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## ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**Policy Custodian:** *Registrar*

**Approving Body:** *MTS Senior Leadership Team*

**Approved:** *June 2025*

### **Policy**

This policy covers admission to Merchant Taylors' School (MTS) and Merchant Taylors' Prep School (MTP).

Merchant Taylors' School is a selective independent, single-sex school for boys which seeks to discover and develop the talents of its pupils through a broad range of experiences so that they emerge as confident, self-motivated learners who behave well and care for and respect others, who are secure in their values and who are ready and willing to play their full part in the fast-changing global society of the 21st century.

To fulfil this aim, we seek to select pupils on merit, based on their academic ability, aptitude, attitude, conduct and potential. Close consideration is also given to an applicant's co-curricular interests; a fact that is reflected in our assessment procedures. These procedures vary according to the year of entry.

The Governors determine the overall admissions policy of the school, and the Head is responsible for securing the admission of suitable pupils. The Head may delegate the assessment, testing, interviewing and recommendation of applicants to appropriate senior staff, while retaining both the responsibility for final selection, and the authority for the admission of pupils. The criteria for selection of pupils for admission (see below) are at the discretion of the Head.

Prospective parents are strongly encouraged to visit the school with their son to gain a clear sense of the School's aims and ethos. This also provides an opportunity for them to learn more about the admissions and assessment procedures. Open Mornings are held in September and May for MTS, and termly for MTP. Individual tours at MTS may be arranged by contacting the Admissions Office. Our aim is to encourage applications from applicants with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible and it welcomes applicants from all social and cultural backgrounds regardless of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, disability, SEND, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other attributes, as stated in the Equality Act 2010, who would benefit from an academic education and would contribute fully to the wider life of the School. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Generous fee assistance (bursaries) at 11+ and 16+ is offered in order to enable as many applicants as possible who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school. Merchant Taylors' School and Merchant Taylors' Prep are committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an applicant's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social background.

The Schools make reasonable adjustments to admissions procedures to ensure that disabled applicants and those with learning difficulties are not placed at a disadvantage in comparison with other applicants. For this reason, we ask parents to indicate, on the application form, if their child has a disability or a Specific Learning Difficulty. The School's *Disability Access Policy* and *Learning Support Policy* are available on the School's website ([www.mtsn.org.uk](http://www.mtsn.org.uk)).

MTS Assessments for 11+ entry take place during December, after which offers are

sent to parents in accordance with local independent school guidelines. Assessments at 16+ take place in the Autumn term. In special circumstances assessments may take place at other times by arrangement with the School.

## **Procedure**

### Entry Stages

The main points of entry for MTP are:

- 3+ for entry to the Nursery School
- 4+ for entry into Reception
- 7+ for entry into Year 3.

Occasional places are sometimes available at other stages in the school.

The normal entry stages for MTS are:

- 11+ (Year 7)
- 16+ (Year 12/Sixth Form).

In special circumstances, entry may be considered at other points in an applicant's school career.

### How to apply

#### Prep School

MTP has a termly Open Morning for prospective parents (see website for dates).

Parents who are interested in applying for a place for their child should complete a Registration Form, which should be accompanied by a Registration Fee. Parents will then be contacted by the Admissions Officer about the details of an assessment.

Parents are informed about the ethos, aims and organisation of the school through the prospectus and the website: <http://www.mtpn.org.uk/>. The final dates for the submission of registration forms are advertised on the MTP website.

#### Senior School

Parents should complete the registration form available from the School website and pay a Registration Fee. The final dates for the submission of registration forms are:

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|-----|--|
| 11+ | 31 <sup>st</sup> October of the year preceding the proposed year of entry (fee assistance applicants need to be registered by September 30 <sup>th</sup> . This is also the date for Practical Scholarship applications. |
| 16+ | 7 <sup>th</sup> October of the year preceding the proposed year of entry.  |

Charges associated with registration are as follows:

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|----|--|
| 3+ | On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 set against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee). |
| 4+ | On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 set against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee). |

- 7+ On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 set against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee).
- 11+ On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 set against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee).
- 16+ On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee).

*On transfer from MTP to MTS, £400 will be reimbursed upon leaving MTP. A deposit is payable to MTS as detailed above (11+).*

### Assessment Procedures

#### 3+

Admission to the Nursery school is by an informal assessment. The majority of assessments take place on our main assessment day in October/November each year when our nursery is closed for the day. This assessment involves applicants coming into a 'play session' at nursery with about 12-15 other applicants, which lasts for approximately 45 minutes. After the applicants have settled, ideally parents leave their children with the nursery staff and wait in the adjacent room but there is flexibility in the case of anxious or upset applicants.

The informal assessment involves applicants being encouraged to play and interact with the other applicants and the nursery staff. The assessment does not involve trying to ascertain what the applicants may or may not know. The skills we are looking for, however, are oral language, the ability to socialise with other children, and the willingness to interact with and take direction from the nursery staff.

Some assessments are arranged outside of the main 3+ day. These assessments take place during an afternoon session of nursery alongside our current pupils. There are usually 3 or 4 applicants on these occasions and the assessment lasts for about 20-30 minutes. The assessment criteria are exactly the same as on the main assessment day.

The majority of applicants start Nursery in the Autumn Term following their third birthday.

Transfer from Nursery to Reception at MTP is not guaranteed and we have to be confident that Nursery children have the right ability to be successful at MTP. However, places at 4+ are allocated to Nursery children before the external applicants and there will be ample opportunity to discuss admission to Reception once a child has started at Nursery.

#### 4+

Admission to Reception is by the 4+ assessment. This takes place in January each year. Places at 4+ are allocated first to the children from Nursery and the remaining places are offered to the strongest applicants from the 4+ assessment.

The 4+ assessment consists of a session with about 10-15 other applicants with our Pre-Prep department staff in one of the Reception classrooms. Parents are requested to leave their children in the capable hands of our staff but remain on site in case any applicant is in distress. During the assessment session, applicants are encouraged to play with each other and are also asked to work individually with one of the Pre-Prep department staff. The assessment activities are not challenging and will be very similar to activities that applicants carry out in their own nursery. All activities are based on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The point of the assessment is not to find what the applicants know – instead we are looking for *teachability* and *sociability*. 'Teachability' is important

so that we can be sure that applicants have the potential to thrive in our environment. We are looking for applicants who are focused and alert, who willingly apply themselves to a variety of activities and who will respond in a positive way to our staff. ‘Sociability’ is equally important as learning at school is a social activity and we are looking for children who can interact in appropriate ways with other children. Applicants will be selected on the basis of ‘teachability’ and ‘sociability’ and also on information provided by their nurseries.

## **7+**

7+ assessments take place in November each year. All the applicants join us for an afternoon of assessment, which lasts for about an hour and a half. The assessment consists of papers in English, Mathematics and Reasoning. The English and Mathematics paper are based on National Curriculum standards. These papers allow us to ascertain if the applicants have so far developed the right academic skills to fit in with our current pupils and to be successful in our learning environment. The Reasoning paper allows us to identify the potential of the applicants. Successful applicants will be selected on the basis of their skills and potential at assessment and information from their current schools. We do not issue sample papers for the assessments.

## **Occasional Places for the Prep School**

Places do sometimes become available at the beginning of other academic years and details of these can be obtained from the School Admissions Officer. These places will be determined by assessment (English, Maths and Reasoning for older pupils) and applicants will be asked to complete work/tasks relevant to their year group. Places will be allocated according to skill, potential and information from current schools.

## **Waiting List for MTP**

The school is often oversubscribed. In the event of your son’s year group being already full the Admissions Officer will contact you and, if you wish, will hold your application on a Waiting List. Should a vacancy become available you will be contacted and invited to confirm your continued interest by letter and sending the non-returnable Registration Fee applicable at the time the vacancy becomes available. On receipt of these the school will initiate the appropriate admissions procedures outlined in the paragraph above.

## **Selection**

MTP is a boys’ school offering places to applicants based primarily on academic ability. We do not discriminate against applicants on the basis of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, disability, SEND, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other attributes, as stated in the Equality Act 2010.

## **Siblings Policy**

Siblings of pupils at MTP are not automatically offered a place and need to participate in an assessment and fulfil the entry requirements. However, in keeping with MTP’s family ethos, in cases of applicants with relatively similar assessment performances, priority will, where possible, be given to siblings of current MTP pupils and to those with a recent family connection to the school.

## **The Offer of a Place**

The parents of each applicant are informed in writing whether a place is being offered or not. Parents of successful applicants have seven days to decide whether or not they wish to accept the place. Places are secured by signing the acceptance form and paying a deposit. Some applicants may be placed on a ‘reserve’ list and may be offered a place if any of the successful applicants do not take up their offer

of a place. Parents of unsuccessful applicants may request why their child was not successful. However, due to the very high number of applicants, those who were not successful have usually not done anything wrong and have merely been outperformed by other applicants.

The school is obliged to check the identity of each pupil and parents are requested to provide the original of each applicant's birth certificate so that we can take a copy. This, along with other necessary records, will be stored securely and confidentially.

## **Transition from MTP to MTS**

### Application

Parents indicate to MTP that they wish to be considered for entry to MTS in the Summer Term of Year 5. Discussions are held with parents by the Senior Leadership Team to give advice on the suitability of a transfer to the Senior School.

Charges associated with registration are as follows:

11+: There is no registration fee as pupils have already paid one on entry to MTP, however, parents must complete a Registration Form to ensure MTS has full contact details for the applicant and their parents. On acceptance of a place, £1050 (£600 set against the first term's tuition fees, £400 set against final account, £50 non-refundable administrative fee).

### Assessment

Assessment has three components:

1. Initial discussions are held in the summer of Year 5 between MTP and MTS on the suitability of candidates for transfer. Following these discussions and discussions with parents by the Senior Leadership team of MTP, a letter giving the likelihood of transfer to the Senior School will be sent. Confirmation of a place will be subject to continued good academic progress and conduct prior to admission, and a satisfactory performance in the Year 6 internal examinations.
2. Candidates will be interviewed at MTS during the autumn term of year 6. The interviews will require applicants to talk about themselves, their interests and their ideas, but will also include questions seeking to ascertain abilities in communication, intellectual curiosity, reasoning and wider cultural interests.
3. Applicants sit internal examinations in the December of Year 6.
4. A final offers meeting is held between Senior Staff at both Schools, using data from examinations, interviews and individual reports.

Final offers are made on the basis of performance in all three elements of the assessment process and parents will be informed of the outcome on a date in accordance with local independent school guidelines. Final Admission will be subject to continued good academic progress and conduct prior to admission.

### **MTS 11+**

Applicants are normally expected to be 11 years of age by 1st September of the year of entry and, unless in exceptional circumstances, no younger than 10 years 6 months.

Assessment has three components:

1. A reference from the applicant's current school. In cases where this is not forthcoming this will not prejudice the applicant's prospects in any way. Parents will be asked to forward a recent School Report. Parents will be sent a form for them to forward to their son's school for completion and direct return to MTS.
2. Examinations in English, Mathematics and a General Paper held in December at MTS. Special provision can be made in the examination for those applicants with Specific Learning Difficulties – please see the School's *Learning Support Policy*.
3. Individual interviews for those applicants reaching the required standard in the examinations. The interviews will require applicants to talk about themselves, their interests and their ideas, but will also include questions seeking to ascertain abilities in communication, intellectual curiosity, reasoning and wider cultural interests. Questions may also focus on strengths and weaknesses that became evident through the examination process.

Offers are made on the basis of performance in all three elements of the assessment process and parents will be informed of the outcome on a date in accordance with local independent school guidelines. Offers are subject to continued good academic progress and conduct prior to admission. Offer holders are expected to remain in their current school. Should they leave their current school, it is the responsibility of the parents to inform MTS.

We do not discriminate against children on the basis of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, disability, SEND, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other attributes, as stated in the Equality Act 2010.

The school is obliged to check the identity of each pupil and parents are requested to provide the original of each applicant's passport so that we can take a copy. This, along with other necessary records, will be stored securely and confidentially.

## **16+**

Applicants are normally expected to be 16 years of age by 1<sup>st</sup> September of the year of entry.

Assessment has three components:

1. Written assessments in four subjects intended for study at A level, sat in November of Year 11.
2. A reference from the applicant's current school. This will be requested directly from the school and is completed on a Merchant Taylors' form. Applicants must also supply a copy of their most recent school report.
3. There will be interviews with specialists in the subjects that candidates wish to study at A Level. There will also be an interview with a senior teacher.

Offers are made based on performance in all three elements of the assessment process and parents will be informed of the outcome in December of Year 11. We do not discriminate against children on the basis of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, disability, SEND, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other attributes, as stated in the Equality Act 2010.

The school is obliged to check the identity of each pupil and parents are requested to provide the original of each applicant's passport so that the School can take a copy. This, along with other necessary records, will be stored securely and confidentially.

## Academic Scholarships

At least 10 Major Academic Scholarships worth up to 50% of the fee will be awarded at 11+.

Entrance Scholarships, worth up to 20% of the fee will also be awarded to candidates who perform well.

Academic Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of performance at interview and in the Entrance Examinations. The strongest candidates will be invited to participate in an enrichment programme supervised by the Director of Scholarship and Enrichment, who will also monitor their academic progress. Scholars will be provided with opportunities that will stretch them intellectually. They will be expected to keep up a good standard of academic effort and achievement, and to attend any events laid on for them.

Awards are reviewed at the end of year 8 and year 11.

It will be from amongst this group that many of the potential Oxbridge applicants will be identified and encouraged.

Academic Scholars will be entitled to wear a lamb-motif lapel badge.

## Outstanding Talent Awards

At least two Outstanding Talent Awards worth up to 50% of the fee at 11+ and one at 16+, will be available.

These will be awarded to applicants of high academic ability who are likely also to make a substantial contribution to the wider life of the school.

They will be awarded on the basis of performance in the Entrance Examination and interview together with information gained from references.

The recipients may be invited to participate in a Scholars' Programme alongside Academic Scholars.

## Sport, Drama, DET and Art Scholarships

Four Scholarships at 11+ and in exceptional circumstances, one Sport Scholarship at 16+, are available each to the value of £200 per annum for materials and specialist programmes in these subjects. Applicants need to apply by September 30<sup>th</sup> in the year preceding entry and have support from Schools or similar experts. An application form is available from the School's website and should be completed on behalf of the applicants and submitted by the relevant registration deadline.

Applicants will be invited for an assessment day in the academic year preceding entry, where they will be assessed via a range of appropriate tasks set by the relevant department. 11+ awards made are conditional on reaching the appropriate standards in the entrance examinations.

Once at the school, Scholars will participate in a subject programme under the supervision of the Department, which will offer specialist advice, training and materials. Scholars will be expected to contribute fully to the subject whilst holding an award. Awards are reviewed at the end of year 8 and year 11.

## Music Scholarships

Four Music Scholarships (one of up to 25% of the School fees; one of up to 15% and two of up to 10%) awarded across 11+ and 16+. A Scholarship includes free instrumental and/or singing tuition on two instruments (or instrument and voice). Additional awards of free tuition may be made if there are applicants of sufficient merit. Prospective applicants should apply no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> in the year preceding entry. They may also arrange an appointment with the Director of Music should they wish to, prior to application. An application form is available from our website and should be completed on behalf of the applicants and submitted by the relevant registration deadline.

Suitable applicants will be invited to a day of activities and auditions during the academic year preceding entry. To gain an award an applicant must show exceptional promise either by an outstanding ability in one field or by a reasonably high standard in more than one. We are particularly interested in applicants who play orchestral instruments. Single-study pianists should expect to be exceptional performers. We look for potential, achievement, and an abiding passion for music which puts it at the heart of an applicant's interests. Music Scholars will be expected to contribute fully to the musical activities of the School. Awards will be reviewed at the end of year 8 and year 11.

#### Continuation Awards (MTP pupils only)

Up to three Major Scholarships worth up to 50% of the School fee may be awarded on the basis of a strong academic record at the Prep School and the Admissions Assessment in Year 6.

Once they join the Senior School, the recipients will be eligible to participate in an enrichment programme supervised by the Director of Scholarship and Enrichment who will also monitor their academic progress. Scholars will be provided with opportunities that will stretch them intellectually.

They will be expected to keep up a good standard of academic effort and achievement, and to attend the programme of events laid on for them.

Rewards are reviewed at the end of year 8 and year 11, in line with all other awards.

Further minor awards may be awarded with a nominal award of £200 on the basis of a strong academic record at the Prep School and the Admissions Assessment in Year 6.

#### **Siblings Policy**

Siblings of pupils at MTS are not automatically offered a place and need to participate in an assessment and fulfil the entry requirements. In cases of applicants with relatively similar assessment performances, priority will, where possible, be given to siblings of current MTS pupils and to those with a recent family connection to the school.

#### **All scholarships can be supplemented with a means tested bursary.**

#### Bursaries

The School welcomes applications from parents whose sons would benefit from attending Merchant Taylors' School, and who contribute strongly to the life of the community, but who require financial assistance. Means tested bursarial support is available up to the value of 100% of the fees. Parents should request an application form from the Admissions Office and return it with the necessary supporting documentation no later than 30<sup>th</sup> September in the year preceding entry. Applications will be forwarded to Bursary Administration Limited for assessment.

#### Complaints Procedure



Prospective parents who are unhappy with any aspect of the implementation of the School's Admissions Policy or of the Admissions Procedures should raise the matter in the first instance with the Registrar at the School – the Registrar can be contacted through the Admissions Office. If the issue remains unresolved, parents are invited to follow the formal school complaints' procedure, copies of which are available on request.