



Admissions Policy

Approved by: Afolabi Joseph

Last reviewed on: 15/08/2024

Next review due by: 14/08/2025

Statement of policy intent

The aims of this policy are:

- to ensure that all parents and prospective parents are aware of the process by which the school will admit pupils.
- to set out procedures that reflect the school's stated aim and core values.

Definitions

Parents include those with parental responsibility.

Early Reception is usually known as the nursery class in other schools. It is the academic year in which children turn four.

A. Introduction

1. The Light School ("TLS") is an independent Christian day school in Thurrock, Essex, for pupils aged between 3 and 16. The school is fully co-educational.
2. TLS welcomes pupils from all backgrounds and it is entirely contrary to the Christian ethos of the school to discriminate against prospective pupils on the grounds of race, religion, gender, or social background. In line with the school's vision, pupils will join a Christ-centered school intentionally teaching pupils in the way of Jesus Christ in the pursuit of academic excellence and purpose.
3. The selection criteria and interview procedure are determined and reviewed from time to time by the Governors of the School. Those involved in selection and interviewing are appropriately qualified.

B. Entry Points

1. The usual entry points are at Early Reception and Reception (3+ and 4+).
2. A few additional places may arise from time to time in other year groups. Parents are asked to contact the Registrar if they are interested.
3. Children are accepted into the Early Reception class from 3 years old and into the Reception class from 4 years old, at the discretion of the Head Teacher and subject to a nursery observation/taster visit and interview with the parents. Entry is at the start of the Autumn Term.
4. The school year runs from 1st September to 31st August. We do not normally consider applications if the pupil would then be working in the year below expected. Very occasionally we may consider pupils working a year ahead, but we will need to ensure that the pupil is of sufficient maturity to cope academically and socially.

C. Enrolment

1. Parents of prospective applicants are encouraged to arrange a visit to TLS. All visits to TLS will normally

include a tour and a meeting with the Principal. The aim of this part of the process is for parents to assess the suitability of the school for their child.

2. Parents who wish to apply for a place must complete an enrolment form for their child and send it to the school with the £80 non-refundable enrolment fee (£150 for any year group other than Early Reception or Reception). The form will be given during the tour. The school accepts enrolment forms at any point in the year.
3. Once a completed enrolment form and fee has been received by TLS, confirmation will be sent to parents and the enrolment process is then complete.

D. Admissions Process

1. As part of the admissions process for Early Reception and Reception, a nursery observation visit will take place. In the event that your child is not at a nursery, he or she will come into the school for a few hours (this is known as a taster visit). If such visits are not possible (for example, due to COVID-19 restrictions), the Principal or a member of Early Years staff will, with you, meet your child informally online. A parents' interview with the Principal or other senior staff members will follow.
2. Nursery observation/taster visits/online meetings and interviews do not guarantee an offer of a place.
3. Offers are not made at one given time. If an offer is made, it will be made soon after the observation or the taster visit. Two weeks will be given in which that offer is to be accepted or refused. Once sufficient offers have been accepted, the list will close and applicants still awaiting offers will be notified by email.

E. Entry at Early Reception (3+)

1. The admissions process for September entry will begin in the preceding October. Subject to a successful nursery observation/taster visit/online meeting (to be arranged between October and December preceding entry), most offers will be confirmed by the end of December.
2. Parents to whom a place in the Early Reception class (to start in September of the coming academic year) is not offered because their class is full will receive email notification as soon as possible. If parents wish, their child will remain on the enrolment list, and they will be notified should a place become available in the pertinent year group.
3. Whilst we would expect most children in Early Reception to move into our Reception class it should be noted that a place in Early Reception does not guarantee transfer into Reception.
4. Parents are given the 'Transfer to Reception' application form soon after their child joins TLS and the completed form should be returned to the Registrar as soon as possible, and no later than the last day of the Autumn term.
5. Parents will be informed no later than the first day of the Spring Term of Early Reception whether a place will be available for Reception in the following September.

Entry at Reception (4+)

1. The admissions process for September entry will begin in the preceding October. Subject to a successful nursery observation/taster visit/online meeting (to be arranged between October and November preceding entry), most offers will be confirmed by the end of December.
2. Parents to whom a place in the Reception class (to start in September of the coming academic year) is not offered because their class is full will receive notification as soon as possible and before the end of the Spring Term preceding the September entry. If parents wish, their child will remain on the enrolment list and they will be notified should a place become available in the pertinent year group.

F. Admission Criteria

1. The conditions for admission to TLS are as follows:
 - The parents of the applicant are supportive of TLS's core values, vision and mission.
 - The applicant is of appropriate age and sufficient maturity.
 - TLS is able to provide adequately for any special educational needs that the applicant may have.
 - TLS, having made reasonable adjustments, has the capacity to cope with any disability the applicant may have.
 - The receipt of an applicant's current school and/or nursery reports.
 - A satisfactory nursery observation/taster visit/online meeting has also taken place.
 - If, during an informal observation, the best educational decision for the child is unclear, an offer of a place will not be made. Further evidence may be gathered from discussion with the parents and where necessary, a referral to an educational psychologist will be made. Parents should inform the school immediately if they are pursuing the referral for their child and should give an estimated time that reports will be made available. The report will be used to inform decisions regarding the offer of a place.
2. In the case where an application is unsuccessful, TLS is not obliged to state or explain its reasons.

G. Offers

1. Parents who receive an offer will be asked to accept it by completing and returning the 'Acceptance Form', which includes a declaration of support for TLS's 'vision, mission and core values', within 2 weeks. If no response has been received within the time specified in the offer, the school will assume that it has been declined and the place may be offered to another applicant.
2. On acceptance of a definite place at the school, a deposit of one month's fees in advance is required. Provided that sufficient notice of departure has been given, the deposit will be refunded at the end of the pupil's final term once any additional invoices for the term have been paid.
3. Fees are due to be paid one month in advance by standing order.

H. Admissions at other entry points

1. In the event of a short period of time between an initial enquiry and the pupil's start date e.g. a last minute holiday enquiry, the following applies.

2. Providing there are places in the appropriate year group TLS is happy to consider last minute applications.
3. The procedure for late admissions is as follows:
 - A tour will be arranged as soon as is reasonably possible.
 - Last minute enquiries are expected to fill in an enrolment form.
 - The prospective pupil will be invited to an observation/taster visit.
 - Subject to the above procedure an offer may then be given, and payment of the school deposit will be required by return.
4. If a place is confirmed, full fees will be required by return.

I. Special Educational Needs and Disability

1. TLS has limited facilities for the disabled, but we welcome pupils with special education needs or physical disabilities, providing we can support them appropriately to access the curriculum. We hope to be able to cater adequately for pupils with disabilities by making reasonable adjustments to the school facilities.
2. Parents of an applicant who has a disability and/or a special educational need should provide the school with full written details when applying for admission. Where possible, this information should be sent to the school at least one week before the applicant's first visit to the school.
3. TLS will use this information to assess the applicant's needs and make sure the school can provide adequately for the applicant throughout the admission process.
4. TLS will consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made for the applicant both during the admission process and later as a pupil.
5. In the event that TLS decides it cannot sustainably provide for the long term needs of a pupil who attends the school, the classroom teacher and Head Teacher will consult with the parents on the best course of action for the pupil's education, which may include transfer to an alternative school.

J. Fees

Fees must be paid in accordance with Appendix 1.

K. Sibling Policy

Many siblings join us and so priority is given to siblings of existing children. However, a place is not guaranteed to siblings and will often depend on the availability of places in a particular year group. Furthermore, we may recommend a different school environment if we feel that that would be in the best interests of the child.

Appendix

1. One month's deposit must be paid upon enrolment at TLS. Fees must be paid by standing order one month advance. The date of the first payment will be confirmed by the Registrar.
2. Alternatively, payments can be made by standing order in nine monthly installments beginning on the first day of July before the academic year begins. 9 equal installments of 1/3 of the terms fees payable as follows:
 - 1 July; 1 August; 1 September for the Autumn term's fees
 - 1 October; 1 November; 1 December for the Spring term's fees
 - 1 January; 1 February; 1 March for the Summer term's fees
3. The deposit must be paid in full upon acceptance of a place at the school. The deposit will be refunded at the end of the pupil's final term once any additional invoices for the term have been paid.
4. Parents agree to give a term's notice in writing of their son or daughter leaving the school. Failure to give such notice will result in the forfeit of the deposit. Parents will also be charged the upcoming term's fees if sufficient notice has not been given. The notice must be given to the Principal by the first day of the child's last term. See example dates in the table below:

Year	Term	Last day at school	Written notice given by
2024-2025	Autumn	20 th December 2024	
	Spring	3 rd April 2025	20 th December 2024
	Summer	17 th July 2025	3 rd April 2025

5. However, if this is impossible due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Principal as soon as possible. You will still forfeit your deposit but, in some circumstances, we may consider reducing the amount of the following term's fees payable, or you can apply for a 'Grant Towards Leaving Fees'. Please note that if for any reason a child leaves the school part way through a term, they will nevertheless incur the full term's fees.
6. Fees must be paid by standing order or direct bank transfer (with the child's name as a reference), cheque or banker's draft. We do not accept cash for fees.
7. In the event of fees becoming overdue by more than 1 calendar month, parents will incur an administration charge of 1% of the outstanding balance, per week, until the balance is paid in full. Should a cheque bounce the school will charge parents a £15 administrative charge in addition to the charge levied by the bank.
8. For any paying activities which are extra-curricular (after school clubs and individual music lessons), parents can opt to pay through employer sponsored childcare voucher schemes or via the government Tax Free Childcare scheme. Please contact the office for more details.
9. Should a child leave the school and payment of fees remains outstanding, TLS is obligated to pass on information about unpaid fees to their new school

