



# SHERBORNE GIRLS

## Admissions Policy

**Approving body:** Education Committee

**Owner:** SSG Director of External Affairs

**Author:** SSG Head of Admissions

### Executive Summary

This document is for staff and the parents of prospective pupils. It details the School's policy on the admission of pupils to Sherborne Girls. This document also covers the admissions procedure, along with the guiding principles the School follows in its selection of pupils.

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## About Sherborne Girls

Sherborne Girls is a selective school for girls from ages 11 to 18, 90% of whom are boarders. It selects its pupils on the basis of their academic aptitude and ability to benefit from and contribute to the ethos of the School and the co-curricular and pastoral opportunities offered.

The School holds a number of tour mornings/afternoons during the year. Details of all tour events are published on the School's [website](#). The Admissions Department is also very happy to welcome prospective parents and their daughters at other times for individual visits.

Sherborne Girls is part of the Sherborne Schools Group.

## The Entry Points

The usual points of entry to the School are at 11+/Year 7 (Lower Fourth), 13+/Year 9 (Lower Fifth) and 16+/Year 12 (Lower Sixth). The School may also have occasional places available for pupils to join at other ages or stages of their education.

Pupils will normally be of an appropriate age for the year group they are intending to join; however, individual circumstances will be taken into account, such as in cases of illness or an exceptionally gifted pupil.

No pupil can be admitted to Sherborne Girls unless financial responsibility to their previous school has been discharged.

Applicants are advised to register for a place at least three years preceding the desired year of admission although the School will try to accommodate late registrations and assessments subject to availability. The Registration Form can be downloaded or completed online through the School's [website](#).

## Equal Treatment

Sherborne Girls is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an applicant's race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or social background. The School's Equal Opportunities and LGBTQIA policies are available on request from the Policies, Inspection and Strategy Coordinator: [policies@sherborneschools.group](mailto:policies@sherborneschools.group) or by contacting the School via our [website](#).

## The Assessment Process

Sherborne Girls has a strong academic tradition and is looking for pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word. The School has strengths in academia, music, drama, art, community activities, charitable endeavours and service, sport and outdoor pursuits. There are many co-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

### 11+/Year 7 entry

Prospective pupils are assessed for suitability for Lower Fourth (Year 7) through QUEST online assessments – adaptive multiple-choice tests in English, Mathematics, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning, plus non-adaptive tests in creative comprehension and problem solving. These assessments are sat at Sherborne Girls in late November/ early December of Year 6. This is part of the 11+ Boarding Taster & Assessment Weekend where applicants will take part in a carousel of activities designed to give them a sense of school life, as well as assess teamwork and creative thinking. Applicants are also interviewed, and assessment results are viewed in conjunction with a reference from their current school.

### 13+/Year 9 entry

Prospective pupils are assessed for suitability for Lower Fifth (Year 9) through QUEST online assessments – adaptive multiple-choice tests in English, Mathematics, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning, plus non-adaptive tests in creative comprehension and problem solving. These assessments are sat at Sherborne Girls in the November of Year 6. This is part of the 13+ Assessment Day where applicants also take part in a fun activity. All applicants are interviewed during the Assessment Day, and assessment results are viewed in conjunction with a reference from their current school.

Most applicants will be offered an unconditional place following the 13+ Assessment Day and payment of a deposit will secure the girl's place at Sherborne Girls. In line with GSA guidelines, this deposit is fully refundable until 1 January of the year prior to the year of entry to the School, e.g., 1 January 2026 for entry in September 2027. After this date, the deposit is non-refundable. If an applicant does not meet the entrance requirements for Sherborne Girls during the 13+ Assessment Day, she may be placed on the Head's List for further review of her progress, in consultation with her current school, during the Lent term of Year 7.

If applicants complete Common Entrance or other assessments, in their school at the end of Year 8, these results will be used for setting purposes only.

In cases where applicants have not registered in time for the main assessment test and places remain available, the School will assess them at a later date.

For entry at 12+/Year 8, applicants will be assessed through QUEST age-standardised online tests, an interview and a reference from their current school. For entry at 14+/Year 10, applicants will be assessed through written papers in English, Mathematics and Science.

## 16+/Year 12 entry

Academic suitability for entrance to the Sixth Form is assessed via a General Paper; an interview with the Director of Sixth Form, or another member of senior staff; a reference from their current school; and predicted GCSE grades (where applicable). The General Paper comprises several sections including a range of questions that reflect our broad subject provision. Applicants select which questions to answer according to their preferred A Level or BTEC subjects.

Sixth Form Assessments take place at Sherborne Girls in November of Year 11.

Applicants would normally be expected to obtain GCSE passes at Grade 7 or above in the subjects to be studied in the Sixth Form. If an applicant obtains a 5 or 6 at GCSE and wishes to study that subject at A Level, they will need to discuss this possibility with the relevant Head of Department to determine whether they have a strong enough foundation to be successful on that A Level course at Sherborne Girls. Grades 1-4 are not a viable basis from which to start an A Level course, and an applicant who has a 4 or anything less will need to reconsider their options and choose a different course.

## Applicants based Overseas (for all entry points)

For applicants who are not resident in the UK, arrangements can be made to complete the relevant assessments and interviews remotely.

## Applicants for whom English is an Additional Language

Applicants for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) will be assessed for their ability to use English as the medium of instruction.

All 11+ and 13+ applicants will be assessed through our normal entrance procedures. If, following these assessments, there are concerns about an applicant's English language proficiency, the School may ask the girl to sit UKiset tests. These are a series of online tests designed to specifically assess English language knowledge and skills. Typically, the tests will be organised in the applicant's own country. If an applicant has taken the UKiset tests prior to registering with the School, the results she obtained should be provided to Sherborne Girls upon registration.

The School's normal entry requirement in the UKiset tests is for a candidate to reach B2 level or above.

Applicants for 16+ are not required to sit the UKiset pre-tests in advance of their application although their ability to use English as the medium of instruction will be assessed through the normal 16+ entrance tests.

Applicants who are at schools in the UK are exempt from the UKiset pre-test if they can provide evidence that they have the appropriate English language skills.

Assessment Day dates are published well in advance on the School's [website](#) and may be obtained by contacting the Admissions Department.

The School asks parents and previous schools to disclose any relevant information in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of registration. In assessing any prospective pupil, the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. Any offer of a place at Sherborne Girls is at the Head's discretion whose decision is final.

## Special Educational Needs

Sherborne Girls welcomes applicants with special educational needs providing that their individual learning needs can be supported by the Learning Support Department to allow them to access the curriculum and flourish. Parents are required to provide a copy of their daughter's educational psychologist's report or a medical report as and where appropriate.

The School will discuss thoroughly with parents and where appropriate and required, their medical advisers, any adjustments that can reasonably be made for their daughter if they become a pupil at the School.

## Sibling Policy

Most sisters of existing pupils join Sherborne Girls. However, admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where the School decides that a sibling who has applied for a place is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment. In this situation the School would have full discussions with parents to determine the right outcome for their daughter.

## Scholarships

Sherborne Girls celebrates all-round excellence and offers scholarships in:

- Academic performance (11+, 13+ and 16+)
- Music (11+, 13+ and 16+)
- Sport (13+ and 16+)
- Art and Design (13+ and 16+)
- Drama (13+ and 16+)

All Junior Scholarship candidates (11+ and 13+) may apply for a maximum of two scholarship categories in addition to Academic.

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence, encourage potential and celebrate outstanding talent. It is an honour to be recognised as a scholar at Sherborne Girls and award holders are expected to act as positive examples for their peers. Scholars benefit from additional support in the area for which they have been given the award, for example free tuition in musical instruments, speech and drama lessons, sports coaching or art workshops.

Sherborne Girls encourages parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply for one of the School's means-tested bursaries described below.

## Bursaries

Sherborne Girls' bursary programme is designed to facilitate as many pupils as possible who meet the Sherborne Girls' entry criteria to take up a place. The School offers means-tested awards annually to applicants at the usual points of entry. Parents are informed of the bursary application process as part of the admissions journey and, if parents wish to proceed with an application for bursarial support, they are invited to complete a confidential assessment process via a secure portal, administered by Bursary Assessment Associates (BAA), in the Michaelmas term for the following academic year.

Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the Bursary Award Policy published on the School's [website](#). Parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support offered varies according to demonstrable need and availability of funds. Awards are reviewed annually, with parents being asked to provide updated information about their current financial circumstances. Bursary awards are adjusted to reflect any such changes in circumstances.

The School's expectation is that parents who do not choose to apply for a bursary at the relevant time will not require financial support throughout the time that their daughter attends the School, except in wholly unforeseen circumstances.

Sherborne Girls supports a number of pupils through its full, transformational Candlelight Bursary programme, and each year aims to offer an additional Candlelight Bursary place. Applicants are often referred through the School's partnership with the Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation or through established community links. Candlelight Bursaries are also supported by The Sherborne Girls Foundation through fundraising. Further information about the Candlelight Bursaries programme and work of The Sherborne Girls Foundation can be obtained from the Development office on [development@sherbornegirls.group](mailto:development@sherbornegirls.group).

## Overseas Applicants

Sherborne Girls warmly welcome pupils from overseas and holds the appropriate UKVI sponsorship licence to support student and child student visa applications. The School works with an external visa advisory service and will advise if your daughter requires a visa in plenty of time prior to entry to the School. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their daughter holds a valid visa before arrival.

All overseas pupils whose parents are resident abroad must have an appointed Education Guardian in the UK who is a British Citizen or has 'settled status' to remain in UK, be over 25 years old, not in secondary education, and living within reasonable travelling distance (no more than 2.5 hours away). The guardian is responsible for the pupil's welfare, including travel arrangements, accommodation during exeat and holidays, and representing parents when required. Where the guardian is not a close relative or family friend, the appointment must be made through a reputable guardianship organisation accredited by the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA) or the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS). The appointment of a guardian is the parents' responsibility, and the School is unable to make recommendations in this regard.

**Fluency in English.** In order to cope with the academic and social expectations at Sherborne Girls, pupils should preferably be fluent English speakers. Tuition in EAL can be arranged at the parents' expense. The charges for individual EAL lessons can be viewed on the School's [website](#). Detail about the assessment process for applicants for whom English is an Additional Language is described above.

**Religious Beliefs.** Sherborne Girls is a Church of England foundation school. The School does not, however, select for entry on the basis of religious belief and, where practical, it offers the opportunity for pupils of other faiths and denominations to observe festivals and expectations of their own beliefs. Parents should, however, be aware that all pupils are normally expected to attend religious services in School and in Sherborne Abbey. Any parent wishing for their daughter to be exempt from such services would need to request this in writing from the Head prior to the pupil enrolling at Sherborne Girls.

## The School's contractual terms and conditions

These are made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

## Girls arriving or leaving outside usual transition points

Pupils will be added or removed from the Admissions Register in accordance with the statutory guidance for local authorities [Children Missing Education Sept 2024](#).

The appropriate forms will be emailed to [SchoolAttendance@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:SchoolAttendance@dorsetcc.gov.uk). and authorities informed in line with guidance from [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#).

## Supporting documents which inform this policy

This policy has been written with consideration of the following School documents:

- SSG Bursary Award Policy
- SSG Education Guardianship Policy
- SG Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils
- SG LGBTQIA Policy

*To request a copy of any of the documents listed above please contact the Policies, Inspection and Strategy Coordinator: [policies@sherborneschools.group](mailto:policies@sherborneschools.group)*

## Appendix 1: Summary of Changes in Issue 3.3

- Clarification and updates to assessment information and Bursary award information in line with current practice.
- Additional detail added to section on Overseas Applicants.
- Approval body updated.