





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

Applying to secondary schools without any guidance can be a difficult and confusing process and the build up to taking competitive examinations is sometimes quite overwhelming for both parents and children. 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 are able to 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 are sufficiently prepared for the examinations.

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 a 11+ information workshop and '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. The 'Meet the Heads' event is an evening where secondary school heads and registrars are invited to The Lyceum to give information about their schools.

Different schools use different styles of past paper. 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. This gives the children plenty of time to gain experience and confidence in taking the type of papers they may encounter. It also helps to provide a reliable indicator as to where they might stand in relation to any offer of a place.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning will be taught from Year 3 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 which will be 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, CAT testing, as well as Maths 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 are invited to attend optional 'Booster' classes run by a member of the Year 5/6 team or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These before or after school classes are free of charge and focus on a range of skills that children will require for the school entry process. Information about Booster classes are emailed to parents before the start of term.

Public speaking opportunities increase from Year 5 upwards. Pupils are invited to help lead assemblies with Mrs Wyatt, talk at Open Morning events and tour prospective parents and pupils around the school. Year 6 students attend weekly Tea and Toast sessions with Mrs Wyatt where they discuss current affairs and school issues. 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 take up LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts) lessons which focus on presentation and public speaking skills.

In the Summer Term, Year 5 pupils are invited to apply for Year 6 positions of responsibility. These roles include Head Boy/Head Girl to Sports Captain, Choir Captain and Office Monitor. Pupils submit applications and personal statements and are interviewed to assess their suitability for the posts.

## What schools should my child apply for?

The process begins by selecting which schools you are interested in applying to. No two schools are the same; however, there are many excellent schools to choose from and narrowing the field down to a list of potentially achievable options requires careful consideration. You will need to consider your child's strengths and personality. There are broad differences which separate one 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 distance from home. Schools will have differing cultures which may appeal to you as a family. We can advise you on the ethos of many schools but it is also important that you visit the schools in order 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 process 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. 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.

Owing to COVID-19, many schools have opted for online assessments e.g. using the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year. As well as limiting the number of children attending different schools to sit exams, many have also moved to an electronic system to avoid the inadvertent selection of candidates who have been 'over tutored'; it is also the only way they are able to deal with timely assessments of the very high number of candidates applying for places. Children who are successful will be invited to participate in the next round of the examination process, which may be further assessments at the school or an interview.

The Common Pre-Test is very similar to the GL assessments that we carry out termly in Years 3-6. These online assessments are taken by Year 6 pupils and 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.

Tests are in a multiple-choice format and take about two-and-a-half hours to complete; they can be taken together or at separate times either in the candidate's own school or at the senior school for which he or she is 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 etc. 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 presenting information about an artefact of their choice, allowing 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 the interview and outcome is provided for each pupil and shared with parents.

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

counter-productive, but it will also be identified at interview 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 contact The Lyceum and ask us to provide a reference for each candidate. While The Lyceum will support any application, it must be noted that the relationship between the Prep and Senior Schools is one built on trust; 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 may 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, whilst 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 will be rejected

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

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 waiting lists to secure offers. Upon acceptance of a place, you will be required to pay a deposit.

It may be unnerving to be placed on a waiting list but it must be noted 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 the rejected places 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 a child is rejected from a school, there is little that can be done and other options must be explored.

Schools will write to you with their decision and will usually (though not always) write to inform us too. When writing to prep schools, they often ask for the schools' confidence in this regard and we must respect this. Please always inform us if you hear back from a school and don't assume we know.

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 outcomes of applications to senior schools; this is a discussion for you to conduct at home. Moreover, celebrating those children with successful outcomes is 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

Many parents chose to employ tutors to help prepare their child for the 11+ process. The Lyceum School neither encourages nor discourages this, as tuition may well be useful in specific circumstances. We do, however, advise against over tutoring a child to the point at which he or she risks burn out and thus under-performs 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
All pupils sit a Year 6 National Curriculum Reading paper	Year 6 pupils take part in an off-site team building day in early September
Weekly arithmetic/mental maths and reasoning tests	Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks
National Curriculum SPAG test	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 from within Dukes Education. 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
Spring Term GL Assessment	Spring Term GL Assessment
Secondary School Information Workshop held in the Spring Term for Y4/5 parents	Year 6 take part in TFL Junior Citizenship Scheme
'Meet the Heads' event – senior school heads invited to come in to talk to parents about their schools	
Planet BOFA online 11+ tasks	
National Curriculum SPAG test	
11+ sample papers sat in Maths, Comprehension, Creative Writing and Reasoning	
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 abroad
National Curriculum SPAG test	Leavers Assembly and events

## Parents can support their children in the following ways:

Ensure homework is completed to a high standard each evening

Provide cultural experiences e.g. trips to galleries, museums and the theatre

Subscribe to a child friendly newspaper e.g. The Week Junior or First News

Encourage your child to read from a range of genres (with daily reading as part of their routine)

Provide your child with a balanced diet including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables

Ensure your child takes regular exercise and has 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)



## 2019-2020 Senior School Offers

Name of School	Number of Offers	Scholarships	Places Accepted
Blackheath	1		
City of London Girls School	1		
Channing	2 2 waiting list		1
Eaton Square Senior School	2		1
Francis Holland (Regent's Park)	4	1 (academic)	2
Highgate	1		
James Allen's Girls' School (JAGS)	1		1
More House	1		1
North Bridge House (Canonbury)	4		
Portland Place	4	1 (music)	1
Queen's College School	4	1 (academic)	
South Hampstead High	1		1
St James Girls' School	1 waiting list		
Wetherby	1		1

## 2018-2019 Senior School Offers

Name of School	Number of Offers	Scholarships	Places Accepted
Aldenham	2		1
Alley's	1		1
City of London Boys School	1		
Channing	2 2 waiting list		1
Eaton Square Senior School	2	1 (academic)	1
Forest	1 2 waiting list		
Francis Holland	1	1 (academic)	
Highgate	1		1
James Allen's Girls' School (JAGS)	1		
North Bridge House (Canonbury)	7		3
Portland Place	5	5 (2 academic) (3 music)	3
Queen's College School	3 2 waiting list		1
Rendcomb College	2		
South Hampstead High	1 waiting list		
St James Girls' School	1		1
Whitgift	2		



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

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