



THE ORATORY

THE ORATORY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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Type of Policy:	Regulatory
Regulatory Body (if a regulatory policy)	Independent Schools Inspectorate
Relevant Legislation (if a regulatory policy)	The Independent School Standards Regulations – from April 2021 Part 6 – Provision of Information para 32(3)
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1. Introduction

The Oratory is a HMC Catholic Co-educational Independent Day and Boarding school for students aged 11 to 18. 36% of our community are boarders, with flexibility to choose flexi, weekly and full boarding options. The Oratory became coeducational in September 2020, and 33% of our students are now girls.

Deciding on the right school for your child is very important, and we believe that a personal visit is invaluable. We hold several open events throughout the year, which give a general introduction to the school and details of these are published on our website. We are also keen to welcome prospective parents and their children in throughout the year. Please contact the school's Admissions Managers, on 01491 683522 or email admissions@oratory.co.uk to arrange a personal tour of the school and meeting with the Head and other key members of staff.

The admissions process at The Oratory is designed to ensure that all students joining the school can be happy, successful and secure within The Oratory's unique academic, pastoral and spiritual community.

2. Entry Procedure

The Oratory School is a selective School. Selection is assessed through an entry examination an interview at 11+, 13+ and 16+ and references from the applicant's previous school. Our selection process is designed to identify pupils who are able to benefit from our balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School.

The usual points of entry are 11+ (Year 7), 13+ (Year 9) and 16+ (Year 12, Sixth Form). We admit up to 40 students into Year 7, another 40 students into Year 9 and a limited number into Year 12. The school may also have places available in other year groups. Please contact Admissions Department for details.

Applicants should register via the online form on the school's website and from September 2023 there is a £150 UK registration fee and a £250 Overseas registration fee.

3. Equal Treatment

Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. We are mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 during the Admissions Process. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. The School's provision for bursaries is described below and full details are available from our Bursar.



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The Oratory is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

4. Information Sharing

We require parents to inform the School at the outset of the application process about any needs which their child may have or any other significant matters which the School should reasonably be aware of because, for example, it would necessitate tailored provision and/or would materially impact on their child's attendance at School and/or ability to engage in day-to-day School life. The School may wish to discuss these matters with the parents and/or require some further information.

Parents must ensure that information provided is accurate, complete and not misleading and relevant details and information (or changes to them) are shared in a timely and transparent manner.

A failure to disclose relevant information and/or the provision of inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information may - in some cases - lead to the withdrawal of an offer or termination of the School's Parent Contract.

5. Special Needs

The Oratory does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The school welcomes students with disabilities and/or special educational needs, providing we can offer them the support they require, cater for any additional needs, and our site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Our policy is to apply our admission criteria to all potential pupils. We require parents of children with special educational needs, disabilities or allergies (suspected and diagnosed) to discuss their child's needs with the School at the outset of the admissions process so that we can consider and make – to the extent reasonable – appropriate provision for them.

Parents are required to provide with the Registration Form full details of all relevant information about their child, including any reports (including any educational psychologist reports, medical reports or assessments or other relevant expert third party reports), materials or information about their child's needs (educational, health or otherwise), and this may include any final or draft EHC needs assessments (or applications for a needs assessment) or final or draft EHC Plans (or applications for an EHC Plan). This is so that the School can assess their child's needs and consult with parents about any adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the School can ensure, for example, that their child will be able to meaningfully access the education offered and that we are able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. This information should be provided prior to the admissions assessment process.

Where parents of a prospective pupil feel their child requires adjustments (in respect of the admissions process and/or with regards to education at School and participation in School life



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in the event they are offered and take up a place at the School), parents should raise these with the School at the outset and the School may – depending on the circumstances - require some further information from parents or request further assessments in respect of the needs identified and will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments proposed and whether they can reasonably be made for the child if they were to become a pupil at the School.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's special educational needs and/or disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments (in the case of disability), we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to meaningfully access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, or where the School cannot reasonably accommodate the adjustments required or reasonably provide the nature or level of the support required.

Sometimes, the situation of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs changes between an offer of a place being made and the pupil starting at the School. The School requires parents to be pro-active in updating the School as to any changes which mean that the information provided during the application process is out of date or incomplete. In the vast majority of cases, this will not affect a pupil's place at the School. However, the School may, in exceptional circumstances, need to reconsider the offer of a place if a pupil's circumstances change materially. It is in the pupil's interests that any such decision is made as early as possible to avoid any disruption to their education, so parents are urged to be forthcoming and transparent in their communications with the School about any material change to their child's circumstances.

In the event your child has an EHC needs assessment or EHCP (whether at the application stage, draft or final form) it is important that these (and the applicable supporting documentation, e.g. educational psychologist reports or other expert assessments) are shared promptly with the School and that the School is kept up to date with respect to any relevant decisions of the Local Authority or changes in provision.

An additional charge is made for those requiring 1:1 specialist teaching.

6. The Assessment Process

The aim of the process is to identify potential. The Oratory is looking for well-rounded students with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum whilst a healthy focus on academic results is maintained. There are many extra-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

No specific preparation for our entrance tests is needed; all candidates start on an equal footing, with identical opportunities to display their academic aptitude.

Students join the school at 11+ through internal entrance assessments in the form of a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT), and English activity and an observed group activity.



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Students join the school at 13+ through the ISEB Scholarship or the ISEB Common Entrance Examinations. Students that are registered to join the school at 13+ are required to complete the ISEB Common Pre-Test in Year 6. In the spring term of Year 6 Students are invited to The Oratory for interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and to participate in observed group activities. The ISEB Pre-test is organised by Prep Schools. If an applicant has not taken their ISEB in Year 6 then they can take it in Year 7. If the application is made after that, or is not at a Prep School, they can be assessed through an individual online assessment at the point of application, followed by an interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and be offered a place dependent on successful completion of Year 8.

Admissions for Students who join the school at 16+ is dependent on predicted GCSE results, school reports and an Assessment Day which will include an assessment in the form of a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) and an interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. It is expected that a grade 6 will be achieved at GCSE in a subject that is to be continued at A Level. In addition, a minimum of five GCSE passes are required, including pass grades in English and Maths.

Overseas applicants will be required to complete Entrance Examinations in English (EAL) as well as the usual entrance assessments along with a Maths A-Level Pre-Test, if a student wishes to continue with Maths in 6th Form.

The dates for the forthcoming assessment process are published on our website in our Annual Information Booklet.

7. Waiting lists

We encourage early registration and acceptance of a place once offered. If an applicant wishes to apply to The Oratory after the Assessment Day for their point of entry, they may still take the assessment but may be placed on a waiting list until a place becomes available. Applicants will be taken off the waiting list in strictly chronological order.

8. Sibling Policy

Most siblings join us at The Oratory and as a family school we encourage sibling applications. However, siblings are subject to the standard school application procedures and must register for a place within the appropriate time frame. Admission is not automatic and there may be occasions where we judge that a sibling is likely to thrive better in a different academic environment. We do like to keep family groups together where possible and offer a 15% fee remission on the fees of third siblings, for the duration that all three siblings are in the school.



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9. Scholarships

The Oratory offers scholarships for excellence in:

- Academic (Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12)
- Music (Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12)
- Sport (Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12)
- Art (Year 9 and Year 12)
- Drama (Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12)
- All-Round (Year 7 and Year 9)
- Thomas Scholarship (Year 7, Primary School Students)

A scholarship may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or in accordance with the School's Parent Contract.

Purpose of Scholarships

Scholarships are designed to reward excellence and to celebrate exceptional talent. In recognition of this achievement, the scholar is offered a 10% reduction in the fees throughout their time at The Oratory and additional non-financial benefits. We also offer a limited number of exhibitions for those applicants who may not quite reach the standard of a scholarship but show talent in their chosen field. Parents are asked to indicate whether they are interested in applying for a scholarship. Details of the arrangements will be sent to all who express an interest.

We encourage parents of scholars who anticipate that they will experience difficulty in meeting the balance of the tuition fees to apply (at the same as registration of their child) for one of the School's means-tested bursaries described below.

Full details of the scholarships can be found in the Scholarships Booklet, available on our website and by contacting the Admissions Department who can arrange to send it to you via email or by post.

10. Bursaries

The Oratory's bursary programme is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet The Oratory's entry criteria to take up a place here. The School offers means-tested awards annually to entrants at the usual points of entry, where the parents have indicated on the Registration Form that they require financial support. Bursaries are means-tested in accordance with the criteria published on the School's website from time to time. Both parents are required to provide proof of their income and assets. The level of support varies according to parental need; but can extend to 40% in cases of proven need.

Bursaries are always offered for 12 months at a time. The family is required to provide fresh information about its circumstances for every year that their child attends the School. Levels of support may vary with fluctuations in income or wealth.



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Where possible we like to offer a small number of means-tested transformational bursaries where exceptional talent is recognised.

Our bursary policy can be obtained from the Bursary Department.

A bursary may be withdrawn in accordance with the terms upon which such award is made or otherwise in accordance with the School's Parent Contract (Terms and Conditions).

11. Financial Information

Any applicant for a place at the School, including those who apply for bursary support and overseas applicants, may at the discretion of the School be required to provide additional financial information and/or undergo checks to confirm that they are able to pay the School's fees (or any percentage of the fees still payable if a bursary or scholarship is granted).

12. Overseas Applicants

We welcome overseas students provided they have a relative or legal guardian living in the UK with whom they can stay with when necessary and who is able to comply with the school's requests *in loco parentis*.

Overseas students are offered places based on recent school reports, online assessments of Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning, an English language test and interview (where appropriate). English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes are provided at an additional charge. One to one tuition in English as an Additional Language is also offered, for an additional charge, to all international students. However, before entry, students will be expected to demonstrate a sufficient and appropriate level of English Language skill to allow them to advance their studies.

The Oratory has a Sponsor License with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for Child Student & Student Visas. Once we have received a deposit to confirm a place and all necessary documentation as stipulated by the UKVI, we will issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). More details on Overseas Students and Immigration can be found in our Terms and Conditions and on our website.

13. Religious Beliefs

Although The Oratory is a Roman Catholic school, we do not select for entry based on religious belief, and we seek to offer the opportunity for those of other faiths to practise their own beliefs. However, it is a requirement that all students study Religious Studies up to and including Year 11, whilst in Years 12 and 13 every student receives one lesson per week of non-examined Religious Education. We do expect all students to attend whole school acts of worship, even if they choose not to actively participate.



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14. School's Contractual Terms & Conditions

Copies of the school's Terms and Conditions are sent to all parents as part of the admissions process. Additional and subsequent copies are available on request. They are also available on the school's website.

15. Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our admissions process; however, if you are unsatisfied with any aspect of the process you should contact the Director of Admissions and Marketing to share your views. The School's Complaints Procedure applies to current parents and students only.

16. Records and Review

Applicants' details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation. Please see the School's 'Privacy Notice - Current, Past and Prospective Pupils and their Parents' on the School's website for further information about how the School collects, uses and processes personal data.

The School will not hold the personal data of you or your child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose and in accordance with our Data Retention Guidelines. This will generally be no more than 12 months following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain personal data for longer might include: if the parents express an interest in the candidate re-applying for any reason at a later date; or to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.