Alpha unless there is a particular reason why we should not do so. Alpha is a family school and we feel this is in keeping with our traditions. The sibling, however, is still required to sit for assessment with us.

Pupils who attend our Alphabets Nursery are given priority when it comes to offering places for Reception, but they do not receive a guaranteed place. All children in our nursery who are interested in a place in the Prep School are required to sit our assessment for equal opportunities. This assessment will take place during a nursery school day.

The outcome of all assessments are emailed to parents on the same day, usually the day after the final assessment group, and parents normally have 7-14 days to make their decision. We will not extend the given deadline under any circumstances, as we feel we have a responsibility to the parents of those children who may be on the waiting list.

Parents secure a place for their child by paying a deposit of £1,000. The deposit is held on account and returned shortly after the child leaves the school at the end of Year 6.

Admission During an Academic Year

If an application is received during the course of the academic year, and there is a space in the particular year group, then parents will be asked to complete a school Registration Form and, usually, parents are asked to supply a copy of their child's latest report from their current school. A date will be set for parents to tour the school, meet with the Headmaster and for their child to spend some time with his/her prospective class. During their time at the school,

the child will also undertake some core academic assessments and have opportunities to play and socially interact with the rest of the class.

A decision as to whether to offer a place will be made after a detailed discussion with all relevant staff members who were involved in the process.

Cancellation/ Fees in Lieu of Notice

Parents are bound by the school's terms and conditions at the time that the deposit to secure a place is paid. Should a child be removed from the school without a full term's written notice, the parents will be liable to pay a full term's fees. If a parent decides to cancel their child's place before entry to Alpha, written notice must be received before the first day of the expected start term and parents will be liable to pay the full term's fees.

Should you have any queries regarding our admissions procedure, please do not hesitate to contact the school on sec@alpha.harrow.sch.uk or by calling 020 8427 1471.