



ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSION POLICY

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ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSION POLICY

Introduction:

Sophia High School has a strong expectation that its students will be successful in their personal learning goals, and that each child's goals will be unique to their strengths and abilities. This policy aims to identify and admit children who will benefit from an online academic education, participate fully in our interactive live lessons with their fellow students and teachers, play a full role in the life of the school and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our school community.

Sophia High School provides full time online education provision to students who are enrolled on our admissions register. We successfully hosted the UK Department for Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) Quality Advisory Evaluation from Ofsted in September 2023, which led to SHS being the first UK DfE Accredited online education provider. We are also the only online school to be accredited by the Council of British International Schools (COBIS), and the only online school as a member of the UK Independent Schools Association (ISA). All inspection reports are currently on our website.

Aims:

The school will aim to provide an inclusive education in full accordance with the UK Department for Education (DfE's) accreditation and quality assurance for online education providers in the UK. All prospective students undertake online standardised baseline assessments in GL Assessment English (PTE), Maths (PTM), Science (PTS), and the CAT 4 assessment which are primarily designed to reveal facility in English and correct level of instruction. Children with English as a Second Language may also be asked to take part in the Cambridge English Placement Test in order to identify language proficiency and plan next steps in support.

Students also take part in a 1-1 virtual lesson with our team of teachers to ensure it will also help the school identify applicants who have additional learning needs and to ensure that students are able to access and utilise the full range of interactive learning tools and opportunities provided by our online learning programme.

Students who are commissioned by UK Local Authorities, schools or families, to support the Alternative Provision mandate, will be enrolled through a personalised programme of Induction, which meets the needs of the student, provides insights into their strengths and challenges, and allows them to best transition to online learning.

Sophia High School believes that:

- Every child has a right to access quality education.

- A diverse learning community is enhanced by the special gifts and talents of every member. We embrace the differences and challenges that each child brings.
- We value the uniqueness of each child and offer places to a student cohort with a wide range of abilities who will thrive within the online programmes offered and benefit from contributions to our interactive live lessons environment.
- There should be equal opportunity for every student to participate in all activities.
- Through close collaboration with parents, we meet the needs of those students and families who are seeking quality education in accordance with the DFE requirements for Online Education providers.
- A high expectation of academic, personal, cultural and social achievement is conveyed to all through our Values and Aims, which drive the learning at Sophia High School.

Equal Treatment:

We welcome children from many different ethnic and racial groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our school community and the rights and freedoms of others. All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of their, or their parents' race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status. We expect all our pupils to attend all assemblies and team meetings, and to take part in the full range of curricular subjects on offer. All pupils attend live lessons with their cameras and audio on (unless agreed prior to joining lessons with the DILAP) and participate in interactive learning both visually and through audio input to lessons with their teachers and peers.

Not all children will be suitable for the online programmes offered at Sophia High School. Some may fall outside of the boundaries of assistance which can be offered with a defined level of additional support.

Disability and Special Educational Needs:

Sophia High School currently has limited facilities for the disabled but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under equality legislation in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities or special educational needs for which, with reasonable adjustments, we can cater for adequately, in view of the responsibilities and promises made to all students in the cohort. We are not able to use the chat function as a sole means of communication in lessons due to our stringent safeguarding policies and requirement to ensure that all students make progress as part of our assessment of learning.

We need to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the online education provided. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational need should provide us with full details prior to the admissions procedure at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place.

Sophia High School needs this information so that, in the case of any child with a particular need, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to ensure that the application procedure is accessible for the child and that Sophia High School can cater adequately for the child's needs should an offer of a place be made.

Sophia High School will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the information and application procedure is accessible for disabled candidates and will make such reasonable adjustments as necessary. For example, we may be able to provide an examination paper in large font for a visually impaired child or use the Google Transcribe feature for children who have EAL.

Similarly, if special education needs or a disability become apparent after admission, we will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at Sophia High School.

Alternative Provision

Alternative Provision encompasses various educational options outside mainstream schools, including online schools that cater to students from Key Stage 1 through to post-16 education. These provisions are designed to meet the needs of students who may require a different approach to learning due to various challenges. Schools and alternative providers must comply with independent school standards and registration processes. Local Authorities oversee quality assurance through established frameworks, ensuring that AP providers meet rigorous standards, including those for Safeguarding. Sophia High School provides online alternative education, offering live, real-time lessons delivered by qualified teachers. Its programme is designed to support students who may benefit from a more flexible learning environment or access to non-traditional courses and qualifications.

Sophia High School currently accepts students commissioned by approved Local Authorities, schools and families, with a range of prior-identified needs. These needs may be physical, related to mental health concerns, School Based Avoidance (EBSA), and may form part of an EHCP. We have employed a Director of Alternative Provision and Inclusive Learning to support the registration of any student who wishes to enrol at SHS, to ensure that a full picture of needs has been identified when offering a place through the Admissions Process.

Application:

When you have read the Prospectus and the Standard Terms and Conditions, please complete the Student Application Form in order to register your interest in a place for your child at Sophia High School. The Student Application Form must be signed by a parent and then returned to the School, together with a Registration Fee of £120 GBP.

This registration fee is required in order for your child to be assessed for entrance at Sophia High School. Registration Fees are non-refundable.

Assessment:

All children who apply for a place at Sophia High School are invited to take part in an assessment with members of the Senior Leadership Team; this involves an assessment of where the child is at on the learning continuum and discussions to explore the child's interests, attitude to school, ability to thrive in an online education environment, personal qualities, ability to contribute to the school community, support available at home and any relevant connection with the school. The School will also require your child's last school report, and a reference form may be sent to your child's existing school requesting further information on your child's academic and social progress.

At Sophia High School we recognise that the way children learn is highly individual, and it is important that all teachers use a range of strategies and differentiation to allow each child to successfully access the online programmes at Sophia High School. In light of this, the Admissions Team uses a range of activities and facilitates different opportunities for children to allow them to best highlight their strengths during the assessment process.

All students, either prior to entry or upon entry (wherever possible) take the GL Assessment PTE, PTM, PTS and CAT 4. Sophia High School is the only online school with permission from GL to run the full suite of their online assessments. We follow rigorous protocol with cameras on (full-face), and continuous internet access with the students to ensure visibility at all times.

Standardised Tests are administered online to generate an internationally recognised level of attainment based on age-appropriate expectations. By accessing and analysing the results of over 15,000+ students worldwide, assessment standardised age scores give a baseline from which the Sophia High School can build on to continue to develop the individual strengths of each child when they enter school. These assessments are also delivered according to the recommended schedule, throughout a student's time at Sophia High School to track attainment and progress.

Children in the Foundation Programme need a chance to explore their environment and become engaged at their own pace during the Admissions process. The Assessment process for these children allows them to participate in developmentally appropriate activities online which encourage them to move, participate, speak (if comfortable doing so), listen, collaborate, build, manipulate, and use the live online learning environment technology. The small group setting encourages children to quickly develop a reassuring bond with peers and teacher, and also highlights their developing social skills.

Key Stage 2 and 3 (Y3 – Y9) children also need time to relax in the new setting and so the Admissions process for these children should also encourage their participation in a range of activities at their own pace. By using a range of strategies such as discussions, online tests, creative activities and use of live online learning environments, children are engaged in different ways to allow their confidence to develop and their strengths to show. Opportunities to

encourage individual creativity are facilitated, alongside collaborative activities where cooperation and teamwork are required with the teacher leading the session.

Key Stage 4 students (Y10 - Y11) take part in the GL CAT4 standardised assessments as these provide a predictor to success at IGCSE levels and form the basis of discussion with parents in line with individual learning pathways for students.

English as an Additional Language support will be necessary for many children who enter Sophia High School. Children who do not have English as a first language may excel in other curriculum areas, and it is important that a sensitive and varied Admissions is in place to encourage children to show their strengths. Through the use of small group activities when working on a 1-1 lesson with our teachers, children with EAL needs will be identified and a baseline level established.

Before accepting a registration fee, the school reserves the right to administer an English language test to ensure that children either a) have the necessary English skills to cope with the curriculum offered, or b) can show the potential to improve their English language skills over a single term, with EAL support, (paid extra) so that they cope independently. Children, and their parents, will be required to sign up to the school terms and conditions to secure an offer of a place.

The School must be satisfied that students who apply for the school will benefit from the online learning environment and interactive digital learning tools used via Google Classroom and be able to access the full breadth of the curriculum in order for a place to be offered. Sophia High School does not have a learning support department to support wide degrees of special needs, however we do have a variety of students with additional learning support needs who benefit greatly from our digital provision.

Due to the unique nature of our blended learning approach, the School must also be confident that a positive working relationship can be fostered with parents / guardians, in the best interest of students, in order for an offer of a place to be made and acceptance acknowledged.

Alternative Provision students who are commissioned with Sophia by Local Authorities, schools or families also undergo a series of informal 'getting to know you' sessions and follow an individual Induction programme prior to their starting. GL Assessments may be delayed to meet the EHCP or SEMH mandate which has been identified.

Priority:

Subject to Assessment data and signing the School's Parental Terms and Conditions:

1. Those already at the School
2. Those who apply before the end of January of the previous academic year
3. UK Based students
4. First come, first served thereafter

In the case of oversubscription at the end of January of the previous academic year, priority will

be given in order to:

1. Siblings of students already at the School
2. Children of staff working at the School

Children with Additional Learning Needs may require further, professional, support and so working closely with families, the school Leadership Team, UK based support agencies and our international partner, Linden, is vital from the very beginning of the Admissions process. Known Additional Learning Needs admission and assessments will be directly supervised by the Executive Principal and Director of Inclusion, working with the registrar and senior team.

During the Admissions process, the Admissions Team may observe that a child might require ALN support to access the online learning requirements of the school, and so a repeat assessment will be requested to allow the Director of Inclusion to be present. Early identification of the specific additional needs of each child is very important if we are to support their learning within the Sophia High School community. The school undertakes to work closely and cooperatively with parents, in order to investigate workable solutions.

Disclosures:

Parents must, as soon as possible, disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, disabilities or learning difficulties.

Offer:

If the School decides to offer the child a place, a confirmation letter along with an Acceptance Form will be sent to the family. To accept the offered place a completed Acceptance Form along with a copy of the child's Passport, Birth Certificate and Residence Visa must be sent as part of DFE requirements.

The decision to offer a place is at the discretion of the School Education Team. Offers may be withdrawn by the School should parents breach the Parent Terms and Conditions at any time.

Deposit:

A deposit is also required to secure the place; details of deposit are outlined within the offer letter.

Families in the UK	£1000
International Families	£1000

Deposition and Cancellation:

Please refer to the School's Parental Terms and Conditions for information as to how the Deposit will be held and in what circumstances it will be refunded. Further information is also provided in the Parental Terms and Conditions about cancellation of a place that has been accepted. Parent

Terms and Conditions are updated annually in April, in compliance with UK regulations, and a copy of the updated T&C is emailed to parents.

Not Offered:

A phone call will be made or a letter sent whichever is most appropriate to communicate a 'not offered place'. Families for whom places are not offered have the opportunity to speak to a member of the leadership and admissions team to discuss the reasons for a place being declined.

Attendance:

As per DFE Regulations, the School tracks the attendance of students in each lesson. Attendance is expected to be at 90% or above, 95% is the target for all students. Students are able to access recording of live online lessons should attending in person not be available due to approved absence or illness.

Attendance for commissioned AP students is tracked each lesson and this information sent to the school or commissioning authority at the end of each day. We track attendance through access to the Google Classroom and through our MIS system online attendance system: Athena which allows us to keep an accurate record of date/time of lesson attendance, and also if a student leaves prior to the end of the lesson. Parents/Guardians are contacted immediately via telephone by our Admissions Department for students missing from lessons if we see a pattern emerging, or students have shown that they find attendance a challenge.

Exclusion:

In registering your child for a place at the school you are agreeing to abide by the School's regulations and policies and to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, that if your child is offered a place at the School they will be both diligent in their studies and responsible in their attitude and behaviour. Should this become a problem, we will make every effort to counsel your child and yourselves and encourage them to modify their behaviour. However, you must accept that it may become necessary for your child's place at the school to be withdrawn and for them to be educated at a school which is more appropriate to their needs. The Board's decision in this matter will be final. See the School's Behaviour and Exclusions Policy for more information.

Sibling Policy:

The school offers siblings priority for entry to the school, but the onus is on parents to inform the school of any siblings they may wish to be considered for entry. Siblings are awarded a fee discount, provided siblings are at the school at the same time. Further details can be found in the School's Fee Structure document. www.sophiahigh.school/fees

Parental Contract:

This admission policy must be read in conjunction with the School's Parental Terms and Conditions.

The Terms and Conditions can be found on the school website: www.sophiahigh.school