



## **WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS PROSPECTIVE YEAR 7 ENTRY: 11+: FAQs for entry in 2021**

*Please note this document is provided as a helpful guide; in any misunderstanding the formal Admission Criteria take precedence.*

### **APPLICATION FAQs**

#### **How do I apply for my daughter to sit the 11+ tests?**

To enter your daughter for the 11+ tests, you must register with the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE). The preference is for this to be done online via the CSSE website ([www.csse.org.uk](http://www.csse.org.uk)), or alternatively the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) can be found in the CSSE booklet.

#### **How do I apply for my daughter to join this school?**

You must name this school as a choice on your Local Authority (where you are resident) Single (or Common) Application Form. The Local Authority will allocate you the first school on the list for which you fulfil the criteria. If you put another school as a higher choice than Westcliff High School for Girls on your list and you fulfil that school's criteria, you will be allocated that school, **even if your daughter has passed the 11+ test**. The closing date for submission of the Single Application Form is 31<sup>st</sup> October for pupils transferring to secondary school the following September.

#### **Can I still apply for my daughter to join the school if I miss the deadline for applications?**

Applications received after the closing date will be treated as late applications. Such applications will be considered after all on-time applications have been processed.

#### **Can a place still be obtained at this school if we put you as a second choice?**

It is possible to gain a place at WHSG if you put a first school where your daughter does not score highly enough to be offered a place at that school, you may still have scored sufficiently highly to be offered a place at this school.

#### **When will I get the 11+ test results?**

This year the CSSE will post the results of the tests by first-class post on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020; these will be available online for parents from 9.00 a.m. on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020.

#### **How many pupils will be offered places in Year 7 for entry in September 2021?**

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) is 184.

#### **What percentage does my daughter have to achieve in the 11+ to gain a place?**

The papers are not marked as a percentage; the raw scores from the two papers (Mathematics and English) are standardised, age adjusted and combined (50% each) to create a final score. It is worth bearing in mind that for Priority Area students this equates to about 60-65% in the tests. Last year, out of area candidates needed to score around 75%.

#### **What is the pass mark for the 11+?**

The pass mark is the same for all children taking the 11+; it is set at 303.0000. However, passing the selection tests is not a guarantee of being offered a place as places are allocated in accordance with the priorities detailed in the school's Admissions Criteria. Entry via the 11+ is in rank order of marks attained, i.e. candidates scoring a higher mark will be allocated places before those who pass at a lower level after taking into account candidates who meet the criteria for preferential consideration.

#### **I am 'in area' and my daughter scored more than 303; will she get a place?**

We believe there are more than enough places available between the Southend selective schools for 'in area' applicants so long as you are resident in the priority area prior to the deadline and name both Southend grammar schools in order.

#### **How many 'out of priority areas' places are available this year?**

The two Southend Girls' grammar schools reserve a minimum of 73 places between them for pupils passing the 11+ and resident outside the priority area. This number often increases with the final number available in each school dependent on how many 'in area' pupils pass, and on how parents resident inside the priority area choose their preferences.

#### **Are any places offered to candidates scoring lower than the pass mark for the 11+?**

No pupil, in any priority category, will be admitted below the pass mark.

#### **What is the lowest point score required to gain a place at WHSG?**

This will change each year, dependent on the results attained by all candidates. As a guide, for entry in September 2020 for priority area students this equated to a score in the 11+ tests of 303.1895 and for the out of priority area the lowest score attained where a place was eventually offered was 335.9856.

### **When will I hear which school my daughter's has been allocated?**

National Offer Day for secondary schools is 1<sup>st</sup> March. Parents who applied online will be available to view the offer online on National Offer Day; letters will be sent by 1<sup>st</sup> class post to parents who used the paper application form.

### **How many places are offered to candidates in the priority area postcodes?**

Up to 80% of the Published Admissions Number, i.e. 147 students, is reserved at this school for children whose primary residence (as assessed in the terms provided annually in the Southend Local Authority secondary admissions booklet) lies within the postcode areas SS0, SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, SS6, SS7, SS8 and SS9. This is subject to sufficient candidates in this category passing the selection tests. The school is 'full' in this category when the quota has been reached, or when there are no more candidates from within the priority area who have passed and have listed the school as a preference.

### **How many places are offered to candidates outside of the priority area postcodes?**

Candidates in this category will be offered places in rank order, subject to exceeding the pass mark, once the number of priority area candidates who are eligible to gain a place have been identified. Places are allocated by Southend-on-Sea Local Authority using the school's rank ordered list, compiled by the CSSE once all papers have been marked. If there are fewer than 147 children from the priority area who have attained the pass mark or higher, then more places are available for candidates whose parents' primary residence lies outside the priority area. Therefore, the number of children who join the school from outside the priority area will fluctuate from one year to the next.

### **Are any preferential consideration places offered to candidates?**

Up to 10% of places reserved for pupils living within the priority area (15 out of 147) and for pupils living outside the priority area (4 out of 37) are designated for children who exceed the pass mark and who are entitled to 'preferential consideration', including looked after children, those in receipt of Free School Meals and Pupil Premium students. A full definition can be found in Note A of the 'Admissions Criteria and Arrangements for Entry 2021', available on the website.

### **If I move into the priority area after the application closing date, can my daughter be considered for a place in this category?**

Consideration for a place at all Southend schools is based on the normal place of residence as at the closing date for Secondary Admissions, 31 October 2020. Any changes of address after the closing date are only updated after National Offer Day, and the applications ranked accordingly at that point.

### **Can I appeal against the decision to refuse my child a place at the school?**

Details about how to appeal against a refusal of a school place will be available on the school's website in advance of March 1<sup>st</sup>. Where any applicant has not been admitted to a preferred school, any parental appeal will be heard by an independent Appeals Panel.

### **Do you sell practice papers for the 11+ tests?**

Free sample past papers are available on the CSSE website ([www.csse.org.uk](http://www.csse.org.uk)). You may also purchase additional papers from the CSSE. There is an application form at the back of the CSSE Information Guide, as well as on the CSSE website

**Further information regarding the 11+ can be found on the CSSE website: [csse.org.uk](http://csse.org.uk)**

## **TRAVEL RELATED FAQS**

### **What are the options with transport to school?**

Transport is arranged through the CSSE, who administer contract bus passes on certain routes. Current routes, timetables and costs can be found on their website ([www.csse.org.uk](http://www.csse.org.uk)). For students who don't live in the areas for Consortium Coaches, there are privately run coaches from other areas (including Romford, Dagenham and Rainham). Alternatively, your daughter can travel to school by train; C2C run a route to Chalkwell Station, with students then walking to the school. Students using the train line into Southend Victoria would need to catch a bus (No 29) for the onward journey to school.

### **We live a long way from the school and my daughter has to get public transport. What happens if she is late?**

If there is an earlier public bus/train that she can get then she will need to do so as girls do receive detentions for being late. However, if she travels by contract bus and this is constantly late then parents need to raise this with the CSSE. Parents may also need to look at an alternative method of getting girls to school as they do not want to miss valuable teaching time.

### **I am concerned that my daughter might be the only pupil from her school to gain a place at WHSG**

Every year there are a large number of students who do not know anybody when they join the school. We generally find that children settle very quickly, with other students being very supportive. Your daughter will be with her Form Group for lessons so will always have friends with her.

### **Where can I view the school's GCSE and A Level results? -**

These can be seen on the school website and in the examination results supplement to the prospectus.

## PASTORAL CARE FAQS

### **What is the Pastoral System?**

For Years 7-11 this consists of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, 3 Pastoral Support Coordinators and 5 Learning Managers, and our Form Tutors. We aim for the Form Tutor to stay with the form throughout Years 7-11.

### **What do you do if there is bullying?**

Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils subject to bullying are supported and perpetrators guided and sanctioned as necessary. Bullying is very rare but when it does occur we act in accordance with our School Behaviour Policy. We have additional support systems at school with ABC Buddies and Pastoral Support Coordinators in place.

### **What if my daughter receives a detention?**

Attendance is a requirement. We appreciate that this can be an inconvenience to parents but if a girl receives a detention then it is because they have not met the school expectations and this must be addressed.

### **What is the House System?**

There are 4 Houses, Bohun, Bourchier, Devereux and Mandeville, (named after 4 Earls of Essex). Each girl is placed in a House, if a parent or sibling was at WHSG then we aim to put them in the same house. Students compete in Sports Day and competitions throughout the Year e.g. Music, Languages and Drama, and they can gain points for their House through excellent work and attendance.

### **What Clubs are there?**

There is an extensive list of clubs and activities, and new ones initiated to match the interests of the current students. There are lots of sports teams, there are ensembles in Music and opportunities in Drama.

### **My daughter's primary school is really small and this looks like a place where she could get lost!**

Pupils quickly learn their way round the school. Students are very supportive. In Year 7 most lessons are with her form group, so will always have others with her as they move around the school.

## GENERAL FAQS

### **What's the average class size?**

In Years 7 and 8 the majority of classes are taught in tutor groups giving class sizes of 30 to 31. Technology subjects (Food, DT, Textiles) are taught in smaller groups of 23.

From Year 9 onwards core subjects are taught in classes of 26 whilst the option classes have a range of sizes (9 to 31).

### **What Languages are offered?**

Parents select either French or Spanish for their daughter to study in Year 7. They take up second language in Year 8 and then select to study either one or two languages for GCSE. All girls MUST follow at least one language.

### **My child is a native speaker, can they take the language GCSE early?**

We encourage this, but prefer the examination to be taken no earlier than Year 10. Sometimes even native speakers can struggle to achieve the higher grades at GCSE if they sit the GCSE early as they don't always have the maturity in their answers that they would have at Year 11, or their writing skills may not be as well developed. The Languages Department would assess her and support her entry where possible.

### **Do we set?**

Only in Maths in Years 8-11; typically with two top sets and the rest mixed ability. Science set in Year 11 by creating a Dual Award group for pupils finding 3 separate sciences a challenge. Classes in the other subjects are mixed ability.

### **Do we have a Swimming Pool?**

No we don't have one!

### **Can my daughter do music lessons? How much do they cost? What is the process?**

Yes – prices vary, a letter is sent out prior to entry. Teaching is available on a wide variety of instruments including violin, piano, saxophone, clarinet, drums and guitar.

### **How much homework will my daughter get?**

In the region of one to one and a half hours per night. All homework should be recorded in their Student organiser.

### **Will my daughter get copies of textbooks and course outlines for each subject?**

Text books are given provided as appropriate in subjects. Some text books are now online. Course outlines for GCSE are on the exam board websites.