



DENSTONE
COLLEGE

Third Form
Entrance Assessments
& Scholarships
2026 Entry



Assessment Days

All students registered for entry to Denstone College will take part in an Assessment Day in November before entry the following September.

CAT₄ assessments

The Process

On the day of the assessment, all candidates will be asked to sit three 45 minute online cognitive ability tests. It is not possible to prepare for these tests as the questions take the form of puzzles, logical thinking, spatial awareness tasks and vocabulary understanding. The pupils do these online and the questions are responsive to ability so all children feel they are making progress. In addition to these tests, the candidates will be interviewed by one member of senior staff, and will undertake a series of group tasks and discussions. This process will allow us to gain a more holistic view of the candidates and will be able to guide our discussions more meaningfully.

All pupils must have confirmed registration before they can be considered for the Assessment Day or scholarship assessments. Registration consists of completing the Application Form, payment of the Registration Fee (£100) and a copy of your child's passport. Please note that references from their current school may be requested at this stage.

The Rationale

At the heart of the process is the need for The College to get to know the children applying for entry and to ascertain the appropriateness of the continuity of their education. Children's current schools are already aware of the many strengths of the individual which will be communicated to the College in a school report and school reference. And so, there is little benefit in asking the pupils to sit a short Maths and English exam which will tell us what we already know. To that end, the day is structured to ensure we can gain further information about all candidates (irrespective of their current school) and to then use this data to have more meaningful and structured conversations regarding the transition. We also wish to reiterate that these are young people and over-preparation for an assessment for a non-selective school such as Denstone is unhealthy and unnecessary.

CE / CASE Pupils

Those registered for Third Form entry may wish to come to us via the Common Academic Scholarship (CASE) or Common Entrance route which are part of the Independent School Examination Board (ISEB) and accessed from the pupil's current school.

Pupils using this route must also attend the Assessment Day and sit the CAT4 assessments as well; this is invaluable data for the College and is impossible for us to ascertain via CE. Places will be offered subject to satisfactory performance in CASE or CE, and these assessments take place at Denstone (CASE) in May, or at your Prep School in June (CE). Whether your son or daughter should sit CASE or CE will depend on the recommendation of your current school Head.

Scholarships (Third Form Entry only)

Scholarships are awarded in recognition of outstanding ability in a number of areas: academic, art, drama, design and technology, music and sport.

At Denstone, a scholarship is neither an elitist badge nor some sort of glorified coupon, but a recognition of particular potential and an expression of hope that certain pupils will lead the way in supporting an aspect or aspects of College life. There are no compulsory extra activities for scholars; and equally, all we offer is open to all who are prepared to work diligently, persevere doggedly, commit faithfully and learn humbly. However, we choose our scholars to be the sort of people who will want to do all these things, and so set an example to the whole school of what it means to be a Denstonian.



So our scholars are cultural leaders, people who not only capitalise on all the opportunities given to them, but also act as the catalysts for enthusiasm all around them. Our scholars are those, we hope, who will both love to get involved and to involve others.

The number of scholarships awarded in any one year will depend upon the number and quality of applicants. Potential pupils are invited to visit us, at an Open Morning or for a personal tour. Once registration is complete, we ask for a reference from a candidate's current school as well as any other pertinent references. Assessment for Scholarship usually takes place in November before entry the following September. Scholarships at Denstone are fiercely contested and as such we expect the highest level of academic, sporting, and creative achievement.

We offer scholarships at Third Form, rather than First Form entry. We believe that by this time, pupils have had more of a chance to find a particular niche, to be genuinely excited by and committed to particular aspects of their educational lives, and to understand that 'scholarship' is essentially an attitude they must have in themselves, rather than merely being a gong to win or a process that is done to them.

The Scholarship will not carry any financial concession as financial support is only available to those students who may not be able to access a Denstone College education otherwise.

The closing date for scholarship applications for September 2026 entry is Monday 13 October 2025.

Scholarships in Brief

Academic

An academic scholarship at Denstone is about more than mere proficiency at a particular academic subject, or subjects, in the classroom. We are looking for pupils who combine intellectual potential with curiosity, ambition, cognitive creativity, and the ability to be inspired by, and to inspire others with, fresh ideas and perspectives.

Academic Scholarships are based on performance in the entrance assessments, and a selection of interview activities. References may also be taken into account.

Academic scholarships are awarded to pupils displaying outstanding intellectual promise among their peer group, both in the College written examinations and interview. Significant evidence of academic potential and impressive commitment to developing their minds above and beyond the taught curriculum are most likely to be rewarded.

Art

Scholarships are awarded to pupils who have demonstrated ability in Art as well as potential for success at GCSE and A Level. The selection process includes an interview with the Head of Art, where pupils will have the opportunity to show and discuss their portfolio work, which will demonstrate outstanding technical ability, a range of materials, a timed piece, and a genuine interest in this subject. Pupils should be able to talk intelligently and enthusiastically about their own work. The idea is to discover the young person's potential for development.

Design and Technology

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. Students acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on other subjects such as Mathematics, Science, ICT and Art. Many Denstonians move onto degrees and careers in product design, industrial design, architecture, engineering, interior design, automotive design and other related courses.

We are looking for

- Highly creative individuals with a genuine passion and talent for designing and making;
- Individuals with a love of all aspects of design, including research and analysis;
- Individuals with a flair for problem-solving and the ability to bring their designs to reality, whether with traditional methods of construction or through the use of computer-aided design and manufacture.

Candidates will be required to attend a 20 minute interview with the Head of D&T. Candidates will be asked about their interests and aspirations as well as having the opportunity to talk through their portfolio. Their portfolio will display research, design and practical work, potentially developed at home or at school. They will also be required to sit an assessment paper; this will be one hour in length, including questions on design, problem solving and product analysis.

Drama

Drama awards are only offered to pupils showing outstanding talent and ability and young people who can provide evidence of experience and a sustained interest in drama will have a strong advantage. For instance, applicants should have had a main role in at least two recent drama productions. Successful applicants will be expected to make significant contributions to drama at Denstone throughout their College career.

The audition will have the following two sections:

1. Two contrasting acting extracts from two published plays that the applicant has prepared and learned.

The duration for each of the pieces should be 3-4 minutes.

2. Spontaneous improvisation – pupils will be asked to create a range of characters in a given set of circumstances.



Music

Music at Denstone is an integral part of College life, with a wide range of ensembles and choirs performing regularly throughout the year, as well as a busy programme of solo concerts. The Department is flourishing, with an ever increasing number of opportunities such as competitions and overseas tours, and we are always seeking enthusiastic new Music Scholars who will help to drive our ambitious programme of events.

For audition at Third Form entry, potential scholars should:

- Perform two pieces on their first instrument. These must be at a minimum of Grade 5 ABRSM or equivalent standard, but the most competitive candidates are likely to be close to or at Grade 6 or above.
- Perform one piece on their second instrument, at a minimum of Grade 3 ABRSM or equivalent standard. (If no second instrument is offered, the first instrument level should be at a minimum of Grade 7 ABRSM or equivalent standard.)
- Be prepared to discuss their performances and their own music making in detail with the Director of Music.

Copies of music to be performed should be sent to Admissions in advance of the audition.

Please note that applicants are not necessarily expected to have taken the relevant ABRSM exams, but should be performing at that level. We recognise all major exam boards, and welcome applications from less formal backgrounds, such as guitar and drums. In these cases we advise looking at the relevant Rock School or Trinity Rock and Pop grade repertoire to confirm difficulty levels of pieces.

It should be noted that the Grade levels given are indicative of the minimum technical standard at which we might expect a potential scholar to perform, and we often see applicants performing at a considerably higher level.

Our standards for Scholars are deliberately high, and unfortunately it is unlikely that candidates performing at levels lower than those stated will be successful.

The Director of Music is always happy to speak to prospective scholars at any point in the year.



Sport

The major sports at Denstone are rugby, hockey, cricket and netball. Young people who excel in two or more of our major sports or who can demonstrate outstanding potential, are invited to apply for a Scholarship. Assessment will involve athletics performance testing, team sports sessions, and an interview with a senior member of the sports staff.





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