

# Commentary on the Admissions Consultation

## For entry in September 2021 (testing in September 2020)

### *What is the prompt for the change?*

The Local Authority, which has run the School's Year 7 admissions for many years, has indicated to the School that it will have to withdraw this support. The School will therefore assume control of testing and the admissions process for entry in September 2021, which has required changes to the School's Admissions Policy. This has resulted in the need for public consultation.

### *When does the change take effect?*

This consultation is on the Admissions Policy for September 2021, for which testing will take place in September 2020.

### *Has the Published Admissions Number ('PAN') changed?*

No – the PAN remains 120 for entry in Year 7 and 20 for external pupils joining the School in Year 12.

### *Has the catchment area changed?*

No – the existing catchment area is unchanged.

### *Why have disadvantaged children (identified via eligibility for the Pupil Premium) been added to the oversubscription criteria?*

The School has seen an increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils admitted in recent years but governors remain committed to broadening participation irrespective of a pupil's economic background.

### *Why has the methodology used to determine the 'required standard' changed?*

In recent years, the entrance test has changed in structure and location. Testing has moved from two sessions held at the candidate's primary school to one session held at Ermysted's. This has resulted in fewer in area candidates choosing to sit the entrance test than was the case when the current methodology was originally developed. As a significant number of in area pupils are not tested, it is no longer possible to identify the 28<sup>th</sup> percentile.

### *Why is the 'required standard' defined as the score achieved by the 140<sup>th</sup> candidate when the scores of all candidates are placed in descending rank order?*

Under the legacy admissions policy, on average, approximately 140 candidates<sup>1</sup> were deemed to have reached the required academic standard each year, over the past four years.

### *What will be the format of the Entrance Test?*

It is proposed to use two multiple-choice papers, each of approximately 50 minutes in length. The papers are provided by GL Assessment. The papers assess a candidate's aptitude in English and mathematics and their ability in verbal and non-verbal reasoning. One paper contains a mixture of questions on mathematics and non-verbal reasoning; the other, a mixture of questions on verbal reasoning and English. Both papers contain timed sections.

### *Why has the test format changed?*

Governors believe that by including questions on English and mathematics, as well as questions on verbal and non-verbal reasoning, the papers will more-closely replicate an applicant's experience of the KS2 curriculum and thus provide a format which is more familiar and more accessible to candidates.

### *Why are the four subjects not assessed in separate papers?*

This option was considered but, given the age of the candidates, governors were keen to ensure that the total assessment time was kept under two hours. Governors believe the new combination papers offer the desired blend of breadth and brevity.

### *Why is the Entrance Test registration deadline not earlier / later than 6 July 2020?*

This date was chosen as it falls after the School's Open Evening<sup>2</sup> – thereby allowing applicants to visit the School beforehand – but leaves sufficient time to notify the test provider of the number of test papers required. It also allows the Admissions Committee time enough to receive, consider and respond to any requests for special arrangements.

### *How can I help my child prepare?*

Familiarisation materials are available free-of-charge on the GL Assessment website.<sup>3</sup> These materials include exemplar questions on English, mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning. They will allow candidates to become familiar with the type of questions likely to be asked in the Entrance Test, the layout of the test booklets and answer sheet, and provide information about how candidates should write their answers on the answer sheet.

For any other queries, please contact the School (01756 792186).

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<sup>1</sup> The four-year average (2016 to 2019) of candidates deemed to have reached the required standard is 142.3 at the time of writing.

<sup>2</sup> Expected to take place on Tuesday, 30 June 2020, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

<sup>3</sup> GL Assessment (<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/free-familiarisation>)