

# Applying for Year 5 entry to an opportunity class in **2022**

Once you complete and submit your application you must change details receive messages and record decisions through your application portal.

## Thinking of applying for Year 5 entry to an opportunity class in **2022?**

You must apply online at:

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



### Key dates

Application site opens:

**Tuesday 20 April 2021**

Application site closes:

**5pm, Friday 7 May 2021**

You must apply before this deadline

Test centre advice sent:

**Wednesday 7 July 2021**

Opportunity Class Placement Test:

**Wednesday 21 July 2021**

Placement outcome information released overnight on:

**Friday 1 October 2021**

**Please read this booklet carefully before applying.**

Parents\* should check the Department's website at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5> regularly throughout the application and placement process.

Please check the Department's website for 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 Telephone Interpreter Service: 131450

Postal Address: GPO Box 33, SYDNEY, NSW 2001

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

### Please Note:

<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'.

## Stages of the placement process

1	Parents read the application information online.	From April 2021
2	Parents register, receive a verification email, log in using own password, and then complete and submit the application online.	From 20 April 2021 to 7 May 2021
3	Parents request any reasonable adjustments for student's disability in the test when applying, including uploading relevant documentation.	From 20 April 2021 to 14 May 2021
4	Principals provide school assessment scores.	From 11 May 2021 to 28 May 2021
5	Parents are sent 'Test authority' advice by email or post.	On 7 July 2021
6	Students sit the Opportunity Class Placement Test for entry to Year 5 in 2022. 'Report of academic merit' due for interstate or overseas students not sitting the test.	On 21 July 2021
7	Requests for special consideration for illness/misadventure are submitted.	By 28 July 2021
8	Last day to change opportunity class choices.	6 August 2021
9	School selection committees meet.	In September 2021
10	Placement outcome released.	Overnight on 1 October 2021
11	Parents submit appeals to principals.	By 8 October 2021
12	Parents accept or decline offers.	From October 2020 to at least the end of Term 1 2023
13	Students with accepted offers are withdrawn from reserve lists.	At 5pm on 28 January 2022
14	Parents of students who have accepted placement are sent 'Authority to attend' letters to take to the school on the first day of term in 2022.	Late January 2022

## Important dates

You must apply online by **Friday 7 May 2021**. The application site will close at 5pm on 7 May 2021. The closing date will be strictly observed except where there is a shortage of suitable candidates or where extenuating circumstances are well documented.

You can change your school choices by logging back into the application portal and making any changes up until **Friday 6 August 2021**. You cannot change choices after 6 August 2021 unless something unexpected and outside your control changes and you have documentary evidence. A request for change of choice after 6 August 2021 must be approved by the Team.

Parents of non-government school applicants are responsible for liaising 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 28 May 2021**.

If you have not received advice about the 'Test authority' by **Monday 12 July 2021**, please log back in to your application and send a message to the Team.

If some problem such as sickness or an accident stops your child doing his or her best in the test, if your child missed the test or if school assessments were affected, you can make an illness/misadventure request. To make a request, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**.

If you have not received the placement outcome information by **Wednesday 6 October 2021**, please log back in to your application and send a message to the Team.

If you accept an offer and are also on the reserve list, you can remain on that reserve list until **5pm, Friday 28 January 2022**. By 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.

✂ You may wish to cut this out and place on your fridge as a reminder.

## What are opportunity classes?

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

Year 5 enrolments are available at 76 primary schools including a virtual opportunity class at Aurora College for students in rural and remote areas.

Parents apply when their children are in Year 4. Successful students are offered placement, and if the parents accept the offer, the students attend the opportunity class full time in Years 5 and 6 at the relevant public school. This is a two-year placement program and there is no provision to apply for Year 6 entry only. In the majority of cases, students who accept a place in an opportunity class will leave their current school to attend the school with the opportunity class.

See a full [list of primary schools with opportunity classes](#) with links to their websites. A map is also available at: <http://www.maptive.com/ver3/Opportunity>

Find more information about catering for academically gifted students with high potential in NSW at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education>

## Who can apply?

Parents of Year 4 students enrolled in NSW public and non-government primary schools can apply. Students from home schools, interstate and overseas schools can also apply. Students must be Australian or New Zealand citizens or permanent residents of Australia.

## Rural and remote applicants

If your child attends or intends to enrol in one of the public schools in rural or remote areas, you can apply for a place in the virtual opportunity class at Aurora College.

Students attend their local public schools and join the opportunity class for science, technology and mathematics lessons using an online conferencing system. Students connect with their

teachers and other students through a virtual learning environment and residential school programs.

Non-government school applicants who are successfully placed will need to enrol their children in the local public school to be eligible to participate in the virtual provision.

View the list of authorised host schools at: [https://www.aurora.nsw.edu.au/files/2020/02/Authorised\\_hosts.pdf](https://www.aurora.nsw.edu.au/files/2020/02/Authorised_hosts.pdf)

Aurora College's selection committee may contact the principal of your child's current school to determine whether this type of learning environment is likely to be best for your child.

Find out more about Aurora College at: <http://www.aurora.nsw.edu.au/>

**Note:** Students at schools with opportunity classes, or at schools within the drawing areas of existing opportunity classes, will not be eligible to apply for entry into the virtual opportunity class. It is also not available to city and regional students.

## Age and school Year

Students are usually in Year 4 at the time of applying and when sitting the test in 2021. They are usually born between 1 January 2011 and 31 July 2012. These students will be aged between 9 years and 5 months and 11 years at the time they start Year 5. If your child is out of this age range or in another school Year when you apply, selection committees will carefully check the reasons you give. They may ask for more information, or for an interview with you and your child if he or she is very young, to determine whether there are special requirements the school can provide.

Selection committees may:

- decide not to accept students who are much older than the usual age range set out above
- consider that students doing the test for a second time have gained an unfair advantage from their previous experience with the test
- decide not to accept students who are already in Year 5 in 2021 and who are seeking to repeat Year 5 in an opportunity class in 2022.

Selection committees considering applications for students seeking acceleration from Year 3 in 2021 to Year 5 in 2022 will take into account evidence of consultation with the school principal

and will require such students to gain a calculated placement score which places them in the top half of the students offered placement in their school with an opportunity class of choice.

## Residency status

Students accepting placement in an opportunity class must be living in NSW at the beginning of Year 5.

Your child must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of Australia to enrol in an opportunity class.

If your child is not yet a permanent resident, but you expect permanent residency will be granted before initial offers are made in early October 2021, you can apply and your child can sit the test. Even if your child qualifies on academic grounds, you will not be offered a place in an opportunity class unless permanent residency has been confirmed.

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

## Interstate or overseas

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

Follow the illness/misadventure process if your child is unable to sit the test while you are temporarily living out of NSW, but your child was in Year 4 in NSW and has school assessment scores that can be moderated.

Find out more at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test/illness-or-misadventure>

Otherwise, if your child is unable to sit the test in NSW you will need to follow the interstate or overseas applicant procedure by completing the [Report of Academic Merit](#).

Find out more at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/information-for-applicants/interstate-and-overseas-applicants>

Interstate and overseas applicants do not need to request school assessment scores from their primary schools.

## How do I apply?

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

Applications are open from **Tuesday 20 April 2021 until 5pm on Friday 7 May 2021**.

You must apply online by **Friday 7 May 2021**. The application site will close at 5pm on 7 May 2021. This closing date will be strictly observed, except where there is a shortage of suitable candidates or where extenuating circumstances are serious, well documented and prevented both parents (if applicable) from applying.

To apply, you can:

1. Go to the application site and register using your own name and email address, not one belonging to your child. You will receive an email to verify your registration.
2. Go to the application and log in using the email address and password you provided.
3. Complete the application and submit it when it is checked and completed.
4. Upload any required documents if relevant.
5. Receive an email confirming that you have successfully submitted your application.

Log in to your application throughout the year to check all details are accurate and to add documents, make changes or send and receive messages to and from the Team.

Parents of students at non-government schools will be asked for consent for the Team to contact the school about scores or adjustments for disability.

You will receive an application number in the format C21123456. Quote this number when making enquiries.

## Parent details

If possible, provide a second email address.

Keep your contact details up-to-date by logging in to your application using the email address you registered and the password you used to apply.

It is vital that you enter at least one mobile phone number as SMS is used to alert parents to any delays on test day.

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

Record the details of other parents in the application if they are likely to contact the Team or if they are entitled to make decisions on behalf of the child.

## **Where parents live at different addresses**

If 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.

If the student lives with each parent for equal time, the parent with whom the child is staying at the time should apply. Additional parents can be added to the application and can ask to receive information about the child's application. Please do not submit two different applications for the same child.

The Team will not participate in parental disputes. The Team will accept decisions about school choices and placement made by the parent who applied, unless there are court orders stating otherwise.

Where parents cannot reach agreement on any aspect of an application, 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/about-us/rights-and-accountability/legal-issues-bulletins/family-law-guidelines>

## **Changes to the application**

It is your responsibility to check and correct or make changes to your application if required. Log in to your application at any time throughout the year to check all details are accurate and to add documents or make changes. Some changes, such as requests for adjustments for disability, changes of school choice, submission of illness/misadventure requests and appeals, will be restricted to certain dates as listed on Page 2.

## **Applying without internet access**

If you have no internet access at home or have a disability that prevents you from using a computer, please contact the Team for assistance.

In the application you can select 'Mail only' for correspondence. It is expected that only those without a regular email address will select that option.

The Team mails letters at the same time as emails or messages are sent so they will take longer for delivery.

## **Attachments**

Please ensure you upload copies of the following supporting documents to your application at the time of applying or as soon as possible afterwards if any of these apply to your child:

- Information about a disability, including medical or behavioural condition that may require reasonable adjustments for the test. Find further information at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/application-process/reasonable-adjustments-for-the-test>
- A copy of court orders if they relate to this child's education or communication about the child.
- An explanation of why the child is older or younger than the usual age range for Year 4, or if not in Year 4 in 2021.
- A Report of academic merit, required for interstate or overseas students who cannot sit the test in NSW. This report must include a full WISC V IQ report or Stanford Binet V IQ report with a reliable full scale IQ score, standardised reading and mathematics test results
- Evidence of previous schooling for students who have been doing most school work in the English language for less than 48 months, (if requested).

Special consideration may be given for Aboriginal students. The Team may need to confirm your child's Aboriginal descent if school records do not confirm it. Find information about confirming Aboriginality at:

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/family-history/you-start/proof-aboriginality>

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

## **How should I choose my first and second choices?**

You can apply for up to two schools with opportunity classes. Think about your choices

carefully. Select 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. Where students qualify for both schools, they will be offered only their first choice of school.

Schools do not select students based on whether their school was chosen first or not. Selections for each school are based on the academic merit of the applicants for that school.

Make sure that all the schools you choose are suitable for your child and that travel times are reasonable. You can see where each school with an opportunity class is located by referring to the map at: <http://www.maptive.com/ver3/Opportunity>

You can also learn more about individual schools with opportunity classes by visiting their [websites](#). Selection committees do not consider your child's travel times or transport needs.

Find out more about school choices at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/information-for-applicants/choosing-an-opportunity-class2>

It is important to note that Maryland Public School is located in the Newcastle area, not in the Sydney suburb of Merrylands.

## Changing your school choice

You can change your school choices before **Friday 6 August 2021** by logging in to your application. You cannot change choices after 6 August 2021 unless something unexpected and outside your control changes, for which you must have documentary evidence. A request for a change of choice after 6 August 2021 must be approved by the Team.

You cannot change your school choices after placement outcome information is released, nor can students transfer between primary schools with opportunity classes.

## How are students ranked for opportunity class entry?

As a result of the Review of Selective Education Access, the method of ranking of students for opportunity class placement is subject to change.

All students are placed in order of academic merit based on and the results of the Opportunity Class

Placement Test and primary school assessment scores in English and mathematics.

The calculated placement score will be derived as follows:

Test component	Score out of	School assessment scores	Score out of	Calculated placement score
Reading	33.3	English	10	
Mathematical reasoning	33.3	Mathematics	10	
Thinking skills	33.3			
Total	100		20	120

For some applicants, other evidence of academic merit may be used in the placement process. For example, interstate and overseas applicants who are not able to return to NSW for the placement test submit a [Report of Academic Merit](#) that includes an IQ report.

## School assessment scores

### NSW public schools

NSW public schools give school assessment scores to show each student's achievement on the school curriculum in English and mathematics in Year 4, relative to other candidates from the same school. The school assessment scores are moderated based on the performance of the candidates from that primary school in the Opportunity Class Placement Test.

If students do not have school assessment scores that can be moderated, their test scores will be used to derive a score that ranks them for each opportunity class.

Details about the calculation of scores for placement in 2022 are available on the Department's [website](#).

NSW public school principals give the scores directly to the Team online.

### NSW non-government schools

If your child is at a NSW non-government school, a 'Principal's page for provision of school assessment scores' is emailed to you as soon as you submit your application. You must give it to the principal within seven days of applying so the principal can supply the scores.

If your child currently attends a non-government school, it is your responsibility to liaise with the school to ensure that the 'Principal's page for provision of school assessment scores' is completed and sent to the Team by **Friday 28 May 2021**.

If the non-government school principal will not provide school assessment scores, ask the principal to sign and date the form. If he/she will not do this, you will need to upload a letter of explanation to your application.

The selection committee will generally not accept an application without school assessment scores if other students from the same school have them.

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

The Opportunity Class Placement Test will be held from **9:00 am to 11:40 am** on **Wednesday 21 July 2021** in test centres, usually at public high schools. The test is held only on this day and only at official test centres in NSW.

All test materials are kept secure before, during and immediately after the test.

The test is designed to measure applicants' ability, rather than their performance on the curriculum.

## **Test authority**

On **Wednesday 7 July 2021** you will be sent a 'Test Authority' letter that tells you where to take your child to sit the test.

Your child must take a printed copy of the 'Test authority' letter to the test.

In your application you will also have access to a document entitled 'Test information for parents and students'. This provides details about the test and about what your child should bring. It also tells students how to show answers.

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>

Please be very accurate about the school your child attends as it is usually not possible to change test centres after they are allocated.

You must arrange for your child's travel to and from the test.

You must not stay on the school grounds during the test unless the Team asks you to stay. The Team may ask you to stay because your child has an approved adjustment for the test that requires you to be available during the test. If you are asked to remain at the test centre you must obtain a volunteer 'Working With Children Check' (WWCC) prior to the test day. You can apply at: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check>.

On the day of the test, you must report to the school office and provide identification and proof of your WWCC.

If you have not received your 'Test Authority' letter by **Monday 12 July 2021**, please log back into your application and send a message to the Team.

## **Opportunity Class Placement Test**

### **Test format**

The Opportunity Class Placement Test format will change in 2021 for placement in 2022. The test will continue to be paper-based. There will be three tests conducted on the one day, consisting of reading, mathematical reasoning and thinking skills, in that order.

Test component	Duration	Number of items
Reading	30 minutes	25
Mathematical reasoning	40 minutes	35
Thinking skills	30 minutes	30

Students record their answers on an answer sheet for each test that is later scanned by a computer. Students bring their own 2B lead pencil, sharpener and eraser to the test centre. Students use a pencil to show their answers.

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

If your child marks a series of answers on the wrong lines on the answer sheet, the misalignment may not be able to be corrected.

## Sample timetable

The following timetable is approximate and will vary according to the size and location of the test centre.

Activity	Time
Parents transport candidates to test centre	by 9.00 am
Administration	9.00 am – 9.30 am
Test 1 – Reading comprehension (30 minutes)	9.30 am – 10.00 am
Test papers collected Break (candidates remain in test centre)	10.00 am – 10.10 am
Test 2 – Mathematical reasoning (40 minutes)	10.10 am – 10.50 am
Test papers collected Break (candidates remain in test centre)	10.50 am -11.00 am
Test 3 – Thinking skills (30 minutes)	11.00 am – 11.30 am
Test papers collected	11.30 am – 11.40 am
Candidates dismissed and parents collect students	11.40 am

## Sample tests

Sample questions for the new test are published on the Department's [website](#) to help your child practise answering the questions on the sample answer sheet.

These samples are provided only to allow students to become familiar with the test format and style of questions. Any results 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 unauthorised tests.

## Reasonable adjustments for disability

On the application, parents must include information about a child's disability, including a medical or behavioural condition that could affect his or her safety or performance during the test, or that might require a life-saving response such as medication.

You can ask for reasonable adjustments for the test when you apply.

Reasonable adjustments are practical arrangements designed to respond to a student's disability and support them to show what they know under placement test conditions, in accordance with the national [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).

This information will be used to understand a student's disability and the adjustments that may

be required to ensure equitable test conditions, on the same basis as a student without this disability, and to ensure safety for all students participating in the placement test.

Information that parents and schools provide about disability is used for approving reasonable adjustments for the test. The Team sends advice to principals and presiding officers in test centres to ensure the adjustments are implemented. Selection committees consider students with disabilities and whether the adjustments were made for them during the test.

Information parents provide about disability cannot be used to restrict access to opportunity class placement in any way.

If you believe your child requires adjustments for the test you will need to explain your child's needs in detail in the application (such as exact font size if requesting large print) and upload evidence and other relevant documents to your application.

You can also add supporting documentation after submitting your application up until **Friday 14 May 2021**.

The Team may contact you and/or the school to confirm the adjustments the student has at school. In many cases, if the requested adjustments are already provided at school, the Team can arrange for these in the test. This may include adjustments such as large print test papers, extra time, specific seating and approval to take medications into the test room.

You do not need to make arrangements for your child to bring glasses or asthma medication. These are allowed.

A person trained in anaphylaxis response will be present at each test centre. Parents of students with anaphylaxis must take an anaphylaxis kit to the presiding officer before the test starts. The Team will send these parents information about the anaphylaxis kit well before the test day.

Supervisors are not trained in emergency care (apart from anaphylaxis response). It is therefore vital that parents let the Team know about any medical condition that may affect their child's safety in the test so appropriate adjustments can be approved.

The Team tries to assist in emergency situations (e.g. a broken arm just prior to the test). However, in



general, adjustments will not be able to be arranged after **Friday 14 May 2021**.

**Note:** Some adjustments will require the student to be tested in a separate room.

### What happens if something goes wrong?

You can make a request for special consideration for illness/misadventure about events:

- affecting performance on the test
- causing the student to miss the test
- affecting performance on assessments at school.

If a problem such as sickness or an accident stops your child from doing his or her best in the test, if your child missed the test or if school assessment scores were affected, you can lodge an illness/misadventure request. To make a request, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**.

### If test performance is affected

If your child sits the test but is sick or injured or an event affects **performance on the test**, you must get a medical certificate or other evidence for the test day.

Cambridge Assessment, the testing company, considers the factors which may have prevented your child from gaining higher test scores. To make an illness/misadventure request, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**. Their process will result in the awarding of a severity rating which will allow selection committees to adjust the total test scores of the students. Only 5 working days after the test are allowed for illness/misadventure requests.

It may be better for the student to sit the test and make an illness/misadventure request afterwards. However, students **must not** attend the test if there is a risk to their health or the health of others, such as in cases of contact with contagious disease.

Students with signs of respiratory illness will not be admitted without a COVID clearance.

### If the student is unable to sit the test

If your child was prevented from sitting the test

for a good reason you can make a request for special consideration of illness/misadventure based on **missing the test**.

You will need to have a medical certificate and an 'Independent evidence of illness' form to support the request that covers the test.

To make a request for special consideration of illness/misadventure based on **missing the test**, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**.

Follow this procedure also for students who are overseas on the day of the test but were in a NSW school for Year 5.

### If the problem is with school assessments

If you believe something has occurred to prevent your child from gaining higher **school assessment scores**, you should provide evidence when you make the request. Then the principal will be asked to write a comment about the school assessment scores.

To make a request for special consideration of illness/misadventure based on school assessment scores, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**.

**You cannot make an appeal later about illness or misadventure that should have been raised at the time of the test.**

## How are decisions made?

All school selection committees make their placement decisions relating to their own school using common selection criteria.

Each committee includes the principal of the school with the opportunity class and a member of that school's counselling team. It can also include other staff members such as classroom teachers. Directors, Educational Leadership may also attend.

Selection committees for each school consider all applicants for the school based on the order of calculated placement scores. They consider:

- students with disability and any personalised support needs
- illness/misadventure requests
- whether to accept late applications
- reasons for students being outside the usual age range or school year

- students who are Aboriginal
- students who have been educated in English for less than 48 months
- students from interstate or overseas with alternative evidence of academic merit
- any other relevant factors brought to their attention
- students to be listed for offers and reserve places according to the number of vacancies at the school
- other evidence of academic merit, if necessary.

## How do I find out the outcome?

The Team expects to release your child's placement outcome overnight on **Friday 1 October 2021**. Your child may be:

- offered a place for one school choice, or
- placed on a reserve list for one or both school choices, or
- unsuccessful for one or both school choices, or a combination of two of the above.

If your child is made an offer to the school you selected as your first choice and also had a score high enough to be offered a place at your second choice school, the second choice school will be shown as 'not applicable'.

If you receive an offer or a reserve place you will have access to an 'Outcome information bulletin' explaining what each type of outcome means and what you need to do.

If you have not received advice about the placement outcome by **Wednesday 6 October 2021**, please log in to your application and send a message to the Team.

Please note: There is no minimum fixed score required for entry to individual schools.

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 posted as the 'minimum entry score' on the Department's [website](#) in April each year. This score varies from school to school and from year to year and is published as a guide only. It does not represent

the cut-off score for the following year. As the scoring has now changed, minimum entry scores for entry in 2022 will be different from all previous years.

The Team sends reports to NSW public schools listing the outcome for all their students who applied. Non-government school principals can request this 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 within 14 days. 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 send a message to the Team by logging in to your application to advise that you wish to accept any offer in advance.

The Team will confirm your response to an offer within 21 days.

### Being on a reserve list only

If your child is on a reserve list only, you will not need to respond unless you wish to withdraw your child from the list.

A student remaining on a reserve list will be offered a place if his or her position on the list is reached.

The Team will continue to make offers, if vacancies arise, throughout Year 5 and to at least the end of Term 1 in Year 6, provided students have not accepted an offer to another opportunity class.

You can follow the progress of the reserve lists from **late October 2021** at:

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

## Subsequent 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 subsequent offer will be made if his or her reserve position is reached. You must accept or decline the new offer. If you accept the subsequent offer, the Team will consider the original offer declined.

**Note:** 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 **5pm on Friday 28 January 2022**. 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 automatically removed from all reserve lists.

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

Scores information will be provided for most applicants.

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

Find out more about scores on the Department's website at:

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

## Can I appeal the placement outcome?

The appeals process begins after placement outcomes are notified to parents.

You may appeal against the placement outcome if you know something specific happened that would not have been considered by the selection committee but that prevented your child from gaining **either** higher test scores **or** higher school assessment scores.

The principal of your child's school may be asked to comment on the grounds for your appeal.

You may also appeal if your child is not yet a permanent resident of Australia but you have

proof that it will be granted before the end of the current school year.

Appeals must be submitted within **5 days of the outcome being released** via the link on the Department's [website](#). All relevant documentary evidence must be uploaded to your application by the due date. Late appeals will not be accepted.

Anything that should have been dealt with or was dealt with by the selection committee, such as illness/misadventure requests, will not be considered valid grounds for appeal. The link to the appeals form and 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/placement-outcome-information/appeals>

## Can my offer be cancelled?

If you do not respond to an offer by the due date the Team will try to contact you twice. If there is no response, the offer will be cancelled and will pass to the next student on the reserve list.

If your child does not satisfy all requirements, such as permanent residency, or does not attend to finalise enrolment on the first day of school without a satisfactory explanation, the offer will be cancelled.

Offers will also be cancelled if they are found to be based on false or misleading information.

## What do I need to do to enrol?

If you accept an offer you will be sent an 'Authority to attend' letter in late January 2022. Your child will need to present this letter to the school on the first day of the school year to finalise the enrolment process.

You will 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 public school with an opportunity class. Schools may ask for materials and voluntary contributions as do other public schools.

You can find information about enrolment policy in NSW Department of Education schools at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/enrolment>

If you need to delay your child's starting date beyond the first day of the school year, you must negotiate it with the principal of the school with the opportunity class (or with the Team if it is in the school holidays) before enrolling your child. You cannot delay enrolment past **Friday 18 February 2022**.

Any extended leave after enrolment must be negotiated with the school principal and is subject to the NSW Department of Education's enrolment policy.

### **Brothers and sisters**

Placement in opportunity classes is based on academic merit. The placement of one twin or triplet does not guarantee the placement of another. Brothers and sisters will be offered a place in the same opportunity class only if they have scores that are high enough to qualify.

Where brothers or sisters of students placed in a school with an opportunity class are not in the catchment area for that school, parents may apply for out-of-area enrolment at that school. There is no guarantee, however, that such an application will be successful.

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

The Team will communicate only with the parents or carers listed on the application. If you want other people to discuss your child's application with the Team, advise the Team in writing to authorise others to make enquiries or decisions on your behalf.

The Team will provide information about an application to any parent or authorised person who is legally entitled to it, regardless of requests for confidentiality.

If relevant court orders apply, upload a copy to your application so the Team can comply with them.

The Team does not correspond with students or speak to them on the telephone. Please ensure your login details are kept secure and shared only with authorised parents or carers.

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

Ask your child's teacher if you want advice about whether your child might benefit from attending an opportunity class.

Find out about programs offered by specific schools by visiting their websites.

Find updated information about the opportunity class placement procedures at:

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

### **Contacts**

Contact the Team by:

- logging in to your application to send and receive messages and to upload documents
- Phone: 1300 880 367. The phone system has updates at key stages of placement
- logging into Facebook and requesting approval to join this Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/159342048077050/> Note: This page is used mainly to provide information and not to respond to requests.
- Use email only as requested by the High Performing Students Team.

### **Frequently asked questions**

#### **1. Must I list two schools in the application?**

You can choose one or two schools with an opportunity class. You should list only schools you would definitely accept an offer to. Please 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 only be offered a place at your highest ranked school choice.

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

The selection procedures are the same as for public school students. One difference is that the Team advises public school principals about the students from their school who have applied.

Parents of students from non-government schools must ask the principal to complete the 'Principal's page for provision of school' assessment scores (emailed with their application confirmation) and then must ensure it is returned to the Team by **Friday 28 May 2021**.

If your non-government school does not provide school assessment scores and the principal will not sign, date and stamp the principal's page, you

must log in to your application and upload a letter of explanation.

The selection committee will generally not accept an application without school assessment scores if other students from the same school have them.

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

You will be sent test authority advice and a test information bulletin two weeks prior to test day.

Sample questions for the new test are published on the Department's website at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-5/the-test#Preparing4>

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 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/her school or if the school cannot provide school assessment scores?

Students who do not have school assessment scores or who are the only candidates from their schools are considered on the basis of test scores only. If the students could not sit the test, the selection committee may request other evidence of academic merit such as an IQ test.

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

It is recommended that the student should attempt the test rather than miss it if possible. To make an illness/misadventure request, go to your application dashboard and submit the request by **Wednesday 28 July 2021**.

You will need your child to see a doctor and obtain a medical certificate covering the day of the test. If your child is unable to sit the test because of illness, ask the doctor to complete the 'Independent evidence of illness'.

All illness/misadventure requests are to be submitted no later than **Wednesday 28 July 2021**. 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 released.

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

It is important that you think about your choices very carefully when you apply. You can make a change of choice without explanation up until **Friday 6 August 2021** via your application. After this date there must be extenuating circumstances which are serious and well documented for a change to be considered. Any change after 6 August 2021 must be approved. Changes of choice based on the fact that the student did not qualify for the original choices will not be approved.

#### 8. What are reserve lists?

Reserve lists are lists of students whose placement scores are not quite high enough to gain an initial offer but are high enough to be on a waiting list if any vacancies arise. Selection committees decide the students who will receive offers and those who will be placed on reserve lists. Students who have been offered places for a particular school will have higher placement scores than those who are on the reserve list or are unsuccessful for that school.

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

If your child is on a reserve list for an opportunity class, the number on the placement outcome advice shows his or her position on the list. How quickly the Team offers places to those on a reserve list depends on whether parents accept or decline offers to that school, and whether other students receive further offers to a school of higher choice and therefore decline the offer to the lower choice. If your child's position is reached on the reserve list, the Team will contact you with an offer.

If you accept an offer and are also on the reserve list, you can remain on that reserve list until **5pm on Friday 28 January 2022**. 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.

From **late October 2021** you can track where the reserve list is up to at:

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

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

No. Students who are unsuccessful cannot be placed on a reserve list because their scores were not high enough. Students cannot be placed on reserve lists for schools which were not listed as choices in their application, even if those schools may require lower entry scores.

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

The Opportunity Class Placement Test is designed to measure 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. The test is more difficult than other school assessments because it is designed to discriminate between high performing students. It is not meant to be a diagnostic test to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses in English or mathematics performance. The student's primary school can advise you on your child's performance in these areas.

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

Not necessarily, as the cohort of students they are compared with is different. Students can improve over the time since they applied for opportunity class placement. Many parents of high potential and gifted students applying for selective schools did not apply for opportunity class placement. 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.

13. If my child receives an offer to my second choice school as well as being on the reserve list for my first choice school, do I have to give up the offer in order to stay on the reserve list?

You can accept an offer to your second choice school and stay on the reserve list for your higher choice school until **5pm on Friday 28 January 2022**. After that time no further offers will be made to students who have already accepted placement in an opportunity class and have not later declined the offer.

14. 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 NSW Department of Education to meet the needs of gifted students. As there is approximately one place for every seven applicants, not all students can be placed. Be supportive and explain to your child that he or she can be very successful at the local primary school. Students from public schools can achieve results which are as good as, or even better than, results gained by opportunity class students, as not all high potential and gifted students seek opportunity class placement.

All public schools must implement their own provisions for high potential and gifted students under the NSW Department of Education's high potential and gifted strategy, which can be found at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education>

15. 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 to an opportunity class. Students are placed in rank order to fill the available vacancies.

The score held by the last student placed at the school in the previous year is referred to as the 'minimum entry score' and is published on the Department's [website](#) in the following April each year.

These 'minimum entry scores' are provided as an indicator for parents' reference, but do not represent a 'cut off' mark for subsequent years. For example, in a school with 30 places, the score of the 30th student who accepts a place at that school represents the minimum entry score for that year. This score can vary from school to school and from year to year. The greater the demand for the school, the higher the minimum entry score is likely to be.

The entry scores for 2022 opportunity class entry will not be known until after the placement process is finalised. Please note: The placement score for entry in 2022 is out of a different number of marks so there could be no comparison between the scores required for entry in 2021 and those required for entry in 2022.

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

Parents will be sent their placement outcome in October.

In a few cases the score cannot be published. If parents do not receive their child's score they can log in to their application and send a message to the Team for an explanation.

The selection committee may adjust a child's score based on criteria such as a student's Aboriginality, length of time doing all school work in English, illness/misadventure request, appeal and a number of other special considerations. 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 two selection committees considering the application.

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

## 17. Why are placement scores and further details sometimes unavailable?

Where students have been considered on other evidence of academic merit, such as an individual IQ test, or the selection committee has used different components of the scores based on supplementary information, the original calculated placement score does not apply. The adjusted scores are not released to avoid the perception that the student did not deserve the placement. Selection committees can make different decisions about adjustments. The original scores would no longer apply in all cases.

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

No. Schools with opportunity classes are not zoned. Selection committees do not consider travelling times and transport arrangements when offering places.

## 19. 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.

## 20. How can separated parents ensure they both receive the information about their child's application?

When you apply, you will be asked to provide the names of other parents. If another parent who does not live with the child is entitled to educational information about them, you can add details to the application.

## Public schools with Year 5 opportunity classes in 2022

You can select up to two public schools with an opportunity class, in order of preference.

### School

#### ARMIDALE CITY

Faulkner St, Armidale

#### ALEXANDRIA PARK +

Park Rd, Alexandria

#### ALSTONVILLE

Main St, Alstonville

#### ARTARMON

McMillan Rd, Artarmon

#### ASHFIELD

Liverpool Rd, Ashfield

#### AURORA COLLEGE ◊

(virtual provision)

#### BALGOWLAH HEIGHTS

Lewis St, Balgowlah Heights

#### BALMAIN

Eaton St, Balmain

#### BATHURST WEST

Suttor St, Bathurst

#### BEECROFT

Beecroft Rd, Beecroft

#### BIRABAN

Beckley St, Toronto

#### BLACKTOWN SOUTH

Flushcombe Rd, Blacktown

#### BLAXCELL STREET

Blaxcell St, Granville

#### BRADBURY

Jacaranda Ave, Bradbury

#### CAMDEN SOUTH

Old Hume Hwy, Camden South

#### CARINGBAH NORTH

Cawarra Rd, Caringbah

#### CASULA

De Meyrick Ave, Casula

#### CESSNOCK WEST

Cnr Campbell St and Wollombi Rd, Cessnock

#### CHATSWOOD

Centennial Ave, Chatswood

#### COLYTON

Nelson St, Mount Druitt

#### COONABARABRAN

Newell Hwy, Coonabarabran

#### CUJEGONG VALLEY

Madeira Rd, Mudgee

#### DUBBO WEST

East St, Dubbo

#### DURAL

Old Northern Rd, Dural

#### EARLWOOD

Homer St, Earlwood

### School

#### ERMINGTON

Winbourne St, West Ryde

#### GEORGES HALL

Pennington Ave, Georges Hall

#### GLENBROOK

Woodville St, Glenbrook

#### GOONELLABAH

Ballina Rd, Goonellabah

#### GOSFORD

Faunce St West, West Gosford

#### GOULBURN WEST

Combermere St, Goulburn

#### GREENACRE

Waterloo Rd, Greenacre

#### GREYSTANES

Merrylands Rd, Greystanes

#### HARRINGTON STREET

Harrington St, Cabramatta

#### HOLSWORTHY

Infantry Pde, Holsworthy

#### HURSTVILLE

Forest Rd, Hurstville

#### ILLAROO ROAD

Illaroo Rd, Nowra

#### IRONBARK RIDGE

Ironbark Ridge Rd, Rouse Hill

#### JEWELLS

Lepton Pde, Jewells

#### KINGSWOOD

Second Ave, Kingswood

#### LEUMEAH

Burrendong Rd, Leumeah

#### LITHGOW

Mort St, Lithgow

#### MARYLAND

John T Bell Dr, Maryland, Newcastle

#### MATTHEW PEARCE

Astoria Park Rd, Baulkham Hills

#### MONA VALE

Waratah St, Mona Vale

#### MOREE

Albert St, Moree

#### NEUTRAL BAY

Ben Boyd Rd, Neutral Bay

#### NEWBRIDGE HEIGHTS

Cnr Lewin & Magree Cres, Chipping Norton

#### NEW LAMBTON SOUTH

St James Rd, New Lambton

#### NORTH ROCKS

North Rocks Rd, North Rocks

#### PICNIC POINT

Prince & Thomas St, Picnic Point

### School

#### PORT MACQUARIE

Grant St, Port Macquarie

#### QUAKERS HILL

Medlow Dr, Quakers Hill

#### QUEANBEYAN SOUTH

Cameron Rd, Queanbeyan

#### RICHMOND

Windsor St, Richmond

#### RUTHERFORD

Weblands St, Rutherford

#### RYDE

Pope St, Ryde

#### SMITHFIELD

O'Connell St, Smithfield

#### SOLDIERS POINT

Cromarty Rd, Soldiers Point

#### SOUTH GRAFTON

Vere St, South Grafton

#### ST ANDREWS

Ballantrae Dr, St Andrews

#### ST JOHNS PARK

Sandringham St, St Johns Park

#### STURT

White Ave, Wagga Wagga

#### SUMMER HILL

Moonbie St, Summer Hill

#### SUTHERLAND

Eton St, Sutherland

#### TAHMOOR

Bronzewing St, Tahmoor

#### TAMWORTH

Napier St, Tamworth

#### TAMWORTH SOUTH

Petra Ave, Tamworth

#### TIGHES HILL

Elizabeth St, Tighes Hill

#### TOORMINA

Cavanba Rd, Toormina

#### WAITARA

Edgeworth David Ave, Wahroonga

#### WENTWORTH FALLS

Falls Rd, Wentworth Falls

#### WILKINS

Park Rd, Marrickville

#### WOLLONGONG

Church St, Wollongong

#### WOOLLAHRA

Forth St, Woollahra

#### WYONG

Cutler Dr, Wyong

+ Places are reserved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

◊ Only students who would be enrolled in Year 5 in a public school in a rural and remote area (excluding

16 areas where there is a current OC provision) in 2022 may apply for Aurora College, the virtual opportunity class.