

The Arts Educational School London

# Admission Policy for Pupils' School



## ADMISSIONS POLICY – PUPILS' SCHOOL

### Overall Philosophy

ArtsEd accepts students from a wide range of abilities. We aim to allow students to realise their potential and thus to pursue their respective levels of excellence, in whatever subject they are working in. The difference in levels of ability is evident in the majority of classes. However, the positive environment for teaching and learning in each class should allow all students to achieve a high degree of progress. Members of staff are accustomed to teaching classes of mixed ability – and this is the practice for the majority of lessons at Key Stage 3. The level of streaming (according to ability) which takes place in the school tends to increase as students become older – by the time students reach year 10 mixed ability groupings remain exclusively for Expressive Arts and tutor periods. Class sizes in the Sixth Form tend to be small: the average sizes for AS and A2 classes are six and five respectively.

The decision as to whether or not to admit a student to ArtsEd is a complex one. We are looking for students who are 'all rounders', ideally with highly developed skills in both the academic and vocational arenas. Such students tend to respond particularly well to the holistic approach offered by our arts-based education, with its delicate and complementary balance between the vocational subjects and the more traditional academic disciplines. As a result, students with clear talents in both of these spheres tend to achieve at their optimum level in our environment. For entry to KS3 and KS4 we carefully consider achievement in the academic tests, as there is an academic minimum level below which we cannot successfully accommodate students within the school due to the SEN/LDD provision that we have available. In the vocational arenas we are not looking necessarily for excellence from a student but, rather, potential - accompanied by a genuine desire on the part of the student to learn, develop and maximise her/his innate talents.

We are not a stage school and do not wish to accept students whose sole motivation is the opportunity to do vocational work. For us, the ability to be a 'thinking performer' is vital – it is, for example extremely unlikely that we would provide consent for a student to be absent from school during term time in order to perform or attend an audition.

After a student has auditioned for a place at ArtsEd, a team of staff collates all the marks for the different audition tasks and decides whether or not the individual would enjoyably benefit from an education at ArtsEd. Offers are made based on these discussions and after referral to a reference provided by each student's current school.

### Students with Learning Difficulties or Statements of Special Needs

We are used to working with a number of LDD students (those with a learning difficulty or disability) our experience suggests that artistic and creative students have a higher propensity to be dyslexic. We have a specialist teacher who works with LDD students on a one-to-one basis when necessary. This teacher also provides advice to staff as to the most successful ways of working with the learning difficulties of particular students.

If your daughter or son has a physical or visual impairment, it is important to contact the admissions secretary (Rosalie Jones) prior to an audition. In such cases, we consider whether or not we can accommodate the level of disability at the school (for example, the absence of lifts, arising from the buildings listed status, would cause difficulties for wheelchair-users intending to access the second and third floors).

Prospective students already holding a statement of special need, should inform us before they accept an audition. There are some forms of special educational need which we do not have the expertise to accommodate and, in such cases, a meeting with parents is necessary so that we are better able to reach an informed decision.

## Admission Process for Prospective students of year 7 and 12 (to start at the beginning of the academic year)

Students will be asked to audition on one of our audition days. There are between three and four such days per year and they remain the principle method by which we select students for our main points of entry to the school, Year 7 and Year 12.

Students attend for a significant part of the day and they are tested in a number of key areas. These include:

### Year 7

An examination in Maths (this is an extensive paper designed to suit a wide range of ability within the normal range Year 6 students). It is not expected that all students complete the paper. Failure to complete the paper would not necessarily be an indication that a prospective candidate had not completed enough of the paper to pass this exam.

An examination in ENGLISH, testing skills of creative writing and answering questions to a piece of text.

Please inform us in advance if your daughter/son has any specific learning difficulties as we can consider these when we are marking the maths and English papers.

Students will then either audition for the *Dance course* or the *Acting course*. It is important that prospective students and their parents/carers have looked carefully at the curriculum offer (available on our website) and made themselves aware of the make-up of the school day, as well as the philosophies behind each course. Such research should allow each parent the best opportunity to find the course which is right for their son or daughter.

#### DANCE COURSE audition requirements

A short dance of no more than two minutes (accompaniment on CD acceptable)

#### DRAMA COURSE audition requirements

A two minute monologue from a play (ensure that the character is of an appropriate playing age to the candidate and bring a copy of the text)

And additionally (for both courses)

Either: a short song (bring sheet music if piano accompaniment is required)

Or: a short instrumental recital (bring sheet music if piano accompaniment required)

At the end of the audition process each candidate is assessed, according to his/her suitability for the school. This information is then considered, alongside the reference from his/her current school. If both are positive the student is invited to attend an interview with

her/his parent(s). The purpose of the interview is for the member of the Senior Management Team to find out more about the student, their interests and why they want to attend the school. Parents also have the opportunity to ask questions in order to ensure that they have all the information they need to make a decision about the school.

## Year 12 (Musical Theatre BTEC and 4 A Level course)

For a detailed breakdown of our curriculum offer for Sixth Form studies, please consult the website for the Pupils' School.

Students auditioning for Year 12 entry attend either a morning or an afternoon audition. During that time there is an introductory meeting for both parents and students where there is an opportunity to ask questions. After this meeting students participate in the following:

- A workshop where skills and potential in Musical Theatre are judged.
- A drama workshop where skills at improvisation and group work are considered.
- A group interview (3 to 5 students) where questions are asked about each student's interest in the arts and their desires to attend Arts Ed.
- A group Jazz dance class (MT BTEC students and those considering A level Dance only).
- A singing audition – all students entering sixth form must prepare a musical theatre song of their choice not a pop song or aria. Bring sheet music of the song.

Students subsequently show the following pieces (depending on A level choices)

Drama – One classical monologue from a play- Shakespeare, Marlowe or Webster and also one monologue from a play written post 1970. Each piece should be between 1-2 minutes long and fully memorised.

AS Music : An instrumental piece on their chosen instrument, minimum grade 4 standard. Candidates will also have to sit a theory test. Bring sheet music.

Art – A portfolio of GCSE work, including a range of work from years 10 & 11. Please bring actual work rather than photographs. Sketchbooks are as important as final pieces.

Dance – AS students are required to prepare a piece of their own choreography for a solo dance inspired by a picture or photograph of their choice. The solo must be 1-2 minutes in length and be in one of the following styles – Classical Ballet, Contemporary or Modern Jazz Dance. Music should be on a CD.

Students for the BTEC course must prepare the drama requirements (see above) and they will also participate in the MT workshop, Drama workshop, group Jazz class, singing audition and group interview.

At the end of the audition process candidates are assessed according to their suitability for the course they have applied to. Marks from each stage of the audition process are collated and considered alongside the reference from each student's current school. Academic

potential is an important criteria for the 4 A level course. If a student is able to show that they have the range of skills at the level required or if we have seen considerable potential, we will be in a strong position to offer a place for the course applied for. In certain circumstances, students applying for the BTEC might be offered a place on the A level course and vice versa. Following this stage, parents usually have a period of four weeks to accept the place and send a deposit to confirm it.

Students are expected to gain an A grade at GCSE in the subjects they want to study at A level. Students are not expected to have had previous experience in Philosophy or Media Studies but at least a B grade in GCSE English is normally required.

## Admission procedures for students looking to enter years 8, 9 and 10 at the start of the academic year or during the academic year.

We occasionally have places in years 8, 9 and 10 for new students to either join ArtsEd at the beginning of the academic year, or during the academic year. The audition process is slightly different.

The first thing that a parent should do is to ring the admissions co-ordinator, Rosalie Jones in order to enquire as to whether or not we have any places, or the chances of any becoming available. In the event of a positive response the student and accompanying parents will be offered a tour of the school. At the end of this tour they are usually met by a senior member of staff with opportunity to ask further questions. The prospective student is also able to ask some questions. If both parties want to extend the application process, the student is asked to attend a 'Taster Day' with the class which the applicant would be joining ultimately. During the taster day (which normally takes place a few days after the tour of the school), the student attends some of the normal class lessons, but they are also taken to perform their pre prepared audition pieces as well as having a meeting with a member of the interview team. At the end of the day staff will feed back their observations to the pastoral head and a decision as to whether or not to offer a place is made (subject to reference from the existing school). If a place is available following the acceptance of an offer, we prefer the student to make a start at the school as soon as possible.

### Other Points to Note

- To request a school prospectus please contact the Admissions Co-ordinator on 02089876600 or [pupils@artsed.co.uk](mailto:pupils@artsed.co.uk)
- Application forms are available on the school website or at the back of the prospectus.
- The fee for an audition or a Taster Day audition is currently £45.
- Parents are required to send a deposit of £500 to secure a place at the school. This is returned to the parents after the student leaves the school.

- Parents are required to sign a contract, before a student starts the school. This outlines our conditions amongst which is the requirement that a term's notice must be given before a student leaves the school.

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Authorised by:

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Policy to be circulated to Pupils' School staff, Governing Body and to be available on the website for all viewers and on request in other forms.