

How will allowing six preferences avoid disadvantage?

As always, parents should rank the schools on their form in order of preference. An “Equal Preference” scheme means that each valid preference is considered under that school’s admission criteria, and schools are not told where they were named on the form. The parents’ order of preference is used by the Local Authority only if more than one school could offer a place, so that the highest available of parents’ preferences can be offered on 1 March. (If none of the schools named can offer a place, the Local Authority allocates another school.)

The important thing for parents to remember is that this year the grammar school preferences should be placed highest on the form, if they wish for them to be considered first if the child is given a “grammar” assessment. (If they are ranked below other schools the grammar applications will still be considered if the child qualifies, but the highest-ranked school that is available will be offered, so that could be a non-selective school, regardless of the Kent Test results.)

Parents who would have named only grammar schools after receiving the results

Last year, parents whose children qualified for grammar school could have named as many as four grammar schools (depending on the local provision) after the results came out. They can still do this before they have the results, but with the insurance of two more options to name other schools further down the form. When the results are out their grammar school preferences will be considered exactly as they would have been last year. If their child can’t be offered any of the first four schools (whether because they are oversubscribed, or because the child is not assessed suitable for grammar school) the two remaining preferences will still be taken into account.

Parents who would have named a mix of grammar schools and non-selective schools after receiving the results

Some parents whose children qualified for grammar school might have named a mix of school types after receiving results, either because these reflected their true local preferences, or so that, if all their local grammar schools were oversubscribed, at least one non-selective preference could be considered if their higher preferences couldn’t offer. They can still do this before they have the results, but can name two more schools than before.

Other parents whose children didn’t qualify for grammar school might have named a mix of school types after receiving results, in order to leave scope for appeals to one or more grammar schools after securing a non-selective place. They can still do this before they have the results, but can name two more schools than before.

Parents who would have named all non-selective schools

Some parents would have named all non-selective schools because their child did not take the Kent Test. They can do the same by 31 October, with up to six options instead of up to four.

Parents whose children were tested but did not qualify for grammar school might also have named four non-selective schools after receiving the results. They can still do so. Provided they use their first two preferences to name grammar schools ahead of receiving the results, these preferences can be considered if their child qualifies, leaving them four non-selective preferences if not. They are not limited to two grammar schools, but after they have named two, any additional grammar preference will reduce the number of non-selective preferences available.