Date: January 2026
Next review due: January 2027
Responsibility: SMT (Principal, Head of Junior School, Head of Admissions)

DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Dame Allan's Schools (the Schools) exist to provide high quality education, both curricular and co-curricular, for girls and boys from the ages of 3 to 18.

A decision on the right school for a child requires careful consideration and we believe that a personal visit to the Schools is invaluable in helping parents and children make an informed choice. We hold a number of open events in the Autumn and Spring terms, further details of which are published on our website. We are also very happy to welcome prospective pupils and their parents/guardians/carers (hereafter referred to as parents) to visit at other times. If you wish to arrange a personal visit, please contact the Schools' admissions office on 0191 275 0608 or dasadmissions@dameallans.co.uk. If it is not possible to hold open events or arrange school visits due to circumstances beyond the Schools' control, details of alternative arrangements will be published on our website.

2. ENTRY PROCEDURES

The academic curriculum offered by the Schools seeks to equip pupils to pass external examinations at ages 16 and 18 years. The norm is that over 90% of pupils in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) will proceed to higher education.

The Schools are selective and seek to identify and admit pupils who have the ability and aptitude to benefit from the academic curriculum on offer.

Subject to assessment and dependent upon availability of places, applications are routinely accepted for most year groups with the exception of direct entry into Years 11 and Year 13.

Applicants for admission are accepted throughout the year. The application form is available on the Schools' website and from the admissions office.

Further details relating to the assessment procedures are set out below.

3. EQUAL TREATMENT

The Schools' aim is to encourage applications from applicants with a diverse range of backgrounds. This enriches our community and is vital in properly preparing all our pupils for today's world. As detailed below, bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many pupils as possible, who meet the admission criteria, to join the Schools.

The Schools are committed to securing equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which all individuals are treated on the sole basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The Schools seek to select pupils of academic potential irrespective of any protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Where an applicant has any disability, they will be treated no less favourably than those without disabilities. The Schools will make reasonable adjustments to address the needs of applicants with disabilities, having regard to what is reasonable in all the circumstances, including academic integrity, available resources, the cost and practicality of proposed measures, health and safety requirements, and the interests of other pupils.

Entrance examination and interview procedures will be arranged to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged. Special arrangements will be made in advance of examinations or interviews for any applicant who has a disability, including the provision of extra time for applicants who have a recognised specific learning difficulty, where such arrangements are reasonable and appropriate in the context of the assessment. Arrangements will be discussed in advance with the parents and the current school of any applicant. Where available, relevant specialist reports will be sought in advance of entrance examinations and interviews.

4. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Schools do not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided that, following appropriate consideration, the Schools are able to make reasonable adjustments to support their access to the education offered, and that the school site can accommodate them. We aim to ensure that all of 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 admissions criteria to all potential pupils. Parents of children with special educational needs or physical or mental disabilities are strongly encouraged to discuss their child's needs with the Schools in advance of entrance assessments, so that appropriate arrangements can be considered and, where possible, made at the point of assessment. Parents should provide, with the application form, a copy of an educational

psychologist's report or a medical report, where available, in order that the Schools can assess the child's needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which may reasonably be made, and to ensure that the child is able to access the education offered and that the health and safety of the child and others can be appropriately supported. The absence of such reports will not, of itself, prejudice an application.

The Schools will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the Schools, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil would not be able to access the education offered, or that his/her health and safety or those of other pupils may be put at risk, we reserve the right to decline a place at the Schools.

5. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES

The precise details of the selection procedure vary according to the age of the pupil. We endeavour to ensure that all applicants and their parents are fully briefed about the process.

The aim of the assessment procedure is to identify the pupil's potential. The Schools are looking for well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests which stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The Schools have strong traditions in music, drama, dance, art, debating, community activities and sport. We offer many co-curricular activities which play an important role in developing a well-balanced, confident individual.

References are required and sought from an applicant's current school at all entry stages. These references are a key part of the selection process, along with examination performance and interview performance.

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

In the event that the number of children registered for the main entry points (Years 3, 5, 7 and 9) exceeds the number of places available, decisions will be made on the basis of professional judgement, taking into account a range of relevant factors, which may include:

- results obtained in entrance assessments;
- references from previous schools;
- the presence of siblings within the Schools or requiring entry;
- the overall balance and composition of the year group (for example, class sizes, pastoral considerations and the effective delivery of the curriculum);
- previous family links with the Schools (Allanians).

Where places cannot be offered at the point of decision, a reserve list will be maintained and offers may be made subject to availability.

In other year groups, where there is no immediate availability, applications will be placed on a waiting list. Applicants will be notified as and when a place becomes available and, where appropriate, invited into school for an assessment as part of the admissions process.

Waiting lists will be managed by the Head of Admissions using professional judgement and will take into account a range of relevant factors, which may include the date of application, the applicant's current school status, and the presence of siblings within the Schools. Placement on a waiting list does not guarantee the offer of a place.

Junior School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Children are welcomed into the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) of Dame Allan's Junior School from the September after they turn three. Prior to admission into Nursery or Reception, parents will be asked about their child's general development and any identified special needs. Subject to availability, children are invited to spend a session in the Nursery during which time staff assess their development and monitor any particular needs they may have. For children joining EYFS, there is an assessment which includes letter and number recognition, sequencing and motor skills.

A place, or on occasion a follow up visit, may then be offered. Where applicable, references will be sought from existing educational settings.

In extraordinary circumstances, where it has not been possible before entry to assess the pupil effectively or at all, an offer of a place may be made, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references (if applicable) and subject to review at the end of the first year in school. If this review is unsuccessful and the pupil does not meet the required standard of progress, the place may be withdrawn and the pupil will not be able to progress into the next year group.

KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

Assessment for entry into Key Stages 1 or 2 (Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) involves online assessments in reading, mathematics and non-verbal reasoning on standardised (age related) assessments and time spent with the applicant's peer group in a classroom situation. Alongside performance in the assessment, reports from current schools, previous learning experiences and special needs are also taken into account. The assessments are taken by arrangement following application.

Children are required to come into school to sit their assessments, unless from out of the area, when alternative arrangements will be made through the Head of Admissions.

In extraordinary circumstances, where it has not been possible before entry to assess the pupil effectively or at all, an offer of a place may be made, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references (if applicable) and subject to review at the end of the first year in school. If this review is unsuccessful and the pupil does not meet the required standard of progress, the place may be withdrawn and the pupil will not be able to progress into the next year group.

Senior School and Sixth form

The main entrance examinations cycle is for admission to the senior school S in Year 7 (11+) and takes place early in the spring term for entry the following September. A reserve date is set aside for those unable to make the main examination day. Applicants for places in Years 8-10 inclusive (or any applicant looking for immediate entry into Year 7) sit the appropriate examination for their year group by arrangement following their application.

Examinations for admission to Years 7-9 in the senior school consist of an online assessment in English, mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning. Candidates then take part in small group interviews, followed by team building activities.

Pupils seeking admission to Year 10 will sit an online assessment in English, mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning and will be interviewed by the Director of Senior School.

All applicants are required to sit the entrance examination in person at the senior school site in Fenham, unless from out of the area, when alternative arrangements will be made through the Head of Admissions.

Applicants for places in Year 12 are interviewed by the Director of Sixth Form. Depending on the outcome of this interview, conditional offers are then made on the basis of GCSE results. We expect students entering Year 12 to have secured a minimum of 45 points from their best 8 GCSE grades (grades 3 or below may not be included). For students applying for a bursary, they are expected to have secured a minimum of 69 points from their best 9 subjects at GCSE. All subjects chosen at A level will require a minimum of grade 6 achieved in that subject (or supporting subjects) at GCSE, with some subjects requiring a higher grade. Further details can be obtained from the Head of Admissions.

Applicants for places in Years 11 and 13 (and applicants wishing to join Years 10 and 12 part-way through the academic year) are decided on a case by case basis. If you require further information, please contact the Head of Admissions.

6. SIBLING POLICY

The Schools welcome applications from siblings. Admission is not automatic and will be subject to passing the appropriate entrance assessment. There may be occasions where the Schools judge that Dame Allan's is not the right environment for the sibling.

7. BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Bursaries are available to applicants from Year 7 (11+) to Year 9 (13+) inclusive, and then again in Year 12. whose parental circumstances are such that they would not be able to attend the Schools without such an award. They are means-tested and can cover up to 100% of school fees. Applicants must satisfy the Schools' entrance criteria and performance in the entrance assessment is taken into account when awarding bursaries. Bursary awards are reviewed annually to assess the continuing financial eligibility of the recipient.

Academic scholarships are available to pupils entering the Senior Schools at 11+, 12+ and 13+. They are awarded up to a maximum value of 50% fee reduction, on the basis of outstanding performance in the entrance process (examination and interview).

Applicants for bursaries and scholarships must sit the entrance examination in person at the senior school site in Fenham prior to the February half term (for entrance the following September) at the Schools.

Bursaries and scholarship awards are tenable during the whole time the successful recipient remains at the School, subject to satisfactory work and conduct under annual review (plus financial eligibility for bursaries). Awards may be withdrawn if there is evidence that the recipient is not working diligently and/or their behaviour falls below the expected standard. Awards may be amended up or down following the annual review of financial circumstances if household income changes.

A Junior School pupil may sit the senior school entrance examination if he or she wishes to be considered for a scholarship for entry into Year 7. However, all pupils who are allocated a place in Dame Allan's Junior School are entitled to a place in Dame Allan's Senior School unless their progress in the Junior School gives cause for concern and suggests that they might find the learning environment at the senior school difficult to manage. Parents will be informed of these concerns by Junior School staff and possible strategies to address them discussed, including the possibility that a pupil might sit the entrance examination to provide an objective view of their progress.

Scholarships are only available, in the first instance, to applicants sitting in the main entrance examinations cycle. Where an applicant sits the examination at a later date and does well enough to have otherwise been considered for a scholarship, consideration will be given to making an award based on the pupil's performance in the school examinations at the end of their first year in school.

Scholarships and bursaries in the Sixth Form are awarded at the discretion of the Director of Sixth Form.

Music Scholarships

Music scholarships are awarded to outstanding musicians at the Senior Schools, who play any instrument or sing with exceptional ability (and meet the Schools' entrance criteria).

They cover the cost of tuition for their instrument or voice. Further details can be obtained from the Head of Admissions.

Sports Scholarships
Sports scholarships are open to all external applicants entering the Senior School into years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12, including pupils progressing from year 6 at Dame Allan's Junior School.

Pupils must display exceptional talent and potential in one or more sporting disciplines, as assessed by our Director of Sport, and would normally be performing at County or Academy level.

All applicants must complete the School's entrance assessment.

Sports scholarships carry a value of up to 25% of fees.

8. ENGLISH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) APPLICANTS

Where a pupil with English as an additional language applies to join the Schools from overseas, the Schools may require the candidate to provide evidence of a formal qualification in English as a foreign language, typically IELTS or equivalent.

Further details are provided in the Schools' English as an Additional Language policy, which can be found on our website.

9. CHILDREN OF MEMBERS OF STAFF

Children of members of staff at the Schools will be subject to the same selection procedures as external applicants.

10. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

The Schools welcome applications from prospective pupils of all faiths and of no faith.

Although the Schools have a Christian foundation and traditions, they do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief.

However, parents should be aware that all pupils are expected to attend the annual Carol Service and Founder's Day service, unless exempt for religious reasons.

11. SCHOOLS' TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Schools' terms and conditions will be made available to parents as part of the admissions process.

12. INTEGRITY OF OUR ADMISSIONS PROCESS

If an application is found to be false, fraudulent or deliberately misleading, the Schools reserve the right to deny the applicant admission or, where a pupil has already entered the Schools, to require that they are removed immediately.

We shall respect Independent School Council protocols regarding transfer and admissions. In particular, we shall aim to establish that parents of pupils transferring to us from another independent school have met all their obligations to the latter prior to the completion of the transfer.

13. COMPLAINTS

The Schools' complaints procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

In the first instance, prospective parents should contact the Head of Admissions in writing, who will respond to their communication in the context of the Admissions Policy.

If a prospective parent wishes to make a specific complaint relating to the conduct of the admissions procedures, this should be addressed in writing to the Head of the Junior School (for admissions to the Junior School and Nursery) or the Principal (for admissions to the Senior School and Sixth Form), within two weeks of any decision relating to an admission being made. The Head of Junior School or Principal will examine the grounds for the complaint and will respond within 10 school working days. The outcome of the Head of Junior School or Principal's decision will be final.

14. RECORDS AND REVIEW

The privacy of personal data provided by prospective pupils and their parents is of the utmost importance to the Schools. For full details of how the Schools handle personal data of prospective pupils and their parents and those who are offered and take up places at the Schools, please see our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices on our website.

The Schools will not hold the personal data of prospective pupils and their parents for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be until the last entry point into the Schools has been passed, unless parents inform us that they require a shorter period of retention. For further information please see our Retention of Records Policy on our website.