



NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

This policy relates to Newcastle-under-Lyme School, including the EYFS. This policy is available upon request to parents and prospective parents and is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website.

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 misjudgement 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 School Entrance Test Form which is sent to parents prior to the assessments. 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. **Little NULS Nursery (Age at admission 2 years plus).** 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 Preparatory School, their parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of NULS Preparatory 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 Prep 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.

The overwhelming majority of NULS Preparatory School pupils transfer to Senior School at NULS too. Offers of places in the Senior School are based on the School's knowledge of them and their performances in internal assessments and Scholarship Assessments. Where there is cause for concern, at any stage, that a child in the NULS Prep School may not be meeting the longer-term requirements for entry into and successful progress at Senior School, either in standard of work, personal needs or conduct, their parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of NULS Preparatory School to explain this and to also assist the family secure an appropriate setting and transition for 11+.

- 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. In addition an essential aspect of the school issuing and honouring school offers is the acquiring of a satisfactory behavioural record from the child's previous school. Should any information on behaviour or academic attributes not meet with the schools approval places will not be offered or can be withdrawn. This applies to both internal and external pupils and is at the School's discretion. The School's examination consists of a Verbal Reasoning Test, a Mathematics paper, an English paper and a computer based assessment.
- 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 remotely. 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 grade 6 or higher and three subjects at grade 5 at GCSE or IGCSE in appropriate subjects which must include Mathematics and English Language. Grade 6 or higher is expected in the subjects or linked subjects students wish to pursue to A Level. Progression and entry into Sixth Form also requires an adequate behavioural record and evidence that a student possesses the maturity and characteristics that will enable them to flourish in a setting where independence is greater and academic challenge is higher.

- 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 Preparatory 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+ with Drama and Art Scholarships also available at 16+.
- 3.8. **Feedback.** The parents of children who are unsuccessful in the entrance assessments may contact the Headmaster or the Head of NULS Prep 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.
- 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

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

SMT lead for this policy:

M J Getty

Policy Reviewed:

August 2023

Policy Reviewed by Governors:

September 2023

Next Review Due:

September 2024