



# WILLIAM HARDING SCHOOL

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Head Teacher: Miss T Cotchin BA(Hons) PGCE NPQH

23 May 2022

Dear Families,

**Re: Secondary Transfer Test Access Arrangements**

**The practice test** will take place on **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022** whilst the **Secondary Transfer Test** will take place on **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**. Some parents may wish to withdraw their child from the secondary transfer test (11+) process. If you do not want your child to attend a grammar school, or if you feel the pace and independence required in a grammar school would not suit your child, please notify me in writing. Every year we have a number of children who are withdrawn from the testing process.

Some children are entitled to have adjustments made to the testing process if they have a disability or Special Educational Need. In the guidelines issued to schools it clearly states that it is the parents' responsibility to notify the school that they wish to request some adjustments to be made for their child. I have attached the paperwork for you which highlights the evidence you need to provide should you feel your child would be eligible for adjustments to be made and you wish them to sit the tests. Please send any adjustment requests to the school office by **3pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June**.

Having read the attached guidelines, should you have any further questions about this specific issue, please contact me via the school office. All adjustments must be requested by parents via the school. No adjustments are given automatically to any child, even if a child has an EHCP.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Stallwood

KS2 Assistant Headteacher

**Our School Values are: Inclusion, Perseverance, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Collaboration.**



## MOVING UP TO SECONDARY SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 2023

**Guidelines for Requesting Reasonable Adjustments to the Buckinghamshire Secondary Transfer Test Materials / Conditions as agreed with the test provider, GL Assessment Ltd, by The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools (TBGS)**

**All parents and headteachers must** refer to the information in the appendices at the end of these guidelines before deciding whether it would be appropriate to make an application for adjustments.

**Headteachers** – please ensure that where adjustments are being requested the parents of the child concerned receive a copy of these guidelines.

**Parents of children attending out of county primary schools** should be aware that where they make a request for adjustments directly to Buckinghamshire LA their child's current school will be contacted as a matter of course for details relating to their child's needs.

**Testing at a central venue for children attending an out of county primary school.** If during the testing registration process a parent advises the LA that their child has a need or condition that potentially might warrant an application for adjustments, the LA will contact that parent if an application has not already been received.

**Where it is considered that a child's situation might be such as to affect other children taking the test at a central venue, a test date will not be offered until it has been established whether this is the case.**

Where adjustments are offered it is highly likely that testing will take place after the normal test dates and the child must not be tested without that adjustment being in place

### **1. Applying for adjustments**

**IMPORTANT NOTE** – as a result of the recent disruption due to the pandemic where reports or results dated after 1 January 2022 are not available, the Panel will, in exceptional circumstances, accept reports and measures dated after 1 July 2021. If a report is more than six months old but dated after 1 July 2021, it will be accepted but only if a more up-to-date report is not available.

Additionally, it should be noted that:

- This process must be completed by the end of the summer term (while the child is in Year 5) at the very latest ready for the test in early September.
- A case cannot be considered based on a parent's or Headteacher's submission alone.
- The Panel will only consider final reports - those still in a draft format will not be accepted.
- Where possible, decisions about adjustments will be notified by the end of the summer term.
- Adjustments, where agreed, may not wholly or completely follow JCQ recommendations (the JCQ guidance on access arrangement for GCSE and other exams is helpful, but the Secondary Transfer Test is outside of JCQ requirements).

The Special Access Panel will make its decision based on the information and evidence provided. Please ensure that the evidence provided is clear and concise and is as complete as possible. Requests for adjustments will not be considered where no or insufficient evidence is provided, or the evidence is out of date.

**Applications for reasonable adjustments will be made by schools but only where requested by the parent.** Where parents advise a teaching member of staff at their school that they believe their child is disabled, then that school is responsible for notifying Buckinghamshire LA (as the Secondary Transfer Testing administrator), of that assertion and for requesting any reasonable adjustments deemed appropriate.

As the Secondary Transfer Test is not compulsory, parents together with their child's headteacher should consider whether a child's specific Special Educational Needs would make him/her suitable to be placed in a grammar school and hence whether it would be appropriate or necessary for that child to take part in the Secondary Transfer Testing process. In the past, the Special Access Panel has been concerned that for some children there were difficulties that would impact on performance to such an extent that it would not have appeared to be in the interests of the child to be tested. In such instances, parents might consider whether they wish to withdraw their child from the testing process.

At the beginning of the summer term prior to the test, Buckinghamshire headteachers will be asked to supply details of children for whom the normal day-to-day delivery of the curriculum is adapted to meet their particular needs and where these needs will impact on the child's ability to access the test papers. Aspects that may affect performance in the test may not be considered.

The request form (which must only be completed by the headteacher) will specifically ask for:

1. Confirmation of the child's SEND status
2. Details of the nature of a child's need and the evidence to support this which **must** be focused on the day-to-day support provided in the classroom
3. A description of the support that the child currently receives in school to enable access to the curriculum. This **must** provide a clear picture of need and the daily methods of working in English and Maths. Details of any recent standardised tests taken relevant to the application should be included. Access might be affected by a child's reading ability and speed. If this is the case, up-to-date details should be included such as reading age and reading speed which can be measured in school.

4. Suggestions as to how the test might be adjusted to enable the child to access it without affecting the integrity of the testing process. This should normally be based on point 2 above.

The request form **must** be accompanied by supporting evidence from the other professionals involved with the child, for example **full copies of reports** from:

- Annex A/Individual Education Plan/provision map with targets, reading age and reading speed details (measured after 1 January 2022).
- Specialist teacher – appropriately qualified to provide information on a visual, hearing or physical impairment
- Original diagnosis
- General Practitioner
- Medical specialist/Consultant
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational therapist
- A Practitioner Psychologist registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Other professional reports

The professional reports provided **must** be:

- **up-to-date** (please refer to Important Note above.)
- **clearly signed and dated** by a qualified person (where a trainee is signing it must be countersigned by a qualified person), and
- where tests have been quoted, **age appropriate** and the scores **standardised**.

Reports that indicate that a child 'might display' signs of a particular difficulty or 'could be considered to have' a particular difficulty should not be included in an application as these are neither helpful nor conclusive evidence.

A Practitioner Psychologist's report containing cognitive ability test results (i.e. WISC5, BAS3) will be accepted where it is no more than 24 months old, however information relating to the child's academic attainments (such as reading and spelling levels) must be updated if the psychologist's assessment was conducted more than six months prior to the application (i.e. reading and spelling levels are valid for the application as long as they have been measured after 1 January 2022). Tests of reading and spelling can be conducted in school and therefore there is no need for an external professional to retest a child for the purposes of this application.

Other professional reports (i.e. Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy) must be up to date, again no more than six months old (dated no earlier than 1 January 2022, see Important Note above).

Where a request for adjustments is being made on the grounds of a disability or need relating to Dyslexia, reading, spelling, comprehension and processing speed results must be up to date (no more than six months old – measured after 1 January 2022). The only exception is where a report relates to a physical disability or a named medical condition.

Where a child does not hold an Education Health and Care Plan explain fully why an adjustment may be necessary. Pupils for whom there is clearly defined support provided in the classroom can be considered for adjustments, if a clear indication of the support provided on a day-to-day basis is given. Evidence could include classroom observations and reports from professionals.

For the purpose of the Buckinghamshire Secondary Transfer Test the following definition of Dyslexia (taken from the Rose Review, 2009) is used:

- Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.
- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexia occurs across a range of intellectual abilities.
- It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.
- Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.

There is no need for an up-to-date report to be sought where the need relates to a physical disability or a named medical condition unless more current information relating to the impact of that disability or condition would be helpful for the Panel. The impact of the disability upon the child's daily functioning in school should, however, be made clear from the Headteacher's report.

## **2. How cases are considered**

The Special Access Panel comprises a Practitioner Psychologist, a representative with an understanding of pupils with Special Educational Needs and a representative with experience as a headteacher in a Buckinghamshire primary school.

The Special Access Panel members consider each case on the basis of the information provided, individually in advance of each meeting and collectively at the meetings. Papers are sent to the Panel members seven days in advance of each meeting.

The Panel will, where necessary, seek advice from the test provider (GL Assessment) regarding the appropriateness of any requested adjustments over and above those that have been set out and agreed in advance with GL Assessment, see Section 3.

The LA, on behalf of The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools (TBGS), will advise headteachers and parents prior to the Practice Test where adjustments can be made. The child will then sit the test.

**The deadline for submitting a completed request for adjustments form is Friday 17 June 2022 – decisions to be advised via email no later than 20 August 2022.**

**Please endeavour to submit requests as soon as possible and do not wait until the final deadline unless absolutely necessary.**

Should a request for adjustments be received after 17 June 2022 but before 9 September, it will be considered in a much later meeting and **testing will be delayed** until after the main testing date. The test results may not be available for release until after the preference deadline (31 October), so parents will need to express both upper/all-ability and grammar school preferences.

Any requests received from 9 September onwards will only be considered where there are clear exceptional reasons for there being no earlier application such as where a child has moved to the area after the testing registration deadline. These cases once agreed exceptionally, will be considered but **testing may be delayed** so parents will need to express both upper/all-ability and grammar school preferences.

Where it has not been possible to agree to the requested adjustments, alternatives may be offered.

All decisions will be notified to both schools and parents.

Once a decision has been made by the Special Access Panel it is **final** and will not be reconsidered prior to testing.

### **3.Reasonable adjustments**

The following is a non-exhaustive table of reasonable adjustments that, for 2023 entry, have been agreed in principle by The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools, GL Assessment and the LA (as the Secondary Transfer Testing administrator) and that will be considered for a pupil sitting the Secondary Transfer Test who is considered as disabled within the terms of the Equality Act 2010 and where the child's needs are such that their ability to access the test papers is affected. The applicability or provision of any given adjustment(s) will depend on the particular circumstances.

Parents and schools should be aware that where one testing body agrees to an adjustment it should not be assumed that another will offer that same adjustment or indeed any adjustment. It cannot be assumed that if a child might qualify for an adjustment in other tests, for example National Curriculum tests or other selection tests, that the same or any adjustment would necessarily be offered for the Buckinghamshire Secondary Transfer Test.

No adjustment is automatically offered. The Panel base their decision on the evidence provided and the nature of the Secondary Transfer Test, whilst seeking to ensure consistency in their decision making. It is entirely possible that the Panel might not agree with the adjustments suggested by other professionals and that they may offer alternatives or none at all.

Adjustment	What can be done	Particular evidence	Appropriate for	Other considerations
<p><b>Enlarged question booklet (answer sheets should not be enlarged, see notes)</b></p>	<p>A standard enlargement for all question types can be provided in line with RNIB recommendations. This will be 14pt on 18pt leading ('leading' is the space between the lines of type). Cream paper versions can be provided. (Practice Test papers are also available.) The font used is Frutiger as recommended by RNIB.</p>	<p>Support of VI teacher.</p>	<p>Children with a visual impairment, dyslexia, dexterity difficulties, those who are red/green colour blind or for some children with other visual impairments.</p>	<p><b>Provision of a suitable work area in which to take the test as the booklets will be B4.</b> <b>Suitable lighting.</b> <b>In all cases, where an enlarged version is used, the child should complete the answers in the test booklet and then school staff should transfer the answers to the original over-printed answer sheet and all copies should be sent for marking. If the school is unable to do this, they should contact the LA for alternative arrangements to be made.</b> <b>Answer sheets on their own should not be enlarged and if children find completing the answer sheet difficult, they should mark their answers in the test booklet (in standard or enlarged size).</b> <b>Where a larger font than 14pt is generally required by a child then a VI specialist teacher needs to evaluate and advise whether the test can be sat in whole or in part or whether the child should be dis-applied from all or part of the test. (Where a child is dis-applied from part of the test see Section 4.)</b></p>
<p><b>Amanuensis</b></p>	<p>An amanuensis (usually the child's LSA) would complete the answer sheet on the child's behalf and at their direction.</p>	<p>Evidence to confirm regular use of amanuensis in the classroom.</p>	<p>Children with severe motor or visual difficulties.</p>	<p><b>Child would need to be tested separately and may be tested on a different date to the main test dates. Child may also require enlarged test materials – see above.</b></p>

<b>Reader/ prompter/</b>	Provision of a reader/prompter is limited to reading the instructions in all sections <u>apart from</u> the comprehension text which should still be read by the pupil.	Evidence to confirm regular use of reader/prompter in the classroom.	Children with reading difficulties which might affect access to the test. Children with severe attention difficulties.	<b>If agreed, the child would need to be tested separately and may be tested on a different date to the main test dates.</b>
<b>Coloured overlay/filter lenses</b>	Overlays and lenses used in class can be used during the test		Children with dyslexia or those with visual impairments.	<b>Provision of a suitable work area in which to take the test. Suitable lighting.</b>
<b>Break during the test</b>	One or two short breaks during the test achieved by pausing the audio file between sections or provide verbal invigilation	Evidence to confirm child regularly takes breaks during class tests.	Children with physical, motor or visual difficulties that cause fatigue. Children with conditions which impair concentration.	<b>Child would need to be tested separately and may be tested on a different date to the main test dates.</b>



<p><b>Extra time</b></p>	<p>10% or 25% (maximum) extra time may be agreed for one or more sections of the test. Extra time may be offered for individual sections or for all, depending on need. It is unlikely that extra time would be permitted on the non- verbal section. Where extra time is offered, the invigilator will read the text rather than an audio file being used for invigilation/test instructions.</p>	<p>Clear evidence from professionals and school-based staff, to show impact of child’s difficulties in similar timed tests. Reading ability and speed should be provided. Occupational Therapy report where a child has slow processing speed. <b>Note</b> – Decisions about extra time are not based on professional reports alone but on the needs of the child as a whole and will be based on the day-to-day support in the classroom.</p>	<p>Children with significant physical, motor or visual difficulties. Children who are severely dyspraxic or dyslexic.</p>	<p><b>Child would need to be tested separately and may be tested on a different date to the main test dates. Test will require administration without the audio file – verbal administration (this is where the invigilator reads the test rubric to the child rather than the child listening to the audio files).</b></p>
<p><b>Test alone</b></p>	<p>Child is tested alone in a quiet environment.</p>	<p>Clear evidence of need. Always offered with other specific adjustments – extra time for example</p>	<p>All children offered extra time or other adjustments that would disturb the rest of the testing cohort. Children with attention difficulties.</p>	<p><b>Child would need to be tested separately. In some cases, testing may not be possible on the standard test dates.</b></p>
<p><b>Invigilator to read text rather than using audio files for invigilation/test instructions (Verbal Invigilation)</b></p>	<p>Each test centre will have a testing transcript to use in emergency where there are issues with the audio files. This transcript can be read to pupils by the invigilator and this method can be authorised for children with particular needs as well as for those requiring additional time.</p>		<p>This may be appropriate for hearing impaired pupils.</p>	
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>Requests for other reasonable adjustments will be considered in the light of the evidence provided. Where a child has multiple needs or is severely</p>			

	disabled, the Panel may agree a number of adjustments.			
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#### **4. Arrangements for visually impaired children**

##### Children able to access standard print or 14pt

If a visually impaired child is able to access normal print or font size 14pt, they will be able to sit both test papers. In this case extra time would be provided and they would be tested separately. If children use the 14pt version of the test papers they will write answers in the test booklets and answers will need to be transcribed.

If, due to their particular visual impairment, a child is unable to access the non-verbal reasoning section of the test this will be taken into account when the child's results are standardised.

##### Children requiring print sizes larger than 14pt

If a child's visual impairment is such that they require an enlargement **in excess of** font size 14pt and therefore are unable to access the test then the child's placement will be considered through an enhanced secondary transfer review process. This is a multi-agency decision (involving school and educational professionals that know the child) to consider if a child should be qualified for grammar school as part of the normal secondary transfer arrangements made to enable pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to move up to the appropriate secondary school. Evidence of academic ability will need to be gathered and considered (e.g. teacher assessments). The VI support teacher will provide a report. Other nationally standardised academic evidence may be used to support the application or, if this is not available, an Educational Psychologist may be asked to undertake some standardised testing with the child. If the decision is to agree that in principle a grammar school can be named, then following the meeting, the decision should be provided in writing to the Admissions and Transport Team. At this point it is not necessary for the individual grammar school to be named. If the decision is to agree that in principle a grammar school is not appropriate to be named, then a parent may request that this decision is reviewed at the Selection Review stage.

#### **5. Other disabilities**

The enhanced secondary transfer review process (see Section 4) may also be put in place for any other child with an Education Health and Care Plan who is identified as requiring special arrangements and the professional evidence about their specific needs identifies that they would not be able to access all or part of the Secondary Transfer Test with adjustments.

## **APPENDIX 1 - The Legal Framework**

The Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), places a duty upon Local Authorities (“LA”), academies and schools not to discriminate against disabled people or pupils in their access to education. The relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 replace the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 that previously applied.

Discrimination may occur by:

- A person treating a disabled pupil or prospective pupil less favourably than it treats or would treat others because of that pupil’s disability; or
- A person treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of the disabled person’s disability where the treatment in question is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- A person applying to a disabled person a provision, criterion or practice which it also applies to persons who do not share that disability, but which puts the disabled person at a particular disadvantage, unless that is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- Failing to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils or prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their non-disabled peers. This is known as the ‘reasonable adjustments’ duty.

Three aspects of admissions are covered by the duty:

- In the admission arrangements and rules (and the operation of these rules);
- In the terms of any offer of a place;
- By refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission to a school by virtue of that person’s disability.

Note that the Equality Act 2010 expressly provides that a person does NOT discriminate, so far as relating to disability, only by applying a permitted form of selection. Selection for admission for a grammar school education by way of academic testing is an example of a permitted form of selection under section 28B of the Act and is therefore in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

However, the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils applies to a permitted form of selection. This may include making reasonable adjustments to the assessment process.

The duty on schools (and in the matter of the Secondary Transfer Testing process only, the LA on behalf of The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools (TBGS)) to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory.

## **APPENDIX 2 - Definitions**

The Act defines a person with a disability as follows:

*“a person (P) has a disability if (a) P has a physical or mental impairment and (b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.*

The Act (and regulations made under the Act) also provides that pupils with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV and pupils who are certified as blind, severely sight impaired, sight impaired or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist are automatically to be considered disabled.

'Impairment'	<p>This should be given its ordinary meaning and it is not necessary to establish the underlying cause of the impairment. It is important to remember that not all impairments are readily identifiable. The impairment might include sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing; have fluctuating or recurring effects; be organ specific, including respiratory conditions, such as asthma; be developmental, such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia; and include learning difficulties.</p> <p>Certain conditions are specifically excluded from the definition of impairment including addiction/dependency on alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than in consequence of the substance being medically prescribed), hay fever (except where that aggravates the effect of another condition), pyromania, kleptomania, exhibitionism, voyeurism or a tendency to physically or sexually abuse another person.</p> <p>The Act states that a person who has cancer, HIV infection or MS is a disabled person and is protected by the Act effectively from the point of diagnosis. (Sch1 Para 6).</p>
'Substantial'	<p>More than minor or trivial – beyond the normal differences in ability which might exist among people. If an impairment could well have a substantial adverse effect but for the fact that measures are being taken to treat or correct it, it is to be treated as having that effect (with the sole exception of wearing spectacles or contact lenses). If the impairment has ceased to have a substantial adverse effect, it is to be treated as continuing to have that effect if it could well recur. A person who has a progressive condition will be treated as having an impairment which has a substantial adverse effect from the moment any impairment resulting from that condition first has some adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities provided that in future the adverse effect could well become substantial.</p>
'Long term'	<p>At least 12 months, likely to be at least 12 months or to last for the life of the child. Note that if an impairment has had a substantial adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities but the effect ceases, the substantial effect is treated as continuing if it could well recur, e.g. a person with rheumatoid arthritis may experience substantial adverse effects for a period of weeks and then go into remission and recur; certain types of depression may be sporadic or recur.</p>

'Normal day-to-day activities'	Normal for many people on a daily or frequent and fairly regular basis. Does it affect one of these areas: <ul data-bbox="398 124 1164 399" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mobility</li><li>• manual dexterity</li><li>• physical co-ordination</li><li>• continence</li><li>• ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects</li><li>• memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand</li><li>• perception or the risk of physical danger?</li></ul>
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### **APPENDIX 3 - The Reasonable Adjustment Duty**

The LA and schools, including academies, are required to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled pupils.

There are potentially two exceptions to this requirement - the provision of auxiliary aids and services and the removal or alteration of a physical feature.

The legislation is constructed in this way because the Children and Families Act 2014 makes provision to meet the educational and health needs of disabled children, if the disability inhibits learning; and the LA and schools are required to plan over time to increase the accessibility of schools to disabled pupils, including making changes to the physical environment of schools. They are not required to make physical adaptations that would incur unreasonable costs and would affect the provision of education for other pupils.