

A Guide to Grammar School Selection (Medway schools)

Introduction

Many parents are unsure of the format and procedure of grammar school selection testing in Kent and Medway areas so we thought we would give you an insight into how it all works.

The first thing to realise is that there are two separate tests your child can sit in order to gain entry into grammar school.

The Medway 11⁺ test

The Kent 11⁺ test

The Medway 11⁺ Test

The participating grammar schools, known as the Medway Grammar School Group, are:

Chatham Grammar School for Boys

Chatham Grammar School for Girls

Fort Pitt Grammar School

Rainham Mark Grammar School

Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

The Howard School (Grammar stream)

The Rochester Grammar School for Girls

Testing takes place in September for year 6 children and is held at designated secondary schools on a Saturday morning.

In order to sit the test you must apply to the Medway Admissions team using the forms provided in the annual Admission to Secondary School booklet that is issued through your child's primary school. At this stage you are not required to select the schools you wish your child to be considered for, as the idea is that you know the outcome of the test prior to submitting your application.

The tests your child will sit are:

Extended writing exercise

Maths

Verbal reasoning

The maths and verbal reasoning tests are in multiple choice formats where your child indicates their answer from a selection given to them.

The extended writing is a creative piece of writing that can range in topic from a story, diary, play script etc. Each test last around 50 minutes.

The multiple choice tests are computer marked whilst the extended writing is hand marked. All tests are allocated a 'raw' score. This raw score is the mark actually achieved by your child.

This score is then standardised, which means that allowances are made for age, so that all children can be compared equally and the youngest are not at a disadvantage.

Once the standardised score of the individual tests are known a combined

weighted score is then calculated by doubling the mark achieved in both the literacy and maths tests then the verbal reasoning mark is added. The minimum total weighted score is 350 and the maximum is 700.

For example

| | Standardised / Weighted |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Writing exercise | 119 (119 x 2) = 238 |
| Maths | 117 (117 x 2) = 234 |
| VR | 122 (122 x 1) = 122 |
| Total weighted score | 594 |

The pass mark varies from year to year and is determined by the scores the children achieve. Around 25% of children are selected for grammar schools and this is worked backwards from the top weighted score until the required 25% line is reached. This then becomes the pass mark. The pass mark in previous years has ranged from just over 500 to 526.

Results are posted out around two weeks after the test date detailing your child's achievement and whether they have been deemed selective.

After the results are known the secondary schools hold Open Sessions where you are able to visit to help you decide what schools to submit applications for. It is worth noting that some Grammar schools will set their own "pass" mark above the Medway mark. These schools are normally over-subscribed; please take the time to read the entry criteria of all the schools you are interested in from the admissions booklet.

If your child is deemed non-selective and you feel the marks do not reflect your child's ability, you can request a review. The review panel will look at your child's school work to decide if the work demonstrates that your child is of grammar school ability. The results of this review will be sent through within two weeks.

If your child has been deemed non-selective and you still wish them to be considered for a grammar school place it is important to include the grammar school on your school admission form and reflect its true order of preference, as you will be able to appeal to the school at a later date.

The allocation of a school place is in March the following year, and this is when you can start an appeal to the grammar school of your choice.

Where a child has a disability or learning need and this will affect how they perform in a test environment your child's school can apply to a panel of specialist advisors who will determine what, if any, special arrangements should be made. All applications must come via schools. They will be asked to submit details of children who fall into this category with supporting evidence in late September. Decisions are made in mid-October ready for the test date in November and parents and schools informed. This is not a statutory part of the process and there is no appeal process against decisions made by the panel.

If a Kent resident wishes their child to sit the Medway 11+ test they must tick the relevant box on the test request form. Details will then be passed over to the Medway Admissions team who will contact you to give details of the test date and place.

Are you a Kent or Medway resident?

This is determined by where you pay your council tax.

If you pay to Medway Council then you are a Medway resident.

If you pay to one of the 12 Kent district councils (for example Swale, Tonbridge and Malling or Gravesham) you are a Kent resident