



**MERCHISTON**  
EDINBURGH



**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

“ In order to join WLSA, schools must pass exceptionally high requirements to become an associate. Such rigorous standards include obtaining remarkable academic results, demonstrating a holistic approach to student wellbeing, and championing respect and concern for different peoples and cultures. Based around Edinburgh, the historic and atmospheric capital city of Scotland, Merchiston is renowned for its success in guiding its pupils to try their hardest and to strive to achieve the highest levels possible in all areas — academic, cultural, sporting, leadership and simply living together as part of a community. ”

**WORLD LEADING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION**



The only school in Scotland to be an associate  
of the World Leading Schools Association

## **HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION**

*I hope you find all you need within our prospectus pack and on our website to help you with the important task of selecting a school for your son.*

*Read, digest, explore. Meet our community. Discover what makes us different. Understand our aims for your son and how we deliver on them. See if you can imagine him here.*

*Merchiston is a remarkable school where boys make lifelong friends and community connections, whilst gaining a world-class, global, outward-looking education.*

*Our community's wellbeing is central; without it no one will ever achieve their best. That is why wellbeing underpins everything we do. Your son will thrive because he is known, understood, valued, and supported in everything he does.*

*I would love to talk with you about your son and, more importantly, talk with him to work out what makes him tick, discuss where he wants to go next and make sure he has the toolkit to get there. Your son will leave Merchiston as a rounded individual, not only having achieved the very highest level of personal academic success, but also with a sense of who he is and with respect for others, having learnt what it means to have true integrity and character.*

*I invite you to take a closer look at Merchiston to gain a feel for the unique atmosphere, ethos and spirit we offer and to discover how we can deliver an education made for your son.*

**Warmest regards,**

**JONATHAN ANDERSON** — *Headmaster*



“ A balanced curriculum, excellent pastoral care and a high A Level pass rate make Merchiston one of the UK’s leading independent schools. ”

UKBOARDINGSCHOOLS.COM



## THE MERCHISTON DIFFERENCE

What makes Merchiston different? It is a combination of things: our size, our genuine focus on the needs of the individual, and the fact that we really understand boys and how to get the very best out of them.

It is a potent trio. It is what enables us to know your son really well and to understand what makes him tick. It is why we can support him in a way that is material and motivating to him. It is the reason your son will strive for personal excellence and want to be the best version of himself. It is the secret of his, and our, success.

## OUR MISSIONS AND AIMS

Our mission is to provide a caring community for your son, which treats him as an individual, unearths and tends his talents, encourages him to pursue excellence in all he does and enables him to flourish.

### WE AIM TO ENSURE THAT YOUR SON:

- Acquires the **confidence** and **leadership** skills to succeed in a dynamic and global world, and to strive for the highest standards
- Balances **modesty** and **confidence**
- Becomes an enthusiastic and curious learner achieving **excellence** in all he does
- Develops **compassion**, **respect** for others and **integrity**
- Discovers and embraces all of the opportunities on offer to develop his **talents**
- Enjoys a sense of **happiness** and **fulfilment**
- Learns **tolerance** and **responsibility**
- Understands **the needs of others** within and beyond our community

“ A community where boys thrive both in and out of the classroom. ”

## PARENT

## HISTORY

In 1828, Charles Chalmers started a small school from humble beginnings, on a site now occupied by Edinburgh’s McEwan Hall. As pupil numbers increased he took the lease of Merchiston Tower, from which the school name is derived (the former home of John Napier of logarithm fame) – then in rural surroundings, and opened his academy, starting with some 30 boys.

Like his famous brother, Dr Thomas Chalmers (mathematician, physicist and theologian), Charles was also a brilliant and original thinker in Mathematics and Science. It was, therefore, no surprise that he included these subjects in the curriculum. At a time when most other schools confined themselves to studying the Classics, Merchiston was already leading the way in preparing its pupils for the world in which they would live.

Merchiston grew, but so did the boundaries of the City of Edinburgh. The Governors decided to move the School to Colinton, so that its 210 students should once again enjoy the advantages of both town and country; there the new School opened its doors in 1930. In June 1933, the school was honoured by the presence of Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of York (later to become Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth).

Fifty years on, at a time of further expansion and with 350 boys on the roll, their daughter, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, visited the School on the occasion of its 150th anniversary.

In today’s School, traditional Scottish elements, such as the wearing of the kilt for formal occasions, are still very prominent, and the Pipe Band features frequently in School life. Rugby is played enthusiastically and the annual fixture against Edinburgh Academy is the longest established inter-club school match in the world, having been played continuously for over 150 years.

The School’s motto ‘Ready ay Ready’, which features in the chorus of the School song (last revised in the 1950s but much older in origin), is still sung with gusto by the School.

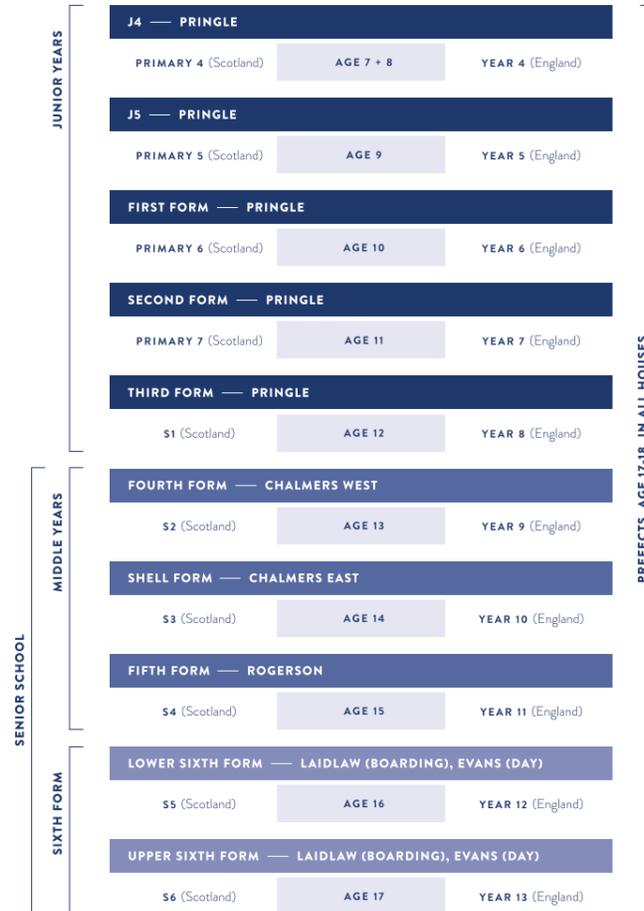
## THE MERCHISTON JOURNEY

Your son will join a tried and tested house system that allows him to remain with his peer group as he progresses through the School; day boys are fully integrated into this system. This means that your son will experience a new boarding house and housemaster at the start of each Autumn Term of the Middle Years.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF OUR SYSTEM?

- A single housemaster oversees academic concerns relating to one complete year group, fulfilling the role of Head of Year.
- Disciplinary structures are fairer and more consistent because the same housemaster handles them for all boys in a year group.
- We can more easily help new pupils integrate into the year group.
- We can regulate school days better because all boys start and finish prep, games and activities at the same time; this means the house runs more efficiently.
- Social events are centrally organised to suit a particular age group.
- By starting afresh each academic year, your son will develop adaptability, relationship-building skills, new structures and focus points.

If your son becomes a prefect in the Upper Sixth year, he may be allocated to one of the boarding houses to lead the younger pupils in the School. As well as providing an excellent role model for the younger boys, and valuable support to the housemaster and tutors, your son will gain useful leadership skills and experience.



## FEES

### MERCHISTON JUNIORS

Boarding Fee	J4 to I Form	£7,220 per term
Day Fee		£5,010 per term

Boarding Fee	II and III Form	£8,390 per term
Day Fee		£5,660 per term

Schools fees include tuition, 24-hour supervision and care, meals, laundry (excluding dry cleaning), travel for school matches and careers counselling.

### SENIOR SCHOOL

Boarding Fee	IV Form and above	£11,730 per term
Day Fee		£8,510 per term

There is a premium for direct entry into the VI Form, equivalent to 5% of the Senior School Boarding fee for each of the two VI Form years.

### SPORTS ACADEMIES

Tennis Academy	Elite Squad	£1,395 per annum
	Development Squad	£660 per annum
Golf Academy	Elite Squad	£2,430 per annum
	Development Squad	£1,320 per annum

### ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Occasional Boarding	£51.50 per night
English as an Additional Language	£190 per term

A comprehensive list of 'Extra Charges' is available from the Assistant Bursar.

Fee concessions are available as follows:

Second Child	5%
Third Child	20%
Fourth Child	40%
Boarding children of serving Service Personnel	10%

In addition, Merchiston operates a joint fee scheme with Kilgraston School, Bridge of Earn and St George's School for Girls, Edinburgh.

Please note that only one concession is available per pupil and does not extend to Additional or Extra Charges.

School Fees are billed in advance at the beginning of each term with Additional and Extra Charges billed in arrears. Payment is due on the first day of each term.

“ Traditional, warm and personal school – small enough for everyone to know everyone. Blessed with lovely grounds, with the bonus of having Edinburgh on the doorstep. ”

“ Despite fewer than 50% of Independent Schools Council (ISC) schools being academically selective, pupils significantly outperform the national and global averages academically. ”

## CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION

The School aims to ensure that your son and all pupils, staff and volunteers live and work together in a safe environment. Your son should be able to approach adults about concerns, confident that he will be treated with respect and listened to. Adults who work in any capacity in the School act professionally, have knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures, and are sensitive to the signs of children who are in distress or under stress of some kind.

We are inspected by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate on a five to seven year cycle. You can read (and download) the Education Scotland Reports on Merchiston by visiting the Education Scotland website ([www.education.gov.scot](http://www.education.gov.scot)), and the Care Inspectorate Reports by visiting the Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)).

Merchiston will always have the safety and wellbeing of your son, other pupils and staff as its highest priority.



“ I am very happy with my son’s Merchiston journey — he has turned into a thoughtful, confident, friendly, ambitious young man, eager to make his way in the world, safe in the knowledge that he has the backing of a group of fellow Merchistonians with whom he has shared his journey. He can stand in any company and speak eloquently with wit and charm and we are extremely proud of him. ”

### PARENT

Independent School of the Year  
for Student Well-being Finalist.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AWARDS — 2020

Best School Food UK

GOLDEN WHISK AWARDS — 2019

## ALL- THROUGH CURRICULUM

Merchiston’s 7–18 curriculum is designed to challenge your son in an appropriate, progressive and cohesive manner. This enables us to meet his needs and ensure that he finds success at an individual level. Our curriculum and approach to learning and teaching is underpinned by a commitment to Getting It Right For Every Child. Personal, Social and Health Education is integral to this, within the Wellbeing agenda, and addresses your son’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Although we do not use the Experiences and Outcomes of the Curriculum for Excellence, we have woven many of their key principles into the Merchiston narrative through ongoing self-evaluation and a drive to continually improve outcomes for each of our boys. Merchiston’s curriculum has evolved over many years, combining the best of the Scottish and English systems. It is designed to provide maximum opportunity for your son to attain, achieve, and develop to be the best he can be, in a safe, supportive, challenging and caring environment.

“ Mr Anderson is very bright and thoughtful, with a rather scary array of knowledge across a multitude of disciplines when you get into a conversation with him. He is extremely perceptive with the boys and quickly understands what makes each one tick individually. ”

### PARENT

## SPORT AND CO-CURRICULAR

In Merchiston Juniors and the Middle Years, your son will be encouraged to participate in team and individual sports. In the Autumn and Lent Terms, the main sport is rugby; in the Summer Term, cricket and athletics. The School also operates a Golf Academy and a Tennis Academy. The academies offer highly personalised and progressive performance programmes alongside an exceptional academic education that is specially adapted to sit alongside each individual’s schedule.

In all of the School’s co-curricular activities, we offer your son opportunities to discover his talents and we provide the pathways for him to achieve excellence. These opportunities are provided through our compulsory sport and activity programmes. These normally include activities such as:

### SPORT

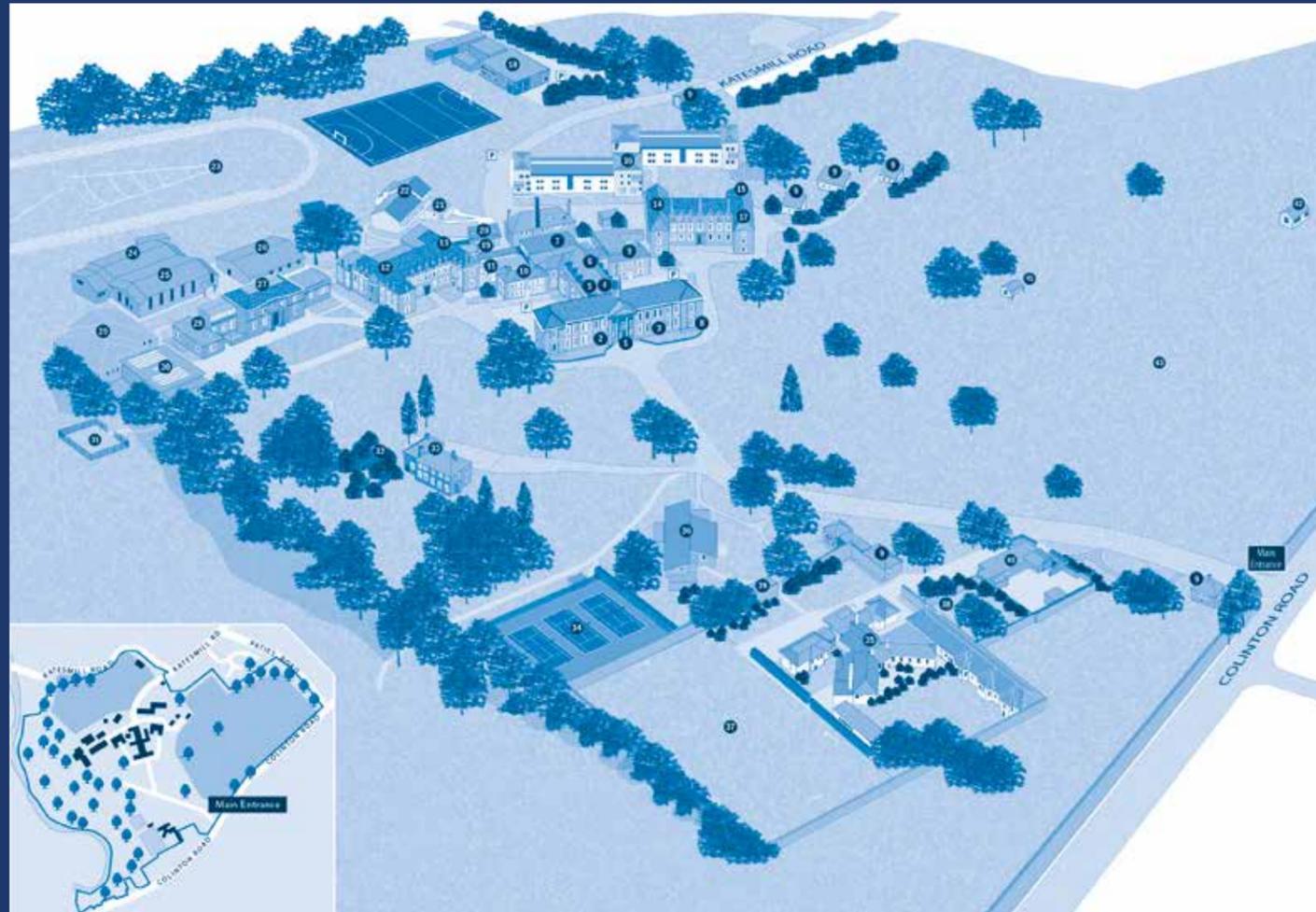
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Football
- Golf
- Hockey
- Rugby Fives
- Sailing
- Shooting
- Skiing
- Squash
- Swimming
- Tennis

### CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- CCF
- Chess
- Computing
- DofE
- Debating
- Design
- Drama
- Electronics
- Engineering
- Masterchef
- Mountain Biking
- Music

In the Fifth and Sixth Forms, your son will have greater choice over his sporting programme. The major sports are not compulsory, but he must participate in physical activity on three afternoons a week, and will be encouraged to reach his potential in his chosen sport. In Sixth Form, he can gain experience working with people and organisations through the Koinonia Programme (Teamwork with the Community) and in Lower Sixth, he will have the opportunity to undertake an individual research project on a subject of his choice.

## CAMPUS MAP



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 RECEPTION  | 23 ATHLETICS ARENA  |
| 2 MEDICAL CENTRE   | 24 SPORTS HALL AND GYM  |
| 3 MAIN BUILDING (ACCOUNTS, ADMINISTRATION AND ENGLISH)           | 25 NAPIER AND THEATRE SCHOOLS (MATHS)                           |
| 4 STAFF COMMON ROOM  | 26 MAPPA MUNDI SCHOOLS (MODERN LANGUAGES, HISTORY AND POLITICS) |
| 5 OLD LIBRARY  | 27 GIBSON HOUSE (BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS)                |
| 6 MEMORIAL HALL  | 28 SPAWFORTH LIBRARY AND CAREERS                                |
| 7 DINING ROOM  | 29 ROBERTSON BUILDING (IT, MUSIC AND ELECTRONICS)               |
| 8 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  | 30 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY AND ART AND DESIGN CENTRE              |
| 9 MERCHISTON ASTRO   | 31 OUTDOOR BIOLOGY CLASSROOM                                    |
| 10 FACULTY OF SUPPORT FOR LEARNING (HARVEY HUB)                  | 32 COLINTON CASTLE RUINS  |
| 11 SCHOOL SHOP   | 33 HEADMASTER'S HOUSE (CASTLE GATES)                            |
| 12 CHALMERS WEST (FOURTH FORM BOARDING HOUSE)                    | 34 INDOOR TENNIS COURTS AND GOLF PRACTICE AREA                  |
| 13 CHALMERS EAST (SHELL FORM BOARDING HOUSE)                     | 35 PRINGLE HOUSE (MERCHISTON JUNIORS BOARDING HOUSE)            |
| 14 ROGERSON (FIFTH FORM BOARDING HOUSE)                          | 36 PRINGLE TEACHING CENTRE                                      |
| 15 EVANS (SIXTH FORM DAY HOUSE)                                  | 37 PRINGLE FOOTBALL PITCH                                       |
| 16 LAIDLAW HOUSE (SIXTH FORM BOARDING HOUSE AND GYM)             | 38 PRINGLE SECRET GARDEN  |
| 17 MOUNT OLYMPUS (GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMICS, CLASSICS AND MASTERCHEF) | 39 MILLER RIFLE RANGE   |
| 18 COLINTON CASTLE SQUASH CLUB                                   | 40 THE STABLES (GROUND STAFF)                                   |
| 19 PIPE BAND HUT   | 41 GRIEVE PAVILION  |
| 20 FIVES COURTS  | 42 1914-2014 WW1 CENTENARY PAVILION                             |
| 21 CCF HUT   | 43 PLAYING FIELDS (RUGBY/CRICKET)                               |
| 22 SWIMMING POOL   | 44 STAFF HOUSING  |

Independent Schools' Grounds  
Team of the Year

INSTITUTE OF GROUNDSMANSHIP — 2019

## LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS

### BY ROAD

Edinburgh is situated to the south of the Firth of Forth and, with all major roads and motorways converging on the city, it can be reached easily from all parts of Scotland and England. The main routes from England are the M6 and M74 motorways or the A1 (M) motorway and A1 trunk road. Merchiston is situated just off the A720, Edinburgh Bypass.

### BY RAIL

Merchiston is approximately 20 minutes by taxi from Edinburgh Waverley Station, which is a mainline station with regular service connections to all parts of Scotland and other parts of the UK. Travel time to London King's Cross is approximately 5 hours.

### BY AIR

Merchiston is within easy reach of Scotland's main international airports — Edinburgh (15 minutes) and Glasgow (1 hour). There are regular scheduled flights to all parts of the UK, Europe and international destinations. Flights to Edinburgh from London are available at numerous times throughout the day and have a standard duration of 1 hour 15 minutes.

Approximate air travel times from Edinburgh International Airport:

London	1 ¼ hours
Dublin	1 hour
Amsterdam	1 ½ hours
Düsseldorf	1 ½ hours
Frankfurt	1 ¾ hours
Brussels	1 ½ hours
Paris	1 ½ hours
Madrid	2 ½ hours
New York	7 ½ hours



## ADMISSIONS PROCESS

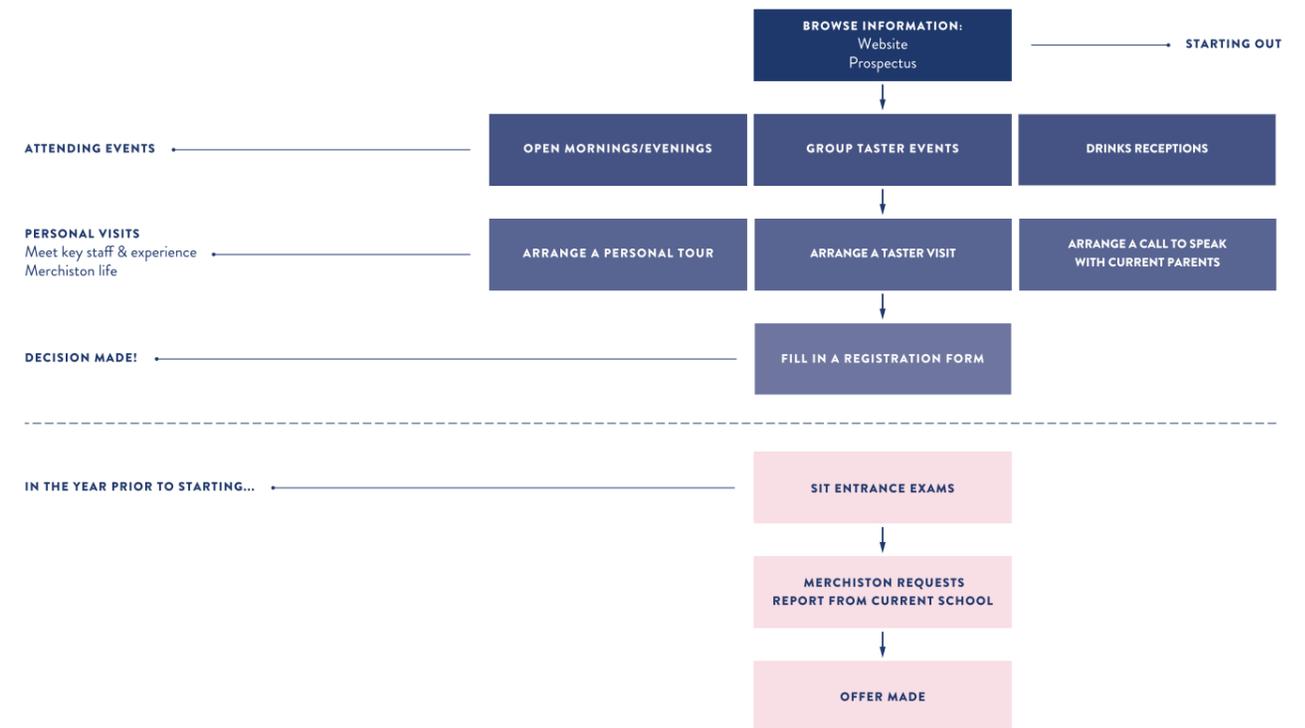
We know that choosing a school for your son is an important decision, which is why we treat every application individually. No two families are the same, so there is no *typical* process. We offer many opportunities for you and your son to visit us throughout the year so that you can decide what the best fit is for you as a family.

A warm welcome awaits.

Director of Admissions, Mrs Kay Wilson

Tel: +44 (0)131 312 2201

Email: [admissions@merchiston.co.uk](mailto:admissions@merchiston.co.uk)



An offer of a place for your son will be dependent on receipt of a satisfactory report from your son's current school and an interview.

“ Excellent location and a unique Scottish culture which appeals to all boys regardless of national roots. ”

PARENT

## ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT DATES

### MERCHISTON JUNIORS

Entrance Assessments:  
January 2021

Entry to J4, J5, First, Second & Third Forms (i.e. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12 years of age in September of the year of entry). Please contact the Admissions Department to discuss available dates.

### MIDDLE YEARS

Entrance Assessments and All-Rounder, Art & Design, Music, Design & Technology and Sports' Scholarships and Pipe Band Exhibition – (Prep and non-Prep Schools):  
Thursday 28 January & Friday 29 January 2021

Entry to Fourth Form (i.e. 13+ years of age in September of the year of entry). Candidates will sit entrance assessments in Maths, English, a Non-Verbal Reasoning Test and a Support for Learning screening test and have an interview. There will be specialist assessments for the All Rounder and Sports' Scholarships. Candidates should expect to be at School from Thursday morning until Friday lunchtime approximately. Those candidates only sitting entrance assessments will be free to go home after lunch on Thursday.

Closing date for applications:  
Friday 22 January 2021

*Please note that where applicable, meals will be provided by Merchiston and overnight accommodation may be available for those candidates coming from a distance.*

*Entry to Sixth Form is based upon candidates predicted and actual GCSE results, or equivalent exams and interview. If joining us from a different exam system, we will ask candidates to sit papers in the subjects they wish to study at A Level.*

## ACCREDITATIONS



## TERM DATES

AUTUMN TERM	2020 – 2021
Autumn Term starts	31/08 – 8pm
Weekend Leave starts	18/09 – 1.15pm
Weekend Leave ends	21/09 – 8pm
Half Term starts	16/10 – 1.15pm
Half Term ends	29/10 – 8pm
Weekend Leave starts	13/11 – 1.15pm
Upper Sixth Parents' Meeting	16/11 – 5.30pm
Weekend Leave ends	16/11 – 8pm
First Form Parents' Meeting	20/11 – 5.30pm
Autumn Term ends	11/12 – 1.15pm

LENT TERM	2020 – 2021
Lower Sixth ALIS and UCAS Meeting	07/01 – 5.30pm
Lent Term Starts	07/01 – 8pm
Weekend Leave starts (Pringle, J4 – Third Form)	21/01 – 4pm
Second Form Parents' Meeting after which W/e Leave starts	
Third Form Parents' Meeting after which W/e Leave starts	
Weekend Leave starts (Other year groups)	22/01 – 1.15pm
Weekend Leave starts (Fourth – Sixth Forms)	
Weekend Leave ends (all)	24/01 – 8pm
Half Term starts	12/02 – 1.15pm
Half Term ends	21/02 – 8pm
Fifth Form Parents' Meeting	27/02 – 12.45pm
Weekend Leave starts	06/03 – 1.15pm
Weekend Leave ends	08/03 – 8pm
Transition Meetings for Shell parents	13/03 – 11.45am
Shell Parents' Meeting	13/03 – 12.45am
Lent Term ends	26/03 – 1.15pm

SUMMER TERM	2020 – 2021
Fourth Form Parents' Meeting	19/04 – 5.30pm
Summer Term starts	19/04 – 8pm
Whole School Commemoration Service	
Weekend Leave starts (all)	
Weekend Leave starts (Pringle)	06/05 – 1.15pm
Weekend Leave starts (Forth – Sixth Forms)	07/05 – 1.15pm
Weekend Leave starts (all)	
Weekend Leave ends (all)	09/05 – 8pm
Commemoration Concert and Art & Design Exhibitions	
Half Term starts	28/05 – 1.15pm
Lower Sixth Parents' Meeting	03/06 – 5.30pm
Half Term ends	03/06 – 8pm
Transition Meeting for Pringle parents (First, Second, Third Form)	
Transition Meeting for Pringle parents (J4 and J5)	
Transition Meeting for Fourth Form parents	12/06 – 12pm
Transition Meeting for Fifth Form parents	
Middle Years Gathering	
Summer Term ends	03/07 – 1pm

“ My son started when he was 12 years old and in one year he went from being shy and reserved to standing up in front of a hall of adults to give a speech on how much he enjoyed his first year at Merchiston. ”

PARENT

“ The School aims to help you be the best that you can be, and will push you to achieve your personal goals – even things you never thought you could achieve. ”

PUPIL



**MERCHISTON**  
EDINBURGH

**A BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL FOR BOYS AGED 7–18**

Merchiston Castle School, Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH13 0PU

+44 (0) 131 312 2200    [admissions@merchiston.co.uk](mailto:admissions@merchiston.co.uk)

**MERCHISTON.CO.UK**



Charity number: SC016580

