

Entrance Exam Frequently Asked Questions for entry September 2024

How do I apply to sit the entrance exam?

All applications must be made online through CHS or NHGS websites before the advertised deadline.

When do I need to apply for the entrance exam?

The registration process is open and the closing date is Friday 30 June 2023. All applications must be made online using the online application procedure on the Halifax Grammar Schools' websites. If you do not have access to the website contact the school office.

Is there a fee?

No. There is no charge for the exam and neither school operates a fee-paying system upon entry.

When is the entrance exam date?

This year the entrance exam will take place on Saturday 23 September 2023. All applicants will be sent a letter confirming the specific timings for the day.

Is there a pre-test my child can sit?

The schools do not organise a pre-test. You will be notified of your child's result by Saturday 21 October 2023. Your result will give you an indication of whether or not to place the Halifax Grammar Schools as a choice on the Local Authority's common preference form (CAF) which has to be completed by Tuesday 31 October 2023.

What does the entrance exam consist of?

For 2023 there are four parts to the entrance exam: English & Verbal Reasoning, Mathematics & Non-Verbal Reasoning.

Does it matter where I live, whether I have siblings in school or whether I am in receipt of pupil premium?

Location is not considered as we have no catchment area and take applications from all over the country. All places are offered strictly according to the order of merit your child achieves and in accordance with the admission's policy for allocation and over-subscription.

Please refer to the individual grammar schools' admission policies with regard to siblings. Parents of children in receipt of free school meals/pupil premium should ensure they identify this on the online application form and provide evidence to the Halifax Grammar Schools before the test date. The evidence should be in the form of a letter from the Local Authority confirming that your child is in receipt of FSM/PP entitlement.

When will I hear that I have been entered for the exam?

All applications received will be sent a confirmation email registering their intent to sit the exam. By Monday 11 September 2023 you will have been sent a letter containing full details of the test day and confirming where your child will be sitting the exam.

If my child requires Access Arrangements how do I request this?

You will need to indicate the access arrangement request on the application form and the SENCO from the grammar school where your child will be sitting the test will contact you before the end of the summer term to confirm any agreed arrangements.

Why is my child sitting the test at North Halifax Grammar School when my first choice is Crossley Heath School?

It makes no difference where your child sits the entrance exam. We house the children according to postcodes where we can. Due to the large number of applications we have to balance the numbers to ensure supervision requirements are met.

How many children sit the exam each year?

On average approximately 1200 children sit the exam each year.

What if my child is ill on the day of the exam?

If you think your child is feeling unwell leading up to the exam day, and subsequently is too ill to perform their best on the day, it is your responsibility, as parent/carer, to make the decision as to whether or not to allow them to sit the exam. If you allow your child to sit the exam and they are unable to perform to their best ability, you do so at your own risk as there is no opportunity for a re-test. Should your child not be well enough to sit the test you have 5 working days to provide a doctor's note or medical evidence. Should your child suffer an injury prior to the test date that may affect their performance please contact the school to discuss suitable arrangements.

Can my child sit a supplementary test?

A candidate may only sit the supplementary test for the following reasons:

- i) Due to medical reasons*
- ii) Where a student has moved into the area after the admissions test has taken place**.

*Where a child is unable to sit the original admissions test due to being unwell immediately before or on the day of the test and is unable to attend, the school should be informed as soon as possible. A letter must be sent to the Headteacher within 5 working days of the test, enclosing a letter from their doctor or a relevant medical certificate.

**Evidence must be provided of the date a student has moved into the area after the admissions test has taken place.

Will my child be disadvantaged by sitting a supplementary exam?

No. All children who sit a supplementary exam receive the same consideration. The order of merit for all candidates is determined after a supplementary test has taken place. It is worth noting that, should there be any subsequent supplementary test once the results have been issued after 21 October 2023, the order of merit may be affected.

When will I hear if my child has got a place?

All children who sit the test will be sent a letter approximately two weeks after the test date, this year that date will be Saturday 21 October 2023 which will confirm their position in the order of merit. Please refer to our timeline on our website. The order of merit is **not a confirmation of a place** due to the fact that there may be a supplementary test(s) taking place which could result in changes to your child's position.

What is the pass mark?

There is no pass mark for the entrance exam. Places are allocated to the two schools according to the order of merit and in accordance with the admission policy for allocation and over-subscription.

What do I do once I have received my child's result?

When you receive your letter stating the order of merit, if your child has an order of merit within 1-500 they are suitable for a place at either of the Halifax Grammar Schools. You must then complete your Local Authority's online Common Application Form (CAF), by their closing date of Tuesday 31 October 2023, in order to be considered further. If you wish to be considered for both of the Halifax Grammar Schools you must place both on the CAF. You must place your preferred grammar school as your first preference. If the CAF is incorrectly preferenced you may risk losing a place offered at the Halifax Grammar Schools regardless of the order of merit achieved.

What happens to those children whose order of merit is between 360 – 500?

There are 180 places available in Year 7 in each of the Halifax Grammar Schools, totalling 360 across the two schools. Children within the order of merit 361-500 would be suitable for a place if one became available. Places allocated beyond 360 are dependent upon the preferences made on the CAF by parents/carers of those children who are between 1 – 360 in the order of merit. This could be due to a child declining a place offered, or due to an incorrectly completed CAF.

When should I expect to receive final confirmation of the place offered?

All places are offered out on Friday 1 March 2024 by the Local Authority according to the preferences made on the CAF. Places are offered at both Halifax Grammar Schools strictly on order of merit and in accordance with the allocation and over-subscription criteria in the Admission Policy.

What if my child is not offered a place at the Halifax Grammar Schools on 1st March 2024?

The system by which the LA allocates school places means that if, after applying the admissions criteria, a child appears on the eligible list of their first preference school, then this is the place that will be offered. A child with CHS as a 2nd or lower preference, even if they are eligible for a grammar school place because of their position in the order of merit, will not be offered a place if they are eligible for a school which they have placed at a higher preference on the initial application.

My child came within 1-500 order or merit but wasn't offered a place at Crossley Heath which was my preferred grammar school?

Parents whose child has not been offered a place at CHS at the allocation date but were deemed suitable by the grammar schools must notify Calderdale LA if they wish to be placed on the reallocation list to be considered for a place should one become available. The responsibility for the waiting list transfers from Calderdale LA to CHS in the first term of Year 7. At the start of the Autumn Term CHS will receive a list from the LA of children who have requested reallocation to CHS. The reallocation list will be maintained until the last school day of the Autumn Term. The school will check with parents if they wish their child(ren) to remain on the waiting list for January 2025.

What happens if my highest preference on my CAF was Crossley Heath and I was allocated my second preference of North Halifax Grammar? Could my child still be considered for Crossley Heath?

If you were offered your second preference and went through the LA route of reallocation to be considered for your first preference, then you **would not** have to decline the place offered because it is a lower preference. If at the end of the reallocation process a place did not become available, you would revert to the original second preferenced place offered.

If my child is not offered a place at one of the Halifax Grammar Schools then will my other lower preferenced school place be compromised?

Local Authorities allocate places according to order of preference. If your child did not achieve the required standard for the Halifax Grammar Schools and they were your first and second preferences, the Local Authority would then allocate your child the lower preferenced school, if you matched their admission criteria. Your lower preferenced school then becomes your highest preference. You would need to apply to your Local Authority through their route of reallocation to be considered for one or more of your higher preferences should a place become available. You would not need to decline your lower preference.

It is worth noting, if you placed an alternative choice of school on your CAF as your **first preference**, and the Halifax Grammar Schools as your **lower preferences** and you matched that first preferenced school's admission criteria, the Local Authority would allocate your first preference to your child as it is your highest preference on the CAF. This is regardless of whether you qualified for a place at either of the Halifax Grammar Schools because you had listed the grammar schools as lower preferences on your CAF.

Can I appeal if my child is not offered a place?

All parents have the right to an appeal. You are unable to appeal solely on the grounds of not being offered a place simply because we only have 360 places available across the two schools. If you feel that you have grounds for an appeal please use the following link:
calderdale.gov.uk/education/schools/admissions/re-allocations/form

Once this is completed the LA will advise the grammar schools of any applications for appeal and parents would be contacted by the schools with further instructions.