



NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

This policy applies to the whole School including EYFS, is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website and is available upon request to parents and prospective parents.

See also: Special Needs and EAL Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disability [SENDA] Action Plan and Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Policy

1. Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 All applications will be treated on merit. Newcastle-under-Lyme School is an academically selective school although our Nursery is non-selective. Its process of selection and admissions is designed to confirm and ensure that applicants have the ability to cope with, and the potential to thrive upon, the academic curriculum in our School environment. We aim to admit pupils based on what the School considers best for the individual child.
- 1.2 The only restrictions we place on entry are those of ability, suitability, numbers and availability of finance. It is our wish to allow all successful applicants to have a place at the School, although this is not always possible when demand exceeds the number of places available. The number of places available, referred to as the standard number, is the number of children the School can accommodate within bounds of providing a safe and comfortable environment. We keep this number under review. In the event that insufficient children are of the appropriate academic standard we reserve the right to admit fewer children.
- 1.3 In the selection process, which varies at different entry points so as to be appropriate to the age of candidates, every attempt is made to ensure that children are put at their ease so that the School can assess what they can do and also what they might achieve given the opportunities that NuLS would offer them. Extra time in written tests is provided for those boys and girls who meet accepted criteria to qualify.

- 1.4 We are an inclusive school and welcome children from all backgrounds and faiths. Entry is granted irrespective of gender, race, religion, political beliefs, disability, physical appearance or sexuality either of students or their parents.
- 1.5 The School's commitment to bursary provision in the Senior School ensures that a good number of children are able to attend the Senior School regardless of parental income and circumstances.
- 1.6 All applications will be treated in a sensitive manner. The admissions and selection process means that some applicants will not be offered a place at NuLS. The School tries to mitigate the disappointment by being as efficient as it can be in the selection process and by giving overall outline feedback to disappointed parents when it is requested.
- 1.7 Although there is no formal appeal process, the School will consider requests from parents where they feel a misjudgment has been made or contributory factors overlooked.

2. The Application Process

- 2.1 An official Registration Form must be completed and returned prior to the entrance assessment. Registration Forms can be obtained from the Registrar or School's website. Please be aware that the School will ask for a copy of the child's birth certificate.
- 2.2 Any Special Educational Needs or Learning Disabilities or Difficulties [SEND] that a child has are taken into account when they apply for entry. Parents should complete the appropriate section on the Senior School Entrance Test Form which is sent to parents prior to the assessments or provide equivalent information to the Head of the Junior School. Parents must apply for a place under these circumstances by submitting the required details and providing an up to date report from an educational psychologist or specialist stating the special needs of the pupil. Around the time of the assessment staff will make contact with the child's current school to request further information and will, depending on the content of the educational psychologist's or specialist's report, make appropriate access arrangements for time in the entrance assessments.
- 2.3 We may request reports from a child's current school [if applicable]. We expect parents to inform their child's Head Teacher of their intention to enrol their child for our entrance assessment.
- 2.4 The School notifies parents about a school place in writing as soon as all the assessments have been completed. This will normally be within two weeks of the initial assessment or interview.
- 2.5 Once an offer of a place has been made by the Headmaster, or by the Head of NuLS Junior School, parents must accept the offer in writing.

- 2.6 Deposits, which are held until the child leaves the School, are non-refundable in the event of a withdrawal of acceptance.
- 2.7 Under the terms of The Code of Practice for Schools, principles agreed by the five Heads' Associations (GSA, HMC, IAPS, ISA and the Society of Heads), we are not able to admit any pupil until all financial obligations to any other member school have been met in full.

3. Assessment Procedure

3.1 Orme Nursery (Age at admission 2 to 3 years)

Places are offered on a first come first served basis. A minimum of five half-day sessions per week in the Nursery is required. Admissions to the Nursery are not academically selective. Children may start Nursery at the beginning of the term in which they will turn three (rising threes). Children registered for the Nursery are automatically registered for Reception; progression into Reception is normal but not guaranteed. However, where there is cause for concern, at any stage, that a child may not be meeting the longer-term requirements for entry into Reception, either in standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at the NuLS Junior School, their parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of NuLS Junior School.

3.2 Junior School Infant or Pre-Preparatory Section (Age at admission 4 to 7 years).

Children are offered a place in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 at any time after successful observation and assessment and evaluation of skills in numeracy, literacy and potential for learning in an existing class of an appropriate level for their entry year. All the work is set at ability levels appropriate for the age group. All places are full-time. It is the School's expectation that boys and girls will successfully progress into the Preparatory Department at 7+ (Year 3). However, where there is cause for concern, at any stage, that a child may not be meeting the longer-term requirements for entry into Year 3, either in standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at the School, their parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of NuLS Junior School.

3.3 Junior School Junior or Preparatory Section (Age at admission 7 to 10 years)

External candidates can gain entry to Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 by assessment and evaluation of skills in numeracy, literacy, reading, general ability and potential for learning at an appropriate level for their entry year, by individual arrangement. A member of staff will also spend some time in an informal interview with a child where they will be looking for a child's ability to listen and speak freely with enthusiasm on a variety of topics of their choice. These assessments should be seen as a positive opportunity for a child to show their ability.

Offers of places in the Senior School to NuLS Junior School children will be made during the Spring Term of Year 5 based on the School's knowledge of them and their performances in internal assessments. Further internal assessments and assessment benchmarking tests during Year 6 will be used prior to decision on the award of Senior

School scholarships or bursaries for NuLS Junior School children. In the unlikely event of a NuLS Junior School child not being offered a place in the Senior School in Year 5, he or she will be given the opportunity to take the Senior School Entrance Examination during the Autumn Term of Year 6. Again, where there is cause for concern, at any stage, that a child in the NuLS Junior School may not be meeting the longer-term requirements for entry into the Senior School, either in standard of work or conduct to enable them to benefit from continuing their education at the School, their parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of NuLS Junior School.

3.4 **Senior School (Years 7 to 11)** (Age at admission 11 to 15 years)

Entrance to the Senior School (Years 7 to 11) is usually by examination at 11+ each year. Entrance to other age groups where places are available is by a similar age-related examination. The examination consists of a Verbal Reasoning Test, a Mathematics paper and an English paper. As part of the assessment process, a member of staff will interview each external applicant. Whilst this process is time-consuming, we feel that it is vital because we view every child as far more than an examination mark.

English Paper: There are three sections. One will be a prompt for a piece of personal creative writing. Candidates will be given a choice of three paragraphs from which they choose one and continue to write a story. A second section will present candidates with a short passage of writing and some structured comprehension questions. Candidates will also be asked to demonstrate understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Mathematics Paper: This contains arithmetic, solving problems and questions on shape and space. There will be a few questions towards the end of the exam that are harder than the rest. The mathematical knowledge required is at National Curriculum levels 4-5.

Verbal Reasoning: This test includes Verbal Reasoning questions.

Three evenings are held during the year to introduce children and their parents to the assessment process at 11+.

3.5 **Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)** (Age at admission 16 years)

Interested students and parents are invited into School for a tour of the School and for the opportunity to attend a 'taster day' with taster Sixth Form lessons. Assessment is by a general academic interview conducted by a senior member of staff taking into account expected GCSE [and IGCSE] performance, and international equivalents, and the reference from a student's current school. If required, interviews can be conducted for candidates from overseas using Skype. Interested potential students are offered a tour of the School and a taster session in advance of interview. Places are usually offered subject to the attainment of satisfactory GCSE [and IGCSE] results or international equivalents, a minimum of five subjects at B grade or higher and three subjects at C grade at GCSE or IGCSE in appropriate subjects which must include Mathematics and English Language. B grades or higher are expected in the subjects or linked subjects students wish to pursue to

A level.

3.6 Late applications

Should parents move into the area at short notice or have some other good reason for their child not having taken an entrance assessment along with other applicants, it may be possible to arrange a supplementary assessment for September entry later in the year, at the discretion of the Headmaster, or the Head of NuLS Junior School should a place be available.

3.7 Scholarships and Bursaries

Financial assistance with fees (Bursaries) on a means-tested basis is available to support pupils in the Senior School (Years 7-13). Bursaries offer assistance with School Fees depending upon parental income. Scholarships are available for academic, musical and sporting ability at 11+, 13+ and 16+.

Academic Scholarships, currently up to the value of £1,000 per annum for up to five years, and Entrance Exhibitions, up to the value of £500 for one year, may be awarded to external applicants gaining the highest places at 11+ following the entrance assessment procedures and to the highest placed internal NuLS Junior School applicants based on scholarship assessments. Applications are not required.

A number of Music Scholarships [currently up to the value of £550] and Sports Scholarships and Sports Exhibitions [currently up to the value of £1000 and £500 respectively] may be awarded to students offering particular musical or sporting prowess at Senior School entry.

Physics [£1000] and Mathematics [£1000] Scholarships are available to Sixth Form entrants. Physics and Mathematics Scholarship Examinations will be held in January each year. Assessment is by written paper and in addition, for the Physics Scholarship, by subject interview.

3.8 Feedback

The parents of children who are unsuccessful in the entrance assessments may contact the Headmaster or the Head of NuLS Junior School, to ascertain strengths and weaknesses with regard to their child's assessment performance. This will inform parents of a possible route to academic development and future success. Actual marks from assessments or papers, or actual papers, are never released to parents or other interested parties as it is essential to maintain the integrity of assessment papers by keeping them confidential. Candidates apply to be assessed only once each academic year but are able to re-apply to sit the entrance assessments in the following year or successive years if they wish.

3.9 Reserve List

When the number of academically qualified candidates exceeds the number of places available a short list of reserves is kept. All candidates on this reserve list will meet our selection criteria. The parents of these children are informed that a place could be offered at a

later date were another parent to withdraw a previous acceptance and thus make a place available.

4. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headmaster and Head of NulS Junior School, in the light of any changed circumstances in the School or its catchment area.

Author:	C Quigley, Registrar
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