

A guide to selective high schools and opportunity classes

Selective high schools and opportunity classes are specialist school settings that group together **high potential and gifted students**.

Learning with classmates who have similar abilities helps students' academic development and wellbeing.

Students still follow the NSW curriculum, but teachers may use special teaching strategies for high potential and gifted learners.

Selective high schools

There are 4 types of selective high schools:

- **fully selective high schools** – these are schools where all students have been selected based on the placement test
- **partially selective high schools** – these are schools that have a mix of selected students and local area students
- **agricultural selective high schools** – these are schools that emphasise the study of agriculture and all students are selected on their academic ability. Some of these schools also provide boarding where students live at the school
- **Aurora College** – these are online selective classes. They are provided at local public high schools in rural and remote areas.

Opportunity classes

Opportunity classes are for high potential and gifted students in Years 5 and 6. They are offered in a number of public primary schools across NSW.

Aurora College provides online opportunity classes for rural and remote students in their local primary schools.

Where are they located?

Selective high schools and opportunity classes are available across metropolitan, regional and rural NSW. Check the maps below for a school near you.

- [Find an opportunity class](#)
- [Find a selective high school](#)

How do I know if it is the right fit for my child?

Does your child:

- enjoy learning
- have intense curiosity
- display a good memory
- ask complex questions
- require fewer repetitions when learning new things
- display creative ways of thinking
- become intensely focused in their area of interest or passion?

If some of these sound like your child, an opportunity class or selective high school might be a good fit.

How do I apply?

Parents apply during the application period online at: shsoc.education.nsw.gov.au

2026 entry into an opportunity class or selective high school

The application period for 2026 entry is from **7 November 2024** to **21 February 2025**.

What year is my child in when I apply?

Opportunity classes

Parents apply when their child is near the end of Year 3 in 2024 or at the beginning of Year 4 in 2025.

Selective high schools

Parents apply when their child is near the end of Year 5 in 2024 or at the beginning of Year 6 in 2025.

Learn more on our website about the [application process](#) and residency requirements at [who can apply for opportunity classes](#) and [who can apply for selective high schools](#).

The placement test

After you apply, your child must sit a test. Students are then selected for placement based on their test performance.

When is the test?

The test will be available across a 3-day period from **Friday 2 May** to **Sunday 4 May 2025**.

Students attend one test day only and do **not** need to bring their own computer to sit the placement tests.



What's in the test?

The test assesses how well students understand what they read, reason using mathematics and their thinking skills. Applicants for selective high schools are also tested on their writing skills.

Learn more at: [Placement test](#).

When will I find out about my child's results?

After your child sits the test, you will get an email in Term 3 with their test performance and next steps. If your child is offered a place, you will get information on how to enrol.

The Equity Placement Model

The [Equity Placement Model](#) helps all students to have fair access to selective high schools and opportunity classes.

Under the Model, up to 20% of student places at each selective high school and opportunity class are held for high potential and gifted students:

- from low socio-educational advantage areas
- of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background
- from rural and remote locations
- with disability.

The held places are offered to students based on their performance in the placement test.

Learn more at [Fair Access](#).

Supporting gifted students in all NSW public schools

Selective high schools and opportunity classes are just one of the ways that the NSW Department of Education supports high potential and gifted students.

High potential and gifted students are supported in all NSW public schools to reach their full potential. Learn more about the department's [High Potential and Gifted Education Policy](#).

Need more information?

Check the following webpages for more detailed information.

Webpages for parents and carers

- **Selective high schools and opportunity classes:** education.nsw.gov.au/shs-oc
- **Selective high schools:** education.nsw.gov.au/shs-yr7
- **Opportunity classes:** education.nsw.gov.au/oc

Webpages for students

- **Selective high schools and opportunity classes information for students:** edu.nsw.link/shs-oc-students
- **Applying for an opportunity class:** Student resource hub: edu.nsw.link/OChub
- **Applying for a selective high school:** Student resource hub: edu.nsw.link/SHShub

Social media

Join our official department Facebook groups:

- **Selective high school placement:** edu.nsw.link/shs-fb
- **Opportunity classes:** edu.nsw.link/oc-fb

Contact us

Contact the Selective Education Unit at:

Email: ssu@det.nsw.edu.au

Phone: 1300 880 367

Telephone interpreter service: 131 450

If you need an interpreter to assist with your enquiry please call the telephone interpreter service and tell the operator:

- the language you need
- the phone number you want to call.

The operator will call the Selective Education Unit phone number (1300 880 367) and get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

