

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

2023/24



We welcome students who have an honest determination to work hard. One of the founding principles of the college is that it should offer education to students without being academically selective. Subject to satisfactory references from their previous school/s each applicant will be considered on their own merit, regardless of background. Once an interview has taken place taster days may be offered and, if necessary, students may join us for a longer trial period, eg a week or even half a term on agreement.

We expect the admission process to be open and transparent with full disclosure from parents/carers and students alike. If we accept students who have had difficulties in the past, they start with a 'clean slate'. The college maintains an informal yet purposeful atmosphere, where there is no uniform and staff and students are on first name terms. All students are expected to work to the absolute best of their ability and show courtesy and tolerance towards fellow staff and students alike.

However, we cannot take students with serious behavioural difficulties or special educational needs over and above our competencies. We reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if essential information, which should have been disclosed, subsequently comes to light.

We also reserve the right not to offer a student a place at the college. It is the college only that makes a decision on whether to accept or decline a student and the college's decision is final.

### **Interviews**

All prospective students based in the UK are interviewed by the Principal, Heads of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team. The college does not consider the application of parents/carers on behalf of their child unless the prospective student is present at interview.

Interviewees are shown round the college grounds, including the main teaching buildings, the canteens and boarding accommodation, if applicable. If it is not possible for a student to attend an interview in person then we can conduct interviews remotely via Zoom or Google Meet.

Interviewees are asked to scan and email before interview relevant documentation relating to their application, including copies of previous public examination results and module mark breakdowns; previous school reports and any assessments or statements of needs. This information is required for the purposes of assessing the suitability of the applicant for study at the college and is treated in confidence. Those attending interview in person must also bring with them their passport or birth certificate if no passport is available. It is very helpful if parents/carers can also provide a reference from their child's school. Where students have been educated at home by their parents they should give details of what has been studied and how the student's programme was structured, as well as show evidence of the notification to the local authority. Those that have been taught by private tutors should provide reports from them. Students have the opportunity to come to the college for a taster day(s), which can be

arranged after the interview has taken place. This is a very valuable way for both the prospective student and the college to decide whether it is the right environment for the student.

If a student's second language is English then an indication of ability via a recognised English language exam or an English test is useful. Those who would need to apply for a student visa must take one of the English language tests as specified by UK Visas and Immigration and obtain at least the minimum requirement as set by them.

During the interview, the student must satisfy us that they are prepared to work hard and is capable of success. All offers are subject to satisfactory references from the applicant's previous school and all references are treated confidentially. If the offer of a place is accepted, the applicant and the parent/carer/fee payer must complete and sign a registration form, agreeing to the terms and conditions set out by the college. A copy of the terms and conditions is enclosed with all registration forms.

### **Overseas students**

Where at all possible we ask overseas students to visit us for interview. However, we understand that this may be difficult to arrange and we can offer virtual interviews instead using Zoom or Google Meet. Each application from prospective students based overseas is considered on its individual merits. The application form for overseas students must be completed and accompanied by a copy of the information page of their passport with their picture, satisfactory and recent school reports, a reference and examination results if applicable. Successful applicants will be asked to complete a registration form and pay the necessary deposits. The college only accepts international students if they are boarding students or living with parents or, if they are 16+ with a registered guardian or family member aged 25 or older. The college does not permit its international students to enter into private fostering arrangements.

If an international student is over 18 they are permitted to live independently. The college offers a *Resident Student* boarding option, subject to availability, for those aged 18 or older where students are supported to live independently, in college vetted accommodation and with additional support and guidance from the professional boarding team. Students of any age, whose parents live outside the UK, must have a UK based guardian appointed by the family as per our Guardianship requirements.

If, for any reason, a student is unable to arrive and start their course on time, the college must undertake an Academic and Pastoral Review to determine if the student is still able to access, progress and complete the course. An Academic and Pastoral Review will take place if a student does not arrive and start within 3 weeks of the published course start date. A review may take place earlier if the college deems it appropriate.

Following the review, the college will decide if:

- The student can access, progress and complete the course and the offer remains in place pending any subsequent reviews.

- The student, with additional support, can access, progress, and complete the course. Details of that support will be provided.
- The student will not be able to access, progress or complete the course and the offer will be revoked.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Although the college is not a special school, we are able to consider certain applications where the student has an SEN. It is essential that the relevant documents are scanned and emailed before the interview and that full details of the student's condition/s are disclosed, so that we can accurately assess the possibility of catering for their needs satisfactorily.

### **Registration forms**

The registration form holds all the personal and academic information about the prospective student. If any significant information relating to academic or medical matters is given on the form, additional information may also be requested. Failure to provide information of a medical or psychological nature that may adversely affect a student's wellbeing may result in the withdrawal of the student's place from the college. Failure to provide information which may relate to a student's reason for leaving a previous school, and which may have a subsequent impact on the wellbeing of students at Rochester Independent College, may result in the student being withdrawn from the college, eg substance misuse or violent and/or abusive behaviour.

By completing and signing the registration form, parents/carers and students are agreeing to the college's terms and conditions. Students are therefore expected to abide by the rules and regulations of the college once they have enrolled.

The college acknowledges receipt of registration forms and the initial instalment of fees.

### **Induction**

Parents/Carers receive a Welcome Pack giving essential information. Year 7-12 students meet their Form Tutors, and Year 13/14 students meet their Personal Tutors, at the beginning of the academic year. Those students who start later will see either the Principal, one of the Vice Principals or Head of Sixth Form/Lower School to collect their timetable and ask any questions.

### **Guardianships and Homestay accommodation**

The college does not arrange guardianships or homestay accommodation for any student. This would need to be arranged by parents/carers themselves.

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