

Frequently asked questions:

The following is a list of typical questions about MLA.

1. How is My Learning Accelerator different to other 11+ & pre-test preparation companies?

We are a leading online 11+ tutoring service that seeks to offer a compelling service for parents and their children seeking entry to selective senior schools.

Our approach is based on the science of learning, to that end we have sourced what we believe to be the best team of 11+ and pre-test teachers and we arm them with the best professional development and technology in order for them to be able to deliver the highest possible impact at the most affordable price.

Our tech enables:

- ❑ Our Head of Learning to tailor a programme to match the needs of your child;
- ❑ Our teachers to shape their lessons for maximum impact using diagnostic tests;
- ❑ Parents and students to visualise progress and understand requirements for next steps;
- ❑ Reduce the cost of being taught by the best teachers.

We also ensure that each of our teachers are not only trained in the latest best-practice in delivering online learning, but that they are also accredited as Thinking Matters “cognitive coaches,” ensuring their teaching is based on the latest research from the science of learning.

2. What does the phrase ‘Cognitive Coach’ mean?

This pedagogical approach is rooted and informed by the science of learning. It draws together the evidence of *what works* to develop cognitive processes and high-order thinking skills, meta-cognition, and translates into practical ways to teach.

The impact of the meta-cognitive approach is incredibly powerful. Recent research by Exeter University shows that pupils at schools which adopt this approach to teaching achieve an additional grade and half at GCSE; significantly above their predicted grades from entering secondary school. Whilst studies haven’t yet been done on the impact of 11+ scores we anticipate that the approach, particularly when applied in group and small group settings, will be highly significant.

3. What is involved in sitting a diagnostic paper and how do we use them?

We send parents a link, along with a login and password to our Digital Learning Platform and the diagnostic papers, for as many subjects as they have elected for their child to sit. The results help us identify the exact areas on which a child needs to focus. Our Head of Learning (HoL) inputs the information into the MLA Progress Wheel and then schedules

a call to conduct a 'gap analysis' looking at where the child is 'at' versus where they need to 'be' for their target school(s). Our technology allows us to show a clear visual image of where gaps exist. At this stage our HoL is able to offer advice on the most appropriate school. Once the gap analysis is complete we, in conjunction with the parent, tailor a learning plan to suit you and your child.

We do not set a time limit on the diagnostic paper, this allows a child to complete every section of the paper in their own time and cover the sections without pressure. We can then clearly assess their strengths and weaknesses and use this to guide our discussions and design a bespoke learning plan.

In contrast, all of our mock exams are within timed conditions to mirror the real situation; the pre-topic and post-topic assessments are timed for the same reason, except for Maths. Pre-topic assessments for Maths are set the day before to give students an opportunity to answer the questions to the best of their ability.

4. How do I access a child's results?

The digital learning platform allows parents and teachers to see the details of each of the practice papers and provides hints and solutions to each question with a chance to go back and view any mistakes made. You can then track grades from topic to topic: this in turn enables our teaching staff to structure lessons in a way that ensures that the time is maximised so that they are covering a student's weaker areas or common mistakes.

5. What online platform do you use for lessons?

We considered the use of Zoom very carefully before choosing to deploy it as a key part of our Online Learning system – not least in the light of media reports of phenomena such as 'Zoom-bombing'. We were clear that Zoom offered the best functionality for remote learning. Within meetings we are able to mute, unmute, allow entry, remove entirely, share a wide range of content, restrict access and more. Additionally, we can see all our students at once.

6. What is our safeguarding policy?

All of our teachers are DBS checked. To ensure the safety of pupils, all our Zoom meeting links sit behind a password-protected wall. These links are inaccessible to anyone but pre-authorised, registered user accounts. We have complete and unilateral control over these accounts. MLA has a Safeguarding Policy available for all staff to read.

7. What would my child expect in a group session?

Maximum 15 children within a session.

- Each session lasts for 50 minutes and is run by one of our elite teachers.
- Every session targets a specific topic. These topics have been identified by us as being the key to 11+ / pre-test success. Once mastered then scores will rocket.

Format:

- ❑ The first 10 minutes of an English and Reasoning session consists of a set of timed, online questions that have been designed to enable our teachers to identify where the group and each individual requires focus to aid their understanding on that particular topic. Maths sessions start on the hour as the pre-topic assessments are available in advance.
- ❑ Middle 30 minutes. On completion of those ‘pre-topic’ questions our teachers get provided with an instant summary of how each child has done in each of the questions. This enables them to then shape their lesson according to the needs of that group. It also enables them to have greater clarity on each individual learner's strengths and weaknesses.
- ❑ Last 10 to 20 minutes. At the end of each session each student gets a ‘post topic’ assessment. This is another set of timed, online 11+ style questions that have been designed to consolidate the material taught and also enable parent, child and teacher to see, via their Digital Learning Platform whether that topic has been genuinely understood. If our teacher identifies that there is further input required, then they may suggest a targeted group session -either in a small group or 1:1 lesson.

8. What would my child expect in a premium group session?

Maximum 5 children within a session.

Each session lasts for 50 minutes, adaptive pre-topic and post-topic assessments, and is run by one of our elite teachers and allows time for the teacher to spend more time with each learner and for a collaborative working relationship between all involved.

Every session targets a specific topic. These topics have been identified by us as being the key to 11+ / pre-test success. Once mastered then scores will rocket.

9. What would my child expect in a targeted group session?

We organise ‘ad hoc’ targeted group sessions that are designed to help pupils ‘crack’ a particular area that they need additional support with. Through a combination of our diagnostic technology and teacher feedback we can identify and relay to you where we feel these sessions are beneficial for a particular child.

10. How often do you run group sessions?

We are running a loop of 24 topic sessions in each subject over the summer holidays starting on 13th July and finishing on 21st August. There is a session on each subject each day of the summer. An expanded loop will then start on Monday 7th September 2020 ahead of the independent school entrance exams that typically take place between October to January. During the October half term we are running courses in Creative Writing and Thinking & Interview skills for pupils in both Year 4 & 5.

Our loop of group sessions covers the key topics of all the exam types to give your child’s a firm foundation and grounding in each area. Our teachers embed spacing and interleaving throughout the loop to boost long-term memory and retrieval of key information. ‘Spacing’ refers to revision throughout the course of study, while ‘interleaving’ means switching between ideas while you learn.

11. Do you run full exam practice sessions?

Yes, we have set aside a week for virtual exam practice this summer: Monday 24th to Thursday 27th August. Parents can register through our website directly, they will be invoiced and then a log-in will be sent from the Digital Learning Platform after it has been paid.

We also run mock examination sessions in Central London and other locations around the country and when it is logistically possible and have arranged one at the beginning of December.

12. What does it cost? How do I pay?

£25 per session for a group session

£35 per session for a premium group session

£100 per 1 hour 1:1 with a Subject Lead Tutor

£75 per 1 hour 1:1 with a Subject Tutor

£50 per Online Mock Exam and Exam Review Session

My Learning Accelerator invoices parents via email before they attend a session.

Payments should be made via bank transfer and invoices need to be paid prior to sessions being joined. Additional practice papers can be purchased online through our Digital Learning Platform.