



CHELTENHAM
LADIES'
COLLEGE

BRIEFING PAPER

FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 9 (LC3): 2025-26

Dear Parents,

The following information is designed to support your daughter in her preparations for sitting the entrance examinations at Cheltenham Ladies' College this November. The syllabuses described in this booklet are based on those set out by the UK government's National Curriculum for England.

Our entrance testing process comprises:

- 1) An online Maths assessment
- 2) An adaptive, online Verbal Reasoning assessment
- 3) A written English paper that covers both comprehension/closed text analysis and an extended writing exercise
- 4) Small group interviews and activities
- 5) A review of references and other pertinent information

We hope you and your daughter find the information within this guide useful, but we would like to emphasise a few points about our examinations:

- We look for a girl's potential, especially at 13+, and worry less about what she has been taught to date. In this regard, the most important trait your daughter can show us is a willingness to engage with questions even when she is uncertain. She must have a go, wherever possible.
- We assess potential scholars by looking for signs of academic curiosity, articulacy and a keen eye for detail. We discount signs of cramming, rote learning or over-rehearsed performances.
- We would never expect your daughter to have covered and remember everything that appears in this document. She will sit the exams at the beginning of UK Year 7 and this will be taken into consideration when we mark and review her performance.
- The exams (and the metrics they generate) are only one part of our entry assessment process. We like to meet candidates on the Assessment Day to see how they engage in different group tasks and activities. We also consider the views of a girl's present Head Teacher who will be asked to supply a confidential reference.
- We look at the all-round pupil and not just the assessment scores: we do not expect the finished article at 11 years of age – we wish to admit girls with intellectual curiosity, resilience and a willingness to try, and to be not afraid to get things wrong, be that on paper, in the classroom or on the stage or sports field to name but a few areas.

Should you have any observations about this guidance or queries about its contents or about the curriculum at College, please contact us as we would be very happy to help.

Admissions Department
(admissions@cheltladiescollege.org)

GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

We will examine your daughter on material specified in the English National Curriculum, which can be accessed online using the links below. If your daughter is at school in the UK, her teachers should have covered Key Stage 2 material and some early Key Stage 3 material at the time of entrance examinations, and there should be no need for her to have any specific tutoring.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study

www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/key-stage-3-and-4

ENGLISH

From Key Stage 2 English

Speaking and Listening

Candidates should learn how to:

- speak appropriately in a range of contexts;
- listen effectively and respond appropriately to others;
- take part in group discussion;
- participate in a range of dramatic activities.

Reading

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- practise regularly reading aloud;
- increase their ability to read more widely and to tackle more lengthy and challenging texts;
- engage imaginatively and thoughtfully with what they read.

They should begin to:

- reflect on the meaning of texts, analysing and discussing them with others;
- use inference and deduction;
- make connections between different parts of a text;
- recognise features of language, form and genre in literary texts, especially poetry, in order to develop their understanding and appreciation.

A range of literature should be studied, including good quality modern fiction, poetry and drama; some long-established children's fiction and classic poetry; texts drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions; myths, legends and traditional stories.

Writing

Candidates should begin to learn:

- that writing is both essential to thinking and learning, and enjoyable in its own right;
- to broaden their vocabulary and use words in inventive ways;
- to choose form, content and style to suit particular purposes and audiences;
- to plan effectively, revise and proof-read;
- to construct grammatical sentences in standard English and punctuate them correctly;
- to use full stops, question marks and exclamation marks consistently, accurately (and, if they have mastered basic punctuation, to punctuate direct speech);
- to paragraph intelligently;
- spelling strategies;
- to write legibly in a joined-up style, with increasing fluency and speed, and to print neatly where necessary;
- to use a dictionary.

From Key Stage 3 English

Speaking and Listening

Candidates should learn how to:

- give a short talk to the class on a familiar subject;
- participate in group discussion, expressing their own views and listening thoughtfully to the views of others;
- comment in an appropriate manner on what is discussed in small groups;
- participate effectively in drama-focused activities.

Reading

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- continue to practise regularly reading aloud;
- read a selection of more challenging stories, poems and plays, including some from different periods and/or other cultures;
- begin to support their views with reference to the text;
- develop the habit of regular private reading and discuss preferences;
- learn how to use library reference books.

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- write stories – chronologically and non-chronologically;
- write descriptively and about the feelings of characters;
- begin to attempt written literary criticism;
- write poetry both freely and with regard for form;
- set out personal letters;
- write in a clear, legible, joined up style;
- revise and re-draft writing when it is necessary;
- use paragraphs, full stops, apostrophes, question & exclamation marks confidently;
- punctuate direct speech.

In addition, candidates should:

- have learned the parts of speech;
- show a growing awareness of word families, prefixes and suffixes;
- use a simple dictionary as a matter of habit;
- spell correctly common polysyllabic words;
- understand the consistent use of tenses and pronouns.

VERBAL REASONING

Verbal reasoning assesses a pupil's skills and potential as opposed to specific learnt content. Verbal reasoning assesses the ability to evaluate, reason and conceptualise with words and sentences.

Verbal reasoning tests are often used to determine a pupil's critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to use their own knowledge to solve a problem.

There are different types of questions asked in a verbal reasoning exam. Some examples are:

- Spotting letter sequences
- Cracking codes based on letters and numbers
- Following written instructions
- Spotting words within words
- Finding a letter to complete two other words

We are pleased to be working with ATOM Learning this year with regards to our VRQ testing. A link to ATOM's explanation of the Verbal Reasoning test can be found here:

<https://atomlearning.com/blog/11-plus-verbal-reasoning-exam-preparation-guide>

Whilst the above link references 11+ testing, the principles and practices are the same at 13+ and 16+

A link to a familiarisation test can be found here:

<https://app.atomlearning.com/public/taster/cheltenham-ladies-college>

MATHEMATICS

Candidates will complete a timed online Mental Maths test and a test of application and understanding. The use of a calculator is not allowed.

Candidates will need to understand and be able to use the following terms: sum, difference, product, multiple, factor, prime, square, even, odd.

Questions may be set which test the candidates' understanding of the following:

- simple whole number arithmetic (+, -, x, ÷) including order of operations
- types of number, factors, indices
- estimation, place value, addition and subtraction of decimals
- long multiplication (up to 3 digit by 2 digit) and division, to include decimals

- equivalent fractions, simple percentages
- operations with fractions ((+, -, x, ÷)
- simple ratio and proportion
- negative numbers
- time
- money
- simple algebra; simplifying expressions, substitution (to include negative numbers), simple formulae
- solving basic linear equations
- symmetry and shapes
- metric units
- measurement, perimeter, area, volume
- co-ordinates (positive and negative)
- simple angle problems
- probability
- mean, mode, median, range, data representations such as pie charts
- Roman numerals

The following are useful general maths resource websites:

<https://corbettmathsprimary.com/content/>

<https://uk.ixl.com/math/>

READING ALWAYS MATTERS – FOR YEARS 7 AND 8

At CLC we love encouraging all our students to be enthusiastic readers. Whether you enjoy reading to switch off & unwind, or voraciously devour facts, figures and opinions we invariably find that girls who read widely have better vocabularies and a better written style than those who do not. Being able to respond to literature of many kinds in creative and inspiring ways is helped enormously by reading a wide range of styles and genres for pleasure.

The list below is by no means exclusive and certainly not compulsory, but it does contain some 'good books' which will provide a common foundation of literary experience on which we can build. It contains a range of titles which are suitable for readers in years 7 and 8. It is grouped by category to help you choose; try and read a range of things which are new to you. Don't be afraid to choose some non-fiction or poetry to curl up with – *and make time to reflect on what you are reading too.*

I hope you'll find titles here which inspire you before coming to College; never be afraid to try something different!

Miss G Shakeshaft
Lower College Librarian

Real Life Reads

- 50 Speeches that made the modern world | *edited by* Andrew Burnet
- Going Solo | Roald Dahl
- Hope in a Ballet Shoe | Michaela & Elaine DePrince
- The Diary of a Young Girl | Anne Frank
- Mud, Sweat and Tears | Bear Grylls
- Women in Sport | Rachel Iqnotofsky
- Chinese Cinderella | Adeline Yen Mah
- Girls who Rocked the World & Girls who Changed the World | Michelle Roehm McCann & Amelie Welden
- Becoming | Michelle Obama | *adapted for younger readers 978-0241531815*
- No One is too Small to make a Difference | Greta Thunberg
- I am Malala | Malala Yousafzai

Just another ordinary day...

- Unheard Voices | Malorie Blackman
- Sea of Whispers | Tim Bowler
- Make more noise | *Edited by* Emma Carroll
- Where I belong | Gillian Cross
- The Breadwinner | Deborah Ellis
- The Little Prince | Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
- Coram Boy | Jamila Gavin
- Cold Bath Street | A.J. Hartley
- A Nest of Vipers | Catherine Johnson
- The Giver | Lois Lowry

- Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children | Ransom Riggs
- The Pearl Thief | Elizabeth Wein

Fairy Tales, Re-Tellings & Other Unexpected Tales

- Cinderella is Dead | Kalynn Bayron
- Looking Glass Wars *Trilogy* | Frank Beddor
- In the Shadow of Heroes | Nicholas Bowling
- The Dark is Rising *Series* | Susan Cooper
- Coraline | Neil Gaiman
- The Woman in Black | Susan Hill
- Savannah Grey | Cliff McNish
- The Ruby in the Smoke *Quartet* | Philip Pullman
- The Midnight Palace | Carlos Ruiz Zafon

In times past...

- The Wheel of Surya | Jamila Gavin
- Smith | Leon Garfield
- Shadow of the Minotaur | Alan Gibbons
- Once | Morris Gleitzman
- Out of Hitler Time | Judith Kerr
- Picnic at Hanging Rock | Joan Lingard
- Beowulf | Michael Morpurgo
- Here Lies Arthur | Philip Reeve
- Salt to the Sea | Ruta Sepetys
- Echo Mountain | Lauren Wolk
- The Book Thief | Marcus Zusak

From the “CLC125 Books of all Time” Challenge

- Noughts & Crosses | Malorie Blackman
- A Christmas Carol | Charles Dickens
- Grimm’s Fairy Tales | The Brothers Grimm
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time | Mark Haddon
- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe | C. S. Lewis
- The Giver | Lois Lowry
- The Night Circus | Erin Morgenstern
- A Monster Calls | Patrick Ness
- Wonder | R. J. Palacio
- Holes | Louis Sachar
- Murder Most Unladylike | Robin Stevens

Read around the Curriculum

Geography & History

- A Short History of Nearly Everything | Bill Bryson
- A History of the World in 100 Objects | Neil MacGregor
- Black and British: A short, essential history | David Olusoga (9781529063394)
- The Silk Roads | Peter Frankopan, illustrated by Neil Packer (9781408889930)

Lifestyle & Creative Arts

- A Journey through Art: a global history | Aaron Rosen
- This Book is not Rubbish | Isabel Thomas
- The Shakespeare Book | DK Big Ideas Series
- All About Theatre | National Theatre

Maths & Science

- 100 Essential Things you Didn't Know about Maths & the Arts | John D. Barrow
- Scientists who changed history | Victoria Heyworth-Dunne et al
- Things to Make and Do in the Fourth Dimension | Matt Parker
- The Secret Life of the Periodic Table | Dr Ben Still

Plays

- Skellig: The Play | David Almond
- My Sister Sadie | Alan Ayckbourn
- Coram Boy | adapted by Helen Edmundson, based on the novel by Jamila Gavin
- War Horse | adapted by Nick Stafford, based on the novel by Michael Morpurgo

Poetry

- Poems that make Grown Women Cry | edited by Anthony and Ben Holden
- Clouds cannot cover us | Jay Hulme
- Poems to live your life by | Chosen and illustrated by Chris Riddell
- Winning Words inspiring poems for everyday life | Chosen by William Sieghart

Religion & Philosophy

- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas | John Boyne
- Really Really Big Questions | Stephen Law
- Philosophy for Kids | David A. White
- The Religions Book | DK Big Ideas Series

Other contemporary authors currently enjoyed by girls aged 11-14

- Elizabeth Acevedo
- Renée Ahdieh
- Kalynn Bayron
- Ian Beck
- Holly Black
- Malorie Blackman
- Tim Bowler
- John Boyne
- Sita Brahmachari
- Kevin Brooks
- Emma Carroll
- Suzanne Collins
- Gillian Cross
- Peter Dickinson
- Siobhan Dowd
- Abi Elphinstone
- Neil Gaiman
- Jamila Gavin
- Candy Gourlay
- John Green
- Frances Hardinge
- Michelle Harrison
- Lian Hearn
- Anthony Horowitz
- Catherine Johnson
- Tanya Landman
- Derek Landy
- Andrew Lane
- Caroline Lawrence
- Patrice Lawrence
- Geraldine McCaughrean
- Sophie McKenzie
- Robert Muchamore
- Beverly Naidoo
- William Nicolson
- Garth Nix
- R.J. Palacio
- Annabel Pitcher
- Philip Pullman
- Pooja Puri
- Bali Rai
- Onjali Q Rauf
- Celia Rees
- Philip Reeve
- Ransom Riggs
- Meg Rosoff
- Veronica Roth
- Louis Sachar
- Kate Saunders
- Marcus Sedgwick
- Ruta Sepetys
- Polly Shulman
- Robin Stevens
- Lauren St John
- Theresa Tomlinson
- Eleanor Updale
- Elizabeth Wein
- Adeline Yen Mah
- Nicola Yoon and Carlos Ruiz Zafon

Once you are at CLC, the Library produces termly and half-termly reading lists to encourage recreational reading, and all of these books *and more* will be found in Lower College Library! We also have lots of information books which can be borrowed at any time to help with prep or just for fun. Each boarding house also has a comprehensive book collection maintained by us: our aim is that you will always have plenty of ideas about what you want to read next.

It's important to read, even if you don't consider yourself a reader! Reading a daily newspaper in English or a journal such as *New Scientist* on a regular basis is a great way to stay informed and improve your language skills, but you should always have a book for pleasure on the go as well!

If you are still short of ideas try websites such as www.booktrust.org.uk or www.lovereading4kids.co.uk