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# Mill Hill

**Instilling values, inspiring minds**

Grimsdell | Belmont | Mill Hill School | Mill Hill International

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## The Mill Hill School Foundation

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# Admissions Policy

## 2023 2024

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# Admissions Policy

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## **1. Aims and Policy Statement**

The Foundation aims to provide excellence in education, to support pupils in the passage from childhood towards adulthood and develop in every pupil self-discipline, responsibility, spiritual and moral values, leading to the highest possible standards of behaviour, consideration for others, pride in oneself and in one's achievements. The Foundation currently comprises eight schools – Mill Hill School, Mill Hill International, Belmont Preparatory School, Grimsdell Pre-Preparatory School, Cobham Hall, Keble Preparatory, Lyonsdown School and St Joseph's in the Park.

This policy primarily applies to four of these schools, namely Mill Hill School, Mill Hill International, Belmont and Grimsdell, and the term "School" refers to these schools, as appropriate; the policy does cover some links in processes to the other Foundation schools at section 7, although these have their own Admissions policies.

### **Authority and Circulation**

This policy has been authorised by the Court of Governors of The Mill Hill School Foundation [the 'Foundation']. Its status is advisory only. It is addressed to prospective parents and pupils and to all members of the teaching and administration staff.

### **Policy Statement**

**The aims** of this policy are:

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable purposes, which are to promote and provide for the education of pupils of any age
- To identify and admit children who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to, and benefit from, the ethos and activities of the Foundation community. The Foundation will admit only children who have met the required criteria

## **2. Equal Treatment**

The Foundation's aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, which enriches our school community. Each school is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background. The Foundation's ethos has its origins in the non-conformist Christian values of its founders, but it welcomes pupils regardless of their faith/no-faith background.

## **3. Disability, Learning Difficulty/Disability and Special Educational Needs**

The Schools welcome pupils with disabilities and special educational needs (SEND), provided we can make any necessary reasonable adjustments to offer the support they require for their additional needs, and the site is able to accommodate them.

In order to determine the necessary support both during the admission process and if an offer is made, we require parents of children with physical/mental disabilities or SEND to discuss the child's needs with the School before they sit the entrance exam. Parents should provide with the Registration Form a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, EHCP or a medical report if they have one. 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 education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School.

#### **4. Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language**

Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) are assessed for their standard of English on application to the School where appropriate, to assess the level of EAL support they need and to determine whether this can be reasonably provided. Their curriculum may then be adapted to suit their needs and abilities. Lessons in EAL are provided for those pupils who need it, either in small groups or individually, as appropriate.

#### **5. Procedure Summary**

The Foundation Schools offer a continuity of education, from Early Years at Grimsdell, Keble Prep, Lyonsdown and St Joseph's in the Park, through to the Upper Sixth at Mill Hill School and Cobham Hall, and from Mill Hill International to Mill Hill School. Admission and entry will be subject to the availability of a place and the pupil satisfying the admission requirements at the time. Progress to the next stage of education in the Foundation is dependent upon the required conduct and academic progress of the pupil, as determined by the relevant Head; where the Head has concerns about the suitability of the child to progress through the Foundation, they will arrange a meeting with parents to discuss this, providing sufficient notice for parents to consider alternative options.

Pupils will be considered as candidates for admission and entry to the School when the Registration Form has been completed and returned to us and the non-returnable registration fee paid.

Offers of places will be made in writing. Parents accept the offer by completing the Acceptance Form, confirming their acceptance of the School's Terms and Conditions (Parent Contract), and returning it to the School with the Acceptance Deposit by the date outlined in the offer letter. Failure to respond by the given deadline may result in the place being offered to another prospective pupil and loss of the previous priority given under the admissions criteria.

The Head's decision relating to all matters of admissions is final.

#### **6. Admission to Grimsdell**

##### **Registration**

There are two main points of entry into the School: 3+ (Nursery) and 4+ (Reception).

The level of demand for places is very high; an initial registration list and a reserve registration list operates. All children on the initial registration list are guaranteed an interview at 3+ or a first-round group assessment at 4+. Children placed on the reserve registration list for 3+ entry, prior to the commencement of the 3+ assessments in November and who are not invited for an informal interview, will automatically be considered for 4+ entry the following year.

## **Entry Assessment**

Pupils being considered for a place at 3+ and 4+ will attend an informal assessment with the Head and a member of Early Years teaching staff. In order to be offered a place or put onto the waiting list, children are required to demonstrate age-appropriate development during the assessment and a natural interest in learning. The child is given access to a range of play-based activities and is observed by a member of the teaching staff to assess their social and emotional development, independence (age appropriate), speech and language, mathematical and phonological awareness, motor skills, coordination and behaviour bearing in mind the child's age and first language.

The assessment will also normally include an informal interview with the parents that will cover such matters as the child's development, nursery or playgroup experience, if applicable, and any areas of strength or special needs. Consideration will also be given to any reports from his or her previous nursery if applicable. For 4+ entry, children may also be invited to take part in a small group setting prior to the informal assessment.

In the event of occasional places becoming available in Year 1 and Year 2, these are offered subject to an informal interview and an assessment of the child.

## **7. Admission to Belmont**

The main entry points to Belmont are Year 3 (7+) and Year 7 (11+).

### **Entry to Year 3 (7+)**

Priority is given to children coming from Grimsdell, who have been recommended for transfer by the Head of Grimsdell. A small number of additional places are offered after an assessment in the Autumn term of Year 2. The children are assessed on their vocabulary, ability to listen, concentrate and interact socially with their peers, in both a formal and informal setting. Assessments measure cognitive ability in reading, maths and spatial awareness. A short piece of prose is written to demonstrate the child's understanding of writing techniques, spelling and punctuation.

### **Entry to Year 7 (11+)**

External entry for 11+ (Year 7) involves two assessment days in the November (Round 1) and January (Round 2) before entry. The first round includes computerised assessments and the review of a confidential reference from the child's current Head Teacher. Parents are also required to inform the School if their child has any physical/mental challenges or Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) before they sit the entrance exam.

Pupils who progress into the second round, will be asked to attend a Group Interview, a Group Team working task and a Creative Writing assessment. Places are allocated after the Second Round. The assessment day will include a range of different activities that attempt to assess the whole child and gauge their suitability for the Foundation.

The detailed assessment process is designed to uncover innate ability and neutralise the impact of intensive tutoring.

The number of 11+ (Year 7) external applications significantly outweighs the number of available places. The decision of which applicants to offer places to is the responsibility of the Head, taking account of all available information. The main factor in this is academic test results, but a holistic approach is taken using all the assessment results, plus considerations such as whether the child is in an existing Foundation school (eg Lyonsdown, Keble Prep or St Joseph's in the Park) and/or whether there are siblings already at the school/s.

Any chance vacancy places that may arise from time to time are offered based on age-appropriate tests, interviews and assessments.

## **8. Admission to Mill Hill School**

### **Entry to Fourth Form (13+, Year 9) and to the Remove (14+, Year 10)**

The vast majority of places in the Fourth Form (Year 9) are required for those pupils transferring from Belmont Year 8, leaving a small number of available places for external entry to the Fourth Form.

#### **Entry to Mill Hill School Fourth Form (13+, Year 9) for Belmont Year 8 Pupils**

Transfer from Belmont to the Fourth Form is the norm, but there may be cases where the considered view of the Heads of Belmont and Mill Hill School is that this is not in the best interests of the child or School. The reasons for this may be that the child's level of academic performance suggests they will struggle with the academic demands of Mill Hill School, or there is a pattern of unsatisfactory behaviour. In the former case, it is expected that internal assessment will have been periodically shared with parents, and discussions will normally take place with the Head of Belmont in Year 7 to allow parents to consider alternative options.

#### **External Entry to Mill Hill School Fourth Form**

External entry for 13+ (Fourth Form) is via an assessment in Year 6 ("Year 6 Track"). Please see paragraph 7 on the previous page for further details (Admission to Belmont – Entry to Year 7). In 2023, Belmont and Mill Hill aligned their 11+ and "Year 6 Track" assessment processes. Candidates sitting the Year 6 track, will sit the same process, which is outlined in the 11+. Those who receive the offer of a place are expected to maintain a satisfactory level of performance through to the end of Year 8 at their current school.

A small number of "chance" vacancies may become available for Fourth Form (Year 9) entry for pupils in Year 8 at other schools, and for direct entry into the Remove (Year 10). Assessment for these is via academic tests, interview and confidential school reference.

#### **Entry to Sixth Form (Year 12)**

Entry into the Sixth Form for both internal and external applicants is conditional upon meeting a minimum GCSE grade requirement, which is currently two grade 7s and three grade 6s, plus at least 5s in English (Language or Literature) and Mathematics. Minimum requirements for each A Level subject must also be met (see the Sixth Form Curriculum Guide). These entry grades to the Sixth Form are a minimum requirement and may not, in themselves, be sufficient to guarantee the offer of a place. The only exception to the minimum sixth form grade requirement is for those applying to the Saracens Partnership for a BTEC Level 3 in Sport, where the GCSE grade requirements are five grade 5s and the completion of a successful subject based interview.

External applicants for the Sixth Form also have an academic interview, usually including a subject specific interview; for subjects like Art and DT this may include a review of their portfolio, and for subjects like Music and Drama it may include an audition. In addition, a confidential reference is requested from their current school and the two most recent set of school reports are reviewed, as are predicted GCSE results.

Progression from Mill Hill International to Mill Hill School is possible at 16+. For pupils not requiring sponsorship from the Foundation to study in the UK, the offer of a place will be conditional upon their performance at GCSE. Pupils from Mill Hill International applying to Mill Hill School at 16+ and requiring sponsorship undergo an assessment of their suitability for the Sixth Form, in combination with information provided by Mill Hill International; for any sponsored pupils, the offer of a place is unconditional.

### **Overseas Applicants**

We welcome overseas pupils to join the Foundation Schools, provided that they have the correct permission to be in the UK.

The School asks for a copy of the prospective pupil's birth certificate or passport as part of the admissions process. Where a pupil is not British, and their family states they do not need a Visa, we will need to see and take a copy of the pupil's passport together with a parent's passport/or residence card and/or Visa to ascertain that they have the correct permission to be in the UK. Where overseas students require a Visa to study at the School, we will review their case and if appropriate support such an application under the terms of our UKVI Child Student sponsor's licence.

Once registered, candidates for whom English is an Additional Language are required to take the Oxford Placement Test, an online adaptive test of Reading and Writing skills. Those applicants meeting the minimum English requirement then take further tests; for Sixth Form entry these are in English and subject-specific tests in their desired A Level subjects, whilst for other years of entry the tests are in English, Maths and Science. An interview will also take place, either in person or online.

## **9. Admission to Mill Hill International**

Once registered, candidates are required to sit the School's placement tests which include a cognitive ability test in verbal, non-verbal, spatial and quantitative reasoning; an English placement test for pupils for whom English is an Additional Language and a written essay. The School also requires a confidential reference from the child's present school. The results of these tests will determine whether an interview takes place, either in person or online. The interview, together with the School placement test results and the last two years' school reports will form the basis on which to decide whether the School can offer the child a place or not. Upon admission, further testing takes place; if the English level of the pupil does not match the level as tested during the admissions process, an alternative course within Mill Hill International will normally be offered.

## **10. Further Information**

### **Special Circumstances**

The School recognises that a candidate's performance in assessments may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- If he/she is unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from his/her school
- If there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement
- The context of their educational history, for example education outside the British system
- If the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties
- If English is not the candidate's first language

In any of these cases, the School may request further information it considers necessary to make a fair assessment.

### **Disclosures**

Parents must as soon as possible disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, physical and mental impairment disabilities, learning difficulties or disabilities or special educational needs.

## **11. Waiting Lists**

After taking account of appropriate allowances and special consideration, places will be offered to pupils on the waiting list based on the holistic judgement of the Head, comprising:

- Performance in the entrance assessments, including particular skills and aptitude
- Suitability for the School environment reflected in group work, interviews and social interaction
- Existing relationship to the Foundation (sibling who is already a pupil, attendance at another Foundation school, parent who works at the Foundation, parent who themselves attended the School)
- References from current school

## **12. Review**

This Policy has been approved by The Education Committee of the Court of Governors, on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

This Review: November 2023

Next Review: Autumn Term 2024



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**Grimsdell**

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