

**MERCHISTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL
ADMISSION POLICY 2010**



1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1 According to Section 5(5) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, as amended, (hereinafter referred to as 'SASA') the Admissions Policy of a public school is determined by the school governing body (hereinafter referred to as 'SGB').
- 1.2 The SGB of Merchiston Preparatory School (hereinafter referred to as 'MPS') has, after deliberation of all material factors, adopted as its Admissions Policy the provisions contained herein.
- 1.3 In the course of the formulation of such Admissions Policy, the SGB has ensured adherence to SASA and to the principles contained in the Constitution, as well as to other applicable legislation.
- 1.4 It is emphasized that, in the implementation of this Admissions Policy, section 28(2) of the Constitution will be the overriding factor in consideration of each application. The aforementioned section provides; 'A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.'

2 SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

- 2.1 Admission is primarily based on merit, where the following aspects are taken into consideration:
 - 2.1.1 Academic ability and attitude;
 - 2.1.2 Co-curricular ability and involvement;
 - 2.1.3 Character and personality.
- 2.2 Entry is not on a first come first served basis.
- 2.3 Parents/Legal Guardians of scholars attending MPS are expected to respect and adhere to the ethos, traditions and all policies pertaining to the governance of the school.
- 2.4 MPS is a boys' school committed to providing an environment of excellence in the provision of academic, cultural and sporting education and activities.
- 2.5 It is the intention to provide a racially, culturally and socio-economically diverse environment, with provision made to encourage access to disadvantaged learners. No form of discrimination will be practiced in the selection of learners to MPS.
- 2.6 Parents/Legal Guardians of day scholars attending MPS are expected to reside with the learners so that normal parental controls are in place and so that the school has access to parents should intervention become necessary.

3 LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

3.1 In terms of Section 6(2) of SASA, the SGB of a public school may determine the language policy of that school.

3.2 The SGB of MPS has, in its language policy, determined that the school will be a single medium school and that the language of instruction will be English. Accordingly learners admitted to the school will need to be sufficiently proficient in English so as not to prejudice their academic progress.

4 AGE OF LEARNERS FOR ADMISSION TO GRADE 1

4.1 A learner will be given preference in consideration for admission to Grade 1 at MPS if he will turn 7 by 31 December of his Grade 1 year.

4.2 In other grades, learners who are more than two years older than the grade cohort will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

5 CAPACITY OF SCHOOL

5.1 The capacity of the school shall be limited to 774 learners (inclusive of boarders), and proportioned as follows: In reaching a decision on this figure the SGB has taken into account all relevant factors including, but not limited to:

- 5.1.1 The number of available educators;
- 5.1.2 Educators' space requirements including a staff room and areas for their administration to be carried out;
- 5.1.3 The number of designated, suitably sized classrooms;
- 5.1.4 The need for space for sports, remedial, and cultural programmes and activities to take place;
- 5.1.5 Provision for continued space for a library, computer rooms, school hall, specialist rooms and laboratories and workshop currently in existence;
- 5.1.6 The need to support the educational process by providing designated and exclusive space for:
- 5.1.7 The management and administration of the school
- 5.1.8 A staff workroom
- 5.1.9 A staff common room
- 5.1.10 Occupational Therapy room
- 5.1.11 Speech Therapist room
- 5.1.12 Educational Psychologist room
- 5.1.13 Provision of the necessary toilet facilities to cater for the number of staff and learners.
- 5.1.14 The capacity of the school to cope with normal movement in corridors between classes and on the stairwells will be a major consideration.

5.2 The educational needs, safety and well-being of the learners are of paramount importance in determining the capacity of the school.

6 DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION OF A LEARNER

- 6.1 An official or certified copy of birth certificate (parents must be advised that it is an offence to make false statements regarding the age of a child)
- 6.2 Immunisation Card
- 6.3 Official KZNDEC Transfer Card (where applicable)
- 6.4 Official MPS application form
- 6.5 Proof of residence
- 6.6 Most recent report card
- 6.7 Confidential and financial questionnaires (where applicable)
- 6.8 Copies of parents/legal guardian identity documents
- All of the above documents must be certified**
- 6.9 Passport size photograph of the learner
- 6.10 Failure to present correct documentation may compromise the application process.

7 CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In viewing applications for admission to MPS, the SGB has resolved that the Headmaster will have discretion to admit learners and, in the exercise of such discretion, the following considerations will be referred to:
 - 7.1.1 A learner must have passed the grade immediately below the grade into which admission is sought, except for Grade 1
 - 7.1.2 A learner who has a brother currently at MPS;
 - 7.1.3 A learner who has a record of committed involvement in the cultural, sporting and co-curricular programme provided for at MPS and who has a good disciplinary record;
 - 7.1.4 Where placement is in the best interest of the learner and where he is clearly willing and able to benefit educationally from the programme offered by the school;
 - 7.1.5 Entry to Grade 1 is extremely limited as priority is given to the MPS boys currently enrolled in the Grade R Foundation Phase;
 - 7.1.6 Learners who need to repeat the year;
 - 7.1.7 Learners who attend registered Pre-Schools;
 - 7.1.8 Preference given to Departmental of Education and Culture Personnel transfers;
 - 7.1.9 Preference given to boarder applications;
 - 7.1.10 Learners needing remedial intervention.
 - 7.1.11 The presence of any of the abovementioned factors is not a guarantee of acceptance to or exclusion from MPS.

8 APPLICATIONS FOR BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT

- 8.1 The capacity of the Boarding Establishment shall be limited to 60 boys.
- 8.2 If learners live at a distance from MPS which precludes them from commuting daily, they may apply for a position in the Boarding Establishment.
- 8.3 Prospective Boarders must fulfill the same school requirements for entry as the day scholars.
- 8.4 As places in the academic section of the school are reserved for the small percentage of boarders, they are not available for day scholars.
- 8.5 Documents required will apply to that of learner admission, as well as boarder documentation accompanied by a letter of motivation from parents/guardians.
- 8.6 Merchiston reserves the right to select candidates for boarding based upon a very strict set of criteria encompassing:
 - 8.6.1 Language proficiency
 - 8.6.2 Sound academic standards
 - 8.6.3 Sound emotional standing
 - 8.6.4 Strong, acceptable parental support base with a complete ‘buy into’ from the parents.
- 8.7 Merchiston Preparatory will not accept a learner if it is deemed that the child is being placed in boarding for the wrong reasons.

9 PROCEDURE OF APPLICATION

- 9.1 All applications are required to be made in writing on the school’s prescribed application form, together with documentary proof requested to be annexed thereto.
- 9.2 Grade 1 applications:
 - 9.2.1 Each year, by no later than the end of February, MPS will advertise its acceptance of applications for the following year and the closing date for submission of such applications. In exceptional cases, and entirely at the discretion of the headmaster, applications may be accepted after the closing date.
 - 9.2.2 Applicants who comply with the submission date will be invited to attend an interview with the headmaster or his representative. Applicants will be notified in writing whether their application has been successful. If an application has been successful, the applicant will be required to notify the school in writing within the prescribed time period of the acceptance of a place for the learner for the following year or the applicant will be deemed to have elected not to take up the offered position.
 - 9.2.3 Not all applicants are guaranteed an interview.

9.3 Applications for other grades:

9.3.1 Applications are dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis for those families moving into the natural feeder area during the year.

9.3.2 All other applicants are dealt with during the second and third terms and parents are informed in writing if a place has been offered to them. If an application has been successful, the applicant will be required to notify the school in writing within the prescribed time period of the acceptance of a place for the learner for the following year or the applicant will be deemed to have elected not to take up the offered position.

9.4 If an application has been declined, an applicant is entitled to request reasons, which will be provided in writing.

SIGNED:


Ivan Rensburg
Chairman MPS Governing Body

August 2010/2011