



The Children's House

11+ Policy

This policy should be renewed annually and as required by legislation.		
Action	Reviewer	Date
Review	EG	Nov 2024
Approved by CoM	BDB	Nov 2024
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Introduction

This policy outlines key information about the 11+ process, and the ways in which the School prepares students, including the collaboration with parents, both for assessments and for secondary school.

Aims

At The Children's House we prepare children for moving to a wide range of senior schools at 11+. Our staff are well trained in the demands of the 11+, and our bespoke curriculum is designed to introduce the key skills and knowledge at the very start of a child's education, right from the Nursery, and build on these gradually. This ensures that by Year Six children will feel confident and prepared for the 11+ process. Our bespoke curriculum is structured to maximise learning potential and inspire pupils to try their very best. As a small school we pride ourselves on our personal knowledge of each and every pupil in our care. We place this knowledge of each individual child and family at the heart of the process, to reduce stress and guide families towards the right school for their child.



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What is the 11+?

The 11+ exam for independent Senior Schools is an entrance test designed to assess a child's academic abilities and determine their suitability for admission to Year 7 (typically at age 11). Most Independent schools in and outside London use this exam as part of their admissions process, and while each school has its own specific criteria and tests, there are common components across most schools. The Exams begin in the late autumn of Year 6 for grammar schools, with most independent school exams taking place in January.

In most cases, there are up to three stages:

1. A computer-based pretest (November of Year 6)
2. A formal written or online exam (December–January of Year 6)
3. An interview stage (January–February of Year 6)

Some schools use all three stages, while others only require one or two.

In the London independent sector, the exams typically involve the following:

Subjects Tested

English: Includes comprehension and in some cases creative writing. Students are tested on reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and may be asked to write an essay or story.

Mathematics: questions on topics from the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum, including arithmetic, algebra, geometry, problem-solving and data handling. Questions usually increase in difficulty as the paper progresses.

Reasoning (Verbal and Non-Verbal): Verbal reasoning tests language, logic and analytical skills, while non-verbal reasoning tests problem-solving abilities with patterns and shapes. Not all schools require reasoning, but it's common among selective schools.

Exam Format



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In recent years, many schools have shifted to online tests, especially for reasoning components. Some schools have their own papers, while others use standard assessments from test providers like Quest (Atom Learning), the ISEB Common Pre-Test, CEM Select, or GL Assessment.

Tests are generally completed in multiple-choice format, although English composition may involve free writing.

The Pretest

- These are provided by ISEB (Independent Schools Examination Board).
- They include **four tests**: English, mathematics, verbal reasoning (VR) and non-verbal reasoning (NVR).
- They are adaptive, meaning the difficulty adjusts based on the student's responses, which means no two students will have the exact same test
- They are designed to evaluate both attainment and potential
- The test will be taken here at the Children's House, and the results are shared with the schools your child has applied to.
- A few schools, use a different provider, CEM (set by the Cambridge Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring). This test is also online but is sat at the school itself rather at the Children's House.
- ISEB and CEM are both designed to assess core skills

Stage 2: The Formal Exam

- The formal exam is taken at the target school
- Traditionally these were written papers in English, Maths and Reasoning but many schools are now moving to an online assessment with a written creative writing task.
- Some schools have maintained a written exam, incorporating literary comprehension and creative writing, either in the form of a story, description or essay task.



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Additional Assessment Components

Many schools have now widened their assessment focus to include **problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking** as well as on traditional English, maths, and reasoning. This will feature in the assessment as well as the interview.

Interviews

Many independent schools in and outside London require an interview as part of the admissions process. This is often done after the written exams to shortlist applicants. Some schools will interview every applicant, whilst others will select interview candidates based on their test scores.

The interview can either be individual or in a group, allowing schools to assess interpersonal skills and problem-solving in group settings, and through participation in observed activities or lessons. Some schools will hold both a one to one and group interview.

Interviews can be a mixture of:

- Straightforward questions (what's your favourite subject, why do you want to come here)
- Hypothetical and imaginative questions (if you could invite any historical figure to dinner, who would you ask and why? If you won a million pounds, what would you do with the money?)
- Moral questions (Is it ever okay to lie? What makes a good person?)
- More challenging Philosophy and ethics (Does AI have any place in education? Should billionaires exist or should wealth be equally shared?)
- Current affairs (What's been going on in the news recently?)
- Some schools will ask academic questions – maths or logic problems. Some may ask children to read a passage or poem or discuss a painting.

Primary School Reference

Primary school reference - most schools request a reference from their primary school, including information about the child's academic ability as well as their character, interests and overall potential



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to assess how well they fit with the school's ethos. These references are produced by the class teacher in collaboration with the Headteacher, with input from other members of the teaching team, where useful, to build a holistic picture of the child. In the Autumn term of Year 6, Parents are invited to provide information on hobbies and extracurricular activities, to inform the reference.

London 11+ Consortium

Parents of girls have the option of applying for 14 schools which are part of the London 11+ Consortium. This includes Channing, South Hampstead, Francis Holland and Queens. Girls applying to schools within the Consortium sit just one test, the results of which are shared between the member schools. The aim is to reduce the number of exams each girl sits and minimise the stress of the 11+ assessment.

To apply for a London 11+ Consortium school parents should request an application form directly from the individual schools. A separate application must be completed for each of the schools.

The London 11+ Consortium exam is 1 hour 40 minutes long and consists of **an age-standardised measure of ability** assessed through an online, adaptive, cognitive test followed by a non-adaptive section testing problem solving and creative and critical thought. An adaptive test is one where the questions are chosen to be the most suitable for each pupil. The system assesses the pupil's ability after each response and selects the next question to have the most appropriate level of difficulty. This means that a pupil does not need to spend time answering questions that are too hard or too easy for them and the whole test can be shorter while still providing an accurate score.

For further information, see: [The London 11+ Consortium](#)

School Visits

The Headteacher and key members of the teaching staff will undertake visits to prospective schools, to provide valuable insights into admissions expectations, and inform and reassure parents. Parents are also advised to book themselves onto open days of any prospective schools.



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The 11+ Journey for Pupils

Pupils begin their 11+ journey as soon as they join us in the Nursery, although we only begin to discuss each child's 11+ individual journey in Year 4. Unlike many nurseries, both our Nursery and Pre-Reception classes are led by qualified teachers who create a curriculum rich in activities designed to build foundational skills in problem-solving and critical thinking. As a recognised hub of best practice, we emphasis nurturing young minds to think independently, question effectively and explore solutions creatively.

Pupils benefit from specialist subject teaching in Drama, Music, PE & Games, Dance, Spanish, Art and IT.

Specialist Music, PE & Games, Dance & Spanish begins in the Nursery, whilst Drama, Art and IT are introduced in Reception. This specialist teaching complements the learning in the core subjects and the other curriculum areas. Subject specialists bring in-depth knowledge and passion for their subject, leading to improved outcomes that complement the learning in the core subject areas, such as art supporting with fine motor skills. It also allows children to experience a wider variety of topics early on, supporting the discovery of personal strengths and interests.

Our class teachers and TAs are trained in the delivery of P4C, Philosophy for Children, and this is incorporated into the curriculum from the Nursery onwards. This enquiry-based approach enables children to start using critical and analytical thinking, articulate their ideas and listen and respond to others. These skills are invaluable for 11+ interviews.

All classes have a weekly or fortnightly timetabled PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) lesson which includes opportunities to share any questions or worries and supports children to keep physically and emotionally healthy.

Termly concerts give the children plenty of experience in public speaking and performing in front of an audience.

Our curriculum is carefully designed and regularly monitored to ensure that The Children's House pupils are well rounded and leave the School with a solid base for secondary education, confident and fully prepared for the next stage of their education.



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Early Years

	Nursery (2.5 – 3.5-year-olds)	Pre-Reception	Reception
Pre-writing	Pre-writing activities to build fine motor skills	Continued focus on pre-writing, pencil grip, and coordination	Development of early writing skills, sentence formation, and punctuation
Phonics and Early Reading	Exposure to phonological awareness through songs and stories	Introduction to phonics, sound blending, and basic sight words	Solid foundation in phonics, early reading, and comprehension
P4C (Philosophy for Children)	P4C sessions to introduce basic reasoning and questioning skills	P4C sessions to further develop inquiry and reasoning skills	P4C sessions emphasising critical thinking, reasoning, and discussion
Development of Hobbies and Interests	Exploratory play to identify interests	Exploration of hobbies, introduction to themed projects and activities	Development of personal interests through structured and free-choice projects
Confidence & Presentation Skills	Social play to encourage initial confidence	Role play to build confidence and presentation	Weekly specialist drama lessons to enhance confidence, public speaking, and self-expression
Mindfulness	Mindfulness sessions at least once daily	Mindfulness once daily for grounding, self-regulation, and focus	Mindfulness to develop calm, grounding, and resilience
Specialist Spanish	Introduction to basic Spanish through songs	Specialist Spanish lessons for early cultural understanding	Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and deepening language learning



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Personalised Interventions	Targeted support to assist developmental milestones	Personalised interventions to support and challenge	Personalised interventions to extend reading, numeracy, and comprehension
Social Skills and Empathy	Play-based interaction to develop turn-taking and empathy	Group activities to strengthen collaboration and perspective-taking	Structured group work to enhance social skills, empathy, and cooperation. Where required, personal interventions
1:1 Reading and Guided Reading	Storytime sessions to develop listening and vocabulary	Introduction to group story analysis and comprehension activities	1:1 reading with a teacher twice per week and regular small group guided reading
Numeracy Foundation	Counting games and number recognition activities	Introduction to number patterns, shapes, and problem-solving	Strengthening of numeracy, basic arithmetic, and logical reasoning
Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving	Simple, open-ended tasks (e.g., block building, shape puzzles) to encourage exploration and decision-making. Guided play with questioning prompts to develop curiosity, e.g., "What happens if...?" Basic reasoning, decision-making, and curiosity skills developed	Structured challenges like sorting, pattern recognition, and sequencing to encourage problem-solving. Role-play scenarios to support cause-and-effect thinking and imagination. Enhanced reasoning, pattern recognition and imaginative thinking skills developed	Daily problem-solving tasks encouraging multiple solutions, scenario-based activities requiring step-by-step thinking, and collaborative projects promoting collective problem-solving. Advanced reasoning, logical thinking, resilience and teamwork developed
Observation and Prediction Skills	Nature walks and experiments to make simple observations	Experiments and exploration that encourage prediction and outcome testing	Activities such as hypothesis-making to support logical reasoning
Reflective Thinking	Simple reflection after activities, e.g., "What did you like best?"	Post-activity discussions to reflect on actions and decisions	Guided reflection to analyse steps taken, mistakes made, and alternative solutions



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Collaboration and Team Work	Partner-based tasks to encourage teamwork and sharing of ideas	Group tasks that require turn-taking, sharing, listening and problem solving	Collaborative projects that promote discussion, compromise, and collective problem-solving
Reasoning and Decision-Making	Encouraging choices, such as in creative play, to develop reasoning	Guided discussions to help children articulate their choices and thinking	Daily activities requiring choices with reasoning, such as selecting tools or materials for tasks
Analytical Thinking	Identifying simple patterns in nature, art, and daily routines	Structured pattern recognition and categorisation exercises	More complex patterning, sorting, and organising to support analytical and classification skills
Innovation and Flexibility	Open-ended materials to allow creative problem-solving and innovation	Encouraging trial and error through flexible activities	Task-based challenges that encourage thinking outside the box and adapting to new situations



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11+ Journey for Pupils

Key Stage One	
Year One	Year Two
Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English	Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English
1:1 Reading with a teacher 2x per week and regular small group guided reading	1:1 Reading with a teacher 2x per week and regular small group guided reading
Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through the curriculum, tailored to individuals.	Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through the curriculum, tailored to individuals.
Personalised interventions to support and challenge,	Personalised interventions to support and challenge
P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence	P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence
Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning	Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning
Development of hobbies and interests through activities such as show and tell	Development of hobbies and interests through activities such as show and tell
Daily mindfulness at least once daily to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation	Mindfulness at least once daily to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation



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Introduction to Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning	Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning
Weekly Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills	Weekly Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills
Discussion of current events in an age appropriate way	Discussion of current events in an age appropriate way



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11+ Journey for Pupils

Key Stage Two			
Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Year Six
Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English, drawing down objectives from the Year above in Maths wherever possible	Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English, drawing down objectives from the Year above in Maths wherever possible	Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English, drawing down objectives from the Year above in Maths wherever possible	Rigorous teaching and learning in Maths and English, drawing down objectives from the Year above in Maths wherever possible
Regular small group guided reading and/or class reading	Regular small group guided reading and/or class reading	Regular small group guided reading and/or class reading	Regular small group guided reading and/or class reading
Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through the curriculum, tailored to individuals.	Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through the curriculum, tailored to individuals.	Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through the	Individual target setting. Challenge and support activities embedded through



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		curriculum, tailored to individuals.	the curriculum, tailored to individuals.
Personalised interventions to support and challenge	Personalised interventions to support and challenge	Personalised interventions to support and challenge	Personalised interventions to support and challenge
P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence	P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence	P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence	P4C for critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence
Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning	Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning	Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning	Specialist Spanish for cultural perspectives and to increase depth of language learning
Daily mindfulness to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation	Daily mindfulness to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation	Daily mindfulness twice daily to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation	Daily mindfulness twice daily to find inner calm, grounding and self-regulation
Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning ,	Weekly Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning	Weekly Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning	Weekly Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning



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Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills	Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills	Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills	Specialist Drama lessons to build confidence & presentation skills
Current events through discussion & School subscription to First News	Current events through discussion & School subscription to First News	Current Events through discussion & School subscription to First News	Current Events through discussion & School subscription to First News
Pupils encouraged to develop hobbies and interests and to share these with peers	Pupils encouraged to develop hobbies and interests and to share these with peers	Pupils encouraged to develop hobbies and interests and to share these with peers	Pupils encouraged to develop hobbies and interests and to share these with peers
		After school Booster sessions 3x weekly in English, Maths and Reasoning	
		Focused holiday homework packs based on school choices	Focused holiday homework packs based on school choices
Introduction to Atom Learning for online	Atom Learning for online exam practice	Atom learning and paper exam practice.	Atom learning and paper exam practice.



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		Weekly <i>Trial Run</i> exams from Summer Term, with detailed individualised feedback	Weekly <i>Trial Run</i> exams from Summer Term, with detailed individualised feedback
	Spring Term: 11+ club to focus on interview skills, problem solving and critical thinking	Spring Term: 11+ club to focus on interview skills, problem solving and critical thinking	Spring Term: 11+ club to focus on interview skills, problem solving and critical thinking
		Summer term: Interview practice	Interview practice
			Post exam projects ad trips
			PSHE preparation for senior school transition



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11+ Journey for Parents

Our 11+ preparation begins as soon as pupils join us in the Early Years and builds up gradually over the years. We work in partnership with parents throughout this process so that we can ensure that each child reaches their full potential.

There are many ways in which parents can support their child with the 11+ process. Please see below for general information, and some that is more specific to each year group.

Reading

Regular reading is one of the best indicators of success at 11+. We ask that parents support their children to develop a solid reading foundation and habit with regular reading together at home in the Early Years and Key Stage One, followed by lots of encouragement, discussion of text and supervision of daily independent and/or shared reading in Key Stage Two. Reading lists are available from the class teacher.

Assessment



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From the Early Years Foundation Stage, we track pupil progress and attainment in a stress-free environment, setting children on the path to success from the very start of their education. Children from Year One upwards sit termly standardised assessments, which provide us with data that is shared with parents at termly Parents' Evenings. Teachers use this data, in conjunction with formative assessment, to set termly targets for every pupil.

How to choose a school at 11+

A number of factors will contribute to the short listing of schools at 11+, whether this is State, State selective (Grammar) or Independent.

These include individual family circumstances such as finances, location of home and willingness to travel, as well as the 'best fit' for the child, taking into account both academics, whether the school is single sex or co-ed, and other opportunities such as sport and the arts on offer at the school. At The Children's House we work with each family and offer guidance and support to ensure every child has a school that they will flourish in and most importantly be happy at.

Please see appendix 1 for a list of 11+ schools to consider.

Grammar vs independent

There are a small selection of State schools that are either fully selective (grammar) or offer a number of selective places to children. See list below. Every independent school in London requires pupils to sit an 11+ entrance exam, but these will differ in content and difficulty.

11+ Information



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Parents are invited to a Meet the Teacher Curriculum Evening at the start of the academic year. From Year 4 onwards, they will receive some information and guidance on the preparation for 11+.

The next whole school 11+ Information Evening for parents will be offered in Spring 2025.

The Children's House operates an open door policy for parents, who are welcome to book in appointments with the class teacher and/or Headteacher at any point to discuss 11+ choices and requirements.



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Early Years Foundation Stage & Key Stage One	Key Stage Two
<p>EYFS: Parent Workshops in phonics, early reading, critical thinking and digital learning offered for parents of children in the Nursery, Pre-Reception and Reception</p>	<p>Year 4: At the start of the school year the Class teacher will clarify what parents need to think about and do in the year ahead, to prepare for the 11+.</p> <p>Year 4 Spring Term Parents' Evening: Parents will meet with both the Headteacher and the Class Teacher to explore school options.</p>
<p>Parents focus on supporting children to establish good reading and homework routines, and gain a solid foundation in English, Maths and Reasoning</p>	<p>Year 5: At the start of the school year, we will clarify what parents need to do in the year ahead for 11+ preparation and timings.</p> <p>Year 5 Autumn Term Parents' Evening: Parents to discuss 11+ long list with the class teacher (and, where appropriate Headteacher)</p> <p>Year 5 Summer Term Parent's Evening: 11+ short list discussed with the Headteacher and class teacher.</p>
	<p>Year 6 Autumn Term:</p> <p>September: Parents asked to complete TCH information form, including 11+ shortlist and other information to support School's references. Grammar school entrance exams take place.</p> <p>October: 1:1 11+ parent meetings with Headteacher, class teacher and, where appropriate, SENCo.</p> <p>November – January: 11+ exams period. Detailed 11+ reference form sent to all registered schools</p> <p>November: Some schools will hold a computer-based pretest</p>



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	<p>Dec – Jan: Most schools will hold a formal written or online exam.</p> <p>Jan - Feb: Interviews</p>
	<p>Year 6 Spring Term:</p> <p>February: Independent school offer letters</p> <p>March: independent school acceptance deadlines & state school offers</p>
	<p>Year 6 Summer Term:</p> <p>March – July – Post exam special projects and events, secondary school transition preparation</p>



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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Curriculum Policies, especially English & Maths
- Reading Policy

Schools to consider at 11+

These are listed by section, in alphabetical order.

State Schools that are either Grammar or have a proportion of selective places

- Dame Alice Owen (Co-ed), Herts
- Henrietta Barnett (Girls), Hampstead Garden Suburb
- Latymer (Co-ed), Edmonton
- Queen Elizabeth's School (Boys), Barnet
- St Mary Magdalen, Islington (Co-ed, 10% of places offered to top scorers on the Governor's aptitude test)

Independent Sector

Co-ed

- Eaton Square Senior, Mayfair
- Highgate, Highgate North London
- Forest School, Snaresbrook
- Kensington Park School (KPS), Queensway
- North Bridge House Senior School, Hampstead



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- North Bridge House Senior School, Canonbury
- North London Grammar School, Hendon
- Mill Hill, Mill Hill
- Maida Vale School, Maida Vale
- The King Alfred School, Golders Hill

Boys

- City of London Boys', Blackfriars's
- St Pauls' School, Barnes
- University College School (UCS), Hampstead
- Wetherby Senior School, Marylebone
- Westminster School, Westminster

Girls

- Channing, Highgate
- City of London Girls', Barbican
- South Hampstead High School, Finchley Road
- St Margaret's School (4-16), Hampstead
- St Paul's School, Hammersmith
- The Village Prep, Belsize Park



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This Policy was reviewed, amended and agreed by the Council of Management in Dec 2024. It will be reviewed again in one year's time.

Agreed by _____ Chair of the Council of Management