



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE 11+ EXAMS

COVERING THE BEXLEY, KENT,
ST. OLAVE'S AND NEWSTEAD WOOD
EXAMS



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Disclaimer

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information in this guide is accurate and up-to-date (as of April 2024), Kin Learning and its staff take no responsibility - legal or otherwise - for any errors contained herein.

Parents are encouraged to use this guide as a starting point and then to verify the information by reading school or council admissions policies and guidance.

Additional Support

If you have further questions or are simply looking for support during the 11+ process, we encourage you to join our Facebook group, [The Happy 11+ Hub](#).

[Click here to join.](#)



Introduction

About the Author

Kamilah Hale is the Founder of Kin Learning and a tutor with over 15 years of experience. After attending the “super-selective” Newstead Wood School, Kamilah went on to study Management at the London School of Economics, graduating with a First Class Honours degree.

Having tutored part-time for several years, she opened her first tutoring centre in 2013 with the aim of creating an educational environment that children actually wanted to come to; where they became well-rounded, sociable students who not only excelled academically, but were also in possession of the essential people skills and natural curiosity that is needed to succeed in today's world.

In the last few years, Kamilah and her small team have taught many hundreds of local students, achieving more than 10 consecutive years of coaching students to secure places at the most prestigious schools in Kent, London and across the U.K. Her students regularly achieve over 410 out of 423 in the Kent test, attain top marks in individual papers and reach the top 180 in the Bexley exam, thus enabling them to get into any school of their choice.

For more information on Kin Learning's 11+ tuition, mock tests and summer courses, visit www.kinlearning.com.

Chapter 1

An Introduction to the Bromley and Kent 11+ Exams

Chapter 1

Introduction

Kent is one of the few remaining grammar school areas left in the country, with a total of five 11+ exams available to sit: the Bexley, Kent, Newstead Wood, St. Olave's and Medway exams. Having so much choice, however, presents a few complications that parents are usually expected to navigate without guidance.

This guide will explain the ins and outs of four of the Kent exams (Bexley, Kent, Newstead and Olave's) with information aimed specifically at parents in greater Bromley and south-east London. These parents areas often face added complications because they are on the outskirts of many of these schools' catchment areas. Understanding the system is, therefore, vital if parents are to make the right choice for their child's secondary schooling.

As many parents are aware, St. Olave's and Newstead Wood have long been at the top of the national secondary school rankings (although Newstead has fallen somewhat in recent years). Because of the competitive nature of these schools' exams, parents often assume that, if their child can get into these schools, they can get in anywhere; however, this is not always the case as all of the exams vary in content and level of difficulty. We therefore recommend that you study each school's entrance requirements carefully before starting your preparations.

Chapter 1

Testing and Results

For almost all of the schools in this guide, your child will sit an exam in September of Year 6 and will receive their results in October.

Generally, these results will tell you your child's score but they will not guarantee that your child will be offered a place at their preferred school.

Based on your child's results, you will be expected to fill in your Common Application Form (CAF), listing your secondary school preferences.

In March of Year 6, on National Offer Day, you'll receive a secondary school offer based on your CAF preferences.

When completing your CAF, it's important that you are realistic about the schools your child is likely to get into. When the time comes, you can use the information in this guide to help you to decide which schools your child has a good chance of getting into.

Chapter 1

Before You Start Reading

Before you read this guide, we recommend having Google Maps at the ready so you can check your straight-line distance from the various schools.

If you're not sure how to check straight-line distance, this video will guide you -

<https://link.kinlearning.com/straightlinedistance>.

Lastly, before you start down the 11+ rabbit hole, we also recommend checking which comprehensive (non-selective) schools are near you and what their results are.

Sometimes, parents find that their local comprehensive performs as well, or nearly as well, as their nearest grammar schools. If this is the case for you, we urge you to carefully consider whether it's worth taking the 11+ at all (because you don't have to!).

This school guide in The Telegraph is a good way of learning more about your local schools' results - <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education-and-careers/state-sixth-form-colleges-admission-rate-oxford-cambridge/>.

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam



Subjects

Exam Board: GL

(All Multiple-Choice)

Numerical Reasoning (25%)

Non-Verbal Reasoning
(25%)

Verbal Reasoning (50%)



Schools

Bexley Grammar (Mixed School)

Townley Grammar School for Girls

Beths Grammar (Boys School)

and Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School (Mixed School).



Stats

No. of Children Taking Test: approx. 6000

Number of Children Deemed Selective: approx. 2000

Number of Places: 800

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Overview

The Bexley exam consists of two papers, each containing a mixture of questions on different subjects. Students are given approximately 50 minutes to complete each paper, with both papers divided into individually timed sections. The first paper covers comprehension and verbal reasoning and the second paper covers non-verbal and mathematical skills.

Bexley - Non-Verbal Reasoning

The numerical and non-verbal reasoning sections make up 25% of the total marks respectively. Whilst the non-verbal reasoning questions are of the usual sort, many of our past students noted that they were given a large number of questions to do in a very short period of time, so working at speed is very important.

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Bexley - Verbal Reasoning

The verbal reasoning section makes up 50% of the total marks in the exam, which is more than any other single subject. The verbal reasoning paper includes comprehension plus several more traditional verbal reasoning questions.

In 2023, the Bexley exam board changed from CEM to GL, meaning that Bexley and Kent now share an exam board. Despite this, it seems the Bexley and Kent verbal reasoning papers still differ significantly, which you will need to take into account when preparing your child.

The Kent English paper includes spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) questions whilst the verbal reasoning paper includes questions on number series and codes, amongst many others.

By contrast, the Bexley GL paper seems to focus on vocabulary-related questions, such as identifying synonyms and antonyms, word relationships or filling in the missing letters. Presently, it does not seem to include any SPaG.

The format of the new Bexley paper is quite consistent with the old CEM format, so we recommend using a mix of GL and CEM materials to prepare for the exam.

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Bexley - Numerical Reasoning

The numerical reasoning section includes a variety of typical Year 5/6 maths topics, including: arithmetic, data, measure, decimals and fractions. Although these topics are unsurprising - and are covered in depth in most 11+ practice materials - the Bexley exam is fairly unique in presenting these topics within advanced problem-solving questions. Students preparing for the Bexley exam therefore need to be adept in applying their existing knowledge in different ways rather than completing questions by rote.

Testing Arrangements

Children sit the Bexley exam around mid-September (usually around the 12th) with results released approximately three weeks after children sit the exam.

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Pass Mark

For many years, the pass mark for the Bexley 11+ has been between 214 and 218 marks out of 280.

Students who place in the top 180 (approximately the top 3%) are guaranteed a place at the school of their choice regardless of their distance from the school. To be in the top 180, children usually need a score of around 245-250 out of 280.

Selective students outside of the Top 180 will be allocated to a school based on their distance from the school. At this point, their actual score becomes irrelevant. This means, for example, that a child with a score of 218 that lives near to a particular school will be given priority over a child that scored 240 and lives further away.

Gaining a Place

Around 2,000 children typically “pass” the exam (officially known as being “deemed selective”).

Continued on next page.

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

Gaining a Place (Cont.)

Catchment areas vary annually based on the number of applicants per school. To determine your child's likelihood of acceptance at a Bexley school, review [past data](#) to see if they would have been offered a place in previous years. Current catchment area details for Bexley are provided below.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	July 2022
Beths Grammar (Boys)	5.7 miles Straight Line	6.5 miles Straight Line	6.9 miles Straight Line	All selective applicants offered places	7.8 miles Straight Line	10.9 miles Straight line	6.068 miles Straight line
Bexley Grammar (Mixed)	2.2 miles Straight Line	2.3 miles Straight Line	2.2 miles Straight Line	3.2 miles Straight Line	2.5 miles Straight Line	2.5 miles Straight Line	1.92 miles Straight Line
Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar (Mixed)	4.4 miles Straight Line	5.1 miles Straight Line	4 miles Straight Line	9.3 miles Straight Line	5.0 miles Straight Line	4.4 miles Straight Line	3.914 miles Straight Line
Townley Grammar School for Girls	All selective applicants offered places	9.7 miles Road route	6 miles Road route	6.6 miles Road route	5.8 miles Straight line	8.9 miles Straight line	6.267 miles Straight line

Chapter 2

The Bexley 11+ Exam

How Does the Bexley Exam Compare to the Kent Exam?

The Bexley and Kent exams are fairly similar in terms of content and level of difficulty, however, there are far more places available for Kent grammars than there are for Bexley grammars - nearly 6000 places compared to Bexley's 800.

Given that the two exams are so similar and that children have a greater chance of passing the Kent test, we generally recommend that children sit both exams if possible. As the Kent test is typically held a week before the Bexley exam, sitting the Kent test can also give children some valuable experience of sitting a real exam.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam



Subjects

Exam Board: GL

(All Multiple-Choice)

Maths

English - Comprehension,
Spelling and Punctuation

Reasoning - Verbal and
Non-Verbal



Creative Writing (only used
as part of appeal process)



Stats

No. of Children Taking Test:
approx. 17,037

Number of Children That
Pass: approx. 7,700

Number of Places: 5,801

Figures correct as of March 2024. Note: the number of children taking and passing the test will change every year.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam



Schools

There are 35 schools covered by the Kent 11+ exam. The following schools are typically of most interest to those in the Bromley, Beckenham, Sidcup and Sevenoaks areas:

Boys' Schools:

Dartford Grammar

Oakwood Park Grammar
(Maidstone)

The Judd School (Tonbridge)

The Skinners' School
(Tonbridge)

Tunbridge Wells Boys

Wilmington Boys

Girls' Schools:

Dartford Grammar School for
Girls

Tonbridge Grammar

Tunbridge Wells Girls

Wilmington Girls

Weald of Kent

Mixed Schools:

Cranbrook School

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam

Kent - English

Children will be given a 25-minute multiple-choice English test that will form one-third of their total marks in the exam.

The English section contains comprehension questions as well as a grammar, punctuation and spelling section.

This 25-minute test will not include the creative writing section, which is at the end of the test. The creative writing section will not be marked, however, it may be used as a deciding factor if a child has failed the test overall and their headteacher has made an appeal on their behalf.

Kent - Maths

The maths portion of the test also accounts for one-third of children's total marks. This is a 25-minute test with a range of multiple-choice questions.

The Kent papers are written by GL and contain a typical range of Year 6 maths topics such as arithmetic, fractions, measure, averages, percentages and data.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam

Kent - Non-Verbal and Spatial Reasoning

Non-verbal and spatial reasoning will be tested as part of the reasoning paper. The non-verbal reasoning sections will be timed individually (similarly to the Newstead Wood exam).

Whilst CGP now release specific spatial reasoning practice books, our students have informed us that these bear little resemblance to the spatial reasoning questions in the Kent test. Most children report that the spatial reasoning section is relatively easy. In most cases, a child with good non-verbal reasoning skills should be able to answer these questions without any special preparation.

Kent - Verbal Reasoning

The Kent verbal reasoning section contains most of the common types of verbal reasoning question including questions on synonyms and antonyms, codes, number sequences and hidden words.

Questions of this sort can be found in the Bond Assessment Papers (not in the CEM format, however) and in the CGP Assessment Papers.

The verbal and non-verbal reasoning papers will be grouped together to form the final third of a child's total mark.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam

Pass Mark

The Kent test is unique in setting a pass mark for each exam paper as well as an overall pass mark. Children must therefore do sufficiently well in all subjects in order to get a place. Students typically need to achieve a minimum score of 107 out of 141 in each paper and also need a minimum total score of around 332 out of 423 (exact figure varies annually).

Given the marking system for this exam, it is very important that children are good all-rounders when preparing for the Kent test.

If a child falls just below the pass mark in one or two sections, their headteacher has the option to appeal the council's decision. At this point, the child's creative writing task will be looked at, in addition to samples of their recent work from school. This appeals process happens before the final results are released to parents.

How Does the Kent Exam Compare to the Bexley Exam?

As of 2023, the Kent and Bexley exams share the same exam board - GL. To succeed in the Kent exam, children need to be good all-rounders, whereas they need to perform particularly well in English/Verbal Reasoning to pass the Bexley test.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam

How the Exam Works

The Kent exam is usually held at the beginning of Year 6 during the first week of September, with different dates for children inside and outside the Kent area. 'Kent residents' are those that live in one of the 12 Kent boroughs - Ashford, Canterbury City, Dartford, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe, Gravesham, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Swale, Thanet, Tonbridge and Malling or Tunbridge Wells.

Results are released 4-5 weeks after the test, around the same time as the other 11+ results. Of the 17,000 or so children that sit the exam, around half will pass the exam. The 5,801 Kent grammar school places will then be allocated based on students' distance from the school as well as their secondary school preferences (stated in the Common Application Form).

Gaining a Place

Unlike the Bexley grammar schools, several of the Kent grammars give a large number of places to students based on their overall score rather than prioritising distance from the school. This creates greater opportunity for those living out of catchment.

In the remainder of this chapter, we have highlighted schools that reserve places for high-scoring, out-of-catchment students as these will be of particular interest to parents in the greater Bromley area.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Boys' Schools

The Skinners' School (Tunbridge Wells)

Skinners allocates the majority of its spaces by distance, prioritising those in the "West Kent area", which is a group of parishes immediately surrounding the school. In 2019 and 2020, their catchment area varied significantly - from 11.5 miles in 2019 to 3.5 miles in 2020. This variation was due to the birth rate.

The school also reserves 20 places for out-of-catchment high scorers.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Boys' Schools

The Judd School

Judd School allocates 157 places based on proximity to the school and 20 places to high scorers in the Kent 11+, regardless of location. Over the last 5 years (as of 2024), the out-of-area catchment scores have been between 402 and 409 out of 423. See below for more detail.

The out-of-area cut-off scores tend to be about 75 marks above the general Kent pass mark, i.e. if the Kent pass mark is 332, the Judd cut-off will be around 407.

The table below shows the cut-off scores after the school worked through its waiting list. Waiting list scores tend to be between 2 and 5 marks below the scores required on National Offer Day in March.

Inner Area postcodes: TN1, TN2, TN3, TN4; TN8, TN9, TN10, TN11, TN12, TN13, TN14, TN15; ME18, ME19; TN16 1** and TN16 2** (not TN16 3** or TN16 9**); DA4 0** (not DA4 9**).

Plus the civil parish of Halstead.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
In-Area Cut-Off Score	361	361	373	384	384	384	376
Out-of-Area Cut-Off Score	400	393	402	402	406	407	406

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Boys' Schools

Wilmington Grammar School for Boys

The school reserves 18 places per year for top 10% of 11+ performers and allocates all other places based on location. Where a tie-breaker is needed, distance will be used as the deciding factor.

For a full list of the catchment area parishes, please visit the school's website at <http://www.wgsb.org.uk/admissions>.

Dartford Grammar School for Boys

As of 2025, Dartford Grammar (Boys) will reserve 130 places for boys within the Dartford Electoral Wards and 50 places for top scorers, regardless of address. 13 places will be reserved for Pupil Premium recipients who score at least 20 points higher than the overall Kent pass mark.

Recent cut-off scores are detailed below. All scores are out of 423.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
In-Area Cut-Off Score	369	379	381	384	379
Out-of-Area Cut-Off Score	391	399	401	406	392

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Boys' Schools

Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys

Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys admits passing students based on their location.

Priority for places is given firstly to siblings of current students and to students with special health or access reasons. Following this allocation, priority is given to children who live within a 3-mile radius of the school and then to those living in the following parishes:

Badgers Mount, Bidborough, Brasted, Capel, Chevening, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Dunton Green, Edenbridge, Hadlow, Halstead, Hever, Hildenborough, Ightham, Kemsing, Knockholt, Leigh, Otford, Pembury, Penshurst, Plaxtol, Riverhead, Rusthall, Seal, Sevenoaks, Sevenoaks Weald, Shipbourne, Shoreham, Southborough, Speldhurst, Sundridge with Ide hill, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Westerham.

Following this allocation, remaining spaces are allocated according to straight-line distance from the school. The furthest distance offered changes every year and was just over 10 miles in 2023.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls

The school reserves 135 places for those living within specified parishes/towns, 35 Governor places (for those that score the highest) and 10 Pupil Premium Places.

Governor places are given solely on the basis of score and are not dependent on the applicant's home address. Students living outside of the Tonbridge/Sevenoaks area can therefore qualify for places at the school if they score particularly highly in the Kent 11+ exam.

The 135 "in area" spaces are reserved for students living in Tonbridge and Malling Borough, Tunbridge Wells Borough and Sevenoaks District areas. Girls living in these areas will then be prioritised on the basis of their scores.

A [PDF on the school's website](#) provides details of historical cut-off scores from 2019 to 2023 (inclusive). In recent years, the cut-off scores have been between 371 and 384 for in-area places, and between 393 and 402 for out-of-area places. All scores are out of 423.

Where there is a tie between applicants for the last place, distance from the school is used as a tie-breaker.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls

The following table details the cut-off scores for Tonbridge Grammar for Girls for the last 5 years. These were the final cut-off scores once all places had been filled. The scores were a little higher during the first round of allocations on National Offer Day in March.

For full score information, visit

<https://link.kinlearning.com/tonbridgegirlsadmissions>.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
In-Area Cut-Off Score	367	377	370	378	377
Out-of-Area Cut-Off Score	388	387	400	394	383

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Girls

Like Tonbridge Grammar School, the school reserves 14 Governor places for girls who scored particularly highly in the Kent 11+ exam. In the case of a tie, straight-line distance from the school is used as the deciding factor.

The school does not release information on the historical cut-off scores for Governor's places, but it is probably safe to assume that, like Dartford Boys and Tonbridge, scores will need to be over 400 (out of 423).

Dartford Grammar School for Girls

There are 180 places available at the school in total. The school reserves 100 places for those within the catchment area with 80 remaining places, however, historical information shows that around 15-25 places are given each year to those with siblings at the school. This leaves approximately 60 places to be allocated to high scorers.

The most recent cut-off scores available are detailed below. All scores are out of 423.

	2019	2020	2021
In-Area Cut-Off Score	359	372	369
Out-of-Area Cut-Off Score	385	393	396

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Wilmington Grammar School for Girls

Wilmington Grammar School for Girls has a Published Admissions Number of 180.

The school awards up to 18 places (10%) to the top performing maths students, within a 5-mile radius, who have been deemed selective.

2023 intake scores ranged between 129 and 141 (out of 141) in the Kent 11+ maths section. In 2022, the minimum score required was slightly lower, at 125.

The remaining places at the school are offered to those within specified parishes around the school. Details of the parishes can be found here -

<https://link.kinlearning.com/wilmingtongirlsadmissions>.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Weald of Kent

Weald of Kent operates across two campuses based in Tonbridge and Sevenoaks. There are 270 places available at the school - 180 at Tonbridge and 90 at Sevenoaks.

The school reserves 18 spaces a year for Pupil Premium students. Admission for these students is based on distance from the school.

Weald does not reserve any places for high-scoring students, however, their catchment area can be very large, so girls in Orpington and Bromley may still be able to gain a place.

After places are allocated to other priority categories (such as siblings and Pupil Premium students), places are allocated to students living in “Category A” towns, which are listed on the next page. These students are ranked according to their proximity to the school’s Tonbridge campus.

Once all Category A places have been allocated, remaining spaces will be allocated based on straight-line distance from the school. For the 2023 intake, the school accepted students within a 25-mile radius of the Tonbridge campus.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Girls' Schools

Weald of Kent

Category A Districts

Tonbridge Town, the District of Sevenoaks, and the Parishes of Ightham, Ivy Hatch, Kings Hill, Pembury, Platt and St Mary's Platt, Plaxtol and Shipbourne.

Tonbridge Town is made up of TN9, TN10, TN11 and TN12.

The following Parishes within the Sevenoaks district are included: Brasted, Chevening, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Dunton Green, Edenbridge, Godden Green, Halstead, Hever, Kemsing, Knockholt, Leigh, Otford, Penshurst, Riverhead, Seal, Sevenoaks town, Sevenoaks Weald and Underriver, Shoreham, Sundridge and Ide Hill, Westerham and Crockham Hill.

Chapter 3

The Kent 11+ Exam - Mixed Schools

Cranbrook School

Cranbrook is unusual in being a state boarding school. This means that schooling is free to all students, but boarders will be charged a termly fee for accommodation. The school has two points of formal entry - the 11+ exam (for entry in Year 7) and the 13+ exam (for entry in Year 9).

The school uses the Kent 11+ exam for entry in Year 7 and has its own exam for the 13+ (which tests maths and English).

The school admits 90 Year 7 day students and 38 Year 9 day students and uses distance as its primary admission criterion, giving priority to students that are either within 8.5 km of the school or within one of the local parishes of: Cranbrook, Sissinghurst, Frittenden, Goudhurst, Staplehurst, Benenden, Sandhurst and Hawkhurst.

In the last 7 years (as of 2024), the minimum score required for entry was 329 (out of 423) at its lowest, and 365 at its highest (this was in 2021). Since 2020, children have needed a score of at least 350 to pass.

[See here](#) for further details on historical admission scores.

Chapter 3

Related Articles

Kent Schools

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-41599066>
- <http://www.kentlive.news/news/kent-news/50-best-secondary-schools-kent-429044>
- <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/kent-test#null>

General Advice

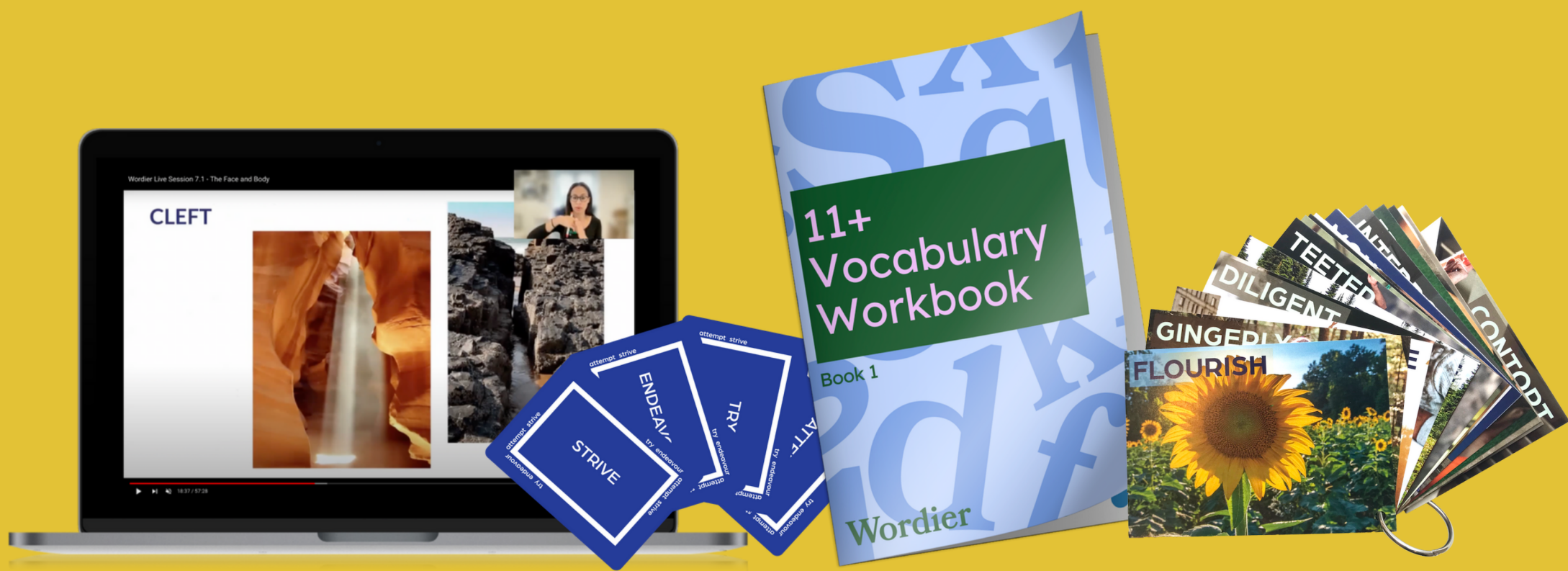
- <http://kinlearning.com/2017/03/06/11-plus-catchment-areas-bexley-bromley-how-to-check-straight-line-distances/>



22 Oct 2021

Excellent materials

Excellent materials, great vocabulary course and so important for 11+ exams. My daughter enjoyed the course, flash cards and the Wordier book and received a fantastic score in verbal reasoning at Bexley test, followed by 100% in reasoning at Kent. Thank you!



Wordier mixes research-backed methods with a healthy dollop of fun to teach vocabulary the right way.

Based on over a decade of experience preparing students for the Kent, Bexley, Olave's and Newstead exams, Wordier resources are the perfect accompaniment to your child's 11+ preparation.

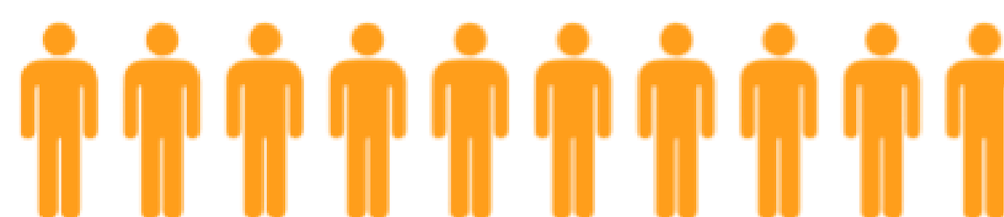
Wordier
wordier.online

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam



Subjects

Exam Board: School's Own

Subjects - Stage One:

Maths

English

Logic (a mix of verbal and non-verbal reasoning)



Subjects - Stage Two:

English (including creative writing)

Maths

Stats

No. of Children Taking Test:
1,537 (based on 2023 figures)

Number of Children That
Passed the First Stage:
approx. 450

Number of Places: 124



Catchment Area

None

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

St. Olave's - Stage One Overview

The Stage One exam takes one hour in total and contains Maths, English and Logic sections, the last of which contains verbal and non-verbal reasoning-style questions. All questions in the Stage One exam are multiple-choice.

These sections are tested separately within the exam but the timings and marks are not equally distributed between the four subjects. Our past students have told us that approximately half of the hour is given to maths, with the remaining 30 minutes split between English and Logic.

The Stage One English Exam

The Stage One English paper does not contain any creative writing questions and is largely a test of comprehension. There are usually several vocabulary and grammar questions among the comprehension questions.

As part of your exam preparations, you may wish to review our video tutorial on the Olave's English sample paper - <https://youtu.be/oMzzlssnMQk>.

Although Olave's produces its own exam, you can find similar questions in the Bond CEM Verbal Reasoning books. The Wordier vocabulary resources have also been designed with this exam in mind.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

The Stage One Maths Exam

The Stage One Maths paper contains approximately 30 questions to complete in about 30 minutes. All questions are multiple-choice and, although this is only the first stage of the exam, the questions tend to be fairly difficult.

This stage has been known to include high-level questions on fractions, decimals, algebra, shape and measure. Prepare your child with brainteasers and puzzle books as well as standard 11+ materials.

St. Olave's - Stage One Logic Exam

Whilst the St. Olave's school website refers to this section as "Logic", boys are actually tested on two separate verbal and non-verbal reasoning sections in the exam. These sections usually last 6-7 minutes each.

The verbal reasoning section mixes traditional verbal reasoning questions with grammar and punctuation questions.

St. Olave's non-verbal reasoning section is notoriously difficult, even for those who go on to pass the exam. It is essential to work on exam technique in preparation for this section so that boys do not spend too long focusing on one question to the detriment of all others.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

St. Olave's - Stage Two Overview

The Stage Two exam contains two papers, each one hour in length. The first part of the test, an English paper, contains questions on comprehension; a spelling, grammar and punctuation section; and a creative writing section.

The majority of the comprehension and SPaG questions are multiple-choice except for a couple of open-answer comprehension questions.

The second paper, a Maths paper, is also one hour. Unlike the Stage One Maths paper, this paper is not multiple-choice and marks are awarded for working.

The Stage Two English Exam

Students are advised to spend about half of their time on the comprehension, spelling, grammar and punctuation sections and the remaining half on their creative writing. In addition to comprehension, the first half of this paper tests children's knowledge of fairly advanced writing and grammatical terms. The comprehension assessment usually has a longer, multiple-choice prose section, and a shorter, open-answer poetry section.

Whilst the school states that there is no real way of revising for this exam, a broad vocabulary and a knowledge of rhetorical devices and punctuation types will certainly help.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

St. Olave's - Stage Two English Continued

Children are expected to spend 30 minutes on their creative writing answers. They are usually given only one question to answer and, therefore, cannot pick a topic of their choice.

In the creative writing section, children are awarded marks not just for the content of their writing, but also for vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, grammar and even handwriting.

Whilst handwriting does not make up a huge proportion of the available creative writing marks, Olave's examiners have stated that a neat layout and good handwriting helps students to form a strong first impression, which is vital when busy examiners have hundreds of papers to mark.

For support with preparing for the creative writing portion of the Olave's exam, visit <https://link.kinlearning.com/creativewriting>.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

St. Olave's - Stage Two Maths Exam

The St. Olave's maths exam is a one-hour paper in which children are given marks for working as well as for their final answers. Many boys struggle to write coherent, legible working so this will need to be worked on throughout their Olave's preparation.

The St. Olave's maths exam is by far the most difficult maths exam in the area and contains content that would usually be given to the average Year 9 or 10 student.

Whilst some of Olave's official sample papers are a good representation of the second stage exam, others are far easier than the actual exam. It is worth purchasing the sample paper available at the Olave's Open Day as this typically gives a fairly realistic portrayal of the actual exam.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

Admissions Procedure

The first stage of the Olave's exam is usually held on the penultimate Friday of September. Approximately 3 weeks after this exam, students are told whether or not they have passed this first stage. Students then have about 4 weeks to prepare for the second stage of the exam, usually held around the middle of November. Stage Two results aren't announced until National Offer Day at the beginning of the following March.

Should my child sit the St. Olave's exam?

When making a decision with regards to the St. Olave's test, it is worth bearing in mind that not only is their exam extremely difficult, but the school has absolutely no catchment area. Existing Olave's parents tell us that boys commute from as far as Hastings and North London to go to Olave's each day, so your son will be competing for a place against not only the top performers from the immediate area, but also the top performing boys for many miles.

Generally, boys that pass the Olave's exam have been working at the very top of their class at school for several years; however, if you feel that your son has not been living up to his potential at school, it is still worth looking into St. Olave's as an option, provided you start preparation early.

Chapter 4

The St. Olave's 11+ Exam

Should my child sit the St. Olave's exam cont.

If you feel that your son is a mid-performer that could do better, you will need to start looking into the Olave's exam at an early stage, preferably at the very beginning of Year 4. Starting your preparation early will give your son time to catch up with, and eventually overtake, the top performers in his school.

If the St. Olave's exam is so difficult, should we aim for a Kent or Bexley grammar instead?

If you are in the catchment area for Bexley or Kent schools, we certainly recommend applying for these schools in addition to St. Olave's. The Bexley and Kent exams are less difficult and competitive than the Olave's exam. If you've prepared for the Olave's exam, your son should be well-prepared for the Bexley and Kent exams anyway.

Knowing that Olave's is hard to get into, many parents aim instead to get an out-of-area place at Bexley, therefore requiring their child to be in the top 180 students. Statistically speaking, your child is more likely to get into Olave's than to be in the Top 180 - Olave's take the top 10% whereas the top 180 students are the top 3% of students taking the Bexley exam. We, therefore, do not recommend hedging all your bets on gaining a Top 180 space and would instead recommend sitting both the Bexley and Olave's exams.

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood 11+ Exam

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood Exam



Subjects

Exam Board: GL

Subjects:

Verbal Reasoning

Non-Verbal Reasoning

Stats

No. of Children Taking Test: approx. 1,000

Number of Places: 168



Catchment Area

9 mile radius from the school

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood Exam

Overview

The Newstead Wood exam consists of two papers: a verbal reasoning paper and a non-verbal reasoning paper. Students are given 45 minutes for the verbal reasoning paper whilst the non-verbal reasoning is administered in four 10-minute sections.

Despite the fact that maths and English aren't tested directly in the Newstead exam, our experience has taught us that the students who do best in the Newstead exam are typically very strong in English and maths as well. This means the Newstead exam is difficult to cram for, even for girls who are doing very well at school and in reasoning papers at home.

Pass Mark

The pass mark for the Newstead exam changes each year, however, for the last 10 years, students have needed a mark between 215 and 222 out of 280 to gain a place.

The two reasoning papers are given equal weight in the exam with no minimum mark in each paper. In the event of a tie for the last place, the girls' verbal reasoning marks will be used.

Although a mark of 220 out of 280 is equivalent to a score of about 78%, students should be getting scores of at least 90% when completing practice papers immediately before the test.

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood Exam

Newstead Wood - Verbal Reasoning

The Newstead Wood exam is written by GL and contains a range of quite typical verbal reasoning questions (similar to the Bond and CGP books).

The real Newstead exam contains approximately 80 questions to complete within 45 minutes. Students will therefore have only 30 seconds to complete each question.

The school sells a sample paper at their Open Day, however, the sample paper provided is also only half the length of a standard paper and therefore does not include all of the question types that may come up in the exam.

Newstead Wood - Non-Verbal Reasoning

The Non-Verbal Reasoning section contains four different types of question, timed in separate 10-minute papers. Once a child has completed a paper, they may not return to it to change their answers.

Like the Verbal Reasoning section, children are expected to complete one question every 30 seconds.

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood Exam

Gaining a Place

Following the Newstead exam, it is important to manage your child's expectations so that they do not get their hopes up. It's common for all candidates to report that the exam was easy, whether or not they end up passing. It is, therefore, important that children are aware that whilst it is a good thing that they found the exam easy, this does not necessarily mean that they passed (although hopefully they will!).

As so many students find the exam easier than expected, it seems that the key to passing is ensuring that your child reads the questions properly and checks their answers so they don't miss out on "easy" marks.

The Newstead Wood exam usually takes place on the last Friday in September of Year 6. Results are released two to three weeks later, however, at this stage, children are not guaranteed a place.

Your child's results letter will give you their mark and will provide data on the historical pass mark. Parents are expected to use this information to decide whether or not to put Newstead as their first choice on their Common Application Form (CAF) at the end of October.

Chapter 5

The Newstead Wood Exam

Gaining a Place Cont.

Following submission of the CAF, secondary school places will be confirmed in March of the following year (March of Year 6). When places at Newstead Wood are first allocated, the pass mark is usually between 220 and 225. This means that students scoring in the 215 to 220 range will most likely not be allocated a place at first. The pass mark will begin to lower from March onwards as Newstead starts to work through their waiting list. If your child has scored between 215 and 220, she is more likely to be offered a place in June or July.

If your daughter has scored between 215 to 220, it is still worth putting Newstead Wood as your first choice as this is the only way to be added to its waiting list.

Should my child sit the Newstead Wood exam?

Although the Newstead exam only tests verbal and non-verbal reasoning, the best candidates should be good all-rounders. This will not only help them to pass the exam but also to flourish when they get to Newstead.

Chapter 6

Frequently Asked 11+ Questions

Chapter 6

FAQs

When do children sit the 11+?

For grammar schools in the Kent area, children sit the 11+ exam in September of Year 6. St. Olave's then has a second stage exam in November of Year 6. Children then receive an initial indication of their results in October and an official school offer in March of Year 6. Private school exams are usually held between November and January of Year 6.

How much homework will my child need to do to pass the 11+?

The amount of homework that your child does depends on when they start their 11+ tuition and their level of knowledge at the beginning of their preparation. Many 11+ tutors will say that children need to be completing two hours of homework every day for at least two years before the exam, however, this is rarely necessary and does carry a high risk of burnout. Children who do this much work to pass the exam are also very likely to struggle if they reach a grammar school as they don't have the natural ability of some of the other students.

Most Kin Learning students do 1-2 hours a week of homework in Year 4, and 2-3 hours a week during Year 5. They also do at least an hour a day during the summer holidays immediately before the exam. Doing this level of work has enabled many of our students to score extremely well in their exams, even scoring full marks or placing in the Top 180.

Chapter 6

FAQs

I don't want my child to go to the local comprehensive. Should I apply only to grammar schools even though my child got a low score and is out of the catchment area?

When filling out the Common Application Form, you must apply only to schools that are realistic for your child. If you do not meet the admissions criteria for any of the schools you apply for, your local council will disregard your preferences and pick a school for you, regardless of whether you listed the school. Often, the school you receive will be an undersubscribed school, which is likely to be undesirable.

When filling in the Common Application Form, read the admissions criteria carefully to avoid disappointment on Offer Day. Details of certain schools' admissions criteria have been included in this guide.

If my child passes an 11+ exam, will they be guaranteed a place at the school of their choice?

Sadly, passing the 11+ is no guarantee that a child will actually receive a grammar school place. Once children have passed, many schools allocate places based on distance alone. We recommend taking this into account when choosing which schools to visit and aim for.

Chapter 6

FAQs

My child has always been an average student. Should they still do the 11+?

When considering whether to stretch a child with a view to sitting the 11+, it's important to consider their personality as well as academics. A good or average student at a comprehensive is usually equivalent to a poor student from a grammar school. You will need to decide whether you are comfortable with sending your child to a school where they may struggle to keep up. For less confident students, they may be better off at a comprehensive where they will feel they are one of the brighter students in the class.

Developing confidence may ultimately be better personally and academically for your child.

If you feel your child is an average student who is capable of much more, it is certainly worth looking into the 11+ and seeking the opinion of a tutor, who should be able to give you more of an impartial view. Beware, however, of tutors that turn away borderline students to protect their success rates.

If you have your heart set on the 11+ but your child is in the middle ability set in their class/year group, early preparation will be key. Starting at the beginning of Year 4, or even in Year 3, will give your child the chance to catch up with the highest performers in their class before going on to advanced 11+ material. Starting early is especially important if you want your child to go to Olave's.

Chapter 6

FAQs

Will my child be penalised if they don't put a school as their first choice?

Many parents worry that their school preferences are visible to schools and that not putting a school first will count against them. Some parents have even been told as much at open days, however, this is completely untrue.

Your school preferences will not be shown to your target schools and schools cannot give priority to children that rank them highly.

If you do not receive an offer from your first-choice school, your second choice will be treated as if it were your first. Similarly, if you do not receive an offer from your two highest-ranked schools, your third choice will be treated as if it were your first choice.

For more information on filling in your CAF school preferences, we recommend watching our CAF webinar here - <https://youtube.com/live/NCsUdrl6lik>.

Chapter 6

FAQs

Should my child sit the 11+?

Sitting the 11+ can be a stressful experience for the whole family, so it is important to consider whether a grammar school is an appropriate and realistic goal for your child. Not taking this into consideration may be setting yourself and your child up for a very upsetting, and potentially damaging, experience.

Many parents struggle to assess their child objectively, especially when he or she is the first of their children to sit the exam. When considering whether your child should sit the 11+, you may wish to consider the following questions:

- Has my child been at a good or excellent level during Years 2, 3 and 4 of school?
- Is my child a confident independent reader?
- Is my child able to problem-solve both in academic work and in real life? This may include when playing games or doing activities.
- Is my child (somewhat) willing to do additional work at home?
- Does my child have high standards for themselves and is he/she willing to persevere to achieve their goals?
- Can my child pick up new concepts quickly and retain new information?

Chapter 7

11+ Timeline

Chapter 7

11+ Timeline

Year 3

Whilst it is not essential to start 11+ preparation before Year 4, there is work that your child can do that will set them up nicely to start proper 11+ preparation in Year 4.

Prior to Year 4, we encourage parents to cover verbal and non-verbal reasoning with their child at home. Remember: these subjects are very rarely covered at school so an early introduction can make all the difference.

You can practise reasoning at home from as early as 5 years old. Most children enjoy this subject so you won't need to worry too much about overloading them at a young age. The Bond Assessment Papers provide reasoning practice for all ages. Throughout Year 3, you should also be practising times tables at home, making sure your child can tell time, and practising basic arithmetic.

To develop good study habits and wider skills that will help in the 11+, remember to encourage your child to read or listen to audiobooks, and try to provide a good supply of jigsaw puzzles and problem-solving books. These fun activities will give your child a real head start in their 11+ preparation and will also help them at school.

Chapter 7

11+ Timeline

Year 4

If you are aiming for a place at St. Olave's, we recommend starting tuition at the beginning of Year 4. With so much to cover, starting early will not only give your child a better chance of passing, but it will greatly reduce everyone's stress throughout your 11+ journey.

For other schools, we recommend starting dedicated 11+ work from at least the spring of Year 4, though this assumes your child is already performing above average for their age.

Once your child reaches Year 4, they should be completing weekly maths, English, verbal and non-verbal reasoning homework, although you don't need to spend hours and hours on this work.

When working at home, make sure that your child knows all of their times tables (up to 12) by mid-Year 4 and that they have a solid grasp of the four arithmetic operations (multiplication, division, subtraction and addition). Whilst arithmetic will be covered at school, we find that the majority of students are lacking in this area. It's therefore very helpful if parents or tutors can keep on top of this in Year 4.

Chapter 7

11+ Timeline

Year 5

If you haven't started tuition (or formal home preparation, if you prefer) by Year 5, it is absolutely vital to sort this out as soon as possible. If you start preparation any later than January of Year 5, you will be significantly decreasing your child's chances of success. It can be tempting to delay starting tuition in order to save money, however, this is often a false economy as you may end up paying for many hours of emergency lessons before the exam(s). If financially possible, we therefore recommend starting tuition by the beginning of Year 5 at the very latest.

During the course of Year 5, your child will start working on practice papers. There's no need to rush onto practice papers; successful 11+ students may not start practice papers until June or even July of Year 5. Rather than rushing to provide practice papers at home, make sure that your child has covered each 11+ topic in depth first. If a child is getting anything less than 80% in the practice papers, it's likely they started the papers too soon and need to go back to workbooks.

During Year 5, aim for your child to sit at least one mock test. If you're planning on booking only one mock test, schedule it for at least one month before the exam. If you sit a mock test at the last minute, you may not have sufficient time to work on your child's weaknesses.

Chapter 7

11+ Timeline

Year 5 cont.

Registration for most exams will open between April and June of Year 5. Don't forget to keep an eye on these dates as you won't get another chance to enrol your child for the exams.

A few schools (like St. Olave's) have their open days at this time of year too. Add these dates to your diary early to help you to make an informed choice when applying.

Year 6

The children will sit their 11+ exams in the September of Year 6. In early to mid-October, you will receive an initial indication of their results, at which point you must fill in your secondary school preferences and submit them to your local council by the end of October.

In March of Year 6, you will be told which secondary school your child has been allocated.

Chapter 8

Key Resources and Articles

Chapter 8

Key Resources and Related Articles

General Advice

- **How to check the straight-line distances -**
<https://link.kinlearning.com/straightlinedistance>
- **Check Oxbridge and Russell Group admissions for your local secondary schools -**
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education-and-careers/state-sixth-form-colleges-admission-rate-oxford-cambridge/>
- **Vocabulary resources -** <https://wordier.online/shop/>
- **Guidance on Filling in the CAF (Secondary School Preferences Form) -**
https://www.youtube.com/live/NCsUdrl6lik?si=MNXxjeyRh_JygiL2

Newstead Wood

- **Maths Riddles for Smart Kids by M. Prefontaine -**
<http://amzn.to/2o52MZY>
- **Building vocabulary is highly recommended for Newstead Wood applicants. See the Wordier website -** <https://wordier.online/shop/>

Chapter 8

Key Resources and Related Articles

St. Olave's

- **St. Olave's practice papers (Stage 1)** - <https://kinlearning.com/product/st-olaves-practice-papers-suitable-for-stage-1-set/>
- **St. Olave's practice papers (Stage 2)** - <https://kinlearning.com/product/st-olaves-practice-papers-suitable-for-stage-2/>
- **Maths Riddles for Smart Kids by M. Prefontaine** - <http://amzn.to/2o52MZY>
- **Wordier Live Vocabulary Classes** - link.wordier.online/wordierlive

Kent Schools

- **Kent Grammar School OFSTED ratings** - <https://www.kentlive.news/news/kent-news/22-kent-secondary-schools-rated-8437800>
- **Kent County Council 11+ Admissions Guidance** - <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/kent-test#null>
- **GL Practice Papers** - <https://amzn.to/2XcBIVe>



16 Sep 2022

Fantastic flashcards

Highly recommend the Wordier flashcards. My daughter found them much more engaging than other flashcards, loving the photos in particular. A great discussion tool. She bounced out of her recent 11 plus exam, chuffed that words she had learnt using these cards had come up.

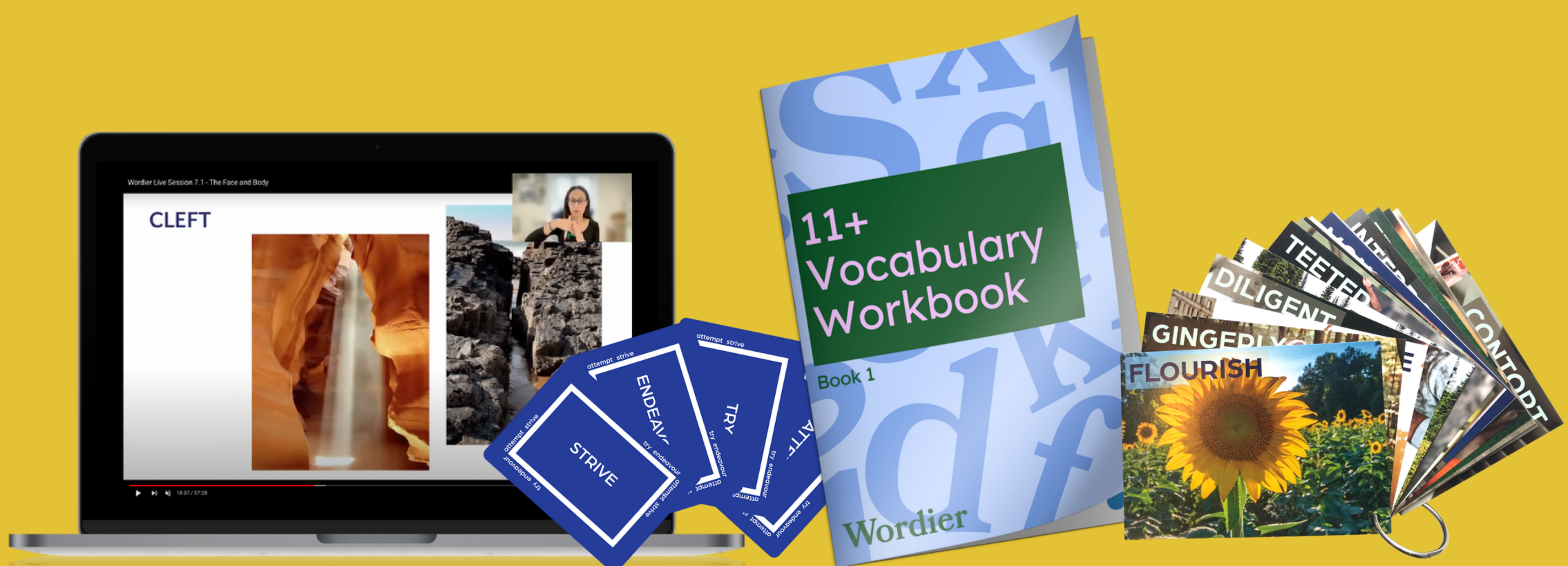


6 days ago

Newstead and St Olaves here we come....

Just recieved the fantastic news that my twin boy and girl have recieved places at St Olaves and Newstead Wood!

They are both different characters and learn differently. From year 4, they both embraced Kin Learning, utilising their Wordier online course, flash cards, Wordier workbooks and Go Fish card game. Vocabulary is a huge and important part of 11 plus prep and it is one area that you can not cram. I would defintely start vocab prep early. My two really enjoyed Kamilah's teaching style. Kamilah took the stress out of the 11 plus. Our 11 plus journey was very pleasant. Both children were fully prepared, always engaged and made friends who they have kept in contact with.



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