



Cambridge Maths School

Admissions Policy for September 2027 Entry

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Introductory statement

Cambridge Maths School (CMS) is a 16-19 sixth form college specialising in Mathematics and mathematical sciences. CMS provides a focused curriculum and an enriched education for high-attaining students in the East of England who have a passion and fascination for Mathematics and the mathematical sciences.

Admission Numbers and Capacity

Applicants will normally be in Year 11 and have their sixteenth birthday during the academic year in which they apply. Applications outside the normal age range will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, including where an applicant has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that identifies a need for admission outside their chronological age group. Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher and should set out the reasons for the request, together with any relevant supporting evidence. Each request will be considered on its individual merits. Where admission outside the normal age range is approved, applicants should then follow the usual application process outlined in this policy. 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 60 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

All applicants may apply directly to the school using the application form available on the school website. Applicants attending a Cambridge Area Partnership (CAP) school may alternatively submit their application via UCAS Progress (www.mychoice16.co.uk). The closing date for applications will be published on the school website. Applicants whose predicted grades meet the minimum GCSE requirements set out in the minimum entry requirements section below will be considered for invitation to the aptitude test, which will take place in February 2027 (exact date to be confirmed). Where the number of applicants meeting the minimum entry requirements exceeds three times the number of available places, the school's oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine which applicants are invited to sit the aptitude test. Applicants who are not invited to take the aptitude test will not be considered further in the admissions process. 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 demonstrated a level of performance in the assessment process above the required threshold

In order to be eligible for enrolment to the school, students must:

- have received a conditional offer
- have confirmed seven GCSE results at grade 5 or above, including a confirmed GCSE Maths grade 8 or 9
- have confirmed GCSE results in Combined Science 8-8 or higher or separate science grade 8 or higher in the subject they wish to study
- have confirmed GCSE results in English Language grade 5 or higher

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.
- Following the aptitude test, the school will determine which applicants are suitable to progress to Stage Two. Where the number of suitable applicants exceeds twice the number of available places, the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine which applicants are invited to interview

Stage two - Interview

Interviews will be held in the week beginning [DTBD]

The interview consists of two parts:

- a **mathematics interview**
- a **personal interview**

Mathematics interview

The mathematics interview is designed to assess:

- the applicant's **mathematical problem-solving ability**
- the clarity and accuracy of their **mathematical communication**
- their **teachability**, specifically how effectively they respond to guidance and apply mathematical ideas when supported by a CMS teacher

Students will be asked to work through a problem and explain their thinking. Interviewers may provide prompts or introduce new ideas to assess how the student adapts, develops their reasoning, and refines their approach.

Personal interview

The personal interview consists of structured questions focused on:

- the applicant's **academic curiosity**, particularly their interest in mathematics and science beyond the GCSE curriculum
- their **readiness to engage**, including examples of stepping outside their comfort zone and reflecting on their experiences

This part of the interview also supports confirmation of information provided at application and provides insight into how the student may benefit from, and contribute to, the school's learning environment.

Scoring

Applicants receive four interview scores:

- Mathematical problem solving
- Mathematical communication
- Teachability (responsiveness to guidance and ability to apply new ideas)
- Personal interview (academic curiosity, readiness to engage and reflection on experiences)

These scores are considered alongside the mathematics aptitude test score when determining which applicants are suitable to receive an offer. The school does not allocate weightings according to the number of interview scores within each component; all assessment information is considered as part of the overall admissions process.

Provisional Offers and Confirmation on Places

Following completion of the aptitude test and any other required assessment stages, suitable applicants may be made a provisional offer of a place.

A provisional offer is conditional upon the applicant meeting the published minimum entry requirements, including the required GCSE grades and any subject-specific entry criteria, following the publication of GCSE results.

Applicants who receive a provisional offer will be informed of the arrangements for accepting the offer and the deadline by which acceptance must be confirmed. Failure to respond by the specified deadline may result in the offer being withdrawn.

Provisional offers do not guarantee admission and do not confer priority for a place. Where the number of applicants meeting the admission requirements exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated in accordance with the school's published oversubscription criteria.

Final confirmation of places will take place following verification of GCSE results and the applicant's eligibility for admission.

Oversubscription Criteria

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, i.e. there are more eligible applicants or offer holders than places available, CMS applies the following oversubscription criteria to determine which applicants will receive an offer and prioritise who to invite to the aptitude test and interview stages:

- Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming Cambridge Maths School
- Students who are 'looked after children'¹ 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 two years at the time of application or have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
- 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 areas: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk.
- Students whose home address is in any of the following UK counties: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk at the point of application.
- All remaining places will be allocated to those with the strongest overall assessment.

If a further tie break is needed this will be determined as distance in a straight line from the student's front door of their home to the front door of 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.

Over-subscription of specific courses

An offer of a place at CMS does not guarantee a place on a particular subject course or class. If individual courses are filled during enrolment, it may be necessary to ask a student to choose another subject.

¹ 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.

A student may choose to join a subject waiting list if their initial choice is not possible, however they must also pick an alternative. If a student declines to choose an alternative subject, then they may be deemed to have declined their place at CMS and their place may be offered to another student.

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 applicants must notify CMS if they wish to remain on the waiting list.

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 and 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.

Review and Appeal Procedure

Offer Review Process

The first stage of any potential appeal is to request a review of the offer decision. This is an initial process check to ensure that there have been no errors in the application of this Admissions Policy.

Requests for a review should be submitted in writing to the school's Admissions Team within one week of receipt of the offer decision. The review will consider whether the admissions process and published criteria have been applied correctly. The outcome of the review will normally be communicated within one week of receipt of the request.

Offer Appeal Process

The appeal process is available to applicants who have completed the review process above and remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within three weeks of receipt of the original offer decision and should be addressed to the Admissions Team for the attention of an ELA Executive Headteacher.

There are two legitimate grounds for appeal:

1. Demonstrable evidence that the Admissions Policy has not been followed; or
2. New and significant evidence that was not available at the time the original decision was made and which may have materially affected the outcome of the application. (This does not include subsequently improved predicted or attained grades following the application deadline.)

The ELA Executive Headteacher will review the application, supporting evidence, and the decisions made in relation to the application. A written response will normally be provided within one week of receipt of the appeal.

The decision of the ELA Executive Headteacher is final in relation to the admission decision and there is no further internal right of appeal.

Equality and Diversity

The school welcomes applications from all students who feel that CMS is suitable for them. In operating its admission arrangements, the school will do everything it reasonably can to enable every applicant to perform at their best and will not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The school will make reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act 2010, to ensure that no applicant with a disability is placed at a substantial disadvantage during the admissions process. Reasonable adjustments relating to the mathematics aptitude test and/or interview will be made, provided that requests are made to CMS in advance and are supported by appropriate evidence where required.

CMS will work with applicants and their families to understand their specific needs and identify any reasonable adjustments required to remove substantial disadvantages that may arise during the application process. Applicants with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who wish CMS to be named in Section I of their EHCP should contact their local authority in accordance with the statutory EHCP consultation process. Applicants with special educational needs who do not have an EHCP are encouraged to contact the school's SENCO as early as possible to discuss any specific support requirements, reasonable adjustments, or access arrangements that may be required for the admissions process, including the mathematics aptitude test and interviews.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. Any amendments for the following September intake will be published on the CMS website by October of the preceding academic year (for example, the policy for September 2027 entry will be published by October 2026). The policy will remain available on the CMS website throughout the admissions cycle.

Complaints

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the admissions process, admissions policy, review process or appeal process, you may submit a complaint in the first instance to:

Jenna Bickley
Eastern Learning Alliance
c/o Impington Village College
New Road
Impington
CB24 9LX

The complaint should set out the nature of your concerns and the steps you have already taken to seek resolution.

If you have exhausted the school's complaints process and remain dissatisfied, you may refer your complaint to the Department for Education (DfE). Information about the DfE's complaints procedure and how to submit a complaint can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe>