

Parent Power methodology: how the school league tables are compiled

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Welcome to the 2020 edition of Parent Power, The Sunday Times Schools Guide, a fully searchable database of Britain's leading schools. It allows you to quickly search and compare the leading 630 state primary and independent preparatory schools in England, all ranked by their Sat results. With examination results and rankings going back to 2010 in some cases, this is the most comprehensive resource covering elite primary school performance in the UK. Full state and independent secondary school rankings will be published next week.



PARENT POWER

Schools Guide 2020

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SEARCHING BY PARENT POWER TABLES

The Parent Power tables are divided into independent and state schools. The full menu of tables currently published on this website is shown on the home page. To view our selection of the best schools from each of these categories simply click on the relevant section. The database will compile the table and display the results in rank order.

From this point, you have two options:

1. Access a school's details by clicking on its title in the table.

2. Refine the table you have called up in a number of ways.

Reordering tables

You can re-rank all of our tables by clicking on any of the columns or by using the small arrows in each column header. For example, by clicking on “town” at the head of the relevant column you can sort the schools alphabetically by location. This will help you identify the schools closest to the area you are interested in, although using the website's search engine will perform the same task much more efficiently, see below.

The schools can also be sorted alphabetically by clicking on

“name”. Where several sets of examination results are combined to produce an overall ranking for a school (at key stage 2, for example, we use reading, grammar and maths outcomes), rankings for each of the examinations individually can be produced by clicking at the head of the relevant column. So clicking on the “up” arrow at the top of Reading column will produce a table of schools ranked solely on performance in the reading element of the Sats, displaying the best first. Click on the “down” arrow to view the results from the bottom up.

SEARCHING USING THE SEARCH FUNCTION

Searching is also possible using the Search function button in the main navigation bar. This is the best way of refining your searches efficiently. This will take you to a search box giving you four options to search for schools by:

School name

Enter the name of the school you are interested in finding out details about. If it is one of the top-performing state or independent schools that are contained in our database, the school’s name will be displayed. By clicking on it, you can access the school’s details.

Postcode

Having selected the Postcode tab, enter your postcode or that of the address you are interested in. The search engine will return results listed according to their proximity to the postcode entered (nearest first). This unique function will allow you to identify the top-performing schools nearest to where you live. Click on the schools’ names to access further details.

Town

Enter the name of the town where you live or the nearest town to

where you live. All schools that feature in our tables within that town will be displayed in rank order. So, the best-performing schools within their tables will be listed first.

Local authority

Select your local authority or the local authority area in which you are interested from the dropdown menu. Schools that have addresses within that local authority area - whether or not they are local authority-controlled - will be listed, again in rank order. This means state academies and independent schools will appear in any sort of schools derived from this search function alongside those that are local authority-administered.

OUR MENU OF TABLES

The top 375 independent, top 500 state secondary, top selective state schools, and top comprehensive (and partially selective) schools

Schools are ranked by performance at A-level and GCSE in summer 2019. The number of A*, A and B grades gained is expressed as a percentage of the total number of A-level entries overall. This is double-weighted. The number of 9, 8, 7, A* and A grades gained at GCSE is expressed as a percentage of the total number of GCSE entries overall. We include IGCSEs sat in independent schools. This is single weighted. School rankings are based on their combined performance in these examinations. Rankings based on performance at A-level or GCSE alone can be found by clicking on the relevant columns displayed in the league table. International Baccalaureate outcomes have been converted to equivalent A-level grades where schools have asked us to do so. IB Higher level outcomes grades 7, 6 and 5 are equivalent to A-level grades A*, A and B respectively. The same principle applies to Pre-U outcomes, although they are also included in a separate

section, see below. D1 and D2 was taken as equivalent to A* at A-level; D3 and M1 was taken as equivalent to an A-grade and M2 to a B grade at A-level.

The top 75 sixth form colleges

Sixth form colleges are ranked on their performance in public examinations in summer 2018. The proportion of students achieving AAB at A-level in two or more “facilitating subjects” is used to rank the colleges. Facilitating subjects are those required by many leading universities and include English, maths, further maths, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, and languages. Where the proportion of students achieving AAB is the same, the size of the institution, measured by pupil numbers, is used as a separator.

The top fee-paying schools for the IB, the top state secondary schools for the IB

Schools are ranked by the average number of points gained in International Baccalaureate examinations in summer 2019. The maximum score is 45 points. The league table also displays the proportions of entries gaining the top two or top three IB Higher Level grades (7 and 6 or 7, 6 and 5). Rankings based on all these different outcomes can be obtained by clicking on the relevant columns. The proportion of students achieving an IB diploma pass and the proportion of sixth formers entered for IB (as opposed to A-level or Pre-U) are also listed. The latter indicates how widespread the IB is within a school. It is harder to achieve a high average points score in a school where children of all abilities are entered for the examinations. In schools where a low proportion of children are entered for the IB, it tends to be those in the higher range of academic ability.

The top independent schools for Pre-U

Performance is measured at three levels, each divided into three sections Distinction (D1, D2 and D3), Merit (M1, M2 and M3) and Pass (P1, P2 and P3). We have ranked schools on the proportion of Pre-U entries in summer 2019 achieving one of the three Distinction grades.

The top fee-paying schools with small or no sixth form (50 schools)

Independent schools catering for 11-16-year-olds or those with small sixth forms (with 10 or fewer A-level candidates in 2019) are ranked by performance at GCSE examinations alone in summer 2019. The number of 9, 8, 7, A* and A grades gained at GCSE is expressed as a percentage of the total number of GCSE entries of all types overall. A-level results achieved in those schools with a small sixth form have been disregarded. All rankings in this category ignore GCSE performance of the schools in the main independent secondary league table. They are rankings solely among independent schools with small or no sixth forms.

The top state secondary schools with no or new sixth forms (50 schools)

Schools with no sixth form catering for 11- to 16-year-olds only (or those with new sixth forms), are ranked by performance at GCSE in 2019. The number of 9, 8, 7, A* and A grades gained at GCSE is expressed as a percentage of the total number of GCSE entries overall. All rankings in this category ignore GCSE performance of those schools in the main state secondary school league table.

The top independent secondary schools in Scotland (Highers/Advanced Highers/National 5) (12 schools)

Independent schools in Scotland following the Scottish examination system are ranked on performance in Higher and Advanced Higher, together with National 5 examinations in summer 2019. The number of A and B grades gained is expressed as a percentage of the total number of Higher and Advanced Higher entries overall. This is double-weighted. The combined number of National 5 grade As is expressed as a percentage of the total number of National 5 entries overall. This is single-weighted. School rankings are based on their combined performance in these examinations. Rankings based on performance at Advanced Highers/Highers or National 5 alone can be found by clicking on the relevant columns displayed in the league table. Some schools declined to release their results to The Sunday Times.

The top independent secondary schools in Scotland (A-level/IB /GCSE) (6 schools)

Schools are ranked by performance at A-level and GCSE in summer 2019. The number of A*, A and B grades gained is expressed as a percentage of the total number of A-level entries overall. This is double-weighted. The number of 9, 8, 7, A* and A grades gained at GCSE is expressed as a percentage of the total number of GCSE entries overall. This is single weighted. School rankings are based on their combined performance in these examinations and the six schools are included in the main UK independent secondary school table. St Leonard's School and Fettes College offer the IB Diploma in their sixth forms and the outcomes of these examinations are converted to an A-level equivalence, with IB Higher level outcomes grades 7, 6 and 5 equivalent to A-level grades A*, A and B respectively. Rankings based on performance at A-level or GCSE alone can be found by clicking on the relevant columns displayed in the league table

The top 100 state secondary schools in Scotland

Scottish state secondary schools are ranked on outcomes for students who left school in the summer of 2018. The examination information is released by the Scottish Government. We rank schools on the proportion of students gaining five or more Higher examinations (grades A-C). This is doubled-weighted and added to the proportion of students gaining five or more National 5 passes and the proportion gaining two or more Advanced Highers (grades A-C). The latter two outcomes are single-weighted. The rankings are based on schools' combined performance in these examinations. Rankings based on performance at Higher, Advanced Higher or National 5 alone can be found by clicking on the relevant columns displayed in the league table.

The top 500 state primary schools in England

Primary schools are ranked on their performance in standard assessment tests (Sats) taken in 2018. We have taken the average scaled scores achieved by children in three areas - reading, GPS (grammar, punctuation and spelling) and mathematics - and aggregated their outcomes. Average scores were awarded to schools in the range of 80 up to 120, with 100 representing the expected standard children should achieve by the end of year 6. A score of 110 or above in any of the three measures indicates children working at a "higher" level of attainment. Among our top 500 schools, the combined average scores are in the range 350 (No 1) to 329 (No 500). Where scores are tied, we have used the number of pupils achieving the given score as a separator. So, a school with a 60-strong cohort of year 6 students will rank higher than a school with a cohort of 30 when tied on the same score. The table is shown ranked initially by the aggregate of the three scores for reading, GPS and maths. It is possible to re-rank the table on the three individual measures by clicking on the top of the relevant column. Only those schools where 20 or more pupils on average have taken these examinations are included in this

ranking of 500 schools.

Additional data from 2018: Sats are included on the individual school profile pages to show the progress achieved in reading, writing and mathematics by pupils at the individual schools. This is included beneath their average scaled scores for reading, GPS and maths respectively in each instance. The number of points above or below the level expected to be achieved by the children, taking account of their starting points educationally at the age of seven, is shown.

We also publish the proportions of children reaching both the expected level of attainment and a higher level of attainment for reading, writing, grammar and maths individually, and reading, writing and maths combined.

For all schools, we have included their attainment in the new-style Sats in 2017 and 2016. These are shown beneath the 2018 outcomes. For many schools that have featured in our rankings for several years, we have reproduced on their individual profile pages (accessible by clicking on the school name in the league table) the level 5 or higher attainment of pupils in old-style Sats taken in 2015, 2014 and 2013. The proportions of pupils achieving level 5 or higher at key stage 2 (taken by 11-year-olds) in English reading, English writing, English grammar and maths are shown. Level 5 attainment was that expected of a 13-year-old, in other words two years above the age of the children sitting these tests. Further historic Sats data from 2012 and before at level 4 (the expected level of attainment for children aged 11) can also be found on some of the individual school profile pages.

The top 50 small state primary schools in England

Primary schools are ranked on their performance in standard

assessment tests (Sats) taken in 2018. We have taken the average scaled scores achieved by children in three areas - reading, GPS (grammar, punctuation and spelling) and mathematics - and aggregated their outcomes. Average scores were awarded to schools in the range of 80 up to 120, with 100 representing the expected standard children should achieve by the end of year 6. A score of 110 or above in any of the three measures indicates children working at a "higher" level of attainment. Among our top 50 small schools, the combined average scores are in the range 338 (No 1) to 331 (No 50=). Where scores are tied, we have used the number of pupils achieving the given score as a separator. So, a school with a 19-strong cohort of year 6 students will rank higher than a school with a cohort of 11 when tied on the same score. The table is shown ranked initially by the aggregate of the three scores for reading, GPS and maths. It is possible to re-rank the table on the three individual measures by clicking on the top of the relevant column. Schools where more than 10 but fewer than 20 pupils on average have taken these examinations are included in this table.

Additional data from 2018: Sats are included on the individual school profile pages to show the progress achieved in reading, writing and maths by pupils at the individual schools. This is included beneath their average scaled scores for reading, GPS and maths respectively in each instance. The number of points above or below the level expected to be achieved by the children, taking account of their starting points educationally at the age of seven, is shown.

We also publish the proportions of children reaching both the expected level of attainment and a higher level of attainment for reading, writing, grammar and maths individually, and reading, writing and maths combined.

For all schools, we have included their attainment in the new-style Sats in 2017 and 2016. These are shown beneath the 2017 outcomes. For many of the small schools that have featured in our rankings over several years, we have reproduced on their individual profile pages (accessible by clicking on the school name in the league table) the level 5 or higher attainment of pupils in old-style Sats taken in 2015, 2014 and 2013. The proportions of pupils achieving level 5 or higher at key stage 2 (taken by 11-year-olds) in English reading, English writing, English grammar and maths are shown. Level 5 attainment was that expected of a 13-year-old, in other words two years above the age of the children sitting these tests.

The top independent preparatory schools

Prep schools are ranked on their performance in standard assessment tests (Sats) taken in 2018. We have taken the average scaled scores achieved by children in three areas - reading, GPS (grammar, punctuation and spelling) and mathematics - and aggregated their outcomes. Average scores were awarded to schools in the range of 80 up to 120, with 100 representing the expected standard children should achieve by the end of year 6. A score of 110 or above in any of the three measures indicates children working at a "higher" level of attainment. Among our top 100 schools, the combined average scores are in the range 350 (No 1) to 309 (No 75). Where scores are tied, we have used the number of pupils achieving the given score as a separator. So, a school with a 60-strong cohort of year 6 students will rank higher than a school with a cohort of 30 when tied on the same score. The table is shown ranked initially by the aggregate of the three scores for reading, GPS and maths. It is possible to re-rank the table on the three individual measures by clicking on the top of the relevant column. Only those schools where 10 or more pupils on average have taken these examinations are included. The results are

obtained from the Department for Education using the Freedom of Information Act and sent to prep schools for verification or amendment. There is no legal requirement for independent schools to enter their children for Sats, and our ranking features only those schools which do.

We also publish the proportions of children reaching both the expected level of attainment and a higher level of attainment for reading, writing, grammar and maths individually, and reading, writing and maths combined.

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