

MOVING UP TO SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2020



The Application and Offer Processes

Timelines, Preferences and Offers



Key Message!

Apply on time:

by 3pm on 31 October – the
deadline



How to apply online

- If you live in Buckinghamshire, visit www.buckscc.gov.uk between 10 September and 31 October 2019
- If you live elsewhere apply via your own LA's website.
- All you need is an email address



Applying online is easy

- You can apply on your phone or PC
- Make a note of which email account you used and your password!
- You will be reminded if an application has not been submitted
- You can accept the place online
- You will see the outcome of all school preferences



Making an application

When you apply online you can:

- List up to 6 schools
- Include grammar, upper, all-ability and out of county schools
- Put the schools in the order you prefer them

Consider:

- The order of your preferences carefully
- Including a local (catchment) school that you have a good chance of being offered



Think about...

- Does your child need to sit or pass a test to be considered for a place at the school?
- Do you know where your child fits on the school's admission rules?
- Do you need to complete a supplementary form?
- Do you live in-catchment? (Check this on the website)



How will your child get to school?

Transport given to the **nearest** secondary school if:

- Over three miles away, or
- Under three miles but the route is an 'unsafe walking route'
- Check on www.buckscc.gov.uk/findaschoolplace to find your nearest school for transport purposes
- All secondary schools are treated equally (grammar/upper/comprehensive/free)
- Paid-for bus tickets can be purchased



The offer process – Step 1

- Local authorities share offer information
- Each school preference is treated separately
- Schools are not told where they are placed on the preference list by the parent
- All admission authorities apply their admission rules to the children with a preference for their school and sort the children into 'ranked order'
- The schools tell the ranked order to their council



The offer process – Step 2

- Where a child can be offered more than one school place - the higher ranked preference school is offered
- The lower preference school is declined
- The vacant place created is offered to another child
- Children who cannot be offered any of their preferences are then offered a place at the nearest school with vacant places remaining



Offer Day – 2 March 2020

Online applicants

- Offer emails sent 2 March
- Can log on and accept the school place online

Postal applicants

- Offer letters posted 2 March

All applicants

- Automatically added to waiting list for higher preferences that could not be offered
- Can register an appeal
- You have 14 days to accept the offer.



After Offer Day

- You can appeal for any school you have been refused
- This includes where your preference is a grammar school and your child has not qualified
- We will automatically add your child to the waiting list for any school on your application above the school we have offered



About Appeals

- Appeals are heard by a panel of three people
- Panel are independent and unpaid volunteers who have no connection with the school or the LA
- You can put your case in person but it can also be held in your absence if you prefer



Application summary

- Apply by **3pm** on 31 October 2019
- Apply online at www.buckscc.gov.uk or on your home LA's website
- List schools in true preference order
- Consider including your catchment/local/nearest school
- Be realistic, understand the rules
- Consider transport arrangements
- Visit the schools
- Don't rely on the opinions of others



The Secondary Transfer Test



Testing Timeline

What	When
Familiarisation booklet	By end of summer term
Practice Test	10 September 2019
Secondary Transfer Test	12 September 2019
Results published	18 October 2019
Application deadline	31 October 2019 – 3pm
School place offers	2 March 2020
Start secondary school	September 2020



The Secondary Transfer Test

- The Secondary Transfer Test is a test to determine whether or not a child is suited to a grammar school.
- The test is produced by GL Assessment
- Buckinghamshire County Council undertakes the administration on behalf of the 13 grammar schools



Do all children have to sit the Secondary Transfer Test?

- No, only if parents want their child to sit the test
- A grammar school will not suit every child so think carefully about whether sitting the test is going to be a positive experience for your child



What does the Secondary Transfer Test measure?

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Verbal skills | includes English and verbal reasoning |
| Mathematical skills | includes various areas of mathematics |
| Non-verbal skills | includes non-verbal and spatial reasoning |



Familiarisation booklet

- Explains what the questions, test papers and answer sheets will look like and how the answer sheets should be completed
- Includes example questions with answers

It will not be looked at in school

GL Assessment provide free familiarisation on their website: <https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/free-familiarisation>



On the test days

- Two papers with a 15 min break between
- Each paper approximately an hour including instructions (practice shorter)
- CD/MP3 gives worked examples and test instructions
- Paper A – Verbal Skills – taken first
- Paper B – Mathematical and Non-Verbal Skills – taken second
- Practice test is not marked



Illness during the test period

- If a child is ill on either practice or transfer test day they can sit the test later
- Children should not sit the test when unwell (even if they want to!)
- Always do the practice test first
- Schools will advise parents of the new date



What do I do if I think something has affected my child's performance in the Transfer Test?

- On the test day let your headteacher know and also collect evidence, for example a doctor's letter
- Once you have the test results, talk to your child's headteacher



Special Arrangements

- Adjusted testing for children with disabilities can be requested
- Apply via headteacher
- Discuss NOW!
- Application must be completed as soon as possible
- Decision made by a panel of experts in SEND, primary teaching and an educational psychologist



Coaching

- Primary schools that undertake testing on behalf of the grammar schools are asked not to tutor or coach the children in their school prior to the test over and above enabling the children to follow the national curriculum relevant for their age.
- The Secondary Transfer Test is designed to enable all children to demonstrate their academic potential without the need for excessive preparation.



Marking and Standardisation

- Tests are machine marked (scanned)
- One mark is given for each correct answer
- Each pupil will have three raw scores
 - **verbal skills**
 - **mathematical skills**
 - **non-verbal skills**
- Each score is age standardised and weighted to produce score (STTS)



Weighting

Each score is weighted as follows:

- Verbal – 50% of the STTS (Secondary Transfer Test Score)
- Mathematical – 25% of the STTS
- Non-verbal – 25% of the STTS
- **Qualifying score is 121**
- **Scores range between 60 and 170 approx**



Results and qualification

18 October

- Results sent by letter addressed to parent/carer
- Handed out at end of school day
- Contents confidential to parent and child
- Approximately 34% of children scored 121 or more in 2019 intake



What can I do if my child does not qualify?

You can either

- Ask for a Selection Review OR
- Just appeal

The procedure is explained in the results letter in October

The Selection Review Panel can decide a child is qualified and once agreed this qualification is for any grammar school



Selection Review Panel

- Panel sits November-January
- 3 headteachers - two grammar one primary
- Decision included in 2 March allocation
- Decision applies to all grammar schools
- At the end of the process and following Selection Reviews, approximately 38% qualify for grammar school
- Can still appeal and IAP will consider whether review process was 'fair, consistent and objective'



Non-qualified Appeal

- Possible to go straight to appeal
- Appeal heard after 2 March
- Most schools will already be full by then
- You would have to prove academic potential AND give reasons why you believe a place should be offered above number



More information

- 'Moving up to Secondary School' leaflet
- Schools' websites
- TBGS website
<https://www.thebucksgrammarschools.org/>
- School open events dates:
See School Directory in 'Find My Child a School Place'
<https://services.buckscc.gov.uk/school-admissions/schools>
- By end of August - more information on the council's website
www.buckscc.gov.uk/movinguptosecondaryschool



How to contact us

Web:

www.buckscc.gov.uk/movinguptosecondaryschool

Email:

Fill in the 'Contact Us' form:

www.buckscc.gov.uk/contactadmissions

