

WITHINGTON GIRLS' SCHOOL

ENGLISH

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

2015

COMPREHENSION

TIME : 45 MINUTES

**Read the story below very carefully. Then answer the questions on the separate question sheet.**

It was Open Day at St Chad's Junior School and Danny stood on the side lines with the other parents, watching the football team thrash the opposition.

'Come on, Sam!'

'You can do it!'

5 'Go for it!'

10 The shouts from classmates rang out as Sam went for a difficult tackle – and missed, crashing painfully to the ground. Danny winced; no parent liked seeing their child injured, even if it was only a grazed knee. The referee seemed to be having difficulty deciding whether the home team should have a penalty or not and, as Danny listened to the increasingly intense shouts from both sets of supporters, the years fell away and memories of Danny's own schooldays, thirty years ago and at a very different school, began to surface.

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15 Danny watched the other children through the window. They seemed to be having so much fun, kicking the ball around, passing, tackling, shouting. If only they would let Danny join in. It was miserable sitting there, ignored at best, laughed at at worst. Danny knew the rules of football, even the offside rule, better than anyone else in Year 6 and was surely more skilful than these clumsy players. If only it were that simple. If only Jake, the captain of the football team, could pick the most talented players.

20 'Danny, come on! You should have finished that work by now!' Danny was startled by the sudden appearance of Mr Cameron, 6A's class teacher, who had a knack of creeping up on students who were not doing what they were supposed to be doing.

'Sorry, Sir.....Sir, do you think I could play football next week?'

25 'Don't be silly! Football's only for... the team. You'll just have to get on with your reading like the rest of the class.'

'Yes, Sir. It's just...'

'Enough! Reading! Now!'

30 When the boys in the team returned to lessons later that afternoon, they were dejected after a 2:0 defeat. Exhausted and cross, they slumped in their seats. Jake looked over at Danny, making sure that the rest of the team were not able to intercept his glance. Danny understood the significance of the glance though – Jake knew that with Danny in midfield they would have won easily, but it was Mr Cameron, not Jake, who chose the team.

35 At the end of the lesson Jake nudged Danny on the way out. 'Sorry, mate,' he said, 'I tried this time, I really did.'

'I know,' replied Danny sadly. 'Thanks.'

The rest of the class shoved past Danny until only Amy and her group of vicious friends were left. Danny usually avoided them but this time it was not possible.

40 'Come on, Danny,' said Amy, smirking. 'We're going to do dancing now – come and join us!' With a **malicious** laugh, Amy was gone, the other girls casting sideways looks at Danny and then linking arms and skipping off down the corridor. Danny took a sidestep into the library and sat there weeping, finding solace among the books.

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45 It seemed like only yesterday! It was hard to believe that thirty years had passed. Danny was jolted back to the present by the shouts from the football pitch. St Chad's had won and Sam, as Captain of the victorious team, was being carried aloft by other team members.

50 'Danny. Danny! ... Danielle!' Danny's husband, Jake, was shouting to her from the other side of the field and as she looked up she saw him making his way towards her, clutching their younger child, Alex, under one arm and a skateboard under the other. 'They won, Danny! Sam's first victory as Captain – obviously inherited my sporting prowess!'

55 'Or mine! You know I was always a better player than you!' replied Danny, giving her husband a playful shove.

'True!' he admitted with a rueful grin.

On the pitch the Headmistress had finished awarding the medals to the winning team. 'And now,' she said, 'could we have the Captain of the St Chad's Football Team, Samantha Chapman, to receive the Cup.'

60 The shouts were deafening as Sam approached the platform, grinning, the other boys and girls in the team patting her on the back or shaking her hand. Danny smiled proudly at Jake and squeezed his hand.

'Mum!' Alex peered up at them, covered in bruises and mud from his skateboarding exploits. 'We won't be too late for my dancing lesson, will we?'

65 'Of course not, darling,' said Danny, and hugged her son.