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UCS Junior Branch Admissions Policy

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Choosing the right school for your child is a very important decision. We do all that we can to help families to make the right choice. We strongly encourage personal visits (the precise arrangements for which vary between the UCS Junior Branch and Senior School, and particular details at each school can be found below).

Admissions decisions will be based upon the academic potential revealed by each candidate in examination, in interview and (where appropriate) activity and also upon the judgement of assessors in respect of a candidate's ability to make the most of the diverse opportunities on offer at UCS and to contribute positively to the life of the school and to the experience of other students. Siblings and boys from UCS Pre-Prep do not have automatic right of entry to the Junior Branch but are expected to achieve an overall standard of attainment in 7+ assessments that suggests they will cope and thrive with the fast-paced academic curriculum of the Junior Branch.

We will always seek a report from the candidate's current school, and take full account of it in balancing all the available information before a decision is reached. An enthusiasm for the extra-curricular life of the school – supporting our long-standing traditions in music, art, drama, debating, community activities and sport - will be an advantage.

Open Evenings and School Visits

The dates of our Open Evenings are published on our website, in our

prospectus pack and often in local newspapers and magazines. We conduct two Open Evenings each year, one in the Summer Term and one in the Autumn Term. The Open Evenings consist of a half-hour tour of the school with a current pupil followed by an open, question and answer session with the Headmaster in the school hall. It is necessary to pre-book attendance by phoning the school office as there is a limit to the numbers that can attend at any one time.

Applications to The Junior Branch

UCS is an academically selective school with no religious affiliation. We therefore welcome families from all backgrounds to view the school and to register their sons for assessment.

The usual point of entry is at 7 years (Year 3) where 60 pupils are admitted each year. Beyond that, there is a 'chance vacancy' waiting list. To apply for a 'chance vacancy' place, please contact the Office. If a place becomes available, parents will be asked to bring their son in for admissions testing and a decision will be made shortly afterwards.

We accept applications up to one year in advance of the pupil's normal entry point, but not sooner than that, so **there is no need to register at birth**. There is a standard registration fee to cover the costs of administration and assessment and the process of application always requires the completion of a Registration Form, which must be signed by both parents.

The Entry Procedure and Assessment Process

Following registration, families are invited to attend the school in the Autumn Term before their proposed entry so that the pupils can have their reading assessed in small groups by one of the Y3 teachers whilst the parents are given a guided tour of the school 'in action' by the Headmaster. In January each year, formal tests in English, Maths and Non-Verbal reasoning are conducted. All candidates are tested at the same time.

After receiving reports from the pupils' current school and looking at the test results, decisions are made regarding entry. Parents are informed, usually before the February half-term break.

Equal Treatment

In accordance with the aims of our founders, UCS is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disability or social background.

Special Needs

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry. We welcome pupils

with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require if they gain a place. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities providing that our site can cope with them. We therefore advise parents of children with any special needs to discuss their requirements with the Headmaster before registration is completed, so that adequate provision can be made both in the assessment process and, if admitted, during the student's school career. Parents should always inform us of any special needs that their son may have; such information will never adversely prejudice an application. The school must be provided with a copy of a relevant report from an Educational Psychologist, doctor or other health professional in order for appropriate judgements to be made. It is not possible to make any adjustments to the admission process (for example, to offer a candidate additional time) in the absence of such a report.

Sibling Policy

Having a sibling (current or former pupil) at the school does not confer automatic admission into the school. Siblings must go through the same process as all other applicants at their chosen point of entry. Siblings will not be admitted if we believe that they are unlikely to cope and thrive within the academic UCS environment or if we think that their admission in preference to another candidate would be unfair.

Contractual Terms and Conditions

Acceptance of any place at UCS requires the payment of a financial deposit and advance payment of a portion of the first term's fees. It also requires that the school's Admission Agreement is completed and signed by both parents and returned to the school. A separate copy of the Terms and Conditions of this Agreement will be provided for retention by the family.

Long Term Progression of Pupils Through UCS Foundation

Although there is no formal entry hurdle at 11+ from the JB to the Senior School, the academic performance of all pupils in the JB is carefully monitored according to their year-on-year baseline and end-of-year tracking results. Strategies for pupils whose academic performance gives long-term concern will be implemented and parents informed. In cases where a pupil's academic performance continues to suggest that the pupil might not be able to cope with the pace and rigour of the curriculum, the Headmaster will consult parents to discuss alternative schooling arrangements. This process is likely to happen before the end of Year 4.

Updated by Lewis Hayward, September 2018

Protocol for Checking Pupils' Right to Study in the UK

Overall responsibility for ensuring pupils' right to live and study in the UK is responsibility of the Headmaster of the JB for both prospective and current pupils. This is the same protocol that applies to pupils throughout the UCS Foundation.

The families of all pupils who join the school are required in the application process to indicate if they are a UK or EU national.

The family of any pupil who is indicated as not being a UK or EU national is asked later in the admissions process if the child has the right to live and study in the UK, i.e. whether they have a valid visa, and whether it is a dependent's visa or if the child would require Tier 4 sponsorship.

For further information about how we handle Tier 4 applications, please see the separate section below.

All candidates who accept an offer of a place here are then required, as part of the joining information provided by families, to supply a photocopy or scanned image of a valid UK/ EU passport or birth certificate. If the right to live and study in the UK is dependent on a visa, we require originals of the child's visa for our inspection; all relevant pages are then copied or scanned and then hard copies placed in the student's file. Families are also required under Section 3 of the Terms and Conditions to inform the school immediately if there is any change in the citizenship of the pupil which affects their right to live and study in the UK. For sake of clarity, this does not include normal renewal of UK or EU passports.

Any prospective pupil whose family fails to provide this information will not be permitted to join the school.

Hard copy images of passports and visas supplied at this time are retained in the pupil files in the Headmaster's Secretary's office in each foundation school.

Records are also kept of the expiry date of any applicable visa. Families are required to contact the school and supply an image of the renewed visa as soon as is practical after they have received it. Failure to do so is a breach of our Terms and Conditions and could result in the child being unable to remain a pupil at the school. As a further diligence measure, the Admissions Office (Senior School) or relevant administrative staff (Junior Branch and Pre-Prep) check our records of visa expiry dates on or around 1st May every year to ensure that we have up to date records.

Tier 4 Visas and Sponsorship

There are currently zero pupils in the UCS Foundation who are on Tier 4 visas. The foundation therefore has no active licences.

The normal position of the schools in the foundation is that we do not permit applications which require Tier 4 visa sponsorship.

On occasion when the need for the school to offer Tier 4 sponsorship arises, for example if a current pupil who wishes to remain a pupil for some reason has a change in their citizenship or visa which would otherwise preclude them from doing so, the Headmaster may decide to offer such sponsorship and support the family's application for a Tier 4 visa. In such circumstances the application is handled by the senior school's Admissions Department (even for current pupils), with the advice of the HR Department and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) as appropriate, regardless of whether the pupil is in the Pre-Prep, the Junior Branch or the Senior School.

Failure to secure a Tier 4 visa would result in the child being unable to continue as a pupil at the school.

As sponsors of a Tier 4 visa, the school would be jointly responsible with the pupil's family for ensuring the successful renewal of the visa in due course.

P Miller

Director of Admissions

March 2017