

Information for principals of primary schools – Year 7 entry to selective High Schools in 2024

This bulletin contains guidance for primary school principals with students applying for selective high school placement. If changes occur that affect primary schools, the Selective Education Unit (formerly the High Performing Students Team) will inform principals as soon as they are confirmed. Visit the Unit’s website at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes> for further information and updates.

Important dates	
Early October 2022	Application information sent to schools and updated on the website
18 October 2022	Application website opens. Parents apply online online at: https://shsoc.education.nsw.gov.au/
16 November 2022	Application website closes
From 21 November to 9 December 2022	Principals asked to supply information about applicants online (government schools only) Non-government principals complete the principal's page for provision of information about the applicant and send it to the Unit.
20 April 2023	Parents are given the test centre and test authority letter released
4 May 2023	Selective High School Placement Test. The test date has been moved from March to May to avoid a clash with NAPLAN testing
11 May 2023	Illness/misadventure requests submitted
July 2023	Selection committee meets
Mid-August 2023	Placement outcome expected to be released.
5 working days after outcome release	Results enquiry submitted online Appeals submitted online
September 2023	Appeals panel meets
October 2023	Appeals outcome advised to parents

Overview of the placement process

When	What	Action
Early October 2022	Application and placement information sent to schools.	<p>Please use as many ways as possible to inform parents of Year 5 students of the opportunity to apply for entry to selective high schools in Year 7 in 2024 such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters or equivalent, at least once when applications open and once before they are due to close • 'Intention to apply' note to parents (See Page 14) • School website home page • School electronic sign board. <p>Check that parents intending to apply have done so before the closing date.</p>
18 October 2022	<p>Applications open online at https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7</p> <p>Students applying to board may be asked to an interview.</p>	<p>Distribute the placement information document or link to all parents who may want to apply.</p> <p>View the SHS report in SCOUT to see who has applied before the closing date.</p> <p>Complete and return the 'School recommendations form' if it is sent to you for more information about individual students' disabilities. Public school principals will access this through a message in the SHS and OC schools' site at https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/</p>
16 November 2022	<p>Online application site closes.</p> <p>Late application information is on the website.</p>	<p>Check that all those intending to apply have done so before the closing date as late applications are accepted only in very limited circumstances.</p> <p>Please do everything possible to prevent parents from having to request late applications.</p>
21 November 2022 to 9 December 2022	<p>The Unit asks principals to use the online Schools' processing site at https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/ to supply information about the applicants such as reasonable adjustments for disability and student background. (Government schools only)</p>	<p>Primary schools are not required to provide school assessment scores for applicants for Year 7 entry in 2024.</p> <p>Provide details about students' reasonable adjustments for disability provided at school for tests, if asked.</p> <p>Tell us in the processing site (or email us) about duplicate applications.</p>

When	What	Action
	<p>The Unit may also request additional details about reasonable adjustments for disability that are provided at school.</p> <p>Non-government principals provide information on the principal's page submitted by parents.</p>	<p>Also tell us about students who appear on your list but are not enrolled at your school.</p> <p>Non-government principals send the completed principal's page to the Unit.</p>
20 April 2023	Parents are sent the 'Test authority' letter showing where to go for the test. Principals are sent the test centre for their students.	<p>Check that all applicants know where they are going for the test.</p> <p>Advise parents to log into their application dashboard to see the test authority and test information. They should contact the Unit if they cannot access it.</p>
4 May 2023	Selective High School Placement Test.	Please do not schedule other school activities for Year 6 students on this day.
11 May 2023	Parents submit illness/misadventure requests about test performance, or about missing the test within 5 working days of the test, if applicable.	
11 June 2023	Last day for parents to submit change of selective high school choices.	
July 2023	Selection committee meets.	
Mid-August 2023	Placement outcomes released. Principals receive report of placement outcome soon after.	Non-government principals can request a report of outcomes if they have provided the principal page and if parents have given permission.
5 working days after outcomes are released	If applicable, parents submit a Results enquiry or an appeal through their application dashboard.	You may be asked to comment on appeals if required.
September 2023	Appeals panel meets	If your school has an opportunity class, you may be invited to serve on a selective high school appeals panel.
October 2023	Outcome of appeals available to parents	
Mid-January 2023	'Authority to attend a selective high school' letters available to parents.	Students take the Authority to attend to the school on the first day to complete enrolment.

Placement procedures for entry to selective high schools

Selective high schools cater for academically gifted students of high potential who may otherwise be without sufficient classmates at their own academic standard. Selective high schools help these students to learn by grouping them with students of similar ability and by using specialised teaching methods.

In this document 'selective' includes fully selective high schools, partially selective high schools and selective agricultural high schools as well as Aurora College, the virtual selective high school.

For students applying in 2022 for placement in 2024, primary schools are not required to provide school assessment scores for their applicants. Students' placement scores will be calculated based on their test scores. Scores will not be released to parents.

Information about placement is subject to change throughout 2023. The website will be updated regularly.

The role of the primary school

As primary principal, you are responsible for:

- advising parents of the opportunity to apply online and before the closing date. This includes advertising the dates and the Unit's website link on the school's website and in at least two school newsletters or equivalent. Please consider placing a notice on your street-facing electronic noticeboard while applications are available but remove it as soon as they close.
- ensuring that important school events such as school camps and athletics carnivals are not scheduled on the test day
- printing and/or distributing the placement information document to parents who request it
- ensuring students' disability data is accurate and current on the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD)
- advising parents to contact the Unit for assistance if they have a disability which means they are unable to use a computer
- completing and returning the School recommendations form for more information about individual students' disabilities, if relevant. Public school principals will access this through the SHS and OC schools' site at <https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/>

- supplying information about the applications submitted on the SHS and OC schools' site (government schools only)
- completing the principal's page for provision of information about the applicants and sending them to the Unit (non-government schools only)
- consulting with the Unit about reasonable adjustments for disability that are provided at school
- providing information about the academic achievement of students applying to board at boarder agricultural high schools, if requested
- being prepared to allocate staff to support students with reasonable adjustments if required
- commenting on appeals submitted if requested
- supporting families where students are found to have engaged in malpractice during the test.

Information about the placement process

Information about all aspects of the application and selection process for the placement of students in Year 7 at selective high schools is contained on the website

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes> and in the 'Information for applicants' document and are not repeated here.

Providing advice to parents

Please advise all parents of Year 5 students that they can apply for selective high school placement in 2024. Please particularly encourage high potential and gifted Aboriginal students, gifted students with a disability and students from low socio-educational advantage backgrounds to apply. In rural and remote areas please encourage parents to consider applying for Aurora College.

Consult with parents if they ask you about the suitability of selective high school placement for their children, but be cautious about making predictions about a student's chances of selection.

Ensure that the opening and closing dates for applications and the Unit's website are advertised at least twice in school newsletters, on the electronic noticeboard, and on the school's website home page. Each year the Unit receives complaints by parents who miss out and claim that the school did not inform them of the application process.

To assist you to identify students whose parents intend to apply, you may wish to use the optional 'Intention to apply' form template which is included on Page 14 of this document. Ensure parents know that this Intention to apply form is not an application. It only informs the school which students are likely to need a reminder to apply by the due date.

School attendance is the best preparation for the Selective High School Placement Test. Students with frequent and/or lengthy unjustified absences from school may be brought to the attention of the selective high school selection committee. Accordingly, parents who remove children from school for the purposes of preparing for the Selective High School Placement Test should be warned that the selection committee is reluctant to place students with a history of unjustified absences into a selective high school.

Please direct parents to the Unit's website to find updated information about placement, the printable booklet 'Placement in selective high schools for Year 7 entry in 2024', the application link and relevant forms.

Acceleration

Parents of students currently in Year 4 should not be encouraged to apply to enter Year 7 in 2024 unless the school recommends acceleration. Parents may request a supporting letter to upload to their application.

Repetition

Parents of students who are in Year 6 in 2022 should be discouraged from applying unless there is a valid reason for them to repeat a school Year.

If parents insist on applying to have their children repeat Year 7 or Year 6, especially if they sat the Selective High School Placement Test in the previous year, principals of government schools should note any details on the SHS and OC Schools' processing site. Non-government principals should note details on the Principal's page for provision of information about the application.

Selection committees have the discretion not to place students who repeat Year 6, having sat the test in the previous year, or whose parents apply when the student is in Year 6 in 2022 and whose parents wish them to repeat Year 7 in a selective high school in 2024.

Submitting an application

Parents must apply online via the link on the website at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/application-process>. The online application form will open on 18 October 2022 and will close on 16 November 2022. Parents must apply by the due date.

When parents submit an online application they will receive an email confirming their application. They can log in at any time to view it.

Parents must not make more than one application for the same child. If they find they have made a mistake after submitting the application they will be able to log into their application dashboard to make changes and resubmit, receive and send messages and upload documents at a later date.

Parents who miss the due date may request approval to apply late for a limited time. Approval is granted only in serious and well documented extenuating circumstances. Information about late applications is available at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/application-process/late-application-requests>.

Where parents maintain that the school did not advise them of the dates for application they will be asked to request a supporting statement from the school. Please supply such a statement only if you have not advised parents in any way that applications were available.

Parents are asked NOT to send school reports to the Unit unless requested to do so.

Parents without internet access

If parents do not have internet access they are advised to access computers at a public library but you may be able to assist by allowing access to school computers at a designated time. If parents have a disability and cannot use a computer, ask them to contact the Unit for assistance. It is not possible to send or receive communication by post so all applicants will need to use email.

Parents who use public internet facilities need to:

- create a web-based email account such as Yahoo or Hotmail or Gmail
- go to the Unit's website at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7> and open the link to the online application
- enter the new email address when registering to apply
- return to the email account to receive the password and link to log in to the application
- log in using the access key/password and complete the questions in the application
- submit the application
- revisit the email to access messages and outcomes.

All further communication will be conducted through the parent dashboard messages with an email alert, as mail services are not available.

Reports to government schools

During the application period, government school principals will be able to access a SCOUT report called 'Selective High Schools/Opportunity Class applications' to see their candidate list.

Collect the returned Intention to apply forms to keep track of which parents have applied.

Monitor your candidate list in SCOUT daily and if you see that an expected student's name is missing towards the end of the application period, please contact the parents to remind them of the due date to apply. A guide to the SHS Scout report is at

<https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/e5fdbebe-2bb9-4f88-9397-68363cf0f361/1/SHS-SCOUT-report-guide.pdf>.

The final list of applicants will be available in the SHS and OC schools' site when applications close.

Application processing by school principals

Further details about reasonable adjustments for disabilities may be requested through a 'School recommendations form' prior to the close of applications. Principals of public schools will receive an email alerting them to the form attached to a message online at: <https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/>.

The Unit will send government primary schools detailed instructions for submitting the information about all applications through the SHS and OC schools' site (the processing site) at: <https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/> by 9 December 2022. These instructions will be sent prior to 21 November 2022.

Please ensure Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) information is up to date.

Please let the Unit know about any listed students not enrolled in your school and about duplicate applications for the same student.

Application processing by non-government school principals

Non-government principals do not have access to the SHS and OC schools' site. The Unit will email the 'School recommendations form' for further information about students with disabilities, if relevant.

Parents ask non-government school principals to complete the principal's page for provision of information about the application and forward it to the Unit at ssu@det.nsw.edu.au by 9 December 2022.

Testing of students

Details of the test are available at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test> along with practice questions. The test in 2023 is paper-based.

All candidates are required to take the Selective High School Placement Test. The test is usually conducted in test centres established in NSW government high schools. Invigilators are employed to administer the test in high school test centres.

If changes occur to testing and/or test centre arrangements, principals will be notified as soon as the changes are confirmed.

By 20 April 2022, all applicants will receive a 'Test authority' letter, information about the test and the test centre they have been allocated to in their application dashboard. An email will be sent to alert parents to log in to access the letter. Government schools will be advised of their students' test centres.

Parents of students sitting the test are responsible for making travel arrangements to and from the test centre. Students must arrive by 9:00am. The expected finishing time is 1:30pm.

Reasonable adjustments for disability

When a parent makes a request for reasonable adjustments for disability for the test, the Unit may contact the principal of the student's current primary school for information about adjustments made at school. Principals are also asked to add information about adjustments that are provided at school when they log into the SHS and OC schools' site or complete the Principal's page (for non-government schools).

Where a student has a disability, including a medical or behavioural condition, requiring separate supervision in the test, the student's primary school may be asked to send an aide or other staff member to ensure that the student is always supervised by two adults.

Principals have an obligation to identify students who may pose a risk to other students or staff at a test centre. Principals do this by making a comment in the principal portal. The Unit will arrange for separate supervision if necessary.

Preparing students for the test

The Selective High School Placement Test is a secure test and papers are unavailable for scrutiny before, during and immediately after the test session.

The Department does not endorse coaching for the Selective High School Placement Test as the test is designed as a measure of academic ability.

It would be helpful if students were familiar with test technique. If parents or teachers wish to familiarise students with the test, they could use the tips and practice test papers available on the website <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test> in order to:

- show students the test format
- provide the students with experience in multiple-choice testing
- ensure that the students understand how to record their answers on the answer sheets and that they must erase completely and show new answers clearly if they change their mind
- advise students to manage time and not to spend too much time on any single question
- encourage students to guess any answers they are uncertain about as marks are not taken off for wrong answers
- emphasise the importance of periodically checking the number of the question against the number on the answer sheet to avoid misalignment, as misalignments cannot be compensated for.

Practice with any other kind of multiple-choice questions could also help students become familiar with this kind of test.

Malpractice

The department has robust measures to identify student malpractice. The consequence of malpractice can be that their scores are not considered and students are not eligible for placement in a selective high school.

Advise students to make sure they don't look at or copy another student's answers or allow copying of their own answers.

Academic records

Parents are NOT required at the application stage to submit school reports, merit certificates, competition or test results such as NAPLAN, or evidence of achievements in sport or performing arts.

Parents may provide additional relevant supporting information such as:

- information about disability, medical or behavioural condition and the likely effect on the academic performance of students
- the results of individual IQ tests if requested
- Court Orders if they relate to decisions about the education and communication with parents.

Parents are asked to give permission for NAPLAN and similar results to be accessed for additional information, if required.

All students are ranked and placed in order of academic merit. For placement in 2024, academic merit is based on the Selective High School Placement Test scores as no school assessment scores will be available. If further evidence of academic merit is necessary, such as in the case of illness or misadventure causing the student to miss the test, the selection committee may approach the parents and/or school.

Selection

A centralised selection committee makes decisions about placement of students in all selective high schools where additional consideration is required. From 2022, a new equity placement model targets students from under-represented groups such as those with Aboriginal background, with disabilities and from communities of low socio-educational advantage as well as from isolated areas. Find more information about equity placement at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/general-information/equity-placement-model>.

Candidates for boarding agricultural high schools may be invited to an interview at the school to determine readiness for boarding, and may be given an early offer conditional on a high enough test ranking.

All placement decisions will be made using the results of the Selective High School Placement Test and, where relevant, information provided by schools and information supplied by parents.

Placement outcome information

The placement outcome is expected to be advised to parents in mid-August. No scores are released to parents. They receive a Performance report which shows their child's performance in bands relative to other students who sat the test.

Parents are sent a notification email to log in to their application dashboard and go to the 'View outcomes' screen via the three dots in the Action column beside their listed application.

Parents must respond to offers within the outcomes screen, either accepting or declining by the due date advised or the offer will lapse. They can also withdraw from reserve lists if they wish to.

Parents of students found to have engaged in malpractice will receive the information just prior to all other outcomes being released.

After the release of outcomes, parents then have the opportunity to submit a Results enquiry or appeal through their application dashboard within 5 working days. Neither a results enquiry nor an appeal will provide test scores to parents.

Government primary school principals will have access to the initial outcome report in the SHS and OC schools' site. The report will show all students who have received offers, those on reserve lists and those who have been unsuccessful.

Non-government primary schools can request a report listing the outcome for applicants for whom they have provided the principal's page and where parents have given permission.

The report may indicate that some students have been placed on 'hold', pending further investigation of matters such as residency status or social and emotional maturity in the case of those seeking accelerated progression.

Students placed on reserve lists are allocated a band A to F to indicate an approximate time offers may be likely to be made, based on how the reserve list progressed in a previous year. Offers are made where vacancies occur until at least the end of Term 1 in the placement year.

In December, an outcome report will be available that includes student rankings for your school.

Enrolment policy

The NSW Department of Education has a responsibility to assess and manage any risk of harm to its staff or students. This includes assessing and managing risks posed to students or staff at a school by any student.

As principal, you have an obligation to identify any students who may pose a risk to students or staff both in a testing situation and if placed in a selective high school and most particularly in a boarder setting.

Sample newsletter text for optional use

Selective high school placement process for placement in Year 7 in 2024

Applications for Year 7 entry to selective high schools in 2024 open on 18 October 2022. Applications will close on 16 November 2022. The due date is strictly observed. Requests for late applications will be approved only under very specific and well-documented circumstances.

Find information about the application and placement process and apply online at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7>.

All candidates are required to sit the Selective High School Placement Test to be held on Thursday 4 May 2023.

The online application dashboard enables parents to log in to make updates and add attachments even after an application is submitted. Parents also communicate directly with the Selective Education Unit through the system's messages feature.

Parents having difficulty completing or submitting an application, should contact the Selective Education Unit through their application dashboard or, if unable to do so, by email ssu@det.nsw.edu.au.

Keep updated on the selective high school placement process at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes>

Further information

For information on the selective high school placement process go to:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7>

For information about the Application process, go to: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/application-process>

The illness/misadventure process is described at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test/illness-or-misadventure>

Information about placement outcomes and reserve lists is at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/outcome>

Information about appeals and results enquiries can be found at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/outcome/appeals>

Contact the Selective Education Unit

Placement of students in selective high schools in Year 7 is administered by the Selective Education Unit, formerly the High Performing Students Team. The Selective Education Unit is referred to as 'the Unit' in this document.

The SHS and OC schools' site has a messaging feature that you can use to send to and receive messages from the Unit at any time: <https://shsoc-schools.education.nsw.gov.au/> (Designated principal's DoE login is required).

Email: ssu@det.nsw.edu.au

Telephone for schools: 7814 3626 (for school only)

Telephone for parents: 1300 880 367. Parents should send messages through their application dashboard to receive prompt response to their enquiry, rather than phoning.

Website: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes>

Intention to apply for Year 7 placement in a selective high school in 2024

Please copy and customise if you wish to use this Intention to apply note to parents.

Dear Parent/Carer

Selective high schools cater for academically gifted students with high potential who may otherwise be without sufficient classmates at their own academic standard. Selective high schools help these students to learn by grouping them with students of similar ability, and by using specialised teaching methods.

If you would like to have your child considered for Year 7 selective high school entry in 2024, you need to apply on the internet using a valid email address (not the student's email address).

Detailed instructions on how to apply and the link to the online form will be available in early-October 2022 at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7>.

Applications open on 18 October 2022 and close on 16 November 2022. You must apply before the closing date.

You must submit only ONE application for each student.

The Selective High School Placement Test will be held on **Thursday 4 May 2023**.

The tear-off slip below is NOT an application, it is advice to the school that you intend to apply. The school CANNOT apply on your behalf.

Yours sincerely

Principal

Cut along the dotted line and return the completed slip below to this school by _____.

THIS IS NOT AN APPLICATION FOR ENTRY TO A SELECTIVE HIGH SCHOOL.

This is a notice to your primary school only that you intend to apply.

TO APPLY GO TO THE ONLINE FORM AT: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes>

----- Cut here and return the note below to the school -----

Intention to apply for Year 7 placement in a selective high school in 2024

Student's name: _____ Class: _____

I intend to apply for selective high school entry in Year 7 in 2024 for my child through the Selective Education Unit website between 18 October 2022 and 16 November 2022. I am aware that this is not an application and that the school cannot apply on my behalf.

Signature of parent/carer: _____

THIS IS NOT AN APPLICATION FOR ENTRY TO A SELECTIVE HIGH SCHOOL.

This is a notice to your primary school only that you intend to apply.

TO APPLY GO TO THE ONLINE FORM AT: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes>