

Consultation for Admissions Policy 2022-23

Background to the proposal

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, George Salter Academy was forced to request a late variation in our Admission Policy for 2021-22 (Entry in September 2021). This request was granted, meaning that the Academy cancelled the annual Nfer Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests and also the Performing Arts Aptitude Tests. The Academy has previously undertaken the Nfer testing to ensure a spread of ability in our Year 7 intake each year. Meanwhile, the Aptitude testing enables the Academy to take 10% of the cohort (25 students in a PAN of 250) who have aptitude in the Performing Arts, who follow an adapted curriculum. As the Academy's Covid-19 Risk Assessment precluded visitors from entering the school site and also meant practical lessons were rare, this meant that neither tests could be carried out.

For the 2022-23 Admissions Policy, the Academy proposes to re-introduce the Performing Arts aptitude tests in the hope that by November 2021 (when the tests are undertaken) the pandemic is curtailed to enable them to occur.

However, The Academy is also proposing to again remove the Nfer Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests for 2022-23.

Furthermore, the Academy also would like to reduce its post-16 capacity number to 200 from 300 places (approximately 100 in each of Year 12 and 13). This is due to the Academic ethos of courses offered in Post-16, where entry requirements mandate that students should be following either A-Levels or Level 3 Btec courses. There is no proposed alteration to our PAN for external students.

Current Position

As outlined above, the current (2020-21) Admissions Policy holds the following position:

- 1) There were no NFER Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests for applicants seeking to enter Year 7.
- 2) There were no Performing Arts Aptitude Tests and therefore no 10% Aptitude stream
- 3) There is a capacity for 300 places in the sixth-form

Proposal

For the 2022-23 Admissions Policy, we propose that:

- 1) We do not hold the NFER Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests for applicants seeking to enter Year 7.
- 2) We re-introduce the Performing Arts Aptitude Tests with an Aptitude Stream of up to 10% of the PAN (up to 25 pupils) for applicants seeking to enter Year 7 who wish to apply for this stream.

- 3) We reduce the capacity of the sixth-form to 200 places (note there is *no* proposed change to our PAN for external post-16 applicants of a minimum of 15 places).

Implications

- 1) The removal of NFER Non-Verbal Reasoning Tests will mean that the Academy intake of 250 pupils will be determined solely by the Oversubscription Criteria published in the policy (including up to 25 pupils entering via the Performing Arts Aptitude stream). This criteria will not, therefore, be applied after applicants are placed into 5 equal bands by ability. This may change the typical ability profile upon entry into the Academy; where most recently they spread was approximately 57% are middle-ability, 27% are high-ability and 13% are low ability (with the remainder not having taken KS2 Sats). Whilst it is difficult for the Academy to analyse the potential impact on ability, the proposal is made as it is potentially fairer to children in the local community to enter the Academy based upon the Oversubscription criteria without ability being a factor.
- 2) The re-introduction of Performing Arts Aptitude Tests will mean that the Academy takes up to 10% of its intake (up to 25 pupils) who have an aptitude for the Performing Arts. This enables the Academy to teach a broader Performing Arts curriculum that places it at the centre of Academy life.
- 3) The reduction of capacity from 300 to 200 places enables the Academy to maintain the highest standards of curriculum by offering A Levels and Level 3 BTEC courses in the most cost-effective way. In ensuring that students have achieved the entry requirements, the Academy is able to plan effectively for a stable number of entrants.

Consultation Process

The Admissions Authority is required to formally consult on any proposed changes to admission arrangements, in line with the School Admissions Code (2014). This report is issued as a formal consultative document and will be available to any individual who requests a copy. A copy of the proposal is published on the school website here: [GSA Admissions Policy 2022-23 \(Proposal\)](#).

Period of Consultation

The consultation period lasts for a minimum of six weeks. The consultation will run commencing from midnight, Monday 7th December 2020, to midnight Tuesday 19th January 2021.

Relevant Consultees

In line with the requirements of the School Admissions Code (2014), the school will consult with the following:

- Parents of all pupils in the affected schools
- Parents of any pupils expected to attend the affected schools within the next two academic years
- The Local Authority
- All other admission authorities in the relevant area
- Adjoining neighbouring authorities

To reach the relevant consultees, we will use the following methods:

- Academy website
- Social Media
- Local Authority circular to all affected schools
- Local Authority circular to neighbouring authorities/admission authorities

Responding to the Consultation

All interested parties are invited to make a written representation on all items within the proposal. Parties are not required to comment on any areas not covered by the proposal.

Written responses will also be accepted by email or post; these responses should outline personal details, including name, address and relationship to the school, why there is an interest in the proposal, whether the party is in agreement with the proposal or not, and any alternative solutions or comments.

Emails must be sent to: Mr R. Reeve (Senior Vice Principal) at r.reeve@georgesalter.com

Written responses must be sent to: Mr R. Reeve, Senior Vice Principal, George Salter Academy, Davey Road, Sandwell, West Midlands B70 9UW.

The deadline for all responses to the proposal is midnight, Tuesday 19th January 2021.

Next Steps

The final report and the decision made by the admissions authority will be accessible via the Academy's website. Printed copies of the report will be made available on request to anyone who has responded to the proposal.

Any decisions confirmed as a result of this consultation will be reviewed in three years time.