

A CHEAT SHEET GUIDE

HOW TO GET YOUR CHILD INTO
PRIVATE SCHOOL ON
SCHOLARSHIP



CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Five step Cheat Sheet | 3 |
| Become No.1 Educator | 8 |
| A little about Me | 9 |
| Your printer friendly pull out | 10 |



Introduction

I don't know where to start?

You aren't alone! The English education system is a minefield, so seemingly complicated that I find myself explaining it not just to parents *but* teachers too. But don't worry, I'll explain it in a simplified way.

Do I need to be rich to educate my child privately?

People are surprised by this answer...No. I have met first generation immigrants on the lowest paid jobs with children educated from the best schools in the country. Unlike many things in life, scholarships are not means tested. So regardless of your status, everyone is entitled to apply and benefit from discounted school fees. The application process is open to all and the news gets better. Scholarship students qualify for additional means tested bursaries and educational grants funding, potentially covering up to 100% of your child's private education for the whole duration of their study.

Should I feel guilty about thinking private?

I don't think so. You naturally want the best for your child. We don't think twice when on that very long commute into work, ferrying children to music lessons, dance rehearsals or sport fixtures. Not forgetting the hours spent over homework...there is *no day off* as a parent. When it comes to the nuts and bolts of things, unlike expensive cars and holidays, a first class education is with you for life and the benefits of that decision continues to appreciate in value.

Will it be easy?

I'll explain the process in a straightforward way, however I am not going to sugar coat things. It takes *motivation* and plenty of *effort*. At the end of the day, everyone wants a scholarship, if not for the prestige, the valuable fees discount.



Step 1

“Motivate and Inspire”

The first step is supporting your child to reach a higher level of learning. Half of the challenge of getting your child into private school on scholarship is mindset. Your child must *want* to succeed, despite the obstacles they may face and you have to believe he/she *can* do it!

It isn't just our children who struggle with mindset, adults are victims too. Research has shown contrasting cultural differences between mindset in the United Kingdom, compared to the rest of the world. Generally speaking, in East Asia there is belief in *growth* mindset, whilst we believe in a *fixed* mindset. So, what does this mean for your child?

The English education system differentiates children on ability from as young as 2 years old. In nursery or pre-school, your child's development is set against the government's Early Years Framework, seven areas of learning including literacy and maths. Sounds impressive? Perhaps not...the UK consistently ranks lower in PISA results, world ranking for the literacy and maths levels of 15 year olds. It seems that despite government efforts we are failing and it's all to do with *fixed* mindset.

Based on a couple of hours of 1:1 observation in the first year of primary school, your child at 5 years old is pigeon-holed as high or low achieving in a *fixed* system through key stages 1 to 2. Designed not to motivate your child to a higher level of learning, a *fixed* mindset educational framework believes that intelligence is set in stone from birth.

But you know what? The system is *wrong*. Almost *anyone* can achieve great academic results with *motivation* and *effort*.



Step 2

“Know Your Child’s Gifting”

The title of scholar is a highly regarded and coveted status, remaining with your child for life. Yes, he/she gets to show off forever and why not? It was especially hard work to get it! A scholarship at senior school opens further doors to top universities, world renowned conservatoires, institutions of the arts and offers opportunity for illustrious careers around the world. It’s an amazing opportunity.

A scholarship is awarded to a scholar, a student who is a specialist in a particular discipline. So, when planning how to get your child into private school on scholarship, it is important to apply for an award based on your child’s gifting or natural talent. This being a special ability in an area that makes your child stand out from children of a similar age, their peers.

You child’s gifting may be obvious, but sometimes it is more difficult to identify or is yet to be realised. The key to discovering hidden talent, is to allow your child to experience a little bit of everything from a young age – do it all. Try art, dance, drama, music, singing and lots of different sports. For children who respond early, also introduce progressive intellectual challenges. Finally, keep exploring and questioning until you get there.

Scholarships are typically categorised into: academic, all rounder, art, choral, dance, drama, maths, music, and sports. Not all independent schools will offer all these areas and in some instances, applicants may only apply to one category. Each school will have specific requirements with set deadlines for applications, screenings, trials and auditions.



Step 3

“Select the right school for your child”

Just like state schools, private schools vary greatly in culture, ethos and performance. Check the league tables against inspectorate reports and parental feedback. Don't just go with the glossy prospectus, impressive grounds or abundance of canapés on Open Day.

Here are the key things to consider:

What is the value of scholarships on offer? Figures can range anything from 0 to 100%.

Are scholarships offered in categories suited to your child? Some private schools may offer only a couple of awards.

Is your child suited to boarding? Your child may be better suited as a day student or partial/weekly boarder.

Pick locations based on travel logistics. If the school is far up north or down south, will you be able to attend parent evenings, sports fixtures, music recitals or drama productions? What about if your child is sick or just wants a cuddle? Then there is the issue of exeat – how will your child get home and back to school over the weekend?

If you don't warm to the headmaster/headmistress, matron or houseparents, it's a clue. Look elsewhere! After all your child will be there for several years. You want the match as close to 'home from home' in care and values.



Step 4

“Knuckle Down”

At his stage, you have identified your child’s gifting, picked your top 5 private schools based on scholarship, culture, ethos, performance (and matron). Now it’s time to knuckle down and make things happen.

Scholarships are fundamentally based on academic performance. In addition to applying for a scholarship award, your son/daughter will need to confidently pass the common entrance or an entry assessment/exam. The application pack will ask for primary school references and evidence of attainment for scholarship at pre selection stage.

The content and format of the exam will vary with each school. In most cases, for year 7 entry, the papers will consist of maths, English (comprehension and creative writing) with verbal/non-verbal reasoning. There may also be additional papers in science and/or a modern language so it is important to select the entrance criteria best suited to your child.

Entrance exams will be held at specific times of the year with clear deadlines and requirement for school registration and/or exam fee. With costs varying upwards of £100, applications to several schools can add up. In some cases these fees may be waived subject to parental income, so it is worth asking for the extra assistance.

Students successful at exam will be invited for scholarship assessment and interview. Again, the exact requirements will vary depending on the school. Like exams, scholarship assessment day will nearly always take place within a group of students. There is now a tendency to interview students in pairs, with questions from a panel based on anything from subject areas to current affairs and sometimes small tasks.



Step 5

“Prepare”

Some parents will enrol children on expensive common entrance programs and book hours of tutoring from age 5 years, yes it's true, I've met them. Whilst I appreciate the thinking...there is no need for it and I'll explain later.

When your child takes their common entrance/entrance exam at age 7+, 11+ or 13+ years old, they are competing with students having already benefited from years of expensive prep school education, which essentially is designed (not like the state education) to make children pass common entrance exams. So without preparation, your child will fail and not because he/she isn't clever enough – you just didn't show them how.

An eight year old in state school education is on average 18 months behind their prep school or private school counterpart. This is due to a number of factors. The top prep and private schools tend to attract the best teachers with lucrative salaries and incentives. Prep schools will have less than 15 children per class and fantastic resources for study and recreational activities. In contrast, our state primary schools will have student numbers approaching 30 with a high proportion of non-English speaking children and others with anti-social/behavioural issues. Increasing stress levels, often means there is high staff turnover. Additionally, as mentioned in Step 1, the state education system is not designed to motivate your child and with little government funding, often lack resources and recreational facilities.

But don't give up! I've already explained the steps to success and any apparent obstacles will become obsolete as I show you how to beat the system.



Become no.1 educator

I know a man who taught his son to read and write, even though he was illiterate and couldn't even use a pencil. His son read Physics at Oxford University, so he definitely did an amazing job at being no.1 educator!

Robert Tyron's famous mice experiments of the 1940s, showed that babies which were stroked and licked by their mothers in the nest were brighter and successfully escaped from his maze trap. In contrast, babies left abandoned in their nest with minimal attention from their mothers, were dull and failed to escape from his maze trap. Simply explained, these results demonstrate the importance of nurture versus nature.

How does this help with getting a scholarship into private school? I hear you say.

Well, as parents we are our children's no.1 educators. Regardless of subject area or level – key stage 1, 2, common entrance, GCSE or A'level, we can coach them to excellence in a fraction of the time, saving thousands of pounds! Now that has got to be the BIG revelation. If not, you may as well stop reading as you don't need my help anymore.

The human brain is amazing. Children are like live wire, millions of neurons charged up, fusing together to create knowledge at record speed. Set out clear learning outcomes with instructional tools and they will learn autonomously. This is the secret to higher level learning and what will set them apart from their peers, making any scholarship in reach.

As Sugata Mitra's award winning *Hole in the Wall* educational project demonstrates, we just have to be enthusiastic cheerleaders...and that is what a no.1 educator is. You don't even have to understand the subject.



A little About Me

I grew up in a family led by no.1 educators. My mentor being child educational pioneer, Dr Rosemary Sassoon, who has always challenged my concept of learning and education.

Following selection into grammar school, I read Human Biology at King's College London and have worked in some fascinating companies with amazing colleagues from around the world.

People have always told me I am great motivator and educator, I remain thankful for these qualities.

Out of curiosity, I completed a teaching diploma and have now added lecturer onto my CV and you know what..? I love it! However, I don't think it is the teaching qualification which makes me a successful teacher BUT the experience of getting my children into top private school on 3 different scholarship awards, from start to finish, within weeks not years and *despite* the obstacles! I use the *same* methods with my students now, right up to undergraduate level.

I am probably not the only mother to have done this and certainly not perfect or amazing. The difference is that I am open to sharing my knowledge and methods with you, in a clear and instructional way.

After recounting my '5 steps' to countless parents, desperate for advice on private schools and scholarships, I decided to create this cheat sheet. Follow my steps and have faith, nothing is impossible. I'd love to be your cheerleader!

claire@cheatsheetguide.com

claire 



Your Cheat Guide - Get your child into Private School on Scholarship

Step 1 - Motivate and Inspire Your Child

Step 2 - Know your child's Gifting

Step 3 - Select the Right School for your child

Step 4 - Knuckle Down and Research Scholarships

Step 5 - Prepare your Study Plan