



South Hampstead

High School

G D S T

11+ Admissions for September 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

We hope that this document answers your questions about the change to our 11+ admissions process at South Hampstead High School this year. Our aim is to minimise disruption and to ensure no pupil is disadvantaged as a result of Covid-19. We appreciate there is a lot of new information to take on board, so please do not hesitate to contact our Admissions Department if you have any further queries: senioradmissions@shhs.gdst.net or 020 7309 6205.

Why have you changed the 11+ test this year?

We always aim to provide an admissions process which is fair, clear, robust and accessible to girls from all schools and backgrounds. In light of the continued uncertainty, and recognising that some candidates may need to self-isolate in the coming months, we have reviewed our admissions process to provide more flexibility. Subsequently, we have decided to adopt a test that provides more options regarding where and when your daughter can sit the test, should there be further disruptions as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

Will all applicants be interviewed?

Given the circumstances, we have committed to interviewing every applicant this year. Our interview process helps us to gain a complete picture of each prospective pupil. We hope this provides some reassurance and an additional opportunity for your daughter to shine. At the interview, we aim to put girls at ease whilst challenging them, to identify whether they will truly thrive here. We hope to conduct 20 minute interviews in person at South Hampstead between **Wednesday 25th and Monday 30th November**; we will be in touch on or shortly after Friday 20th November to confirm your daughter's timeslot.

Will you request a reference/feedback from my daughter's current school?

In order to gain as holistic a picture as possible of each girl, we will also contact your daughter's current school to request a reference. We will also ask her current school to provide a statement to explain the impact of lockdown and the teaching and learning provided since March 2020. We will send out these reference requests in November. In addition, we will also ask for your/her feedback on what her schooling has been like, to help us understand her individual experiences and circumstances.

My daughter has had very little education since March; I am worried that this will put her at a disadvantage in the 11+ process.

We are aware that pupils have had a variety of educational experiences since lockdown. The test we are adopting is designed to identify potential as well as attainment; in addition, we have committed to interviewing every candidate this year. Please be assured that we consider very carefully not only the test results, but also her performance at interview as well as the reference from her current school.

What is the new test?

All South Hampstead 11+ 2021 applicants will need to sit the **Independent Schools Examinations Board (ISEB) Common Pre-Test**. Many other independent schools in London - including other London 11+ Consortium schools - have now opted for this test this year. If your daughter has applied to any other schools using the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year, she will sit the exam only once; her scores will be shared with all the ISEB Common Pre-Test schools to which she has applied.

What format is the test and how can my daughter prepare?

The ISEB Common Pre-Test is a **computer-based test which includes questions on verbal and non-verbal reasoning, English and Maths**, and takes two and a half hours to complete. Although this is longer than the original exam, there will be a break. As with our usual 11+ test, **no special preparation** is required for the ISEB Common Pre-Test. It is designed to identify potential as well as attainment and, as such, the test is as accessible to pupils who have suffered disruption to their education due to the pandemic. Please refer to the ISEB website for more information: <https://www.iseb.co.uk/Parents/What-are-the-Common-Pre-Tests>

Practice tests are not available, but familiarisation materials can be accessed here:

<https://secure.testingforschools.com/player-demo-iseb/#/> (NB. The ISEB website also refers to Common Entrance at 11+. Please note that this is a completely different test and is not the test we are using.)

When should she sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test?

The South Hampstead deadline to sit the test is **Friday 15th January 2021** – we have tried to give as long a timeframe as possible to provide more options for pupils who may be unwell or isolating. **However, it is important that you check the deadline of any other ISEB Common Pre-Test schools to which you have applied, as she may need to sit the test earlier, if their deadline date is before ours.** Given the evolving Covid-19 situation, **we strongly recommend that your daughter sits the test as early as possible.** It is vital that we have your daughter's ISEB test scores to enable us to consider her application. The ISEB Common Pre-Test is adaptive ie. correctly answered questions will lead to harder questions and vice versa. Therefore no two students will receive the same test. The questions delivered to the candidate during the test are also tailored to her age. As the test is both adaptive and age-standardised (with no specific preparation required), there is no advantage to sitting the test later.

Where should she sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test?

Your daughter can sit the test at:

1. her current school (if the ISEB Common Pre-Test is being offered) OR
2. any other school to which she has applied (if they are using the ISEB Common Pre-Test) OR
3. South Hampstead High School on **Tuesday 5th or Wednesday 6th January** (if option 1 is not available)

Her test results will be shared by the test provider (ISEB) with all ISEB schools to which she has applied, **so your daughter only sits the ISEB Common Pre-Test once.** If, for any reason, your daughter takes the tests more than once within a single academic year, only the first set of results will stand.

What should we do next?

Make sure you have applied to South Hampstead online by **Wednesday 18th November**, including payment of the application fee (either by bank transfer or by credit card) and, if applicable, registration for Sport/Music Scholarships and/or a bursary. If you applied before 13th October, please go to your parent dashboard and **complete the new checklist item: ISEB Registration Information** by uploading a photo of your daughter's passport; we can then register your daughter with the ISEB. Please complete this as soon as possible **by Wednesday 18th November** latest. If you apply to South Hampstead after 13th October, you will be prompted to upload a photo of your daughter's passport for the ISEB registration as part of your application.

Next steps:

1. We will then contact your daughter's current school to check if and when they are able to host the ISEB Common Pre-Test. If they are offering the test, your daughter should sit it at her current school at the earliest date available. If her current school cannot host it, we will contact you to see if your daughter will be sitting the test elsewhere (ie. if she is applying to another school which also uses the ISEB Common Pre-Test) or if she needs to sit the test at South Hampstead.
2. Please wait to hear from us on or shortly after Friday 20th November to confirm the date and time for your daughter's interview (these will take place from Wednesday 25th to Monday 30th November).
3. Once your daughter has taken the ISEB Common Pre-Test and had her interview, there is nothing further for her to do, unless she has also applied for a Music or Sports Scholarship.

How will Music and Sports Scholarship applicants be assessed?

If your daughter has applied for a Music or Sports Scholarship, we will be in touch to advise whether she has been selected for assessment by the relevant department. Sports assessments will take place on the afternoon of Friday 8th January; music auditions on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th January. We will be in touch with all scholarship applicants with further details.

Do I need to register my daughter with ISEB?

No, as candidates are registered by the senior schools to which they apply, **parents should not register their daughter for the Common Pre-Test themselves.** However, please ensure you proceed as usual to make your application to each senior school for which you would like your daughter to be considered, even if more than one school to which you are applying is using the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year.

My daughter's school is offering the ISEB Common Pre-Test this term, but can she wait and take it at South Hampstead in January?

For practical reasons, we would very much like your daughter to sit the test in her current school if it is being offered – this will help to provide sufficient capacity for girls whose schools do not offer the test to sit at South Hampstead. The ISEB Common Pre-Test is adaptive ie. correctly answered questions will lead to harder questions and vice versa. Therefore no two students will receive the same test. The questions delivered to the candidate during the test are also tailored to her age. As the tests are both adaptive and age-standardised (with no specific preparation required), there is no advantage to delaying the date your daughter sits the test. As a reminder, it is vital that we have your daughter's ISEB test scores to enable us to consider her application.

My daughter's school is not hosting the test. What shall I do?

Your options are as follows:

1. If she is applying to another independent senior school, please check what entrance test they are using. If it is also the ISEB Common Pre-Test, check the school's deadline for the test. **If it is before Friday 15th January, she must sit the test at the senior school with the earliest deadline.**
2. If she is applying to another independent senior school, and that school is using a different test, please let us know and we will liaise with you in order to arrange for your daughter to sit the test at South Hampstead on Tuesday 5th or Wednesday 6th January.
3. If she is not applying to any independent school other than South Hampstead, she must sit the test at South Hampstead High School on Tuesday 5th or Wednesday 6th January. Please let us know if this applies to you, so we can make the necessary arrangements. We understand that you may feel concerned about your daughter sitting the test in a location that is less familiar than her current school. However, please be assured that the test day experience will be warm and welcoming. If you would like to visit South Hampstead with your daughter this term, before our test dates, there are limited tours available to book online via your parent dashboard once you have applied.

The dates you are hosting the test at South Hampstead are close to the deadline. What happens if my daughter is ill or self-isolating on 5th/6th January?

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we strongly urge all candidates who can sit the test sooner (in their own school or in another school to which they have applied) do so. However, if the South Hampstead test dates are the only option, we have contingency plans should your daughter be unable to attend - please inform us as soon as you possible if she is self-isolating or unwell on 5th/6th January.

We live abroad. Can our daughter take the ISEB test abroad? What about the interview?

Yes, we will be able to send candidate login details to overseas schools. Once you have applied, we will liaise with your daughter's current school to confirm that they are able to invigilate the tests and send them the information required. The same deadline by which your daughter needs to sit the test (whether she is applying to South Hampstead only or also to other schools using the ISEB test) will continue to apply. Your daughter's interview will be conducted online; further details will be sent to you on or shortly after Friday 20th November.

My daughter has special educational needs. Is this new test accessible for my daughter?

The ISEB Common Pre-Test is accessible to candidates with a range of special educational needs or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments may be applied, the nature of which will depend on the candidate's specific needs. You must inform us, when making your 11+ application, about any specific needs your daughter may have. There is a section on our 11+ application form for this purpose and you must also upload a copy of any educational psychologist report. Where appropriate, candidates can be given additional time to complete each test element. Candidates requiring extra time may take the untimed/manually timed version of the test. This version does not have an on-screen timer.

We had planned for my daughter to sit the London 11+ Consortium test at South Hampstead. What do we do now?

1. If the only London 11+ Consortium school you have applied to is South Hampstead
As we have adopted the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year, your daughter cannot sit the London 11+ Consortium test at South Hampstead on Friday 8th January. To be considered for South Hampstead this year, she will need to sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test instead – please refer to the sections above for more detailed information about where/when she should sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test.
2. You have applied to one (or more) schools within the London 11+ Consortium, in addition to South Hampstead
As we have adopted the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year, your daughter cannot sit the London 11+ Consortium test at South Hampstead on Friday 8th January. To be considered for South Hampstead this year, she will need to sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test as well as the London 11+ Consortium test - please refer to the sections above for more detailed information about where/when she should sit the ISEB Common Pre-Test. **Please note that a number of London 11+ Consortium schools are now adopting the ISEB Common Pre-Test this year, so please ensure you check the test arrangements with each school you have applied to.**

When will we hear if my daughter has been offered a place?

Offers will be made on Friday 12th February, followed by an Offer Holders' Event on Monday 22nd February; the deadline to accept is noon on Wednesday 3rd March. Please note that any changes to key dates will be communicated to all applicants and listed on our website: <https://www.shhs.gdst.net/admissions/joining-the-senior-school/entry-at-11/>

Can we visit South Hampstead at the moment?

Due to current restrictions, capacity for private tours is limited. For families who have not visited us before, tours can be booked by logging on to your parent dashboard and following the 'Quick Links' tab once you have applied.

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