

News story: Thousands of new places created in Outstanding schools

Selective schools are to introduce a range of measures to improve access for disadvantaged children after being given permission to expand, Education Secretary Damian Hinds [announced today](#) (Monday 3 December).

The first 16 schools to receive funding from the £50m Selective School Expansion Fund have been confirmed and all have set out clear actions that will prioritise access for children on the pupil premium and are undertaking outreach work with local schools.

All 16 selective schools will be making changes to their admission arrangements to increase access for disadvantaged children, with over half of the schools committing to lowering the mark required to pass the entrance test for pupil premium pupils. Many more will help pupil premium children or children attending schools in less affluent areas prepare for their entrance tests.

Today's announcement builds on the 825,000 new school places created since 2010 and the one million this government is on course to create by 2020.

Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, said:

One of the stand-out features of this country's education system is its diversity, and selective schools are an important part of that. They include some of the best schools in this country, with almost all selective schools rated Good or Outstanding, and they are popular with parents. So it is right that when there is need for more places in an area, these schools should be able to expand – as other schools can – to enable as many children as possible to benefit.

I have always been clear that selective schools will only be able to expand if they meet the high bar we have set for increasing access for disadvantaged children, and all of these schools have done that. As a result, countless more children from disadvantaged areas will benefit from places at outstanding schools.

The schools are:

- Altrincham Grammar School for Boys (Trafford)
- Bournemouth School (Bournemouth)
- Bournemouth School for Girls (Bournemouth)
- Chelmsford County High School (Essex)
- Colchester County High School (Essex)
- Colyton Grammar School (Devon)
- John Hampden Grammar School (Buckinghamshire)

- Kendrick School (Reading)
- Lawrence Sheriff School (Warwickshire)
- Queen Mary's Grammar School (Walsall)
- Queen Mary's High School (Walsall)
- Sir Thomas Rich's School (Gloucestershire)
- Sir William Borlase's Grammar school (Buckinghamshire)
- St Michael's Catholic Grammar School (Barnet)
- Rochester Grammar School (Medway)
- Wolverhampton Girls High School (Wolverhampton)

As well as prioritising access for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the successful schools have also committed to a variety of outreach initiatives. For example, Queen Mary's High School in Walsall will set up help desks in partner primary schools to assist parents registering children for the selection test and answer any questions they may have about the process.

Today's announcement builds on the Memorandum of Understanding the government agreed with the Grammar School Heads Association (GSHA) earlier this year, in which the group outlined its commitment to widening access and working with local schools to raise standards for all children.

Chief Executive of the Grammar School Heads Association Jim Skinner said:

We are delighted that selective schools are being supported to expand. It is really important that, just like other good and outstanding schools, they are able to expand to meet parental demand, especially at a time of significant growth in the number of pupils reaching secondary age.

The large majority of selective schools now prioritise access for disadvantaged pupils, which is backed up by outreach and partnership work with local schools. Selective schools are therefore well placed to contribute to meeting the ongoing need for more school places and supporting high quality education provision elsewhere.