



MOVING UP TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2022 (released May 2021)



2022 testing – Coronavirus update

- At this time we do not expect there will be a need to delay testing but there may be some changes to the test arrangements to comply with Covid requirements
- The following PowerPoint explains the normal processes that we would try to keep to where possible
- Any changes to the process due to Covid-19 requirements will be updated regularly on the TBGS website
<https://www.thebucksgrammarschools.org/> and if necessary we will write to parents

Included in this presentation

- The application and offer processes (Slides 4-17)
(when to apply, how to apply, things to consider when applying, how the process works, National Offer Day, waiting lists and Appeals)
- The Secondary Transfer Test (Slides 18-37)
(Timeline, test dates, what the test measures, familiarisation and practice, the testing process, how it is marked, Selection Review and Non-qualified appeals)
- More information
- How to Contact the Admissions Team

The application and offer processes

Timelines, preferences and offers

Key message!

Apply on time:
by Midnight on 31
October – the deadline

This is not going to
change!



How to apply for a school place online

- If you live in Buckinghamshire, visit www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions between 7 September and 31 October 2021
- 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!
- Use an email address that you know you can access even if not in work
- 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 local (catchment) school(s) 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 Buckinghamshire Council website)

How will your child get to school?

Transport is 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 [Find my child a school place \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/find-my-child-a-school-place) 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 with each other
- 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

- Grammar school preferences will only be offered to qualified pupils (by scoring 121 or due to successful Selection Review)
- 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 – 1 March 2022

Online applicants

- Offer emails sent 1 March
- Can log on and accept the school place online

Postal applicants

- Offer letters emailed or posted 1 March

All applicants

- Automatically added to waiting list for higher preferences that could not be offered but for which the child is qualified
- Can register an appeal
- You will 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 members 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
- During the pandemic all appeals in Buckinghamshire are being held in writing only in line with government advice but this arrangement is due to end at the end of the year

Application summary

- Apply by Midnight on 31 October 2021
- Apply online at www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk or on your home LA's website
- List schools in true preference order including grammar and upper schools if your child is sitting the test
- Consider including your catchment/local/nearest school
- Be realistic, understand the rules
- Consider transport arrangements
- Visit the schools (if you are permitted)
- Don't rely on the opinions of others

The Secondary Transfer Test

Currently we don't know if the Covid-19 pandemic will affect the usual processes for testing.

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 Council undertakes the administration on behalf of the 13 grammar schools.
- You can find information about the test here:
[Secondary Transfer Testing 2022 introduction | Buckinghamshire Council \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](#)
- And here: [The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools | Home \(thebucksgrammarschools.org\)](#)

Planned testing timeline

What

When

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Familiarisation booklet | • July 2021 (posted to home address) |
| • Practice Test | • 7 September 2021 |
| • Transfer Test | • 9 September 2021 |
| • Application deadline | • 31 October 2020 (midnight) |
| • Results Published | • 15 October 2021 |
| • School place offers | • 1 March 2022 |
| • Start secondary school | • September 2022 |

Impact of Covid

- Last year we delayed the testing because children were not in school during the summer term. This year we hope this will not be the case and we can test on the normal timeline in early September
- However, test arrangements will still need to take account of any social distancing and hygiene measures in place at the time which may mean testing in smaller groups. Children may sit the test at different times
- The aim is for children to still sit the practice test two days before the Transfer Test
- If there are any changes proposed to these arrangements then they will be explained on the TBGS website :

[The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools | Home \(thebucksgrammarschools.org\)](https://thebucksgrammarschools.org)

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
- Your child's headteacher will ask you if you want your child to sit the test so they can make sensible arrangements for the testing sessions

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!)
- Children should always sit the practice test first
- You will be advised of new date(s) for the test(s) before your child sits the test

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 SEND 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

- The completed answer sheets are machine marked (scanned)
- One mark is given for each correct answer
- Marks are not deducted for incorrect answers
- Each pupil will have three raw scores
 - **verbal skills**
 - **mathematical skills**
 - **non-verbal skills**
- Each score is age standardised and weighted to produce the Secondary Transfer Test 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
- The qualifying score is a minimum score of 121
- Scores range between 60 and 170 approximately

Results and qualification

15 October

- If your child attends a Buckinghamshire primary school we have asked the headteacher to provide us with your email so we can send the results by email direct to you.
- The email will be sent from 4pm.
- If your child attends a Partner school or has sat the test at a grammar school test centre then we will send the result to the email you used to register for the test.
- Contents are confidential to parent and child.
- Approximately 37% of children scored 121 or more in 2021 intake

What can I do if my child does not qualify for a grammar school place?

If your child is not qualified and you think a grammar school would be appropriate you can either

- Ask for a Selection Review OR
- Just appeal

The Selection Review Panel can decide a child is qualified.

A qualification at Selection Review is a qualification for any grammar school and they will all be considered when the allocation is made.

It will have been an unusual year – will this be taken into account?

- The grammar schools recognise that there may be circumstances that have impacted on a child's performance in the test
- At Selection Review each child's situation is considered individually
- The panel will look for evidence of both consistent educational ability and factors that may have affected a child's performance in the Transfer Test

Selection Review Panel

- Panel sits December-January
- 3 headteachers - two grammar one primary
- Decision included in 1 March allocation
- Decision applies to all grammar schools
- At the end of the process and following Selection Reviews, approximately 36.47% qualify for grammar school

Non-qualified appeal for a grammar school place (after Selection Review)

- When a case that has been to review is considered by the Independent Appeal Panel, parents will need to show that in their child's case the Selection Review Panel decision was not 'fair consistent and objective'
- Only if they are successful, can they then put their full academic case to the Independent Appeal Panel
- If a child is qualified at appeal, the qualification is for the particular school only.
- The appeal will happen in the summer term

Non-qualified appeal for a grammar school place (without a Selection Review)

- It is possible to go straight to appeal without having asked for a selection review
- Appeals are heard after 1 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 Planned Admission Number (PAN)

More information

- 'Moving up to Secondary School' leaflet

- School websites

- TBGS website

<https://www.thebucksgrammarschools.org/>

- School open events dates (subject to social distancing requirements):

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

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-admissions/>

How to contact the Admissions Team

Web: www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/

Fill in the 'Contact Us' form:

- www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions