



# **Admissions Policy**

## **June 2023**

### 1.0 Policy statement

- 1.1 We welcome applications for admission from pupils of all backgrounds. This policy applies to all pupils, including those in our Early Years Foundation Stage. We admit pupils with an additional educational need and/or disability provided both parents and school conclude that we can provide appropriately for the child's specific needs.

### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The British School of Tirana (BST) exists to provide a British education in terms of curriculum, ethos and method, for pupils from the international and local communities resident in Tirana and its surrounding area. The BST looks to admit the children of parents who share its mission and vision, and who will contribute in a positive way to the development of the School community. A successful pupil will embrace and participate fully in the educational programmes, both academic and co-curricular.

The BST is open to all children who can benefit from and contribute to our international education irrespective of race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, gender or religion. All pupils entering the School aged five years and over are expected to have a reasonable and age-appropriate level of literacy and oral fluency in the English language to be able to access the curriculum on offer and to be able to participate fully and actively in the wider co-curricular programme. A programme of support lessons in English as an Additional Language (EAL) is provided, according to the individual needs of the child (additional fees may apply). Pupils will generally be accepted into Nursery and Reception classes with lower levels of proficiency in the English language. Subsequent transfer into Year 1 classes however, will be dependent upon the achievement of a suitable level of English for the curriculum at this stage. It is an expectation of the School that at least one parent has proficiency in the English language, both spoken and written. Pupils will require significant support in and exposure to this language at home. All communications between the School and home will be in English. This includes regular reporting on progress and communication about the academic and personal welfare of the pupil.

In making an application for a place at the BSM parents confirm that:

1. They have read and understood all information provided to them as part of the application process and that they accept the terms on which the place at the School is offered.
2. They embrace full participation in all aspects of the British curriculum including physical education and sport.

In addition to assessment results, references and reports, the following criteria may be taken into consideration:

- Native English language
- Citizen of the UK or an English-speaking country
- International expatriate or Italian expatriate returning to Italy where previous schooling has been in a similar school or exclusively in English
- Sibling of a current pupil
- Child of an alumnus of the School
- Family circumstances

It is not the policy of the School to admit a child to a year group above his/her age. In determining the appropriate age group the British academic year will be used (1 September to 31 August).

### **3.0 Enquiries**

- 3.1 All enquiries and applications should be made to the Admissions Officers who will ensure that you have all the information you need.

### **4.0 Visits**

- 4.1 Prospective parents are encouraged to visit to see the school in action and to meet the Heads of School (Primary and Secondary). Every term there are open days for each age group within the school and the dates are published on the school website. This is an opportunity to tour the school on an informal basis. Alternatively you might like to make an appointment for a personal tour. Prospect students are also invited to spend one day in school prior to their enrollment as part of our annual "Bring a Friend in School" series of events. Please contact secretary1@britishschooloftirana.al to arrange this.

### **5.0 Registration**

- 5.1 Following a visit, parents wishing to register their child should complete a Registration Form and return it with a payment for the registration fee and 1<sup>st</sup> installment (deposit). The registration fee covers the cost of administering the registration procedure, including the waiting lists and is non-refundable.
- 5.2 The school will respond by confirming that the child's name has been placed on the admission list for the relevant term and year. If the year group is fully subscribed, they will be placed on a waiting list. A place is confirmed once a formal offer has been made by the school (contract drafted and signed) and a deposit has been received in return.

### **6.0 Admission to Nursery**

- 6.1 Children are welcomed into the Nursery from 8 months old and no formal assessment of children is undertaken. However, parents will be asked about their child's general development and any identified special educational needs prior to a place being offered. Places are not automatic, in some rare cases a place will not be offered if we judge that a child's development is below expectation or that they will not flourish in the environment we offer.

### **7.0 Criteria for Admissions to the iGCSE and Sixth Form**

- 7.1 In addition to the criteria above, there are some academic measures considered for entry to the iGCSE years and Sixth Form:  
Applying from GCSE / IGCSE schools, students moving to Sixth Form need to achieve at least level 5 or above at IGCSE, to include English and Mathematics.  
To study a subject at HL, students need to achieve at least a 6 at IGCSE.
- 7.2 Applying from other school systems - Entry requirements for students without IGCSEs are considered on a case-by-case basis during the admissions process. A minimum average of 7 in the relevant academic subjects would generally be expected on an Albanian DEFTSE or equivalent.

### **8.0 Admissions Procedure**

- 8.1 *School visit:* On receipt of an expression of interest, by email or message, parents will be invited to visit the School with their child/children. During this visit, families will be given a tour and offered meetings/interviews with appropriate staff, including the Principal and/or the relevant Head or Deputy Head of School Section and/or the Head of Key Stage. These meetings/visits can be conducted online in special circumstances, although a visit to the school is strongly recommended.
- 8.2 *Application:* Parents are asked to formally apply by completing the Application Form. They are also asked to send a copy of the most recent school report in order for the application to be processed. A reference from the current school of the child may also be requested.
- 8.3 *Assessment:* Assessments are age-specific and designed to take into account the varied prior educational experience of applicants. In general, each applicant of the Senior School will be assessed using CAT4 online testing and a written English Language test. Additional subject specific assessments, particularly Mathematics, may be used for entry to Year 10 and 12. There is a charge for the assessment of each



child, which includes extra EAL testing if deemed necessary. This fee is offset against school fees if the place at the School is offered and taken up, but is otherwise not refundable.

- 8.4 There are no formal written assessments for entry to the Primary School, but extra and intensive EAL testing will be charged. A written assessment for pupils applying for Primary School may be requested if the school report does not provide sufficient information.
- 8.5 A child may also be assessed by the School's Special Educational Needs (SEN) staff if this is found to be necessary by the School. A second charge is payable for this service and this fee will be offset against school fees in the event that a place is offered and taken up.
- 8.6 *Offer of a place:* Following receipt of the assessment results, school reports and the school reference (if relevant), the School will decide whether a place is to be offered. Parents will receive a letter informing them of the outcome and making clear any specific conditions attached to any offer of a place (e.g. subject choices and the need for additional English language study before entry to the school.)
- 8.7 *Acceptance of a place at the school:* Parents will need to complete the Acceptance Form and pay Registration and Fees before the given deadline to secure the place. The offer of a place will remain in force for ten days from the date of the offer letter and draft contract (unless otherwise stated) and may be withdrawn after that period if the required documents and fees are not completed, with the place being offered to another family. No child may enter the school until all fees due have been paid, and the required forms have been returned.

## **9.0 Taster days**

- 9.1 We offer Taster Days as an opportunity for children to experience the academic, social and physical environments.

## **10.0 Transition from Nursery to Reception**

- 10.1 Transition from Nursery (age 3-4) to Reception (age 4-5) is not automatic. Children are assessed based on an ongoing observation of their learning and development and it may be necessary for specialist assessments to take place if the school is concerned that additional support may be required in addition to the standard package for teaching and learning.

## **11.0 Transition through year groups**

- 11.1 It is anticipated that all pupils will transition through the school and reap the rewards of the education on offer. Should this prove not to be the case, parents will be informed of any concerns at the earliest opportunity and at the latest before the end of the Spring Term if there appears to be any reason why the pupil may be refused a place in the subsequent year groups. In rare cases it may be that a pupil's progress or behaviour means that transfer to the next stage of the school is not deemed appropriate.

## **12.0 Admission to other year groups**

- 12.1 Children joining the school from Year 1 upwards are assessed to ensure that they can access the curriculum, particularly in relation to their level of English language.
- 12.2 Non-Native English students will be required to undertake a language proficiency assessment before a place is offered. This includes a written assessment and may also include an interview in person or via electronic media.

## **13.0 Offer**

- 13.1 The parents of each applicant will be informed if their application was successful and whether a place is available. The school will not be obliged to state its reasons for declining a request for admission.

## **14.0 Waiting list**

- 14.1 If no place is available, parents may place their child's name on the waiting list for the school. The school cannot guarantee when a place may become available.

## **15.0 False information**

- 15.1 Where the school has made an offer of a place on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

## **16.0 Pupils with English as an additional language**

- 16.1 We welcome pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, including overseas pupils and those with English as an additional language (EAL). Children entering the School must have an appropriate working knowledge of English and parents must be committed to supporting further English study at their own cost, if deemed necessary by the school.

## **17.0 Special educational needs and disabilities**

- 17.1 Subject to our entry requirements being met, we welcome pupils with special educational needs or physical disabilities. We advise parents of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the school before registering for a place. This will enable the school to determine whether the school can make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the child can flourish as a learner. Where necessary, parents will be asked to provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or a medical report and the school may need to discuss provision with the parent and external agencies/therapists/Teaching assistants. The cost of such reports is the responsibility of the parent. Where specific provision is required, parents may be asked to pay an additional charge to meet these needs (staffing and/or resources).