



St George's
School Edgbaston

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

Revised: September 2023



Thank you for your interest in St George's 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 lower this cap depending on the dynamics of a given class or year band. The Upper School is typically three form entry (sometimes four depending on numbers), where alongside our qualified teachers you will find a teaching assistant in most departments. 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 and a Specialist Teacher for Dyslexia who ensure a high quality of provision is in place for pupils with additional needs. They work together to deliver essential training for staff on both quality first teaching strategies and on meeting the requirements of the Code of Practice; they support the integration of pupils into the day-to-day curriculum, as well as carefully planning and delivering individual and group interventions. Our SENCOs are responsible for both Individual Provision Plans as well as Class Provision Plans. They provide invaluable assessment information and support the Senior Leadership Team to monitor the progress of pupils with SEND.

We have an onsite speech and language therapist; however, they work in the main with our pupils that hold Educational Health Care Plans. Should you feel your child would benefit from assessment, advice for staff in the classroom or direct therapy, you should discuss this at the point of application. If you already have information that applies to any additional needs, possible assessments or awaited assessments, 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, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, the Communication and Autism Team, the Hearing Impairment Service etc), 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 Upper School by passing our selective entrance exam and/or through assessment taster days; we also consider information gathered which confirms the child can manage both our academic and social curriculum, which is still the expectation. The school will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act. Where provision is needed over and above our core offer, additional costs will be charged.

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 throughout the year and monthly tours. Members of our Inclusion Department are available during the Open Days and our SEND Administrator conducts the monthly tour. 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. 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.

We consider each application individually and determine whether we can meet the needs of your child as they are known at the time. It may be that we can meet needs that other schools are unable to meet or it may be that we would have the same difficulties as other schools. This depends entirely on individual circumstances.

3. 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.

4. 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/IPPs for the last six months) are a good starting point. This will give us insight as to their ability, how they access the curriculum, additional provision and/or intervention required, levels of independence and social interaction.

Professional's reports (such as those written by an Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, the Community Paediatrician etc) will detail your child's diagnoses, strengths and areas of need; they will also provide recommendations as to how best 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 professionals' reports, such as an educational psychologist's or speech and language report, in order to help our understanding.

5. 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.

6. 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.

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

We cannot guarantee this. 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.

8. Does my child have to sit the entrance exam?

Yes, if your child is entering Year 7. We will use this information along with the information gathered by our Inclusion Department to make a decision about whether we can offer a place.

If your child is Year 8 or above, we will consider the paperwork provided and information gathered; if we decide to offer taster days we will allocate your child to teaching groups and a timetable. Time will be found within lessons to observe your child's ability to access the curriculum. This is intended to be a positive experience for the child, and we do ask that you let us know about any anxieties, concerns or needs your child may have. The subject teachers will complete an assessment summary sheet on your child, which provides information about the child's academic and social abilities. Our Admissions Panel will make the final decision as to whether a place should be offered, and will consider the information gathered from your child's taster day/s, any assessments/paperwork from external agencies, the entrance exam (if your child is Year 7 entrance) and references taken up from the child's current school.

9. Will my child get Access Arrangements for the exam?

If your child is sitting the Entrance Exam you will need to provide us with an up to date professional's report which identifies the need for access arrangements and details what they should be. We need this information to ensure we can make appropriate provision to enable your child to do their very best in the exam and to reduce any anxieties that these pressurised conditions may induce.

10. 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.

11. Transferring into KS4

The school has a wide range of GCSE options on offer, as well as Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT; we are also able to offer some more vocational courses (BTEC pathways) to identified students.

It is not always possible to offer the courses your child has chosen in their current setting, and they may be expected to choose alternatives from our options blocks.

12. How many GCSEs does my child have to take?

That depends on the needs of your child and the courses they choose. The majority of pupils take English Language, Maths and Double Science (which is a combination of physics, chemistry and biology) GCSEs, as well as a combination of option subjects. Most students will take a full GCSE pathway; however, some may take a combination of GCSE and BTECs, others may take Functional Skills in the core and/or solely BTEC options.

If your child is likely to need interventions we will reduce their timetable by one subject in order to allow these to take place. It may be that your child would benefit from reducing their timetable by two subjects; if this is agreed between the pupil, parents and school they will attend our Study Skills provision where they can work on interventions, study skills and homework as well as 'booster' work for subjects in which they struggle most. All decisions made in this respect will be based on individual circumstances and needs. The final decision rests with the school.

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

All applications 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.

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

As a small school our resources are limited and we have small classes with distinct dynamics. We make our admissions decisions based on a range of factors including existing class structure, numbers and needs amongst other things. We make decisions based on the best interests of the child and if we have said no then it is because we firmly believe that it would not be in your child's interests to join us at that point in time. We never say no lightly. We would love to say yes to everyone but we simply cannot.

15. 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 and cannot be challenged.

16. 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 in our entrance exam 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.

17. Will my child automatically transfer from the Upper School into St George's Sixth Form?

No. All students must apply for a place in our Sixth Form. We will talk to you and your child about their hopes and aspirations for the future as well as potential examination pathways. If we feel we do not have a relevant certification pathway, or your child will require resources we do not have available, we would not offer a place.

18. What qualification pathways do you offer in Sixth Form?

We only offer Level 3 qualifications – A Levels and a limited number of BTECs. We do not have pathways for students not yet ready to study independently at this level. You should be aware that BTECs are not a 'softer option' and do include examinations as well as course work. It is important that your child can study independently both in and outside of lessons as, alongside fifteen hours curriculum time, your child has fifteen hours of independent study time.