



Choosing a Secondary School for your Children

Guidance on the issues to consider

This presentation

- The aim of these slides is to provide you, as parents of children at the school, with initial guidance on things to think about when considering secondary school education for your child.
- The slides formed the basis of face-to-face and online meetings with parents of children in years 4 and 5, held at both Broughton and West Tytherley primary schools in December 2022.
- They provide guidance only. If you would like more support, please contact the school office and we will do all we can to help.

Times to apply

- When your child is in Year 6, you will need to apply for a place.
- The application process opens in mid-September and closes 31st October.
- You will need to apply in the county in which you live, but can apply to a school in a different county.
- By the time the application date opens, it is a good idea to have visited the schools that you are considering.

Things to consider

- Your catchment is from where you live, not where you go to school.
- Catchment criteria is decided principally on distance. Other criteria may differ according to the type of school. E.g. Is it an Academy, selective (grammar), Faith School etc ?
- Other criteria may include: SEND, siblings, faith.
- You can choose any secondary school, regardless of where you live, if there are spaces available.
- You need to be aware of how your child will travel to the school.
- The very best way to decide which will best suit your child is to visit and look around as many as you can. (I will cover what to look for later).

Recent destinations

- There are a range of schools in Hampshire and Wiltshire you may wish to visit.
- Children from Broughton and West Tytherley school have moved on to a wide range of secondary schools in both counties.
- Recent destinations include (shown in alphabetical order):
 - Bishop Wordsworth's Grammar School – Salisbury
 - Harrow Way – Andover
 - Henry Beaufort - Winchester
 - John Hanson – Andover
 - South Wilts Grammar School
 - St Joseph's, Laverstock
 - Test Valley School
 - The Romsey School
 - The Trafalgar School – Downton
 - Wyvern St. Edmunds

Before Visiting Schools - advice

- Think about your child carefully, their strengths and weaknesses.
- What do they need to set them up to succeed in their secondary school? Try to be honest about what they are like as learners and in their interactions with others.
- What are your priorities?
- Then look at each school website through this 'lens'. The website will tell you a lot of information about the school offer: size, exam results, subjects taught, extra-curricular activities, sports and team games, residential trips and outings. It will talk about the ethos of the school and its vision and values. It is worth noting all these things and looking for evidence of them when you visit.

Open Days

If you attend open days, try to look beyond what you are being shown.

The school will be showcasing the best that they can offer. I always think it useful to also look at other things as well, such as:

- Levels of engagement and behaviour in classes – is this what happens day in and day out?
- How do the pupils behave as they move about the school? (Be realistic but with high expectations).
- What does that atmosphere feel like?
- How do the adults and pupils interact with each other?
- Ask your guides what would they change? How do they feel respected? What is the best thing? Are they proud to attend this school?

When you have narrowed it down

- Arrange to visit on a non-open day and see the school as it runs on a daily basis. Do you still feel the same way, see the same things? Is there a consistency from the open day, or does it feel very different?

- And finally:

There is no perfect school, and what is right for your child may be different for another. Please talk respectfully about all schools with your children so that they do not tell other children that some schools aren't good etc...