

First step - narrow down your school choice options:

- **Check the** [BBC School League Tables](#) to see the GCSE results of the schools in your area and areas surrounding you. You can also check the [Financial Times Top 1000 Schools](#) for both state grammar and independent schools.

Note

: Whilst a school's exam performance is useful to know, it does not always mean that the school is suitable for your child.

- **Check the school websites** to find out more about each school. The website will give you a feel for the school and they will usually give information about their entry requirements, application procedure and dates for open days/evenings.
- **Catchment area** – some schools will require you to live within a certain radius of the school. They can have different ways of calculating whether you are within the catchment area, so you should check the school website for information.
- **Think about travelling** to the school on a daily basis. Check transport and make sure that it is a realistic journey for your child.
- **Order the school prospectus** and a sixth form prospectus (check that a sixth form place will be guaranteed to pupils in the lower school).
- **Book a visit to the school**, preferably during school hours, so that you can see the school in operation. It is important to take your child with you on school visits.

Examination requirements

The examination dates and content varies between schools. Both of these can change from year to year, so you will need to check school websites or telephone schools.

- **State Grammar School** examinations are usually held between September and January of the year your child enters Year 6. You will need to check exact dates with the schools. Many grammar schools now have two exam stages. Most schools usually set their own entry examinations, although some are part of a 'consortium'.
- **Independent School** examinations are usually held in the January of the year of entry. Most Independent Day Schools will require your child to go to each school to sit a separate exam, unless they are part of a 'consortium'. Independent Boarding Schools usually require your child to sit one Common Entrance paper per subject covering all boarding schools.
- **Most independent schools** conduct *a formal interview* as part of their selection process. We will cover interview technique and will give each child an individual practice interview in the autumn of Year 6.

- **Up to date guidance and advice** regarding senior school admissions requirements will be provided to all our parents during the Year 5 parent consultations in April each year.

Waiting Lists and Appeals

We can provide individual information and guidance on this later, if needed.