

DECIDING UPON SENIOR SCHOOLS

As pupils move up year groups at Reigate St Mary's there is constant teacher monitoring of their progress alongside standardised testing, so that the staff are fully aware of each child's development and their academic attainment levels. These results combined with the school's assessment of each individual child's aptitude and levels of application, enable the school to accurately predict which senior school will be most appropriate for them.

It is of paramount importance that each child goes to a senior school that is appropriate for them. Going to an environment which is highly academic for a child who would struggle in this environment can damage their self-confidence and negate the benefits of being in such a school. Therefore, the school will start talking to parents during the course of Year 4 (when their child is 8 years old rising 9 years old) to give them an indication of which senior school might be most suitable.

Although the majority of children do go on to Reigate Grammar School, it is not the right environment for everyone and some families may be looking at other senior independent or maintained schools through choice anyway.

For those children whose parents choose an alternative independent senior school to Reigate Grammar School, a programme of tailored support is provided for their child suitable for the type of entrance examination they will sit at 11+. This runs alongside the children's normal timetable lessons and is overseen by an experienced member of staff who works to support children and parents and who communicates with the chosen senior school to ensure the whole process is smooth and stress free.

It is important to keep lines of communication open and to have conversations with the school as early as possible so that we are all working together for the best outcomes for each child.

In the Spring term during Year 5 letters are sent to parents of children who would cope with and benefit from an education at Reigate Grammar School, offering an early recommendation. If this is accepted by parents, it will lead to an early offer of a place at Reigate Grammar School being made. Therefore, by the end of Year 5, parents whose children will cope with the academic rigour at Reigate Grammar School are able to accept an early offer, pay a deposit and be assured of a place at our senior school at the end of Year 6 without their child having to sit the 11+ entrance examination.

This takes the pressure off both children and parents and also means that throughout the course of Year 6 the prep school is able to focus primarily on a high quality, exciting and challenging education rather than an over emphasis on passing the 11+ test which can, for many prep schools, curtail the quality of education and take the enjoyment out of learning during that important final year of prep school life.

Instead, the emphasis at Reigate St Mary's is on developing those leadership skills, on growing children's confidence and on being well prepared for the transition into senior school life.