



The
Lyceum

A Guide to the 11+





What does The Lyceum do to prepare my child for the 11+ process?

The build up to taking competitive examinations can be overwhelming for both parents and children, and without any guidance applying to secondary schools can be a difficult and confusing process.

A sensible balance

We aim to keep a sensible balance between examination preparation and normal school activities so that children do not feel daunted. Having time for music, sport, relaxation, hobbies and friends is vital during the preparation period. We also encourage children to learn to manage their emotions so that they are able to keep calm and relaxed and can perform at their best.

With realistic expectations and good preparation, children can go into examinations feeling confident and we invest a great deal of time in making sure that children feel they can take their examinations in their stride.

A comprehensive overview of the process

The Lyceum has devised a programme that will give each pupil the best chance to fulfil their potential at 11+. We also ensure that parents have a comprehensive overview of the steps.

In Year 5, each family is invited to an information workshop and a 'Meet the Heads' event in the Spring Term. The workshop will outline the steps involved in the 11+ process and will also set out how your child will be prepared at school. 'Meet the Heads' is an event where secondary school heads and registrars are invited to The Lyceum to share information about their schools.

Understanding assessment

Schools use a variety of assessment material - some are multiple choice, some are computerised, and some are written.

From Year 5 and throughout the Autumn Term of Year 6, children will be presented with a variety of 11+ past papers, giving them plenty of time

to gain experience and confidence in taking the type of papers they can expect. It also helps to provide a reliable indicator as to where they might stand in relation to any offer of a place.

Preparation for assessment

Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning will be taught from Year 4 onwards and Planet Bofa is introduced in Key Stage 2. The software gives our pupils access to a large database of questions in subject areas covered in the school entrance examinations. It provides tailored teaching and practice questions in Maths, English and Reasoning and generates reports detailing each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, tailoring their programme of study accordingly.

From Years 3-6, Cognitive Ability Testing (CAT), as well as Maths, Spelling, Reading and Comprehension assessments, take place in the first few weeks of each term. The results of these tests inform us in our planning for your child and also help us to manage expectations in terms of senior school choices. These tests also expose the children to the type of test they might expect if sitting computerised examinations.

During the Summer Term of Year 5 and Autumn Term of Year 6, children can attend optional 'Booster' classes run by a member of the Year 5/6 team or Senior Leadership Team (SLT). These before school classes are free of charge and focus on a range of skills needed for the school entry process. Information about Booster classes is communicated before the start of term.

Public speaking and team building

Public speaking opportunities increase from Year 5 onwards. Pupils are invited to help lead assemblies, talk at Open Morning and tour prospective parents and pupils around the school.

Year 6 students attend weekly sessions with a member of SLT where they discuss current affairs and take part in team building activities. These meetings also provide the opportunity to discuss how they are feeling and share ways in which they can manage their stress levels.

From Year 3 onwards, pupils may join LAMDA club which focusses on presentation and public speaking skills.

Opportunities for leadership

In the Summer Term, Year 5 pupils are invited to apply for Year 6 positions of responsibility. Pupils submit applications, personal statements and are interviewed to assess their suitability for the posts.

These roles include:

Head Girl
Head Boy
Sports Captain
Wellbeing Ambassador
Digital Ambassador
Prefect
...and more!



What schools should my child apply for?

No two schools are the same; however, there are many excellent schools to choose from and narrowing the field down to a list which is achievable requires careful consideration. You will need to consider your child's strengths and personality.

There are broad differences which separate one school from another.

Some factors that you need to consider include whether the school is for day or boarding pupils, single sex or co-educational, and the distance from home.

Schools will have differing cultures which may appeal to you as a family. We can advise on the ethos of many schools but it is fundamental that you visit the schools to judge for yourself whether you think it would be a good fit for your child.

The Process

Registration

You will need to register your interest with any school you wish to apply to. Schools differ in their processes and it is crucial that you familiarise yourself with the individual admissions processes via their websites.

As a general rule, you should register your child by the end of Year 5 for most independent and grammar schools (earlier for some boarding options).

What happens when I apply?

Once you have registered for a school, you will be invited to take part in the application process during Year 6.

Most schools will require candidates to sit examination papers and attend an interview, some have multiple assessment stages. They will also require a reference from The Lyceum.

Assessment

All day schools and most competitive boarding schools will ask the children to sit an assessment for entry. Assessment usually comprises Mathematics and English (including comprehension and creative writing) and sometimes verbal and non-verbal reasoning.

Some schools have opted for online assessments using the ISEB Common Pre-Test or a similar assessment.

The Common Pre-Test is very similar to the GL assessments that we carry out twice a year in Years 3-6. The ISEB assessments are an age-standardised measure of ability and attainment. They are commissioned from GL Assessment and are online and adaptive. The tests include Verbal Reasoning, Non-Verbal Reasoning, English and Mathematics.

They are in a multiple-choice format and take about two-and-a-half hours to complete; the tests can be taken together or at separate times either in the candidate's own school or at the senior school for which they are entered.

Interview

An interview will usually consist of a discussion about a current affair, subjects of particular strength and interest, favourite books and authors, hobbies and always questions about why your child wants to attend that particular school.

In some cases, the interview is a rigorous academic assessment, asking questions relating to literacy, numeracy and specific subjects. Some interviewers will offer a topic and expect the child to discuss it at length, they may show a piece of art and ask for a child's interpretation or ask hypothetical questions.

Year 6 pupils prepare for interviews in class during English lessons and are provided with opportunities to present to their peers. Pupils are tasked with choosing an artefact of their choice which represents them and allows them to speak freely, confidently and with passion.

Mock interviews are held in the Autumn Term with pupils spending 20 minutes one-to-one with a senior member of staff from Dukes Education. Written feedback on how the interview went is provided for

each pupil and shared with parents.

We also hold interview and public speaking skills workshops with The Noisy Classroom - an organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting the use of speaking and listening in the classroom.

Senior School feedback suggests that pupils from The Lyceum generally shine at interview. Nonetheless, children are reminded that interviews must be viewed as a conversation, rather than an exercise in delivering a pre-prepared script.

It is important that the children are not over rehearsed for interviews; not only is this counterproductive, but it will also be identified very quickly. Interviewees who stand out are those who are polite, articulate and speak from the heart about genuine areas of interest.

References

Senior Schools will ask us to provide a reference for each candidate. While The Lyceum will support any application, the relationship between the Prep and Senior Schools is one built on trust and it is therefore our obligation to give a fair and accurate assessment of the suitability of a child to any given school.

Whilst we know your children in terms of school life, academia and achievements which have taken place at The Lyceum, we will contact you early on in the Autumn Term of Year 6 to ask you to provide any extra information that we could include in your child's reference to support their application.

For example: instruments played, recent music exams taken, whether they are part of a choir or sports club or attend Brownies/Cubs etc. This information, while not essential, enables us to provide schools with a more rounded view of candidates.

If your child has an Educational Psychologist report, this needs to be declared and does not count against your child. With your permission, we may submit the report alongside their reference or the school may wish to liaise with parents directly. Please note that failing to declare a report is not advised and offers can be withdrawn at a later stage if important information about your child is not disclosed.

What happens next?

Once the reference has been received and an assessment/interview has taken place, schools will write to you to inform you of their decision. This will usually be to inform you of one of three potential outcomes:

- Your child will be offered a place
- Your child will be placed on a waiting list
- Your child has been unsuccessful

Many schools send out their offers in the week before February half term although some schools choose to make offers before this date.

Accepting an offer

If you receive an offer of a place, it is important that you accept the place as soon as you know you wish to take it. This will help those on waitlists to secure offers. Upon acceptance of a place, you will be required to pay a deposit. Schools often over-offer places so we do not recommend sitting on a decision for too long.

Being on a wait list

It may be unnerving to be placed on a waiting list but remember that waiting lists do move. Parents may wish to bear in mind that the academic top performers will have applied to several schools and will have undoubtedly received offers at all or most.

Each child can obviously only take up one place, so the sooner they accept their place, the sooner a place may be offered to waiting list children. It may be worth finding out where your child is on the waiting list in order to manage your expectations of a subsequent offer.

If your child is unsuccessful

If a child is unsuccessful gaining a place from a school, there is little that can be done and you will need to explore other options.

Keeping us informed

Schools will write to you with their decision and will usually write inform us too. This may not always be the case so please always inform us if you hear back from a school and don't assume we know.

Discussing the outcome

You are welcome to speak to us once you have your results to seek advice before making your final decision. We do not inform the children of senior schools outcomes; this is a discussion for you to conduct at home.

Moreover, celebrating those children with successful outcomes in fairly low key and will only ever be acknowledged on a 1:1 basis. It is useful for you to discuss the reason for this with your child and explain the need to be conscious of the feelings of those who may not have been successful.

Tutoring

Our 11+ preparation at The Lyceum is comprehensive and covers all your child needs to know. We neither encourage nor discourage tuition however we understand that some parents employ tutors to help in specific circumstances.

It is important not to over tutor a child to the point they risk burn out and underperform on the day. It rarely makes a difference to a child's performance overall and many of the tests are devised to identify raw ability. Please rest assured that the teachers at The Lyceum are well aware of the demands of the senior schools admissions process and will guide and prepare the children accordingly.



Timeline for 11+ and Secondary School Preparation

Autumn Term Year 5	Autumn Term Year 6
Autumn Term GL Assessment	Autumn Term GL Assessment
Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks	11+ Mock exam week takes place in early September. Feedback on exam outcomes is shared with parents
All pupils sit an end of Year 5 reasoning test in the first term (for gap analysis)	Weekly 11+ tests in Maths, Comprehension, Creative Writing and Reasoning
Weekly arithmetic/mental maths and reasoning tests	Year 6 pupils take part in an off-site team building day in early September
	Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks
	All Year 6 pupils awarded roles of responsibility within the school
	Children spend time working on their CVs in school and at home with their families, identifying their strengths, hobbies and interests
	Parents will be contacted to provide information about their child's interests outside of school. This will be used to support the child's school reference
	Mock interviews take place in September/October with key educators within the Dukes family. Feedback shared with parents and pupils
	Autumn Term - Weekly Booster sessions focusing on Maths, Creative Writing and Comprehension skills

Spring Term Year 5	Spring Term Year 6
Secondary School Information Workshop	Year 6 take part in TFL Junior Citizenship Scheme
'Meet the Heads' event	Attend residential trip
Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks	
National Curriculum SPAG test	
11+ sample papers sat in Maths, Comprehension, Creative Writing and Reasoning	
Attend residential trip	
Summer Term Year 5	Summer Term Year 6
Summer Term GL Assessment	Summer Term GL Assessment
Parent Meetings early in the Summer Term to discuss 11+ options	National Curriculum Tests
Summer Term - Weekly Booster sessions focusing on Maths, Creative Writing and Comprehension skills	PSHE lessons focusing on preparing for secondary school
All Year 5 pupils invited to apply for roles of responsibility (awarded to them in Autumn Term of Year 6)	Sex and Relationship Education programme of study
Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks	Residential trip
	Leavers Assembly and events

Ways you can support your children:

- Ensure homework is completed to a high standard each night
- Provide cultural experiences e.g. trips to galleries, museums, theatre etc.
- Subscribe to a child friendly newspapers e.g. The Week Junior, First News etc.
- Encourage your child to read a range of genres (with daily reading as part of their routine)
- Provide your child with a balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Ensure your child gets an adequate amount of sleep each evening.
- Promote independence of organisation, presentation etc.
- Encourage your child to continue attending clubs, pursuing hobbies and taking music lessons

Additional recommended online tools for children to use outside of school include:

Bond Online - <https://www.bond11plus.co.uk/home/try-it>
Atom Individual Membership - <https://atomlearning.co.uk/>
Chukra 11+ - <https://www.11plus.co.uk/>
Pretest Plus - <https://pretestplus.co.uk/>
Creative Writing Ideas – The Literacy Shed - <https://www.literacyshed.com/home.html>

Books

CGP 10-minute test book (to help with speed)



2021-2022 Senior School Offers

School	Number of Offers	Awards/ Scholarships
Alleyn's	2	
Belmont	1	
City of London School	1	
City of London School for Girls (CLSG)	1	
Channing	1 (+1 wait list)	
Dame Alice Owen (Grammar)	1	
Dulwich College	1	
Forest	4	1 (academic)
Francis Holland (Regent's Park)	1	
Highgate	1 wait list	
King Edwards, Bath	1	1 (academic and music)
Kingswood	1	1 (academic)
Latymer Upper School	2	
North London Collegiate School	1 wait list	
North Bridge House (Canonbury)	4	
North Bridge House (Hampstead)	1	
Portland Place	1	
Queen's College School	2	
St Margaret's	1	
Truro School	1	
UCS	1	
Wetherby	2	

2020-2021 Senior School Offers

School	Number of Offers	Awards/ Scholarships
Alleyn's	1	
Babbington House	1	
Bancroft's	1	
Berkhamsted	1	
Bishops Stortford College	1	1 academic
Channing	1 (+2 wait list)	
COLFE's	1	
Eaton Square Upper School	3	1 academic
Emanuel	2	
Forest	4	1 academic
Haileybury	1	
Highgate	1 wait list	
North Bridge House	9	1 drama
Portland Place	5	
Queen's College	4	
Sevenoaks	1	
Stephen Perse Foundation	1	
St Benedict's	1	
St Dunstan's	1	
St Swithun's	1	
The Perse School	1	
The Leys School	1	1 academic
UCS	1 wait list	
Westminster	1	
Wetherby	4	



Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Email us at frontdesk@lyceumschool.co.uk

www.lyceumschool.co.uk