

Letter from the Heads of the North London Girls' Schools' Consortium

We, the twelve heads of the North London Consortium for Girls, are pleased to announce a change in the 11+ application process to our schools. In January 2019, it is our intention that the two 11+ examination papers for both Consortium groups for entry in September 2019 will be replaced by a one hour bespoke cognitive ability test taken at a Consortium School. There will be no further written assessments at our Schools, and we will develop the creativity of our interview processes. For the coming year, 2018, the application process to each individual School will remain the same but we hope that, in due course, a more centralised process will be established. In 2019 we shall become known as the London Consortium, and we hope that other schools will join us so that the number of assessments children sit are eventually much reduced.

This change is driven by our belief that education is about more than outcomes - and admission is therefore about more than results. We are committed to human flourishing in all its fullness, and our interest is in the whole child. With our junior school colleagues, we have a collective obligation to safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of all of our pupils, and we are determined to do what we can to improve the selection process for these young children. Our new rigorous test will identify the academic potential needed for entry to our Schools, and each School's interview process will enable us to identify the personal skills and traits we also value.

We have been concerned at the growing pressure on young children caused by increased competition for school places, and the perceived need to prepare ever harder for a range of lengthy admissions tests. We have listened to the pleas from our colleagues in our feeder schools - prep, primary and junior - to address the growing crisis in children's mental health and to act to reduce the scope for excessive tutoring. We have noted the damaging effect that teaching to the test has, particularly on creative writing and reading for pleasure, and we long for literacy teaching at KS2 to regain its freshness and pleasure.

We believe that this change will reflect our commitment to a dynamic education which nurtures a child's self-esteem and spirit as well as her intellect.

Channing School – Mrs. Barbara Elliott
Francis Holland School (NW1) – Mr. Charles Fillingham
Francis Holland School (SW1) – Mrs. Lucy Elphinstone
Godolphin and Latymer School – Dr. Frances Ramsey
More House School - Mrs. Amanda Leach
Northwood College – Mrs. Jacquelyn Pain
Notting Hill and Ealing High School – Mr. Matthew Shoults
Queen's College – Mr. Richard Tillett
Queen's Gate School – Mrs. Rosalynd Kamaryc (Chairman of the Consortium)
South Hampstead High School – Mrs. Victoria Bingham
St. Helen's School – Dr. Mary Short
St. James Senior Girls' School – Mrs. Sarah Labram