



Slough Consortium of Grammar Schools
Guide to the 11+ Test for entry in September 2014

Herschel Grammar School
Langley Grammar School
St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School
Slough Grammar School

The Slough consortium of grammar schools

The four grammar schools in Slough operate a consortium for the purposes of 11+ testing. The schools use a common 11+ test and administer it according to common procedures. A child sits just one 11+ test, irrespective of how many of the Slough Consortium grammar schools parents are applying to.

School Admissions Code

The current Admissions Code was introduced in 2012 and applies to all applications for school places this autumn.

The Admissions Code requires that the results of selection tests must be made available to parents before the final deadline for submission of the Common Application Form (CAF). This is designed to allow parents to make an informed choice of schools.

Testing and application process

1. If you are thinking of applying to one or more of the four grammar schools in Slough as a choice for your son or daughter, the first step is to register to take the Consortium 11+ test. To do this, you must complete a registration form and return it to the Consortium as directed on the form. Registration forms are available from the websites of any of the Consortium grammar schools.

The **sole purpose** of the registration form is to enable your son or daughter to sit the 11+ test, and the Consortium will order one set of test papers for your son or daughter. Please ensure that you therefore complete **ONE** registration form only.

Please note – registering for the test is NOT an application for a place at a particular school, and is NOT considered to be an expression of interest in any particular school. At this stage you are simply asking for your child to sit the Consortium 11+ test. On the basis of the results of that test, you may choose to apply to one or more grammar schools, or none at all.

2. The second step is for your child to actually sit the 11+ test. Testing will take place on **Saturday 21 September** for all candidates irrespective of their home address or current primary school. There will be four test centres and you will be able to state a preference for the most convenient centre for your child. We will send a letter confirming testing arrangements in early September.
3. You will receive the results of the 11+ test in mid October, so that you have time to consider the implications for your choice of schools.
4. Having thought carefully about which schools to apply for, you must complete the Common Application Form for your home Local Authority by the end of October. You must include any grammar school for which you wish your son or daughter to be considered, and you must place grammar schools higher in your order of preference than non-selective schools.
5. The grammar schools will supply the 11+ test scores to Slough Local Authority.
6. Slough Local Authority will coordinate the process and allocate each child a place at the school which is highest on the CAF, and for which they are eligible. Where a pupil can be placed at more than one school the offer will be for the highest ranked school where places are available.
7. The home Local Authority writes to all parents to notify them of the allocation of school places. This is coordinated across the country so that all allocations are notified on the same day.

Grammar schools are their own admissions authorities. This means the formal offer of a place comes from the grammar school itself, and will be made by letter as soon as possible after the national allocation day.

Key dates for 2013-14 process

24 May 2013	Registration forms available from the websites of any of the Consortium grammar schools, or directly from the schools.
28 June 2013	Closing date for receipt of Registration Forms
21 September 2013	11+ tests take place at testing centres for all registered children
Mid-October 2013	Parents notified of results of 11+ tests
31 October 2013	Deadline for submission of Common Application Form to Local Authority
3 March 2014 <i>First working day after 1 March</i>	Notification of allocation of school places by Local Authority. Formal offers from schools will follow soon after.

Consortium grammar schools

The four schools in the consortium are

Herschel Grammar School Northampton Avenue Slough Berkshire SL1 3BW	Tel: 01753 520950 email: mail@herschel.slough.sch.uk Web: www.herschel.slough.sch.uk
Langley Grammar School Reddington Drive Langley Berkshire SL3 7QS	Tel: 01753 598300 email: school@lgs.slough.sch.uk Web: www.lgs.slough.sch.uk
St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School 1 Langley Road Slough Berkshire SL3 7AF	Tel: 01753 527020 email: admissions@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk Web: www.st-bernards.slough.sch.uk
Slough Grammar School Lascelles Road Slough Berkshire SL3 7PR	Tel: 01753 522892 email: office@sloughgrammar.berks.sch.uk Web: www.sloughgrammar.berks.sch.uk

Format of the 11+ test

The Consortium 11+ test consists of **two** separate multiple choice papers.

a) Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR)

80 questions in 40 minutes - four sets of 20 questions each lasting 10 mins (an average of 30 secs each question)

There is a worked example and 2 or 3 practice questions before each section of 10 minutes and an opportunity for the pupils to ask questions for clarification. There are no time warnings during each section. The whole paper takes about 50 minutes.

b) Verbal Reasoning (VR)

80 questions in 50 mins. This is challenging, and is common for pupils to run out of time and not finish all the questions. Time warnings are given at 25 and 45 minutes.

ALL questions on both papers are multiple choice. Pupils indicate their answers on an answer sheet. Rough paper is provided.

Extra time

Extra time is available for pupils with special needs. This is **up to 25%** pro rata for each paper – so a maximum of an extra 2.5mins on each section of the non-verbal reasoning paper (10 minutes in total) and up to 12.5 additional minutes on the verbal reasoning paper. The registration form has a section for you to advise the consortium if additional time is required, as it must be notified in advance. **Professionally supported evidence will be required.**

A general rule would be that if your son or daughter regularly receives additional time to complete assignments in school, or would be eligible for additional time for the Year 6 SATs papers, they may be eligible for additional time in the 11+ tests.

There may also be other reasons for special consideration, eg visual impairment or physical disability.

11+ test results and standardisation

Papers are marked by Optical Mark Reader and manual check and then moderated by GL Assessment who carry out a standardisation process.

Standardisation is a statistical procedure whereby raw scores (number of questions answered correctly) are converted to standardised scores (on a range from 69 to 141) to make it fair for candidates of all ages. The standardisation takes into account how a child has performed compared to the average performance of all the children taking each test in the Consortium **and** how the child has performed in each test compared to children of the same age in years and months.

It is a statistically complex procedure which results in a fair score for all children whether born on 1st Sept, 1st February or 31st August. Children do not have marks added because they are born in August, or taken away if they have a September birthday - it isn't as simple as that! Standardisation also means that it is possible for children to score top marks whilst getting some questions wrong or failing to complete all questions.

Notification of test results

You will be sent the results of the 11+ tests before the deadline for submission of the Common Application Form.

The results notified will be:

- Standardised score for the Non-Verbal Reasoning paper
- Standardised score for the Verbal Reasoning paper
- Average standardised score across the two papers

Completing the Common Application Form

If you live outside Slough, you must apply through your own Local Authority – even if your child currently attends a Slough school. The Common Application Form, or CAF, is issued by your child's primary school or can be obtained directly from your Local Authority. However, the majority of applicants now complete the CAF on line and this method has many advantages. You will receive a unique log-in, and can change your preferences right up to the midnight deadline for submission; you can also log in to see your child's allocation before the post arrives!

The number of schools to which you can apply depends on where you live; parents in Slough have six choices, but other areas may differ. On the CAF you must state **all** the state schools you wish to apply for including grammar schools both **in and outside** of your own area. The address you give on the form **must** be your permanent address on the closing date of 31 October, and you may be asked for proof of this address.

Your preferences should be placed on the CAF in rank order. All preferences are considered using the over-subscription criteria for each school. Where a pupil can be placed at more than one school the offer will be for the highest ranked school where places are available. If you are applying to grammar schools you **must** therefore place them at the top of your list in your preferred order.

Local authorities will make offers to eligible pupils using the stated admission criteria for each school. **It is therefore very important to find out the particular admission requirements for each school you are interested in.** These will be published on each school's website.

Allocation of places

If you live outside Slough, your home Local Authority will send your application information through to Slough Local Authority. All preferences are considered using the over-subscription criteria for each school. Where a pupil could be placed at more than one school the offer will be for the highest ranked school where places are available.

It is essential that you place the schools on the CAF in your genuine order of preference. If you place a non-selective school above a grammar school on the CAF, the Local Authority will assume that is your preferred choice; if your child was eligible for the non-selective school and also scored high enough in the 11+ to be eligible for a grammar school place, they would be allocated a place at the non-selective as it is the preferred school. There is no such thing as 'tactical placing' of schools in a particular order. **List the schools to which you are applying in your genuinely preferred order.**

You will be notified which school your son or daughter has been allocated through your Local Authority on 3 March 2014 – this is the national allocation day. Grammar schools are their own admissions authorities - the formal offer of a place comes from the grammar school itself, and will be made by letter as soon as possible after the national allocation day. You **must** confirm acceptance of the place or the school may assume you are no longer interested and offer the place to another child.

Frequently asked questions

Are practice papers available?

Practice papers can be purchased from WH Smith, Amazon etc. Make sure you obtain the correct version - **GL Assessment *The official 11+ Practice Papers, multiple-choice version***. Please note that although these papers allow your son or daughter to familiarise themselves with the style of questions, they are not necessarily in the same format – number of questions, or number of sections - as the actual tests.

Are calculators or dictionaries allowed?

No calculators or dictionaries are allowed. Pupils need only a pencil and a rubber.

What if my child is ill on the test day?

Please do not let your child sit the test if they are unwell.

Contact the testing centre as soon as possible. Alternative arrangements will be made for your child to sit the test at a later date at one of the testing centres. Evidence such as a doctor's letter will be required.

What is the pass mark?

We do not refer to a 'pass' mark. The 11+ test is designed to identify the top 30% of pupils; a score of 111 or greater means that your son or daughter falls within this range and would be considered suitable for a grammar school education - they are therefore **eligible to be considered** for a place in a grammar school if they were to apply.

If a grammar school is oversubscribed – ie has more applicants than it has places available – places will be offered according to the criteria set out in the individual school's Admissions Policy. A score of 111 in itself is therefore **not** a guarantee of a place.

You should be aware that the four grammar schools have different criteria under which they will offer places if they are oversubscribed. This may involve offering places in rank order, according to distance from the school, or some other criteria. You **must** check the admissions policy of each school, and address any questions you may have to the school concerned.

Can I appeal if my child is unsuccessful?

You have the right to appeal against the allocation of a particular school. Once your son or daughter has been allocated a school place on 3 March 2014, you have a maximum of 20 school days in which to lodge your appeal to the school or schools who did **not** offer them a place. Appeals are heard on behalf of the school by an independent appeals panel, and must be held within 40 school days of the request being received. Full details of how to appeal will be published on the schools' websites.

Essentially there are two possible reasons for an appeal.

1. Your son or daughter scored **111 or more** on the 11+ test, but due to oversubscription was not offered a place at a school to which you had applied.
2. Your son or daughter scored **below 111** on the 11+ test, and was therefore not eligible for consideration. ***If you intend to appeal in the belief that you son or daughter did not perform according to their ability in the 11+ test, you may only appeal to the schools you have named on the CAF.*** This is because you can only appeal against a decision not to offer you a place at a school to which you have made an application.