

Admissions Policy

This policy has been written for all three sections of the School

Admissions Statement

Ratcliffe College is a co-educational Catholic day and boarding School, founded by, and in the trusteeship of, the Fathers of the Institute of Charity (Rosminians). Our vision at Ratcliffe College is to educate young people in the spirit of the Gospel and the traditions of the Catholic Church, seeking to nurture the God-given talents and potential of each individual in order that each one may become a confident, responsible and useful member of society. While we operate as a Catholic School, we welcome children of other denominations and faiths whose parents feel that they can share in, and benefit from, the ideals and environment of our School.

Process for Application

Most prospective students and their parents will have their first introduction to Ratcliffe College by attending one of the Open Mornings held in March and October. On these occasions, they will have the opportunity to meet with the Headmaster and teaching staff, and will be accompanied by students of the School on a tour of the various departments.

Parents are also welcome to arrange a visit with their son/daughter on a normal School day, where we will facilitate a tour of the College accompanied by a senior student. There will also be an opportunity for a meeting with the Headmaster.

When parents feel that a place at Ratcliffe College is a strong, possible choice for their son/daughter, they are encouraged to register.

Registration

Parents interested in applying for a place for their child at Ratcliffe College are invited to register their intent. A non-refundable registration fee of £125 (Overseas students)/£99 (UK students) and is payable for all students wishing to enter Ratcliffe College, at any level.

Parents may register a son or daughter at any age on the clear understanding that completion of the registration form and payment of the non-refundable registration fee does not constitute a binding contract for admission to Ratcliffe College.

Parents should also note that this will result in a request from Ratcliffe College to the child's current School for a report.

The registration form should be signed by both parents. If only one signature is provided then a letter should also accompany the form stating sole custody, along with an appropriate court order, without exception.

After completion of the registration process, the admission procedure depends on which level the student is entering the School (see below). As part of the process, the Headmaster reserves the right, without specifying a reason, to cancel any registration.

The School should be notified of any change of address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Offers of places are always subject to availability and the admission requirements of the School at the time offers are made. A copy of the current edition of the standard terms and conditions, together with other relevant School publications such as Parents' and Pupils' Information Handbooks, will be supplied on request.

Admissions Criteria

The following criteria are used, in no particular order, to help determine a student's suitability for admission:

- By the very nature of the School, priority will always be given to Catholic families, and to families sympathetic to the Catholic ethos of Ratcliffe College;
- Performance in the School's entrance examination/assessment (see below for details);
- A willingness and/or ability to participate in the rich variety of extra-curricular activities;
- A positive report from the applicant's present School. Apart from applications to the Sixth Form, interviews will not normally be held but the School may wish to interview borderline candidates whose particular circumstances warrant it;
- The presence of a sibling already in the School and/or previous family connections;
- In all circumstances, the School's aim is to admit students with academic ability and a range of qualities to gain the maximum benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities available at Ratcliffe College.
- Families transferring to Ratcliffe College from a fellow Rosminian School.
- Students with SEND (including students with an EHCP) will be considered alongside other applicants. Consultation with related health, social and educational professionals may be needed, prior to the offer of a place, in order to confirm that the School is an appropriate setting to meet the child's needs.
- The School reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any student, once admitted, if it comes to light that relevant information was withheld from the school at the point of admission.

The Headmaster, in consultation with the Board of Governors, is responsible for all decisions relating to the admission of students. If there is a waiting list for entry to a particular age group, applicants will be considered strictly according to the fulfilment of the criteria and to the date order of registration for each child. All formal offers of places will be made in writing, either by the Headmaster or by the Registrar acting on his behalf.

Entrance Examinations/Assessment Procedures

Preparatory School

Nursery (3-5 year olds)

Children spend a half-day in the Nursery and are informally assessed during this time.

There is a separate Admissions Policy for the Nursery, available upon request, owing to the complexity of Nursery provision and the educational needs of individual children.

(5-11 year olds)

Years 1-6: children spend a half day in School and, during this time, take assessments in English and Mathematics.

Entry is normally at Year 3 and 5 (when additional classes of 18 pupils are admitted), but a small number of places may be available for entry to other Years if there are vacancies.

Overseas families, wishing to enter at Preparatory School age, **must** visit the School, in person, and their child be interviewed on a face-to-face basis. The assessment can then be carried out under our supervision.

Under normal circumstances, Preparatory School children transfer to the Senior School. Where such transfer is deemed inappropriate (for example, where it is felt that that child will not thrive given the curriculum provided), the Head of the Preparatory School, in conjunction with the Headmaster, will notify the parents with at least one year's notice.

Senior School (11-18 year olds)

Entry is normally at 11+ (when an additional form of entry is admitted) and 13+ and to the Sixth Form, but a small number of places may be available for entry to other years if there are vacancies.

11+, 12+, 13+, 14+ entrance examinations are all normally held on a Saturday morning in the first half of the spring term prior to entry in September. Papers are set in English, Mathematics and Science. For candidates applying for 13+ entry from independent preparatory schools, entry can also be by Common Entrance examinations, held in the Summer Term prior to entry in September, subject to places being available

Sixth Form

In general, applicants will be interviewed and entry will also be based on successful performance in GCSE (or equivalent examinations).

Applicants should normally obtain at least six GCSE passes at grade B/6 or better including English and Mathematics. For any subject to be studied in the Sixth Form, applicants should have at least GCSE grade B/6 in that subject (or, for subjects not taken at GCSE, at least grade B/6 in related GCSE subjects). Further to this, GCSE grade A/7 or better is normally required in order to study the following subjects in the Sixth Form: Mathematics, Sciences, Languages and English Literature.

Specimen copies of the 11+, 12+, 13+, 14+ English and Mathematics papers are available on request from the Registrar.

Access Arrangements for Entrance Examinations

Extra time is allowed in the entrance examinations for students with a specific Learning Difficulty who have evidence within a professional assessor's report that they work at a rate which is below average for their peer group. Acceptable evidence will be in the form of an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor report which clearly indicates speed scores for reading, writing or cognitive processing falling below SS85 (or two speed scores below SS90).

Medical reports will also be considered. Such reports will need to be current i.e. they will have been completed within two years of the entrance examinations.

Non-Native Speakers of English from Overseas

It is strongly recommended that overseas applicants should provide an IELTS or Cambridge Assessment English examination certificate to confirm their ability in English language. However, applicants for entry to Years 9 and 10 do have the option of sitting our own English examinations, but will have to sit an IELTS or Cambridge Assessment English examination at the end of their first academic year, in order to progress through the School.

Students may also be tested in subjects such as Mathematics and Science.

Overseas applicants are also interviewed via Skype, if a personal visit to the School cannot be arranged.

Deposit

On acceptance of an offer, a deposit of £1,000 for students entering Ratcliffe College from the UK and of £5,000 for students from overseas, is payable on entry to the Preparatory School and Senior School. £500 of the UK deposit or £3,000 of the overseas deposit is returned to parents at the end of the first term.

The current deposit amount can be found on the back of the Registration Form. A deposit is not payable on entry to the Nursery, but will be required when the child moves to the Preparatory School. The deposit is not refundable if the student subsequently fails to take up the place. As fees are payable termly in advance, the deposit will be held until the student leaves and may be used to offset charges incurred during the final term. Any balance remaining will be refunded at that time.

When accepting an offer, parents of Catholic students should send a copy of a certificate of baptism for their child or, if there is difficulty obtaining this, a referral by their parish priest confirming baptism, in accordance with the laws of the Catholic Church. Where possible, acceptances from families of other denominations and faiths should be accompanied by a letter from a minister of their faith to whom they are known. This information will assist the School in ensuring that appropriate provision is made in the matters of sacramental preparation and religious practice.

Disclosure of Information

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to disclose, in confidence, to the Headmaster any circumstances which may reasonably be understood to have the potential to affect the pastoral and/ or educational welfare, care and management of any prospective student prior to an offer of a place at Ratcliffe College. Failure to do so may jeopardise said student remaining at Ratcliffe College, should any serious matter arise as a consequence of failing to disclose such reasonable information.

This policy was last reviewed by the Chair of Governors and the Headmaster, September 2019.

Copies of all our policies are available on request