

Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge Supplemental Guidance – Fair Banding Assessment

This information relates to entry into Year 7 for 2020

For entry into Year 7 in September 2020, parents have to include Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge (TASB) as one of their five preferences on the Common Application Form (CAF). Pupils interested in applying to TASB will be invited to sit a non-verbal reasoning assessment (a Fair Banding Assessment), produced by a reputable national organisation.

Applicants who sit the Fair Banding Assessment (FBA) are considered for admission first. Applicants who do not sit the assessment for a valid reason e.g. illness, moving in to the authority after the initial assessment, will be given an additional opportunity to sit the assessment at a later date.

The results of this assessment will be used for the purpose of assisting the academy in placing applicants into one of four bands (1-4) dependent on their FBA score. The boundaries of each band reflect national benchmarks. We will admit the required number from each band based on the spread of ability of those applying.

The assessment is externally set by a well established educational assessment agency and the papers are collected by the agency to be marked. The academy is then provided with a list of each child's assessment mark, similar to an IQ score, with 100 being the average. The marks are divided into four bands and we are instructed how many children to take from each band e.g. if 40% of those applying are identified in band 2, then 40% of our intake has to be from this band. This ensures that the 180 places we offer reflect the ability range of our applicants.

The assessment is not a traditional entrance exam which children either pass or fail. It is done to ensure that we take a fair number of children across the whole ability range.

TASB offers 180 places each year.

Fair Banding Assessment Window 1:

The parents of pupils interested in applying to TASB need to complete a Fair Banding Assessment Registration Form (available on the academy's website or can be obtained directly from the academy).

Registration forms are available for completion from **Monday 15 April 2019** (the second Monday in April) to the deadline of **Friday 13 September 2019** (the second Friday in September). The assessments for these pupils will take place on **Saturday 21 September 2019** (the third Saturday in September).

Note: There will be a second assessment window for any pupils who missed the assessment window above but please note that a pupil will only be allowed to sit the assessment once. Please contact the academy for further details.

The admission assessment will consist of a nationally validated assessment, supplied by a recognised body such as GL Assessment. The assessment is a predictor of future performance and as such does not rely upon material that will be covered in the primary school curriculum. The results from the assessment are standardised and aged-weighted. Exemplar material, including examples of assessment questions, is available from the academy's website or can be obtained directly from the academy.

Secondary school applications must be submitted to the LA in which the child is resident by October 31st 2019. The LA will then allocate places according to the coordinated scheme and parents will be notified of the offer on 1 March 2020.

The coordinated scheme in Calderdale is administered as an equal preference scheme. This means that parents express a preference for up to five schools on the CAF and although they are ranked in order, they are given equal preference. The LA will operate the scheme and coordinate admissions by sending every preference to the admission authorities without reference to the rating on the CAF. Therefore, schools will offer places based on their oversubscription criteria which cannot include 'first preference first'. The ranking is used to discriminate between preferences if two or more schools are able to offer a place, then the highest preference is offered.

Parents wishing their daughter or son to be considered for a place at TASB are advised to place the academy as their first preference. The academy was ranked in the top 1% for improved performance in 2018 and is the second highest performing secondary in the whole local authority (behind only Trinity Academy Halifax).

Parents who wish to place Trinity Academy Halifax as their first preference are reminded that it regularly receives over 700 applications for just 330 places, and therefore parents who want a 'Trinity MAT' secondary experience are strongly advised to place the two academies (Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge and Trinity Academy Halifax) as their first and second preferences.

Kirklees and Bradford also operate an equal preference scheme and so parents can follow the advice given above for Calderdale residents.