

## **Frequently Asked Questions on Banding as part of the secondary admissions process**

### **What is Banding?**

Banding is used at secondary transfer to help to ensure that Secondary schools maintain a balanced admission intake that reflects the full range of abilities of all children in the local authority. Banding is used **only** when a school is oversubscribed.

### **Why do Schools in Tower Hamlets use banding?**

Schools in Tower Hamlets are committed to ensuring that their intake at Year 7 is inclusive and diverse, and that pupils of all abilities have the same equality of access.

### **How is Banding used within Tower Hamlets?**

Tower Hamlets uses banding as part of the application to secondary school. Each secondary school's intake is divided equally across four bands, which covers the full range of pupil's abilities in Tower Hamlets.

### **Do all schools in Tower Hamlets use Banding?**

All of the borough's community schools use banding. This includes Central Foundation Girls', George Green's, London Enterprise Academy, Mulberry Academy London Dock, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, Mulberry School for Girls, Mulberry Stepney Green Maths, Computing and Science College, St Pauls Way Trust and Stepney All Saints CofE Secondary School. If a school does not use banding, its admissions policy will state the criteria that they use to determine admission to the school.

### **How does the Local Authority assign pupils to a Band?**

Pupil assessment from each primary school in the summer term of year 5 is used by the Local Authority to determine the range of ability for the local area. Each pupil is placed into one of four quartiles, based on their assessment data. For administrative purposes, the quartiles are referred to as Band A, B, C or D.

### **What if a child has come from out of Tower Hamlets?**

For pupils who apply from primary schools outside of Tower Hamlets, teacher assessment of their Band will also be used to determine which quartile they will be placed.

## Is there an advantage to being in any particular quartile?

No, schools take equal amounts of pupils from each of the four quartiles. The Banding process is intended for the purpose of ensuring that a school achieves a balanced intake when it is oversubscribed. It is designed to be inclusive and fair to all children, whatever their ability.

## When will Parents know what band their child has been assigned?

Parents receive a letter from their child's primary school notifying them which band their child is in at the beginning of the school year when their child reaches Year 6.

Parents will need to use this information as part of the application process.

The primary school is not part of the overall process of allocating children into quartiles. The quartiles reflect the ability range of the borough for administrative purposes and should not be viewed as a definitive judgement of pupils all-round ability.

## What happens if one or more of the bands is oversubscribed?

The number of children offered places from within each band is proportionate to the size of the local band, and places are allocated according to the school's published oversubscription criteria.

Here is an example:

<b>Band</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Percentage of places allocated to each band</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number of places offered using the school's oversubscription criteria</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>240</b>
Number of applicants for the school in each band	90	82	80	74	326
Number of applicants that cannot be admitted	30	22	20	14	86

The school's intake will therefore reflect the range of ability of children within the Tower Hamlets area.

## What happens if one or more of the bands is undersubscribed?

If there are fewer than 60 applications in a particular band, then all the pupils applying within that band will be offered. The unfilled places in the band will then be allocated to an adjacent band to ensure that all 240 places are filled. Here is an example:

<b>Band</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Percentage of places allocated to each band</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number of places offered using the oversubscription criteria</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>240</b>
Number of applicants for the school in each band	55	117	54	100	326
Number of applicants that cannot be admitted	0	52	0	34	86
What happens?	The 5 unfilled places in Band D are allocated to Band C	5 extra places are filled by children in Band C	The 6 unfilled places in Band B are allocated to Band A	6 extra places are filled by children in Band A	All 240 places are filled.

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