

September 2009

To: Parents of Year 6 children

**PLEASE READ THIS LETTER CAREFULLY AND KEEP IT SAFE FOR REFERENCE**

Dear Parents

**TRANSFER TO SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SEPTEMBER 2010**

I am delighted to be able to write to you, I have tried to answer the questions which I think will be uppermost in your minds but, if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to write to:

Alison Wellfair  
Admissions Officer  
Pate's Grammar School  
Princess Elizabeth Way  
Cheltenham  
Glos GL51 0HG

For over 400 years Pate's has been a grammar school. Today we are still exactly that – a state-funded school, charging no fees and open to children from Cheltenham and the surrounding area. As a grammar school we do have our own selection procedures, which operate in conjunction with the co-ordinated scheme for secondary admissions in Gloucestershire run by the local education authority (LA). Our admissions procedures are explained in this letter.

**What sort of school is Pate's?**

Pate's is a selective secondary school for boys and girls. To find out more, you are warmly invited to attend one of our special Open Information Evenings, to be held from 7.00pm to 9.00pm at the School on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009. The programme will be the same on each evening, so you can choose which one to attend. Copies of our new prospectus will be available and this will be the best opportunity to look round the school and see some of our pupils at work.

We will also be holding two open mornings for Year 6 children and their parents only on Monday 21 and Wednesday 23 September from 9.20am. To book an appointment please email [admissions@pates.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@pates.gloucs.sch.uk)

### **How does my child gain admissions to Pate's?**

Pate's is a selective school and to gain a place your child must first sit and pass the Pate's Admissions Test in November of Year 6. We use the same admissions test as all of the other Gloucestershire Grammar Schools and the Admissions Test this year will be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

### **Is there a special catchment area?**

No.

### **How do I register to sit the entry test for Pate's?**

Before you can apply to Pate's, it is essential that you submit the attached Registration Form by 4.00 pm on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The form is also available on line from the school website.

### **How do I apply for admission to Pate's?**

By 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009, you must complete the LA's Preference Form, which is available from your child's primary school or from the LA. This asks you to state your ranked preferences for 4 secondary schools. Pate's must be included as one of those preferences if your child is to be considered for admission to Pate's.

### **How many places will be available?**

There are 120 places available for children entering the school in Year 7.

### **Which children will qualify for entry to Pate's?**

Pate's has been a free grammar school for the children of Cheltenham and surrounding area for over 400 years. We are very proud of that record. We want to continue to offer a particular type of academic education to very able children, whatever their background or their circumstances.

Children qualify to be considered for a place if they are either ranked in the top 120 places, or those from the next 40 who have been placed on the reserve list. They must also have applied to the LA by the 4<sup>th</sup> December will be eligible to be considered for a place at Pate's.

### **How will the successful 120 be selected?**

The school passes this rank order of all qualified children to the LA. The LA then takes account of the preferences made by parents on their LA application.

In the first instance places will be offered at the start of March for whom Pate's is the highest ranked parental preference school for which they qualified. In most cases this will be to children whose parents ranked Pate's as their first preference.

It is possible that not all the 120 places at Pate's will be filled at the start of March. The law requires that any unfilled places are offered to children on the school's waiting list. The parents of any qualified child can ask the school to place their child's name on the waiting list. Unfilled places will be offered to children on the waiting list strictly based on rank order position in the Admissions Test. This will happen on or soon after April 1.

### **Does this mean I have to make Pate's my first preference school?**

The decision must be yours, as each family will have different circumstances.

You will be offered one school place by the LA. This has to be the highest placed on your 4 preferences for which your child has qualified. Thus being realistic, the only sure way of your child gaining a place at Pate's will be to put Pate's first on your list of preferences.

There are no longer any 'first preference first' arrangements allowed in any school in the country. This means that, unlike the last few years, you can now put Pate's as first preference and if your child did not qualify to be offered a place at Pate's then the preference would not be seen as an 'effective' preference and your second preference school would be elevated to be considered as your first effective preference along side families who had put your second preference school down as their first preference school. Under the old system, up to and including last year, many families living, for instance, in the catchment areas of over subscribed comprehensives felt they could not risk putting Pate's as first preference. Many of those families will now feel able to put Pate's first and the popular comprehensive school as second preference (or even third preference after another grammar school) without prejudicing their allocation at a local comprehensive. This is a seemingly complicated change but it will liberate many families to record the schools in order of their actual preference rather than worry about falling foul of the now illegal first preference system. No school in the country is operating the old 'first preference' scheme this year.

I am convinced that the end of the 'first preference' system will benefit many, many families who will now feel able to put Pate's first on their preference form.

### **When will I be notified if my child has gained a place?**

All offers of school places will be made by the LA at the start of March.

### **Will I know how my child performed in the Pate's Admissions Test?**

Yes, we will aim to write as soon as we can process the results. We will provide the best information that we can to help you make a decision about applying to Pate's. This is explained at the time you may find different information will be of help to you depending upon your child's performance in the test.

### **What if my child qualifies for consideration by being in the top 160 in the Test, but is not offered a place at Pate's by the LA at the start of March?**

If there are unfilled places at Pate's after the start of March then the school fills those places from its waiting list. The parents of qualified children (those who were ranked in the top 160 in the Admissions Test) can ask the school to place their child's name on the waiting list. Offers to fill unfilled places will be made to children on the waiting list strictly according to their rank order position in the Admissions Test. Offers for any unfilled places will be made soon after April 1.

### **Can I make a formal appeal?**

If you are dissatisfied with the way the admissions procedures were operated by the school or the LA you have the right to appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. Further details about the appeals procedure are available from the Admissions Officer at Pate's.

### **What will the Admissions Test involve?**

There are two verbal reasoning tests. The answers are completed on separate sheets which can be marked by computer. On the day of the test all children have some practice questions first, under the guidance of experienced Pate's staff. There is a break between the two tests.

### **Is it possible to obtain some practice beforehand?**

Yes. We have 5 sets of verbal reasoning questions, which can be downloaded from our website, to give children an idea of the type of questions they will be faced with. They are available on the website all year round. Obviously we do not want to disadvantage any child whose family does not have computer access. If this is the case for yourselves, please speak to our Admissions Officer who will try and arrange for you to receive a copy. Of course you can still obtain from most bookshops the GL Assessment Practice packs.

### **Can anything else be taken into consideration beside the examination score?**

Please let the Admissions Officer know in good time of any circumstance (for example, bereavement or serious illness) which may affect your child's performance on the day of the Entrance Test. Such notification should always be in writing and, whenever possible, be sent to the Admissions Officer before 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009. If your child is too ill to actually take the Test on the day itself please let the Admissions Officer know by 4.00pm on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009. We can arrange for a Late Test to be taken later in the term. If any special circumstances become apparent on the day of the test, the Admissions Officer must be notified by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at the latest. It will NOT be possible to take into consideration any special circumstances of which the Admissions Officer has not been informed.

Whenever possible, all such pleas for special consideration should be supported by expert opinion in writing (for example, by a note from the family doctor or Primary Head teacher). In all such cases, the confidential assessments made by the Primary Heads will be automatically taken into account.

### **When will I be notified about arrangements for the Admissions Test day?**

As soon as all the Registration forms have been received and processed, the School will be able to finalise the exact arrangements for the day. If you have not received them by 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009, please telephone 01242 253778 or email [admissions@pates.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@pates.gloucs.sch.uk). Because it is a very busy time in our Admissions Office I would be grateful if you would not contact the School about this before this date.

If you have any remaining queries or concerns regarding admissions generally or the test in particular then our Admissions Officer, Alison Wellfair will be able to help at the address given on the first page of this letter. Of course, if you have any queries about any other matter and feel I may be able to help then please contact me at the school. I wish all the best for you and your child during this process.

Yours sincerely



Shaun Fenton  
**Head Master**



PATE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS'  
CENTRAL REGISTRATION FORM**

For entry to Year 7 in September 2010 for any of the Gloucestershire Grammar Schools'

**PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

**Pupil's details**

Legal surname:			
Other names:			
Date of birth*:		Gender <b>M/F</b>	
Present School:			
Pupil's permanent address			
Postcode			

*\*A pupil must reach the minimum age of 10 years by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 (and be a genuine year 6 pupil) to be eligible to sit the test in November 2009. If the pupil is younger, you will need to contact the Access to Education Team (0-16) and the preferred school to discuss the process – see overleaf for contact details.*

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s) details**

Title and Initials		
Surname		
Address & Postcode		
Telephone Home:		
Mobile:		
Tel Work:		
Email Address:		

I/We wish my/our child to be registered to sit the ENTRANCE EXAMINATION on the morning of **SATURDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2009**.

I/We certify that the information given above is accurate and that the address given above is the pupil's actual permanent residence.

I/We have read the Letter to Parents of Year 6 children and we understand and accept the criteria.

Parent/Guardian's signature:	
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**THE FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY 4.00PM ON FRIDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009 AT THE LATEST**

**Please ensure that you have also completed the Online Common Application form by the closing date of 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

**P.T.O.**

Please indicate below (by ticking the relevant boxes) which of the grammar schools you would like the test scores shared with (the schools will need to know this information if you intend to list them as one of your preferred schools on your Common Application form):

School	tick
Crypt School, Gloucester	
Marling School, Stroud	
Pate's Grammar School, Cheltenham	
Ribston Hall High School, Gloucester	
Sir Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester	
Stroud High School, Stroud	
The High School for Girls, Denmark Road	

Please name any sibling at the school	Year

Pupils will usually sit the entrance test at their highest preference grammar school. Therefore please indicate at which grammar school your child will sit the entrance exam so the school can make the appropriate arrangements:

Name of School	
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If your child has any special educational needs, disabilities or other factors for consideration which might require reasonable adjustments to be made to the testing process, please outline these below (attach a separate sheet if necessary):

<b>Please note that you will be contacted if further information is required</b>
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**THIS REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY 4.00PM ON FRIDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009.  
PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE SCHOOL YOU WANT  
YOUR CHILD TO SIT THE TEST AT:**

- The Crypt School**, Podsmead, Gloucester, GL2 5AE .....Tel 01452 530291
- Marling School**, Cainscross Road, Stroud, GL5 4HE .....Tel 01453 762251
- Pate's Grammar School**, Princess Elizabeth Way, Cheltenham, GL51 0HG ... Tel 01242 253778
- Ribston Hall High School**, Stroud Road, Gloucester, GL1 5LE .....Tel 01452 382249
- Stroud High School**, Beards Lane, Stroud, GL5 4HF .....Tel 01453 764441

If your child will sit the test at **The High School for Girls** or **Sir Thomas Rich's School**, please return this completed registration form to the Access to Education Team (0-16):  
Children and Young People's Directorate, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TP (telephone 01452 425407).

*Please check that you have addressed your envelope correctly. We must stress that it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that this Registration Form is received before the closing date. If you would therefore like receipt of this form to be acknowledged, please enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope. If we do not receive your form by the closing date, your child will be unable to sit the test in November.*

**PROOF OF POSTING CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AS PROOF OF DELIVERY**