



Post 16 Admissions Policy

Applications and Admission to Year 12

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Author | Jon Bradshaw |
| Created: | October 2013 |
| Reviewed: | September 2024 |
| Governors Committee: | Learning and Achievement |
| Agreed by Governors: | September 2024 |
| Frequency of Review | Annual |
| Review Date: | September 2025 |

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

1. Thomas Tallis School Plan 2024 -25 has seven aims.

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | A powerful curriculum |
| 2 | The best teaching and learning |
| 3 | Great achievement and progress |
| 4 | Highly successful Post-16 provision |
| 5 | Excellent personal development |
| 6 | Behaviour for a strong community |
| 7 | A model for a better world |

As part of aim 7 Thomas Tallis School has adopted the *Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education*. This means that we try to behave in a principled and correct manner in everything we do.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. We therefore behave with **selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership**. We demonstrate **trust, wisdom, kindness, justice, service, courage and optimism**.

ENTRY INTO YEAR 12

1. We aim to offer a range of academic and vocational qualifications to our sixth form students at Level 3. Our admissions policy aims to ensure that students accepted into the sixth form are placed on appropriate courses where they are likely to succeed, and that the overall character of the sixth form is such that high standards and expectations for conduct and academic outcomes can be maintained.
2. All Thomas Tallis students in year 11 who meet our entry criteria will be actively encouraged to apply for the sixth form. In order to manage the workload of admissions staff we may choose to pre-Enrol a portion of our Year 11 students who are almost certain to meet our entry criteria.
3. We expect students to apply by our published deadlines. This is so that we may complete our admissions procedures in an orderly way. Further, the 2014 School Admissions Code says at 2.6 that "Admission authorities can...set academic entry criteria for their sixth forms, which must be the same for both external and internal places". We determine admission to our Sixth Form in accordance with the following criteria.
 - a. Achievement of 5 4-9 grades or equivalent, including Maths and English GCSEs at 4 or higher. We may in some rare cases accept students with 4 4-9 grades including either Maths or English at 4. Level 2 BTEC courses which attract points for more than one GCSE will count as a maximum of one GCSE. Other non-GCSE courses may be taken into account in borderline cases. Students we accept without a 4 in Maths or English will be entered for a retake in Maths or English as appropriate.
 - b. Satisfactory attendance and punctuality in the lower school. We will normally expect face-to-face attendance to be above 93%. This is because we are not a remote learning centre. The pace of sixth form learning is high and our seminar/in-person teaching model is such that it is not possible for students to self-study our courses, or to catch up independently on work missed during long periods of absence. Students who have shown by their KS3 and KS4 attendance that they are best suited for study at home will be much better served by the remote teaching provision available nationally through the National Extension College, for example.
 - c. Achievement of the minimum entry requirements for the subjects they have chosen to continue Post 16. These are reviewed from time to time. See our 'Recommendations and Requirements' document.
 - d. We may in some very rare cases accept students who excel in one area of study such as Art but have only a 3 grade in Maths and English.
 - e. That there is a suitable course available with a vacancy; group size will normally capped at 26 but may vary depending on the nature of the subject and availability of resources. We may offer 28 places at Enrolment in the case of some courses with the expectation that in fact 26 students will actually take them up.
 - f. We may from time to time seek to encourage students of 'shortage subjects' to apply to us. A 'shortage subject' is one where we would like more applicants and more students in a class. We periodically review our list of such subjects.
4. We also accept external applications from students in Year 11 wishing to transfer from

other institutions and will publicise ourselves at local events to encourage applications. Students are invited to attend the Open Evening in the autumn term, and 'Taster Days' in July so that their applications are well-informed.

5. Thomas Tallis Sixth Form offers places prior to Enrolment, not specific courses. The school reserves the right to set different academic entry qualifications for entry to various courses. These are publicly available through our website and are reviewed from time to time. The school also reserves the right to the final decision about the content of a student's curriculum, in line with our 'Pathways' document and also taking into account the likelihood of a student's success in each of his or her subjects.
6. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the sixth form or a subject is oversubscribed then the following criteria to select from those students who meet our academic entry requirements will be used in the order stated:
 - a. Students with an EHCP naming Thomas Tallis on the plan.
 - b. Looked-after students and previously looked-after children who have been adopted or become subject to a child arrangement or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after.
 - c. Children who have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
 - d. Students already in Year 11 at Thomas Tallis. This is because it is a reasonable expectation on the part of Year 7 parents that their child's journey through the schooling that Tallis offers will be a seven year one, from Year 7 to year 13.
 - e. Students already in Year 12 at Thomas Tallis.
 - f. Students or their immediate family member with a chronic medical condition or social care need that can only be met if the student attends a particular Post 16 centre. Applicants need to set out the reasons why Thomas Tallis School can best meet needs and the implications for the child or immediate family member if a place was not obtained at the Post 16 centre. Evidence of the condition or need must be submitted with the application, such as a letter from a registered health professional or practitioner i.e. a doctor or social worker.
 - g. Students who attend another Royal Greenwich secondary school.
 - h. Students based on home to school distance. Greenwich LEA calculate this for us.
 - i. Students from other centres who are restarting Year 12 – see 22., below.
7. Applicants to Thomas Tallis Post 16 Centre apply via the online application form available on the Post 16 website. In the main we will not interview external candidates but will judge suitability based on reference and information provided by a candidate's school. We may choose to interview marginal candidates and candidates who seem to us to have made unusual course choices.
8. If parents/carers are considering whether Thomas Tallis School should be named on their child's Education Health Care Plan, the school should be involved in the appropriate review. If we think our provision will be inadequate for the child's needs, or there is evidence that admitting the applicant would have a detrimental impact on the learning of other students, we will raise a concern. Where an EHCP has been agreed naming Thomas

Tallis School, we will automatically offer a place, provided the student meets the academic entry requirements for the Sixth Form as detailed on our website and elsewhere.

9. We welcome applicants from students with mental or physical disabilities and/or mental or physical health problems and will make reasonable adjustments to our provision so that students are enabled to study with us. All applications are measured against the same criteria for entry. We expect students and parents of students to be frank with us about a student's needs, just as we will be frank about whether we think we can meet these needs: we need to know what a student's difficulties are or are likely to be so that we can discuss appropriate support. We may therefore from time to time ask to meet a student who has declared a difficulty so that we can risk-assess an application. Any information we are given about a disability or health problem will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively. We do have a duty of care to all staff and students and cannot guarantee to provide for the needs of every individual. If we think our provision will be inadequate for a child's needs, or there is evidence that admitting the applicant would have a detrimental impact on the learning of other students, we will not offer a place.
10. We have a 'Fitness to Study' policy which we use to determine whether students who become significantly unwell after admission may continue as students with us.
11. Applications from overseas students whose home is not in the UK or who have non-UK qualifications will be considered on an individual basis. Normally such applicants must expect to have an address within our catchment – see 6.g., above.
12. All students are asked to select provisional course preferences on application. This is not a firm commitment and they will be able to reconsider their options at Enrolment after the GCSE results have been published. All students must attend our Enrolment in person (or agree with us in advance to send a representative to it) unless they are a pre-Enrolled student who has met their provisional offer. All internal students will be interviewed to discuss their intended pathway (laid out in our Pathways document) so that we can offer guidance with regard to future progression.
13. Applications received by the published deadline will be considered first. Late applications (those submitted after the published deadline) will be considered after all on-time applications unless exceptional circumstances merit earlier consideration. We may give such applicants a lower priority than those received on time. We may choose to speak to late applicants only after the start of the academic year once the availability of places is known.
14. To remain on roll, all students in the sixth form in Year 12 or Year 13 must study a minimum of three A-level equivalent courses in each year of study, and no student will remain on roll with fewer than three courses in the curriculum (but see 18 below). If in Year 14 each student must study enough courses to mean that at the end of Year 14 they will have completed a minimum of three A2-equivalent courses. Except in the case of looked-after children or children with an EHCP, the sixth form will not admit students to Year 15.
15. The school reserves the right to remove students from individual courses where a

student's approach to the course falls below Tallis's high standards. These standards are laid out in our Disciplinary Policy, which also explains the grounds on which we may permanently exclude students from the sixth form entirely. The school will, where possible, offer alternative courses if we wish to remove a child from a particular course, but, particularly mid-year, it may not be possible to do so. Removal from a course will normally be discussed in advance with parents and/or carers, and a chance given to reach minimum standards before removal occurs.

16. The school will make every reasonable attempt to contact parents where there are concerns about a student's progress, attendance or behaviour. If a parent does not respond to our phone calls, texts, email or letters than we will proceed without parental input. We will only deal with those who hold parental responsibility or their consistent representative. While we are generally happy to work with families where parents do not live in the same household and we have worked collaboratively with the resident parent, we will not necessarily review decisions upon the return of a previously-absent parent. We do this in order best to support our students and so that measured and wise decisions may be made calmly with those who will be responsible for working with the student and the school consistently to enable success.
17. The school reserves the right to remove students from BTEC courses where a student has failed a course in-year because they have not passed a core unit. If a student fails a BTEC core unit it is unclear what purpose would be served by them staying on our roll, as no qualification can be awarded at the end of the period of study, and we do not have more accessible alternatives than BTEC in our course offer. We will therefore generally advise such students to leave Tallis,
18. The only exception to our policy around students being required to study three courses concerns students applying for Art Foundation courses or Conservatoire courses who may, at the school's discretion, be allowed to pursue two or even one A-level equivalent course(s) in Year 13; there may be from time to time students who are similarly allowed to continue with double Media or double Business only, at the school's discretion.
19. Students failing to meet entry requirements may still be admitted to courses if there are exceptional and extenuating circumstances supported by evidence. For example, a student may be able to claim special consideration if a medical condition exists (supported by a doctor's note) that has significantly influenced GCSE results in comparison to the predicted outcomes. Such cases will be considered on their individual merits.
20. If there is insufficient demand to make a particular course viable, the course may not run in September despite being advertised in our Prospectus earlier in an academic year. We would normally look to have at least fifteen students on a Year 12 course. Some courses (e.g. further maths, the languages, music, dance) are exempt from this requirement for the present. This list of exemptions to our normal class size rule is reviewed every year.
21. The normal admission age is 16 and so such students will become 17 during their Year 12 school year. Individual students under the normal admission age for post-16 education

may be admitted on a case-by-case basis provided they have completed Level 2 qualifications as detailed above. Tallis is a 16-19 centre and so we will not normally admit students who will be older than 19 at the conclusion of their studies.

22. Individual students over the normal admission age who have already attempted Year 12, whether at another centre or at Tallis, will be admitted subject to satisfactory reference and an interview if necessary. However, when we are oversubscribed, the normal time of such interviews will be early in September once term has started and course vacancies are clear. Hence, such students will not be given priority when choosing courses: 'first-time' year 12 students will be prioritised instead.
23. Students repeating Year 12 must generally do so with a different selection of courses. This is because it is the school's invariable experience that only a fresh start on fresh courses allows a student a satisfactory chance of success. Additionally, the school is not funded for students to repeat the same courses. Hence, the school will not let students who have failed challenging courses elsewhere (such as, but not limited to, maths, the sciences, economics, psychology) restart the same courses at Tallis and if we are able to offer such students a place it will almost invariably be to study different courses included in our offer where there is a better chance of their success.
24. As far as size of sixth form goes, we aim to have at least 540 students on roll in total though we may enrol significantly more if there is space on courses. We may if we choose set a maximum size for Year 12 so that overall numbers don't exceed this figure. However, this is also dependent on course availability as previously referenced. We reserve the right to make this decision year by year, after analysis of available staffing, financial and physical resources.

CONFIRMING COURSES EARLY IN YEAR 12

25. We may choose to offer a place to a student about whom we have reservations, and when we do this it will be normal to put such a student 'On Contract' until the October Census requires us to report a student as formally enrolled. Prior to the Census, we may choose to withdraw our offer of a place if such a student does not meet our disciplinary standards. This will not be considered as a permanent exclusion under our Disciplinary Code as students are not formally enrolled until the Census return is completed.
26. At the start of term we check that Enrolment has been conducted correctly. We reserve the right to revise a student's curriculum if we discover that they have been mis-enrolled e.g. they do not meet the entry requirements for a course. In such cases we will try to offer an alternate course where the student does meet the entry requirements.
27. We do not want to set students up to fail and so we may from time to time set additional testing for prospective students of a course in the first few weeks of Year 12. This testing is intended to give us extra information about the likelihood of a candidate's success in a subject and will in general only draw on GCSE-standard material in that subject. We may on the basis of the results of this testing withdraw our initial conditional offer of a course and insist that a student swaps to another subject where there is space and they meet the

entry conditions. Where we wish to use additional testing to determine suitability for a course, we will let applicants for this course know this well in advance.

MOVEMENT BETWEEN COURSES IN YEAR 12

28. This section outlines our procedure for appealing initial course selection in Year 12 where a student comes to feel after starting a course or courses that they have made a wrong choice.
29. Our initial advice about course selection is designed to meet our aim (Para. 1, above) 'that students accepted into the sixth form are placed on appropriate courses where they are likely to succeed'. In giving this advice we also exercise (Para. 5, above) our 'right to the final decision about the content of a student's curriculum, in line with our 'Pathways' document and also taking into account the likelihood of a student's success in each of his or her subjects'.
30. It is important that a student is placed on the right course for them and all of our advice and guidance up to and during our Enrolment procedure is intended to achieve this aim. To this end, we will generally run an Open Evening in October and Taster Days in July for Year 11 applicants. All these events are intended to give applicants the opportunity to confirm the course choices that they have in mind.
31. Our Enrolment procedures in August are in-person so that we may give students face-to-face advice about the choice of courses best suited to their needs and intentions about progression. The curriculum offer we make to each student is not set until GCSE results have confirmed suitability for particular courses.
32. For a student to be enrolled on a course they must meet the entry requirements, there must be space on the course, and the overall timetable (Para. 14) for the student must be satisfactory. These requirements also apply to students who wish to change courses.
33. Spaces available for courses vary slightly between courses. In general we cap class size at 26, (but may offer 28 places in order to obtain 26 students), but some courses e.g. Media, Photography have a smaller class size limit because of the size of teaching rooms or other resource constraints.
34. In general, Year 12 course changes can occur until the end of the fifth full week of the autumn term. Within this 'window' at the start of Year 12 course changes will be straightforwardly possible, if the school agrees that it is wise for a particular student to make them. This is for two reasons.
 - a. Five full weeks of teaching in a subject amounts to approximately 25 hours of lessons and 25 hours of independent study to make up. Our experience is that most students are able to make up this lost ground if they change one subject before our cut-off date, but it becomes very rapidly much more difficult to do so after it. The difficulty is doubled if two subjects are to be changed, and so on.

- b. Secondly, the school must take a 'snapshot' of the Post-16 population in early October which we must report to the DFES for their accountability measures to work. This picture must be accurate.
35. Unless a student has previously expressed an interest in a course but could not be enrolled on it because the course was full at Enrolment, we will accept course change requests from the start of the third full week of Year 12 to the end of the fifth full week. This is because we require students to have a fair grasp of what each of their current courses involves so that an informed decision about any changes can be made. It should be noted that in most cases where a student is uncertain about a course because they have formed the view that they are unlikely to achieve highly in it, changing to a different course does not in fact lead to better outcomes.
36. For a course change to be made a student must write to their Head of Year explaining in some detail their reasons for requesting a course change. This is so that requests are made after careful thought on the part of the student concerned. We may also ask students to fill in a 'Dropping Form' so that we can be sure that dialogue between home, student and school has happened.
37. In general we will only allow a student to swap one course, once. This is because the success rates of students who swap two courses are very poor because of the doubling of the amount of work required to catch up and because the success rates of students who swap courses repeatedly are very poor. We will try to give students the best advice we can about courses they wish to change to, but a course change decision must be final.
38. We will judge requests to move from BTEC courses to A-level courses on the basis of the professional judgment of staff teaching the A-level courses.
39. After the fifth full week of term, it is no longer straightforward for students to move between courses. Every week that passes gives a student another ten hours of work to catch up on and so it becomes harder and harder for students starting courses later to catch up and achieve at their potential. The school must also consider the workload of staff teaching classes and other resource constraints. In addition, as above, we are required to give an accurate picture of what students are studying to the DFES.
40. After the end of the fifth full week of term, we will judge each application to change course on its individual merits. In the case of such late requests, the professional judgement of staff about the possibility of a student catching up and of staff being able to assist them to do so will be considered before a decision is reached.
41. The right of the school to decide on the final merits of a late application to change courses is reserved.
42. In general, we will not allow any student to change courses after the end of the first half term.
43. Examples where we may choose to allow a student to move courses after our initial cut-off

date include but are not limited to:

- a. A Year 12 student who has studied similar or identical courses at another centre and who wishes to transfer to Tallis to pursue the same courses.
- b. A student who has studied courses within the same faculty with good initial success where the staff concerned uniformly support the likelihood of a move succeeding.
- c. A student with an APS of 8 or more together with a 9 in the desired subject.

44. In all such cases the judgment of the school will be final.

45. It will generally be possible to pick up new Year 12 courses (assuming that the entry requirements for such courses are met by an applicant) at the end of a Year 12, for commencement in the academic year following. This will in turn mean that to complete a course, a student will need to stay on for a third year of sixth form. (See Para. 49 onward).

ENTRY INTO YEAR 13

46. We will not in general accept applicants from other centres who wish to complete Year 13 with us. This is because of very poor success rates in the past and concerns about staff workload.

47. Progression to Year 13 is not automatic. Thomas Tallis automatically re-enrols Year 12 students onto Year 13 courses only if the standards laid out in this paragraph are met.

- a. To be recommended to continue with an A-level course a student must have achieved a D or above in the subject in their end of Year 12 exams.
- b. Where we think a student is set to fail A-level we may insist that a student takes an AS qualification as an intermediate step. In such cases, the AS grade must be a D or higher for a student to continue to A-level.
- c. To continue with a BTEC course, a student must be in line to achieve at least a Merit or above in the subject, unless the student's ALPS is a P only (see Para. 47, below).
- d. Students must meet our A-level and BTEC progression standards in at least three A-level equivalent subjects (except in such cases as described in Para. 18, above).
- e. Students must have greater than 95% attendance and no unauthorised absence, except in the case of students with known mental or physical health concerns under the supervision of a hospital consultant.
- f. There must be no outstanding disciplinary concerns known to the Head of Year 12. Where a written warning or Disciplinary Contract has been given to a student about conduct, a student must have met any conditions specified in the warning or contract.

48. Where students have not met the automatic progression standards specified in 27a. and 27b. above:

- a. Where a child is predicted E's or U's in three subjects, we will strongly recommend that a child restarts new courses either at Tallis or at another centre. A meeting will be arranged to discuss our concerns with students and parents.
- b. Where a child is underperforming in one or two subjects, we may in some cases offer a student alternative two-year A-level courses or equivalent to make up the

minimum of three. This means that a student will be a 'Year 14' student in due course. Our normal conditions for such an offer are that our standard admission requirements for each new course must be met, attendance must be greater than 95% with no unauthorized absence, and there must be no outstanding disciplinary concerns.

- c. Students may choose to continue with A-level courses that we think they are going to fail and the school will offer as much support as we can to such students, but in such cases we will make it clear that continuation is against our advice.
- d. We may choose to enter students we think will fail A-level for AS examinations instead or alongside an A-level entry. This is not to protect the school's results, but the outcomes for students.

49. Where students are studying BTEC courses, have an ALPS of P and are predicted P grades for their BTEC, the school may choose to allow students to progress into Year 13.

50. Students and parents are made aware by our Sixth Form Learning Agreement that post-16 students are subject to the same potential disciplinary sanctions as younger students, and read our Post 16 Behaviour Policy carefully. Sanctions include fixed-term suspension and permanent exclusion.

ENTRY INTO YEAR 14

51. Some students seek to stay on at Tallis to complete a qualification they began only in their second year of sixth form study. Progression to Year 14 is not automatic. Thomas Tallis reenrols Year 13 students onto Year 14 courses automatically only if the standards below are met:

- a. To continue with an A-level course a student must have achieved a D or above in the subject in their end of year exams.
- b. To continue with a BTEC course, a student must be in line to achieve a Merit or above in the subject.
- c. Students must have greater than 95% attendance and no unauthorised absence, except in the case of students with known mental or physical health concerns under the supervision of a hospital consultant.
- d. There must be no outstanding disciplinary concerns known to the Head of Year 13. Where a written warning has been given to a student about conduct, a student must have met any conditions specified in the warning.
- e. In some cases (for example, where a syllabus has changed or a class does not have sufficient numbers to run) Tallis may be able to act as an exam centre only and Year 14 students will have to self-study for examinations.
- f. Where a candidate for Year 14 study is marginal, we may place such a student on a Disciplinary Contract to support a student's commitment to study.
- g. If the conditions in the contract are not met, student will forfeit their entitlement to attend classes and we will act as an exam centre only.

RETAKEING A-LEVEL EXAMINATIONS

52. Retaking is by agreement with the school only, and in the main we do not let children

retake A-levels, particularly if a student has achieved in line with staff expectation in a subject.

53. There may be extenuating circumstances (such as consultant-authorized medical absence or social services involvement) where the Head of Year will make an exception to our general rules about retaking examinations.

54. All students must pay for retakes, in line with our long-standing custom.

55. Taught retakes

- a. We are not funded for students to be taught for retake examinations.
- b. We will only allow students to attend classes for retake purposes where we have space in the relevant A-level class and the full agreement of the teaching staff.

56. Number of retakes

- a. The school will generally allow one subject to be retaken.
- b. We will only in very few circumstances allow two subjects to be retaken.
- c. We will not allow students to retake three subjects.

57. Private entries

- a. The school is prepared to enter former students as private candidates for retakes, at our discretion.
- b. In general, we will only do this in the twelve months after the initial leaving date.
- c. Where this agreement is reached, the school can take no responsibility for student achievement and teaching staff will not be formally involved in preparing students for examination.

APPEALS

58. Students who are refused a place in Year 12 are entitled to appeal to Royal Greenwich L.E.A. which is Thomas Tallis School's Admissions Authority. An appeal form and guidance notes on the procedure are available on Royal Greenwich's website at www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/admissions. The completed appeal form must be submitted within a month of the date of a letter from the school refusing a place. Appeals are normally heard during the summer term and the date of any appeal will be confirmed by the clerk to the Independent Appeals Panel.

End of document