



Wimbledon College

Admissions Policy 2024

Wimbledon College is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic secondary school for boys in the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus¹. It is part of the provision of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Southwark and an apostolic work of the British Jesuit Province.

The school exists primarily to provide a Jesuit education for children of the Catholic community. Once it has met its historical and current obligation to boys of the Catholic community, Wimbledon College welcomes those who support the religious ethos of the school.

In September 2024, Wimbledon College will admit 199 boys² to Year 7 without regard for aptitude or ability. Once it has met this admissions number, the school will refuse places to further applicants because the school's accommodation and resources are limited.

¹ The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) is a Religious Order of the Catholic Church founded in 1540. It has an international work in schools. The ethos and principles of Jesuit schools are set out in the document *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1987).

² This number will include all boys, whether Catholic or not, who have Statements of Special Needs and are thereby admitted by law.

Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, the governors will admit boys in the following order:

1. Catholic boys who are looked after children or looked after children in the care of Catholic families or who were previously looked after children [see the section – Looked after Children – below]
2. Catholic boys, who have special circumstances which, in the judgement of the governors on the evidence submitted to them, make Wimbledon College particularly suitable for the boy.
3. Catholic boys who attend Mass every Sunday and Holyday.
4. Catholic boys who attend Mass less frequently than every Sunday and Holyday.
5. Catholic boys who do not attend Mass.
6. Boys enrolled in the catechumenate. Evidence of enrolment in the catechumenate will be required.
7. Other boys who are looked after children or previously looked after children. [see the section – Looked after Children – below]
8. Boys who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Evidence of Baptism will be required.
9. Boys of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Evidence of Baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.
10. Boys who are members of other faiths. Evidence of membership of the faith provided by a priest, minister or religious leader of a designated place of worship will be required.
11. Other boys.

Tiebreaker Criteria

If the number of applicants in any one category exceeds the number of places available, priority will be given to boys in the following order:

- i. Boys who will have a brother³ at Wimbledon College or a sister at the Ursuline High School, Wimbledon in September 2024.
- ii. Boys whose parent is a member of staff, where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- iii. In order of distance⁴ from the boy's home to Wimbledon College.

Where distance is the determining factor, and there are boys who live equidistant from the school an independent body will be engaged to draw lots to determine the rank order.

Parental Preference

Wimbledon College will consider every application for a place in accordance with the admissions criteria described in this document. Admissions decisions are made by the Governing Body.

³ Brothers include blood siblings, adopted children and siblings by marriage (step-brothers) who reside at the same address.

⁴ Distance will be measured by the Local Authority in a straight line from the boy's home to the front gate of the school. The child's address should be that of the child's permanent residence. You may not give the address of a relative or carer unless they have legal custody of the child. If parents are separated and share custody of the child, the address given should be that of the parent with whom the child spends most of the school week, which will normally be the address of the parent to whom Child Benefit is payable. This address must be used on the Supplementary Information Form.

Catholic Identity and Religious Practice

Catholic means being a baptised member of the Latin Rite (Roman Catholic) Church or of an Oriental Rite Catholic Church in communion with the Holy See⁵.

Catholic practice means attending liturgy⁶ on each Sunday⁷ and Holyday.

Parents wishing to be considered under the criteria of Catholic identity and practice need to complete the Wimbledon College Supplementary Information Form and Religious Practice and Priest's Reference Form in addition to the Common Application Form for their Local Authority. The Supplementary Information Form and Religious Practice and Priest's Reference Form enables the school to confirm religious practice by seeking a reference from a priest of the place where the boy regularly worships. [Parents should state if the boy worships regularly at more than one place of worship]. If there is a valid reason why a boy has not attended Mass each Sunday and Holyday, the parent may explain the circumstances on the Religious Practice and Priest's Reference Form and this will be considered by the governors. A baptismal certificate is also required.

On the advice of the Education Commission of the Archdiocese of Southwark the governing body of Wimbledon College has agreed the following statement in order to clarify how its faith-based oversubscription criteria will be interpreted in light of the suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass between 18th March 2020 and 4th June 2022.

As of the 5th June 2022, Pentecost, the Bishops of England and Wales reinstated the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. Parents applying for a place at Wimbledon College, under a faith-based criteria will need to complete a Supplementary Information Form and Religious Practice and Priest's Reference Form. Evidence of practice will be measured by frequency of attendance at Mass as validated by either a priest or minister, as was the case prior to 18th March 2020. These arrangements apply to the admissions round for 2023 and subsequent rounds.

⁵ The Oriental Rite Catholic Churches in communion with the Holy See are the Maronite and Italo-Albanian Catholic Churches; the Chaldean and Syro-Malabar Catholic Churches; the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Syrian and Syro-Malankara Catholic Churches; the Melkite, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Romanian Catholic Churches; the Greek Catholic Church, the Byzantine Catholics in former Yugoslavia, the Bulgarian, Slovak and Hungarian Catholic Churches and the Eastern Catholic Communities (Russian, Belarusian, Georgian and Albanian) without hierarchies.

⁶ The Catholic Church regards the liturgy as "the summit and the source of all worship and Christian life" (canon 897) and requires Catholics to "take an active part in the celebration of ... the Mass" (canon 898). For this reason, "on Sundays and other Holydays of obligation, the faithful are obliged to assist at Mass" (canon 1247) unless it is impossible to do so "for some ... grave reason." (canon 1248).

⁷ Mass attendance on Sundays and Holydays includes the vigil Mass on the evening before the Sunday or Holyday.

Special Circumstances

Special circumstances include educational, medical, social and compassionate reasons why the application of one boy should be given precedence over others.

The application will need to demonstrate why a place **specifically** at Wimbledon College is in the child's best interests.

Other circumstances which may merit special consideration include the children of Crown servants, diplomats or armed forces personnel, those returning or moving to the UK from overseas, refugees and asylum seekers, and other social or family circumstances by which the child is adversely affected.

Each application made under the special circumstances category must include at least one letter from a relevant professional (such as a social worker, doctor, priest, primary school head teacher or educational psychologist) which sets out evidence in support of the application.

The governors will weigh each application on its individual merits, considering all and only the evidence submitted to them, also taking into consideration the ability of the school to meet individual needs and the overall balance of the school population. On the basis of the case presented to them, the governors will decide whether or not an application is eligible for admission under special circumstances.

Boys with Statements of Special Needs

The law requires the school to admit boys whose additional needs can be met by Wimbledon College and who have a Statement of Special Needs specifying Wimbledon College as the parents' preferred school.

Looked after children

The law requires the school to give priority to the admission of boys who are looked after children or who were previously looked after children.

A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

A previously looked after child is a child who was adopted (or subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) immediately following having been looked after and those

children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Catholic boys who are looked after children are given first priority and non-Catholic boys who are looked after children are admitted after places have been offered to Catholics boys but before other boys.

Applications for Year 7

Boys transferring from Y6 at primary school to Y7 at secondary school must do so through the London-wide co-ordinated admissions scheme. All applicants must submit the Common Application Form to the boy's Local Authority as well as submitting the Wimbledon College Supplementary Information Form directly to Wimbledon College.

The deadline for both forms is 31st October 2023.

Boys already in Y7 at secondary school who wish to transfer to Y7 at Wimbledon College do so by following the procedure set out below for Y8-11.

In year admissions - Applications for Years 8 to 11

Boys wishing to apply for a place in Y8-11 at Wimbledon College, or who are already in Y7 at a secondary school, should do so by contacting the school's Admissions Officer *to enquire about potential vacancies and the application process, including completing the Wimbledon College Supplementary Information Form.*

You will also need to contact Merton Admissions by visiting www.merton.gov.uk/admissions and complete the In year application for Merton Schools form provided by Merton Council. Once Merton Council have processed your application and you have submitted your Supplementary Information Form to Wimbledon College, you will be notified of the outcome within 10 school days.

If a place is available it will be given at the earliest opportunity. If the year group is full, a place will not be offered because the school's accommodation and resources are limited. Applications will be ranked according to our Admissions Policy. Parents have the right of an independent appeal if a place is refused. Parents may also ask for their son to be placed on the waiting list

Applications to the Sixth Form

Please refer to our separate Admissions Information for entry into our Sixth Form on the College website

The Waiting List

Wimbledon College has a waiting list of boys who have not been offered a place but whose parents express the wish for them to take up a place should one become available. Applicants are ranked in the same order as the admissions criteria above. Parents are told what place their son has on the waiting list.

The waiting list for Y6 to Y7 transfers is operated by the London Borough of Merton on behalf of the school as part of the London-wide co-ordinated admissions system until the end of December. Thereafter, Wimbledon College operates the waiting list.

Parents who wish their child's name to be included on the Y7 waiting list after December must inform the school in writing or by email during the month of December. The waiting list is maintained for one school term. Parents wishing their son's name to remain on the waiting list after that time must inform the school in writing or by email before the beginning of each school term.

Boys who are placed at Wimbledon College under the statutory Local Authority fair access protocol ("hard to place pupils") will take precedence over boys already on the waiting list.

Boys (including new and late applications) are ranked on the waiting lists according to the admissions criteria. This means that a boy's place on the waiting list may go down as well as up.

Late Applications

Late applications will be considered by the governors and included in the admissions procedure at the point when they are received. Parents should be aware that Local Authorities have their own rules and procedures for late applications and may refuse to process some late applications.

Appeals

Parents of boys who are not offered a place at Wimbledon College have the statutory right of appeal. Appeals are heard by an independent panel. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented, has experienced problems such as ill health or is a summer born child. Parents should provide evidence to support their application. A Governors' committee will consider the application and their decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

If parents do wish to apply for a place for their child outside of their normal age group then they must do the following:

- apply using the common application form or the in year admission form as appropriate
- write a letter of application to the Chair of Governors. This should include all relevant recent professional information to support their application.

The Governors' committee will consider each application and take the following into account:

- parent's views
- information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development including information from the child's current or most recent place of education
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional, where relevant
- the view of the Headteacher.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at the College, however this right does not apply if they are offered a place at the College, but it is not in their preferred age group

The Honesty of the Application

Any false or deliberately misleading information given on the Common Application Form or Wimbledon College Supplementary Information Form or in supporting papers, or any relevant information withheld, may lead to the withdrawal of a place, even after the child has started at the school.

Information and Assistance

Wimbledon College is committed to fairness and transparency in the way it operates its admissions procedures. Parents are invited to contact the school to discuss their situation and to obtain help in applying, especially if they are disabled or have difficulties of language or are unfamiliar with school admissions. Independent advice and assistance can also be obtained from the Local Authority.

Wimbledon College
approved by the Board of Governors (November 22)