



**Admission Appeal Defence Statement
Secondary School – Holcombe Grammar School**

Please be advised that each parent who lodges an appeal will have a personalized defence statement forwarded to them as part of their case papers.

Admission Appeal for students joining Year 7 in September 2022
Published Admission Number: 150
Number of Applications received: 461
How many places were offered on national offer day and what is the position today: 150/150

Places Offered – (Please catalog oversubscription criteria)	Numbers
SEN/LAC	1
Sibling link	11
Trust Link	3
Staff link	-
Health and special access	-
Distance	135
Total number of pupils offered a place	150
Rank position of last child offered a place	412

<p>Under which criteria was this child considered for admission</p> <p>If your son has been successful at either the Medway or Kent Test but has not gained a place he would have been considered for admission under the oversubscription criteria of 'distance' which was calculated using the graphical information software used by School Admissions and Transport.</p> <p>If your son was unsuccessful at either the Medway or Kent Test he is not eligible for a place at a grammar school, unless otherwise decided by the Independent Appeals Panel.</p>
<p>Distance of last child allocated a place was 39,570 meters from the school.</p>

The key issue in considering an appeal for a place at this school is whether a student is of grammar school ability and, therefore, has the capacity to access the pace and challenge of the grammar school curriculum.

This curriculum is designed for the top 25% of the ability range. Students below this level, who were unsuccessful at the Kent/Medway Test would struggle to engage with the curriculum and its delivery. Therefore, students who have not been deemed selective should not be considered for a place at Holcombe Grammar School.

One of the key issues in considering an appeal for a place where a student was successful at either the Kent/Medway test is whether there is the capacity to increase the number of students allocated to the School.

Currently (2021/2022) in each year group the numbers are as follows.

Year 7 - 150, Year 8 – 150, Year 9 - 142, Year 10 - 145, Year 11 – 146

The Governors are satisfied that places have been allocated correctly and in accordance with the school's over-subscription criteria.

The school cannot admit more than 150 students into Year 7 for the following reasons:

- The school considers that going beyond this figure would be detrimental to the education of others and would compromise the efficient use of resources. A figure of 150 would give 5 classes of 30 (with the exception of DT where for safety reasons we have classes of no more than 20 students) so any more than this would make accommodating students in classes highly challenging; 5 classes of 30 would not compromise the safety and education of existing students. Without additional buildings the school cannot accommodate further increases in its PAN.
- The school has a phased building plan to increase capacity, but COVID 19 has delayed confirmation of funding for expansion to grammar schools, delaying the commencement of building work which could allow for building renovations and expansion to accommodate larger numbers of students. No significant new building work will take place in the next 12 months.
- The school is having to consider converting an existing classroom and study areas within the library into a Science laboratory for September 2021. This is so that the school can accommodate its PAN of 200 in Year 12 and the high demand for 'A' level sciences, based on applications received standing at 450 for September 2022 entry.
- The school had plans, due to be funded by the Government's grammar school expansion fund to renovate and expand the number of specialist rooms, including Art, DT and Music, but without funding confirmed, this second phase of building work has not occurred.
- To accommodate all 150 students in a year group within specialist areas, the school is dependent on demanding timetabling to ensure that students are split across several subjects at the same time, as it is not in a position to accommodate high numbers of students at the same time.

- The school is made up of a range of older buildings and additions of different designs over a long period of time. The buildings design has led to a number of smaller than average rooms, leaving tight spaces for 30 students and a teacher desk/area. These classrooms have to be designated to 6th form teaching, due to the typically smaller teaching groups at A Level.
- Newly built/converted classrooms have had to be constructed/renovated within the original footprint/building restrictions. This has resulted in a number of rooms including maths, humanities, some computer rooms, etc. failing to meet the space requirements of new build classrooms. Space is very limited and the majority of these classrooms have been converted to fit 15 double desks for students and 1 teacher area/desk only. Therefore, we do not have sufficient space or furniture necessary to host over 30 in a class.
- IT classrooms have a maximum of 30 computers/desks in each and the age of the building means that we cannot accommodate additional power/data points.

In summary, whilst the School is sympathetic to the family's request for a place, it believes that the original decision not to offer a place was the correct one. This is in order that there is no prejudice to the efficient use of resources and the education of the other children who have been allocated places.

Completed by:



Date: 24th February, 2022

