

ADMISSIONS POLICY

d'Overbroeck's is a co-educational independent school for students from age 11 through to the Sixth Form. The main entry points are at 11+ into Year 7, at 13+ into Year 9 and at 16+ into the Sixth Form. Subject to places being available, we are happy to consider applications on behalf of pupils who may wish to join us at a different point, directly into Year 8 or Year 10 for instance.

We also offer a one or two-year IGCSE programme for international students who wish to go on to sixth form study, either here or at another school, and need to gain the necessary qualifications or to improve their English language skills before they are ready for further study in the UK.

We take only day pupils up to Year 11, and day and boarding students in the Sixth Form. International students on the IGCSE course are usually all boarders. In total, we have around 485 students on the roll, of whom 150 or so are boarders.

Visits, Open Mornings and Taster days

We encourage prospective parents and students to come and see us, and ideally to do so on more than one occasion.

We run a number of Open Mornings each year (usually once in each term), and the dates for these are published well in advance. We also encourage prospective parents and students to come and see us for an individual appointment on a normal school day, either before or after they have been to an Open Morning.

As a rule, we are very keen that all prospective students have been in for a visit and an individual meeting with a senior member of staff before they come in for taster days or to sit entrance assessment tests or scholarship exams.

Admissions overview

d'Overbroeck's is a selective school. However, we do not wish to be narrowly selective on academic grounds alone. Subject to applicants meeting the minimum entrance requirements that are relevant to their year of entry, we are happy to consider pupils across a relatively wide range of abilities. Our overriding aim is to enable all of our students, throughout the age and ability range, to achieve to the best of their potential both academically and personally. In addition to academic ability and motivation, particular aptitude in areas such as art, sport, music or drama or an active and well-informed enthusiasm in any other worthwhile area will be taken into account when applications are considered.

Equal treatment

Our aim is to encourage applications from as wide a range of candidates as possible, and we set great store by the fact that our student body is healthily diverse in terms of nationality and background. As a school, we are committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of, for example, a candidate's gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or, as far as is practically possible given that we are a fee-paying school, social background.

We welcome students with special educational needs provided that we are satisfied that we can offer them the support they need – and, of course, that they meet our normal academic entrance criteria. We will usually arrange an interview and assessment in order to decide whether we can provide the required support and will need to see any relevant documentation (for example educational psychologists' reports or EHC plans) prior to such interview and assessment.

We are also happy to welcome students irrespective of any disabilities. We will do all that is reasonable to comply with the Equality Act 2010 so that we may accommodate the needs of disabled applicants for which, with reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately. We will be guided by the principles set out in our Disability Inclusion Policy wherever these are relevant.

Applications from students with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, disordered eating or self-harm will be considered provided that we are satisfied that the student is well enough to be in school; that we are able to offer both the kind and amount of support (including in light of the school's equality obligations) we believe the student would need in all aspects of school life, including boarding where relevant; that the student is receiving sufficient and appropriate support outside of school where we believe this to be necessary; and, of course, provided that s/he meets our normal academic entrance requirements.

We may also request further information, such as a medical certificate, and any associated correspondence from the student's current school that we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

Religious beliefs

d'Overbroeck's is not associated with, or committed to promoting, any one particular faith or religious belief. We welcome students regardless of religious belief or background and would always seek to make every reasonable effort to accommodate students' religious requirements and to allow them to practise their faith as they and their families would wish to.

Entrance requirements and the assessment process

As has already been indicated, d'Overbroeck's is a selective school, though not very narrowly so on academic grounds alone. We are naturally keen to draw very able students; but we are equally happy to admit students whose ability is closer to the average. Success means helping each and every one of our students to achieve to the best of his or her ability. The aim of the assessment process is, therefore, to enable us to get to know our prospective students and to take a view on whether we think a student is likely to be happy and successful in this environment and to take full advantage of what it has to offer, both academically and personally.

- **For entry at age 11+**

All applicants are asked to sit our internal assessment tests in English and Maths. There is a short interview with a senior member of staff and we ask for a reference from the student's current school. Candidates will be asked to attend a 'taster day' to sample a school day with our current Year 7. We will take all these factors into consideration when making our decisions. We are generally looking for evidence that the child will be able to access our full curriculum and to take full advantage of an academic education up to and including A level.

- **For entry at age 13+**

All applicants are asked to sit our internal assessment tests in English and Maths. There is a short interview with a senior member of staff and we ask for a reference from the student's current school. Candidates will be asked to attend a 'taster day' to sample a school day with our current students. We will take all these factors into consideration when making our decisions. We are generally looking for evidence that the child will be able to access our full curriculum and to take full advantage of an academic education up to and including A level.

If the pupil is preparing to sit Common Entrance at an independent Prep school, then the offer of a place made on the basis of our own internal assessment will be conditional on the pupil achieving the required standard in the Common Entrance papers. We are normally looking for a *minimum* of 60% on the English, Maths and Science papers and an *average* of 60% on the remaining papers.

- **For entry into the Sixth Form**

We will always consider an application in the round, taking into account the full range of relevant factors, including academic potential and achievement to date as well as the student's interests, activities and achievements in other areas.

Academically, students will usually be expected to have a minimum of six GCSEs (or IGCSEs) with grades A*, A or B.

At least a B grade at GCSE will be required in any subject that a student wishes to continue studying in the Sixth Form. Please refer also to the relevant Subject Profiles for any additional subject-specific recommendations.

All students will be expected to have achieved at least a C grade at GCSE (or IGCSE) in both Maths and English.

Students who wish to study Maths at A level will be required to gain at least an A grade in GCSE Maths; students wishing to study Maths and Further Maths will be required to have achieved an A* in GCSE Maths.

Where an offer of a place is made, it will be conditional on the candidate achieving these minimum grades at GCSE.

International students who are studying for qualifications other than GCSEs will be expected to achieve results that are equivalent to the above.

Students whose first language is not English must also demonstrate at least an upper intermediate level of English, equivalent to the middle / upper range of B2 or above on the Common European Framework (IELTS 6.0 / 6.5 and above in all skills). These students will usually be required to sit our online entry tests in English Language and Maths.

Candidates will be expected to attend for a personal interview, although Skype interviews for some international students can be arranged.

For all candidates joining us from other schools, we will request a formal written reference from the current school and this will be taken into account when the application is considered.

- **For entry into the IGCSE course for international students**

Students are usually between 14 and 16 years of age when they start on this course. Having submitted a personal statement and progress reports from their current school, applicants are

required to sit our online tests in English Language and Maths. We will also request a formal written reference from their current school. We interview candidates with a lower intermediate level of English, equivalent to at least B1 level or an IELTS score of 4.5, usually using Skype. Students and parents are invited to attend in person wherever possible.

Scholarships

A range of scholarships is offered each year to candidates entering Year 7, Year 9 or Year 12 (the Lower Sixth) who show outstanding talent and potential. In addition to academic scholarships we also offer awards for outstanding talent and potential in art, music and drama. An Environmental Awareness scholarship is also available for candidates entering the Sixth Form.

Information on the scholarships and awards that we offer, on how they are assessed and on how to apply for them, is set out on the website; printed versions are available on request from the school.

Bursaries

The school also awards a number of bursaries each year to help in cases of demonstrable financial need. Bursaries are means-related and assessed on the financial circumstances of the parents (and, where appropriate, any other family members who may be able and willing to contribute to the fees). Where a bursary is offered, the level will vary according to the family's financial circumstances. In general, the expectation will be that the family will shoulder the main bulk of the fees with the bursary helping to square the circle, rather than the other way around.

Except where specified otherwise at the outset, bursaries are normally intended to apply for the duration of the student's time at d'Overbroeck's unless the family's financial circumstances change significantly during that time. Bursary recipients will normally be asked to provide fresh information about their circumstances for every year that the student is with us. Levels of financial assistance may be varied with fluctuations in income, though please note that there will be no obligation on the school to increase the value of a bursary if the family's income should decrease relative to the previous year.

Please note that bursaries are normally offered only to families who are resident in the UK. Bursaries are always offered on the condition that the recipient continues to maintain an excellent record of work, attitude and attendance throughout.

Bursaries are usually applied to tuition fees only. Boarding fees (where applicable) and other charges are normally applied in full.

Parents wishing to discuss the possibility of a bursary are asked in the first instance to contact the Principal for a preliminary discussion.

Contract Terms for parents

Prospective parents may consult these on the website at any time. A copy will be sent to parents at the time an offer of a place is made.

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