



# Information about applying for Year 5 entry to an opportunity class in

# 2020

(Parents must read this document before submitting an online application)

## Thinking of applying for Year 5 entry to an opportunity class in 2020?

You must apply online at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5>

### Key dates

**Tuesday 30 April 2019**

Application website opens

**Friday 17 May 2019**

Application website closes at 5.00pm

You must apply by the due date.

**Wednesday 17 July 2019**

*Test authority* letters sent to applicants

**Wednesday 31 July 2019**

Opportunity Class Placement Test

**Mid-October 2019**

Placement outcome information is sent

**Application information should be read carefully before applying.**

It is on the website at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5>

**Note:** The information in this document is available in an accessible format on the website.

**Parents\*** should check this website regularly for updates all the way through the application and placement process. Please check the website and Facebook for up to date information before you contact the Team.



The opportunity class placement process for Year 5 entry is administered by the High Performing Students Team<sup>^</sup>.

### Contact details

High Performing Students Team

NSW Department of Education

**Email:** [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) **Telephone:** 1300 880 367 **Fax:** 02 9266 8435

**Postal address:** Locked Bag 53, DARLINGHURST NSW 1300

**Website:** <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/159342048077050/>

<sup>^</sup> In this document, the High Performing Students Team is referred to as the Team.

\*Parent\* is defined under the *Education Act 1990* as 'a guardian or other person having custody or care of a child'.

A list of the primary schools with opportunity classes is shown on page 2 of this document.

## Public schools with Year 5 opportunity classes in 2020

You may choose up to two opportunity classes in order of preference.

OC code	School	OC code	School	OC code	School
<b>ACP</b>	<b>ARMIDALE CITY</b> Faulkner St, Armidale	<b>ERM</b>	<b>ERMINGTON</b> Winbourne St, West Ryde	<b>POR</b>	<b>PORT MACQUARIE</b> Grant St, Port Macquarie
<b>ALX</b>	<b>ALEXANDRIA PARK</b> + Park Rd, Alexandria	<b>GEO</b>	<b>GEORGES HALL</b> Pennington Ave, Georges Hall	<b>QUA</b>	<b>QUAKERS HILL</b> Medlow Dr, Quakers Hill
<b>ALS</b>	<b>ALSTONVILLE</b> Main St, Alstonville	<b>GLE</b>	<b>GLENBROOK</b> Woodville St, Glenbrook	<b>QUE</b>	<b>QUEANBEYAN SOUTH</b> Cameron Rd, Queanbeyan
<b>ART</b>	<b>ARTARMON</b> McMillan Rd, Artarmon	<b>GOO</b>	<b>GOONELLABAH</b> Ballina Rd, Goonellabah	<b>RIC</b>	<b>RICHMOND</b> Windsor St, Richmond
<b>ASH</b>	<b>ASHFIELD</b> Liverpool Rd, Ashfield	<b>GSF</b>	<b>GOSFORD</b> Faunce St West, West Gosford	<b>RUT</b>	<b>RUTHERFORD</b> Weblands St, Rutherford
<b>BGH</b>	<b>BALGOWLAH HEIGHTS</b> Lewis St, Balgowlah Heights	<b>GOU</b>	<b>GOULBURN WEST</b> Combermere St, Goulburn	<b>RDE</b>	<b>RYDE</b> Pope St, Ryde
<b>BLM</b>	<b>BALMAIN</b> Eaton St, Balmain	<b>GRE</b>	<b>GREENACRE</b> Waterloo Rd, Greenacre	<b>SMI</b>	<b>SMITHFIELD</b> O'Connell St, Smithfield
<b>BHW</b>	<b>BATHURST WEST</b> Suttor St, Bathurst	<b>GRY</b>	<b>GREYSTANES</b> Merrylands Rd, Greystanes	<b>SOL</b>	<b>SOLDIERS POINT</b> Cromarty Rd, Soldiers Point
<b>BEE</b>	<b>BEECROFT</b> Beecroft Rd, Beecroft	<b>HAR</b>	<b>HARRINGTON STREET</b> Harrington St, Cabramatta	<b>GTS</b>	<b>SOUTH GRAFTON</b> Vere St, South Grafton
<b>BIR</b>	<b>BIRABAN</b> Beckley St, Toronto	<b>HOL</b>	<b>HOLSWORTHY</b> Infantry Pde, Holsworthy	<b>STA</b>	<b>ST ANDREWS</b> Ballantrae Dr, St Andrews
<b>BTS</b>	<b>BLACKTOWN SOUTH</b> Flushcombe Rd, Blacktown	<b>HUR</b>	<b>HURSTVILLE</b> Forest Rd, Hurstville	<b>STJ</b>	<b>ST JOHNS PARK</b> Sandringham St, St Johns Park
<b>BCS</b>	<b>BLAXCELL STREET</b> Blaxcell St, Granville	<b>ILL</b>	<b>ILLAROO ROAD</b> Illaroo Rd, Nowra	<b>STU</b>	<b>STURT</b> White Ave, Wagga Wagga
<b>BRA</b>	<b>BRADBURY</b> Jacaranda Ave, Bradbury	<b>IBR</b>	<b>IRONBARK RIDGE</b> Ironbark Ridge Rd, Rouse Hill	<b>SUM</b>	<b>SUMMER HILL</b> Moonbie St, Summer Hill
<b>CAM</b>	<b>CAMDEN SOUTH</b> Old Hume Hwy, Camden South	<b>JEW</b>	<b>JEWELLS</b> Lepton Pde, Jewells	<b>SUT</b>	<b>SUTHERLAND</b> Eton St, Sutherland
<b>CBN</b>	<b>CARINGBAH NORTH</b> Cawarra Rd, Caringbah	<b>KIN</b>	<b>KINGSWOOD</b> Second Ave, Kingswood	<b>TAH</b>	<b>TAHMOOR</b> Bronzewing St, Tahmoor
<b>CAS</b>	<b>CASULA</b> De Meyrick Ave, Casula	<b>LEU</b>	<b>LEUMEAH</b> Burrendong Rd, Leumeah	<b>TAM</b>	<b>TAMWORTH</b> Napier St, Tamworth
<b>CES</b>	<b>CESSNOCK WEST</b> Cnr Campbell St and Wollombi Rd, Cessnock	<b>LIT</b>	<b>LITHGOW</b> Mort St, Lithgow	<b>TAS</b>	<b>TAMWORTH SOUTH</b> Petra Ave, Tamworth
<b>CHW</b>	<b>CHATSWOOD</b> Centennial Ave, Chatswood	<b>MAR</b>	<b>MARYLAND</b> John T Bell Dr, Maryland, Newcastle	<b>TIG</b>	<b>TIGHES HILL</b> Elizabeth St, Tighes Hill
<b>COL</b>	<b>COLYTON</b> Nelson St, Mount Druitt	<b>MAT</b>	<b>MATTHEW PEARCE</b> Astoria Park Rd, Baukhham Hills	<b>TOO</b>	<b>TOORMINA</b> Cavanba Rd, Toormina
<b>COO</b>	<b>COONABARABRAN</b> Newell Hwy, Coonabarabran	<b>MON</b>	<b>MONA VALE</b> Waratah St, Mona Vale	<b>WAI</b>	<b>WAITARA</b> Edgeworth David Ave, Wahoonga
<b>CUD</b>	<b>CUDEGONG VALLEY</b> Madeira Rd, Mudgee	<b>MOR</b>	<b>MOREE</b> Albert St, Moree	<b>WEN</b>	<b>WENTWORTH FALLS</b> Falls Rd, Wentworth Falls
<b>DUB</b>	<b>DUBBO WEST</b> East St, Dubbo	<b>NEU</b>	<b>NEUTRAL BAY</b> Ben Boyd Rd, Neutral Bay	<b>WIL</b>	<b>WILKINS</b> Park Rd, Marrickville
<b>DUR</b>	<b>DURAL</b> Old Northern Rd, Dural	<b>NEW</b>	<b>NEWBRIDGE HEIGHTS</b> Cnr Lewin & Magree Cres, Chipping Norton	<b>WOL</b>	<b>WOLLONGONG</b> Church St, Wollongong
<b>EAR</b>	<b>EARLWOOD</b> Homer St, Earlwood	<b>NLS</b>	<b>NEW LAMBTON SOUTH</b> St James Rd, New Lambton	<b>WOO</b>	<b>WOOLLAHRA</b> Forth St, Woollahra
		<b>NOR</b>	<b>NORTH ROCKS</b> North Rocks Rd, North Rocks	<b>WYO</b>	<b>WYONG</b> Cutler Dr, Wyong
		<b>PIC</b>	<b>PICNIC POINT</b> Prince & Thomas St, Picnic Point		

## What are opportunity classes?

Opportunity classes located in 75 NSW government primary schools cater for Year 5 and Year 6 academically gifted and talented students. These classes help gifted and talented students to learn by grouping them with other gifted and talented students and using specialised teaching methods and educational materials at the appropriate level.

Parents normally apply when students are in Year 4. Students who are placed then attend the opportunity class full time in Years 5 and 6 at the primary school with an opportunity class. It is a two-year placement program. In the majority of cases, students who accept a place in an opportunity class will leave their current school to attend the school with an opportunity class. There is no provision to apply for Year 6 placement only.

For further information in 35 other languages see:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents/opportunity-class-and-selective-high-school-fact-sheet> and <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents/opportunity-class-placement-test>

Parents of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students are encouraged to consider applying for selective high school and opportunity class placement. More information is available at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/general-information/student-experience>

For further information and support parents can speak with their principal or contact their local Aboriginal Education and Wellbeing Advisor.

Cut this out and place on your fridge as a reminder.

## What are the stages of the placement process?

1	Parents read the application information available online	From 30 April 2019
2	Parents register, receive a password, log in, complete and submit the application online	From 30 April to 17 May 2019
3	Application website closes	10pm on 17 May 2019
4	Any disability test provisions are requested	May to July 2019
5	Principals provide school assessment scores	From 21 May to 7 June 2019
6	Disability test provisions finalised	By 10 July 2019
7	Parents are sent <i>Test authority</i> letters	On 17 July 2019
8	Students sit the Opportunity Class Placement Test for Year 5 entry in 2020	On 31 July 2019
9	Last day to change school choices	By 9 August 2019
10	Any illness/misadventure requests are submitted	By 14 August 2019
11	School selection committees meet	In September 2019
12	Placement outcome information sent to parents	In Mid-October 2019
13	Parents submit any appeals to principals	By 25 October 2019
14	Parents accept or decline offers	From Mid-October 2019
15	Parents of successful students receive <i>Authority to attend</i> letters to take to the school on the first day of Term 1 in 2020	Mid-January 2020
16	Students who have accepted offers are withdrawn from reserve lists	At 5pm Tuesday 28 January 2020

## Important dates

You must apply online by **Friday 17 May 2019**. The application site will close at 10pm on 17 May 2019. The closing date will be strictly observed except where there is a shortage of suitable candidates or where extenuating circumstances are serious and well documented.

You can change your school choices by **Friday 9 August 2019** by sending the *Change of choice* form to the Team. You cannot change choices after 9 August 2019 unless something unexpected and outside your control changes and you have documentary evidence. A request for a change of choice after 9 August must be approved by the Team. The *Change of choice* form is on the department's website.

It is the parent's responsibility to liaise with the non-government school to ask the principal to complete the *Principal's page for provision of school assessment scores* (school marks) and ensure it is sent to the Team by **Friday 7 June 2019**.

If you have not received your *Test authority* letter by **Thursday 18 July 2019** you must email the Team at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) If you do not have email access you can phone the Team on 1300 880 367.

If some problem such as sickness or an accident stops your child from taking the test or from doing his or her best either in the test or at the school you can make an *illness/misadventure* request using the form on the department's website. The form must reach the Team by **Wednesday 14 August 2019**.

If you have not received the placement outcome information by **Wednesday 16 October 2019**, email the Team at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) If you do not have email access you can phone the Team on 1300 880 367.

If you accept an offer and are also on a reserve list, you can remain on that reserve list until **5pm on Tuesday 28 January 2020**. At that time you must give up either the reserve place or the offer. After this time students who have accepted an offer will be removed automatically from any reserve lists.



## How do I apply?

Parents must apply **online** from the department's website at the following link: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5> and should read the instructions carefully. Applications are available between 30 April and 17 May 2019.

You must apply by the due date. You will:

1. register to receive a password using your own email address, not one belonging to your child
2. log in to complete the application using the password
3. submit your application
4. receive an email confirming that you have successfully submitted your application
5. check the attachment to the email to confirm all details are accurate.

The attachment will contain an application number in the format C19 123 456. **You must quote your application number whenever you enquire about your application.**

### Applying without internet access

If you have no internet access at home you may need to go to a public library and complete the following steps:

- set up a web-based email to use for the application, such as Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail or similar
- use that email account to register at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5>
- wait to receive an email with a password and a link. You may need to check your email spam or junk folders as well as the Inbox
- copy the password
- log in using the password you copied
- complete the application and, in the Contact details section, click on **'Mail only'** for all future correspondence
- submit the application
- check your new email account for the confirmation email and print the file showing all your application details. Check the email spam or junk folders as well as the Inbox.

The Team will then send all communication to your postal address.

**Note:** The Team mails letters at the same time as emails are sent so posted mail will take longer for delivery.

The department's website is in an accessible format. If you have a disability that prevents you from using a computer, contact the Team by phone on 1300 880 367 for assistance.

If you find you have made a mistake or need to change details after you submitted your application, email the Team at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au)

**Do not apply twice** for the same student, as the selection committee can consider only one application for each student.

### Parent details

It is the parent's responsibility to use an email address that does not belong to a child. The Team will not correspond with students. Any email suspected of belonging to a child will be disabled and then all correspondence will need to be sent by mail unless a valid second email has been provided.

If possible, parents should provide two email addresses and must write to the Team to update their child's record every time there is a change to any details.

### Where both parents live at the same address as the student

The names of both parents should be recorded on the application form if the second parent is likely to contact the Team or to make independent placement decisions on behalf of the child.

### Where parents live at different addresses

Where parents do not live together, but have equal shared responsibility for the care and welfare of the student, the parent who lives at the same address as the child for most of the time should submit the application.

Where the student lives with each parent for equal time, the parent with whom the child is staying at the time of applying should apply. Parents must not submit two different applications for the same child. Duplicate applications will not be processed.

If the second parent is entitled to information about the child's application that parent may write to the Team and request to receive duplicate system-generated correspondence.

The Team will not participate in parental disputes and will accept decisions about school choices and placement made by the parent with whom the child is living most of the time, unless there are court orders stating otherwise.

Where parents cannot reach agreement, the matter will be dealt with according to the department's guidelines for dealing with family law related issues. For more information refer to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/legal/familylawguidelines.pdf>

### Changes to the application

Check that all details in the application confirmation email are correct. Parents are responsible for notifying the Team in writing about changes to the application.

## Attachments

You must send copies of the following supporting documents to the Team if any of these apply to your child:

- information about a disability including a medical or behavioural disorder such as vision impairment, diabetes, anaphylaxis, autism or serious illness. If you believe your child needs disability test provisions, you will need to provide diagnostic evidence that focuses on the functional impact of the disability on test performance. Further information about this can be found at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/application-process/special-test-provisions>
- copy of court orders if they relate to this child's education or communication about the child
- explanation of why the child is older or younger than the usual age range for Year 4, or not in Year 4 in 2019
- for interstate or overseas students not able to sit the Opportunity Class Placement Test, parents must arrange to complete a *Report of academic merit*
- for students who have been doing most school work in the English language for less than 48 months, evidence of previous schooling, if requested.

Quote your application number when sending documents or use the cover sheet you receive with your application confirmation email when sending attachments to the Team.

Do not send school reports or certificates or other test results unless asked to do so.

## Who can apply?

Parents of Year 4 students enrolled in government and non-government primary schools can apply.

## School year and age

Students are normally in Year 4 at the time of application and were born after 1 January 2009 and before 31 July 2010. These students are aged between 9 years and 5 months and 11 years at the time they start Year 5.

If you apply when your child is out of the age range or in another school year, selection committees will examine the reasons you give. The principal of the school with the opportunity class may ask for an interview with your child if he or she is very young to determine whether there are special requirements that the school can provide.

Students seeking acceleration from Year 3 to Year 5 in 2020 must gain a placement score which places them in the top half of the cohort of students offered placement in their school of choice.

Selection committees can decide not to accept students who are currently in Year 5 and whose

parents are seeking them to repeat Year 5 in an opportunity class in 2020.

Selection committees may consider that students doing the test for the second time may have gained an unfair advantage from their previous experience with the test.

## Residency status

You must be living in NSW at the beginning of the school year of entry.

Your child must be a citizen of Australia or New Zealand or a permanent resident of Australia to enrol in an opportunity class. If your child is not yet a permanent resident, you can apply and your child can sit the test if you expect permanent residency will be granted before mid-October when initial offers are made. Even if your child qualifies on academic grounds you will not be offered a place in an opportunity class unless permanent residency has been granted.

Offers and enrolments will be cancelled if the placement was based on false or misleading information.

## Interstate and overseas applicants

You can apply while you are temporarily living interstate or overseas. If possible, your child should return to NSW to sit the test.

If your child cannot sit the test you will need to follow the interstate or overseas applicant procedure by completing an online application from **30 April** and **17 May 2019** and the *Report of academic merit*.

Refer to the website for updates to this procedure at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/information-for-applicants/interstate-and-overseas-applicants>

If your child is unable to sit the test while you are living out of NSW temporarily but your child was in Year 4 in NSW and has school assessment scores that can be moderated, the illness/misadventure process could apply to you. Find out more at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test/illness-or-misadventure>

## How should I choose an opportunity class?

You can apply for up to two primary schools with opportunity classes. Think about your choices carefully. List only the schools you would like your child to attend and in your preferred order. Offers are made on the basis of your order of choice. If your child qualifies for both schools, he or she will get an offer only to your first choice of school.

Make sure that the schools you choose are suitable for your child and that travel time is reasonable. Check the map on the department's website for the location of the primary schools with opportunity classes. The

selection committees do not consider distances, travelling times and transport options between the student's home and school with an opportunity class.

Be aware that Maryland PS is in the Newcastle area, not in Merrylands.

### Change of school choice

You can change your school choices before **Friday 9 August 2019** by sending a *Change of choice* form available on the department's website to the Team. You cannot change choices after **9 August 2019** unless something unexpected and outside your control changes and you have documentary evidence. A request for a change of choice after **9 August 2019** must be approved by the Team.

Changes of school choice cannot be made after outcome placement information is released and you cannot transfer between primary schools with opportunity classes.

### How are students ranked for opportunity class entry?

All students are ranked and placed in order of academic merit. Academic merit is determined mainly by combining the results of primary school assessments in English and mathematics with the results of the Opportunity Class Placement Test. This combination is expressed as a calculated placement score out of 300.

For some applicants, other evidence of academic merit may be used in the placement process, for example interstate and overseas applicants submit a *Report of academic merit*.

### School assessment scores

The NSW primary school gives school assessment scores to show each student's achievement on the school curriculum in English and mathematics in Year 4. The scores are scaled (moderated) according to the performance in the Opportunity Class Placement Test of the candidates from the child's primary school.

This means the moderated school assessment scores can be compared with those of all other applicants in NSW and gives them equal weighting with the English and mathematics test scores.

If students do not have school assessment scores that can be moderated, only their test scores will be used to calculate their final placement score.

Find out more about calculation of scores at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/selection-process>

NSW government school principals provide scores to the Team online.

If your child is at a NSW non-government school you will need to give the *Principal's page for provision of*

*school assessment scores* to the school to get school assessment scores. The principal's page is emailed to you as an attachment with your confirmation email as soon as you submit your application online.

Give the principal's page to the principal within seven days of applying.

It is the parent's responsibility to liaise with the non-government school to ensure that the completed *Principal's page for provision of school assessment scores* is sent to the Team by **Friday 7 June 2019**.

If your non-government principal will not give school assessment scores, you must send an email or letter of explanation to the Team and attach evidence to support your request for exemption. Exemption will not be approved if any other applicants from the same school have been given school assessment scores. In such a case, selection committees may decide not to accept the application.

Interstate and overseas applicants should not supply school assessment scores from their primary schools.

### What do I need to know about the test?

The Opportunity Class Placement Test for Year 5 entry in 2020 will be held on **Wednesday 31 July 2019** in test centres, usually at government high schools. The test is held only on this day and only in official test centres in NSW. All test materials are kept secure before, during and after the test and are not released to any unauthorised person. The test measures ability rather than performance on the curriculum.

### Test authority

On **Wednesday 17 July 2019** you will be sent a *Test authority email or letter* that tells you where to take your child to sit the test.

Every effort will be made to send you this information but it is your responsibility to ensure that you have received it. The information sent to you by email (or mail if you do not use an email address for correspondence) will consist of:

- a *Test authority* letter which must be presented at the test centre
- a *Test information* bulletin which explains the test and lists what your child should bring. The bulletin explains how to show the answers to the questions in the test
- a disability test provisions letter, if applicable.

If you have not received your *Test authority* letter by **Thursday 18 July 2019**, you must email the Team urgently at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) If you do not have access to email you can phone the Team on 1300 880 367.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their contact details are current throughout the placement process.



Students from the same primary school will usually attend the same test centre.

In the week before the test you will be able to see the list of test centres on the department's website at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test>

You must arrange for your child to travel to and from the test but you must not stay on the school grounds during the test unless the Team has authorised you to stay as part of a child's disability test provision. If you are asked to remain at the test centre you must obtain a volunteer *Working With Children Check (WWCC)*, report to the school office and provide identification and proof of your WWCC.

## **Opportunity Class Placement Test**

### **Test components**

There are two parts to the test, each comprising 35 multiple-choice questions in English, mathematics and general ability (thinking skills). Students have 30 minutes to answer each part of the test. They record their answers on an answer booklet that is later marked by a computer. Students use black pen supplied at the test centre to show their answers.

For marking, students are identified by barcoded booklet numbers only.

**Important: If your child does not follow instructions and records the answers on the question booklet instead of the answer sheet, the marks may not be counted.**

### **Sample tests**

Sample tests are published on the department's website to help your child practise answering the questions on the sample answer sheet. Find the sample tests at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test#Preparing2>

These samples are provided only to allow students to become familiar with the test format, so results obtained may not reflect the score your child will get in the actual test. Selection committees will not make any decisions based on your child's score on practice items or any other tests.

### **Disability test provisions**

All disability test provisions will be made in accordance with the national *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. Students with a disability can apply for opportunity placement on the same basis as students without a disability.

If your child has a disability including a medical or behavioural disorder that could affect his or her performance on the test, you can ask for disability test provisions when you apply. For example, the Team

can arrange provisions such as enlarged papers, specific seating and approval to take medications into the test room. You do not need to seek permission for your child to bring glasses or asthma medication into the test centre. These items are allowed.

If you explain your child's personalised needs in your application, the Team may contact you or the school to discuss disability test provisions.

Please advise us if your child has a medical or behavioural disorder that makes it possible that other students may be disturbed by your child during the test. In these cases we may be able to arrange for your child to be supervised in a separate room for testing.

The Team will try to assist in unforeseeable emergency situations (e.g. a broken arm just prior to the test). However, disability test provisions for existing disorders cannot be modified or added to after **Wednesday 10 July 2019** and disability test provisions requested for the first time after **Wednesday 10 July 2019** cannot be guaranteed.

In situations where a disability test provision cannot be modified prior to the test parents can seek individual consideration through the illness/misadventure process.

You must provide supporting documents if you are asking for disability test provisions. Students with a disability including a medical or behavioural disorder will be given individual consideration by selection committees.

### **What happens if something goes wrong?**

If a problem such as sickness or an accident stops your child from taking the test or from doing his or her best, either in the test or at school, you can make an *illness/misadventure* request using the form on the department's website. The form must reach the Team by **Wednesday 14 August 2019**.

If your child is sick or injured at the time of the test, you must have a medical certificate and a completed *Independent evidence of illness* form, both of which cover the day of the test. It is generally better for the student to sit the test, if possible, and submit an *illness/misadventure* request afterwards. Students must not attend the test centre if there is a risk to their health or the health of others, such as in cases of contagious disease.

If you believe something has occurred to prevent your child from gaining higher school assessment scores, you should provide documentary evidence if possible and ask the principal to write a comment on page 4 of the form.

School selection committees discuss the illness/misadventure requests and decide whether or not to

accept them. You cannot make an appeal later claiming illness or misadventure. Further information is available at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test/illness-or-misadventure>

If an illness/misadventure request is made for a student who missed the test and who does not have reliable school assessment scores, the student may be considered for placement on the basis of a reliable WISC V or Stanford Binet V Full Scale IQ Score and any other assessment that may be requested. In cases where an IQ test may be the only comparable evidence of academic merit which can be considered by selection committees, government primary schools may be asked to allow their school counsellor to conduct the test. If this option is unavailable parents will need to arrange for their child to be tested at their own expense.

### **How are decisions made?**

All selection committees make their placement decisions using the same selection criteria, but each school selection committee makes its decisions independently. Each committee includes the principal of the school with an opportunity class and a member of the school counselling service and can also include other Departmental staff, such as Directors, Educational Leadership or relevant school staff.

Selection committees:

- place students applying for their school in order of their placement scores
- consider late applicants
- look at the likely impact of a disability including medical and behavioural disorders and illness/misadventure requests
- consider matters affecting students outside the usual age range or school Year
- give consideration to students who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or who have been educated in English for less than 48 months
- consider any other relevant factors brought to their attention
- list students for offers and reserve places according to the number of vacancies at the school
- look at other evidence of academic merit, if necessary.

### **How do I find out the outcome?**

In mid-October you will be sent your child's placement outcome information. Your child may be:

- offered a place for one school choice and/or
- placed on a reserve list for one or both school choices and/or
- unsuccessful for one or both school choices.

If your child is made an offer to the school you selected as your first choice and also has a score

high enough to be offered placement at your second choice school, that second choice school will be shown as 'not applicable'.

If you receive an offer or a place on a reserve list, you will be sent an *Outcome information bulletin* explaining what each type of outcome means and what you need to do.

In most cases you will receive your child's calculated placement score out of 300.

If you have not received the placement outcome by **Wednesday 16 October 2019**, email the Team at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) quoting your child's full name and application number. If you do not have email you can phone the Team on 1300 880 367.

There is no fixed minimum score required for entry to individual schools as students are placed in rank order of their placement scores to fill the available vacancies.

The score held by the last student accepting a place at the school in the previous year is the 'minimum entry score' that is published on the department's website in April each year. This score varies from school to school and from year to year. You cannot use these scores from the previous placement process to prove that your child should have received an offer to a particular school in the current placement process.

The Team sends reports to NSW public primary schools listing the outcome for all their students who applied. Non-government school principals can request information if they provided school assessment scores.

### **Responding to offers**

If you receive an offer you must fill out the response form that you are sent with your placement outcome information and return it by the date shown on the form. This is usually 14 days later. If you get an offer by phone late in the process you might have less than 24 hours to decide whether or not to accept. If you do not respond by the due date the Team may assume you do not want the offer. If you accept an offer and then change your mind and want to decline it, you should write to the Team immediately so that the place can be offered to the next eligible student.

If you will not have access to your email at the time offers are made, you can advise the Team in writing if you wish to accept any offer in advance or if you want to change contact details.

The Team will confirm your response to an offer within 21 days. If you have not received an acknowledgement 21 days after you sent your response, please email the Team.

### **Being on a reserve list only**

If your child is on a reserve list only, you will be offered



a place if his or her position on a list is reached. The Team continues to make these offers, if vacancies occur, throughout Year 5 and to at least the end of Term 1 in Year 6, provided that students have not already enrolled in another opportunity class.

From early November you can follow the progress of the reserve lists at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/outcome>

### Further offers

If your child has been offered a place at your second choice school and is also on a reserve list for your first choice school, a further offer will be sent if his or her reserve position is reached. You must accept or decline the new offer. If you accept the further offer, the Team will consider the original offer declined. The Team will make an offer to your first choice school even if you declined an offer to your second choice school.

If you accept an offer and are also on a reserve list, you can remain on that reserve list until **5 pm Tuesday 28 January 2020**. At that time you must give up either the reserve place or the offer. After this time, students who have accepted an offer will be removed automatically from all reserve lists.

### Can I find out more about my child's scores?

Scores information will be provided for most applicants. A separate letter or email attachment will show you the raw scores your child gained on the Opportunity Class Placement Test and the raw school assessment scores. You cannot use these scores to try to recalculate the placement score. Details of scores will not be provided over the phone.

If selection committees adjusted scores for special considerations, the scores are not released.

Find out more about scores at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/selection-process>

### How do I appeal?

You may appeal against the decision of the selection committee if you know something specific happened to prevent your child from gaining higher school assessment scores or test scores (but not both) which might not have been considered by the selection committee. All appeals must be supported by relevant documentary evidence.

You must download the official appeal form that will be available on the department's website at the same time outcome placement information is released. Complete the parent section of the form and hand the appeal, with evidence attached, to the principal of your child's school no later than **Friday 25 October 2019**. The principal will pass it on to the Team by

**Friday 1 November 2019**. Late appeals will not be accepted.

Anything that should have been dealt with or was dealt with by the selection committee through the illness/misadventure process will not be considered valid grounds for appeal. Further details about grounds for appeal can be found at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/outcome/appeals>

### Can my offer be cancelled?

If the Team cannot contact you to make an offer or find out your response after trying at least twice, the offer will no longer apply.

If your child does not satisfy all requirements, such as permanent residency, or does not attend the school on the first day without a satisfactory explanation, the offer will be cancelled. Offers or enrolments will be cancelled if the placement was made on the basis of false or misleading information.

### What do I need to do to enrol?

If you have accepted an offer you will receive in late January 2020 an *Authority to attend* letter which your child must take to the school on the first day of the school year as part of the enrolment process. You may also need to provide original documentation, such as proof of residency, and meet all other NSW Department of Education enrolment conditions. There are no extra fees for attending a primary school with an opportunity class. Schools may ask for materials and voluntary contributions as do other government schools.

Information about the enrolment policy in NSW Department of Education schools is at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/enrolment>

If you need to delay your starting date beyond the first day of the school year you must discuss it with the principal of the school with an opportunity class (or with the Team if it is in the school holidays) before enrolling your child. You cannot delay enrolment beyond **Friday 21 February 2020**.

If parents later remove a student from an opportunity class for an extended period of time the vacant position must be offered to the next student on the reserve list.

### Brothers and sisters

As placement in an opportunity class is based on academic merit, you should not expect that if one of your children has been successful, the other children in your family will be placed. The placement of one twin/triplet does not guarantee the placement of another.

Brothers and sisters and twins/triplets will be offered a place in the same opportunity class only if they have scores that are high enough to qualify.

Parents of students who are offered a place in an opportunity class cannot assume that younger or older siblings can also enrol as an out-of-area enrolment at that school.

### **Who can make enquiries or decisions about my child?**

The Team corresponds with the parents that you list on the application. If you wish to let other people discuss your child's application with the Team, you must write to the Team authorising them to make enquiries or decisions on your behalf.

The Team will provide information about an application to any parent or interested person who is legally entitled to it, regardless of requests for confidentiality. The Team will abide by requests not to reveal a parent's contact details to any other specified person. The Team will not correspond with students or speak to them on the telephone.

### **Where can I get further information?**

The Team updates information about opportunity class placement procedures regularly on the Team's website at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5>

The Team's telephone system also has current information about the placement process. Please check the website before contacting the Team by email at [ssu@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ssu@det.nsw.edu.au) or phone 1300 880 367 or fax (02) 9266 8435.

You will need to give the student application number and other identifying information when talking about your child. For email enquiries you should use the original email address used in the application.

Ask your child's teacher if you want advice about whether or not your child might benefit from attending an opportunity class.

Find out more about programs offered by the [primary schools with opportunity classes](#) by visiting their websites.

For regular updates on the placement process log into Facebook to access this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/159342048077050/>

Detailed information is available in [Rules and procedures for Year 5 placement in an opportunity class](#).

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **1. Must I list two schools?**

You should list only those schools you are prepared to accept. You may list one or two choices. Consider your choices carefully.

### **2. Does the order in which I list my choices matter?**

Yes. If your child qualifies for both of your choices, you will be offered a place only at the first choice school. However, if your child qualifies for only one of the two choices, you will be offered that place regardless of whether it was your first or second choice.

### **3. What provision is made for students from non-government schools?**

The selection procedures are the same as for government school students. The only difference is that the Team advises government school principals about the students from their school who have applied. Parents of students from non-government schools must ask their principals to complete the *Principal's page for provision of school assessment scores* (emailed as an attachment to parents with their application confirmation) and then must ensure it is returned to the Team by **Friday 7 June 2019**. In circumstances where this is not possible you should submit a letter of explanation to the Team.

The selection committee will NOT generally grant an exemption to applicants who do not have school assessment scores if other students from the same school have them. The selection committee may decide not to accept the application in this case.

### **4. What can I do to prepare my child for the Opportunity Class Placement Test?**

Encourage your child to use the sample tests on the department's website to practise answering the questions on the sample answer sheet. Students will also be given practice questions before the test begins. See sample tests at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test#Test1>

The results of practice items do not mean that your child will score the same in the test. Selection committees and appeals panels will not make any decision based on your child's score on practice test items.

The Department of Education does not endorse coaching for the Opportunity Class Placement Test.

### **5. How is the placement score calculated if my child is the only one applying from his or her school?**

A student who does not have school assessment scores or who is the only candidate from his or her school will be considered on test scores which will be expressed as a mark out of 300 as the calculated placement score.

## 6. Will my child be disadvantaged if the school cannot provide school assessment scores?

Over the entire candidature, about half of the placement scores are increased by the moderated school assessment scores while the other half are decreased. Where students are not provided with school assessment scores, it is not possible to guess whether or not having school assessment scores would have increased their placement scores. Students without school assessment scores who are considered exempt will be considered on their test scores only.

## 7. What happens if my child is sick or injured on the day of the test?

It is generally better for the student to attempt the test than to miss it. You should download the *Illness/misadventure* form from the department's website. You will need to take the student to the doctor and obtain a medical certificate which covers the day of the test and ask the doctor to complete the *Independent evidence of illness* form. You should complete the *Illness/misadventure* form whether or not the student attempted the test, attach the medical certificate which covers the day of the test and the *Independent evidence of illness* form, and return the completed form to the Team by **Wednesday 14 August 2019**. The selection committee will then consider the student's illness/misadventure request as part of the selection process. You will not be able to appeal on the grounds of illness after the placement outcome information is known.

## 8. Can I change my choice of schools after submitting the application?

You must think about your choices very carefully when you apply. You can ask for a change of choice without explanation if you submit a request form by **Friday 9 August 2019**, when selection committee lists are created. After this date, there has to be documentary evidence of the extenuating circumstances and any change must be approved.

## 9. If my placement outcome information indicates that my child is unsuccessful, can his or her name be placed on a reserve list?

No. Three terms are used in the placement outcome information: 'offer', 'reserve list' and 'unsuccessful'. Selection committees decide the students who will receive offers and those who will be placed on reserve lists. Students who receive offers and those on reserve lists have higher scores than those who are unsuccessful. Students placed on a reserve list will be given a number indicating their position on the reserve list. Progress on the reserve list varies from year to year. When offers begin to be made from the reserve list, the progress of each school's reserve list is available on the department's website from early November 2019.

## 10. What does the Opportunity Class Placement Test tell me about my child's performance?

The Opportunity Class Placement Test measures ability, while school assessment scores show each student's achievement on the school curriculum. The test helps to identify students for entry into opportunity classes on the basis of academic merit. It is not meant to be a diagnostic test to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics. The student's primary school is most appropriate to advise you on your child's performance in these areas.

## 11. If my child was unsuccessful for opportunity class placement, does it mean he or she will be unsuccessful for selective high school entry?

Not necessarily. The entry requirements for opportunity classes and selective high school placement can vary quite significantly. Moreover, there is scope for improvement in the ability and performance of students over the time since they applied for opportunity class placement. Conversely, not all students from opportunity classes are successful for selective high school entry. There are more than twice as many Year 7 places in selective high schools as there are Year 5 places in opportunity classes.

## 12. If I receive an offer to my second choice as well as being on the reserve list for my first choice, do I have to give up the offer to stay on the reserve list?

You can accept an offer to your second choice school while remaining on the reserve list for your first choice school until 5pm on **Tuesday 28 January 2020**. After that time, no further offers will be made to students who have already accepted placement in an opportunity class.

## 13. What should I do if my child does not get into an opportunity class?

Opportunity classes are only one of the initiatives provided by the Department of Education to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. As there is one place for approximately every six people applying, not all students can be placed. Be supportive and explain to your child that he or she can be very successful in a mainstream class at his or her current primary school.

## 14. What score does a student have to gain to be successful for opportunity class placement?

There is no predetermined score that a student has to achieve to receive an offer of opportunity class placement. The minimum entry score for each school with an opportunity class depends on the scores achieved by the candidates applying for that school and can vary from school to school, and from year to year. The greater the demand for the school, the higher the entry score is likely to be.



### 15. How can I find out my child's score?

Most parents will receive their child's placement score at the bottom of their placement outcome information in October.

A further letter or attachment is provided with the breakdown of the raw school assessment scores and test marks. In a few cases the score cannot be published. If parents do not receive their child's score they can write to the Team for an explanation.

The selection committee may adjust a child's score based on criteria such as a student's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status, length of time doing all school work in English, illness misadventure request, appeal and a number of other factors. This is why a student may appear higher on a reserve list than another student with a higher calculated placement score. Adjusted placement scores are not released as they can vary between the selection committees considering the application.

No other score information is available, including adjusted scores or school rankings.

### 16. How does the reserve list work?

If the student is on a reserve list for an opportunity class, the number on the placement outcome information shows the student's position on the list. The progress of the reserve list depends on whether students accept or decline an offer and whether other students receive further offers to schools of higher choice. If a student's position is reached on the reserve list, the Team will contact parents with an offer. From early November 2019 until 28 January 2020 you can track the progress of the reserve lists on the department's website. The page is updated regularly.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/outcome#Reserve1>

### 17. Does my child get an advantage if we live very close to the school with an opportunity class?

No, selection committees do not consider travelling times and transport arrangements when offering places.

### 18. If my child is one of the last to be made an offer, does that mean he or she will struggle in an opportunity class?

The selection committee offers places or reserve list positions only to those students they think are capable of doing well in an opportunity class. There are many things which can affect student performance, including your child's willingness to learn, his or

her response to teachers and interaction with other students. While some students who receive late offers might have problems, the majority should have no difficulties.

### 19. How can separated parents make sure they both receive the information about the application?

When you apply you will be asked to provide the names of both parents and you should give the contact details of the parent who the child lives with most of the time. You will have to provide copies of court orders if they exist.

If the parent who does not live with the child is entitled to educational information about the student, that parent may contact the Team and request duplicate system-generated correspondence.

**Under no circumstances should separated parents make separate applications for the same student.**

Response forms are sent only to the primary applicant. It is the responsibility of separated parents to reach consensus about matters such as school choices and accepting offers.