

NSB ADMISSIONS - Frequently asked questions

General Questions

1. How many students do you admit each year?

Our Published Admission Number (PAN) is 215 for Year 7, so initially only 215 offers are made. The only exception to this is with twins where initially if one twin is successful and the other is not our Admissions Policy allows us to offer a place to the other twin.

2. How do I apply to Northampton School for Boys?

Please complete the Supplementary Information application form by 5:00pm on 31st October which can be found on the admissions pages of the website.

3. Do I have to fill in a Local Authority form?

Yes – if you have not registered an application through the LA they will not allow you to be allocated a place even if you have completed our Supplementary Information Form successfully. You will be dealt with as a late applicant after all places have been allocated.

4. Do I have to list 3 preferences?

You don't have to list three preferences, but are strongly advised to do so. If you are unsuccessful with the application for the preferences that you have listed, then the LA will allocate the nearest available school with places.

5. Should I put my son in for all tests?

All boys must sit the Common Ability Test. It is up to you to decide if your son wishes to sit either or both of the Aptitude tests. However, if you believe that your son has a real potential in either music or technology then please enter him. Over the last 5 years boys who are offered a place under aptitude have scored 85% or better in the tests.

6. Will my son be prejudiced if he does not sit or is unsuccessful in the Aptitude tests?

No – the Music and Technology Aptitude Tests are separate and the outcome of these will not prejudice your son in the remaining part of the admissions process in any way.

7. What happens if I put another school as a higher preference?

The Local Authority operates an equal preferencing system which means that all your preferences are considered equally against each relevant school's over subscription criteria. The penultimate slide on the presentation by Mr M Edwards shows what happens when you have met the admissions criteria for different schools and which school will then be allocated.

8. What if my application is late?

Our policy states that late applications will be considered after on time applications.

9. Why do you ask for proof of address for sibling links?

To be considered for a sibling link, you must have an elder sibling on roll at the school as at 31st October and you must live at the same address as them. We ask for proof of address so that we can verify that siblings do live at the same address.

10. How do I find out if my son has got a place at NSB?

On National Offer Day, you will receive a notification on the Local Authority application portal. We will write to those parents with successful applications a few days after this with further details about what happens next.

11. What are the oversubscription criteria for the school?

The priority order of the oversubscription criteria can be found below, however, please refer to the Admissions Policy for a full description of these:

- All Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).
- Aptitude – 10% of places are awarded to boys with a demonstrated particular aptitude for Music and/or Technology
- Children of staff directly employed by Northampton School for Boys
- Sibling Link – where an elder brother/sister, living at the same address, are on roll and attending the school on the closing date for applications (31 October).
- The remaining places are allocated using a system of Norm Referenced Banding as described in the DfE School Admissions Code

12. My son has an older brother attending the school. Will he definitely get a place at the school?

Because of the oversubscription criteria, we cannot say he would definitely get a place at NSB, however, in the last 20 years, all sibling link applicants have gained a place under this criteria if they have applied to the school on time.

13. Can I apply to NSB if I do not live in Northamptonshire?

Yes – we do not have an address criterion so applicants would have the same chance of being selected regardless of how far they live from the school. If you do live outside Northamptonshire, you should make the application via your own Local Authority.

14. What happens if my son does not get a place at NSB?

If your son is unsuccessful in gaining a place at NSB then you do have the right for your case to be heard by an independent appeals panel. We will write to you about this straight away after National Offer Day.

15. My son has support at his primary school and I think he has special needs? Does he automatically get a place at NSB?

Only children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have a higher priority in the Admissions policy. If this is the case and your son has an EHCP, you should approach the EHCP team at the Local Authority who will help support you make an informed choice of school. It is important to ensure that NSB is the right school for your son before making your choice so, if your son has an EHCP, please feel free to contact us on 01604 230240 and a member of staff from our Additional Intervention Team will be able to assist with any queries.

Common Ability Test

1. Does my son have to do the Common Ability Test?

Yes – all children who want to be considered for a place at NSB need to sit the Common Ability Test so that they can be put into a band for the random allocation of places.

2. How will I find out at what time he has to come for the test?

We will write to you after the closing date for all applications and tell you what time he has to come for the test.

3. What measures are you putting in place to ensure my son will be safe when he comes for the test?

Last year, we significantly reduced the amount of children doing the test at one time and in one room so that social distancing could be maintained at all times as these were the rules in place at the time. Areas were cleaned between sittings. We will be increasing the number attending the tests but final details are yet to be confirmed.

4. What type of questions are in the Common Ability Test?

This is a non-verbal reasoning test of 75 multiple choice questions.

5. Is there a pass mark for the Common Ability Test?

No – the Common Ability Test is not a pass/fail test but is used to rank all the students who apply to us from top to bottom. Students are then split into five equal bands of the same ability students and then the same number are selected from these bands at random. All students should do their best with the knowledge that it is not a pass/fail test

6. Is it possible to fail the Common Ability Test?

No

7. Does my son need to bring any equipment with him for the Common Ability Test?

Yes – your son will need to bring two pencils (preferably hb), an eraser and a pencil sharpener with him for the test.

8. What happens if my son misses the Common Ability Test?

It is crucial that your son attends this test, however, if there is an emergency then please contact Mrs L Shocklidge, the Admissions Officer, at the school for further information.

9. Do we get to find out how he has performed in the Common Ability Test?

No. We do not publish the results of this test, however, if your son is unsuccessful in gaining a place at the school and you then decide to appeal, you will be provided with his result and the band that this placed him in.

10. Where should we park?

Please park in the Cripps Hall car park and enter via the red front doors in main reception.

11. Will I be allowed to stay on the school site whilst my son is doing his test?

Last year parents were not allowed to stay on site for the duration of the test, however, this is currently being reviewed in light of the latest national guidance and the level of infection rates in the local area. Further instructions will be provided to parents before the 13th November.

Aptitude Tests

1. Does my son have to sit the Technology or Music aptitude test?

No – the aptitude tests are completely optional. Students who have a passion and demonstrate an interest in these areas generally have an aptitude for them. Only enter your son for Technology or Music if you feel this is the case. Over the last 5 years boys who are offered a place under aptitude have scored 85% or better in the tests.

2. How do I book onto the aptitude tests?

To book onto the aptitude tests you must do this on the Eventbrite website. Search for Northampton School for Boys. Your location will need to be set to Northampton and NOT online events. Alternatively use the link on the school website.

3. When are the closing dates for the aptitude tests?

The Technology aptitude test closes on Thursday 7th October at 9:00am and the Music aptitude test closes on Thursday 14th October at 9:00am.

4. My son already has an older brother/sister who attends the school and would qualify under the sibling link criterion. Does he need to take the aptitude test?

No. Sibling link has a higher priority in the over-subscription criteria than aptitude therefore there is absolutely no need for a sibling to attend the aptitude tests.

5. What measures are you putting in place to ensure my son will be safe when he comes for the Music/Technology aptitude tests?

Last year, to ensure that the school was as safe as possible, we implemented a number of strategies. We reduced the amount of visitors on site at any one time, by asking that only one adult accompanied a child taking the test, and insisted that face coverings and social distancing were observed. Additional enhanced cleaning was provided throughout the day and an increased number of testing slots was made available hence reducing the number of students who could attend each session.

This is currently under review and we will ensure that the latest guidance/legislation is followed. Information will be provided on the website.

6. Does my son need to bring a musical instrument to the Music aptitude test?

No – the test consists of forty questions consisting of four different sections looking at Pitch, Melody, Improvisation and Rhythm and is carried out orally and aurally.

7. Does my son have to play a musical instrument to do the Music aptitude Test?

No – we are testing for potential so it is not a requirement, however in the past, students who play an instrument to a high level have tended to do better in the test.

8. What type of questions are in the Technology aptitude test?

The Technology aptitude Test is a multiple choice test that is carried out on a computer. It contains elements of Information Technology and Design Technology and is a picture puzzle based test which is designed to look for logical thinking and spatial awareness.

9. Does my son need to bring anything for the Technology aptitude Test?

If your son has a ruler, he could bring this with him, however, it is not an essential piece of equipment and the test can be done without one.

10. What measures are you putting in place to ensure my son will be safe when he comes for the Technology aptitude test?

We advise that all parents and children continue to sanitise their hands on arrival and if possible maintain a 2 metre gap from other visitors to the site. The wearing of face coverings is now down to personal choice. If there are one way routes in operation we will expect these to be followed and we would expect visitors to carefully follow instructions given by staff. For the test itself, we will be operating this electronically on a computer with no sharing of equipment. Computers, desks and seats will be cleaned between test sittings.

11. When should I arrive for the test?

Please arrive at the time indicated for each test. This will be indicated on the information provided on the ticket. If you arrive too late for the test you may not be able to sit it.

12. Do I need to bring my ticket to the test?

Yes – please bring your ticket to confirm your booking.

13. Can I do one test and not the other?

Yes – you can book in for both tests, one test or no tests. You should only book in for an aptitude Test if you or your son feels that he demonstrates an aptitude for either Music or Technology.

14. Why do the aptitude Tests take place before the application deadline of 31st October?

The tests take place before the application deadline because the School Admissions Code says that we have to write to parents giving an indication of how well your son has done in the test. Please note that we will not be able to give you the exact result.

15. When will I find out the results of the aptitude Tests?

We are not able to give you the exact results, but we will provide an indication of how well your son has done by Friday 22nd October. You will be told if he was in the top percentile which will be determined based on the number of students taking the test (2020 – top 7%, 2019 – top 7%, 2018 – top 5%). Please be aware that if your son is in the top percentile then this does not guarantee, or equate to an offer of, a place at NSB.

16. If my son does not take either or both of the aptitude Tests, will he be disadvantaged?

No – the Music and Technology aptitude Tests are separate and the outcome of these will not prejudice your son in the remaining part of the admissions process in any way.

17. What is the pass mark for the aptitude Tests?

There is no pass mark for the aptitude tests. The top 21 performing students across both the Technology and Music aptitude tests will be offered a place under this oversubscription criteria.

18. Where should we park?

Please park in the Cripps Hall car park and enter via the gates next to the pedestrian crossing for the Music Aptitude test and the red doors in Main Reception for the Technology Aptitude test.

19. Can my son do the tests another day?

Unfortunately, this is not possible. The tests only run on one day.

Coronavirus Health and Safety

1. How are you ensuring that my son will be safe when he comes into school for one of the testing days?

We will be asking all parents and children to sanitise their hands on arrival, follow any one way routes in operation, to carefully follow instructions given by staff and to maintain a 2 metre gap from other visitors to the site where possible. The wearing of face coverings is now down to personal choice.

2. What if my son has to self-isolate due to testing positive for Coronavirus?

If this is the case, we would ask that you contact the school on 01604 230240 and ask to speak to the Admissions Officer, Mrs Shocklidge.

3. Why have you cancelled the Presentation and Open Evening tours of the school?

We have taken guidance and feel that it would not be appropriate to run tours of the school site due to the number of visitors we have. Instead we will be running smaller Presentation Mornings and tours and we also have videos and a virtual tour which give a flavour of the school.

4. Do I have to wear a face covering when we come to the school?

The wearing of face coverings in the buildings is now not compulsory and is down to personal choice.