FSCE Entrance Test for Year 7 Entry

Frequently Asked Questions

For Prospective Trafford Consortium Parents

1. What is the FSCE Entrance Test?

The FSCE (Future Stories Community Enterprise) entrance test is a set of test papers used by some grammar schools to evaluate candidates for entry into Year 7. It assesses a range of academic abilities, all inspired by (and not beyond) the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum taught up until the end of Year 5.

2. What subjects or skills are explored in the FSCE test?

The FSCE test for the Trafford Consortium explores the application of knowledge and skills from KS2 subjects which may include any of the following *(which are covered in more detail in the Familiarisation Guide for Parents):*

- **Art & Design:** critically evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design as well as know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.
- **Computing:** use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world, providing insights into both natural and artificial systems.
- **Design & Technology:** how the design and manufacture of products solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering children's own and others' needs, wants and values.
- **English**: assessing understanding of texts, and appropriate use of language. To identify candidates with a strong command of the written word, who can read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- **Geography**: understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the dynamic formation and use of landscapes and environments over time.
- **History**: ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps children to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.
- **Languages**: a liberation from insularity, foster children's curiosity and learn new ways of thinking.
- **Maths**: problem-solving, logical reasoning, and application of numeracy. To identify candidates whose fluency in the fundamentals of maths means that they are able to focus on grappling effectively with increasingly complex problems in context and with increasingly large integers.

- **Music:** develop a critical engagement with music – to listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, to understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated.
- **Physical Education:** to understand the skills of running, jumping, throwing and catching in isolation and in combination and to recognise flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance.
- **Science:** develop a broad and deep scientific view of the world around them. They should do this through exploring, testing and developing ideas about everyday phenomena and the relationships between living things and familiar environments, and by beginning to analyse functions, relationships and interactions through controlling variables.

The FSCE test values the application of curious thought to novel scenarios over and above memory or rote learning that is common to other entrance tests.

There is NO non-verbal reasoning in our tests as it is not taught as part of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum so we do not believe it to be a fair aspect to assess.

3. How is the test different from other entrance tests?

The FSCE test has been designed with the child in mind. From familiar test layouts to accessible wording and content with a range of difficulty levels, all children will be able to 'give it a go' based on their commitment to working hard at primary school. A mix of multiple choice and constrained response will be familiar to children from their primary school work.

4. What assurance is there that my child has been taught the FSCE test content?

All of our tests only include Key Stage 2 curriculum content that will have been taught up until – and including – the end of Year 5. Furthermore, our tests undergo:

- extensive research and development in collaboration with teachers;
- trials in primary schools up and down the country;
- review and feedback sessions with a team of highly experienced education professionals serving as our expert panel.

5. Should my child have a tutor to prepare for the test?

No. We do not want any parent to have to pay a tutor for their child to prepare for the test. This is in order to ensure every child – regardless of their background, primary school or any disability – has the same opportunity. While the look and feel of the test remains the same each year, the content, type and style of questions vary purposefully each year so that no tutor can claim to know the 'pattern' nor what preparation is necessary to be successful.

6. Can my child prepare for the FSCE test?

Yes – but not through tutoring. Children will instead benefit by:

- Working well at primary school with maximum attendance and engagement in all areas of school life;
- Reading widely and regularly, with a focus on meaning;
- Practicing mental arithmetic in real-life scenarios and problem-solving puzzles;
- Engaging in reasoning and logic games that require imagination;
- Using the official Familiarisation Guides provided by the school or by FSCE.

There is *no need* for intensive tutoring and *no need* for spending hours on past papers or mock exams. There are NO commercial 11+ books or past papers endorsed by FSCE. All relevant test information and sample questions are provided in our Familiarisation Guides.

7. Will we be given practice papers or familiarisation materials?

The school has Familiarisation Guides on their website to help children, parents and teachers understand the style and format of the questions. These resources are designed to be informative, provide familiarity, reduce anxiety and ensure fairness. No tutor, parent, website, Whatsapp group or company can claim to have any other knowledge about what the FSCE entrance will be like or contain.

8. How long is the test and how many papers are there?

The structure can vary slightly but generally for the FSCE test at Trafford:

- There are two separate papers which might be sat in any order;
- Each paper typically lasts 45–60 minutes;
- A break may be scheduled between papers.

Specific details will be provided by the school in advance of the test and further information can be found in the Familiarisation Guides on the school's website Admissions page.

9. When is the FSCE test held?

The test is usually held in the summer term of Year 5 or the autumn term of Year 6 (typically in September), but this can vary slightly depending on the school. Exact dates will be published on the school's website or in admissions materials.

10. Where will the test take place?

Most commonly the test will be held at the grammar school site, providing a controlled and consistent environment. Details will be shared in your registration confirmation.

11. What support is provided for children with additional needs?

If your child has special educational needs or requires reasonable adjustments (e.g., extra time, modified papers), you should indicate this at the time of test registration and provide supporting documentation. Each application will be assessed individually by the school you are applying to.

12. How are the papers marked?

Questions are scanned and marked automatically using Optical Mark Recognition technology, with expert humans verifying any inconsistencies, amended answers or questionable responses. The process is reliable and trustworthy.

13. How are results used?

Test results are used alongside the school's admissions criteria to determine whether a place can be offered. A qualifying score or ranking system may be applied depending on the number of applicants.

15. Will we receive the test scores?

This depends on the school's policy. Some schools provide scores or rankings to help parents make informed choices for school applications. Check the admissions section of the school's website for details.

16. Who do I contact if I have further questions?

If you have questions about registration, access arrangements or test logistics, please contact the school's admissions team directly via the contact information provided on the school website.

We appreciate that understanding and preparing for any secondary school application process and entrance test can be a challenging time. Our aim is to ensure that all children are on a level playing field with equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability and that parents feel informed and supported throughout the process.