



Cambridge Maths School

Admissions Policy for September 2026 Entry

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Introductory statement

Cambridge Maths School (CMS) is a specialist, selective 16-19 free school that aims to recruit students who will benefit most from a challenging preparation for the study of advanced mathematics and related courses at university.

Admission Numbers and Capacity

Applicants will normally be in Year 11 and have their sixteenth birthday during the academic year in which they apply. Interested applicants who fall outside these criteria should contact the school using the school's online admissions query form.

References to "applicants" in this policy will be references to students' parents applying on their behalf or the students themselves depending upon the context.

CMS will admit up to 100 students into Year 12 each year.

Minimum study programme

All students will be expected to enrol on a programme of study comprising a minimum of 540 planned hours per year. All students will study Maths and Further Maths A Level and then a minimum of one other Science subject.

Applying for places

Arrangements for applying for a place at Cambridge Maths School vary according to whether you are using UCAS Progress (www.mychoice16.co.uk) or other application methods inside or outside the Cambridge Area Partnership (CAP). Applications for admission to Year 12 outside the CAP area can be sent directly to the College (application form on website). The closing date for applications is published on the website.

Students whose predicted grades are in line with the minimum GCSE predictions referred to in the minimum entry requirements (see below) will be invited to take part in the aptitude test in February 2026 (exact date to be confirmed in due course). If the number of suitable applicants exceeds a multiple of three times the number of available places then the oversubscription criteria* may be applied.

Term will begin on [TBC].

Minimum Entry Requirements

1. Minimum entry requirements (all must be met)

In order to receive a conditional offer students must:

- be predicted seven GCSEs at grade 5 or above, including a predicted GCSE Maths grade 8 or 9
- be predicted GCSE Combined Science 8-8 or higher or separate science grade 8 or higher in the subject they wish to study.
- be predicted GCSE English language grade 5 or higher
- have passed an aptitude test which results in their being interviewed; **and**
- have achieved an applicant score (as described below) above the determined threshold.

2. Process

Stage one requirements

- Predicted GCSE grades are in line with the minimum entry requirements above.
- Students take the Aptitude test on the advertised date. The raw score will be converted to a percentage score.

Suitable applicants will progress to Stage two of the process. If the number of suitable applicants exceeds a multiple of two times the number of available places then the oversubscription criteria* may be applied.

Stage two - Interview

Interviews will be held in the week beginning [DTBD]

The interview will consist of two parts: a mathematics interview, and a personal interview.

The mathematics interview will be used to further assess the applicant's mathematical skill and understanding, and to determine how well the applicant is able to learn and apply a mathematical technique when guided by a CMS teacher.

The personal interview will determine how well the applicant fits the school's values and ethos, will confirm information supplied at the point of application, and will support the assessment of how much value the school may add to the applicant in terms of having an impact on their attainment and progress.

Applicants will be assigned four scores at interview:

- A score for the further assessment of mathematical skill and understanding.
- A score representing how well they learnt a mathematical technique when guided by a CMS teacher
- A score representing their fit with the school's values and ethos and how they will benefit from the school's learning and teaching environment
- A score for the value the school may add in terms of having an impact on the applicant's attainment and progress.

The four interview scores are combined with the mathematics aptitude test¹ score to form an overall post interview score. This score is known as the **applicant score**.

A threshold will be determined below which candidates are judged to be unsuitable for the education offered at the school.

Applicants whose applicant scores fall below the threshold will not be offered places.

Conditional offers will be made by the end of March 2026 to all successful applicants. Applicants will be asked to accept or decline their conditional offer by a given **date which will be communicated at the point of the offer being made**. Offers are made subject to *achievement* of minimum entry requirements as per grades outlined in 'Minimum Entry Requirements above. Offer holders who meet their conditional offer are expected to enrol at CMS on GCSE results day. Specific details of the enrolment process will be communicated with offer holders in advance of receiving their GCSE results.

Applying for places

In the event that the school is oversubscribed students will be admitted in the following priority:

The places will be offered according to the *oversubscription criteria below:

- Students who are 'looked after children'² and students who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.
- Students whose parents are staff employed by Cambridge Maths School (CMS) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for at least one year at the time of application or have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

¹ Student scripts from the Aptitude Test will be kept for 3 months from when offers are made and at least until the end of June of that academic year.

² A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). Previously looked after children also includes those who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- Students who in any or all of the past 6 years were eligible for free school meals and whose home address at the point of application is in any of the following UK counties: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk.
- Students who attend a state funded school at the point of application and whose home address is in any of the following UK counties: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk.
- Students who, at the point of application, whose home address is in any of the following UK counties: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk.
- All remaining places will be allocated based on those with the highest ranked **applicant score**.

If a further tie break is needed this will be defined as distance in a straight line from the student's home to the school. Priority will be given to the student living nearest the school. If two students live equidistant to the school, there will be a final tie breaker based on random allocation.

Waiting lists

Those who have met the minimum entry criteria but have been unsuccessful in gaining a place due to their position in the oversubscription criteria will be placed on the waiting list. Should a place become available it will be offered to the applicant at the top of the waiting list as determined by the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be maintained until the 1st of September after which point a waiting list will be maintained but applicants must notify CMS if they wish to stay on it.

Late applications

CMS will accept at its discretion (and subject to whether there is a reasonable prospect of a place becoming available) applications after the application deadline. Late applications for the main admissions cycle will be considered alongside other applicants only if places remain at that stage of the process. They will otherwise be added to the school's waiting list. Accordingly, late applicants may be offered a place or added to the waiting list if they meet the minimum entry criteria.

Misleading applications

Any offer will only be withdrawn if it becomes apparent that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Appeals

Any applicant refused a place will be offered a right to a review. Should an applicant believe there has been a failure to adhere to our admissions policy in some way, they may request a review of the decision made. Review requests should be directed to admissions@cms.tela.org.uk within one week of receipt of our decision email. They can typically expect to receive a reply to a review request within one week.

Appeal Process – this is available to those applicants who have been through the Review Process above but are not satisfied with the answer. Appeals should be sent in writing within three weeks of receipt of our original decision email. They should be sent to the admissions team at admissions@cms.tela.org.uk, with the subject: Appeal for the attention of the Head of School.

There are two legitimate grounds for appeal:

1. Demonstrable evidence that the Admissions Policy has not been followed
2. Provision of new significant evidence relating to decisions taken correctly under the Admissions Policy

The Head of School will review the application and evidence base and the decisions made in relation to it and will provide a response typically within one week of receipt of the appeal. The Head of School's judgement will be final in relation to the decision about whether to offer a place at the College and there is no further form of appeal.

Equality and Diversity

The school, in operating admission arrangements, will do everything it reasonably can to enable every student to perform at their best, and in making acceptance decisions, will not discriminate between students on grounds of gender, disability, faith, ethnicity, or sexual preference, provided they meet the criteria for entry.

The school will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that no applicant with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND) is dissuaded from applying to the school. The school is keen to encourage applications from all students who feel that CMS is suitable for them. Any reasonable adjustments that are needed, both prior to the entrance exam and/or interview and after admission will be made.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be published on CMS website before the end of the preceding September (i.e. the policy for 2027 will be published in October 2026). The policy will remain on the website throughout CMS year.

Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the admission policy or appeal process you may submit a complaint, outlining your concerns with CMS in the first instance via Jenna Bickley, Eastern Learning Alliance, c/o Impington Village College, New Road, Impington, CB24 9LX.

If you have exhausted that process, have evidence of that and remain dissatisfied then you can contact the ESFA at complaints.esfa@education.gov.uk or by letter at Customer Service Team, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT.