

M4 Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

The mission of The Purcell School is to provide young musicians who demonstrate the potential to become exceptional (irrespective of background) with outstanding teaching within a supportive school environment and to equip them with the self-confidence, adaptability, maturity and perspective to sustain their professional development and personal fulfilment throughout their lives.

2. Admissions Criteria

The School is seeking to offer a place to applicants who we believe will thrive at the School.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate potential to develop exceptional musical ability. They will show musical aptitude, understanding and commitment, and satisfy the School that they will benefit from the musical opportunities available; they will have the stamina and the perseverance to maintain a demanding programme of practice and musical activities, whilst enjoying the challenge.

The School must also feel reasonably sure we 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:

- That we are able to meet the musical, educational, pastoral and social needs of a prospective student.
- That we receive a satisfactory reference from the student's current school.
- That a prospective student demonstrates a sufficient grasp of English appropriate to the age of entry, or the capacity to acquire the required level.
- That we are able to accommodate students, whether in a boarding or a day House.
- That a boarding student applicant will benefit from boarding provision.
- That a day student applicant lives close enough to the school to enable their participation in all school activities (see 10 below).
- That there are sufficient Music and Dance Scheme places available at the school, where an MDS bursary is requested.
- That, for applicants from outside the UK, they are able to obtain a visa from the UK Border Agency.
- That applicants who are non-UK passport holders can provide evidence of their residency status in the UK.

3. Age of Entry

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

4. Application & Audition Fees

An **application fee (non-returnable) of £100 + vat** is payable upon submission of a completed application. Acceptance of this fee does not guarantee the offer of a place.

If a prospective student is invited for an audition (see 13), an **audition fee (non-returnable) of £100 + vat** is payable in advance of the audition. These fees are paid electronically via the School's online admissions platform.

Families in serious financial difficulty, for whom the application and/or audition fee would prevent them from making an application to the School, may contact Admissions for help and assistance with these fees.

5. References

In advance of any offer of a place at the School, we will always ask the prospective student'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.

6. Deadline for Applications

We welcome applications throughout the year and these will be considered in the order they are received. Candidates are encouraged to apply as early as possible in the school year as we reserve the right to close applications once the school has reached capacity.

7. Entrance Deposit

On accepting a place at The Purcell School, an entrance deposit must be paid. The deposit will be **£2,000 + vat** unless you are eligible for the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS), in which case the deposit payable is **£500 + vat**. This deposit 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 details.

8. Terms & Conditions

All offers of places are made subject to the school's Terms and Conditions, which are sent to successful prospective students with the offer letter and Acceptance Form. Students are admitted to the School at the discretion of the Principal, whose decision will be final.

9. Applications from International Students

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 holds a Student Sponsor licence granted by the Home Office which enables us to sponsor students from outside of the UK to study at the School, should they be offered a place at the School. We cannot be held responsible should parents be unable to obtain a visa for their child for the full period of study.

Applicants who do not hold a UK passport must provide evidence of their right to study in the UK.

Parents of international students (non-UK residents) must agree to appoint and retain a UK-based educational guardian for the duration of their child's education at the School.

10. 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.

11. Disability and Special Needs

The School welcomes applicants from students with disabilities and/or special educational needs. 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 required to complete the appropriate section of the Application Form setting out the nature and extent of any disability and/or special need, and any support their child may require during the admissions process. The School may ask parents to provide any underlying medical assessments and reports and/or any current or planned EHCPs prior to audition. Parents are advised that a failure to disclose information at this point may result in an offer being withdrawn at a later stage. Parents are welcome to contact us for advice in advance of any application.

12. Applications

Applications to the school should be submitted via our online admissions platform which can be accessed via the [Admissions](#) page of our website. Admissions must include:

- A **recording** of the prospective student playing their instrument(s). Please visit <https://www.purcell-school.org/admissions/how-to-apply/> for details of the requirements of the recordings to be submitted.
- Where the application is to study composition, details of the compositions to be submitted can also be found under <https://www.purcell-school.org/admissions/how-to-apply/>.
- A **letter of recommendation from the prospective students' music teacher** (translated into English if necessary).
- **Payment of the application fee** – this is payable online via the admissions platform.

Once a complete application is received, this will be passed to the relevant Head of Department of the first study instrument for their consideration. The Admissions Manager will inform parents of the outcome of their application.

13. Auditions

Entry to the school is via audition. Students are not required to sit an academic entrance exam.

Auditions are held throughout the school year. Students who are invited to attend an audition will be contacted by the Admissions Manager who will communicate the date and requirements of the audition. At audition, the prospective student will be:

- Asked to play two pieces on their first instrument and one piece on their second instrument (if relevant).
- Set sight-reading and aural tests.
- Interviewed by an audition panel which will include the relevant Head of Department.

On the day of the audition, students and their parents will be given a tour of the school, which, for boarders, will include a visit to a boarding house. They will also meet with a Senior Leader, usually the Director of Boarding, who is also the pastoral lead at the school. Parents will also have the opportunity to discuss their financial needs with the Finance Manager.

To enable us to determine a suitable academic programme, the prospective student may be interviewed by a senior member of staff. Students for whom English is not their first language may be assessed by the Head of English as an Additional Language. Students with special educational needs may meet with our Head of Learning Support. Where circumstances dictate, auditions, including meetings with key members of staff, may be held online.

Following a successful audition, the candidate will either be offered a place or placed on a waiting list and informed if and when a place becomes available.

14. Further information

All enquiries about this policy should be directed, in the first instance, to:

Natasha Vallance, Admissions Manager

Email: admissions@purcell-school.org

Telephone: 01923 331 100

Policy author/reviewer:	Last review date:	Next review date:
Paul Bambrough / Adam Wroblewski	October 2023	October 2024
Paul Bambrough	September 2024	September 2025