

London Borough of Bexley School Admissions Team

**Starting at Secondary School
September 2023**

**Information for parents about how to apply
for a secondary school place and about the
selection test**



What will we cover?

- Information for parents
- Selection test
- How to apply for a secondary school place
- Banding tests
- Offers of places
- Timetable

Information for Parents

- Leaflet about Bexley's Selection Test – March
- Bexley Selection Test registration – May to July
- Booklet about the secondary schools in Bexley and how to apply - August
- Online application period opens – 1 September
- School open days and evenings - September/October
- Secondary School websites - see secondary booklet or use Google
- School Admissions web pages:
www.bexley.gov.uk/admissions and www.bexley.gov.uk/selectiontests
- Contact the School Admissions Team – 020 8303 7777 or email schooladmissions@bexley.gov.uk

Selection Test

- Provider is the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, University of Cambridge (CEM)
- Experienced assessment test provider used by many schools and local authorities
- Children will only sit the test if their parents opt in. Register online between 3 May and 1 July 2022. Late registration not accepted
www.bexley.gov.uk/selectiontests
- Children attending Bexley schools (including independent schools) who have been registered will sit the test during the week of 12 September 2022, either in their own school or at a test centre.
- Two test papers with a short break in between

Format of the test

- Each test lasts 45 – 50 minutes plus time for instructions
- Separately timed sections of questions
- Examples at the start of each section
- Audio soundtrack with instructions on what to do and time warnings
- Question booklet + OMR answer sheet
- Most questions in multiple choice format. Some Maths questions are not multiple choice
- Rough working can be done on question booklets

Test content

- Comprehension
 - Verbal ability (including vocabulary)
 - Numerical reasoning
 - Non-verbal reasoning
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- CEM Entrance assessments are intended to provide as fair an assessment of ability as possible.
 - Assessing a broad range of abilities will provide a fairer selection process than a test that only assesses one area of ability
 - 50% of marks for verbal ability and comprehension, 25% for numerical reasoning, 25% for non-verbal reasoning
 - One age-standardised score covering both test papers

Getting ready for the test

- Coaching and tutoring are not needed
- Test questions will be based on what children are learning in school
- Some of the questions will be quite difficult
- CEM does not sell practice books or papers
- Encourage your child to read widely
- Link to Familiarisation paper sent in registration acknowledgement
Schools may go through sample questions with pupils

Test results

- Test results sent on 7 October 2022, by email
- In 2021, 5,883 children sat the test and 2,047 were deemed selective
- Places offered according to the oversubscription criteria for each school.
- 800 grammar school places in Bexley in September 2022.
- Places may be offered to children who missed the selective score by one or two marks, **if** offers have been made to all selective children and there are still unfilled places

How to apply for a secondary school place

- Read the 'Admission to Secondary Schools in Bexley' booklet and get details about any schools in Greenwich, Bromley, Kent etc that you are interested in. Decide on your preferred schools and make sure that your child meets the admission criteria. Some schools now give priority to children of staff, to children attending named feeder schools and to children eligible for free school meals.
- Complete your application online from 1 September 2022, at www.eadmissions.org.uk or visit www.bexley.gov.uk/admissions for the link to the e-Admissions site
- Apply to your home Council regardless of where your preferred schools are
- If you really cannot apply online, paper forms can be requested from the School Admissions Team
- Bexley residents can list up to six preferences for any type of school in any area, in order from 1 to 6. You don't have to list 6 schools, but the more you list, the greater the likelihood of being offered a school that you would be happy with. All preferences are equal – schools do not know where you have placed them on your application form

How to apply

- Include evidence for medical conditions or other requests for priority with your application. If you mention something on your application, you must provide evidence to support it, or it will not be considered
- You must provide evidence of your address and your child's date of birth. Scan and upload evidence with online applications, or send copies to the School Admissions Team by email or post. See the 'Admission to Secondary Schools in Bexley' booklet for full details
- Supplementary Information Forms must be completed for some schools. In Bexley these are the three faith Academies: St Catherine's, St Columba's and Trinity. Check closing dates for SIFs as they may be different from the application closing date
- Make sure you have provided all the information requested
- The national closing date for applications is 31 October 2022.

Banding

- Schools that divide applicants into ability bands before allocating places will ask children to sit a Non Verbal Reasoning test in November or December. In Bexley, these will be Hurstmere School, Harris Academy Falconwood and the Harris Garrard Academy.
- Banding is not a pass or fail test but ensures that the school admits a balanced intake of children of all abilities
- Check each school's oversubscription criteria to see how many bands there are and how places are allocated in each band. Children living quite close to a school may not get a place if their band is full with others living even closer, or the school uses random allocation to offer places (Harris Academy Falconwood). Some schools do not give priority to siblings or for medical reasons.

The offer process

- All the secondary schools in Bexley are Academies and decide who offers will be made to. They must use the criteria published in the admissions booklet
- The School Admissions Team exchanges information with the schools in Bexley and other local authorities
- Schools put all applicants into rank order according to the school's oversubscription criteria (eg children in care, medical and social needs, siblings, home to school distance)
- If a child can be offered a place at more than one school, the one that is listed highest on the application will be offered. The other places can then be offered to children lower on the list for that school
- The offer of a place will come from the local authority where you live, even if you are being offered a school in another area
- One offer only. You cannot hold offers of more than one place

Offers of places

- **If you apply online, you will be sent an email on 1 March 2023, in the evening, with the name of the school your child is being offered.**
- **If you apply online and are offered your first preference school, you will not be sent a letter, only the email**
- **If you apply on a paper form, you will be sent a letter on 1 March with details of the school offered**
- **If you apply online but are not offered your first preference school, you will also receive a letter with details of waiting lists and how to appeal**
- **You will be asked to accept or decline the offer by 15 March 2023 either online or by returning a paper slip**
- **If we can't offer one of your preferred schools, a place will be offered at the nearest school to home with a vacancy**
- **You can ask for your child to be put on waiting lists for higher preference schools than the one offered.**
- **Parents have the right to appeal if a school is not offered – contact the school for details**

Offers for September 2022

- In 2022, over 73% of Bexley children were offered their first preference school and over 97% one of their six preferences
- Examples of parents not being offered any of the schools listed on their application are:
 - Only listing grammar schools when the child was not selective.
 - Only listing faith schools and not submitting the SIF or not having a Church connection
 - Not applying for schools near the home address or only listing schools that band
 - Only listing one or two preferences for schools with random allocation or a long way from home

ADVICE – list your 6 schools in genuine order of preference but always include one near to your home address and one that doesn't use random allocation. Wait for the test results before applying for grammar schools, and always include at least one all ability school if your child is not selective

Online tips

- Site is easy to use and very quick
- You can apply right up to the deadline of 11.59pm on 31 October
- You can go back in and change details up to the deadline
BUT
 - Remember to complete all the fields
 - Add full name and date of birth of siblings in the correct field
 - Add any requests for priority on the correct field. Scan and upload supporting evidence or send copies to the School Admissions Team clearly marked with your application reference number
- You will get an email receipt if the application has been submitted correctly. Without the receipt, the application may not be valid
- If you do change anything, make sure that all application details are still correct before re-submitting

Timetable

April 2022	Leaflet available to parents about the secondary application timetable and the selection test
1 July 2022	Closing date to register online for the selection test
1 September 2022	Online application system opens
Week commencing 12 September 2022	Selection test for those registered who attend a primary school in Bexley

Timetable

September/October 2022	Schools open days and evenings
7 October 2022	Selection test results sent
31 October 2022	Closing date for secondary school applications
November/December 2022	Banding tests
1 March 2023	Offers sent by email to all parents who applied online Letters posted by first class post to parents who didn't apply online and those not offered their first preference school

Check List

- If you want your child to sit the selection test, register online by 1 July 2022 at the latest
- Visit schools in September and October
- Check oversubscription criteria – make sure you know how each school allocates places
- Wait for selection test results before making final preferences
- Complete and return Supplementary Information Forms to faith schools by the published date
- Apply online by 31 October 2022
- Make sure you apply on time! Late applicants will miss out on the most popular schools