



Haberdashers' Castle House School

11+ Entry to Selective Grammar Schools Parent information September 2024

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1. Timeline

Year 1	The 11+ journey commences in Year 1 with dedicated curriculum time given to developing core skills
Year 2	We start assessing the children using GL tests in Year 2 to familiarise them with the process of testing.
Year 3	As pupils move into Key Stage 2 the focus broadens to encompass traditional Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning techniques, extending to investigating a range of questioning styles, comprehension, grammar and maths skills, culminating in the opportunity for test practise. At parents' evening in the summer of Year 3, there is the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with regards to these skills. From Year 3 the volume of testing increases in order to begin to build an accurate profile of the pupil.
Year 4	It might seem early, but now is the time to start thinking about whether you will be applying to a Grammar School. This gives you time to research options. You may wish to visit a few schools by yourself, with a view to visiting those shortlisted with your child later in the year. A more formal approach to teaching and assessing 11+ starts
Year 5	Pupils who are looking to take the Grammar School tests will see an increase in formal 11+ teaching, alongside opportunities to complete mock tests in our formal exam room. This enables your child to understand what the real tests will be like and should help to alleviate some of the anxiety they may have about the test.
Year 6	11+ exams for Grammar Schools will take place in September 2023. Independent Schools will have their own assessment days, which will usually take place between October 2023 and January 2024.
What next?	11+ exam results are issued in October. If your child has reached the qualifying standard, you are then eligible to apply for your chosen Grammar Schools. Official results are released in March.

2. Admissions

There is now a collaboration between Midlands based selective schools. The new partnership, known as 'West Midlands Grammar Schools', will incorporate all Birmingham, Shropshire, Walsall, Warwickshire, and Wolverhampton grammar schools.

Tests take place at a broadly similar time each year across the West Midlands Grammar School partnership, but on the same day. In 2024 this was 16th September 2024. With parental consent, candidates' tests scores can be shared between all schools within the partnership.

Dates and key processes have been aligned and all applications will be directed to one centralised application portal, usually at the start of May and closing at the end of June.

Schools included in the West Midlands Grammar School Partnership are: Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, King Edward VI Aston School, King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys, King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls, King Edward VI Five Ways School, King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls, King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School for Boys, Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls, Queen Mary's High School, Queen Mary's Grammar School, Newport Girls' High School, Wolverhampton Girls' High School, Haberdashers Adams, King Edward VI School Stratford, Lawrence Sherriff School, Stratford Girls Grammar School, Rugby High School and Alcester Grammar School.

Our Two local Schools - **Haberdashers' Adams & Newport Girls' High School** are well known to CHS

Newport Girls' High School

NGHS is an outstanding school where pastoral care and superb academic results go hand in hand. Girls are cared for by an amazing team of teachers who really get to know them well. We have mixed Year 7 and Year 8 form groups which helps Year 7s quickly find their feet with an older sisterly approach. In spite of recent expansion, the school is quite small with 120 girls in a year and only 780 in total. The curriculum is broad and balanced - STEM for girls is popular but so are the Arts with Drama and Music both very popular and an annual school musical is a real highlight. All students study separate sciences from Year 7 and two languages (French & German). The House system offers leadership opportunities in many year groups and competitions as varied as House Bake Off to House Spelling Bee. There are a number of trips and visits from a team-building day locally in Edgmond to trips to India and New York in the upper years. All students have the opportunity to visit France or Germany in Year 8.

If things go wrong, we have an experienced pastoral team and recently won a Platinum award for Safeguarding from a recent audit.

Our recent Ofsted report (November 2022) is also a great place to point parents as what they comment on here really captures the essence of our school. [Newport Girls' High School Academy - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

For more information about admissions see <https://www.nghs.org.uk/admissions/y7->

Haberdashers' Adams

Haberdashers' Adams is a selective state grammar school, offering an exceptional education. We welcome boys and girls aged 11-18 as day pupils and boys as boarders. There is no charge for education, so boarders pay only for the provision associated with

boarding making Haberdashers' Adams much more affordable than the independent school sector.

Pupils consistently achieve outstanding academic results. However, we offer so much more than just examination success. There is a huge focus on providing pupils with as many opportunities as possible to try new things and to take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered. Life is exciting, busy and fast-paced at Haberdashers' Adams which has some fantastic facilities, including a modern music and performing arts centre, a brand-new teaching block for art and maths, and some superb sports facilities including a swimming pool and over 100 acres of playing fields.

Recommended by The Good Schools Guide, our reputation for high academic results is equalled by our strong house system and numerous house competitions. To gain the most from their time at Haberdashers' Adams pupils need to be prepared to try new things and to step out of their comfort zone to see what they can achieve.

Traditional Values, Modern Approach

We have a long and proud tradition of successfully educating generations of young people with a passion for helping our pupils to develop as confident, articulate young men and women who are interesting, balanced and who care for each other. While we are proud of the school's heritage we do not allow the history of the school to dictate our future. Teachers are encouraged to use their own creativity and flair in the way they teach their lessons.

Whilst we have high expectations of pupils, we strongly believe that the most important aspect of your child's life at school is how happy they are. In our experience a happy child will thrive and we warmly invite you to find out whether our school is one where your child will be happy.

11+ Entrance

As a selective school, the application process involves passing an entrance test. Prospective pupils in Year 5 should register during May-June in order to sit the test in the September of Year 6. We have 135 places for day pupils and 15 places for boarders in Year 7.

The test is provided by GL Assessment. The scores for each section are standardised to take account of differences in age, meaning younger children are not disadvantaged compared to children in the same cohort who could be almost a year older.

For more information about admissions see <https://www.adamsgs.uk/admissions/joining-us-in-year-7> It is worth noting that for admissions from September 2025 Castle House School is included in the designated schools list.

3. The Entrance Test

The test is provided by **GL Assessment**. Candidates will sit two papers, each approximately 50-60 minutes long (which includes time for instructions and example questions). Each test paper is divided into smaller individually timed sections that test:

- English Comprehension
- Verbal Reasoning
- Mathematics
- Non-Verbal/Spatial Reasoning.

There are no sections of writing within the test - all questions are multiple choice and children record their answers on a separate answer sheet. The weightings for the test results are 50% for English/verbal reasoning, 25% for non-verbal reasoning and 25% for mathematics. The scores for each section are standardised to take into account differences in age, meaning younger children are not disadvantaged compared to children in the same cohort who could be almost a year older. Familiarisation questions can be found at the bottom of this page which show the style of questions to appear in the test and how answers must be recorded.

Other information about the test

- There is a short comfort break between the two test papers. Children may bring some light refreshments for the break period (no nuts/nut based products, chewing gum or fizzy drinks).
- Children should bring their own stationery (two HB pencils, an eraser and a sharpener). We request that these are brought in a clear pencil case or clear food bag/zip lock bag. No other stationery such as rulers or highlighters are permitted. A small supply of spare stationery will be available in each room.
- The test instructions, example & practice questions and timings are delivered via audio CD. Prior to each section beginning, candidates are advised how long they will have to work on that section. Candidates can only work on the current section and cannot revisit a previous section or move on to the next section until told to do so. In sections lasting more than five minutes, candidates will be advised via the audio CD when they have five minutes remaining.
- Watches/timers/stop clocks of any kind are **not** permitted in the test. A clock will be present in the room.
- Mobile phones, calculators, smart watches, tablets, iPods will not be allowed in or around the test rooms. Any failure to comply with this may lead to disqualification.
- Your child does not need to wear school uniform when attending the test.
- Parents/Carers cannot wait on-site during the test.
- Space is available within the question booklets for children to do any working out. Rough/scrap paper cannot be used. Question booklets are not marked - only the separate answer sheets are marked. It is important that your child is aware of how to answer the questions on the separate answer sheet.
- Children will be able to use toilet facilities before the test and during the break. In the event that a candidate has to use the facilities during the test, any time spent away from the test room is lost.

Further information can be found at [Find My Test Centre - West Midlands Grammar Schools](#)

4. Which Areas Will Be Assessed?

<p>ENGLISH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension exercises - reading • Texts and answering questions • Writing tasks • Punctuation and grammar problems • Spelling tasks - spotting incorrect spellings – Cloze procedure – Sentence structure and order – Vocabulary knowledge - synonyms and antonyms. 	<p>MATHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know times tables thoroughly • Be able to apply the four number operations accurately (+ - x /) and at speed • Have a fundamental understanding of number relationships, measurement, mental arithmetic, geometry and data handling • Reason mathematically, solving worded problems.
<p>VERBAL REASONING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply logical thinking • Find and follow patterns and rules • Determine word meaning • Spell accurately • Apply basic maths skills • Work systematically 	<p>NON-VERBAL REASONING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process pictorial information • Understand how shape and patterns relate to each other • Find and follow patterns and rules Apply maths skills such as rotation, reflection and symmetry

Understanding your child

There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to Senior Schools. Taking your time to find the right fit will be important. Understanding your child, and how to get the best from them, will help you to determine which school is right.

Keep in contact with us

The home / school relationship is crucial to understanding the needs of your child. Our door is always open to you, either formally through Parents' meetings, arranged appointments or brief updates on the gate.

Understanding your child's academic profile

In those meetings, we will talk you through your child's academic profile. Using their CAT-4 data, we will discuss any differences in performance across the four sets of scores and how to interpret the information. From experience, we know what kind of CAT-4 range each Senior School will accept, so we can give appropriate advice regarding likelihood for success and areas for improvement. Your child's attitude to learning is a key part of the puzzle, so we will talk you through how they apply themselves in specific subject areas. In discussion, we can suggest which schools might nurture both their academic and extra-curricular talents.

What are your child's strengths? Which areas require more support?

Knowing your child's strengths and areas for support will help you ask the right questions when you visit Senior Schools. Some schools may not be right for your child, so we can help to guide you on the areas in which they excel and the kind of environment that will allow them to flourish. In previous years we have used the consistent score of 115 in GL testing as a good benchmark of the required level to pass the test at Adams or NGHS.

5. SELECTING SCHOOLS

What is the school's ethos? Does it 'feel' like a school in which your child will flourish? Do not ignore your instincts when it comes to the 'feel' of a school. You will know if a school feels right for your child. Although it may be tempting to apply for the same schools as friends, it may not be the right place or provide suitable challenge. Being clear with yourself about what feels right is really important.

What is the learning environment like? Will it suit your child's learning style? Does your child learn well independently, or do they thrive on collaboration and the opportunity to tackle problems as a group? Are lessons practical, hands-on and experiential? Does the school use technology to support lessons? All of these are important questions to consider when building a picture of a school. You should assess whether the teaching approach will suit your child's learning style and inspire them to achieve their potential.

What kind of enrichment opportunities does the school offer? A wide range of sporting, musical, creative, technological and extracurricular opportunities should give you a sense of the commitment the school has to the 'whole child'.

6. HELPING US TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD

Revision and preparation

Aim to keep any preparation you do light and engaging. It may be better to not discuss the exam itself, but seek opportunities to practise some of the key topics. Continue to support your child with their normal homework, whilst introducing a focus on the subjects areas that are likely to be assessed. Ensuring your child works in a quiet environment and is able to complete tasks within a certain timeframe are conducive to promoting exam skills. You will usually be able to find past papers for the various exam boards on the relevant websites, so spending some time on these with your child will be valuable

Reading and Spelling

Reading widely is essential for the development of vocabulary and accurate spelling, so your child should dedicate regular time each week to reading a diverse range of books, both fiction and non-fiction

Online platforms

Once you know which assessment test is likely to be used, start to get your child used to the question format so they are familiar with the way the assessment will look.

Interview preparation

Where relevant, we will provide interview practice for those children who would like it. Within these sessions, children will be asked to talk about their favourite subjects, a book of interest or current affairs, as well as more informal conversations about their friendship groups or family. An interview is a key part of an assessment process, not just testing your child's communication skills, or their knowledge of a subject, but also their values and their ability to articulate them. Although most of the interview preparation will be led by us, you can support your child at home by regularly discussing current affairs and by subscribing to a weekly newspaper, such as The Week Junior.

Wellbeing

Build in plenty of time for fresh air, exercise, rest, and fun! No child should feel unnecessarily stressed by the preparation for assessments, so try and make sure there is time to relax. Continue life as normal and allow each child to shine as an individual!