



Abbotsholme

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Abbotsholme is an independent co-educational boarding and day school from ages 2-18 on the border of Derbyshire and Staffordshire in the United Kingdom.

Abbotsholme School Aims

Abbotsholme aims to prepare its pupils for the whole of life by giving them a balanced education through a strong academic curriculum and an extensive range of co-curriculum activities; and where academic, personal and social developments are given equal standing and everyone – pupils and staff – are encouraged to do their best.

Abbotsholme recognises the diversity of talent in each pupil and aims to provide:

- Knowledge to help everyone achieve and succeed to their individual academic ability
- An understanding of the environment
- Challenges to build strength and test courage, as well as be a stimulating and enjoyable experience
- A cultural enrichment to widen perspective and a responsibility to others in our global world.

Our Vision

It is our firm belief that a good balanced education is an essential preparation for the whole of life. An education at Abbotsholme provides not only the starting blocks but it also propels each individual through the start of life outside Abbotsholme.

Abbotsholme wants all of our children not only to succeed – whatever their individual talents or abilities may be – but also to feel successful. The Abbotsholme ethos encourages a sense of self-worth and of pride in their own achievements, whilst, in equal measure, celebrating the success of others.

Although we are committed to helping all Abbotsholmians fulfil their academic potential, the measure of our success cannot be judged by scholarly achievements alone. Indeed, it is their development as people that must be seen as the ultimate test.

Our vision is that pupils leave Abbotsholme as responsible and socially aware young men and women who are able to face an increasingly demanding world with confidence and with a zest for life. In years to come, we would wish to know that they were happy with themselves and with their lives; we also would want them to be successful in their personal and professional endeavours whilst remaining sensitive to the needs of others.

The general admissions policy is to admit pupils who are likely to benefit from an education based on the principles set out above.

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are:

1. To ensure compliance with the Schools' charitable purpose and general school admissions guidelines. Abbotsholme School is open to everyone in the clear understanding that the aims and vision underpin the ethos and life of Abbotsholme School. Admission is neither restricted by location (region or worldwide) or by financial circumstances – excepting that overall there has to be a proper balance between income and expenditure such that the continuance of the School will not be financially put at risk.
2. To identify and admit children who are most suited to, and most likely to benefit from, the particular education and opportunities that Abbotsholme offer. Although the schools are proudly non academically selective, a child's academic performance is a consideration in the admissions process undertaken Abbotsholme School as appropriate, in consultation with key staff.

Equal Treatment

We welcome children from many different ethnic groups, background 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, orientation, property, birth or other status.

We expect all of our pupils to attend chapel and assemblies which are an integral part of school life.

All parents must be in sympathy with the schools' aims and policies.

Feeder Schools

Abbotsholme Senior School's main feeder school (at 11+) is Abbotsholme Prep. The School has good relationships with other independent and maintained preparatory and primary schools in the region whose pupils comprise a significant proportion of the annual intake.

Age of entry

Abbotsholme School admits children at Pre-Prep Level from age 2+ at whichever point this occurs in the school year. Children then move into full time education in Prep School (including Abbotsholme Prep School) in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. Places are offered at all age group levels throughout the school, subject to availability.

Abbotsholme is a three-form entry school. (This information is up to date as of the date of this document, but could be subject to change). Abbotsholme admits pupils in all years and throughout the year through a rolling admissions programme.

Very occasionally, we may offer places to pupils one year ahead or behind their standard year group, if we consider, as a matter of professional judgement that this would be in the best interests of the pupil and the School.

Boarding

All boarding at Abbotsholme is in shared or single rooms. Boarding places are allocated according to the school's policy of grouping boarders by gender and age. Currently there are four boarding houses plus a cabin complex for Sixth Formers, which pupils will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Boarding houses include Girls Boarding for Junior pupils, Girls Boarding for Senior Pupils, Boys Boarding for Junior pupils, Boys boarding for Senior pupils.

Overseas Applicants

Abbotsholme School encourages boarders from overseas and currently approximately one fifth of the School's population is from overseas.

- (a) Abbotsholme welcomes applications from pupils who live overseas.
- (b) Overseas pupils whose parents are citizens of countries in the European Economic Area or of Switzerland do not require visas to study in the United Kingdom.
- (c) Abbotsholme is licensed by the United Kingdom Border Agency to sponsor pupils who require visas to study in the United Kingdom. The School will issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) reference number to each pupil requiring a visa if he or she has been offered and has accepted a place to study at Abbotsholme .
- (d) A pupil requiring a visa to study at Abbotsholme should apply for a Tier 4 child student visa.
- (e) It is the responsibility of the pupil requiring a visa and of his or her parents to apply to the United Kingdom Border Agency for a visa at the appropriate time and with the correct documentation and to inform Abbotsholme that an application is being made.
- (f) Abbotsholme will at all times comply with the rules and procedures of the United Kingdom Border Agency.
- (g) All enquiries about visa applications should be made to the Admissions Office. Only members of the Senior Management Team are authorised to sign a letter supporting a pupil's, or prospective pupil's, application for a visa in the UK. For information on how to ensure your Visa application is successful, please visit our website which details information on errors that can be made in the application process that could jeopardise your application.
- (h) All overseas pupils are required to have a guardian resident in mainland UK who is prepared to be responsible for that pupil should an emergency situation occur. That Guardian will be asked to sign a declaration to show that they understand their responsibilities and duties to the pupil. A Guardian is needed to act for the pupil in an emergency throughout the whole time the pupil resides at Abbotsholme School, even if that child turns 18 whilst at the school.

Former Pupils and Siblings

The School especially welcomes the children of former pupils.

In keeping with the school's family ethos, every effort is made to accommodate children from the same family, and, where applicable, across Abbotsholme.

Where two or more siblings attend Abbotsholme, the governors will provide an automatic fee discount.

Staff Discount

Abbotsholme School staff both teaching and non teaching, work extremely hard to support the education of the school's pupils and the smooth running of the school. In recognition of this fact, and the fact that the school support a warm and family centred environment, staff members receive a discount on school fees to support sending their children to the schools. Details of this are available on request.

Entrance Procedures

Abbotsholme School and Abbotsholme operate entrance procedures in accordance with HMC guidelines.

Our UK admissions procedure has eight elements:

1. Registration (including enquiry, visit and filling in our registration form if assessment and taster is done together; (a non refundable fee of £60 will need to accompany the completed form). Taster days on their own do not require a registration form and fee.
2. School reports (from current school).
3. Character references (these will usually be from the Head of a candidate's current school and will make reference to the candidates academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the school community, talents and interests and any other special circumstances that should be made known).
4. Entry assessments / examinations (for entry into the Senior School only).
5. Taster day at the schools (all parents/guardians will need to fill in a medical form for the taster day).
6. If extra Learning Support is required then an appointment with the Learning Support representative at Abbotsholme will also need to be made and an assessment will take place).
7. Disability assessments (More detail can be found about these in the Disability and Special Education Needs section).
8. Decision (Headmaster's decision is final).

Our admissions procedure for overseas pupils has seven elements:

1. Registration (from enquiry to filling in our registration form. A non refundable fee of £60 will need to accompany the completed form).
2. School reports (from current school).
3. Character references (these will usually be from the Head of a candidate's current school and will make reference to the candidates academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the school community, talents and interest and any other special circumstances that should be made known).
4. English essay and English test (These help us to comply with UK Border Agency requirements).
5. Visit or Telephone / SKYPE Interviews with a member of the Marketing and Admissions team.
6. Disability assessments (More detail can be found about these in the Disability and Special Education Needs section.)
7. Decision (Headmaster's decision is final)

Parents of pupils entering Abbotsholme Pre-Prep at 2+ will need to fill in a specific Pre-Prep Booking Form and Registration Form; pupils for Abbotsholme Prep Scholl will need to fill in the Abbotsholme Registration Form to enter the school. From Year 3 to Year 6, pupils will be informally assessed in core subjects (English, Maths and Science) on a taster day.

At Sixth Form, entry to Abbotsholme is dependent on GCSE results (or equivalent passes) of at least 5 C grades.

Additional Factors

In the event of oversubscription of children who meet our admission requirements, then consideration will be given to the following:

- a) A child who already has a brother / sister in the school; a sibling who was previously at the school, or whose parent is a former pupil of the school;
- b) A child who is not registered elsewhere;
- c) A child whose parent is a current member of our staff;
- d) A child with a particular skill, talent or aptitude.

Bursaries and Scholarships

The School aims to reach out to the wider community irrespective of social and/or economic circumstances, and accordingly provides bursary assistance depending on individual and family needs and circumstances. Bursaries are only awarded up to a maximum of 50% (this is an exceptional amount and Abbotsholme tries to share the pot to ensure that a greater number of pupils can benefit from an education at Abbotsholme School) of the fees where applicants provide up to date information about their financial circumstances, including documentary support. Such information is treated in strict confidence and bursaries are awarded on the understanding that parents will respect this confidence. These will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Bursary Committee which includes the Headmaster, Head of Operations and Finance Manager. *Pupils must be registered before any bursary application is made.*

In order to attract and reward pupils of a high academic, musical or all-round ability and potential, the School offers a number of scholarships each year.

Scholarships are given at 11+, 13+ and in the Sixth Form up to a maximum of 50% (this is an exceptional amount and Abbotsholme tries to share the pot to ensure that a greater number of exceptional pupils can benefit from an education at Abbotsholme School) off the school fees. All candidates at all levels will be notified within a month after sitting the Scholarship exams. These awards will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Scholarships and bursaries can both be applied for and both can be given, although some fees must be paid by the parent in the instance that both are awarded. For deadlines for both scholarship and bursary applications, please contact the Admissions Office on 01889 594 265.

The award of a scholarship and bursary is entirely at the discretion of the Senior Management Team on the recommendation of the Headmaster. Scholarships and bursaries are awarded on the undertaking that, unless by mutual agreement, the Pupil will remain at Abbotsholme School until the end of Year 11 or Sixth Form where relevant. All scholarship (and bursary) monies are repayable in the event of an earlier withdrawal of the Pupil by the signatories (Parents / Guardian).

Complaints Procedure

Abbotsholme has long prided itself on the quality of the admissions support both to parents and pupils. We welcome suggestions and comments from parents and take seriously any concerns you may have. These will be treated in a professional and appropriate manner in accordance with this Procedure.

Stage One

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint about any member of the Admissions teams they should normally contact the Head of Marketing and Admissions in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Head of Marketing and Admissions cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult with the Headmaster before responding to you.
- Complaints made directly to the Headmaster may be referred to the Head of Marketing and Admissions unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.
- The Head of Marketing and Admissions / Headmaster will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or in the event that the Head of Marketing and the parent fail to reach

a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage Two of this Procedure.

Stage Two

- If the complaint cannot be resolved as set out above, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- The Headmaster will respond to the parents within five working days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision. Parents will be notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage Three of this Procedure.

Stage Three

- If parents seek to invoke Stage Three, following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, they will be referred to the Chairman of Governors who may call a hearing of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Chairman of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normal within 14 days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than two days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the

parents, the Headmaster, and the Chair of Governors and, where appropriate, the persons complained about.

- A written record will be kept of all complaints and at what stage they were resolved. These records will be kept for at least three years. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the schools' inspections; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Last Review date – February 2014