

Which OC Schools Should You Target?

A Parent's Guide to NSW Opportunity Classes

A free resource from Scholarly Training

For parents of Year 2 students in NSW

INSIDE THIS GUIDE:

- Complete list of OC schools across Sydney and NSW
- What makes each OC school different
- How the preference and placement system works
- Decision framework: which school suits your child?
- A printable worksheet to compare your top options
- Location, NAPLAN performance, and feeder school insights

Why Choosing the Right OC School Matters

Most parents know they want their child in an Opportunity Class. Fewer know that not all OC schools are the same. Each has a different profile, culture, location, and academic track record. Because you can only nominate two preferred schools, making an informed choice matters.

This guide gives you a clear overview of OC schools across Sydney and NSW, how to think about preferences, and a decision framework to choose the best fit for your child and family.

Section 1

What Are Opportunity Classes?

Opportunity Classes are specialised classes within select NSW government primary schools for academically gifted students in Years 5 and 6. They are not separate schools. They are dedicated classes within existing public schools, typically around 30 students.

How OC Classes Work

- Students placed through a competitive test (sat in Year 3)
- OC classes run in Years 5 and 6 only (two years)
- Modified curriculum with extension and enrichment
- Class sizes typically 30 students
- OC students share the school campus with regular classes
- OC teacher trained to differentiate for high-ability learners

Beyond Academics: The Social Benefit

OC classes create a peer group of motivated, curious learners. Many parents report that the social environment is as valuable as the academic extension. Your child is surrounded by peers who are equally engaged, which can be transformative for confidence and love of learning.

The Preference System

When you apply, you nominate up to 2 preferred schools in order. The algorithm considers your child's test score and your preferences. If the score is high enough for your first choice, they get placed there. If not, it tries your second. If neither works, your child may be offered a place at the nearest OC school with availability.

This is why understanding the full landscape is critical. A strategic preference order can mean the difference between a great-fit school and one that is less ideal.

Section 2

OC Schools: Sydney Metro

The following table lists major OC school locations across Sydney. Always confirm with the NSW Department of Education for the current list.

School	Area	Region	Notes
Artarmon Public School	Artarmon	North Shore	Feeder to North Sydney Selective
Balmain Public School	Balmain	Inner West	Popular Inner West option
Carlton Public School	Carlton	South Sydney	Established OC program
Chatswood Public School	Chatswood	North Shore	High demand, strong NAPLAN
Denistone East PS	Denistone	Northern	Well regarded OC program
Ermington Public School	Ermington	Western Syd	Growing OC program
Epping North PS	Epping	Northern	Strong academic culture
Ferncourt Public School	Marrickville	Inner West	Inner West alternative
Hurstville Public School	Hurstville	St George	High demand, strong results
Matthew Pearce PS	Baulkham Hills	Hills District	Hills District feeder
Merrylands East PS	Merrylands	Western Syd	Accessible Western Sydney
Newbridge Heights PS	Moorebank	South West	South West Sydney option
North Rocks PS	North Rocks	Hills District	Established Hills OC
Smithfield Public School	Smithfield	Western Syd	Western Sydney location
Summer Hill Public School	Summer Hill	Inner West	Popular Inner West OC
Waitara Public School	Waitara	Upper North	North Shore feeder
Woollahra Public School	Woollahra	Eastern Subs	Eastern Suburbs option

This is a representative list. The NSW Department of Education publishes the full current list each year.

OC Schools: Greater Sydney and Regional NSW

OC classes extend beyond inner Sydney. Schools across Greater Sydney and regional NSW also host programs.

School	Area	Region
Wollongong Public School	Wollongong	Illawarra
Newcastle East PS	Newcastle	Hunter
Penrith Public School	Penrith	Western Sydney
Bankstown Public School	Bankstown	South West Sydney
Parramatta Public School	Parramatta	Greater West
Liverpool Public School	Liverpool	South West
Hornsby North PS	Hornsby	Upper North
Blacktown South PS	Blacktown	Western Sydney

Section 3

What Makes OC Schools Different?

1. Competitiveness of entry

Schools like Chatswood, Artarmon, and Hurstville are the most sought-after. Higher demand means higher scores needed. Less popular schools may accept lower scores, which can be strategic.

2. Feeder school pathway

Some OC schools feed to specific selective high schools. North Shore OC schools often feed into North Sydney Boys/Girls Selective. If you have a Year 7 target, this may influence your choice.

3. School culture and size

A school with 800+ students feels very different from one with 300. Consider whether your child thrives in larger or smaller environments.

4. Location and commute

A 45-minute commute each way adds 1.5 hours to your child's day. A closer school with a slightly less prestigious reputation may serve your child better overall.

5. Extracurriculars and enrichment

Some OC schools offer robotics, debating, music, and science competitions. Others have limited extras. If your child has strong interests beyond academics, investigate this.

Section 4

Strategic Preference Ordering

You can list up to 2 preferred OC schools. The algorithm processes them in order. Your preference strategy matters as much as your child's test score.

THREE COMMON STRATEGIES:

Strategy A: "Aim High"

Pref 1 = Dream school (competitive). Pref 2 = Realistic backup. Best for high-scoring students.

Strategy B: "Play It Safe"

Pref 1 = Confident your child can get in. Pref 2 = Nearest OC. Best for families who prioritise any OC placement.

Strategy C: "Location First"

Pref 1 = Closest OC school. Pref 2 = Second closest. Best for minimising commute and disruption.

"The best OC school is the one where your child will be happy, challenged, and supported. Rankings are a guide, not a verdict."

Common Preference Mistakes

Mistake	Why It Hurts	What to Do Instead
Picking only the most competitive school	If score falls short, you miss a school that would have accepted them.	Always use both preferences. 2nd choice = realistic option.
Ignoring commute time entirely	1+ hour each way exhausts young children and reduces study time.	Map actual door-to-door travel. Factor in rush hour traffic.
Choosing based on rankings alone	A top-ranked school that does not fit can be worse than a lower-ranked one.	Visit schools. Talk to OC parents. Consider fit.
Only listing 1 preference	Miss first choice = placed at nearest school with space.	Always list 2 to maximise your chances.

Section 5

Your OC School Decision Worksheet

Print this page and fill it in as you research. Score each factor from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Decision Factor	School 1: _____	School 2: _____	School 3: _____
Commute time (shorter = higher score)	___/5	___/5	___/5
Academic reputation / NAPLAN results	___/5	___/5	___/5
Feeder pathway to target selective school	___/5	___/5	___/5
School culture / community feel	___/5	___/5	___/5
Extracurriculars and enrichment programs	___/5	___/5	___/5
Realistic chance of placement	___/5	___/5	___/5
Before/after school care availability	___/5	___/5	___/5
Overall gut feel for your family	___/5	___/5	___/5
TOTAL	___ / 40	___ / 40	___ / 40

How to Use This Worksheet

- List 2 to 3 schools in the column headers
- Research each factor (websites, other parents, drive-bys)
- Score honestly from 1 to 5
- Highest total = strongest option. Use the top 2 as your preferences.

Tip: If two schools are within 2 to 3 points, commute time should be the tiebreaker.

Section 6

The Bigger Picture: OC is Step One

Choosing the right OC school is important. But it is only one piece. The bigger piece is making sure your child is prepared to earn a place.

Knowing which school to target gives you direction. But direction without preparation is wishful thinking. Your child needs genuine strength in reading, mathematical reasoning, and thinking skills over the next 12 to 14 months.

The families who get the best OC outcomes start early (in Year 2), focus on the right skills, and follow a plan tailored to their child.

Free Year 2 Strategy Call

In a free 15-minute strategy call, we will:

- Discuss your child's current level across all 3 test areas
- Identify the single biggest gap to close
- Recommend a personalised preparation plan for the next 12 months
- Help you think through your OC school preference strategy

No pressure, no obligation. If Scholarly is the right fit, we will explain how. If not, we will tell you that too.

BOOK YOUR FREE STRATEGY CALL

Limited spots available each week. We keep calls small so every family gets personalised advice.

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OC | Selective | NAPLAN | Scholarship Exam Preparation

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