ADMISSION APPEAL – SECONDARY SCHOOL

Subject: 11+ Admission Appeal
Date: July 2021

INTRODUCTION
Appeals are received from students that have not been allocated a grammar school place inline with Appendix 1: Secondary Transfer Co-ordinated Scheme for Kent.

The school considers that it is relieved of its duty to meet the parental preference because the student did not meet our entry criteria and this would not be compatible with the published admission arrangements.

The Independent Appeal Panel will be asked to decide whether or not students appealing should be allocated a place at Maidstone Grammar School for Girls into Year 7 for September 2021 intake.

Background Information
1. Places at Kent Secondary Schools have been allocated in accordance with the co-ordinated scheme (see Appendix 1).

2. Maidstone Grammar School for Girls is selective and the admission of this student would not be compatible with the admission arrangements of the school.

3. Year 7 for September 2021 is not currently oversubscribed.
APPENDIX 1

ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 2021

Secondary Transfer Co-ordinated Scheme for Kent.

The Secondary Transfer Scheme to co-ordinate admissions to Kent Secondary Schools has been agreed by all admissions authorities.

The key features of the scheme are:

♦ There is a standard form known as a Secondary Common Application Form (SCAF).

♦ Parents were invited to express six preferences in priority order, including any schools outside the LA area.

♦ Some schools asked parents to provide additional information on a supplementary form. This was not an application form; the only valid application form was the SCAF.

♦ The closing date for return of completed SCAFs was 2 November 2020.

♦ The LA notified all secondary schools of applications for their school. The schools applied their over-subscription criteria and sent back to the LA a list of all applicants ranked in priority order.

♦ The LA acted as a clearing house for all applications, and matched each schools’ ranked list against other schools’ ranked lists and:

    (a) Where a child was eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school was offered.

    (b) Where a child was eligible for a place at two or more nominated schools a place was allocated at whichever of these was the highest ranked preference.

    (c) Where a child was not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child was allocated a place at an alternative school.

♦ On 1 March 2021 the home LA notified parents of the school allocation decision.

♦ On 21 April 2021 Kent County Council allocated places at schools with vacancies to children on schools’ waiting lists, in accordance with their oversubscription criteria.

♦ After 21 April, schools with vacancies allocate places to children on their waiting lists, in accordance with their oversubscription criteria.

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APPENDIX 2

ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 2021

PESE 2021 - Threshold Statement

Schools which use Synergy will receive information about their pupils’ initial assessments and their standardised scores and in the English, Maths and Reasoning tests by this route, with instructions on how a case can be referred to the local Head Teacher Assessment Panel for further consideration using SAM.

For a “Grammar” assessment a pupil needs:

An aggregate score of 332 or more, with no single score lower than 108.

Scores in this year’s standardisation run from 69 to 141. 423 is therefore the maximum standardised score any pupil can achieve.

Pupils with a grammar assessment may be offered a place at any type of school, including a grammar school, subject to local admission criteria. A grammar school assessment does not guarantee that a child will get a grammar school place. The allocation process uses data from the Secondary Common Application Form to offer parents the highest available of their stated preferences.

Pupils with an aggregate score lower than 332 will be given a “High School” (H) assessment, as will pupils who have scored less than 108 on one test, and may be offered a place at any type of school except a grammar school, subject to local admission criteria.

Where a pupil has been absent for one or more tests and no score is recorded a letter “U” will appear in the assessment column pending late scores, notification of withdrawal from the process, or assessment by HT Panel.

On Thursday 26 November Kent County Council will use the email address parents supplied on registration to notify them of their child’s Kent Test assessment. Parents can also use their login details to view their child’s assessment decision and choose whether they wish to look at the child’s standardised scores. Parents must not be told their child’s assessment before this date.

NB – new! : Virtually all registration was electronic this year, and letters will not be posted to parents. Email notifications will not include outcomes from tests set by individual grammar schools, who will contact parents separately.

Although there is no scope to appeal against the assessment decision itself, parents who have already named one or more grammar schools on the SCAF retain the right appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel for admission to the named grammar school(s) once school places have been offered on 1 March 2021.

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Oversubscription Criteria for Maidstone Grammar School for Girls

Maidstone Grammar School for Girls is a selective Grammar school. The school will admit girls into Years 7 to 11 and girls and boys into Years 12 and 13.

Girls are normally admitted at age 11. All students must have gained a selective place through the Kent PESE (Procedure for Entry into Secondary Education). Details of the Kent PESE are available from the Kent County Council booklet ‘Admission to Secondary School in Kent 2020’. There is no guarantee of a place to applicants who meet the over-subscription criteria. The Published Admissions Number is 180. Before the application of oversubscription criteria, children with a statement of special educational need or Education, Health and Care Plan, which names the school, will be admitted. As a result of this the Published Admission Number will be reduced accordingly. When the school is oversubscribed, the following oversubscription criteria will be used in the order shown:

- **Eligible girls who are looked after and previously looked after children**: A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

- **Children previously in Care outside of England**: Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

- **Students in receipt of Pupil Premium**: A student is eligible for Pupil Premium where they have been registered for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last 6 years. This does not include students who have only been eligible to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals. Parents wishing to apply under this criterion must ensure that they complete the attached Supplementary Information Form and return it to the school by 31st October in the year of application. Parents must also complete an application (via online or paper Secondary Common Application Form) naming the school, otherwise their child cannot be considered for a place.

- **Governor Places**: The top places for 30 students ranked in order of the TOTAL aggregate score in the Kent 11+ assessment tests.

- **Current Family Association**: This is defined as a sister or brother attending either Maidstone Grammar School for Girls or Maidstone Grammar School when the child starts. In this context brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
Distance from Home to School: Determined by straight line using NLPG data, with those eligible girls living nearest being accorded highest priority. The school uses measurements provided by the local authority and further information on how distance are calculated is available in the ‘Admission to Secondary School in Kent’ booklet provided by the local authority.

If more than one applicant have equal eligibility for the last available place at the school, the names will be issued a number and drawn randomly to decide which child should be given the place. In the event that the final place offered from a ranked list falls to a pupil of a multiple birth, the school will offer a place of each of these girls who have met the over subscription criteria.

The parents’ preferred school is MGGS. It has not been possible to allocate a place at MGGS because the student does not have a grammar school assessment.

The best indicator of a student’s performance is their English and Mathematics 11+ test scores together with any NFER CATS data. The school notes that the 11+ reasoning scores are much higher for all students this year, compared with recent years. Students with 11+ scores lower than 100 in any of the tests, do struggle to access the curriculum at MGGS.

Each year group in the school contains 6 classes; historically the school has been able to accommodate 30 children in each class. On 1st March 2021 National Offer Day, 154 places were allocated. Since this date, the number of accepted places stands at 174. The PAN is 180. The anticipated year groups for Year 7 in September 2021 is 180, 163 in Year 8, 183 in Year 9, 185 in Year 10 and 172 in Year 11.

Current Class Organisation:

Year 7: Six classes of 30
Year 8: One class of 30, one class of 29, one class of 27, two classes of 26 and one class of 25.
Year 9: Three classes of 31 and three classes of 30.
Year 10 and 11: Students are organised into 6 tutor groups, but are not taught in these tutor groups. There are a range of different classes, differing in size, for both core and option subjects

CURRENT CONTEXT

General Information

The site has space for only 6 forms of entry per year group, with a usual maximum of 30 students per class. On occasion, a class of more than 30 has been created, but this could not be managed for all classes. No classroom can seat more than 32 students. Technology rooms cannot take more than 20 students for health and safety reasons, as given by DATA Design Technology Association. There is no equipment or space for more than 20 students to participate in Design Technology lessons. As a consequence, each Key Stage 3 year group is taught in 9 Design Technology groups. Hence, they are taught in nine groups of 20 students, equating to 180 students. However, on occasions we have had 21 in some groups. This has a negative impact on student progress as they have to share resources. It limits the tasks that groups can make and as a result has been detrimental to students wanting to continue to study Design Technology beyond KS3, due to their limited experiences caused by large classes. Additionally, staff have reported more health and safety concerns with classes over 20. This is increasingly a major concern.

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At KS3: in each year group classes of at least 30. Where the number in the year group exceeds this, students are spread across groups to have a minimal impact, especially for practical subjects.

At KS4: Students are organised into 6 tutor groups, but are not taught in these tutor groups. There are a range of different classes, differing in size, for both core and option subjects.

There is pressure on students’ ability to access large spaces such as the canteen during the time given at break time.

Students struggle to arrive on time for assemblies due to the sheer number of students attempting to access the space.

Context of the School Buildings:

- The Covid-19 situation has created significant additional pressure on the school, challenging our ability to function effectively. Many of our smallest classrooms have been designated sixth form rooms as these classes should be smaller than lower school groups.
- The school is currently required to ensure that each year group is in a separate ‘bubble’ and the impact of reducing specialist classrooms, which are particularly critical to the delivery of Key Stage 5 classes, to one year group per day has put a significant strain on the school’s ability to function.
- The school is at full capacity in respect of its legal requirements for student toilets within the buildings. To go over PAN puts the school in breach of its legal and Health and Safety responsibilities, with respect to toilet provision.
- The main school building at MGGS is 80 years old with narrow corridors.
- To admit more than 30 students per class would result in arrangements of classroom furniture, which would prevent any flexibility or movement of furniture to suit different class activities. As a result, this will limit the activities that take place in the classroom, ultimately having a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. In some classrooms, teachers will not be able to circulate to see students’ work as the rooms are too crowded, creating a severe barrier to effective one to one support of students. Larger classes that we currently have can simply not be accommodated in these rooms.
- There are restrictions in flexibility due to small classrooms, and ensuring our students with mobility problems can access their lessons has a knock-on consequence for classroom availability.
- The corridors in the 1960s extension are also narrow and normally there is significant congestion during lessons changeover, particularly in our 1960s block which houses Maths, Geography and Design Technology. Students are required to work in close proximity to each other in classrooms.
- There is a very poor quality 1960s extension (which houses Design Technology). To take more than 20 students per class would be in breach of Health and safety recommendations for Design Technology lessons due to the size of the rooms.
- To go above 180 students would require the need for an additional class, for which we do not have a room, the resources, the teachers available nor the money.
- There is also a limit to specialist equipment in Science Laboratories and Design Technology lessons. More than 30 students per form (or 20 in a Design Technology lesson) would impede learning as all students would not have access to this equipment.
- The corridors in the main building and 1960s extension (which houses Design Technology) are narrow and exceeding the school PAN of 180 can result in severe congestion in the corridors.
- SEN statistics – the school does not employ any Teaching Assistants.
- There are restrictions in flexibility in timetabling due to some small classrooms, and ensuring our students with mobility problems can access their lessons has a knock-on consequence for classroom availability.
Current Pan and Social Distancing
Students are currently required to work in bubbles. The school is running with staggered starts, staggered lunch and staggered end of the day. There is significant pressure in managing the number of students within the school.

Students who do not meet the school’s entry criteria often require additional 1-1 teacher support in lessons as well as out of lesson support. Due to the current Covid restrictions, the school is prevented from providing this within the classroom setting due to the need to socially distance.

CONCLUSION
The parents’ preferred school is MGGS. It has not been possible to allocate a place at MGGS because the student does not have a grammar school assessment.

The best indicator of a student’s performance is their English and Mathematics 11+ test scores together with any NFER CATS data. The school notes that the 11+ reasoning scores are much higher for all students this year, compared with recent years. Students with 11+ scores lower than 100 in any of the tests, do struggle to access the curriculum at MGGS.

Miss Deborah Stanley, Headteacher

July 2021