



SHS

Admissions and Inclusion Policy

2023 - 2024

ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSION POLICY

Ownership & Consultation	
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Introduction:

Sophia High School has a strong expectation that its students will be successful in their personal learning goals, and that each child's goals will be unique to their strengths and abilities. This policy aims to identify and admit children who will benefit from an online academic education, participate fully in our interactive live lessons with their fellow students and teachers, play a full role in the life of the school and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community.

Sophia High School provides full time online education provision to students who are enrolled on our admissions register. We have applied for the UK Department for Education Online Education Accreditation Scheme and have met all the criteria for the scheme. We are awaiting a Quality Advisory Evaluation from Ofsted, which we expect in September 2023. Our Online School membership request has been accepted by the Council of International Schools and we completed our Membership Accreditation evaluation in November 2021. This inspection report is currently on our website.

Aims:

The school will aim to provide an inclusive education in full accordance with the UK Department for Education (DFE's) accreditation and quality assurance for online education providers in the UK. All prospective students undertake online standardised baseline assessments in English and Maths, which are primarily designed to reveal facility in English and correct level of instruction. Children with English as a Second Language may also be asked to take part in the Cambridge English Placement Test in order to identify language proficiency and plan next steps in support.

Students also take part in a 1-1 virtual lesson with our team of teachers to ensure it will also help the school identify applicants who have additional learning needs and to ensure that students are able to access and utilise the full range of interactive learning tools and opportunities provided by our online learning programme.

Sophia High School believes that:

- Every child has a right to access quality education.
- A diverse learning community is enhanced by the special gifts and talents of every member. We embrace the differences and challenges that each child brings.
- We value the uniqueness of each child and offer places to a student cohort with a wide range of abilities who will thrive within the online programmes offered and benefit from contributions to our interactive live lessons environment.
- There should be equal opportunity for every student to participate in all activities.
- Through close collaboration with parents, we meet the needs of those students and families who are seeking quality education in accordance with the DFE requirements for Online Education providers.
- A high expectation of academic, personal, cultural and social achievement is conveyed to all through our Values and Aims, which drive the learning at Sophia High School.

Equal Treatment:

We welcome children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our school community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all our pupils to attend all assemblies and team meetings, and to take part in the full range of curricular subjects on offer. All pupils attend live lessons with their cameras and audio on and participate in interactive learning both visually and through audio input to lessons with their teachers and peers.

Not all children will be suitable for the online programmes offered at Sophia High School. Some may fall outside of the boundaries of assistance which can be offered with a defined level of additional support.

Disability and Special Educational Needs:

Sophia High School currently has limited facilities for the disabled but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under equality legislation in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities or special educational needs for which, with reasonable adjustments, we can cater for adequately, in view of the responsibilities and promises made to all students in the cohort. We are not able to use the chat function as a sole means of communication in lessons due to our stringent safeguarding policies and requirement to ensure that all students make progress as part of our assessment of learning.

We need to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the online education provided. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational need should provide us with full details prior to the admissions procedure at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place.

Sophia High School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with a particular need, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to ensure that the application procedure is accessible for the child and that Sophia High School can cater adequately for the child's needs should an offer of a place be made.

Sophia High School will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. For example, we may be able to provide an examination paper in large font for a visually impaired child or use the Google Transcribe feature for children who have EAL.

Similarly, if special education needs or a disability become apparent after admission, we will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at Sophia High School.

Application:

When you have read the Prospectus and the Standard Terms and Conditions, please complete the Student Application Form in order to register your interest in a place for your child at Sophia High School. The Student Application Form must be signed by a parent and then returned to the School, together with an application fee of £50 GBP. Students entering Year 10 and Year 11 take part in the CAT4 assessments and so pay an application fee of £100 per student.

This registration fee is required in order for your child to be assessed for entrance at Sophia High School. Registration Fees are non-refundable.

Assessment:

All children who apply for a place at Sophia High School are invited to take part in an assessment with members of the Senior Leadership Team; this involves an assessment of where the child is at on the learning continuum and discussions to explore the child's interests, attitude to school, ability to thrive in an online education environment, personal qualities, ability to contribute to the school community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the school. The School will also require your child's last school report, and a reference form may be sent to your child's existing school requesting further information on your child's academic and social progress.

At Sophia High School we recognise that the way children learn is highly individual, and it is important that all teachers use a range of strategies and differentiation to allow each child to successfully access the online programmes at Sophia High School. In light of this, the Admissions Team uses a range of activities and facilitates different opportunities for children to allow them to best highlight their strengths during the assessment process.

Lower Primary children in Reception and Key Stage 1 (Y1 – Y2) children need a chance to explore their environment and become engaged at their own pace during the Admissions process. The Assessment process for LKS1 children allows them to participate in developmentally appropriate activities online which encourage them to move, participate, speak (if comfortable doing so), listen, collaborate, build, manipulate, and use the live online learning environment technology. The small group setting encourages children to quickly develop a reassuring bond with peers and teacher, and also highlights their developing social skills.

Key Stage 2 and 3 (Y3 – Y9) children also need time to relax in the new setting and so the Admissions process for these children should also encourage their participation in a range of activities at their own pace. By using a range of strategies such as discussions, online tests, creative activities and use of live online learning environments, children are engaged in different ways to allow their confidence to develop and their strengths to show. Opportunities to encourage individual creativity are facilitated, alongside collaborative activities where cooperation and teamwork are required with the teacher leading the session.

Key Stage 4 students (Y10 - Y11) take part in the GL CAT4 standardised assessments as these provide a predictor to success at IGCSE levels and form the basis of discussion with parents in line with individual learning pathways for students.

Standardised Tests are administered online to generate an internationally recognised level of attainment based on age-appropriate expectations. By accessing and analysing the results of over 15,000+ students worldwide, assessment standardised age scores give a baseline from which the Sophia High School can build on to continue to develop the individual strengths of each child when they enter school. This test will be taken by all students on entry, and also periodically throughout their time at Sophia High School to track attainment and progress.

English as an Additional Language support will be necessary for many children who enter Sophia High School. Children who do not have English as a first language may excel in other curriculum areas, and it is important that a sensitive and varied Admissions is in place to encourage children to show their strengths. Through the use of small group activities when working on a 1-1 lesson with our teachers, children with EAL needs will be identified and a baseline level established.

Before accepting a registration fee, the school reserves the right to administer an English language test to ensure that children either a) have the necessary English skills to cope with the curriculum offered, or b) can show the potential to improve their English language skills over a single term, with EAL support, (paid extra) so that they cope independently. Children, and their parents, will be required to sign up to the school terms and conditions to secure an offer of a place.

The School must be satisfied that students who apply for the school will benefit from the online learning environment and interactive digital learning tools used via Google Classroom and be able to access the full breadth of the curriculum in order for a place to be offered. Sophia High School does not have a learning support department to support wide degrees of special needs, however we do have a variety of students with additional learning support needs who benefit greatly from our digital provision.

Due to the unique nature of our blended learning approach, the School must also be confident that a positive working relationship can be fostered with parents / guardians, in the best interest of students, in order for an offer of a place to be made and acceptance acknowledged.

Priority:

(Subject to English test and agreeing the student and parent pledges)

1. Those already at the School
2. Those who apply before the end of January of the previous academic year
3. UK Based students
4. First come, first served thereafter

In the case of oversubscription at the end of January of the previous academic year, priority will be given in order to:

1. Siblings of students already at the School
2. Children of staff working at the School

Children with Additional Learning Needs may require further, professional, support and so working closely with families, the Director of Education and UK based support agencies is vital from the very beginning of the Admissions process. Known Additional Learning Needs admission and assessments will be directly supervised by the Director of Education working with the registrar and senior team.

During the Admissions process, the Admissions Team may observe that a child might require ALN support to access the online learning requirements of the school, and so a repeat assessment will be requested to allow the Director of Education to be present. Early identification of the specific additional needs of each child is very important if we are to support their learning within the Sophia High School community. The school undertakes to work closely and cooperatively with parents, in order to investigate workable solutions.

Disclosures:

Parents must, as soon as possible, disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, disabilities or learning difficulties.

Offer:

If the School decides to offer your child a place, a confirmation letter along with an Acceptance Form will be sent to you. To accept the offered place a completed Acceptance Form along with a copy of your child's Passport, Birth Certificate and Residence Visa must be sent as part of DFE requirements.

The decision to offer a place is at the discretion of the School Education Team. Offers may be withdrawn by the School should parents breach the Parent Terms and Conditions or Charter at any time.

Deposit:

A deposit is also required to secure the place; details of deposit are outlined within the offer letter.

Families in the UK	£1000
International Families	£1000

Deposition and Cancellation:

Please refer to the School's Parental Terms and Conditions for information as to how the Deposit will be held and in what circumstances it will be refunded. Further information is also provided in the Parental Terms and Conditions about cancellation of a place that has been accepted.

Not Offered:

A phone call will be made or a letter sent whichever is most appropriate to communicate a 'not offered place'. Families for whom places are not offered have the opportunity to speak to a member of the leadership and admissions team to discuss the reasons for a place being declined.

Attendance:

As per DFE Regulations, the School tracks the attendance of students in each lesson. Attendance is expected to be at 90% or above, 95% is the target for all students. Students are able to access recording of live online lessons should attending in person not be available due to approved absence or illness.

Exclusion:

In registering your child for a place at the school you are agreeing to abide by the School's regulations and policies and to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, that if your child is offered a place at the School they will be both diligent in their studies and responsible in their attitude and behaviour. Should this become a problem, we will make every effort to counsel your child and yourselves and encourage them to modify their behaviour. However, you must accept that it may become necessary for your child's place at the school to be withdrawn and for them to be educated at a school which is more appropriate to their needs. The Board's decision in this matter will be final. See the School's Behaviour and Exclusions Policy for more information.

Sibling Policy:

The school offers siblings priority for entry to the school, but the onus is on parents to inform the school of any siblings they may wish to be considered for entry. Siblings are awarded a fee discount, provided siblings are at the school at the same time. Further details can be found in the School's Fee Structure document. www.sophiahigh.school/fees

Parental Contract:

This admission policy must be read in conjunction with the School's Parental Terms and Conditions.

The Terms and Conditions can be found on the school website: www.sophiahigh.school