



WESTMINSTER UNDER SCHOOL

Admissions Policy

This policy additionally applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS]

Written by:	TSL, MJW and AL
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Introduction

Westminster Under School was founded in 1943. It is the main feeder school to Westminster School. As of September 2026, the Under School will expand, to include a new Pre-Preparatory department, with the first co-educational Reception year group starting. At this point, we will also have our first expanded and co-educational cohort of pupils in Year 3 and Year 7. By 2030, both Westminster Under School and Westminster School will be fully co-educational. Each year, the vast majority of Under School pupils gain their first choice of senior school, with the majority of pupils transferring to Westminster School. A few pupils at the end of Year 8 leave to join full boarding schools, such as Eton College or Winchester College and in time, it is envisaged that girls who join us at Reception or Year 3 may also head to leading girls' schools, usually for a Year 7 start.

Aims of this policy

- To ensure compliance with the School's charitable object as a Public School for Young Persons, Westminster Under School provides independent education for pupils aged between 4 and 13 (Reception to Year 8).
- To set selection criteria and procedures that are consistent with this charitable object and fair to all applicants.
- To identify applicants whose academic abilities appear to match the ethos and standards of the School and whose personal qualities suggest they have the potential to contribute to the School community and benefit from the many opportunities that are offered.

Responsibility for Admissions

The Master has overall responsibility for admissions and for the operation of this policy. Other members of staff significantly involved in the process of admissions include, but are not limited to, the Registrar, the Deputy Master (Lower School), the Deputy Master (Upper School), the Assistant Master (Academic), the Assistant Master (Teaching and Learning), the Heads of Mathematics and English, and the Head of Learning Development. The selection criteria and interview procedure are set and reviewed regularly and each year the School's Governing Body reviews the admission statistics.

Given an offer at the 11+ entry point also gives entry to Westminster School (subject to satisfactory academic progress and behaviour), senior members of staff from Westminster School, such as the Registrar and the Head Master, are also involved in the overall selection process.

Entry Points

The School will accept up to 32 pupils at 4+ into Reception from September 2026, 60 pupils at 7+ (Year 3) (this will decrease to around 28 for the September 2029 entry) and approximately 30 pupils at 11+ (Year 7), though numbers naturally vary slightly from year to year - the overriding intention is that the School would be a good fit for any pupil offered a place here.

The School takes the applicant's age on 1st September to determine qualification for entry at each point: for 4+ entrants their fifth birthday, 7+ entrants their eighth birthday and for 11+ entrants their twelfth birthday. These should fall between 1st September and 31st August of their first academic year at the School.

Occasional Places may be available at non-standard entry points which are posted on the [Admissions' section of School's website](#), along with additional conditions. The Registrar should be contacted to discuss any possible vacancies. Similarly, any out of chronological age applications should be discussed with the Registrar in the first instance.

Overseas applicants should take particular note of the final section in this policy.

Admissions Timetable and Process

4+ Entry

Admission for 4+ entry is usually opened one year prior to entry. Dates are published on the Admissions section of the School's website. A registration fee is payable. Unfortunately, the School is unable to accept applications received after the closing deadline has passed.

Parents may register their children for admission to Westminster Under School at 7+ at any time after the Registration opens, from September 1st two years before their intended year of entry. Registration must have been completed by the published deadline, which is generally at the end of September of the year preceding the point of entry, e.g. 30th September 2026 for a September 2027 start.

There is no advantage in registering months or years earlier, as applications are reviewed during the selection process and not in the order in which they are received. Parents are strongly advised to speak to their existing School's headteacher with regard to whether the Under School would likely be a suitable school for their child.

The 4+ entrance assessments will take place in two rounds, typically in October and January prior to the September of joining.

The first round takes place in an informal, relaxed, and play-focused setting. Children will engage in a mix of structured activities and free play; they will be assessed in terms of how they interact, explore, and respond to gentle prompts.

Following the first round, a number of children will be invited back for the second round in January. This again takes place in an informal and relaxed setting, and will include looking at how the children engage in free-flow and group activities, a sample Phonics lesson, and some short individual testing.

Shortly after the second round, the School will contact the children's parents to let them know whether their child has been offered a place. Date of birth, EAL, and proximity to the school will be factored into the decision-making process. The deadline for offer acceptance is typically in the first half of the Lent Term.

7+ Entry

The 7+ examinations currently fall either in October or November prior to entry in the following September, e.g. November 2026 for September 2027 entry.

Parents who have registered their children will be informed by email of the exact examination dates in good time. If any parents have not received a letter inviting their child to take the tests by mid-September for 7+ entry, they should contact the Registrar in good time. The School does not take responsibility for administrative errors, letters that go astray, or emails that are not delivered.

The aim of the 7+ academic tests and interviews is to explore an applicant's current academic performance and future potential. There are tests in Mathematics, English, Verbal, and Non-Verbal Reasoning. Following the academic tests, a child may be invited for a further morning or afternoon at the Under School if they have performed well. About 100 applicants at the 7+ entry point are invited back. This usually includes some whole-class teaching with other pupils, some further testing in English, spelling, Mathematics and an informal interview, usually in small groups. The style of the session is intended to be enjoyable and welcoming, replicating a normal day as far as possible, so as to allow a pupil to shine and for them to experience an

Under School education. Various members of staff are involved in these days, including those from the Junior Department, who teach these year groups on a daily basis.

The aim of these days is to conduct them in such a way that all applicants enjoy their experience and feel a sense of success, regardless of the outcome. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their children feel that the family is making its own decision about the most appropriate school for them.

11+ Entry

Registration must have been completed by the published deadline, which is generally in the October of the year preceding the point of entry, e.g. October 2026 for a September 2027 start. Dates are published on the Admissions section of the School's website. There is a registration fee, which can be waived for pupils who are judged eligible for a bursary. Unfortunately, the School is unable to accept applications received after the closing deadline has passed.

Importantly, applying for both 11+ at Westminster Under School and at 13+ for Westminster School is not permitted. Pupils who enter Westminster Under School at the 11+ stage are deemed to have qualified for a place at Westminster School without the need for a further test or interview, subject to satisfactory work and behaviour. It is expected that all pupils accepted at 11+ will transfer to Westminster School.

The first stage of the 11+ process is for pupils to take the Independent Schools Examination Board (ISEB) Common Pre-Tests in English, Mathematics and Reasoning. This is used by many other independent schools and stops pupils from having to complete similar tests multiple times. In many cases, this electronic test can be completed in the pupil's existing school, but pupil can also take it at the Under School should their existing school not provide this. Parents must register their child directly with ISEB.

Following the tests, pupils may then be invited to the School for some further written testing in English and Mathematics only, which usually takes place on a Saturday morning in mid-January, followed by a morning or afternoon at the School, often later in January or early February, which will include an interview with senior members of staff. The head teacher of the pupil's present school will also be asked to send a report.

Parents who have not received a letter inviting their child to take the tests by the second week of November should contact the Registrar in good time. The School does not take responsibility for administrative errors, letters that go astray, or emails that are not delivered.

All School policies apply while children taking assessments are on the School site. The Admissions team should be informed of anything significant relating to a child that may have an impact on an assessment day, e.g., medical issues, and so on, before the start of the assessments.

We reserve the right to make changes to the form of any of these assessments - for example where the School is required to close its physical premises, or where visitors are not permitted

in School. Where practicable, we will give appropriate notice of planned changes to assessment arrangements.

Selection at 4+

Selection at 4+ will be made considering a number of factors, including:

- aptitude for learning, as demonstrated during our assessment days;
- date of birth: the School will endeavour to have an even split of pupils across the quartiles of the year, through the School will assess children with peers in their quartile group;
- SEND;
- current setting;
- whether English is a first Language for a child - nonetheless, for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), the School expects a child to be able to understand and communicate in English at this entry point;
- a reference from the child's nursery setting, where available.

Selection at 7+ and 11+

Following our various tests, the interview, and the receipt of a report from each applicant's current head teacher (where available), the pupils are then considered. Selection at 7+ and 11+ will be made considering a number of factors, including:

- attainment and aptitude for learning, as demonstrated during our assessment days;
- date of birth;
- SEND;
- current setting;
- whether English is a first Language for the child - nonetheless, for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), we expect a child to be able to understand and communicate in English at these entry points;
- a reference from the child's current setting, where available.

For successful pupils, an offer letter is then sent to parents of pupils who have been successful, usually soon after the further testing for the 7+ entry point, and before February half term for the 11+ entry point.

Applicants who are not offered an immediate place may be placed on a short Reserve List – the Registrar will contact these applicants' prospective parents should a place become available. While every application is carefully considered, the School is unable to offer individual explanations for admissions outcomes. Documents supporting each applicant's application for admission, together with interview notes, are retained by the School for at least one year after the entry point, whether or not the applicant is offered a place.

For those parents receiving an offer, a place must be accepted, and the appropriate fees paid, by the date specified in the offer letter which is generally in late November / early December for 7+ and early March for 11+ in the year of entry. If payment has not been made by that

time, the School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place. Deposits are held until the pupil leaves the School, or if transferring to Westminster School, the deposit is transferred to them. Should a parent subsequently decide not to take up the place offered, the Deposit may be withheld in whole or in part to offset the genuine estimate by the School of the loss it will suffer by the parents failing to honour the contract with the School.

The pre-conditions for admission are that:

- i. The child is of the appropriate age and sufficient maturity.
- ii. The pupil attends School following the published term dates and School hours.
- iii. The pupil's learning difficulties and other special needs (if any) can, in the opinion of the Master, be managed with the provision of reasonable adjustments under the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Act 2015.
- iv. The School accepts pupils whose first language is not English, and indeed many pupils speak two or three languages fluently, but lessons move at a fast pace and a pupil who did not speak good English could struggle, so proficiency in English will be assessed to ensure an applicant has the minimum necessary skills.
- v. The pupil's present school states satisfactory attitudes and conduct on the part of the pupil and their parents.
- vi. Fees (if applicable) at the present school have been paid and the parents are able, if required, to satisfy the Bursar that they are in a position to pay the ongoing fees for Westminster Under School.

All admissions will be in accordance with the School's Policy on Special Educational Needs and Disability. The Governing Body of Westminster School is committed to its responsibilities under the Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2015), which established the right for disabled students not to be discriminated against in education.

Sibling Policy

Westminster Under School does not operate a sibling policy and places are awarded solely on the basis of performance in the assessments described in this document.

Staff Children

Where staff employed by Westminster Under School or Westminster School wish to enter their child for admission to Westminster Under School, in order to avoid any conflicts of interest, they should remove themselves from any admissions activity related to their child's entry point: this includes, but is not limited to, the creation and setting of examination papers, participation in interviewing rounds, and attendance of and participation in selection meetings. The decisions reached by the selection panels where the children of staff are concerned should be made without fear or favour, and should be considered final.

Internal Transfer from Pre-Prep to Year 3 (7+)

At the 4+ entry point, children will be offered a place at Westminster Under School for three years – from Reception until the end of Year 2.

Internal pupils for 7+ entry, i.e. those who have joined at 4+, can choose to be assessed for 7+ entry. Parents should register their interest in this within the same timeline as external applicants, which parents will be advised of. This selection process will take place internally and will be based on continuous assessment data that we already hold. Likely progress into Year 3 will be discussed with parents at the relevant time.

External pupils at 7+ will continue to participate in the formal assessment process. Evidence will be collected, either through continuous assessment for internal pupils, or formal testing for external pupils, to ensure that those offered places at 7+ through both routes are of the same calibre and have the appropriate attributes and abilities.

Internally, the School will advise parents in the Election Term of Year 1 on potential future schools and / or whether their child is likely to be offered a 7+ place at Westminster Under School.

Children at the School for Reception to Year 2 who are not offered a place at 7+ will be welcome to reapply to rejoin the School at 11+ or 13+.

Transfer from Westminster Under School to Westminster School

The overwhelming majority of pupils who join the Under School in Year 3 are assessed for 13+ entry by Westminster School during the course of Year 6. The assessment takes the same form as that for external pupils applying for entry to the Under School at 11+:

- i. the ISEB Common Pre-Test is taken during the Play Term of Year 6;
- ii. all Under School pupils are then invited to take Westminster School's 13+ entry tests in English and Maths, normally in the Lent Term of Year 6;
- iii. all Under School pupils are also interviewed.

Most Under School pupils will then receive an unconditional offer for entry to Westminster School at 13+. As a result, there is no requirement to take a further examination in Year 8 (though very able pupils may choose to sit The Challenge scholarship exam), and transfer to Westminster School is automatic, subject to continued academic progress and good conduct. This procedure will change when changes to The Challenge examination are confirmed.

If a pupil's results in the 13+ assessments fall below the required standard for external pupils, the pupil may be placed under review, in order to monitor progress, or, for a small number of pupils, an offer may not be received for Westminster School, and other senior schools will need to be considered.

For those pupils placed under review, a final decision about whether or not they may transfer to Westminster School is normally made by Westminster School staff in the Lent Term of

Year 7, following a formal assessment of their progress. This assessment may include an updated reference, the sharing of internal exam results, or further testing and interviewing at the discretion of Westminster School. At this stage the pupil could either be offered an unconditional place or could be told that a place to Westminster School will not be offered.

The School will advise and support parents during the course of Years 5 and 6 on potential choices of senior schools and / or whether on the basis of progress so far, their child is likely to be offered a 13+ place at Westminster School. More information is contained in the 'Understanding the Transfer Process to Westminster School' document, available to parents of Westminster Under School parents.

Since pupils who join the Under School in Year 7 follow the same assessment process in order to gain their places at 11+, they will normally transfer automatically to Westminster School without further formal assessment, subject only to continued academic progress and good conduct.

Fees

There are three current fees for admission to the School: a registration fee to register a child for the initial assessments, an entrance fee on acceptance and an acceptance deposit, refundable at request at the start of the academic year after leaving Westminster Under School (if not transferring to Westminster School), or after leaving Westminster School.

- Non- refundable registration fee of £300 (inclusive of VAT)
- The value of half a term's fees for the year group they are joining (which is then offset against the Lent term fees in the year a pupil joins the School)
- A flat £3000 for all age groups.

Fees for those families who are applying for a bursary place are different and can be discussed in detail with the Registrar or the Bursar.

Scholarships & Bursaries

The School does not offer academic scholarships.

A small number of Music Scholarships are awarded each year at 11+ (Year 7) based on an applicant's musical ability determined by audition. The value of a Music Scholarship will be 10% of the day fee and will last for two years, i.e. until the pupil leaves the Under School.

Means-tested bursaries up to 100% of the fees, including a travelling and uniform allowance, are available for pupils entering Westminster Under School at 11+ according to financial need. Any parent applying for a place at 11+ with a bursary must indicate this at the time of the main application, with the first step being the satisfactory completion of 'Part A' documentation before the September deadline. 'Part B', a full financial overview of the family's finances, must be completed strictly before the published deadline. More information can be found from the

Registrar or in the ‘*Bursary information for Parents Applying for an Academic Bursary*’ document.

Means-tested bursaries are available for pupils entering the School where one parent falls into one of the following categories:

- British citizens in possession of a British passport (The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).
- Citizens of the EEA or Switzerland, as defined by the UKVI, in possession of an EEA or Swiss passport or ID. See website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration
- Has indefinite leave to remain in the UK.

Parents should consult the UKVI website for a detailed explanation of the criteria established by the United Kingdom. These criteria are used by the School. Parents who qualify under the above criteria must also live inside the M25 London orbital motorway. The expectation is that their child will commute from home to School each day.

Bursaries are not available to children of parents who:

- i. are in the UK on a visa (general, student, child, business, special or medical) or entering the UK under Tier 2 or Child Student Visa (Tier 4 UKVI Points Based System); or
- ii. live outside the M25 London orbital motorway.

Overseas Applicants

Westminster Under School is a day school which does not offer boarding facilities. The School will not accept applications from overseas unless at least one parent is resident at all times in London and the pupil is able to commute daily from their home to School.

Westminster Under School will, at all times, comply with the rules and procedures of the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) division of the Home Office. We can no longer accept any applications at Westminster Under School on a Tier-4 Visa.