

FAQs

How can I comment on the proposed admission arrangements?

The public consultation runs from 19 November 2018 – 7 January 2019. To view and comment on the proposals, please visit www.birmingham.gov.uk

How do I find out if I am in a catchment area and which one I am in?

Maps of our catchment areas can be viewed on our website.

You can enter your post code at www.birmingham.gov.uk/wardlookup and the ward you live in will be shown. You can then compare this ward to our maps to find out if you live in a catchment area and to identify your local selective school.

How do I find out more about the entrance test?

Please visit www.birminghamgrammarschools.org for more information on the test and what to expect. Applicants will still be required to sit an entrance test. The test is not changing.

How will places be offered?

Please view our explanatory presentation for information on how places will be offered. This can be found at <https://prezi.com/view/tA3jm0XY2HsiYlrYGK7g/>

What does this mean in practice?

Those children who live in a selective school's catchment area will have a greater chance of being offered a place at that school, provided that they meet the qualifying (Pupil Premium) or priority (non Pupil-Premium) score. These scores will be consistent across all of the selective schools.

Those pupils living outside of the catchment areas will still be able to apply for the remaining places. As now, their chances of successfully receiving an offer will be determined by their score in the entrance test.

What if I don't want to apply to the school that serves my catchment area?

As now, parents may express a preference for any of the selective schools. These proposals do not change that. They merely give a higher priority to applicants who live in a school's catchment area.

Why are you doing this? The current system worked perfectly well.

In recent years, the current system has led to increased divergence in the cut-off scores for the different schools. In many cases, children travel long distances to school.

The current system of pure ranking is used by a minority of selective schools across the country, usually by those that are not part of a selective area or a family of schools. Most selective schools use a combination of a "pass" score with distance or a catchment area.

How did you decide on the catchment areas?

The catchment areas have been designed to ensure that there is a strong chance that children living within them would be offered a place at the catchment area school, provided that they meet the qualifying (Pupil Premium) or priority (non Pupil Premium) score. This is based on application patterns over recent years.

I don't live in any of the catchment areas. Can I still apply?

We welcome applications from children outside of the catchment areas. As now, parents, wherever they live, may express a preference for any of the selective schools and an offer will depend on their child's score.

Based on previous application patterns, we do not expect that the available places will all be filled by children living in the catchment areas.

What about siblings?

Under the current admissions criteria, there is no priority given for siblings. The new proposals give priority for siblings in some situations, for example where scores are equal among children applying from outside the catchment area. However, we are mindful that parents may have already made choices for older siblings and we would be interested to hear views on this through the consultation process.

Why are you increasing the pupil premium cohort at the selective schools?

We believe that selective schools should be accessible to all, regardless of background. By increasing the percentage of places available to 25%, we will provide a consistent approach across all the selective schools.

In addition, by providing greater access to those living in the catchment area, we aim to build on the productive links that have been established between the selective schools and local primary schools.