

Parent Info Sheet: Understanding How Exams Are Marked (Ages 7+ to 11+)

Why this matters

At the 7+ to 11+ stage, exams are not just about knowing the answers — they're about *how* answers are given.

If your child understands how their work is marked, they are far more likely to:

- Gain marks more consistently
- Answer questions in the expected format
- Avoid simple mistakes that lose points
- Feel more confident in exams

Even very able children can lose marks if they don't understand what examiners are looking for.

What parents should do

Check school websites

Most schools provide information about assessment methods and marking criteria. These give valuable insight into what is expected. This varies from school to school. For exams in Gloucestershire, although children sit the same exam for each of the seven grammar schools, they are marked differently. Richard Pates looks for consistent marks across all key areas whereas Ribston Hall High School will take an average.

Ask questions at open events

When attending school open days or evenings, ask:

- How are exams marked?
- What do examiners look for in top answers? This is crucial in non-multiple choice questions.
- How are children prepared for this?



Make sure your child understands

Talk to your child about:

- How marks are awarded
- Why showing working (especially in maths) matters
- How to structure answers clearly

Key message

Understanding the marking process can make a significant difference to your child's results. It turns effort into achievement by ensuring their work meets the exact criteria examiners are using.

A simple rule to remember:

It's not just what your child knows — it's how they show it.

