LINCOLNSHIRE 11+ PARENT PREPARATION GUIDE

VERBAL REASONING - NON-VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE PAPERS - EXAM TECHNIQUE

PLANNING ASSUMPTION

2 hours of focused preparation per week

INDICATIVE PREPARATION RANGES BASED ON 2 HOURS PER WEEK

Starting point	Estimated preparation time
Strong starting point	Approx. 20–28 weeks
Secure/average starting point	Approx. 28–38 weeks
Developing starting point	Approx. 38–50 weeks
Very limited prior preparation	Approx. 45–60+ weeks

These are broad planning estimates, not guarantees. A diagnostic assessment should be used to set an individual programme.

This guide helps parents estimate how long a child may need to prepare across the topic areas within the Mr James Maths Tuition scheme of work, while also allowing time for consolidation, timed practice, full practice papers and examination technique.

1. HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Eleven-plus preparation is not simply a matter of teaching every question type once. A child also needs repeated retrieval, mixed practice, speed, accuracy, confidence under time pressure and familiarity with full-paper conditions. For that reason, the estimates below deliberately include time for revisiting earlier skills and completing practice papers.

> This preparation guide should be read alongside the Lincolnshire 11+ Information Guide for Parents. Both guides use the same principle: preparation should be matched to the individual child and informed by diagnostic evidence and ongoing progress.

- 2 hours per week is treated as focused preparation time. This may be one 2-hour session or two 1-hour sessions.
- The Mr James Maths Tuition scheme used for this guide comprises 51 topic areas: 34 Verbal Reasoning topics and 17 Non-Verbal Reasoning topics. Other schemes may organise or group the same underlying skills differently.
- Some topics can be introduced together; others need several revisits before they become secure.
- Vocabulary development should continue throughout the programme rather than being taught only once.
- Full timed papers should become increasingly important in the final phase of preparation.

A realistic overall timescale

Starting profile	Estimated weeks	Approx. hours	Typical interpretation
Strong	20–28	40–56	Many skills already secure; focus on gaps, speed and papers.
Secure / average	28–38	56–76	Good general foundation but several unfamiliar or inconsistent areas.
Developing	38–50	76–100	Requires systematic teaching plus substantial consolidation.
Early stage	45–60+	90–120+	Needs broad skill-building, vocabulary work and gradual timed practice.

SUGGESTED ALLOCATION OF PREPARATION TIME

Where a pupil has a broadly secure starting point, approximately 28–38 weeks at 2 hours per week may provide a useful planning framework. The actual preparation period should be informed by diagnostic assessment and ongoing progress, while protecting sufficient time for practice-paper work and exam technique.

Area	Indicative share	Purpose
Verbal Reasoning	40–45%	Question types, vocabulary, codes, sequences and language skills
Non-Verbal Reasoning	25–30%	Pattern recognition, spatial reasoning, 2D/3D skills and codes
Mixed consolidation	10–15%	Interleaving, retrieval and correction of recurring errors
Timed sections & exam technique	10%	Pacing, skipping/returning, accuracy checks and decision-making
Full practice papers & review	10–15%	Stamina, timing, score tracking and targeted follow-up

IMPORTANT NOTE ON TOPIC NUMBERS

The 51 topic areas referenced in this guide reflect the scheme of work used by Mr James Maths Tuition. They should not be interpreted as a universal or definitive count of Lincolnshire 11+ topics. Other tutors, parents and preparation providers may use different schemes of work. In some schemes, individual skills may be divided into shorter or more specific sections, while in others several related skills may be grouped together under a single topic heading. As a result, another programme may appear to contain more or fewer topics without necessarily covering more or less examination content. The preparation times in this guide are therefore based on the Mr James Maths Tuition scheme and should be treated as indicative rather than as a direct comparison with the number of topics used by another provider.

2. VERBAL REASONING: TOPIC COVERAGE

The Mr James Maths Tuition scheme used for this guide contains 34 Verbal Reasoning topic areas. The estimates below represent teaching plus initial practice. They should not be added mechanically, because related topics can be grouped and revisited together. Other schemes may divide or combine these skills differently.

Logic — 3–5 weeks
Topics: Statement Logic, Deductions, Number Logic, Letter Logic.

Numbers & Algebra — 2–4 weeks
Topics: Find the Calculation, Balance the Equation, Substitutions.

Reordering — 1–2 weeks
Topics: Rearrange Words, Rearrange Letters.

Codes — 3–4 weeks
Topics: Letter Pairs, Letter Codes, Number Codes, Symbol Codes.

Sequences — 2–3 weeks
Topics: Number Sequences, Letter Sequences, Ordering Words.

Vocabulary — Ongoing; 5–8 focused weeks
Topics: Synonyms, Odd Ones Out, Homographs, Antonyms, Spot the Connection, Definitions, Jumbled Sentences. Vocabulary is cumulative and is best developed little and often across the whole programme. Reading, word meaning, synonyms/antonyms and contextual use should continue alongside other topics.

Building Words — 3–5 weeks
Topics: Join the Words, Find the Link, Transfer a Letter, Morph the Word, Missing Letters.

Finding Words — 2–4 weeks
Topics: Hidden Words, Stolen Words, Anagrams, Jumbled Words.

Cloze — 2–3 weeks
Topics: Choose the Word, Complete the Sentence.

> Indicative Verbal Reasoning phase: around 14–22 weeks of the programme, with vocabulary continuing throughout.

3. NON-VERBAL REASONING: TOPIC COVERAGE

The Mr James Maths Tuition scheme used for this guide contains 17 Non-Verbal Reasoning topic areas. Other schemes may divide or combine these skills differently. Progress depends heavily on how quickly a child learns to identify transformations, relationships, spatial rules and efficient elimination strategies.

Recognise and Associate — 2–3 weeks

Topics: Odd One Out, Match to a Group, Match to a Pair.

Extending a Pattern — 3–5 weeks

Topics: Pairing Shapes, Sequences, Matrices, Odd Shaped Matrices.

Finding a Code — 1–2 weeks

Topics: Find a Code.

2D Shapes — 3–5 weeks

Topics: Parts within a Shape, Shape Logic, Rotations and Reflections, Following Folds.

3D Shapes — 4–6 weeks

Topics: Nets and Cubes, Rotating 3D Shapes, Nets from 3D Shapes, Combining 3D Shapes, 3D Shapes from Above.

> Indicative Non-Verbal Reasoning phase: around 10–16 weeks, with earlier skills revisited through mixed sets.

Why some NVR topics take longer

- Rotations, reflections, folds and 3D nets require visualisation rather than memorising a single rule.
- Matrices and sequences may combine several changes at once, so pupils need experience of increasingly complex examples.
- Timed practice matters: a child may understand the rule but still need to recognise it quickly enough in an examination.

4. PRACTICE PAPERS AND EXAM TECHNIQUE

Practice papers should not be left until every topic is 'finished'. Short timed sections can begin once a reasonable foundation is in place, while full papers become more frequent later. Every paper should be reviewed so that mistakes lead to specific follow-up teaching rather than simply producing a score.

Stage	Paper work	Technique focus	Approx. programme time
Early	Short untimed/mildly timed sets	Method, accuracy, understanding instructions	From weeks 4–8
Middle	Timed topic and mixed sections	Pacing, elimination, avoiding avoidable errors	Regularly
Later	Half papers / longer timed sets	Stamina, section timing, recovery after difficult items	Final 10–14 weeks
Final	Full papers under realistic conditions	Timing plan, checking strategy, confidence and consistency	Final 6–10 weeks

5. EXAMPLE PREPARATION PATHWAYS AT 2 HOURS PER WEEK

These examples show how the Mr James Maths Tuition scheme can lead to different preparation lengths. The correct pathway should be chosen from diagnostic evidence and ongoing progress, not age alone.

A. Strong starting point — 20–28 weeks

Weeks	Preparation focus
Weeks 1–3	Diagnostic work and priority gaps
Weeks 4–12	Targeted VR/NVR teaching; vocabulary continues
Weeks 13–18	Mixed timed sections and weaker-topic repair
Weeks 19–28	Full papers, review, speed, stamina and exam technique

B. Secure / average starting point — 28–38 weeks

Weeks	Preparation focus
Weeks 1–4	Baseline assessment and core foundations
Weeks 5–20	Systematic VR/NVR coverage with regular retrieval
Weeks 21–28	Mixed practice, timing and consolidation
Weeks 29–38	Full papers, targeted reteaching and final technique

C. Developing starting point — 38–50 weeks

Weeks	Preparation focus
Weeks 1–6	Foundations, vocabulary and diagnostic gap-filling
Weeks 7–30	Structured teaching of VR/NVR topic families
Weeks 31–40	Consolidation and increasingly timed mixed work
Weeks 41–50	Full-paper cycle, review, stamina and final refinement

What 2 hours per week could look like

Time	Activity	Example
50 minutes	New / developing skill	Teach and practise one VR or NVR focus
10 minutes	Retrieval	Quick review of previously taught material
40 minutes	Second focus / mixed practice	Related skill or mixed question set
20 minutes	Timed work & review	Short timed set, corrections and technique

6. HOW PARENTS CAN JUDGE WHETHER PREPARATION IS ON TRACK

Progress should be judged by more than a single practice-paper score. A stronger indicator is whether performance is becoming more accurate, faster and more consistent across different question types.

- Knowledge: the child recognises the question type and knows an appropriate method.
- Accuracy: mistakes are increasingly due to genuinely difficult items rather than misunderstanding or rushing.
- Speed: familiar questions are completed efficiently without a large drop in accuracy.
- Transfer: the child can apply the same reasoning to unfamiliar examples.
- Stamina: concentration is maintained across longer timed sections and full papers.
- Review: the child can explain why an answer was wrong and what they would do differently next time.

When extra preparation time may be needed

- Vocabulary is significantly below the level needed to access verbal questions confidently.
- Several core topic families are completely unfamiliar.
- Accuracy falls sharply when a time limit is introduced.
- 3D/spatial reasoning or multi-step logic requires repeated reteaching.
- Practice-paper results vary widely from one attempt to the next.
- Long gaps in preparation mean previously taught material needs to be relearned.

7. PARENT PLANNING SUMMARY

For a pupil with a secure/average starting point, approximately 28–38 weeks (56–76 focused hours) may provide a useful planning framework.

A shorter programme may be appropriate for a pupil who already performs strongly across most question types. A longer programme is sensible where substantial vocabulary, reasoning or spatial foundations still need to be built. The most important principle is to protect enough time for timed work, full papers and careful review rather than rushing through the topic list.

Planning measure	Programme overview
Topic areas in this Mr James Maths Tuition scheme	51
Verbal Reasoning	34 topics
Non-Verbal Reasoning	17 topics
Weekly preparation assumption	2 hours
Indicative secure/average-start range	28–38 weeks
Recommended final emphasis	Timed practice, full papers, review and exam technique

IMPORTANT

This document provides indicative planning estimates only. It does not guarantee a particular examination outcome or school place. Individual learning rate, starting attainment, attendance, independent practice, diagnostic evidence and performance under timed conditions will all affect the preparation period required. The topic count and organisation used throughout this guide are specific to the Mr James Maths Tuition scheme of work. Alternative preparation schemes may divide, name or combine the same underlying skills differently, so topic totals should not be used as a direct measure of the breadth or quality of another programme.