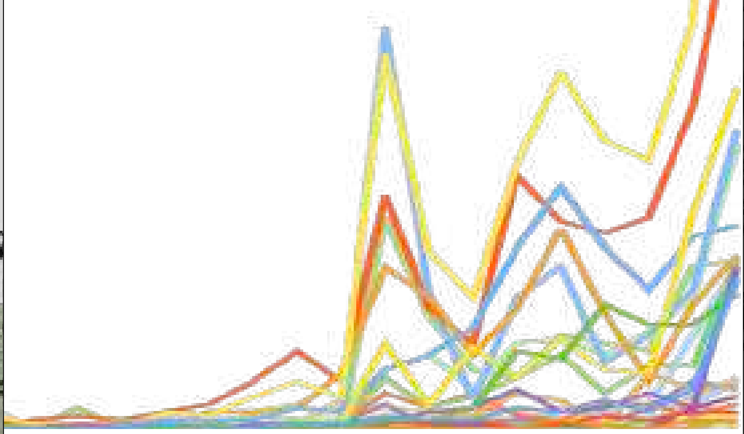
‘This year there was a superb atmosphere. It felt light and energetic; it also helped that there were many, many prospective parent connections made on both days.’

Tom Rogerson, Cottesmore

Independent SCHOOLS Show

POST SHOW REPORT 2023



SUPPORTED BY

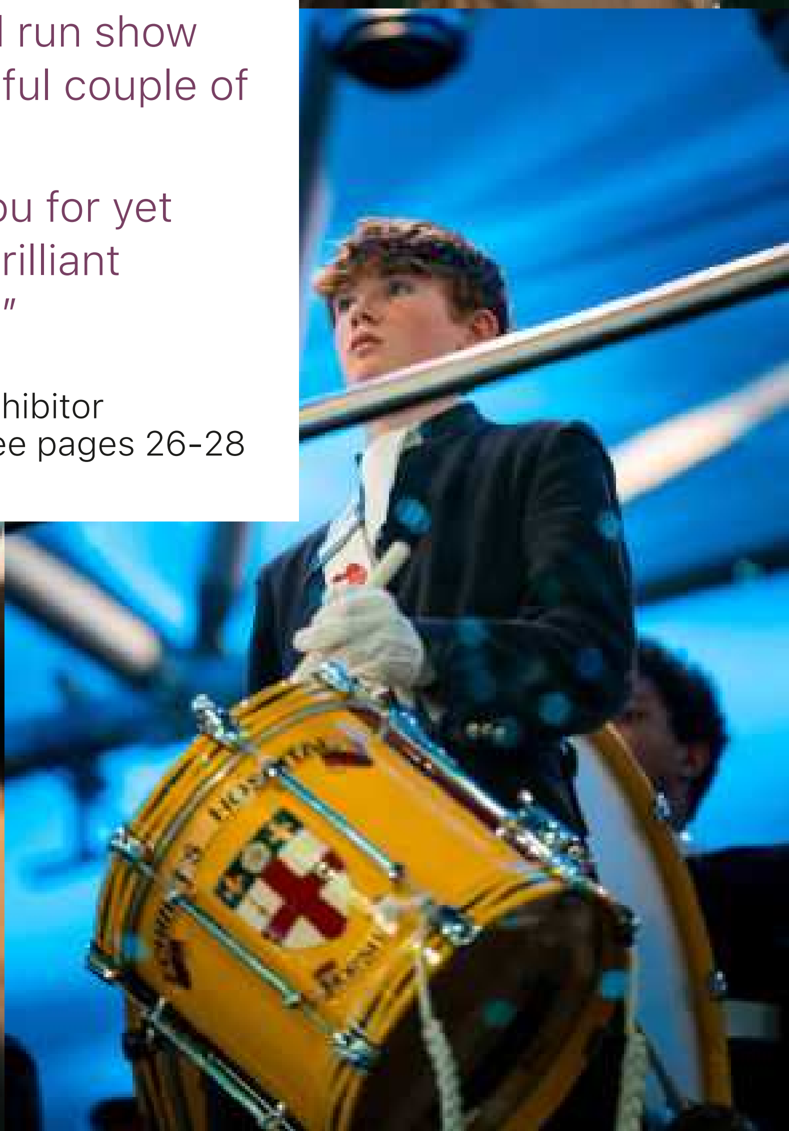
Think Academy

“ISS, where the best in British education unite…."

“Very well run show and a useful couple of days.”

“Thank you for yet another brilliant weekend!”

For more exhibitor feedback see pages 26-28



Introduction

2023 marked the last Independent Schools Show in its current weekend format, and we are delighted that this year our exhibitors reported higher quality visitors and record-breaking numbers of leads, with everyone agreeing that Saturday was particularly strong.

The data we gathered this year points to the wisdom of adjusting the show to a Friday evening and extended Saturday opening, rather than the entire weekend. We plan for a longer Saturday, making it even easier for affluent visitors from all regions to visit. The new Friday slot, by contrast, enables us to target a new London audience who may be busy professionals, second home owners or commuters, or simply those with intensive sporting and co-curricular commitments.

We know exhibitors want to hear more and are pleased that the initial reaction has been overwhelmingly positive.

We think the new format will appeal to wealthy, education-focussed London families, and we expect footfall to rise even further in future years.

David Wellesley Wesley, Show Founder

Exhibitor feedback

"This year we offered a tailored digital personalised prospectus that was delivered to their inbox before they left the stand. In total our enquiries across our three schools exceeded a hundred."

"So many positive visitors"

"The ISS really promotes independent education."

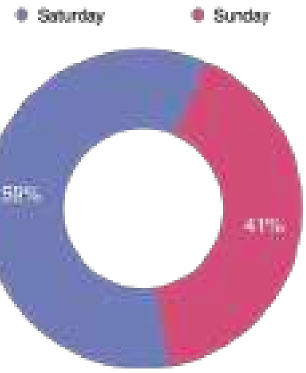
For more exhibitor feedback see pages 26-28

About Our Visitors

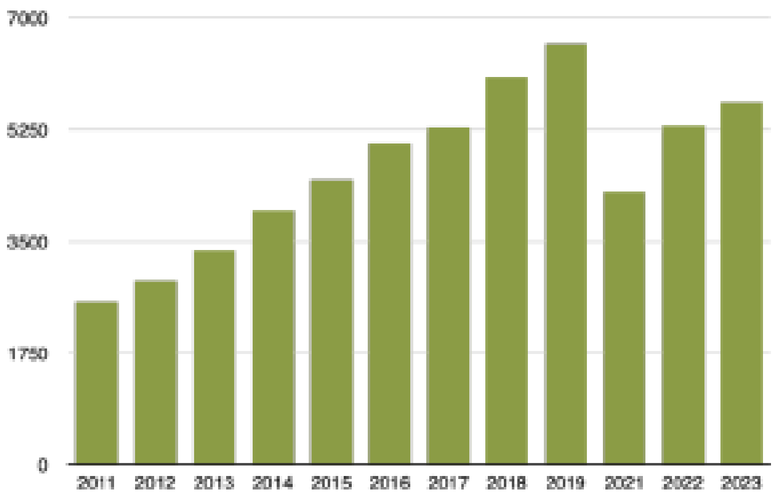
Visitor numbers were up 14.9% on 2022. While the quantity increased, the quality of visitors was the highest ever reported by exhibitors.

- Weekend footfall: 5679 visitors (a 14.9% increase on 2022).
- Pre-Show ticket registrations were up 25%.
- The average group size was our largest ever (3.26 rather than 3.09) - with noticeably more parents bringing their children to be entertained as well as informed.
- Saturday was the busier day - despite the travel difficulties resulting from the march. And this year there were fewer two-day visitors.

See pages 6-15 for a full analysis of the show's visitors.



Daily entry of ticket holders



Visitor numbers climbed again, making 2023 our third highest year

EXPERIENCE BOARDING

We strongly encouraged parents to bring their children this year, and they did. The average group size of 3.26 meant families brought children in record numbers.

Our campaign to bring your child was helped by our NEW Experience Boarding trail which gave children aged 8-13 something fun to do while their parents spoke with schools.

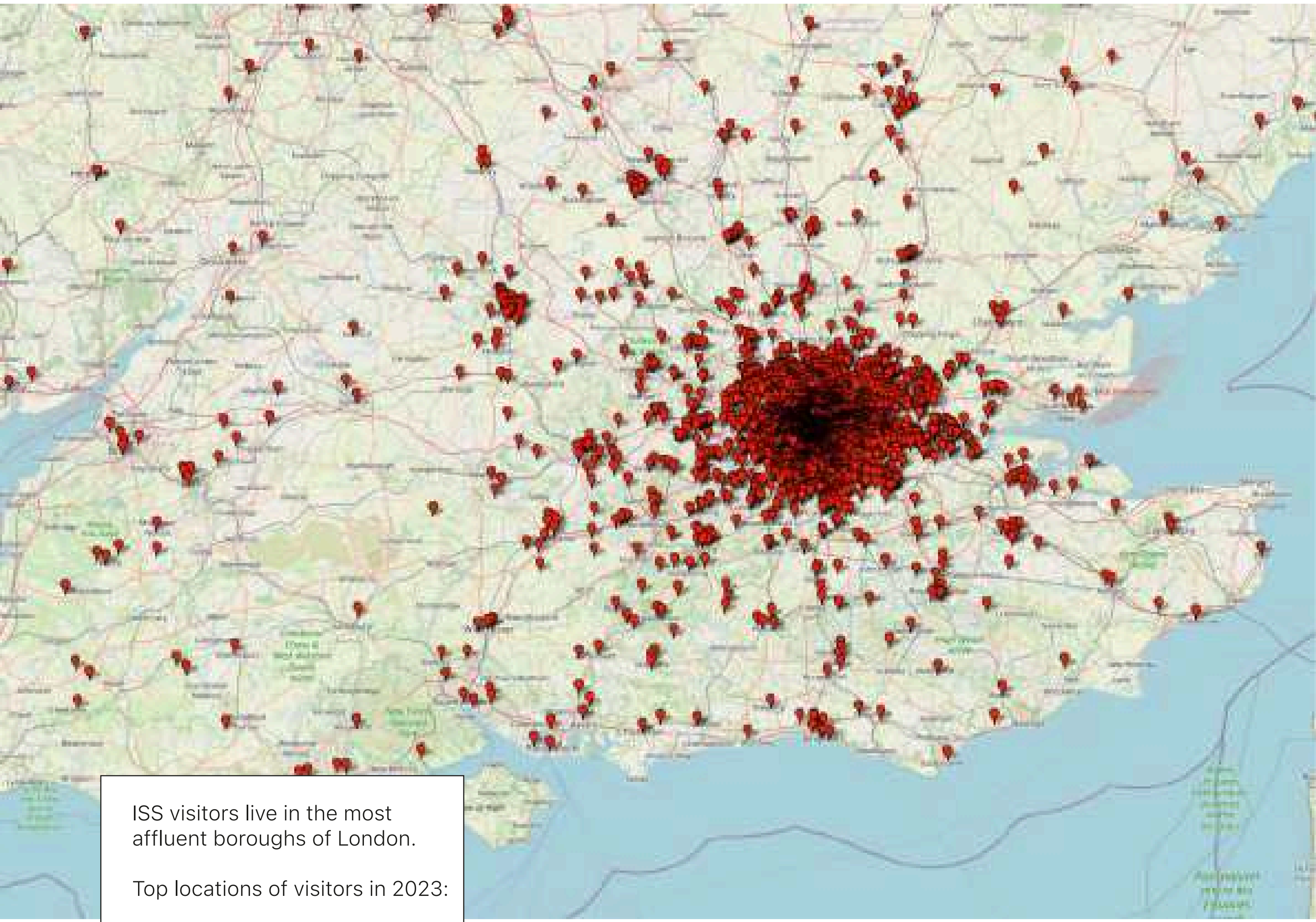
Over 50 families enrolled before the show opened and their turnout rate (83%) demonstrates the value of the feature. Many more families signed up during the show, and over 140 children participated in the trail - climbing, caving, sitting round the fire pit - while their parents explored schools.

We expected parents to have a coffee with boarding schools, while their children did the trail. But it turned out that most parents preferred to dive straight into the show and visit schools on their stands. Iterating quickly we therefore abandoned our planned receptions.

We will develop this feature in 2024 to give more children a taste of extra-curricular school life, giving their parents some time without their children to speak with schools.

Where our visitors come from

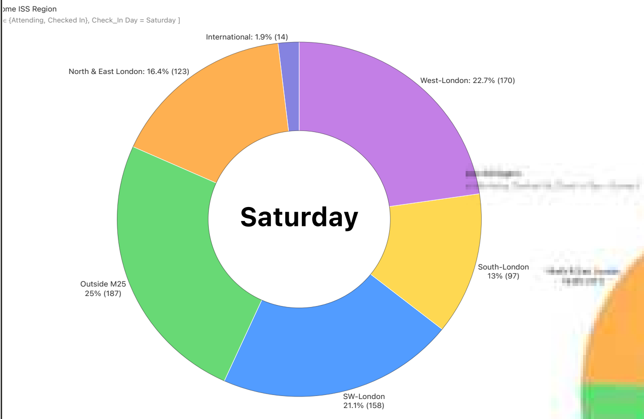
75% of visitors this year came from Greater London. Increasing numbers came in from outside the M25 (up 24%), especially on Saturday.



ISS visitors live in the most affluent boroughs of London.

Top locations of visitors in 2023:

- Wandsworth
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Westminster
- Lambeth
- Southwark
- Ealing
- Barnet
- Merton
- Tower Hamlets
- Croydon
- Greenwich
- Camden

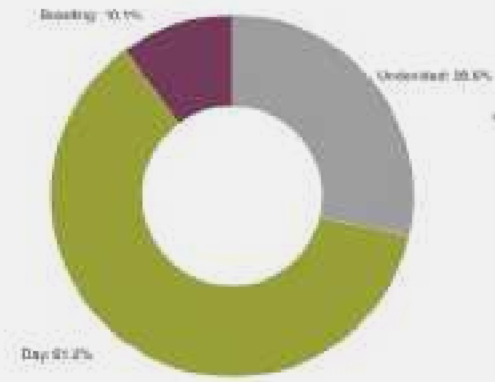


Geographical distribution of Saturday & Sunday visitors

What our visitors want

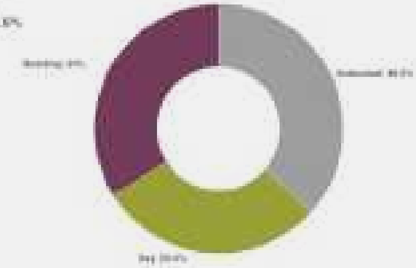
Day / Boarding Places

- 61% of ISS visitors come to the show sure they are looking for day places.
- Fewer parents (28.6%)are undecided.
- The numbers of parents certain they want boarding were up 33% on 2022.



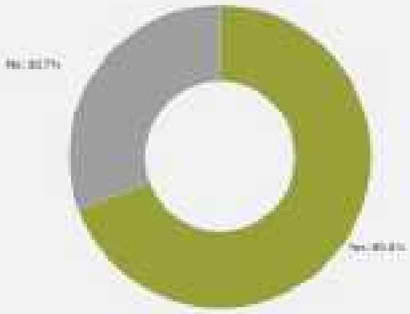
Above, ALL visitors Day & Boarding choices

Below, 6th form Day & Boarding choices



Sixth Form Boarding

- Visitors with teenagers have a stronger interest in boarding than day places.
- This year a record 34% are sure they want boarding (up 100% on 2022), while 29.4% were certain they wanted day places. 36.6% came to the show considering boarding.

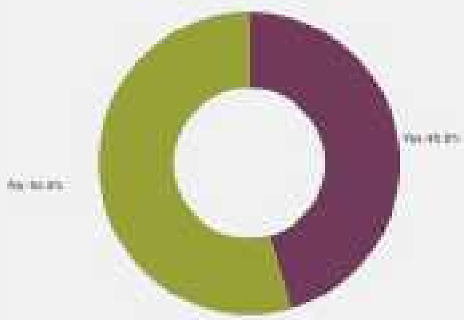


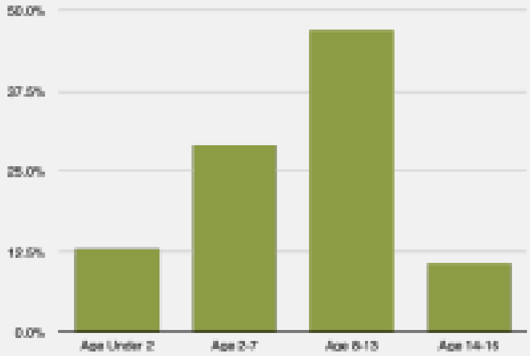
Above, looking for a London school

Below, parents looking at London schools who are also looking at multiple locations

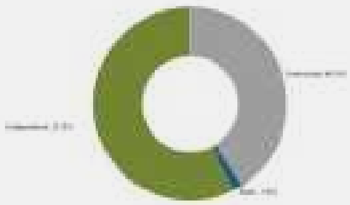
London Choices

- 69.3% of visitors are considering London independent schools.
- However London parents are acutely aware how much demand there is for day places in the capital, which is why nearly half of the visitors considering London schools are also looking beyond the M25.



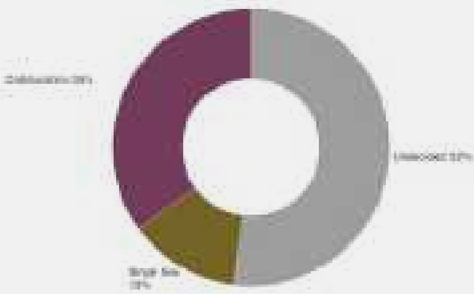


Above, age of visitors' children



State / Independent

- A majority of ISS visitors come to the show sure they are looking for places at independent schools.
- However a significant minority (41.9%) are comparing schools in the state and independent sectors.
- A tiny group are only considering state schools (usually boarding).



Above, Co-Ed & single sex choices

Single Sex / Co-Education

- Most ISS visitors are undecided whether they want a Co-Ed or single sex school.
- Parents with daughters are nearly twice as likely as parents of boys to be certain that they want single sex schools.

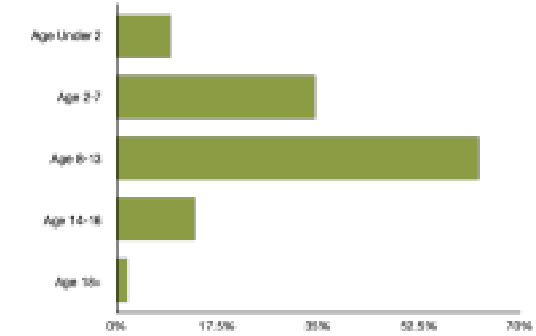
WEST LONDON

24.3% of 2023 visitors

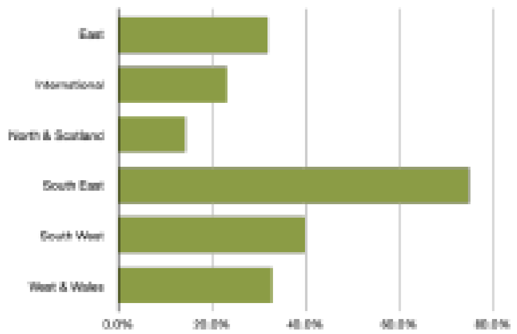
Top areas:

- Kensington & Chelsea
- Hammersmith & Fulham
- Westminster
- Ealing
- Hounslow
- Watford

Age of children



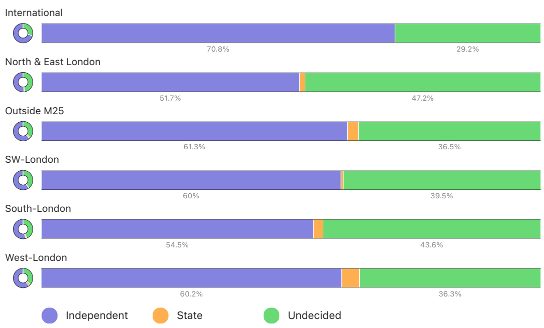
Where outside London are visitors from this region looking for a school?



Overview

- The area of London most strongly committed to independent education.
- Vast majority of West London visitors live in the more central boroughs.
- Heard about the show from a friend, or via current school, Good Schools Guide, or the Evening Standard.
- Less committed to co-education than parents in other regions, and most likely to want single sex schooling for their sons.
- Considering relocation as well as boarding. Drawn to schools outside the M25 in the south east, also looking further west and south west.
- 30.4% looking for bursary information.

Regions compared:
01 Considering state schools



- Overall 40.8% of parents are undecided and looking at state schools as well as independents.
- There are significant variations.
  - West and South West London families are the most committed in the capital to independent education
  - North & East Londoners are the least strongly committed.
  - A very small group of parents are committed to the state system.

Some homes of 2023 visitors who live in West London

This region is home to some of the wealthiest and most cosmopolitan of all our visitors.

Also includes urban professionals living in terraces, and multicultural metropolitans from Ealing and Southall.

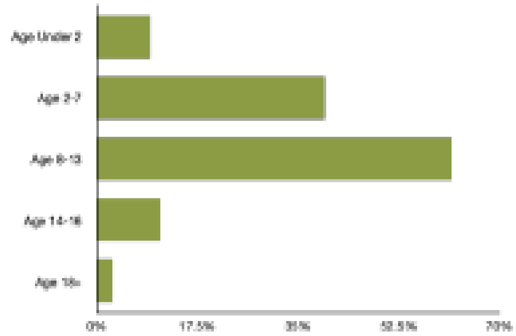
SOUTH LONDON

14% of our 2023 visitors

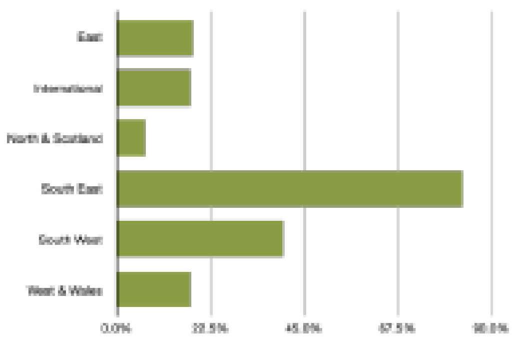
Top areas:

- Lambeth
- Southwark
- Greenwich
- Lewisham
- Croydon
- Bromley

Age of children



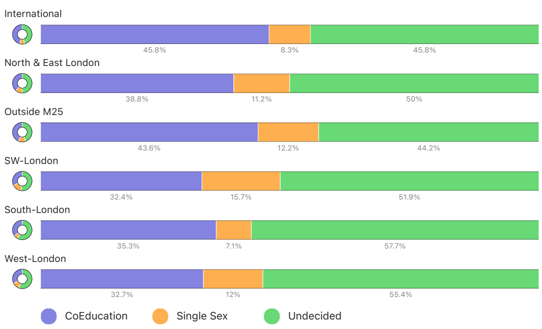
Where outside London are visitors from this region looking for a school?



Overview

- The largest and most diverse of our regions, this area of the capital is home to 13% of our visitors (17% in 2022).
- Travel plans most likely to disrupted by the Palestine march on Saturday.
- These parents are most likely to have heard about the show from friends & family and seen bus advertising.
- Online sources of information reach these parents - e.g. Google, Facebook and Instagram.
- 16% have attended a previous ISS.
- Least likely parents to want a school outside London or the South East.

Regions compared:
02 Co-Education



- Overall 52.2% of families are undecided on co-ed / single sex.
- South West and West Londoners were the most committed to single sex education, South Londoners the least.
- International families and families travelling in from outside the M25 are the most likely to be sure they want co-education.

Some homes of 2023 visitors who live in South London

This region covers high density inner city areas such as Lambeth and Southwark, plus big suburban boroughs such as Croydon and Bromley.

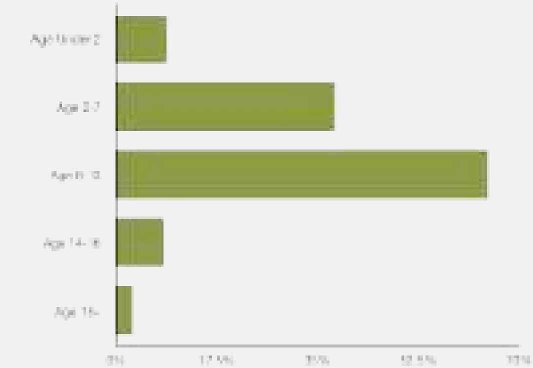
SOUTH WEST LONDON

19.3% of our 2023 visitors

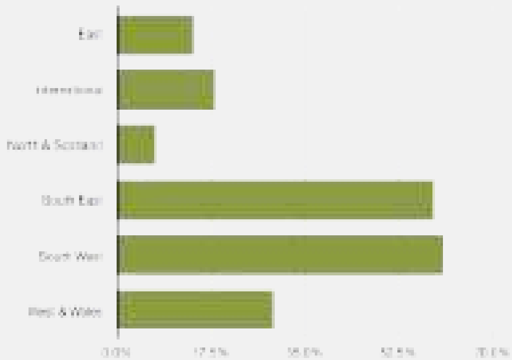
Top areas:

- Wandsworth
- Merton
- Richmond upon Thames
- Kingston upon Thames

Age of children



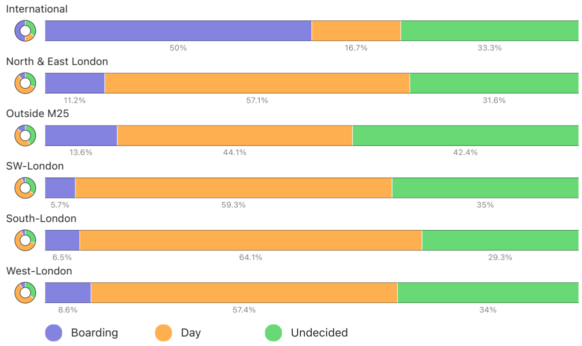
Where outside London are visitors from this region looking for a school?



Overview

- The show's home region, it includes Wandsworth, the borough which produces the greatest number of visitors.
- South West Londoners are the most likely likely to have seen it featured in Nappy Valley, received an invitation from the Handbook or been told about the show by their child's current school or Bonas MacFarlane tutor.
- Least likely to be looking for fee-assistance.
- Interested, but less firmly committed to boarding than in the past.

Regions compared:
03 Prep & 13+ Boarding



- Overall 44% of families with children aged 8-13 at the show are certain they want boarding or are considering it.
- Across London interest in boarding is broadly similar, but North and West Londoners are the most likely to have it on their shopping list.
- International families are very likely to be looking for 11+ & 13+ boarding.

Some homes of 2023 visitors who live in South West London

The show attracts many visitors from the wealthy boroughs clustered around Richmond Park.

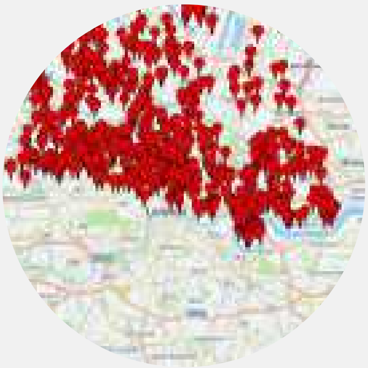
Much favoured by urban professionals, living in terraces.

NORTH & EAST LONDON

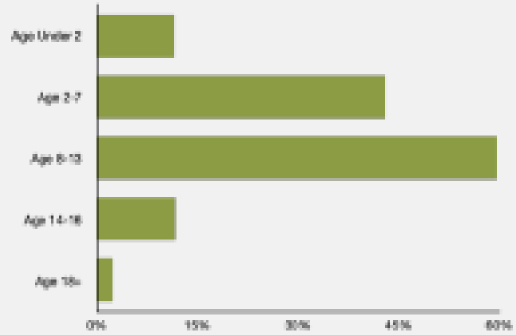
17.6% of 2023 visitors

Top areas:

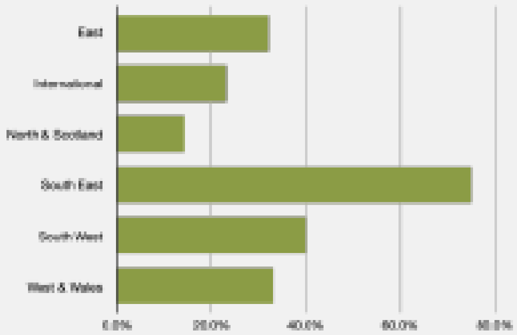
- Tower Hamlets
- Barnet
- Camden
- Newham
- Islington
- Brent
- Hackney



Age of children



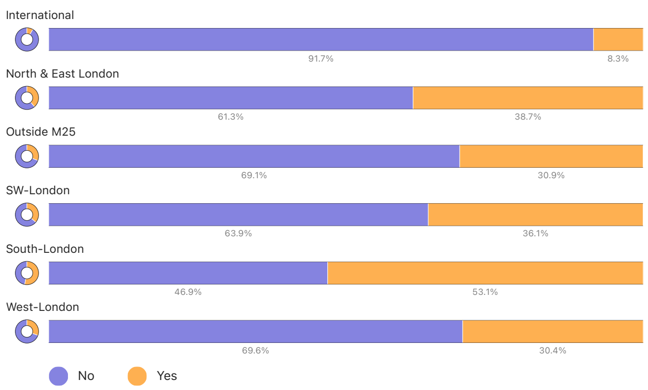
Where outside London are visitors from this region looking for a school?



Overview

- Region includes boroughs with the greatest density of housing in the UK, but also has Rural Residents living inside the M25 (Epping Forest).
- North & East London families at the show had the most older children, and were open minded about boarding, co-education and school location.
- Approaches to feeder schools, Good Schools Guide, Google and Facebook were how we reached these parents.
- 8.7% of North & East London parents had visited the show before - the smallest percentage of repeat visits.
- Like South East Londoners the most disrupted by the march on Saturday. Most came on Sunday this year.

Regions compared:
04 Information about bursaries



- Overall 37% of families indicated that they would like information about bursaries.
- South Londoners are the most likely to be looking for a bursary, international families are the least likely.
- Within the capital, South West and West Londoners are the least in need of fee-assistance.

Some homes of 2023 visitors who live in North & East London

This region includes boroughs with the greatest density of housing in the UK, alongside some of the UK's wealthiest areas

It even includes a small group of rural residents living inside the M25 (Epping Forest).

David Smith

Inflation still feels very high but it will come down — and here's why

Browsing in a well-known high street chain the other day — you can never have enough socks — I was struck by how much prices had gone up, even compared with a few months ago. So I checked. Sure enough, as clothing retailers brought in their autumn ranges, they sneaked through some quite hefty price rises.

Clothing prices rose by 3.2 per cent in September, official figures show, following a 1.6 per cent rise in August. Both of these increases exceeded those of a year earlier, where the monthly figures were 3.1 per cent and 1.1 per cent respectively. Nobody appears to have told clothing retailers that inflation is meant to be falling.

Thus, clothing is one of those high-inflation elements of spending, with inflation in the sector running at an annual rate of more than 7 per cent, and a bigger rise in prices over the past two years than in the whole of the 2010s.

Food is in a similar position. Prices are more than 12 per cent higher than last year. An unofficial measure from the British Retail Consortium and AC Nielsen suggests that food price inflation dropped from 9.9 per cent in September to 8.8 per cent in October. That is still high. In the case of food, there has been a bigger rise over the past two years on the official figures — 28 per cent — than in the previous 13 years.

I mention these things not to encourage the Bank of England's monetary policy committee to raise interest rates again tomorrow. Markets do not expect an increase in rates, and nothing has changed since the Bank paused its rate rises in September to persuade a majority on the MPC to increase again now.

Rather, it is to make a couple of points. The first is that the reality for many people is still one of rising prices. Visible prices, such as those for food, clothing, petrol and diesel and insurance, are still rising. When the big fall in inflation comes in two weeks' time, it will be largely because of favourable comparisons between this year's domestic energy prices and those of a year ago.

Lower energy prices are welcome, of course, but for most households stripping out the various elements of government support which were provided at the time of peak prices is fearsomely complex. The complexity means that lower household energy bills are almost a price reduction by stealth.

People still think they are in the middle of a cost of living squeeze, which is one reason why the closely watched GfK index of consumer confidence has just recorded a nine-point fall and remains very weak.

For that reason, while halving inflation from its 10.8 per cent average in the fourth quarter of last year would mean that one of Rishi Sunak's five pledges had been met — perhaps the only one — the government would be wise not to crow too loudly about it. For most people, inflation remains a reality.

The second point is to ask the question of how inflation will come down, if it is indeed the case that the Bank is finished with rate rises. There are a few routes through which this will occur.

Much of the impact of the 14 rate rises we saw between December 2021 and August this year has yet to feed through. Of the roughly 8.5 million UK households with mortgages, just over half have faced additional payments so far. Of those yet to face higher monthly payments, many will see substantial rises.

This is not the only lagged effect of higher interest rates yet to come through. For companies, higher rates are biting but will bite harder. The fall in employment and job vacancies coming through is one. A sharp rise in the number of businesses in what the insolvency specialist Begbies Traynor describes as "critical financial distress" is another. It attributes this to the end of "the era of cheap money".

Clothing prices are doing a good job of disguising inflation's fall

What might be described as the monetary pipeline is also pointing firmly downwards. Money and credit figures released by the Bank earlier this week were very weak. Money supply figures, which 40 years ago guided UK economic policy, showed a sharp fall, with the M4 measure of money down by 4.2 per cent on a year earlier, which is highly unusual. Another money supply measure, known as "Divisia" money, showed an even sharper fall.

The lagged effects of higher interest rates will bear down on inflation over the next 12 months and so will another increase in the cost of borrowing, coming through from higher government bond yields. This is a problem for the government, which must fund its debt, but also for household and business borrowers. Even as Bank rate has been held since August, long-dated gilt yields have gone up.

Finally, the global economic environment is weak and will probably be made weaker by events in the Middle East. This is first and foremost a human tragedy triggered by vicious terrorism, but will add to the mood of uncertainty. Though it is easy to draw comparisons with the Yom Kippur war of 50 years ago, so far there has been a muted response in energy markets and oil prices at the time of writing are a little lower than they were a month ago.

Fears of the conflict spreading to other parts of the region will persist, however, and add to the expectation of a very subdued outlook for the world economy. The IMF, in its latest forecast, predicted weaker growth next year than this.

UK growth, meanwhile, is set to remain insipid, with a consensus forecast of 0.4 per cent growth in 2024, similar to this year, and with a few 2024 recession predictions among the Treasury's latest compilation of independent forecasts. Weak growth will reduce businesses' pricing power. Inflation has proved stubborn, but it will come down.

David Smith is Economics Editor of The Sunday Times
david.smith@sunday-times.co.uk

Katie Prescott

Ignore the critics — stellar guest list shows AI summit is being taken seriously

Bletchley Park may have been the perfect place to conceal codebreakers in the 1940s but the sprawl of little huts is not ideal as a location to convene large groups.

While there are some functional meeting rooms, other areas are preserved in aspic. In the library, typewriters sit on mahogany desks and a wireless broadcasts Churchill's tub-thumping speeches.

To host the government's inaugural AI safety summit, temporary buildings have had to be thrown up. Despite it being the place where Alan Turing, a founding father of computer science, and a team of extraordinary people helped to win the war, some UK tech leaders grumble that it is not an appropriate venue. As one academic put it sharply: "Surely we have done other things in science and technology since then?"

'It's striking the Online Safety Bill has only just come into force'

Fair cop. But it is quite fun. While the event has come in for negative murmuring, much of it is unfair. It been referred to as a jamboree, a glorified photoshoot. Its focus on the dangers of the technology is another criticism, but the stonking guest list of business and political leaders shows it is being taken seriously.

The UK is a global leader in AI and is trying to take a lead here. Of course, it can't tackle everything in one go. Policymakers have learnt the hard way, from previous advances in technology, that it is important to get in on the act early. It is striking, for example, that the Online Safety Bill has only just come into force, decades after the birth of social media.

That's not to say there aren't challenges with such a shindig. Can governments really wrest the power from the Big Tech companies that back these "start-up" AI businesses? Microsoft has put $10 billion into OpenAI; Google and Amazon have pledged $6 billion to Anthropic; and DeepMind is owned by Google.

There will undoubtedly be a struggle to reach a consensus. There are huge philosophical schisms within the AI sector, all fighting for their own agendas, and that's before you get to academics and governments. This division broadly lies between those who believe the technology should be feared and those who think this is fear-mongering.

Yann LeCun, chief AI scientist at Meta, known as a godfather of the technology, sits in the latter camp. He fired the first bazooka on Twitter at the weekend, accusing the top AI bosses — Sam Altman of OpenAI, Dario Amodei of Anthropic and Demis Hassabis of DeepMind — of "massive corporate lobbying" aimed at encouraging control of the technology that would quash open source systems such as Meta's.

The other side says the threat from the tech is real and would like to see regulation so that, they argue, companies are not marking their own homework and can draw on government expertise in areas such as national security. Things will get heated.

Away from the noise at Bletchley, the biggest news in AI regulation this week came from the other side of the Atlantic, where President Biden is also taking "a lead".

He published details of a far-reaching executive order on the development and use of the technology to ensure that the US continues "to lead the way in innovation and competition". An attempt to steal the UK's thunder? Not according to ministers here, who say it was all globally co-ordinated. Who knows who is in the lead at this stage, but does it matter?

Since the US is where most of the big AI companies are based, this directive that bypasses Congress feels momentous. While legislation is still required, the White House battleship will inevitably spur on momentum for the UK's summit, not to mention the other initiatives that are sprouting like mushrooms.

In a rather odd press release late on Monday, Michelle Donelan, the technology secretary, announced that Bletchley will go on to host an AI exhibition after the summit. The event and its global counterparts look set to leave a greater legacy than a mere museum piece.

Katie Prescott is Technology Business Editor of The Times

PLAN YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE

Considering an independent school education for your child?

Two hours at the Independent Schools Show could transform your child's future.

Saturday 11 November - Sunday 12 November
Battersea Park, SW8 4NW

Independent SCHOOLS Show

Family tickets £15 Advance tickets are FREE
SchoolsShow.co.uk

Think Academy · THE SUNDAY TIMES · THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE · TATLER · Evening Standard

One of six ISS adverts in the The Times - our new media partner.
This year's 'Plan your child's future' campaign ran in The Evening Standard, Tatler, First News, Nappy Valley, School House and the BSA for three months before the show, helping us to reach a wider audience of South East parents in 2023.

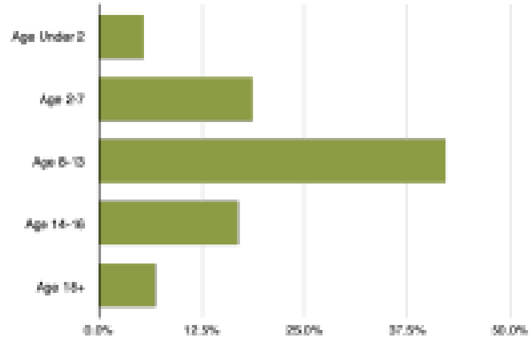
OUTSIDE THE M25

22% of our 2023 visitors

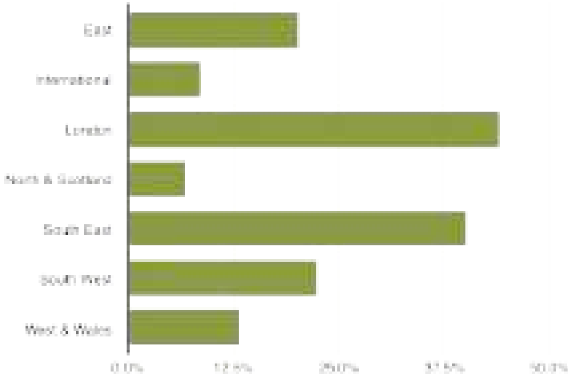
Top areas:

- Buckinghamshire
- Thurrock
- Elmbridge
- Dartford
- Medway
- Oxford
- Wokingham
- Chesham

Age of children



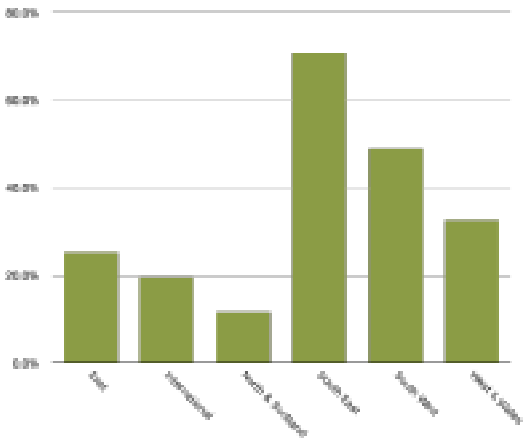
Where are these visitors looking for a school?



Overview

- Most come from an outer ring around the M25, but the show also attracts families from across the UK, many of whom are relocating to the South East.
- These families are keen 'researchers' - information sites: GSG, ISS Parent Forums, Google all key sources of visitor traffic. Muddy Stilettos a key source.
- Strongly committed to the sector, the most likely to stay all day and attend multiple talks.
- This is the least diverse group.
- Most likely UK families to want boarding, but also the second most likely group to be looking for fee-assistance.

Schools outside London
Locations of parents' school searches



- 42% of parents at the show are looking for schools in multiple locations.
- 15% are looking at more than three locations.
- Parents are looking across the UK. The South East was most popular for re-locators planning to commute.
- A significant group (20%) are considering schools outside the UK.

Some homes of 2023 visitors who live outside the M25

Visitors in this category have a range of incomes.

Rural, Urban and Suburban families, living in manor houses, new estates, cottages.

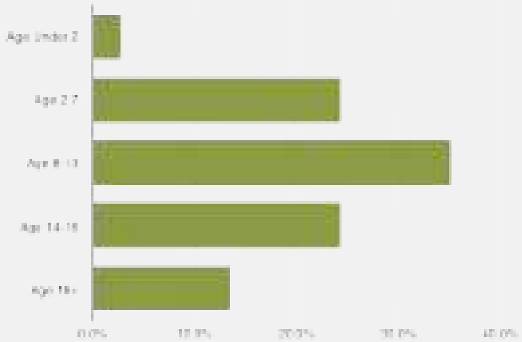
INTERNATIONAL FAMILIES

3% of our 2023 visitors

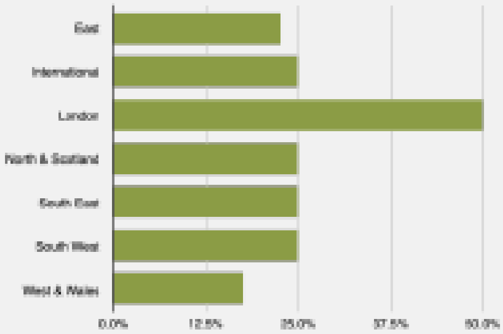
Top countries:

- Spain
- Ireland
- USA
- Canada
- Switzerland

Age of children



Where are our international visitors looking for a school?



Overview

- A small but important group.
- Families looking for UK boarding and to relocate to the UK.
- This is an easy group to misread:
    - Most likely to want boarding, but also open to day schools.
    - Least likely to need fee-assistance.
    - But also least committed to the sector and very likely to be considering state schools.

Regions compared:
06 Considering sixth form boarding

- As their children get older, ISS visitors are far more likely to consider boarding.
- Only 25% of West Londoners are sure they want a day sixth form for their teenager.
- 55.6% of visitors from South West London were sure they wanted a boarding place for sixth form.
- 83% of international families looking for sixth form places want boarding.

Some homes of visitors who live outside the UK

Visitors this year included families from urban Madrid, rural Ireland and Texas suburbia.

All visitors were given a daily talks programme, showing the location of theatres and listing all the speakers

TALKS PROGRAMME

Saturday November 11

Workshop Theatres

LONDON CHOICES

Get the key admissions information

- 10:30 Wetherby Preparatory School
- 10:50 Park Hill
- 11:10 London Park Schools
- 11:30 Eaton Square School
- 11:50 Knightsbridge School
- 12:10 St James Preparatory School & Nursery
- 12:30 Kew Green Preparatory School
- 12:50 Maida Vale School
- 13:10 DLD College
- 13:30 Minerva's Virtual Academy
- 13:50 The Lyceum School
- 14:10 King's College School, Wimbledon
- 14:30 St Paul's School
- 14:50 St Paul's Girls School
- 15:10 Marymount London
- 15:30 Alleyn's School
- 15:50 Queen's Gate School
- 16:10 Streatham & Clapham High School GDST

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Evening Standard

BURSARY & SCHOLARSHIPS PAVILION

Hear about the availability of fee assistance

- 10:30 Aysgarth School
- 10:45 Notre Dame School
- 11:00 Sherborne School & Sherborne Girls School
- 11:15 Bryanston School
- 11:30 DLD College
- 11:45 Reigate Grammar
- 12:00 St Edward's, Oxford
- 12:15 St Mary's School, Cambridge
- 12:30 The Downs
- 12:45 Malvern College
- 13:00 Queen Ethelburga's
- 13:15 Roedean School
- 13:30 Christ's Hospital
- 13:45 St Paul's School
- 14:00 St Paul's Girls School
- 14:15 The Duke of York Royal Military School
- 14:30 Knightsbridge School
- 14:45 Queen's Gate School
- 15:00 Millfield School
- 15:15 St Felix
- 15:30 Cranleigh School & Cranleigh Prep School
- 15:45 King's College School, Wimbledon

SUPPORTED BY

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

Mezzanine Theatres

THINK ACADEMY THEATRE PARENT BRIEFINGS

11:00 Find the right school for your child (how to spend 2 hours at the show)
- Ben Evans, Head, Windlesham House School
- Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Headmaster, Stowe School

11:45 Senior school transition: how to prepare for the intense competition at 11+
- Jason Zhou, Director, Think Academy
- Harry Cobb, Director, Bonas MacFarlane

12:30 Making access to independent schools and their bursaries fair
- Alastair Chirnside, Warden, St Edward's Oxford
- Elaine Cunningham-Walker, MD, GMA Group

13:15 Relocation, relocation, relocation - moving out of the city
- Hero Brown, Founder, Muddy Stilettos
- Ceri Jones, Headmaster, Caterham
- Andy Nuttall, Headmaster, The Downs
- Catherine Hutton, Director, Hutton Bubear

14:00 Single sex v Co-ed
- Dr Ruth Sullivan, Head, Sherborne Girls
- Jesse R Elzinga, Headmaster, Sevenoaks School
- Simon Balderson, Deputy Head, Westonbirt School

14:45 Moving your child from a state school - when and how to switch systems?
- Tom Rogerson, Headmaster, Cottesmore School
- Irfan Latif, Principal, DLD College
- Charles Bonas, Founder, Bonas MacFarlane

15:30 Who thrives in a highly academic senior school?
- Dr Andy Mayfield, Director of Admissions, St Paul's School

SUPPORTED BY

Think Academy

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE FORUM

11:00 North London - finding the right school for your child
- Camilla Smiley, Consultant, The Good Schools Guide
- Grace Moody-Stuart, Director, The Good Schools Guide
- Jenny Brown, Head, City of London School for Girls
- Adam Pettitt, Head, Highgate School

12:00 When & why would you choose boarding?
- Janita Clamp, Commissioning Editor, The Good Schools Guide
- Jacqueline Simpson, Consultant, The Good Schools Guide
- Emma Goldsmith, Head, The Dragon
- Dominic Oliver, Head Master, Lancing College
- Clement Donegan, Senior Deputy Head, Bryanston School

14:00 How are family finances assessed for a bursary?
- Grace Moody-Stuart, Director, The Good Schools Guide
- Camilla Smiley, Scholarship & Bursary Consultant, The Good Schools Guide
- Luke Walters, Deputy Head, Christ's Hospital
- Dr Philippa Davies, Harrow School

15:00 South West London - finding the right school for your child
- Janita Clamp, Commissioning Editor, The Good Schools Guide
- Susannah Cannell, Consultant, The Good Schools Guide
- Chris Wolsey, Headmaster, Ibstock Place
- Ted Lougher, Headmaster, King's College Junior School
- Cathy Ellott, Head, Streatham & Clapham High School - GDST

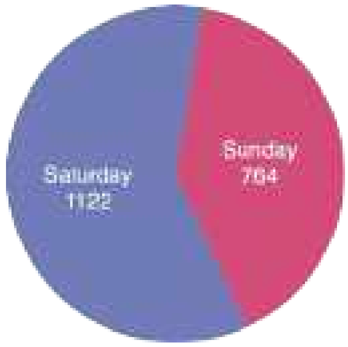
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Education Theatres

With four stages, this year was our most ambitious content programme yet. 1886 visitors attended over 80 talks - an average audience size of 23.6.

The main stages performed well - with Good Schools Guide Forum and Think Academy Theatre both often at capacity. Both stages now have well-developed and distinct formats.

London Choices and Bursary & Scholarships stages need a rethink. Mornings were very quiet. Both stages were busier in the afternoons, with 'big name' London schools attracting large audiences.



Number of visitors who attended talks each day

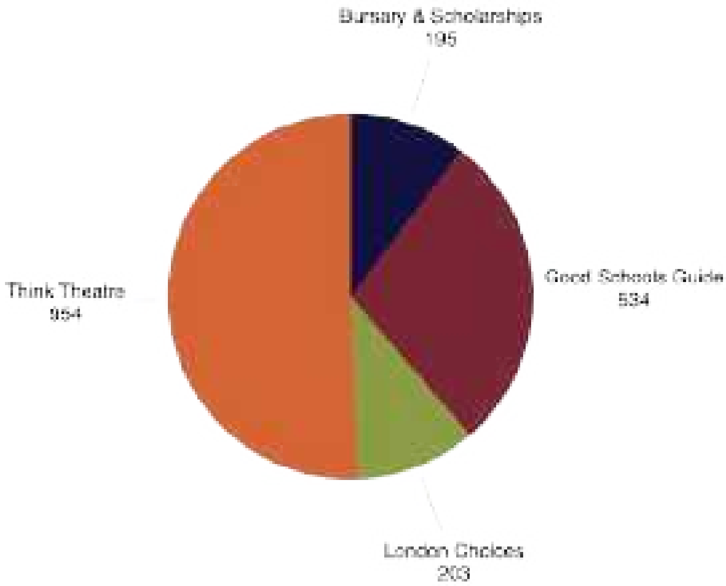
Think Academy Theatre, Good Schools Guide Forum

The mean audience in the two main stage theatres this year was 71 people, up from 59 in 2022.

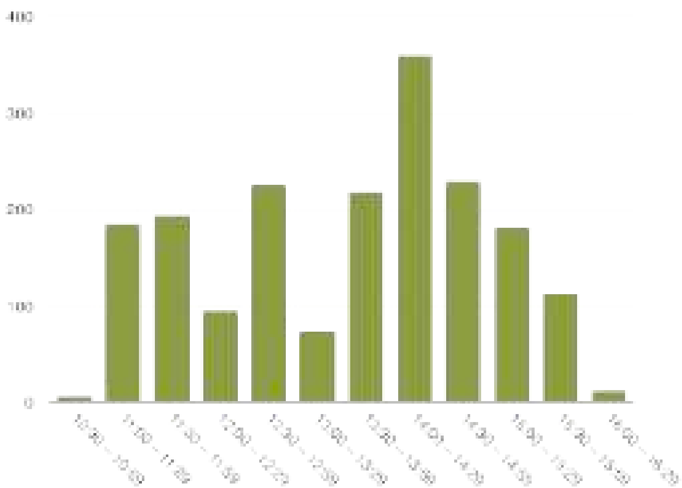
- The most popular start time this year was 14:00. Both theatres were busy until 4pm.
- Think Theatre talks repeated the 'In Conversation' format, focussed into crisp 30 minute parent briefings.

London Choices, Bursary & Scholarships

- 195 parents attended 22 talks in the Bursary & Scholarships Pavilion - reflecting the significant reduction of parents on Saturday seeking bursaries this year.
- 203 parents attended talks in the London Choices zone.



Number of visitors who attended talks in each theatre.



Number of visitors attending talks (by start time)

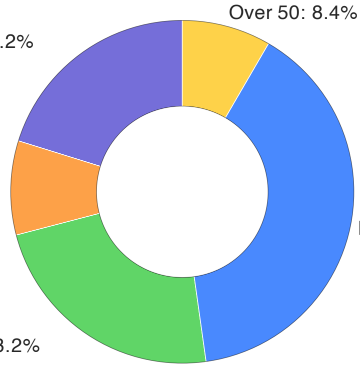
Agents

For the fourth time we had an agent's ticket. Registered agents were asked to supply references, and their conduct was regulated via agent mailings and an online handbook.

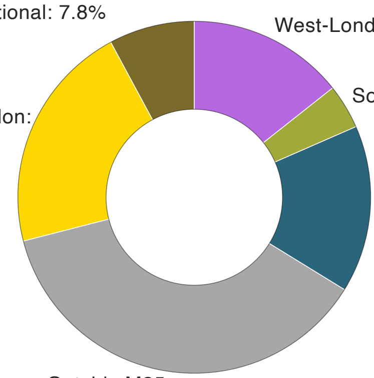
375 agents registered for agents' tickets this year, up 74% on 2022. Far fewer unregistered agents attended the show. All exhibitors were sent a directory of attending agents.

NEW this year: the agents' lounge managed by our agents' co-ordinator, alongside expert advisors from Mishcon de Reya, Cognita and Bennett International to help agents understand international visa regulations and help smaller, new agents to act correctly and build credibility with schools.

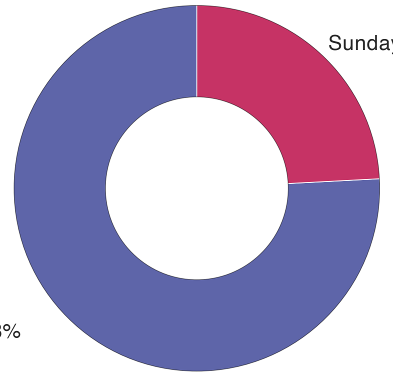
- Many agents are small businesses, but 17% claim to have placed 25+ children in UK independent schools.
- The agent's landing page, plus the ticket booking form in 2023 encouraged more agents than ever to register.
- We asked agents to register early, provide references and information about the size of their business.
- Restrictions on non-registered agents were enforced more strongly. We repeated the traffic light scheme, with schools able to indicate that they did NOT wish to see agents. This has reduced the issue, but not eliminated it, with one exhibitor reporting that they had 10 agents on their stand, despite displaying a red dot.



Agents were asked about #children they have placed in UK

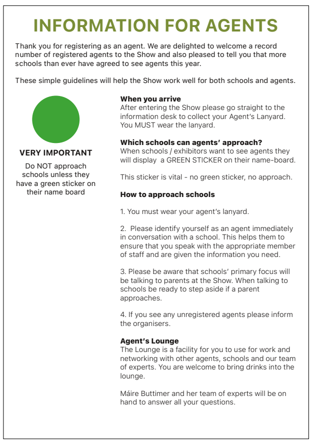


Agents come from all over London, the UK and overseas



Saturday was the busier day for agents

Below: pages from the 2023 agents' pack



INFORMATION FOR AGENTS

Thank you for registering as an agent. We are delighted to welcome a record number of registered agents to the Show and also pleased to tell you that more schools than ever have agreed to see agents this year.

These simple guidelines will help the Show work well for both schools and agents.

VERY IMPORTANT

Do NOT approach schools unless they have a green sticker on their name board

When you arrive
After entering the Show please go straight to the information desk to collect your Agent's Lanyard. You MUST wear the lanyard.

Which schools can agents' approach?
When schools / exhibitors want to see agents they will display a GREEN STICKER on their name-board.

This sticker is vital - no green sticker, no approach.

How to approach schools

1. You must wear your agent's lanyard.

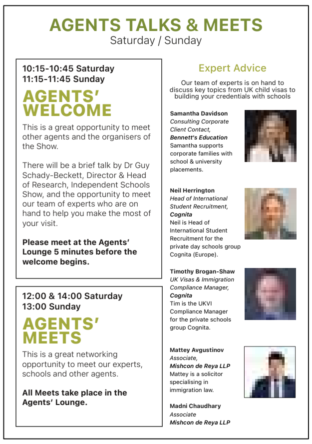
2. Please identify yourself as an agent immediately in conversation with a school. This helps them to ensure that you speak with the appropriate member of staff and are given the information you need.

3. Please be aware that schools' primary focus will be talking to parents at the Show. When talking to schools be ready to step aside if a parent approaches.

4. If you see any unregistered agents please inform the organisers.

Agent's Lounge
The Lounge is a facility for you to use for work and networking with other agents, schools and our team of experts. You are welcome to bring drinks into the lounge.

Máire Buttimer and her team of experts will be on hand to answer all your questions.



AGENTS TALKS & MEETS
Saturday / Sunday

10:15-10:45 Saturday
11:15-11:45 Sunday

AGENTS' WELCOME

This is a great opportunity to meet other agents and the organisers of the Show.

There will be a brief talk by Dr Guy Schady-Beckett, Director & Head of Research, Independent Schools Show, and the opportunity to meet our team of experts who are on hand to help you make the most of your visit.

Please meet at the Agents' Lounge 5 minutes before the welcome begins.

12:00 & 14:00 Saturday
13:00 Sunday

AGENTS' MEETS

This is a great networking opportunity to meet our experts, schools and other agents.

All Meets take place in the Agents' Lounge.

Expert Advice

Our team of experts is on hand to discuss key topics from UK child visas to building your credentials with schools

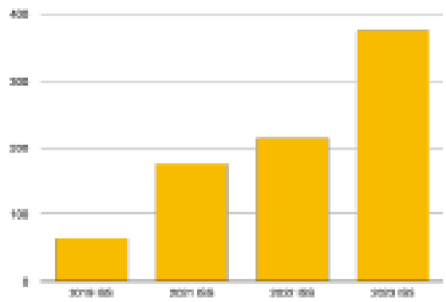
Samantha Davidson
Consulting Corporate Client Contact,
Bennett's Education
Samantha supports corporate families with school & university placements.

Neil Herrington
Head of International Student Recruitment,
Cognita
Neil is Head of International Student Recruitment for the private day schools group Cognita (Europe).

Timothy Brogan-Shaw
UK Visas & Immigration Compliance Manager,
Cognita
Tim is the UKVI Compliance Manager for the private schools group Cognita.

Mattey Avgustinov
Associate,
Mishcon de Reya LLP
Mattey is a solicitor specialising in immigration law.

Madni Chaudhary
Associate
Mishcon de Reya LLP



Agent ticket registrations 2019-2023


Show

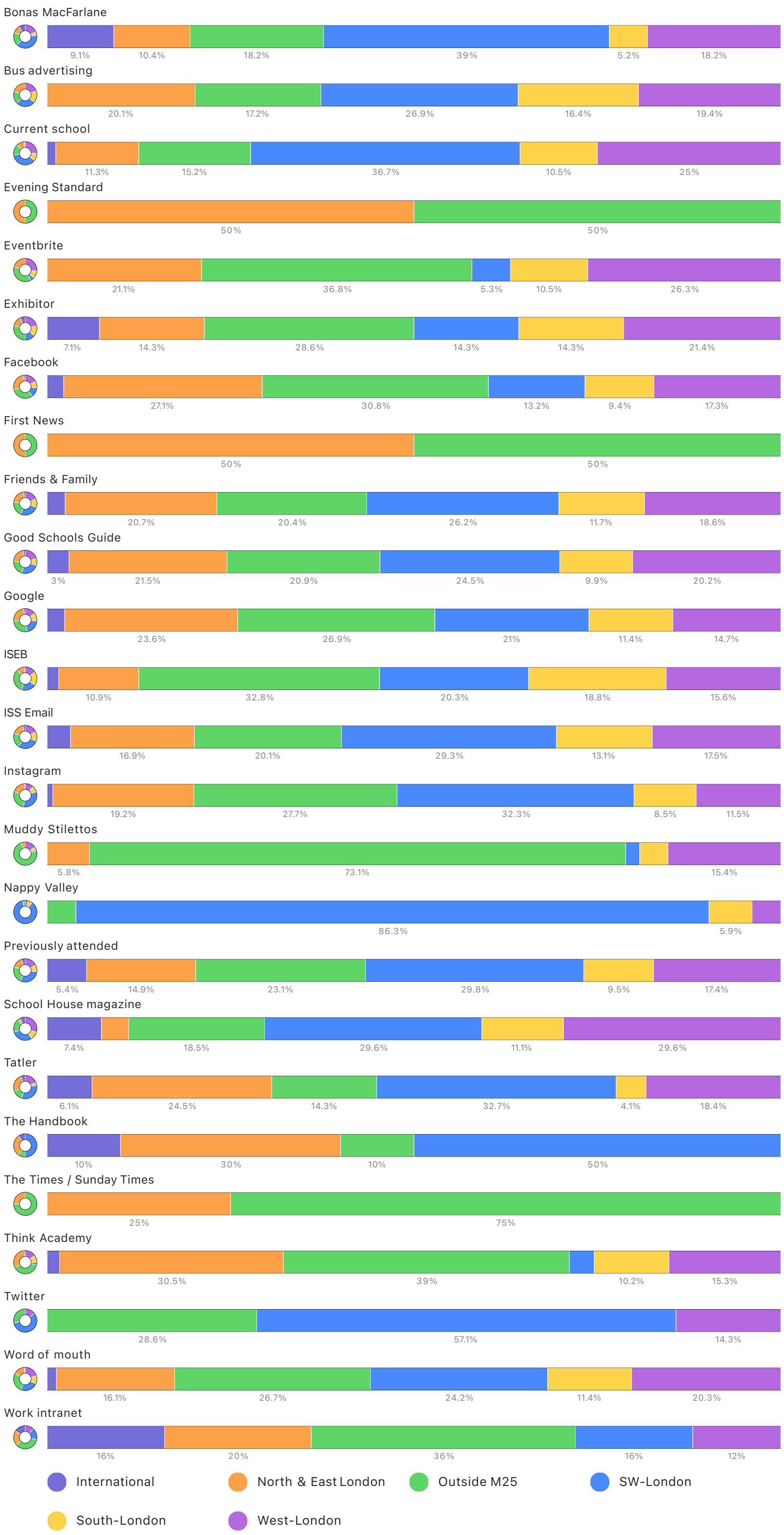

#schoolsshow
BE AWESOME
Reach for
the stars...

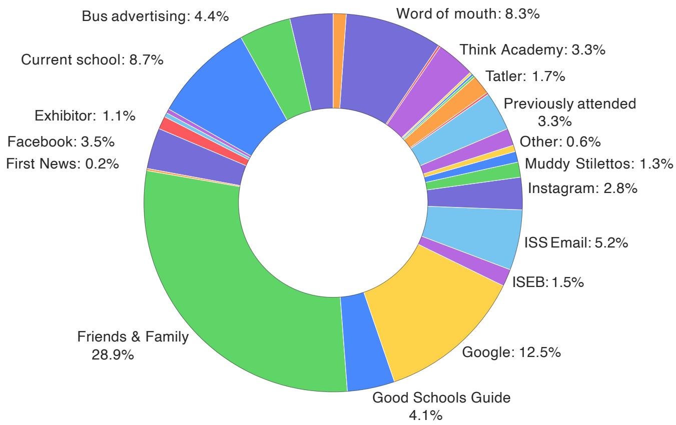
2023 Marketing Campaign

Multi-channel campaign:

- Our mission is to engage two types of families: the most committed and those who are just considering independent schools.
- To do this we run a complex, multi-channel campaign that targets feeder schools as well as parents. As this chart shows, we are acutely aware that each channel reaches different parts of London and different audiences.
- ISS channels performed very strongly again this year. ISS emails to our database of families accounted for 15.4% of attendees. The website integrated tightly with advertising and email campaigns. Exhibitors' school listings on the site performed well in organic Google searches.
- Google advertising complemented the organic search effectively, making Google again the third largest source of visitors.
- Social media is a stable but small source of visitors. Instagram and Facebook are our key channels.
- Bus advertising performed well.
- Media partnerships continue to deepen and perform well (see p24).
- Word-of-mouth continues to dominate in the crucial final weeks.

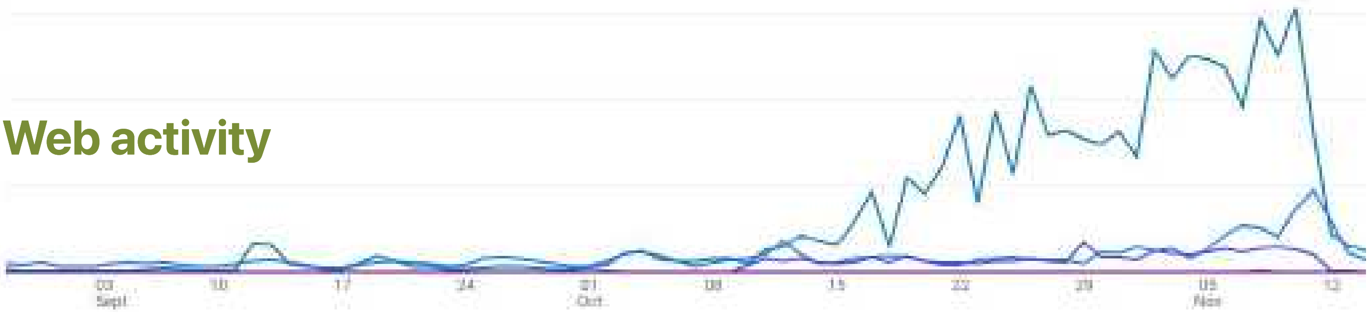
Geographical reach of different marketing channels





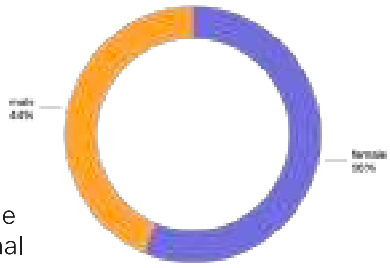
Final week sources of visitors

Web activity



In the three month build up there were:

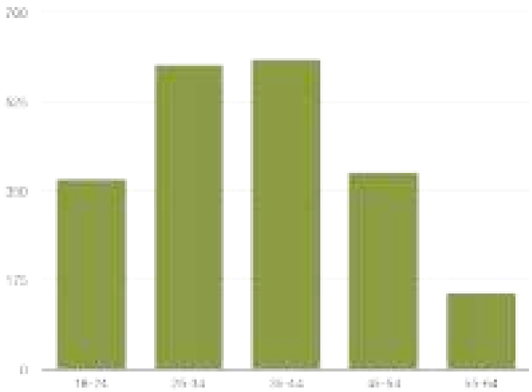
- 35,292 unique users.
- 250,311 visits.
- The Battersea build-up campaign produced the largest spikes, but the Hurlingham Fair and the international shows generated spikes of traffic throughout the year.



Gender of website visitors 2023

Online demographics

- This year website visits from mothers (56%) exceeded fathers (44%), matching long term trends.
- 75.3% of website visitors were aged from 25-54.

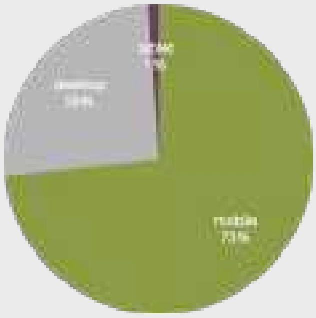


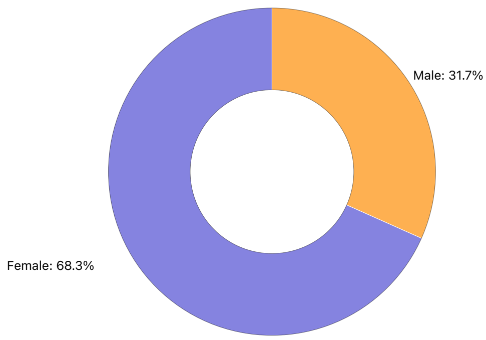
Age of website visitors 2023

Mobile use

Mobile now represents 73% of all traffic on the Show’s website. Indicative of the visitors’ wealth, Apple iPhone usage continues to rise - now 68.7% of mobile traffic.

- The vast majority of first visits and ticket registrations take place on phones.
- Longer fact-finding visits and video catch-ups still take place on tablets, laptops and desktops.





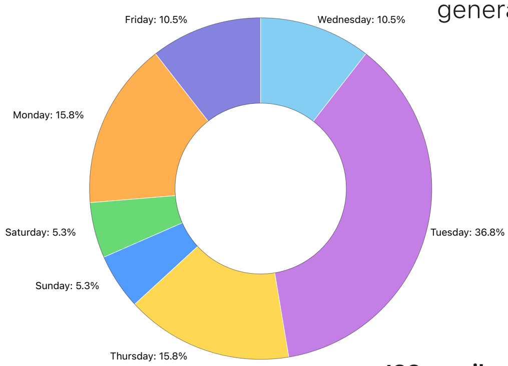
Gender distribution of checked in ticket holders 2023

- As in previous years, in 2023 mothers were far more likely to book tickets (68.3%), but generally both parents attend.

ISS Emails

In 2023 ISS sent:

- 290,095 emails to parents, feeder schools and agents.
- Open rate was 38.2%, up from 37% in 2022.
- 89.4% of emails were sent during the week - over the show weekend ISS emails were also sent on Saturday and Sunday.



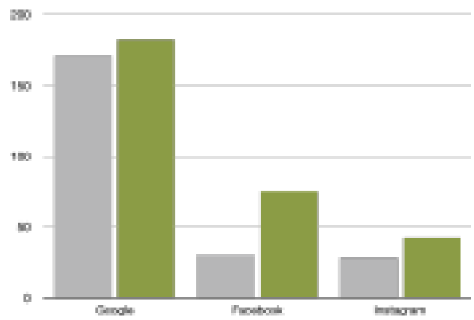
ISS email send days

Mailing Lists

Over the last 12 months ISS’s email mailing lists have grown to 105,205.

Social Media & online advertising

This year there was a 55% rise in visitors who heard about the show from social sources, principally from Facebook and Instagram campaigns, supported by social media and Google advertising.



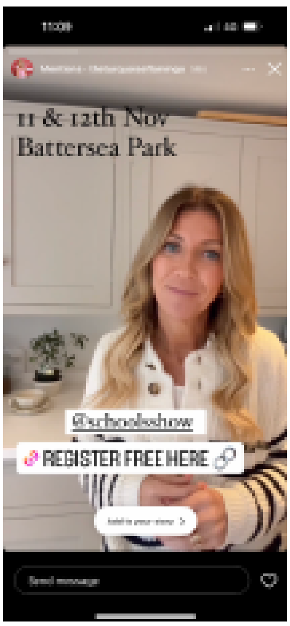
- Visitors who heard about the event from Facebook rose 150%.
- Visitors who heard about the event from Instagram rose 50%.
- Google was the largest source of visitors.

Social posts generate web traffic, and help produce the high 'word of mouth' referrals in the final weeks of the build up.

- Instagram followers rose 53% from Nov 2022- Nov 2023 (3930 to 6010)
- Instagram / Facebook campaign: 25 posts, 245 stories, with far more reels and short engaging content featuring heads, current students and advice given in talks from previous shows.

In the month of November in the final two week build up ISS organically reached 10.1K (+54.2%); of whom 571 engaged (+93.8%).

The highest viewed Insta Reel had 7,327 views organically.



Gleanin

For the second year a Gleanin link was sent to all speakers and exhibitors two weeks before the Show, to share their attendance with their unique audiences.

With personalised images, plus stand number or timings of talks, Gleanin linked directly to our ticket page.

The result:

- 77 exhibitors & speakers shared;
- Generating 524 clicks to our tickets page.

Most active sharers:

Partnerships

We have built long-term relationships with our sponsors and media partners.

Deep involvement

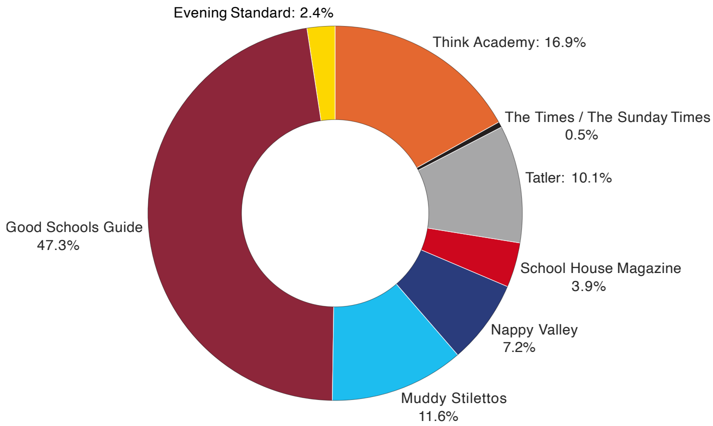
- Our NEW headline partner, *Think Academy UK* built on the partnership we began developing at the Summer Fair in May.
- For ISS Think Academy promoted the show to their clients, quickly becoming our second most effective partnership.
- Think Academy also supported a programme of talks at Battersea.

Above, Think Academy stage

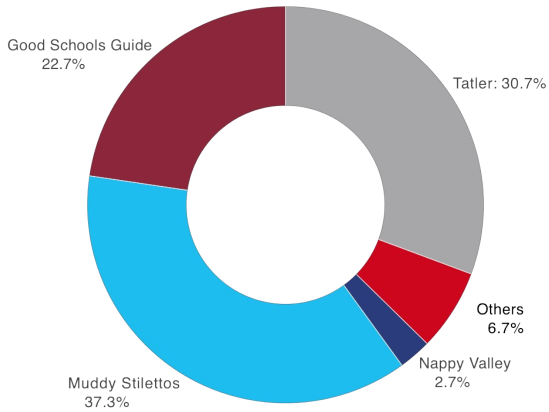
- Our NEW media partner this year, *The Times & The Sunday Times* came on board in late October with a blizzard of press advertising that helped drive visitors to attend the show, helping drive attendance from ticket holders who live outside the M25.
- *Muddy Stilettos* and *Tatler* both grew their visitor numbers this year.
- *Tatler*, our oldest partner, was again highly effective at reaching parents in central London and outside the M25. This year all Tatler readers registered online, rather than having a paper ticket.
- This year *Muddy Stilettos,* who joined us as a partner two weeks before the last show, provides a new channel to reach parents outside the M25. At the show they met readers and schools, running a popular champagne bar, and hosting two talks on relocation and their school awards.

The Good Schools Guide

- The *Good Schools Guide Forum* was an even larger feature this year. Hosted by GSG's editors, consultants and featuring heads of schools, the Forum's events were busy.
- GSG was yet again the most successful media partnership - particularly effective at reaching information hungry urban professionals in North & East and West London.



Above: partners' ticket registrations by source
Below: VIP ticket registrations by source



- Our partnership programmes produce some of the highest quality and most engaged visitors at the show.
- 25% of VIP ticket holders heard about the show from one of our partners.

TATLER

THE TIMES

THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE

Think Academy

Evening Standard

Muddy Stilettos

NappyValleyNet

SCHOOL HOUSE

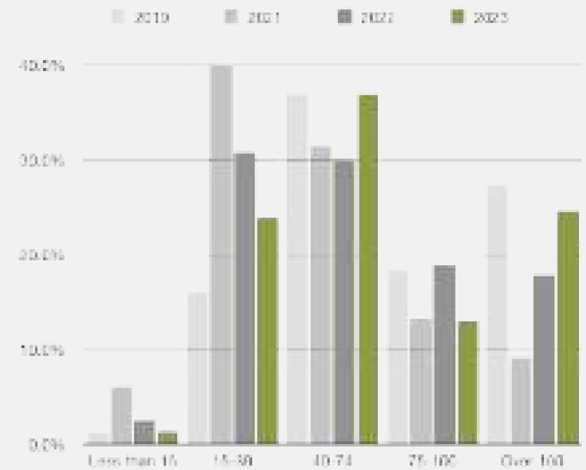
Exhibitor Feedback

84 exhibitors took part in our 9th feedback survey. Many of you commented that this was a very professionally run show.

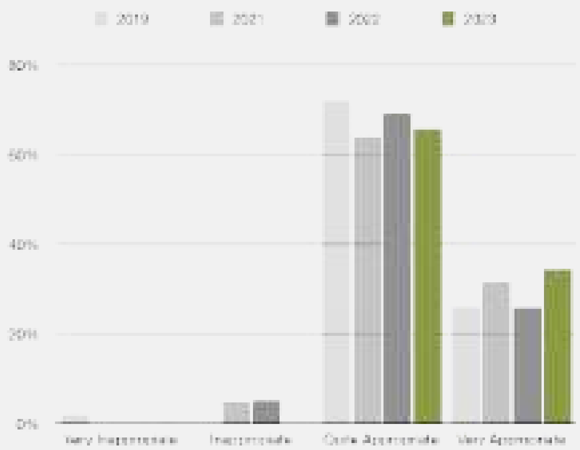
Visitors / Leads

2023 broke all records for # appropriate leads

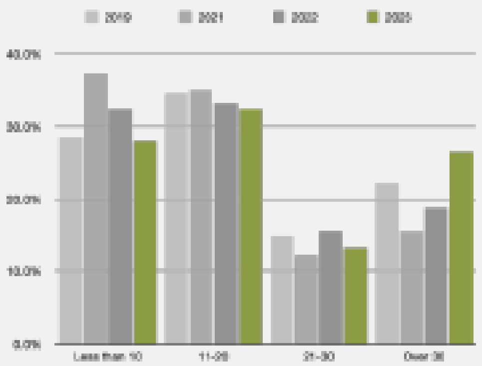
Exhibitors reported strong visitor numbers



Record breaking visitor quality



Highest ever # positive leads



Best things:

"Support and help from your staff all day."

"We felt that parents were more informed this year"

"We liked the fact that there were so many interactive stands for children this year. "

"Great to meet so many prospective families"

Your feedback

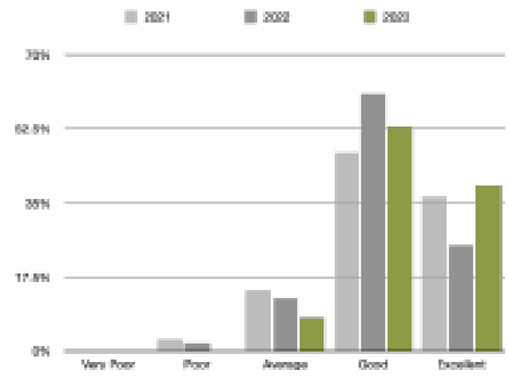
What you asked us to improve in 2022:

- New concepts for introducing boarding to visitors, especially children.
- Earlier communication about the talks.
- Fewer sales people (not agents).
- Smaller panels on the GSG stage.
- Rethink format of London Choices talks. **More still to do.**
- Signage from the Battersea Power Power Station tube. **More still to do.**

What you would like us to improve this year

- Catering - long queues and the menu this year were not popular.
- You would like more information about the new Friday / Saturday format.
- Bursary & Scholarships and London Choices stage programmes did not run as planned: new format to reduce the number of talks and devise new panels to echo the success of the front stages.

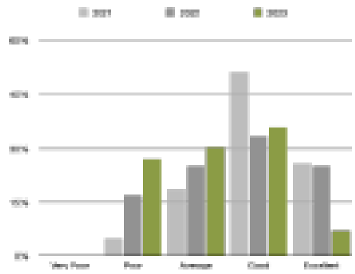
Your ratings



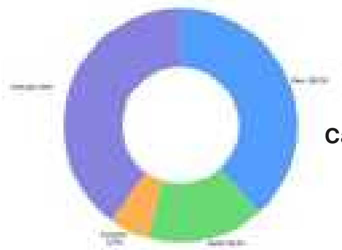
Symbiosis - the stand builders

Café & Catering

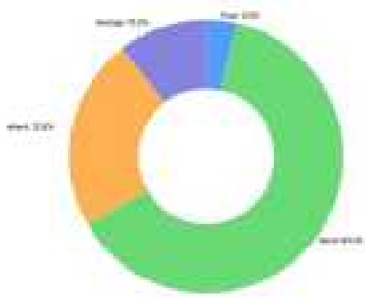
The ratings for Roll Baby, the café, were weaker this year. A significant group of you thought it expensive, queues were too long, and some of you didn't like the menu.



Café: quality

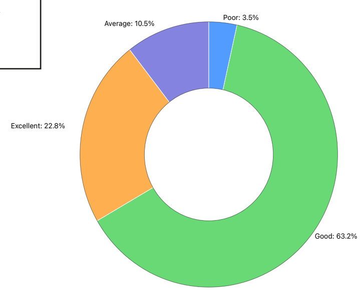


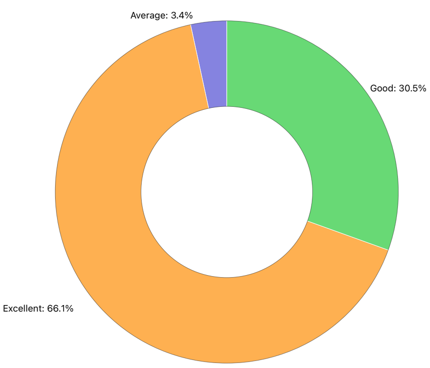
Café: Value for money



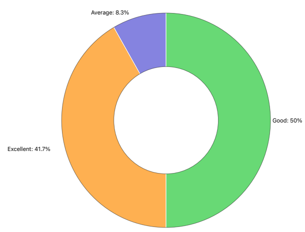
Build up communication overall

Balance of stands & theatres

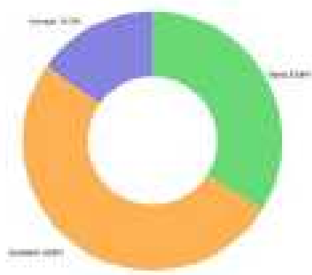




ISS Professionalism



Cleanliness of the venue

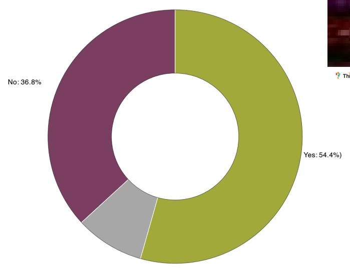


Build up communication talks programme

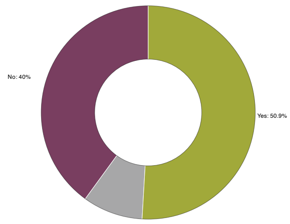
First feedback on our 2024 plans

Informing exhibitors

54.4% saw our flyer

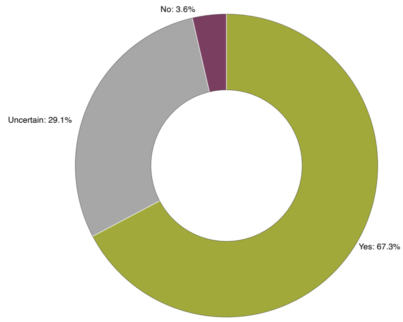


50.9% spoke with a member of our team

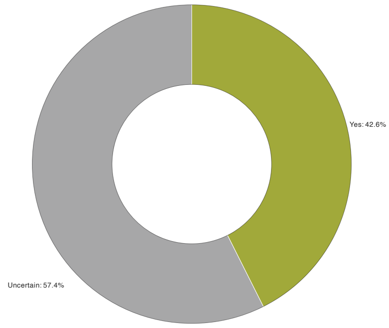


94.6% would like further information about the plans for 2024

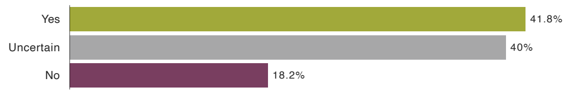
Your initial feedback



67.3% like our 2024 plan to open the Show on Friday evening & extended Saturday (no Sunday)



42.8% like the sound of the new floor plan, no-one against, 57.2% need to hear more



41.8% like the idea of getting rid of the printed Show Guide, but a significant group (18.2%) do not

Thank you!

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