



Friday 12th March 2021

Re: Year 5 Pupils Starting Secondary School in Sept 2022 Information for 11+ Entry Examinations

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was lovely to speak with so many families last week; I do hope you found the phone call helpful in understanding the process involved for 11+ testing.

A number of families asked me to follow up with similar information so I have compiled responses to the Frequently Asked Questions to assist you. During our call we discussed your child's individual attainment and also their Non Verbal and Verbal Reasoning Scores. It is not necessary for Primary Schools to undertake these types of tests, however we find that they give us a good indicator of pupil potential and we can compare with their national curriculum attainment. They are also a good indication of how pupils may fair at Grammar Schools.

I have asked the Y5 staff to administer the NVR and VR tests once the children are settled back into school routines and I will then contact you individually with the scores as this is something I would usually offer during February parent teacher meetings for our Y5 families, but obviously was unable to do so this year due to lockdown.

FAQs

When do I apply for an 11+ test?

If you would like your child to be entered into 11+ examinations for Wirral Grammar Schools, you must have completed the on-line registration by 31st May. The portal does not open before the 1st May, so we will send a reminder out nearer the time. If you would like your child to sit the entry examination for Catholic Grammar Schools (St. Anselms or Upton) you should contact the school direct and register for the test. This is also the case for Birkenhead High School Academy for Girls.

St Anselm's College's entrance examination registration is now open. [Click here to open their registration page.](#) The examination is due to take place in September 2020. You can also find their sample examination papers [here.](#)

Upton Hall's admissions form is now open. [You can find the form here.](#) The closing date is 29th June. Other useful documents regarding admission to Upton Hall can be found [here.](#)

Birkenhead High School Academy have not yet opened their admissions for this year, but you can find their admissions page [here.](#)



When will my child sit the test?

Your child will sit two tests on the same day with a short break in between them. You will be contacted during the summer with your exact date and time and the arrangements for the test, but they are planned to go ahead during September 2021. You will then know the outcome of your child's test results before you have to complete your secondary admission choices in October 2021.

Are the 11+ tests the same as when older siblings took them?

The test has changed in recent years; they can no longer be taken in the child's primary school and are sat in the Grammar Schools themselves. The test focus on the following four areas:

- Non-verbal reasoning,
- Verbal reasoning, vocabulary and spelling,
- Mathematics
- Reading and comprehension in English sections.

The test provider changed in 2020 and is now GL Assessments. GL assessments have readily available familiarisation materials and sample papers which can be accessed using the following link: <https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/11plus-series-11-plus-practice-papers/11plus-familiarisation-materials/>

What is the pass mark?

The four Wirral Grammar schools have a standardised pass mark of 236, as does Upton Hall. The other schools allocate places to children based on their test result ranking, so there is no official pass mark, and the lowest qualifying score will vary from year to year.

Where can I find out more information?

By contacting Wirral secondary school admissions:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-admissions/apply-primary-or-secondary-school-place#wgSM-1>

This site has all the information needed and links to register for 11+ testing. You can also download the Wirral 11+ Test Familiarisation guide here:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/schools%20and%20learning/School%20admissions/Wirral%20Familiarisation%20Guide.pdf>

Does my child need a tutor?

The Local Authority state that pupils do not need to be tutored to pass the 11+, however they will need to be familiar with test techniques and this type of test will be new for them. Learning to work to time and complete all sections, as well as identifying what the question is asking and how to fill in the answer sheet are all important to help your child access the test. The more they practice, the more they will be able to work at speed successfully and the less anxious they will be on the actual day. Primary Schools cannot recommend tutors, but there are many Wirral websites that you can search if you decide this is something you want to enquire about.

How do I know if my child should sit the 11+ test?

It is important that you think not just about the test itself, but about the expectations of Grammar schools. Pupils attending grammar schools must be able to cope with the academic expectations and should currently be working at higher levels in primary school. Their results and school work should be consistently above average in order that they are not placed under undue pressure in an 11+ situation.



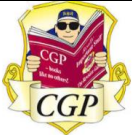

What can I do to help my child?

Vocabulary is a key area of the 11+ test, so anything you can do to help your child broaden their vocabulary and use of language will be beneficial. Read the newspaper together and highlight new words; get your child to look up their meaning and find other similar words (synonyms) or words with opposite meanings (antonyms). You can also use example vocabulary lists to work through and help your child know and understand new vocabulary – an example can be found on this link:

https://www.11plusguide.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/11Plus-Vocabulary-List.pdf?utm_source=website&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=Vocab%20List

Listed below are some links to free resources that you can access to support your child to prepare for the 11+ test. If you click on the blue type the links should take you straight to the relevant documents:

Links to high quality free resources:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Bond are a commercial supplier of resources to support tuition for grammar school examinations (known as 11+). They have created a bank of free resources that you can access by clicking here.</p> <p>Also have a free set of interactive tests that can be accessed by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>Eleven Plus Exams have created a collection of free 11+ preparation guides and practice papers for families.</p> <p>https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/study-from-home You can access them by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>CGP are a commercial supplier of resources to support tuition for grammar school examinations (known as 11+). They have created a bank of free resources that you can access by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>11 Plus Guide is designed to be a one stop for families considering the 11+. They have compiled a helpful page of free resources to support your child. That can be read by clicking here.</p> |

Parents can also source high quality resources online, through apps and via publishers. These are good for familiarisation. Children should not be expected to work at test speed until September of the tests.

What Next?

In these unfamiliar circumstances it is important that you have the chance to ask any questions and be clear on your next steps. It is very hard for Y5 families who will not have had the opportunity to visit secondary schools yet. To help our families, I am happy to host an online meeting using zoom so that I can share the information I would do usually and also answer any questions you may have. The meeting will take place at 4pm on Tuesday 4th May and we will send links out for you to join nearer the time.

The first part of the meeting will be for **ALL Y5 FAMILIES** and I will explain how to apply for a secondary school place for September 2022. This will probably be about 15minutes and then some time for families to ask any questions you have. For those who want to know more about grammar school testing we will then continue for another 15minutes followed by questions.

Secondary schools would usually provide open evenings during the summer and autumn terms and I know they are working with the Local Authority to see how best they can safely share information with prospective families; the hope being that they will be able to do "out of hours" tours in small groups at some stage soon.

Whilst we wait for the government's next advice you could start to look at secondary school websites with your child and find out about what they can offer your family. Parents will need to make choices during the early Autumn term, so you have plenty of time, but it is advisable to be well-informed.




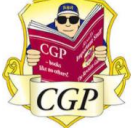




I hope the information provided here and the telephone call has answered your questions and provided you with the information you need. The final linked resources are from a range of 11+ suppliers and the hyperlink will take you to further resources.

I'm sure for many it will feel rather daunting, so my advice would be to talk together with your child, look at some of the sample material and if the 11+ is something you want to consider, set out a plan to work with your child to familiarise them with the materials. Starting with small amounts of time initially and then increasing over the coming months will help build your child's confidence and then you can begin to work to timed sections as they become more familiar. Remember there are still six months before the test so regular, planned sessions will be of most benefit.

If there is anything further you'd like to know please contact the office and we will do our best to support you. I'm ever hopeful that before the year is finished we will be able to welcome families back on site and I can talk with you face to face, but in the meantime I will do my best to keep you informed!

Best Wishes,

Mrs Donelan
Headteacher

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>School Entrance Tests</p> | <p>School Entrance Tests have a wealth of resources for families. Includes links to national example papers and information for families about entrance examinations. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>Oxford Owl have published their useful 11+ help guide for families. Contains lots of frequently asked questions. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>The Exam Coach has an 18 point help guide for families considering how to prepare their child for the 11+ examinations. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
| <p>Publications</p>  | <p>Eleven Plus Exams has a wealth of free resources and support for families considering the 11+. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>CGP have published a useful 11+ help guide for families. Lots of free resources as well as advertisements for their own products. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>11 Plus Guide have created a free and independent 'one stop' shop for families. Have a lot of free resources, advice and links to products that you can buy to help with learning at home. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>Bond are a commercial supplier of resources to support tuition for grammar school examinations (known as 11+). They have created a bank of free resources that you can access by clicking here.</p> <p>Also have a free set of interactive tests that can be accessed by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>11 Plus DIY offer a vast range of 11+ resources and support for families. Includes free guides, test papers and their own products and tutoring that they sell. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |
|  | <p>11 Plus Swot was written by a parent who was frustrated by the lack of 11+ guidance and support to families. They have lots of free advice but also sell products and tutoring online. You can visit their website by clicking here.</p> |