



ACORN HOUSE COLLEGE

Admissions Policy

Acorn House College

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Overview

Acorn House College is a sixth form college supported by a small senior school from years 9-11 referred to internally as our 'Middle School.' Acorn House provides an option for parents and young people in the local community, nationally and internationally who wish to benefit from our small-group, exam-focused, tutorial-style teaching and expert teachers. We recognise that young people learn in different ways, at different rates and that personal circumstances can affect learners throughout their careers. For this reason, Acorn is pleased to offer:

- Entry throughout the academic year
- Entry into the year group appropriate to personal circumstances rather than chronological age
- The opportunity for students to retake some or all of their GCSE, AS or A level examinations in a variety of different programmes

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are to identify and admit students who will benefit from an academic education and who will contribute to and benefit from the ethos and activities of our college community. Acorn House College is an academically non-selective college for pupils aged 13-19 however the college will select students based on their potential, work ethic and attitude towards learning and education.

The College admits a number of students each year who have underperformed at GCSE, first year of A level (formerly AS level) and A level. Equally we have students beginning these courses for the first time. All applications are welcome and we have no preference for 'first time' students over 'retakers' or vice versa.

Admission process

Equal Treatment: We welcome students from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds, religious beliefs and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected and balanced with the lawful needs and rules of our college 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.

Disability and Special Educational Needs: The College has some facilities for the disabled and is aware of its legal and moral responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. For example, it is possible to attend an almost full curriculum without leaving the ground floor (only the art room is currently on a higher level, but is accessible by lift). Wherever possible the College will do its very best to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities including

making any reasonable adjustments possible to do so. Acorn House College has in place a three-year development plan outlining its priorities for access during that time period. This plan is available on request or from the College' website.

The College needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a child's ability to take full advantage of the education provided at the College and expects parents and/or applicants to do this at the earliest opportunity. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational need must provide the College with full written details at registration, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place. Circumstances that come to light after registration must be made known to the college at the earliest opportunity. The College needs this information so that, in the case of any child with particular needs, we can assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the admission process and if an offer of a place is made. Similarly, if special educational needs or a disability become apparent after admission, the College will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at the College.

Procedure

Our admission procedure has the following elements:

1) application; 2) interview (either face to face or by telephone/online eg via Skype); 3) reference from previous institutions; 4) academic records from previous institutions; 5) disability and SEN assessments (if applicable); 6) right to study in the UK; 7) test (for scholarship applicants only)

For candidates applying to study A level, although we do not have minimum entry requirements, we do recommend a minimum of five C grades at GCSE for students who wish to take three or more A levels and we may recommend that candidates without this minimum also consider options elsewhere.

Entry Points

Acorn House can accommodate students applying to the College for entry into any year group from years 9 through to 13. We can admit students throughout the year although our main entry point is September each year and we have a number of intensive teaching groups including a one-year GCSE and a one-year A level.

As an independent College we are able to offer students places in the year groups most suited to their ability, background and personal circumstances rather than that corresponding to their chronological age. Similarly, we may occasionally recommend that candidates apply for places either above or below the year group corresponding with their chronological age.

Interviews

These are informal and usually conducted, at least in part, with parents present. The purpose of the interview is for the interviewer (usually the principal) to understand the circumstances of the applicant and whether or not the college is in a position to

help. It is also designed to determine the suitability of the candidate for the course they propose to study and that they would benefit from the provision of education the college has to offer.

Character reference

The Head or other appropriate person from the candidate's previous institution will be asked to provide a written reference as to the candidate's academic ability, attitude and behaviour, involvement in the college community, talents and interest, and any other special circumstances such as special education needs, or a disability. The reference may also include the results of tests taken at that institution. If a candidate from within the UK is applying for A level and does not have GCSE results, predicted grades at GCSE should be provided.

Special circumstances

We recognise that a candidate's performance may be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- if he/she is unwell when taking tests or has had a lengthy absence from his/her college;
- if there are particular family circumstances such as a recent bereavement or illness;
- if the candidate has been educated outside of the UK;
- if the candidate has a disability or specific learning difficulties;
- If the candidate has been unhappy for whatever reason at their previous school or setting;
- if English is not the candidate's first language.

In any of these cases, we may request further information such as a medical certificate or educational psychologist's report and any associated correspondence or details from the student's current institution (including samples of work).

Disclosures

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

Additional Factors

We may reject a candidate who, in the opinion of the interviewer or member of the admissions team, has a poor record of behaviour or who is likely to cause disciplinary problems at the College. We may also reject a candidate who we feel is unlikely to be able to benefit from attending the College. In short, we support applications from candidates who wish to be a part of our college community and who agree with our statement of values, aims and expectations which can be found on our website by following the link <http://www.acornhousecollege.com/our-values-and-ethos/>.

Scholarships, discounts and bursaries

Scholarships

Scholarships may be awarded to applicants based on the following criteria:

- Previous academic record at GCSE, AS or other academic level
- A high score on the college's scholarship test
- Aptitude, ambition and academic potential as judged by the principal at interview

Bursaries

Bursaries are awarded based on financial need and are awarded entirely at the discretion of the principal. The college reserves the right to investigate the financial circumstances of an applicant should they apply for a bursary based on financial need. These awards are made in good faith and are based on trust between the parent and the college.

Discounts

From time-to-time the principal may award other discretionary discounts on the main tuition fees if he feels there is a genuine need or reason. Such awards are discretionary and a matter only for the College and the parent to whom the award is made.

Conditions

Students who have had their fees discounted for whatever reason should consider this to be a privilege and are expected to have exemplary conduct, upholding the ethos, values and expectations of the college at all times.

- Any such awards can be withdrawn at anytime
- Discounts are awarded to individual students and/or families only and should not be discussed between students or between families
- Awarding a discount to one student, does not imply that an award can be made to another, even when those students are members of the same family
- All discounts are reviewed termly and students may be required to reapply for the award if, for example, the circumstances in which the award was made, change