



SCHOLARSHIP POLICY

Review Date: July 2023

Latest Review Due: July 2024

Staff responsible: Mr Gareth Green (Assistant Head Academic)

Chair of Governors: Mark Taylor

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following St Michael's policies:

- *Curriculum Policy*

Rights Respecting School policy statement

Our school's vision and values have at their heart the importance of treating each other as we would want to be treated ourselves, with Care, Consideration and Courtesy for all. This is one of the reasons why the work of UNICEF and Rights Respecting Schools is so significant to us. We are committed to respecting, upholding and promoting the rights of every child. This policy links specifically to our commitment to the the following articles:

- *Article 3 - Best interest of the child*
- *Article 4 - Making rights real*
- *Article 12 - Respect for children's views*
- *Article 28 - Access to education*
- *Article 29 - Aims of education*
- *Article 31 - Rest, play, culture and arts*

Introduction

The following policy is designed to clarify the scholarship procedure to UK boarding schools, however, it should be noted that some schools change their admissions policies regularly and that this policy will adapt to those changes wherever possible. This policy is designed to be interpreted with other existing policies at St. Michaels.

Identification of potential scholars at St. Michael's - Academic.

Pupils are setted in terms of ability in core subjects from Year 6. This, together with methods of assessments such as, *inter alia*, effort and attainment marks, CAT testing, staff discussion, internal testing and end of year testing helps teachers formulate an overall picture of a child.



At the end of Year 7 pupils will undertake internal end of year exams. Academic Heads of Department shall meet following these examinations and prior to the end of the academic year in order to discuss and identify potential scholars. Heads of Department will look back on, *inter alia*, past assessment data and take into account CAT data as well as the requirements of individual schools (some schools have higher scholarship requirements, e.g. Eton King's Scholarship, Winchester Election etc). Heads of Department will utilise the *Destination Schools* list as drawn up and maintained by the Assistant Head (Academic) to aid this discussion.

Following this meeting, the Assistant Head (Academic) will send electronic mailings to those currently suitable for a scholarship (if at all.) We wish to discourage the notion of children 'having a go' at scholarships due to the propensity for added stress to children by the unlikelihood of a child attaining that scholarship and the extra work needed to be a scholar. Our teachers here at St. Michael's can draw upon years of experience and their professional judgement when giving advice on scholarships and senior schools. Parents need to note that the sitting of an academic scholarship does not preclude their child from having to, in addition, undertake Common Entrance in June.

NB! Scholarship candidates must be known to be intrinsically driven and take responsibility for putting themselves through the rigours of the additional work these candidates will undergo. This character trait is one that is built up over time and will be commented on in the Headmaster's reference to senior schools.

Identification of potential scholars at St. Michael's - Non-Academic

At the end of the academic year, following the Academic Heads of Department meeting, non-academic staff meet to discuss potential scholars in their subject(s). Again, they will take into account their individual knowledge and experience of the child together with data such as past reports and assessments (effort and attainment), together with relevant experience on the part of the child (e.g. representation in out-of-school sport, music grades, peripatetic reports etc).

The non-academic Heads of Department shall also utilise the *Destination Schools* list to inform their discussions as this knowledge of destination schools may inform their decision due to the varying standards between schools. Again, some schools have higher scholarship requirements due to specific specialisms, e.g. Millfield Sports Scholarship.

Following this meeting, the relevant non-academic Head of Department shall contact parents of a child to explain their suitability for a scholarship. Our teachers here at St. Michael's can draw upon years of experience and their professional judgement when giving advice on scholarships and senior schools.

The Assistant Head (Academic) keeps an up to date record of which scholarships are available for each school in order to advise staff during these meetings or parents in the letter.



If a parent feels strongly that their child is suitable for a scholarship then they need to make an appointment with the Assistant Head (Academic) to discuss further. It is expected that for both types of scholarship (academic and non-academic) that whilst the school will support pupils (further information as below), that pupils will be expected to be self-motivated and have a desire to attain a scholarship. Children are expected to be of a scholarship standard without the need of external tuition. The school will cater for the needs of potential scholars but underpinned by familial support.

Pupils will still need to undertake Common Entrance if being entered for a non-academic scholarship and it may be possible to combine with an academic scholarship if suitable as above.

Tuition of academic scholars within lessons

This is catered for individually by Academic Heads of Department within their long-term and medium-term plans. Some teachers may divide a class into groups to cater for different senior schools or run lunchtime / after school activities - this is left up to the discretion of HOD's and overseen by Assistant Head (Academic) and Headmaster, as well as being indicated on Medium Term Plans.

Children will be given access to a minimum of two past-papers pertinent to their chosen scholarship senior school. They may also be exposed to relevant past papers from other schools as these may help their learning due to the cross-over of subject knowledge and area. Again, this is left to the discretion of the teachers. These will be completed by the potential scholars with feedback provided. An open dialogue will take place for the duration of the period when the scholarship is being attempted. Parents, teachers and/or pupils may decide that the attempt of the scholarship is not in the child's interest. In these cases the correct decision may be to withdraw the child.

Sporting / Music / Drama CVs to support

When staff have knowledge of an application for a sporting, music or drama scholarship prior to the November half-term, the Head of that department works with the children to help them provide a 'CV' and accompanying documents. Please note that whilst help is provided, children need to show self-motivation and diligence to undertake some of this on their own outside of the school setting.

Applications for senior school scholarships

This is the responsibility of parents. We cannot complete application forms nor can we send them off. We cannot provide guidance on financial bursaries available to parents or how to fill in these forms. Parents are responsible for adhering to the deadlines for submission of these application forms directly to the relevant senior schools. Only in exceptional circumstances can the school help or offer advice. As mentioned above, the Assistant Head (Academic), Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Headmaster remain available to offer honest advice on senior school suitability and which awards are available, however parents are



always strongly advised to carry out their own research on senior schools and the availability of awards therein.

Mock interviews

We guarantee that your child will have two mock interviews with a suitable member of staff. This may be by way of a group interview session or an individual session, but all children will be guaranteed one individual session. It is not possible to offer direct feedback to parents as to the performance of their child at this session. The time and location of these interviews will be communicated to parents directly.

The acquisition of background knowledge important to possible success at scholarship is imperative. Teachers at St. Michael's routinely immerse children in stimulating debate as part of their every day teaching, be it through English, TPRS. or discussing current affairs in Geography or a form time session. Many assemblies also discuss current affairs. It is expected that parents of scholars will reinforce this interest in the world around them by ensuring that children are included in debate and exposed to news and events in the home. This is equally true for those applying for non-academic scholarships; the child needs to have an inherent interest in music, sport, art or drama outside of the school setting.

Senior schools do not wish for us to wholly prepare our pupils for interviews at senior schools for scholarship. They wish for children to be confident and passionate yet be prepared to think on their feet. They want to get to know the real child and many of these interviews give the senior school a chance to get to know that child.

References

We will only fill in references when directly approached from the senior school and we will always adhere to deadlines. It is school policy not to disclose references to parents. They are written internally, checked and sent directly to the senior school using either our own template, the ISEB template or the senior school template of choice. We take a great deal of time to ensure the references are completed accurately and fairly through a plethora of means, including, *inter alia*; review of data held on the child on the school's portal, a read of the child's last written reports, discussion with form tutors and, at times, staff may be asked to fill in a document with an up to date performance on a child. All references will be completed by the Headmaster in conjunction with the Assistant Head (Academic) and the Assistant Head (Pastoral.) If the senior school in question require outside achievements, the Assistant Head (Academic) will coordinate this flow of information with parents.

Communication of scholarship results

All senior schools undertake this in different ways. Some communicate directly to parents in the first instance and some inform the school first. If necessary, it will always be the Headmaster who shall communicate results with the child concerned.



Visits for scholarship attempts

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school when a child shall be absent for the purposes of sitting the scholarship(s) as senior schools do not inform the school directly. That way the school can also plan when the mock interviews need to take place.

Post scholarship

Scholars, regardless of the outcome of the scholarship, are expected to resume classes following the Common Entrance syllabus in school. Provision will be made in lessons by way of differentiation if required and this is determined by the individual subject teachers. Some examinations can be early (February half-term) and some can be late (May). During Common Entrance week, scholars may have their own enrichment week outside of school (should staffing allow this to occur) and shall also take part in the Year 8 Enrichment Week at the end of the academic year.