

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



15a Admissions, Discipline & Exclusion Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Widford Lodge School including those in the EYFS

Reviewed and approved by Proprietor: September 2025
Review date: September 2026

This policy applies equally to all areas of Widford Lodge School. No child, or their parents, will be refused entry or treated less favourably on the grounds of race, religion or belief, language, national or social origin, political or other opinion, sexual orientation, disability, property, birth, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other status.

ADMISSIONS

A non-refundable registration fee of £150 plus VAT, therefore £180, together with a completed application form and provision of the child's birth certificate, are required from parents in the first instance to be included in the admissions process. By signing the registration form, parents are confirming that they have given the required notice to any existing school, before we will offer them a place at Widford Lodge. Registration forms are available from the school website or by contacting the school office.

Places in the Pre-School

Widford Lodge usually receives many more applications for the available places in the Pre-School than we offer. Places are allocated on a first come first served basis, with a waiting list being managed by the Pre School staff.

Places in Reception, the Pre-Prep and Prep

Children progressing from our Pre-School fill a significant proportion of places in Reception. In order to confirm a child's place in Reception, the full autumn term's fees are required in advance in the spring term prior to starting Reception. This is the case whether or not children are already in our Pre-School or joining us from another setting. Places in Reception are allocated on a first come, first served basis. A number of induction sessions are arranged for all children in the term prior to them starting Reception, whether they attend our Pre-School or not. The Reception teacher also meets with parents of children in our Pre-School onsite and visits the homes of children new to Widford Lodge to meet the family in a setting where they feel at ease.

A place is subject to the co-educational ethos of the school. Siblings of children attending Widford Lodge will be given priority on the waiting list for a place in the school. The waiting list is managed by the school admissions staff.

The admission of children with special educational needs or any additional needs will be via consultation between the Headteacher, the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and the parents and will take into consideration the needs of the child and the school, and whether/how the physical layout of the school and the staffing arrangements enable suitable provision for the child's needs. Parents are required to inform the school as part of the process for paying the first term's fees in advance and confirming the place in Reception whether their child has any additional needs, if these were not advised on the registration form. We realise that at this age additional needs may not have been formally diagnosed, therefore we ask that the school is informed of all possible additional needs or learning differences regardless of whether they have been formally diagnosed. Any admission therefore must include all relevant information, partnership with any outside agencies already involved and full medical disclosure where appropriate. Please see our Special Educational Needs and Disability policy and our Accessibility Plan for further information; parents may be asked to pay for specific additional support in line with this policy.

Transfer to Prep School at 7+

The child must show evidence that she/he has the ability to benefit from the academic education that Widford Lodge offers and the intellectual potential to cope with the Prep school curriculum and the pace and standard of work. Pupils may be offered places subject to the child receiving regular additional support (available at school at parental expense) and termly or annual review. Any concerns regarding transfer will be discussed with the parents at the earliest opportunity. **It is highly unusual for pupils not to transfer to the Prep School.**

Taking up a Place

There are a number of set procedures that we encourage parents to follow before deciding to send their children to Widford Lodge.

- Parents receive school prospectus or use the school website for information.
- Parents make an appointment to visit the school and are shown round by the Headteacher.
- Parents may then choose to return their registration forms and fee, formally asking for a place.
- For children joining an established class from Reception to Form 6 where the school year has already started, they are asked to spend a whole day at school, with the class they would join. The class teacher informally assesses the child to see if Widford Lodge can meet the needs of the child.
- The Headteacher telephones the parents to offer a place or to discuss any issues arising from the day spent at school. Before offering a place the Headteacher may require reports from the pupil's current school, if applicable.
- By the nature of the layout and age of the building, the school has limited facilities for those with additional needs 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, the school can cater adequately.
- Parents are required to complete some paper forms providing further relevant information including residency and at least two contact names and numbers and also to sign the parent agreement between themselves and Widford Lodge, prior to the child's first day as a Widford Lodge pupil.

The school's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any additional needs of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage. Please refer also to our Accessibility Plan.

In keeping with Widford Lodge School's family ethos every attempt will be made to accommodate brothers and sisters.

DISCIPLINE & EXCLUSION

At Widford Lodge School we encourage the establishment of good relationships between teachers and pupils and support for the school's values through a system of rewards and sanctions which are designed to promote a caring and mutually supportive environment.

The school's **Policy for the Promotion of Good Behaviour and Sanctions for Misbehaviour** sets out the standards and expectations of behaviour in and around the school. It incorporates the procedures to be followed in the event of unacceptable behaviour and possible sanctions and rewards which may be used. We recognise that disruptive behaviour can be caused by a variety of factors and we aim to work with the pupil and parents in such cases.

The school's **Anti-Bullying Policy** defines different forms of bullying, identifies possible causes of bullying and ways of raising awareness of bullying. It establishes procedures to be followed and possible sanctions if bullying takes place.

This Admissions, Discipline and Exclusions Policy would need to be invoked for persistent or very serious incidents and /or persistent or very serious breaches of Behaviour and/or Anti-Bullying policies or School Rules.

Reasons why it may be necessary to exclude a pupil

It may be necessary to exclude a pupil if:

- There is a very serious incident or very serious breach of the school's Behaviour and/or Anti-Bullying policies
- The School Rules, school's Behaviour Policy or Anti-Bullying Policies are persistently breached
- Allowing a pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or other members of the school.

Exclusion can be fixed-term or permanent, depending on the nature of the incident or situation. Fixed-term exclusion would be considered for persistent or serious breaches of school rules, the school's Behaviour policy or Anti-Bullying Policy. Consideration would need to be given to the age of the child and the circumstances but some examples of when it may be appropriate to consider permanent exclusion for a first or 'one off' offence are as follows:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or member of staff
- Serious bullying or cyber bullying
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Possessing or supplying an illegal drug and/or alcohol
- Serious case of theft
- Carrying an offensive weapon.

The Headteacher would decide whether it is necessary to report an incident to the police or another external agency.

It would be inappropriate to consider exclusion for the following reasons:

- Failure to do homework
- Lateness or truancy
- Breaches of school uniform rules, or rules on appearance (including jewellery and hairstyle) except where these are persistent and in defiance of school rules.

The behaviour of a pupil outside school can be considered grounds for an exclusion.

Procedures by which a pupil may be excluded

Exclusion is a serious step and wherever possible it is at the end of a disciplinary process where all other measures and sanctions as outlined in school policies have been exhausted. The disciplinary process is most likely to have already involved parents. Occasionally the behaviour of a pupil will be such that exclusion will be a necessary immediate response. However, such action would be exceptional and would generally relate to extreme and very serious behaviour.

Pupils need to be aware that exclusion is a possible extreme sanction. Wherever possible, pupils will have been supported to modify their behaviour, to avoid the need for exclusion.

Only the Headteacher has the power to exclude a pupil from school. The Headteacher may exclude a pupil for one or more fixed-term periods, or permanently.

Wherever possible, exclusion should not be imposed in the heat of the moment. The following procedure should be followed by the Headteacher when considering exclusion:

- Ensure that an appropriate investigation has been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available, taking into account school policies
- Allow the pupil to give their own version of events
- Consider the context of the incident and whether there may have been provocation
- Consult others, if necessary, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headteacher's decision
- Be satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities, the pupil did what he/she is alleged to have done
- Keep a record of events and meetings.

After having followed the above procedure as closely as is possible under the circumstances, the Headteacher may decide that exclusion is appropriate. The pupil's parents or guardians must be informed immediately of the Headteacher's decision to exclude. The parent or guardian needs to be informed of:

- The period of exclusion
- The reason for exclusion
- The right to appeal to the Proprietor regarding the exclusion and the process of appeal.

The Head will telephone or email the parents, followed up by written letter within one school day of the decision to exclude confirming the information above. Reference will also be made to the continuing education of the pupil, including setting and marking work, if the exclusion is for more than one school day. If the fixed-term exclusion is changed into a permanent exclusion, parents must be informed in writing and must again be given the right to appeal to the Proprietor.

If a parent refuses to co-operate with exclusion and still sends their child to school or refuses to collect him or her, the school must have due regard for the pupil's safety and it may be that it is not possible to enforce exclusion in these circumstances. If this was the case, the pupil would need to be internally excluded.

Period of exclusion

Pupils may be excluded for one or more fixed-term periods, not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year, or permanently. Exclusion should be for the shortest time necessary and cannot be for any unspecified period.

In circumstances where a pupil is excluded for more than 15 school days, plans will be made as to how the pupil's education will continue during the period of exclusion and how the time might be used to address the issues that have arisen. Consideration will need to be given on how to reintegrate the pupil into the school at the end of the fixed term period of exclusion.

Notification of exclusion

When the Headteacher has taken the decision to exclude a pupil, for a fixed term or permanently, the Proprietor will be informed of the decision. The Headteacher will report any exclusions to the Proprietor at their regular meetings.

Appeal Procedure following exclusion

Parents have the right to appeal to the Proprietor following the exclusion of their child. An appeal can be made on the grounds of:

- The facts of the event leading to exclusion
- The severity of the sanction.

Parents should refer to the school's Complaints Procedure for additional guidance.

Implementation, monitoring and review of the policy

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Discipline and Exclusion Policy. Although the policy is reviewed annually, it is likely that it won't be possible to review the policy effectively until it has been invoked on at least one occasion.