**Coronavirus: assessments for selective school admissions – Update for candidates**

Dear Parent

The Government has now issued guidance on the procedures for carrying out assessments for admission to selective (grammar) schools in relation to Coronavirus(COVID-19).

**Change to assessment date**

Due to this guidance, the assessments for non-Catholic grammar schools which were due to take place on 21st September 2020, will now be moved back into late October. This is intended to enable as many children as possible to get back into the routine of education before the assessments take place, and therefore minimise any disadvantage that may have been caused by the period many children have had to spend away from school.

The test venues will need time to consider how best to organise the arrangements for assessing children, taking into account appropriate protective measures to reflect the COVID-19 guidance, which will be reviewed regularly.

The dates provisionally under consideration are **22nd or 23rd October 2020.** The date and venue for your child’s non-Catholic assessment, and the venue arrangements, will be advised to you at least two weeks before the assessment date. Please note that local or national arrangements related to COVID-19, such as a local lockdown, may further affect the assessment dates or assessment arrangements.

**Applying for secondary schools**

Applications for secondary school 2021 open on 1st September 2020 and must be submitted by the closing date of 31st October – this is the national deadline for applications.

Moving back the assessments to late October means that parents will not know whether their child has reached the academic standard required for admission before the 31st October closing date for applications.

Wirral Authority has therefore decided that for entry to secondary school in 2021, Wirral-resident parents will be allowed to give FIVE preferred schools on their application, rather than three.

This means parents can give up to three selective schools on their application, AND give two non-selective preferred schools. It is recommended that you follow this advice – if your child does not reach the standard for entry to selective school(s), the grammar preference(s) will be withdrawn and the non-selective preferences will automatically move up to become your first and second preferences.

**Applicants from other English authorities**

If you are resident in England, but outside Wirral, your home authority decides how many schools can be given on an application. We would recommend giving at least one selective school, and at least one non-selective school on your application. Your home authority may treat changes to your application to add or alter preferences after 31st October as a late application. Late applications are only considered after all on-time applicants have been offered places.

**Mainstream Admissions**

August 2020