



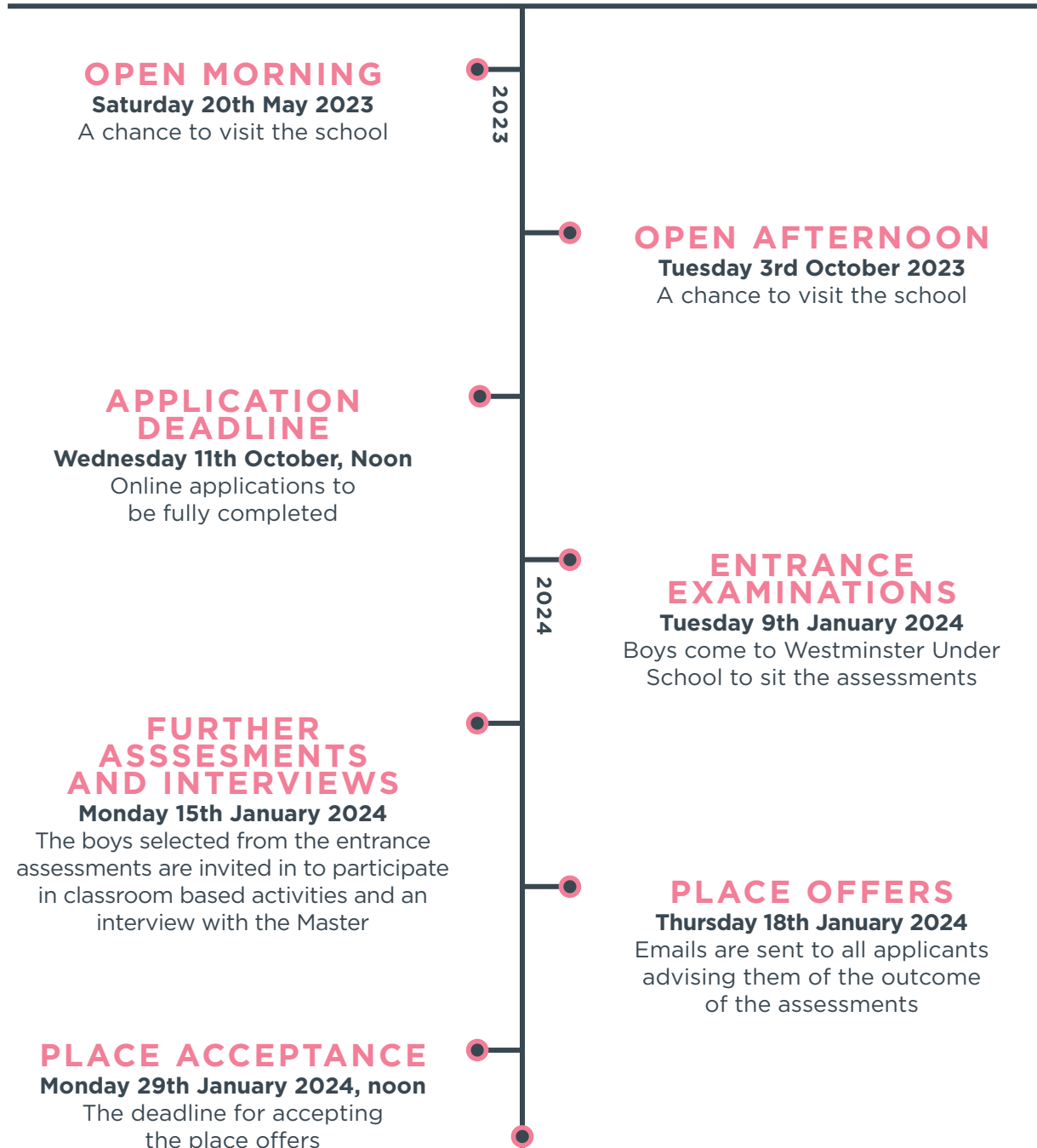
WESTMINSTER
UNDER SCHOOL

8+

ADMISSION
INFORMATION PACK



KEY DATES



ADMISSIONS PROCESS

REGISTRATION

Parents who wish to register their sons for the September 2024 8+ entry should complete the online registration form, which can be found in the Admissions section of the school website:

www.westminsterunder.org.uk/admissions.

The deadline for all September 2024 applications is noon on Wednesday 11th October 2023.

WHAT IS LIFE LIKE AT WESTMINSTER?

Days are busy and the boys must have an intrinsic love of learning - they will be exposed to so many new things in a safe, supportive and intellectually challenging environment.

Having able boys means that there is also plenty of time for reading, discovery, music, art, drama and sport. Parents regularly say that discussions in the car and at home around the dinner table are endlessly interesting, with ideas and learning at school being at the centre of wider family discussions.

We are in no way an exam factory - if boys have strengths in specific areas, they are challenged by means of widening the curriculum rather than just extending them to work further up the school. Pupils entering national competitions in Maths, History, English and Latin is very common for us. Pupils should not expect to do, e.g., Year 9 Maths in Year 4: that is simply not the best way of challenging bright boys.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

At the Under School we look for potential in the boys and for boys who have natural ability and will therefore thrive here. Our challenge is to find that potential, rather than simply select intensely-tutored boys, and whose natural ability will grow with the challenges a Westminster education provides. We, therefore, strongly recommend that you do not "cram" your son, or have him specifically tutored. This can detract from the freshness, spontaneity and eagerness to learn which are some of the qualities we are looking for.

All boys for the 8+ entrance assessments will sit tests in Mathematics, English, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning.

The boys will be placed in small groups within classrooms and there will be at least two members of staff who will help them and be with them for the duration of the exams. There will be breaks in between the papers, allowing the boys to use the bathrooms, have a snack have some time away from the screen.

Further information regarding the tests will be made available to parents once the application deadline has passed.

MATHEMATICS

It will be assumed that the boys have completed a programme of study contained within the National Curriculum. Boys should have a sound understanding of place-value, a grasp of the four arithmetic operations and the ability to apply them in problem solving.

They should have a range of mental calculating strategies (for example, doubling and division for the 2,4,5 and 10 times tables, and to be able to deduce other results from these). They should also have a practical experience of measurement and shape. They should understand the concept of fractions at a basic level.

ENGLISH

Writing

The boys should be able to express themselves creatively and accurately. In the second stage of assessments, we will require boys to write in a form that should be familiar to any pupil who has followed the Key Stage 1 and 2 programme of study, or equivalent, checking for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Reading

Your son will be reading aloud to others as well as reading to himself regularly. He should be able to discuss the stories, their meaning and any new vocabulary encountered.

REASONING

There will be tests in Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning, which will test thinking skills. The boys do not need to do any preparation for Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning, although familiarisation with these type of papers may increase confidence for those that have not had previous experience with them. There are a number of examples of reasoning books available online or from a wide number of bookshops.

Please be reassured that a teacher will be on hand to support and prompt your son if he requires it during the tasks on the assessment day. Most boys finish the assessment day having enjoyed the challenge of these papers.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY AND INTERVIEW

Based on the results of the Entrance Assessment, we will invite approximately 50 boys back for some classroom activities and an interview. This will take place on Monday 15th January.

The boys will enjoy a morning similar to a typical school morning. They will be settled in with games before they start their assessment. The morning will include an outside play break and a snack and drink.

They will be interviewed in small groups by The Master and a member of the Senior Management Team where they will be encouraged to talk about themselves, discussing their genuine interests and enthusiasms. We are looking for boys who have a spark and a passion. Quiet or shy boys are equally effective in talking about the topics that fascinate them.

This is a chance for us to get to know the boys. We aim to make both days as normal and as comfortable as possible with friendly teachers encouraging and supporting the boys.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) ADMISSIONS

Parents should inform the Admissions Department about a candidate's particular needs, providing any reports

from suitably qualified professionals. The School is happy to make reasonable adjustments to the admissions process to enable SEND pupils to participate fully and to the best of their abilities. Extra time will be available if required.

The Head of Learning Development (SENCO) works closely with the Admissions team to make decisions about any access arrangements requested for entrance exams. The regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) are used to determine whether or not a prospective pupil should be allowed any concessions in the entrance exams.

All pupils with SEND requirements will automatically be interviewed as part of the selection process. The School's Policy on Admissions sets out the 'pre-conditions' required for selection.

All decisions relating to SEND matters are made with regard to the provision of reasonable adjustments as set out in the Equalities Act 2010. For more information please visit our website at School Policies and Reports - Westminster Under School.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

The School accepts pupils whose first language is not English, and indeed many boys speak two or three languages fluently, but lessons move at a fast pace and a pupil who does not speak good English could struggle, so proficiency in English will be assessed to ensure an applicant has the minimum necessary skills.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TRANSFER TO WESTMINSTER SCHOOL OR OTHER SENIOR SCHOOLS

For boys who enter WUS in Years 3 and 4, entry to Westminster School is not automatic and progress must be maintained, which is detailed on our website. The School continues to support boys going to a range

of top senior schools when they leave us, including Westminster, Eton and Winchester.

OUR FUTURE

Our intention is to become fully co-educational at both the Under School and Westminster School by 2030. Although no dates are yet confirmed, we look forward to reaching the point at which we can make this significant change to our schools, enabling any child who would flourish here to be able to come, irrespective of gender. Please do be assured that when we are ready to release these precise details and timelines, our parents, current and future, will be the first to know.

SCHOOL FEES

The school fees for the academic year 2022/2023 are £7,107 per term, £21,321 per year. The fees for the 2023/2024 academic year will be released in July 2023.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school gates open from 8am and boys should arrive at the side gate in Douglas Street, between 8am and 8.15am. Registration is at 8.20am.

Year 3 and 4 boys finish their lessons at 3.15pm every day. Boys attending clubs will go to their clubs at 3.20pm, while those not attending clubs will be brought to the school gates for collection at 3.20pm.

HOMEWORK

Year 3: 20 minutes per night, plus reading
Year 4: 30 minutes per night, plus reading
Year 5: 50 – 60 minutes per night
(two subjects)
Year 6: 60 minutes per night
(usually two subjects)
Year 7: 90 minutes per night
(three subjects)
Year 8: 90 – 105 minutes per night
(three subjects)

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS: “EXTRAS”

These clubs include activities such as Fencing, Judo, Karate, Bridge, Chess, Indoor Cricket, Climbing, Table Tennis, LAMDA, Clay, Film-Making and Swimming. At the Under School these are known as “Extras”.

GAMES

Our main sports are football and cricket, but as the boys move through the school they will have the opportunity to compete in other sports such as athletics, basketball, cross-country running, hockey, Fives, rugby, swimming and tennis.

Games takes place twice a week on Vincent Square or at the Sports Hall.

The boys also have PE and swimming each week, with swimming taking place at the Queen Mother Sports Centre on Vauxhall Bridge Road.

DOOR TO DOOR TRANSPORT

There is no official school transport; however, the following services are available and currently used by pupils. This transport is arranged by the parents directly with the operators:

Mini Bus Services

West London Route 1

The route is:
W2 to W8 – SW7 – SW3 – WUS

West London Route 2

The route is:
W10 – W11 – W2 – WUS

Taxis

There are two main external taxi providers chosen by parents who take several boys to and from school.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Pimlico Tube Station, on the Victoria Line, is less than 5 minutes walk away. Victoria and St James’s Park, on the District and Circle Lines are approximately a 10 minute walk away.

