



St George's
School Edgbaston

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS OF PUPILS WITH
ADDITIONAL NEEDS: PREP SCHOOL

Revised: March 2024



Thank you for your interest in St George's Prep School. We are an inclusive mainstream Independent school that welcomes pupils, staff and parents from many different cultures, faiths and backgrounds. Our class sizes are capped at 20, but we often elect to Prep this cap depending on the dynamics of a given class or year band. The Prep School is one form entry. As well as our qualified teachers, our teaching assistants support the delivery of the curriculum and are integral to the excellent pastoral care that the school provides.

We have an active, qualified SENCo who ensures a high quality of provision is in place for pupils with additional needs. She works directly with our pupils, delivers essential training for staff on both quality first teaching strategies and on meeting the requirements of the Code of Practice; she supports planning of the day to day curriculum, as well as carefully planning individual and group interventions. Our SENCo is responsible for both Individual Provision Plans as well as Class Provision Plans. She provides invaluable assessment information and supports the Senior Leadership Team to monitor the progress of pupils with SEND.

We have an onsite Speech and Language Assistant who works under the guidance of a speech and language therapist; they work primarily with our pupils that hold Educational Health Care Plans; however, should you feel your child would benefit from assessment, advice for staff in the classroom or direct therapy, you should discuss this further at the point of application. If you already have information that applies to any communication and language needs, we ask that you submit this along with your registration form.

St George's has many pupils of varying ability and need. In order to ensure the needs of all learners are catered for we invest in a wide range of both in house and external training. We genuinely believe in providing our staff with an excellent 'tool kit' to provide greater depth of understanding of the pupils we work with; staff training ensures a depth of pedagogy essential to quality first teaching.

We often work closely with external professionals (such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists), and aim to implement their recommendations both in the classroom and the wider school setting.

In the maintained sector each pupil has a 'notional budget' of £6000 allocated to meet their additional needs, with the LA providing 'top up' funding for children with a higher level of need. Top up funding is allocated through the CRISP process; Independent schools do not have access to CRISP. The Independent School sector does not receive the notional budget or top up funding, and some of the provision your child requires

may be beyond our core offer; therefore you need to be aware that you may be charged additional fees to meet your child's needs appropriately.

Traditionally pupils access places in St George's Prep School through assessment taster days and through the provision of information which confirms the child can manage both our academic and social curriculum, which is still the expectation. The school will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act, however in the case of Independent schools, many adjustments carry a cost which is not included in the school fees for the mainstream cohort (core offer).

Our SEND Information Report is available on our website and details which interventions and support form part of our core offer (available to all), and which are beyond (not available to all).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who do I speak to about the provision the school offers?

Our SEND Information report is your first port of call. This details the provision we offer and helps you to understand our core and non-core offer. This should be read alongside our SEND Policy – both documents can be found on our website; should you require a paper copy or enlarged font please speak directly to our Admissions Team who will be happy to assist.

Pre-entry access to our SENCo is limited. As a busy school with a large Inclusion Department, our SENCo is kept very busy working with our current students, their parents and our staff. You will appreciate that we have many enquiries from parents of pupils with SEND and, if our SENCo were to meet all of them, they would have little time to carry out their essential duties. We offer several Open Days and Tours throughout the year and members of our Inclusion Department are available during these. They will be happy to answer any queries you may have.

You may have further queries you would like to discuss with us; we will do our very best to answer you as soon as possible but, as a busy school with a limited infrastructure, we may take a day or two to respond. We ask that you consider any questions you have in advance as we cannot offer unlimited access to our Inclusion or Admissions Departments.

2. How do I apply?

You should fill in your registration form, and ensure you indicate that your child has SEND – there is a space to do this on the form. If you have any letters, reports or further information that would help us to understand your child's needs better, please provide them at the point of registration.

3. Why do you need me to provide reports?

We need to understand exactly what your child's needs are. Your child's last school reports (including their IEPs for the last sixth months) are a good starting point. This will give us insight as to their ability, how they access the curriculum, levels of independence and social interaction.

Professional's reports (such as those written by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, the Community Paediatrician etc) will detail your child's strengths and areas of need; they will also provide recommendations as to how best to help your child access their academic and social

curriculum. We need this information to ensure we have the provision your child requires.

If we feel there is not enough information available for us to make an informed decision about the provision your child needs, we may ask you to commission professional reports such as an educational psychologist's or speech and language report.

4. Will you read these reports before I register?

Quite simply – no. We have a high volume of applications and consultations for students with SEND; therefore, we only read pupil paperwork once you have registered.

5. My child's school believe they can no longer meet their needs. Can you?

It is possible that your child has needs beyond the provision of their current setting; you should fully explore the reasons why the school feels they cannot continue to meet your child's needs through dialogue with the school's SENCo and Headteacher. It may be that they feel your child needs an EHCP. If this is the case they have a legal duty to support you in an application for EHCP assessment. St George's is not best placed to support you as we do not know your child, their profile, or what interventions have been put in place - including which have been successful or not. If we discover that the school feels your child would benefit from the support of an EHCP we would not offer a place; on gaining an EHCP you can always contact St George's to discuss admissions via Local Authority consultation. If your child does not need an EHCP we would follow the same admissions procedure as detailed in Points 1 and 2.

6. Can my child repeat a year?

If the information we gather supports this request, and it is agreed by all parties that it is in the best interests of your child, then yes. Please be advised that the decision to hold your child back a year could cause complications if looking for secondary placement within the maintained sector.

7. Will my child automatically be offered taster days?

If through our information gathering (as detailed in Point 1) we feel that we are not an appropriate setting for your child we would not offer taster days. We do understand that a child on paper does not always provide the full picture of the individual, but our liaisons with the current school and relevant professionals will enable us to understand whether or not it is appropriate to offer time in our setting.

8. Will my child be able to access 1:1 support on taster days?

No. The support we have is shared amongst the class and allocated according to the teacher's planning. Our curriculum must run for our current cohort with as little impact on resources as possible. If you feel that your child is likely to need this level of support you must make us aware prior to coordinating a date.

9. When will I find out if my child will be offered a place?

All applications for children with additional needs are considered at a fortnightly panel meeting. A member of our Admissions Team will inform you of the date at which your application will be considered. Not receiving all of the information we need, or delays in response from your child's current school, may prolong the process; it would be helpful if you could inform your child's school that we will be in touch and request that they cooperate in information sharing. We will inform you of our decision in writing following the meeting of the Admissions Panel.

10. My child has not been offered a place, but I believe the school has children with similar needs and the resources to meet these needs.

As a mainstream school we have to cap the number of pupils with additional and complex needs in order to maintain our staffs' ability to provide a relevant curriculum for all of our children. It may be that we do have the resource, but our resources are finite and may already be allocated to our current cohort. If we do not believe we have the capacity to offer a relevant curriculum, or cannot guarantee access to the resources required to support your child we cannot offer a place.

11. Who do I speak to if my child is refused a place?

If we decide that we are not the appropriate setting for your child we will inform you in writing. The panel (which is made up of members of our Inclusion Department and Senior Leadership Team) will have considered all the information made available to them (including information from our staff with regards to the taster days). No one person can make a decision whether to offer a place or not in isolation, and therefore the decision will be final.

12. I would like my child to be considered for a bursary or scholarship.

We have a limited number of means tested bursaries available each year. Our Admissions Policy provides you with more detail, and a member of our Admissions

Team can provide you with information; please be content that your child meets the criteria for bursary consideration before you apply.

A limited number of scholarships are offered each year for academic excellence; the decision to offer scholarships is based upon how your child functions during their taster day as well as information from their current school. Parents cannot apply for scholarships.

It is worth bearing in mind that the support your child needs may be in excess of our core offer; as detailed on Page 1, this means there may be additional charges to the fees detailed on the web. Additional charges are not reduced in line with bursaries or scholarships.

13. I have applied/am going to apply for an EHCP for my child. Should I move my child from their current setting now?

We would advise you to keep your child in their current setting until an EHCP has been finalised. As we do not know you or your child, we would not be in a good position to support you through this process. You should also be aware that, if and when an EHCP is agreed, your local authority has to consult with the school – even if the child is already on our role. Please see our FAQs re Admissions for students with EHCPs.

If your local authority refuses to assess or refuses to issue an EHCP, you can register your interest or get in contact with our Admissions Team for advice.

14. Will my child automatically transfer from the Prep School into St George's Upper School?

No. All students must apply for a place in our Upper School and sit the entrance exam. If your child fails the entrance exam, or they require resources we do not have available, we would not offer a place.