

POST-PRIMARY ADMISSIONS GUIDE

Our guide will help you understand more about the transfer procedure and what to expect when applying for a place in post-primary school for your child.

If your child was born between 2 July 2009 and 1 July 2010, they will be due to start post-primary school in September 2021.

The online application will be open between 12 noon on Monday 1 March 2021 and 4pm on Tuesday 16 March 2021. Please note that this is not a first come first served basis and post-primary schools will only begin to make decisions on applications after the closing date for applications has passed. Your child's primary school will share with you an electronic copy of the key information leaflet 'Applying for a post-primary school place' in the coming weeks. This leaflet and further guidance will be accessible on this website to assist you in making an online application.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors of each school to determine the admissions criteria to be used in the event of oversubscription.

The admissions criteria for post primary schools are now available <https://www.eani.org.uk/search-schools>. Before you start your application it is very important that you read the admissions criteria of all the schools you are interested in sending your child to.

Exceptions

The following children are exempt from the post-primary admissions process:

- Children with a statement of special educational needs.
You should not complete an application if your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs as your child's placement will be arranged through the EA's Special Educational Needs Department.

However, if your child is undergoing statutory assessment and does not currently have a statement you still need to apply for a post-primary place.

- Children who will be attending an independent school.
You will need to contact the school directly to make admissions arrangements for child to attend an independent school.

Key Dates

2 February 2021	Admissions criteria published for post-primary schools
1 March 2021	Post-primary applications open at 12 noon for parents to make an application for their child
16 March 2021	Post-primary applications closes at 4pm
March – June 2021	Post-primary schools consider applications and apply their admissions criteria to select applicants. EA moves those applications that have not been selected to their next preference school for consideration, through a clearing-house system, until applicants have either been selected by a school or parental preferences exhausted.
19 June 2021	Parents access the outcome of their child's application via the online portal

Getting ready to apply

The number of places each post-primary school has available in Year 8, i.e. the Admissions Number, can be viewed at the top right of each school's 2021/22 criteria document. The admissions number for schools is decided by the Department of Education.

You should ask schools directly for clarification if you are not sure what something in their criteria means before applying, as this might influence your decision in terms of which schools to apply to and in what order to list your preferences. It is also important that you fully understand what information or documentation you will need to include or upload to support your child's application. Any supporting documents in addition to your child's birth certificate that **might** be required by any of your listed preferences will be mentioned by a school in their published admissions criteria.

Due to the cancellation of transfer tests the admissions criteria for many grammar schools are different this year. Some schools indicate in the criteria that they will give priority to children who had been registered to sit tests and a small number of schools plan to use another form of academic selection. If you are claiming special circumstances or special provisions you should read very carefully the requirements set out in the admissions criteria of each particular school to determine if and how they may apply to your child.

When completing the application you will need to ensure you include all the relevant information about how your child meets the criteria of each school you choose, as this is what schools will use when applying criteria and making decisions on which children are offered places. You will also need to upload your child's birth certificate and any other documents requested by the criteria of each school you are applying to with your child's online application. Please take time now to get ready all the documents that you will need. Save your documents on your tablet, computer or phone where you can access them easily e.g. a redacted bank statement or utility bill as proof of address, a copy of a registration letter or card or a letter from your primary school to indicate your child is the eldest child.

You can start to get ready to apply by:

- **considering which schools you may wish to apply for.** It is strongly recommended that you list at least four schools in your order of preference. Please note that some schools give priority to applicants who have listed the school as first preference.
- **reading the admissions criteria and considering how well your child meets them.**
Read the definitions set out in criteria carefully and note that terms may differ in meaning from school to school. For example, many schools prioritise applicants who are the eldest child of the family. For some schools this definition may be extended include other circumstances where a family has not, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, had the opportunity to have an elder child already and currently enrolled, such as, cases where an older sibling cannot attend mainstream school and attends a special school. In this instance, you would be required to explain in your application how your child meets this criterion and you may be required to provide verification documents. The criteria should outline if this is the case.
- **Consider the number of applications each school received and how many pupils have been admitted in previous years.** This information is included in the schools' published admissions criteria document. If the schools you are applying for are normally oversubscribed you should be aware that there is no guarantee that your child will gain a place in any particular school and you should nominate as many preferences as you feel is appropriate.
- **Checking whether transport assistance will be available for your child.**

The online application is very straight-forward to complete and you will be guided through each page. In addition to the guidance videos and documents on the EA website, the Admissions Helpdesk will be available for digital assistance if you need it.

Tel: 028 9598 5595

Email postprimaryadmissions@eani.org.uk

If you are unable to apply online, paper applications will only be available on request from the Education Authority.

School Preferences

Parents have the right to express preferences for the schools they would like their child to attend, but no child can be guaranteed a place in any school or any particular type of school (secondary, integrated, grammar, single sex etc).

You should list at least four preferences as there is no guarantee your child will be accepted into the first preference. You should list at least one non grammar school. Please note that you will not be asked for further preferences during the procedure. You will only be asked for further preferences if

your child is unsuccessful in obtaining a place at the end of the admissions process at which point many schools will have filled all available Year 8 places.

You will be able to list up to 12 preferences on the online application. You cannot list the same school more than once, unless in the situation whereby the school you are applying to has a Boarding Department or Irish Medium Unit in which case you may list either or both. Please be sure to correctly select, from the dropdown list on your application, those schools that you wish to nominate as preferences as some schools have similar names e.g. St Mary's High School, Downpatrick, St Mary's High School, Newry St Mary's Limavady etc.

Late Applications

The closing date for post primary applications is 4pm on Tuesday 16 March 2021.

All late applications for a Year 8 place will be paper-based.

Applications received later than 4pm on 16 March 2021 will not be processed until after the conclusion of the admissions process, unless in exceptional circumstances whereby they may be permitted until 4pm on 12 April 2021.

How and when will I be notified of placement?

You can log in to the online application to view the outcome of your child's application on Saturday 19 June 2021.

If your child has not yet been placed in a school you had listed on your application the EA will advise you on the same date and you will be asked to nominate additional preferences from a list of schools which still have places remaining available.