

Prospective Year 7 Open Evening- FAQs

What percentage does my son have to achieve in the papers to pass?

It is difficult to answer this, as the papers are not marked as a percentage. The raw scores from the two papers (maths and English) are standardised, age adjusted and combined (50% each) to create a final score. However, in preparing for the tests, it is worth bearing in mind that boys who achieve 70% or above in each paper are very likely to be considered for a place; and scores above 50% *may* be just high enough.

My son lives outside the catchment area – is the pass-mark higher for him?

The pass-mark is the same for all children taking the 11+; this year the pass-mark was 303. The school's annual admission number is 180. Our admission criteria state that of those 180 places, 5/6ths (150) have to be reserved for children whose parents' primary residence (as assessed in the terms provided, annually, in the Southend Local Authority secondary admissions booklet) lies within the postcode areas SS0, SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, SS6, SS7, SS8 and SS9 (catchment area), subject to their passing the selection tests.

Places are allocated by Local Authorities according to the school's rank ordered list, which is compiled by the CSSE once all papers have been marked. If there are fewer than 150 children from the catchment area who have scored the pass-mark or higher, then more places are available for candidates whose parents' primary residence lies *outside* the catchment area. Therefore, the number of children who come from schools outside the catchment area will fluctuate from one year to the next.

Is my son eligible for 'Preferential Consideration'?

10% of places reserved for pupils living within the catchment area (15 out of 150) and for pupils living outside the catchment area (3 out of 30) are designated for children who exceed the pass mark and who are entitled to 'preferential consideration'. Preferential consideration is available to children who pass the selection tests and who indicate on the CSSE Supplementary Information Form at the time of registering for the tests that they are in receipt of Free School Meals, or are recipients of the Pupil Premium Grant. A full definition can be found in Note A and Note D of the 'admissions criteria and arrangements for entry 2025' printed in the 'Prospectus Supplement – General Information' in your pack.

How do I apply for my son to come to this school?

To enter your son for the 11+ tests, you must register with the CSSE. This is best done online via the CSSE website (www.csse.org.uk). Alternatively, the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) can be found in the CSSE booklet. You must register no later than **19th June 2026**. The selection tests will be held on **Saturday 19th September 2026**. (If your child is unwell on the day or cannot sit the tests on a Saturday for religious or other reasons, the alternative test date is **Tuesday 29th September 2026**.)

Results of the tests will be made available to parents by the CSSE on **12th October 2026**.

You must put this school as a choice on your Local Authority (where you are *resident*) Single Application Form. The Local Authority will allocate you the first school on the list for which you fulfil the criteria. If you put another school as a higher choice than SHSB on your list and you fulfil that school's criteria, you will be allocated that school, *even if your son has passed the 11+ test*. The Single Application Form must be submitted to your Local Authority by **31st October 2026**. (You should check with your own LA for their closure date if your home LA is not Southend or Essex.)

Do you sell practice papers?

Free sample past papers are available on the CSSE website (www.csse.org.uk). You may also purchase additional papers from the CSSE. There is an application form at the back of the CSSE Information Guide and on the CSSE website.

Can we still obtain a place at SHSB if we put you as a second choice?

Yes – for instance, if you put KEGS as a first choice, it is possible that your son doesn't score highly enough to be offered a place at that school but may still have scored highly enough to be offered a place at this school.

Do you have children travelling a long distance to school?

Yes – we have taken children from all over Essex, including from Tiptree, Braintree, St Lawrence Bay, and East London.

How does this affect after-school activities?

The vast majority of this school's extra-curricular activities take place during the lunch break, although some, such as the Wargames Club, do take place after school. If your son has to catch a contract bus (see below), he will have the opportunity to attend sporting practices and peripatetic music lessons during the lunch break. If your son is chosen to represent the school in sport, fixtures generally take place after school and/or on a Saturday morning.

Can you give me information about transport?

For those of you who live some distance from the school, the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex administers contract bus passes on limited routes offered by Stephenson's and First Buses. Current routes, timetables and costs can be found on their website (www.csse.org.uk). Some private providers also offer services from further afield, such as Maymist and SBC Leisure – further information about private providers can be obtained from online searches. If you live locally, you can find details of bus routes at your local bus station or online.

Alternatively, you can travel by train to the school – the nearest station is Prittlewell on the Liverpool Street line, which is a 10-15-minute walk from the school or Southend Central (or Westcliff-on-Sea) on the Fenchurch Street line, which is a walk of approximately 20-25 minutes.

I am concerned that my son might be the only pupil from his school to get a place at SHSB.

Every year, we have a very large number of boys who do not know anybody at the school. We generally find that pupils settle very quickly and make new friends; we do a lot of work to support this in the first term.

On the exam day, are special arrangements available for candidates with special needs?

Quiet rooms are provided for candidates who may require special attention, including those with hearing impairment, those who may need to eat during the tests due to diabetes, or other special needs. In previous years, we have accommodated special requests for enlarged papers and other adjustments. Special needs requests *must* be indicated on the CSSE application form. **Any consideration for special adjustments must be made in writing to the CSSE by 26th June 2026 at the latest.** Arrangements cannot be made for special adjustments that are notified after this date. Adjustments will be made in accordance with the requirements of the Equalities Act (2010) and with reference to independent specialist advisors whose decision will be binding on the CSSE and candidates.

What does SHSB do for pupils with SEND?

Please speak to Mr March (SENDCo), either at the open evening, or subsequently by email (enquiries@shsb.org.uk).