

The Tonbridge School Admissions Process



Entry procedure

Families wishing to apply for a place for their son are encouraged to visit and register with us during Year 5. Visits might be through one of our termly Open Mornings or through an individual visit, usually including a meeting with the Headmaster or the Director of Admissions and a tour of the school.

Following registration, initial assessments take place during the Autumn Term of Year 6.

The assessment procedure consists of three elements:

- All applicants are required to complete the ISEB Common Pre-Test by 1 December (either in their own school or at Tonbridge).
- All applicants are invited to attend an assessment afternoon at Tonbridge during the Autumn Term. This visit may take place either before or after the ISEB pre-test is taken.
- Tonbridge also requests a report on each applicant from their current school.



Following these steps, in January of Year 6, applicants receive one of the following:

- An Unconditional Offer of a place (subject only to a satisfactory final report from their current school).
- A Provisional Offer, inviting them to sit a further competitive assessment, which will take place at Tonbridge during the Summer Term of Year 7.
- No offer if we judge a candidate to be less well-suited to Tonbridge.

For those who register after the start of Year 6 there is an opportunity to gain entry either through late Year 6 assessment, completing the same three elements as earlier applicants, or in the case of those registering after our standard entry lists have closed (usually at some point in Year 6), through our late applicant examination which takes place in November of Year 8.

It is our expectation that around 60% of the places will be filled by those receiving Unconditional Offers in Year 6, leaving around 40% of places for those sitting the subsequent examinations.

Whilst we will continue to encourage boys who have been prepared for Common Entrance to sit this exam in June of Year 8 for setting purposes, passing this exam is not a condition of entry.

Scholarships and Bursaries

Tonbridge is committed to broadening access to the education which we provide. We offer an extensive range of scholarships, all of which provide access to means tested bursaries offering up to 100% fee remission.

Scholarships fall into three broad categories:

- **Junior Foundation Scholarships** (awarded in Year 6 for entry to Tonbridge in Year 9). Any candidate who has received an Unconditional Offer in Year 6 and who is in need of bursarial support in order to attend Tonbridge may apply for a Junior Foundation Scholarship. Candidates will be invited to Tonbridge to sit further exams in February of Year 6, with awards offered shortly afterwards.
- **Music, Sport, Drama, Art, and Design, Technology and Engineering Scholarships.** Assessments take place in February of Year 8. Any boy in receipt of an Unconditional Offer (awarded either in Year 6 or Year 7) may apply for one or more of these scholarships.
- The **Academic Scholarship** Assessment takes place in late April/early May of Year 8. Again any boy in receipt of an Unconditional Offer (awarded either in Year 6 or Year 7) may apply.

Further details of all of our scholarship and bursary provision can be found on our website.



Timeline for Entry in 2023

2020

- January - July** Any remaining applicants should visit and register in order to be included in the initial assessment process.
- September - December** Applicants should complete the ISEB Common Pre-test by 1 December.
Applicants will be invited to Tonbridge for an assessment afternoon.
Tonbridge will request reports from applicants' current schools.

2021

- January** Unconditional Offers are made to the strongest candidates.
Provisional Offers are made to other strong performers, who will subsequently be required to sit the May Year 7 exams.
- February** Junior Foundation Scholarship examination.
- March** House Lists Open to those who have accepted Unconditional Offers.

2022

- January** Deadline for accepting Unconditional Offers made in January 2021.
- May** Entrance Exams at Tonbridge for those holding Provisional Offers.
- June** Unconditional Offers made to successful candidates who took the May 2022 exams.
- July onwards** Reserve List places offered to others, leading to Unconditional Offers if and when places become available.
- November** Late Applicants exam for overseas applicants and those on the Headmaster's List.

2023

- February** Music, Cowdrey (Sport), Art, Drama and Design, Technology and Engineering Scholarship Assessments. Novi Visit :An opportunity for prospective pupils to spend two days at the school to familiarise themselves with Tonbridge in advance on entry in September 2023.
- March** Academic Scholarship Exams.
- Late April/Early May** CE for those who have been prepared for it (for setting purposes only).
- June**

Frequently Asked Questions

How many pupils do you accept at 13+?

Around 145 new boys join Tonbridge each year at age 13. The year is divided into seven forms.

How many boarders do you have?

Around 60% of the school are boarders. We have seven boarding houses and five day houses.

My son is in Year 5 at prep school and has been registered with Tonbridge. When will he visit Tonbridge for an assessment afternoon and when can we expect to hear the results of this?

Boys in prep schools usually sit the ISEB Common Pre-test (at their prep schools) during the Autumn Term of Year 6 at their current school. They will also be invited to spend an afternoon at Tonbridge during the Autumn Term. This visit may be before or after they have sat the ISEB pre-test. Results are issued in mid-January of Year 6.

My son is in Year 5 at primary school and has been registered with Tonbridge. When will he visit Tonbridge for an assessment afternoon and when can we expect to hear the results of this?

Primary schools are often unable to supervise an ISEB Common Pre-test. As a result, primary school boys will be invited to spend a full day at Tonbridge, so as to allow them to sit the ISEB Common Pre-test here, as well as completing the assessment afternoon. Results are issued, as with prep school candidates, in mid-January of Year 6.

If my son receives a Year 6 Unconditional Offer for entry in Year 9, when will we need to accept this by?

Unconditional Offers which are made to boys in Year 6 (during January) must be accepted by 1 January in Year 7 by completion of the final entry form and the payment of the admission fee. However, house lists open in March of Year 6 and therefore, if a family wishes to express a preference for particular houses on the opening of the house lists, they may choose to accept the place earlier.

If my son receives a Year 6 Provisional Offer for entry in Year 9, when will we need to accept this by?

Provisional Offers which are made to boys in Year 6 (during January) must be accepted by 1 January in Year 7 by return of the appropriate form. We will automatically write to all candidates who have accepted a conditional offer during the Lent Term of Year 7 with full details of the exams to be taken in May of Year 7.

Is it correct that house preferences can only be sent in once an Unconditional Offer has been accepted?

That is correct. Once an Unconditional Offer is made, be it in Year 6, Year 7 or Year 8, and once a decision is made between whether your son will be a boarder or a day boy, then a first, second and third preference house may be identified. Having said that, we encourage parents to avoid placing excessive emphasis on the house which their son might join, as there are not great differences between the houses and they all offer similarly sized year groups.

If my son receives an Unconditional Offer after the May Year 7 exam for entry in Year 9, when will we need to accept this by?

Those with Provisional Offers will sit the entrance exams in May of Year 7, with Unconditional Offers being issued to the strongest performers in early June. These places must be accepted by 1 July so that any remaining places may be offered to others.

My son is a late applicant and will therefore sit the late applicants' exam. What are the timescales for this?

The late applicant exam is sat in early November during Year 8 with results issued by 1 December. Places must be accepted by 10 December, so that reserve list candidates can be offered any remaining places.

Will you still expect UK prep school candidates to sit CE?

We would expect those who are at a school which prepares pupils for CE to sit either our Academic Scholarship examination in late April/early May of Year 8 or Common Entrance in the June of Year 8. Common Entrance results will be used for setting purposes only; candidates should aim for an average of over 70% in the core subjects.

Can candidates who do not attend UK prep schools take part in the Academic Scholarship process?

Yes. Any candidate who has an Unconditional Offer of a place may take the academic scholarship, which will be sat at Tonbridge over a three-day period early in the summer term of Year 8.

What is the balance between Year 6 Unconditional Offers, Year 7 Unconditional Offers and Late Applicants?

In a typical year around 60% of the year group will have received Unconditional Offers in Year 6, with the remaining places being filled by those who have gained entry via the Year 7 or Year 8 (Late Applicant) exam.