

M4 Admissions Policy

Introduction

The Purcell School exists to provide young musicians with the potential to become exceptional with the best possible teaching and environment in which to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background.

Admissions Criteria

Potential students must be able to demonstrate the potential to develop exceptional musical ability and promise, along with the musical aptitude, understanding and commitment to satisfy the school that he or she will benefit from the musical opportunities available, and the stamina and perseverance to maintain a demanding programme of practice and musical activities.

The school must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective student to the best of his or her academic potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the student's peers, and that these criteria will continue to be met throughout the student's time at the school.

Other factors that will be taken into account are:

- a) that the school is able to meet the musical, educational, pastoral and social needs of a prospective student.
- b) that the school receives a satisfactory reference from the student's current school.
- c) that a prospective student demonstrates a sufficient grasp of English appropriate to the age of entry, or the capacity to acquire the required level.
- d) that, where a boarding place is requested, there are sufficient vacancies in the relevant boarding house and that the student is capable of benefiting from boarding.
- e) that, where a day place is requested, that there are sufficient vacancies in an appropriate house, and that the student lives close enough to the school to enable their participation in all school activities (see 10. below).
- f) that, where a scholarship under the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS) is requested, there are sufficient MDS vacancies in the school.
- g) that, for students from outside the UK, they are able to obtain a visa from the UK Border Agency.

Age of Entry

Students can be admitted to the school between National Curriculum years 7 and 12 (ages 11 to 16) but cannot be admitted into Year 11 or Year 13. The normal point of entry is September each year, but other arrangements can sometimes be made at the discretion of the Principal.

Application & Audition Fees

There is an Application Fee (non-returnable) of £35 which should be sent with the completed Application Form. Acceptance of this fee does not guarantee the offer of a place. If invited for a Main Audition (see 11. below), there is also an Audition Fee of £50. There is no fee for a Preliminary Audition. Fees are paid electronically via the School website: <https://www.purcell-school.org/product-category/payments/>

Families in serious financial difficulty for whom the application and/or audition fee would prevent them making an application are encouraged to approach the School for help and assistance.

References

In advance of any offer of a place, we will always ask each candidate's current school for a written report. It is therefore important that parents inform their child's current school that they have lodged an application with us.

Deadline for Applications

Applications will be considered in the order they are received, and **candidates are encouraged to apply as early as possible in the school year**. The closing date for applications for students who meet the eligibility criteria for support under the Department for Education (DfE) Music and Dance Scheme is usually the last day of the Purcell School Easter holiday but may be extended at the discretion of the Principal and/or Bursar depending on recruitment numbers. Auditions for students who do not meet the eligibility criteria for support under the scheme usually finish in March but potential applicants are encouraged to make enquiries to the School at all other times as circumstances may dictate some flexibility in these dates.

Entrance Deposit

On accepting a place at The Purcell School, an entrance deposit must be paid. **This will be £500 for UK students and £1,000 for non-UK students**, and will be retained until the end of the student's final term at the school. In the event of the parents withdrawing the student more than one term before admission, the entrance deposit will be forfeited. In the event of a withdrawal less than one term before admission, a full term's fees will be payable in lieu. Please see our Terms and Conditions for further detail.

Terms & Conditions

All offers of places are made subject to the school's Terms and Conditions, which will be made available to all successful candidates, or which can be obtained in advance from the Registrar. Students are admitted to the school at the discretion of the Principal, whose decision will be final.

Applicants from outside the UK or EU

The school welcomes applicants from around the world. Students from outside the UK are required to obtain a visa to study in the UK. The school is a Highly Trusted Sponsor for the UK Border Agency, but cannot be held responsible should parents be unable to obtain a visa for their child for the full period of study. Parents of all non-UK students are responsible for appointing a UK-based guardian.

Day places

In order to be eligible to apply for a day place, parents / guardians of the student will normally be required to live within one hour's travel time from the school at the point of application, and for the duration of their time at the school.

Day places will not be offered to overseas students without 'indefinite leave to remain' status.

Disability and Special Needs

The school welcomes applications from any prospective student with a physical and / or mental impairment. The school's policy is to apply the criteria stated above to all students and potential students regardless of any disability of which it is aware, and not to put any disabled student or potential student at a substantial disadvantage compared to any student who is not disadvantaged because of a disability. All applications will be judged fairly and the school will consider any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made to cater for the child's disabilities.

When applying for a place, parents are asked to complete the appropriate section of the Application Form (available on our website), setting out the nature and extent of any disability / special need, and whether or not they wish the school to take any disability / special need into account during the admissions process. Parents are welcome to contact us for advice in advance of any application.

Admissions Procedure

All applications must be made to the Registrar. Candidates should download and complete the **Application Form** which can be found on the School website. Candidates will also need to send a written recommendation from their instrument teacher(s), a DVD of a recent performance (overseas candidates only), and the Application Fee of £35. The Application Fee can be paid via the School website: <https://www.purcell-school.org/product-category/payments/>

On receipt of an application, we may request candidates submit a video recording of a recent performance and/or recommend that a candidate should take a Preliminary Audition. This is similar to the Main Audition (see below), but the candidate plays to the appropriate Head of Department only. It is less pressurised than a Main Audition and can help to settle nerves.

Auditions are held throughout the school year. For a Main Audition, candidates will be asked to play two pieces on their first instrument and one piece on their second instrument (if relevant). Sight-reading and aural tests will also be set. The candidate will be interviewed by an audition panel which will include the relevant Head of Department. For the purposes of standardisation, some auditions may be recorded. Where circumstances dictate (such as during the recent pandemic), auditions may be held online.

To enable us to determine a suitable academic programme, candidates may also be interviewed by a senior member of staff. Candidates for whom English is not their first language may be assessed by the Head of EAL.

On the day of the audition, candidates and their parents will be given a tour of the school, which for boarders will include a visit to a boarding house, and will meet with the Director of Boarding,

Vice- Principal, or Principal. Parents will also have the opportunity to discuss their financial needs with the Bursar. Where circumstances dictate (such as during the recent pandemic), such interviews may be held online.

Following a successful audition, the candidate will either be offered a place (normally within two weeks of the audition) or placed on a waiting list and informed if and when a place becomes available.

Further information

All enquiries about this policy should be directed to Mrs Natasha Vallance in the first instance:
N.Vallance@purcell-school.org

<i>Policy author/reviewer:</i>	<i>Policy date/review date:</i>	<i>Next review date:</i>
Paul Bambrough	January 2020	January 2021
Paul Bambrough	Spring 2021 (Covid review)	September 2021
Paul Bambrough	September 2021	September 2022
Paul Bambrough	September 2022	September 2023