

The Bhaktivedanta Academy

Admission Policy for Primary & Secondary Schools

Admission Policy:

The purpose of the school is training students to be highly learned – a combination of academic ability and cultural maturity.

- The school's admission policy is designed to identify children with the potential to take advantage of the school's educational programs.
- The academy is willing to consider accepting potential students when both the parents and students are convinced and enthusiastic about being involved in the school's educational programs.

The Students:

Categories of preliminary prerequisites sought in potential candidates for admission: a desire to learn, appropriate age, sound health, compatible goals, a standard of discipline, academic ability, sound character, acceptance of the principal of authority, accepting the school as home, respectful social dealings & a devotional service attitude:

- **Desire to learn:**

Without a desire to learn, students will be unable to take advantage of, or appreciate, the different *asrama* and academic programs the school offers.

- **Age:**

Students between the ages of 5 and 16 will be accepted into the primary & secondary educational programs. Boys above 16 years of age will be assessed on an individual basis.

Young students should be able to follow basic instructions, be able to understand and accept the principal of authority, should be able to go to the toilet without assistance, should be able to eat without being fed and be able to communicate with the teachers if they are hungry, tired, feeling sick etc.

- **Goals in Life:**

The goals of the students and their parents must be compatible with the goals stated in the mission statement of the **Bhaktivedanta Academy**.

- **Health:**

Children should be of sound health, free from chronic or acute diseases, or any emotional or physical disabilities. Otherwise, a student will be unable to take proper advantage of the educational facilities offered by the school.

- **Standards of Discipline:**

According to scripture, there are two types of discipline – inborn & acquired. Applicants for enrollment should have a basic level of inborn and acquired discipline that practically manifests in their obedience to the instructions of their parents, teachers and other seniors. This fundamental principle of Vedic education forms the basis for higher spiritual discipline.

- **Character:**

According to Vedic standards, good character is the most important qualification for a student. As such, knowledge taught in the school is not merely academic learning, but is education in the culture of learning. “When a person is highly educated and acts strictly on moral principles, he is called highly learned. A person conversant in different departments of knowledge is called educated, and because he acts on moral principles, he is called morally stout. Together, these two factors constitute learning.” (*Nectar of Devotion* 21.11)

Lord Caitanya glorified Srila Haridasa Thakura as the ideal preacher, as he both practiced *acara* (culture) and preached. The aim of the institution being to train preachers, culture – within the context of the Vedic tradition as practiced within the Gaudiya Vaisnava *sampradaya* – is necessarily a fundamental aspect of training.

- **Academic Ability:**

Inherent academic ability is a necessary prerequisite to take part in the school’s different educational disciplines.

- **Accepting the School as Home:**

It is important for students to be comfortable in the school environment. Students thus focused on their education, value and practice the culture of the institution as their own. Otherwise, the culture will be seen only as something practiced in the school, having no impact on their own lives.

- **Social Relationships** – with juniors, equals & seniors:

A student must have the ability to relate within different spheres of social dealings, the standard being – respect for seniors, camaraderie with equals and kindness towards juniors. The antithesis being: jealousy towards seniors, unnecessary competitiveness with equals and being exploitive of juniors.

- **Acceptance of Authority:**

Vedic education being a descending process, *avaroha* – success is founded on the students’ acceptance of *guru*, *sadhu* and *sastra*. Without acceptance of authority, success will not be found in any sphere of life.

- **Service Attitude:**

By the performance of menial service, the desire to learn is invoked within the student. By menial service, the heart is purified and character is developed – thereby awakening the ability to question submissively. Menial service, performed with knowledge and devotion elevates one from the theoretical platform to the platform of realization. Therefore, menial service under the guidance of authority is the root of Vedic education.

The Parents:

Values:

The **Bhaktivedanta Academy** seeks parents who, valuing the traditions and knowledge taught in the school, want their children to have that educational experience and the continued practice of those values on the completion of their education.

- Parents must have faith in the Vedic concept of education.
- Must be committed to their child being trained in the Academy.
- Should cultivate in their child, the values, knowledge & lifestyle learned in the school.
- Should understand the principals of acceptance of authority.

Dealings with their children in the school:

Fundamental to Vedic education is the principle that students make the school the focus of activity during the time of their education. Parents appreciating this principle are naturally sensitive that dealings with their children do not distract from, but rather enhance, their child's educational and cultural development.

- After first being convinced, parents should encourage in their child a value for the education they receive.
- Parents should see that their dealings with their child nourish the higher and finer aspects of a Krishna conscious parent-child relationship.
- To develop life-long positive habits, continual practice of educational values is necessary. Therefore, to avoid disrupting the child's focus in their educational development, parents are recommended to take their children out of the school only during scheduled breaks (see 'Pilgrimages and Vacations'), and during that time to maintain the devotional and cultural practices of the school.
- Parents should show by example the understanding of the position - as outlined in Manu smriti - of the teacher in the student's life.

- Parents must accept the basic principal of Gurukula life being the cultivation and practice of brahmacharya. As such the association of the opposite sex in any form is completely forbidden. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that this principal is upheld.
- In order to maintain brahmacharya and discipline of the mind video games, any social media and watching movies is forbidden.

Parents Orientation to School policy and Educational Traditions:

Discussions between the parents and teachers regarding the school's philosophy, culture, educational programs, and policies will be held to facilitate the parents understanding and to establish a working relationship between the parents and staff.

- Parents must understand their child's educational programs.
- They must have the capacity to see and acknowledge their child's strengths and weaknesses according to the Vedic version; and be able to cooperate with the teachers on cultivating the strengths and correcting the weaknesses.
- They must voice concerns about their child's educational programs and school policies in a cooperative and appropriate way.
- They should be straightforward in their dealings with the school and others, concerning voicing their opinions on school policy and educational programs.
- They must responsibly represent their acceptance of the school policies and training programs.
- They must show respect towards the educational authorities.
- They must be respectful of the schools experience in education and have a willingness to concede their own personal opinions on education and child development, in favor of the school's policies and decisions for the purpose of cooperation, etiquette and accomplishment of objectives.
- Parents should demonstrate solidarity with the policy of the school – never disagreeing with school policy, or arguing with the teachers in front of the child. Issues of contention should be dealt with privately with the teachers, so as not to disturb or confuse the child's faith in, or respect for, authority.
- They must be responsible in their commitments to the school.
- They must abide by the yearly schedule of the school.

Parents-Teacher Association (PTA) forum:

The Academy organizes PTA meetings to provide a forum for parties to share views, concerns and feedback on the student's educational programs and progress.

Enrollment Procedure:

Interview:

- An interview is first held with the parents:
 - To determine their perception, needs and expectations regarding the educational process
 - At this time the school prospectus will be given to prospective parents
 - To discuss the astrological chart of their child, focusing on character and educational potential; and the attitudes and abilities the school is seeking.
- Depending of the prospective students age the staff members next interview the prospective student and review the student's acceptance potential.
- In a second interview the findings of the staff and the school's expectations are then discussed with the parents and prospective student. At this time any further questions prospective parents may have are discussed. This finalizes the application process.

Application Form:

Parents wishing to enroll a student into one of the primary and secondary schools of the **Bhaktivedanta Academy** are required to fill in and submit an application form. All students are required to have a valid study visa and be registered and accepted as Mayapura residents by the MCS (Mayapur community sevaks).

Trial period:

The prospective student will attend the **Orientation** program as a day student to associate with the teachers and students to determine:

- If the student appreciates the spiritual, academic and asrama values, lifestyle, methods and facilities;
- If there is a natural service attitude, respect for seniors, friendship with equals, and gentleness towards juniors.
- If the student can physically and emotionally adjust to the Gurukula lifestyle.
- If parents can appreciate and accept the spiritual, academic and asrama values, lifestyle, methods and facilities.
- If parents can accept that during the child's time in Gurukula the teacher becomes the primary authority.

The trial period will be conducted in four stages:

- 3 days – 1st stage
- 3 weeks – 2nd stage
- 3 months – 3rd stage
- 6 months – 4th stage

Training period:

After the trial period – when the teachers are confident that the prospective student has the potential for the Academy’s educational methods to effectively work– the child will be further trained in the fundamental aspects of culture, values and etiquette for six months as a day student. Based on the child’s progression in the school and his eagerness he may be invited to join the Asrama after this 6 month period.

- If the student hasn’t developed the academic skills or character to complete the Orientation course within a span of six months, the child may be dismissed from the school.
- Younger students may be given more than six months to complete the Orientation course
- Those unable to complete the Orientation course, may consider enrolment in the Academy’s home schooling programs.
- Students may be given three opportunities to complete orientation.
- After completing the Orientation course, the student will attend the academic and *asrama* programs as a day student in the **Sri Vidya-vacaspati Tol:**
- Upon developing the required attitude, the student may be invited into the **Sri Yajna Varaha Vidya-ksetra** as a residential student. Entry into the asrama is not automatic.
- Upon developing the required attitude, the student may be awarded Upanayanam. The student is then accepted as a full student of the Academy.

Correctional Measures:

- A student misbehaves due to ignorance.
- Therefore, the primary correctional method is – educating students in proper behavioral standards according to the *Vaisnava* philosophical and cultural traditions.
- When students are made aware of the benefits of proper behavior and the negative results of improper behavior – the student, in time, with practice, comes to the platform of realizing, valuing and applying the standards of proper behavior.
- If bad habits are chronic or acute, the student may be then engaged in various menial services – such as cleaning duties – to invoke humility, contemplation and purity of heart.

Grounds for Dismissal:

- A disrespectful or defiant attitude towards elders & authority;
- Inability to co-operate with other members of the school;
- Disrespect towards guests and devotees;
- Violence towards other living entities;
- An improper, or lack of service attitude;
- No desire to learn the culture & etiquette of the school – even after repeated instruction;
- Inability to distinguish between occasions that call for formal or informal behavior;
- Absconding from classes and asrama programs;
- Over-attachment to home, resulting in an inability to participate in school programs;
- Fraternizing with, or absorption in, members of the opposite gender.
- Failure to follow school schedules and programs.
- Failure of parents in understanding and following school requirements in regards to the child.

- Students seeking admission, who are seen to possess the negative character traits listed above, will not be admitted into the school.
- Enrolled students demonstrating the above-mentioned negative character traits will be warned three times, and if warnings are not heeded, will be dismissed.
- Inappropriate behavior on the part of parents may also result in the dismissal of their child.

Contributions & Deposits:

In keeping with Gurukula tradition, education is without charge. Charges are used towards defraying establishment costs and adventitious expenses. This defrayment cost is due twelve months of the year regardless of scheduled holidays, or time out of the Gurukula for any other reason.

Defrayment costs:

Admission fee: 20,000 rupees (one time payment and non refundable).

Medical fee: 4,500 rupees (for yearly medical insurance).

Monthly fee: 8,000 rupees

These defrayment costs are subject to revision and change.

Deposits for residential students:

- **Medical emergencies:**

A refundable deposit must be kept with the school for use in case of medical emergencies. As these funds are depleted, they are to be replenished annually. Receipts for funds expended will be provided.

- **Emergency travel:**

In case an emergency arises requiring the child's travel back to their country of residence, a refundable deposit – the figure of which being determined by the school administrators at the time of enrollment – must be deposited with the school. As the price of travel increases, these funds are to be upgraded.

- **Admission checklist**

- 1) Chart of the boy done by B.A astrologer and pre-approval for trial period.
- 2) Completed admission form.
- 3) Clear understanding and acceptance of school policies (as outlined in prospectus) especially in regards to schedules, trial periods, educational subjects and methodology of Vedic education.
- 4) If the boy's parents are not in Mayapur and approved guardian must be arranged.
- 5) 20,000 rupee admission fee (non refundable).
- 6) 4,500 medical insurance fee (per year).
- 7) Pro rata school fees for the month i.e. before 15th of the month 8,000 after 15th 4,000.
- 8) 4 passport size photos.
- 9) Color copy of details page of passport.
- 10) Color copy of valid Indian visa.