

Examination
for
Year 9 Entry

Parents' Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the Royal Hospital School's guide to our entrance examination. I hope that you will find the booklet useful in preparing your son or daughter for the day of the examination.

The purpose of the entrance examination is to test the candidate's raw ability in verbal reasoning, mathematics and English. This is helpful to us in several ways: it ensures that the candidates to whom we ultimately offer places will have the ability to make the best use of academic opportunities available at the Royal Hospital School; it allows us to select prospective scholarship candidates (although I shall say more about that later); it allows us to place pupils in the correct forms and sets once they have arrived at the school.

Although we try to make the day itself as friendly and straightforward as possible, I am aware that in many cases this will be the first time that your son or daughter will have sat in a large hall, at individual desks, doing examinations for a number of hours. That is bound to be quite a daunting experience for them.

Having prepared my own children for this entrance examination, I am quite certain that the best help that you can give your children is to encourage them to practise doing similar papers under examination conditions (timed and without help). That way the papers themselves, when they arrive on the desk, will actually be the most familiar part of the whole process. The purpose of this booklet is to show you some sample questions, to explain what the examinations and the day itself will be like and to provide information about how to obtain further papers for practice.

Please feel free to contact me on 01473 326200 for any further advice about the entrance procedures.

Best of luck to all candidates,

Jonathan Allday
Director of Studies
The Royal Hospital School

The day of the examination

What to bring with you:

Please ask your son or daughter to bring the following equipment to school on the day of the examination:

1. a sharp HB pencil;
2. a blue or black pen;
3. a pencil sharpener, 12" ruler and a clean eraser;
4. a small bag to contain all the above, preferably with the candidate's name displayed.

Please note that calculators or dictionaries are NOT allowed.

We always carry a stock of spare items such as above, should anyone have forgotten to bring something. However, realizing that they have left something at home tends to upset the candidates, who are bound to be rather nervous anyway.

When you arrive:

On the morning of the examination, all candidates and their parents will be asked to register and gather in the school's Jellicoe room. If for any reason you are going to arrive later than expected (transport problems etc.), please contact the School so that we can make arrangements for your son or daughter to start the examination after the remaining candidates, if necessary.

Shortly before the start of the examination, the Headmaster will welcome you and say a few words about the morning's events. After this, the Director of Studies will take all the candidates to the examination hall. Parents and other guests will be welcome to remain in the Jellicoe room for a short while, have a tour of the School or speak to one of the members of staff available. However, as the examinations themselves will last several hours, we recommend that you return at a later time once they have finished. Parents coming from a distance may like to spend the time shopping in Ipswich or visiting the local area. Lunch is available for all candidates after the examination, should they wish to stay. In any case, they will be returned to the Jellicoe room for collection. We will advise parents of the likely end time of the examinations before they leave but, as refreshment breaks are provided between papers, a precise end time is difficult to predict.

The examinations:

The candidates will be required to sit three entrance papers as follows:

1. Verbal reasoning (externally set, internally marked) 50 minutes
2. Mathematics (internally set and marked) 60 minutes
3. English (externally set, internally marked) 60 minutes

Refreshment and comfort breaks will be provided between papers.

Verbal reasoning:

This paper tests the candidate's ability to think, reason and solve problems set in words.

Important aspects of this paper are:

- It is a multiple-choice paper answered on a special grid provided to the candidates.
- Answers are indicated by drawing a pencil line on the grid.
- Candidates are not allowed to write on the paper itself; scrap paper will be provided for them to jot on.
- Candidates will be asked to fill in their name, date of birth and current school on the front of the answer grid.
- Before the start of the main paper, there is a short practice test for all candidates. During this test the candidates are allowed to ask any questions they wish, and invigilators will be moving round the hall to ensure that they are correctly completing the answer grid for the practice questions.

We use two different versions of the verbal reasoning paper, one for year 7 entry and one for all other entry years. The both papers are very similar in style, although the year 7 one is slightly less challenging. There are approximately 70 questions on both papers.

Once the paper has been marked, a verbal reasoning score is produced by correcting for the candidate's age. The average performance of all candidates sitting this paper across the country, in a given age range, is set at 100. A typical candidate will score between 105 and 110, which corresponds (very roughly) to about 70% on the paper. Scholarship candidates will expect to score in the region of 130 (over 90%).

Mathematics:

We use internally set mathematics papers, and a different paper is used for each year of entry. The papers test the candidate's ability to manipulate numbers, perform basic mathematical operations, solve mathematical puzzles, construct geometrical figures, work with geometrical figures and solve algebraic problems. They will clearly differ in style depending on the age of the candidate and the material we expect them to have covered at their current school.

The day of the examination

Answers are written on the examination paper, and can be completed in pencil or pen provided the answers are legible. It is important that any corrections are done neatly and clearly.

The papers are scored as a percentage, and the average performance of candidates accepted into the School is generally 50-55%.

English:

The English papers used are externally set and marked by our own staff according to a scheme provided. A slightly different paper is used for each year of entry, although their styles are very similar. The papers test the candidate's basic grammar, spelling, sentence construction, comprehension and appreciation. They will be required to read short passages and answer questions on them as well as express themselves in a short passage of writing. Marks on the paper are converted into an age-corrected standardized score, similar to the verbal reasoning. A typical candidate will score 105 on this paper, corresponding to about 65% of the available marks.

The end of the day:

Candidates are free to leave as soon as the papers are completed, although they are also welcome to stay for lunch.

It normally takes 2-3 weeks to notify parents of the examination results. However, we do not generally release information regarding performance on individual papers.

Scholarship candidates are selected from those achieving the highest marks on the entrance papers and will be notified by the middle of the week following the entrance examination.

They will be invited to return to the Royal Hospital School for an interview and to complete a one-hour computer-adaptive test designed to measure ability and aptitude for learning.

Preparing for the examination

The remainder of this booklet contains a guide to verbal reasoning papers, a practice mathematics paper and a practice English paper. Mark schemes are also provided for the practice papers.

The best preparation that a candidate can have is to have tried as many practice papers of a similar type as possible. Standard 11+ entry papers are available in many bookshops and online at www.elevenplusexams.co.uk. We recommend the NFER versions (details at the end of this section), although those provided by other publishers are also useful.

As most 13+ candidates will sit the common entrance examination at their current school, papers specifically for this age group are not readily available. However, the 11+ papers are also suitable practice for any age range, provided you remember that older candidates will be expected to answer a higher proportion of the more difficult questions correctly.

I would suggest that all prospective parents invest in a set of published practice papers. These generally contain answers as well as hints and tips on how to do the papers. Most candidates will need guidance and support with the first few attempts, although you should be urging them to work through a complete paper against the clock as soon as possible. My suggestion is that the papers enclosed with this booklet be left until just before the day of the examination. Parents, of course, are encouraged to read these papers beforehand in order to see the style and depth of question.

How to do verbal reasoning

Although verbal reasoning questions come in many forms, they are generally like puzzles or games. The papers include questions that test observation and thinking in letters, words and sentences. Some questions ask the candidate to construct new words from patterns given to them, or to select words that fit into a pattern. A relatively good vocabulary for the age of the candidate is required, as some questions rely on being able to find words of similar or opposite meaning. Perhaps surprisingly verbal reasoning papers also include questions that involve mathematical calculations.

Verbal reasoning is widely regarded as an excellent indicator of a candidate's potential. However, the papers can be practised and scores improve over time as the candidate gets used to the style of question.

Some hints to start with:

1. Read the questions carefully.
2. Try to eliminate answers that are obviously wrong.
3. If you can't answer a question, move on to the next and come back to it.
4. If you do miss a question out, be sure to leave a space on the answer grid – some candidates have been known to get 'out of sequence' and end up answering questions in the wrong spaces on the grid.
5. Use scrap paper to make notes, cross out letters in the alphabet, draw lines connecting numbers or letters in a sequence etc. Some people find it easier to think on paper. There is nothing wrong with this, provided that you do not write on the paper itself.
6. If you have any time left at the end of the examination, use the time to go back over the questions you could not do first time. Check all your answers carefully.

The paper:

Verbal reasoning papers are constructed by professional experts and are widely tested and evaluated before being made available to schools. The papers are then subject to copyright. For this reason, it is not possible for us to provide a full verbal reasoning practice paper.

There are plenty of specimen papers available in bookshops and online. In addition, I can recommend the Nelson Thornes booklet "How to do verbal reasoning" by Alison Primrose (ISBN 0-7487-6441-0) having used it to prepare my own children.

The following page contains a series of questions of a similar style to those used in the verbal reasoning paper, with hints to their answers.

Practice questions:

In the following questions, the first pair of letters are related in some way. Find the letters that complete the second pair so that they are related in the same way as the first:

1) BD is to CE as FH is to...: A: GI B: EG C: AC D: IJ

(the answer is A, the letters in the second pair are one further in the alphabet compared to the first pair)

2) BP is to DR as FT is to...: A: FT B: GU C: HV D: PT

(the answer is C, the letter in second pair is two further along in the alphabet)

In answering questions of this form, it is helpful to write out the alphabet and underline the letters in the pair – this sometimes makes the pattern more obvious.

In the following questions, pick the number that continues each series in the most sensible way:

3) 6, 12, 18, 24 A: 28 B: 32 C: 26 D: 30

(the answer is D, each number is 6 greater than the previous one)

4) 13, 11, 15, 13, 17, 15, 19 A: 21 B: 15 C: 17 D: 19

(the answer is C, the sequence is actually two sequences alternating. In each one the next number is 2 greater than the previous one)

Once again it is helpful with questions of this sort to work on paper. Write down the sequence and draw arrows to match up numbers, alternatively write down the differences underneath pairs of numbers until you find the pattern.

Find the next letters in the series:

5) CF, VF, BF, UF, AF, A: TF B: ZF C: WF D: DF

(the answer is A, the sequence is actually two alternating sequences with the first letter going one down the alphabet every time)

6) JKL, MNO, PQR A: HIJ B: ABC C: STU D: RST

(the answer is C, each group of three letters is a cluster from the alphabet moving through the alphabet in sequence)

7) BE, EH, HK, KN A: NQ B: LM C: NO D: FG

(the answer is A, each letter is found from the previous pair by jumping two in the alphabet.

In each question, letters stand for numbers. Work out the answer to the sum and mark its letter on the answer grid.

8) If $A=2$, $B=4$, $C=6$, $D=8$ and $E=16$, what is $E \times A \div D$? A: **A** B: **B** C: **C** D: **D**
(the answer is B, $16 \times 2 \div 8 = 4$)

9) If $A = 81$, $B=9$, $C=14$, $D=32$ and $E=2$, what is $A \div B \times E + C$? A: **A** B: **B** C: **C** D: **D**
(the answer is D, $81 \div 9 \times 2 + 14 = 32$)

In the following questions, the word in the bracket is constructed from the words to either side. Choose the word that fits into the empty bracket in the same way.

10) laugh (hop) open chat () apple
 A: tap B: pat C: top D: hap
(the answer is A, the word takes the last letter of the first word and joins it to the first two letters of second word)

11) drain (dance) chest stung () abroad
 A: bang B: cat C: sand D: sugar
(the answer is D, the word takes the first, third and last letters of the first word and joins them to the first and third letters of the second word)

In each question below, choose two words, one from each set of brackets, that complete the sentence in the best way.

12) Sun is to (day, light, paper) as moon is to (tree, scared, night)
 A: light, scared B: paper, tree C: day, night D: night, tree
(the answer is C)

13) Red is to (anger, hot, burn) as blue is to (unhappy, river, sky)
 A: anger, river B: burn, sky C: hot, unhappy D: anger, unhappy
(the answer is D)

Verbal reasoning

In the questions below, move one letter from the word on the left to the word on the right in order to make two new words.

- 13) FEAR KIT
 A: far, kit B: fur, kite C: far, kite
 (the answer is C)

- 14) LENDING PEAT
 A: pat, leaving B: ending, pleat C: lend, peating
 (the answer is B)
-
-

Sample
Entrance Test
in
MATHEMATICS
for
Year 9 Entry

Year 9 Entrance Examination – Solutions

Sample
Entrance Test
in
English
for
Year 9 Entry

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

TIME ALLOWED: 60 minutes

All questions should be attempted

Exercise 1: My First Day at Boarding School

*The boy who wrote this account has made some mistakes. Sixteen words have been spelt wrongly. Eleven of these mistakes have been underlined. Write your corrections above the mistakes. There are also mistakes that are **not** underlined. Find these and correct them in the same way.*

When we arived at the house, we were greeted by the housemaster, Mr Griffiths. He was 1

tall and athletic-looking with a pair of glasses perched dangerously on the end of a nose

that swept down like a ski-slope. He was very friendly and chearful and he made me feel 2

at home immediatly. I asked him if I could go up to my bed-space, and he said that I could. 3

When I got up their, I saw another boy lying on one of the beds. He looked a bit 4

miserable so I introduced myself and started talking to him. It turned out that 5

his parents were liveing abroad, and he worried about their being so far away. 6

It was then that I told him that *my* parents live in paris, and that seemed to make 7

him feel better. We talked for a long time and found out that we both liked

reading, rugby and recieving unexpected parsels. 8, 9

Before we finished are conversation, the door swung open and a boy slammed his 10

way thorough it like a hurricane. He had a tangled mass of ginger hair that looked 11

like one of the worlds' wild places. His eyes were a leafy green. He thrust out his hand 12

but we didnt realise what he wanted for a moment. "Shake!" he exclaimed. "We can't 13

be friends untill we shake!" 14

He had a strong grip all right; I felt as if my entier body was being seized. That was the 15

begining of an interesting friendship! 16

Exercise 2: My Friend, James

The boy who wrote this account has made sixteen mistakes.

Sometimes wrong or inappropriate words have been used. Sometimes commas, full stops, question marks or other punctuation marks are missing.

*Twelve of these mistakes are underlined. Write your corrections above the mistakes. In the last paragraph there are also four mistakes that are **not** underlined. Find these and correct them in the same way.*

I am writing about my best friend James. James likes to read and make up stories of his 17

own. He particularly enjoyed tales about ghosts and hauntings. In fact, when we first 18

met, he asked me, "Have you ever seen a ghost?_ I told him that I hadn't but that I'd 19

like to.

James told me that there was a haunted house in a wood nearby but that his other friends

wouldn't never go there with him. He asks me if I'd be prepared to risk a visit, and I 20, 21

agreed although I felt quite nervous. I think that James is more braver than I am. 22, 23

We decided to go one night after we'd finished are homework. It wasn't late but it was 24

dark. Although the moon was bright and, full, it did not seem to make much difference. 25

It did not take us long to reach the house. I must admit that I was disappointed. It looks 26

more like a shed than a house. I joked, "It's the first time I've seen a haunted shed, James!"

He did not seem to find my joke very funny. However he responded by saying that I'd 27

soon stop laughing, if their *was* a ghost there. 28

We both fell silent and walked around the building there really wasn't much to see, 29

and I was beginning to feel silly. I was on the point of suggesting that we ought to go back

home, when we where both shocked by the sound of a door creaking open then 30

slamming shut. The noise was so loud that we both took to our heels. When we reached

the edge of the wood, we looked back and saw something soft and white squeezing itself

through the door of the building. We wouldn't of stayed there for all the money in the 31

world! What do you think it was 32

The Nightmare

Read the following passage and then do the three exercises that follow it.

A boy describes his first night in a new house in Apton Magna in Yorkshire. He has a terrifying dream.

The passage is taken from a story by Robert Swindells.

That first night in Apton Magna I had a dream. You know what it's like when you move house. We'd driven all the way from Bedford to Yorkshire and then spent six hours lugging furniture and other junk around. It was a Sunday - what Dad calls the day of rest, which is a bit of a laugh considering. By nine o' clock I was shattered. They'd bought this enormous house, Four Winds, which used to be the local manor or something. It had six bedrooms, which works out at two each, as well as two bathrooms and about eight downstairs rooms. I don't know why we needed a place that size. When I asked Dad he mumbled something about entertaining so maybe he was planning to turn it into a theatre or something. It was like three ants moving into Wembley Stadium.

Anyway, I was shattered and went to bed. I had to go up this wide, curving staircase and along about three miles of landing to get to my room. It was a big, square room with a polished floor and a high ceiling. There was no carpet, and my single bed and bits of furniture looked lost in it. It reminded me of those rooms they put guests in in horror movies - the sort where you know something horrible's going to happen in the middle of the night. Maybe that's what brought the dream on.

It was a weird dream - more of a nightmare, really. It was dark and I was walking along an unmade road alone. I was coming into Apton Magna though it didn't look anything like Apton Magna. There was just a rough road with little houses on either side, and what looked like a church on a low hill. I think I'd been expecting something good when I reached the village - a bed for the night, perhaps - but the place was deserted. Doors stood half open and the wind whined through black, unglazed windows. A feeling of dread gripped me and I started to run. There was something lying on the ground in front of me and I tried to jump over it, but my feet

wouldn't leave the ground and I sort of waded through it. It was a bundle of rags that was hard inside. There was a scraping, rattling sound and when I looked down I saw bones. I screamed. The scream woke me, and I lay in a cold sweat with a voice in my head saying, "Hidden, but here forever."

The scream must have been real, because Mum came in and put the light on. I told her I'd been dreaming and she sat on the bed and held my hand for a bit. I've had bad dreams since I was very small and she's used to it. "It's the move," she murmured. "Finding yourself in a strange room. It's all over now."

It wasn't, though. I knew, and so did she. It never is when I dream.

Exercise 3: The Nightmare

*Here, the boy's story has been re-told in a shortened form, but some parts are missing. Fill the gaps, writing **one** word on the unbroken lines and **two or more** words on the longer, dotted lines.*

The boy moved with his family from Bedford to Apton Magna in _____ 33

His parents had bought a large house called The boy 34

wondered why they needed a house that size, and his father told him it was for _____ 35

The boy was very _____ and decided to go to bed. He felt that his room was like 36

something from a He wondered if that was what had made 37

him _____ 38

His dream was strange and was more like a _____. It was dark and he was 39

walking along an unmade road. He was coming into Apton Magna but it looked unfamiliar.

There was just a road, houses and a building that looked like a _____. Although 40

he'd been expecting, the place was deserted. 41

He felt very _____. He found himself walking through a bundle of rags 42

deserted

coming into Apton Magna during the night but the place was _____. Doors 50

whined

unglazed windows

were half open and the wind _____ through *windows without* _____. 51,52

dread

gripped

A feeling of _____ _____ him and he started to run. There was a 53,54

bundle of rags lying on the ground in front of him, which gave out a strange sound. When he looked down, he saw bones.

At this point, he screamed. That was when his mother came in and switched on the light.

Exercise 5: The Nightmare

You will need to look back at the passage in Exercise 3 to answer these questions. (**Do not use the underlined words in your answer.**)

1. ...what dad calls the day of rest, which is a bit of a laugh considering.

Why did it make the boy laugh to think of the moving day as a day of rest?

2. It was like three ants moving into Wembley Stadium.

Why did the boy describe his family moving into the house as being like ants moving into Wembley Stadium?

56

3. Write down **one** detail from the boy's description of his room that explains why it reminded him of a room from a horror movie.

57

4. ...I lay in a cold sweat...

Why does the boy make a point of telling you that he woke up in a cold sweat?

5. It wasn't, though. I knew, and so did she. It never is when I dream.

What do these last three sentences tell us about what is likely to happen when the boy has a dream?

58

End of paper

**ENGLISH ENTRANCE TESTS: Yr 9
MARKING KEY**

**Exercise 1: My First Day
at Boarding-School
(Spelling errors)**

- | | | |
|-----|------------|--------------------|
| 1. | arived | arrived |
| 2. | chearful | cheerful |
| 3. | immediatly | immediately |
| 4. | their | there |
| 5. | introduced | introduced |
| 6. | liveing | living |
| 7. | paris | Paris |
| 8. | recieving | receiving |
| 9. | parsels | parcels |
| 10. | are | our |
| 11. | thorough | through |
| 12. | worlds' | world's |
| 13. | didnt | didn't |
| 14. | untill | until |
| 15. | entier | entire |
| 16. | begining | beginning |

**Exercise 2: My Friend, James
(Grammatical/stylistic errors)**

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 17. | friend James | friend, James |
| 18. | enjoyed | enjoys |
| 19. | ? | ?" |
| 20. | wouldn't
ever | would never/
wouldn't ever |
| 21. | asks | asked |
| 22. | agreed although | agreed,
although |
| 23. | more braver | braver |
| 24. | are | our |
| 25. | and, full | and full |
| 26. | looks | looked |
| 27. | However he | However, he |
| 28. | their | there |
| 29. | building there | building. There |
| 30. | where | were |
| 31. | of | have |
| 32. | was | was? |

**Exercise 3: The Nightmare
(Understanding of whole text)**

- 33. Yorkshire
- 34. Four Winds
- 35. entertaining
- 36. tired/exhausted
- 37. horror movie/horror film
- 38. dream
- 39. nightmare
- 40. church
- 41. something good
- 42. frightened/scared/afraid
- 43. bones
- 44. in a cold sweat/sweating
- 45. the strange room

**Exercise 4: The Nightmare
(Understanding language in
context/Spelling)**

Pupils may offer responses other than those indicated below but the meaning of the responses should be as follows in order to score a mark.

N. B. Words should be spelt correctly.

- 46. rubbish/stuff
- 47. amusing/funny/laughable
- 48. exhausted
- 49. films
- 50. empty
- 51. whistled
- 52. glass
- 53. fear/terror
- 54. seized/grabbed

**Exercise 5: The Nightmare
(Understanding language in context)**

Pupils will phrase their answers in various ways but the meaning of the responses should be as follows in order to score a mark. Pupils are asked not to use the underlined words in their responses. Therefore answers which explain a word or phrase by using that very word or phrase in the definition should be regarded as unacceptable.

- 55. It struck him as funny because he had had to work very hard to help in the move.

- 56. **because the three members of his family seemed very small in relation to the enormous size of the house**
- 57. **big/had a high ceiling/no carpet/furniture looked lost in it**
(Also allow *took a long time to get there.*)
- 58. **because it shows that he has had a nightmare/has had a frightening experience**
- 59. **The dream points to later events/predicts later events/is the start of a pattern of events.**