

ADMISSIONS POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Due to COVID 19 we have had to make adjustments to our admissions procedures, our December audition will be run virtually please contact Gabriella Duda (gduda@artsed.co.uk) for further information.

The Arts Educational Schools accepts pupils with a wide range of abilities. We aim to allow pupils to realise their potential and thus to pursue their respective levels of excellence, in whatever subject they are working in. The difference in levels of ability is evident in the majority of classes. However, the positive environment for teaching and learning in each class should allow all pupils to achieve a high degree of progress. Members of staff are accustomed to teaching classes of mixed ability, and this is the practice for the majority of lessons at Key Stage 3. The level of streaming (according to ability) that takes place in the school tends to increase as pupils become older – by the time pupils reach Year 10, mixed ability groupings remain exclusively for tutor periods. Class sizes in the Sixth Form tend to be small: the average sizes for A- level classes are approximately 10 pupils.

The decision as to whether or not to admit a pupil to ArtsEd is a complex one. We are looking for pupils who are ‘all-rounders’, ideally with highly developed skills in both the academic and vocational arenas. Such pupils tend to respond particularly well to the holistic approach offered by our arts-based education, with its delicate and complementary balance between the vocational subjects and the more traditional academic disciplines. As a result, pupils with clear talents in both of these spheres tend to achieve at their optimum level in our environment. For entry to Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, we carefully consider achievement in the academic tests, as there is an academic minimum level below which we cannot successfully accommodate pupils. This is due to the level of special educational needs (SEN) and learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) support that we are able to provide, as well as a firm belief that pupils need to be able to cope with the pace of work in order to thrive in our busy learning environment. In the vocational arenas, we are not necessarily looking for excellence from a pupil, but rather potential – accompanied by a genuine desire on the part of the pupil to learn, develop and maximise her/his innate talents.

We are not a stage school and do not wish to accept pupils whose sole motivation is the opportunity to do vocational work. For us, the ability to be a ‘thinking performer’ is vital – it is, for example, extremely unlikely that we would provide consent for a Key Stage 4 pupil to be absent from school during term time in order to perform or attend an audition.

After a pupil has auditioned for a place at ArtsEd, a team of staff collates all the marks for the different audition tasks and decides whether or not the individual would enjoy and benefit from an education at ArtsEd. Offers are made based on these discussions and the school may decide to ask for a reference from the pupil’s current school.

Pupils with learning difficulties or statements of special needs

We are used to working with a number of SEN pupils and our experience suggests that artistic and creative pupils have a higher propensity to be dyslexic. Our SEND Department works with SEN pupils on a one-to-one basis when necessary. They also provide advice to staff as to the most successful ways of working with the specific learning difficulties of individual pupils.

If your daughter or son has a physical or visual impairment, it is important to contact the Admissions Secretary (Gabi Duda) prior to an audition. In such cases, we consider whether or not we can accommodate the level of disability at the school.

Prospective pupils already holding an Educational Healthcare Plan (EHC) should inform us before they accept an audition. There are some forms of special educational need that we do not have the expertise to accommodate and, in such cases, a meeting with parents is necessary so that we are better able to reach an informed decision (see the school's SEND Policy).

Admission process for prospective pupils in Year 7 and Year 12 (to start at the beginning of the academic year)

Pupils/parents need to complete the Registration Form that can be located on our website. Pupils will then be asked to audition on one of our audition days. There are three or four such days per year, and they remain the principal method by which we select pupils for our main points of entry to the school: Year 7 and Year 12. On the audition day, day school pupils are required to bring along photo identification.

Pupils attend for a significant part of the day and they are tested in a number of key areas. These include:

Year 7

An interview together with her/his parent(s). The purpose of the interview is for the school to find out more about the pupil, their interests and why they want to attend the school. Parents also have the opportunity to ask questions in order to ensure that they have all the information they need to make a decision about the school.

An examination in **Maths** (this is an extensive paper designed to suit a wide range of ability within the normal range of Year 6 pupils). It is not expected that all pupils complete the paper. Failure to complete the paper would not necessarily be an indication that a prospective candidate had not completed enough of the paper to pass the exam.

An examination in **English**, testing creative writing skills and answering questions on a piece of text.

Please inform us in advance if your daughter/son has any specific learning difficulties, as we can consider these when we are marking the Maths and English papers.

Pupils will then either audition for the *Dance course* or the *Acting course*. It is important that prospective pupils and their parents/carers have looked carefully at the Curriculum Offer (available on our website) and made themselves aware of the make-up of the school day, as well as the philosophies behind each course. Such research should allow each parent the best opportunity to find the course that is right for their son or daughter.

DANCE COURSE audition requirements

A short dance of no more than two minutes (accompaniment on CD acceptable).

DRAMA COURSE audition requirements

A two-minute monologue from a play (ensure that the character is of an appropriate playing age for the candidate and bring a copy of the text).

Additionally, for both courses:

- A short song (bring sheet music if piano accompaniment is required) may be selected from a list provided; or
- If the candidate so wishes, they may perform a short instrumental recital (please bring sheet music if piano accompaniment is required).

At the end of the audition process, each candidate is assessed for his/her suitability for the school. This information is then considered alongside the reference from his/her current school and the candidate's most recent school report.

Year 12 (Musical Theatre/Acting/Dance BTEC and A Level pathway)

For a detailed breakdown of our Curriculum Offer for Sixth Form studies, please consult the Sixth Form Curriculum Policy

Pupils auditioning for Year 12 entry attend an all-day audition. During that time, there is an introductory meeting for both parents and pupils where there is an opportunity to ask questions. After this meeting, pupils may participate in the following:

- A Drama workshop where skills in improvisation and group work are considered.
- A group interview (three to five pupils) where questions are asked about each pupil's interest in the arts and their desire to attend ArtsEd.
- A group jazz dance class (Musical Theatre/Dance BTEC pupils and those considering A Level Dance only).
- A singing audition – all pupils wishing to join the Musical Theatre BTEC must prepare a musical theatre song from a list provided. Music A Level pupils will also be asked to participate in a vocal or instrumental performance. Please bring sheet music for the song.

Pupils subsequently show the following pieces (depending on A Level choices):

Drama – One classical monologue from a play (Shakespeare, Marlowe or Webster) and also one monologue from a play written post 1990. Each piece should be between one and two minutes long and fully memorised.

Music – An instrumental piece on their chosen instrument, minimum Grade 4 standard. Pupils can do a singing audition but must have a minimum of Grade 2 keyboard skills.

Candidates will also have to sit sight reading and aural tests. Please bring sheet music.

Art – A portfolio of GCSE work, including a range of work from Years 10 and 11. Please bring actual work rather than photographs wherever possible. Sketchbooks are as important as final pieces.

Dance – Pupils are required to prepare a piece of their own choreography for a solo dance based on one of the three starting points set by the Dance Department. The solo must be one to two minutes in length and be in one of the following styles: classical ballet, contemporary or modern jazz dance. Music can be played through a mobile phone.

Photography – Pupils need to send a portfolio of photographs they have taken, the subjects of which are available either online or from the school's Admissions Secretary.

Pupils for the BTEC Musical Theatre course must prepare for the Drama requirements (see above) and they will also participate in the Drama workshop, group jazz class, singing audition and group interview.

Pupils auditioning for the BTEC Acting course must prepare for the Drama requirements (see above) and they will also participate in the Drama workshop and group interview.

Pupils auditioning for the BTEC Dance must prepare for the Dance requirements listed above and they will also participate in the jazz workshop.

At the end of the audition process, candidates are assessed for their suitability for the course to which they have applied. Marks from each stage of the audition process are collated and considered alongside the reference from each pupil's current school. Academic potential is an important criterion for the four A Level courses. If a pupil is able to show that they have the range of skills at the level required, or if we have seen considerable potential, we will be in a strong position to offer a place for the course applied for. In certain circumstances, pupils applying for the BTEC pathway might be offered a place on the A Level pathway and vice versa. Following this stage, parents usually have a period of two weeks to accept the place and send a deposit to confirm it.

Pupils who would like to take the BTEC pathway must achieve 5 GCSE's Grade 4 and above including Maths and English. To study any A Level, pupils are expected to gain a 7,8 or 9 grade at GCSE in the subjects they want to study. If pupils do not study the course at GCSE then a 7,8 or 9 grade in either English Literature or Language will be suitable.

Admission procedures for pupils looking to enter Years 8 and 9 at the start of the academic year or during the academic year

We occasionally have places in Years 8 and 9 for new pupils to either join ArtsEd at the beginning of the academic year, or during the academic year. The audition process is slightly different.

The first thing that a parent should do is to ring the Admissions Coordinator, Gabriella Duda, in order to enquire as to whether or not we have any places, or the chances of any becoming available. In the event of a positive response, the pupil and their accompanying parents will be offered a tour of the school. At the end of this tour, they are usually met by a senior member of staff, who will give them the opportunity to ask further questions. The prospective pupil is also able to ask some questions. If both parties agree to continue with the application process, the pupil is asked to attend a ‘taster day’ with the class that the applicant would be joining. During the taster day (which normally takes place a few days after the tour of the school), the pupil attends some of the normal class lessons, but they are also taken to perform their pre-prepared audition pieces and have a meeting with a member of the interview team. At the end of the day, staff will feed back their observations to the Pastoral Head and a decision as to whether or not to offer a place will be made (subject to a reference from the existing school). If a place is available following the acceptance of an offer, we prefer the pupil to make a start at the school as soon as possible.

Scholarships and Additional Funding

Scholarships

A small number of specialist scholarships are available for students entering the Sixth form, which are means-tested. Successful candidates are awarded either a fully funded or partially funded scholarship, according to individual circumstances.

Scholarships are available in the following areas:

- ArtsEd Academic Scholarship
- ArtsEd Dance Scholarship
- ArtsEd Drama Scholarship
- ArtsEd Musical Theatre Scholarship
- Leverhulme All-Round Scholarship

Students wishing to be considered for a scholarship must participate in an initial audition and. To be successful, they must achieve at the highest level. Students are subsequently given advice as to which scholarship they should apply for together with advice about preparation.

Parents or carers are required to complete a detailed questionnaire , which concerns financial circumstances. Scholarship auditions are then held and awards are offered to those who show the highest levels of ability on the day.

Bursaries and hardship grants.

Bursaries and hardship grants are available to parents whose pupils have been enrolled in the school for two terms. As with the scholarships they are means tested and involve parents completing a detailed financial questionnaire which is used to determine the level of funding entitlement (10%-40%). Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Awards Board, with the Deputy Headteacher being responsible for the co-ordination and management of the process. cparker-wood@artsed.co.uk

Other points to note:

- To request a school prospectus, please contact the school's administration on 02089876600 or email pupils@artsed.co.uk.
- Application forms are available on the school's website or at the back of the prospectus.
- The fee for an audition or a taster day audition is currently £75.
- **For year 7-9 entry parents are required to send a deposit of £1,000 to secure a place at the school; Sixth From students require £1,500 and overseas pupils require an additional deposit of £1,000. This is returned to the parents after the pupil leaves the school.**
- Parents are required to sign a contract before a pupil starts the school. This outlines our conditions, amongst which is the requirement that a term's notice must be given before a pupil leaves the school.

Review of Admissions Policy

Policy written:	August 2010
Policy written by:	Greg Beavis
Policy reviewed	September 2020
Next review date:	September 2021

Circulated to the Principal, Governing body and teaching staff. This policy will be made available to parents and pupils on the website and on request.

