

POST-PRIMARY ADMISSIONS GUIDE

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

If your child was born between 2 July 2010 and 1 July 2011, they will be due to start post-primary school in September 2022.

Key Dates

12 January 2022	Admissions criteria published for post-primary schools
1 February 2022	Post-primary applications open at 12 noon for parents to make an application for their child
23 February 2022	Post-primary applications closes at 4pm
February – May 2022	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
21 May 2022	Parents access the outcome of their child's application via the online portal

Applying for a Post-Primary School Place

Online applications will open at 12noon on Tuesday 1 February 2022 and will close at 4pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022.

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 in due course to assist you in making an online application.

Places are **NOT** allocated on a first come, first served basis. Post-Primary Schools **WILL NOT** consider applications until after the closing date.

It is important that you:

- Find schools in your area.
- Read the Admissions Criteria.
- Check what supporting documentation is required to be uploaded with your application
- List at least four preferences on your application.
- Check whether transport assistance will be available for your child. [Transport Eligibility Checker](#)

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.

Admissions Criteria

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 i.e. if schools receive more applications than they have places available.

Before starting to complete your child's application you should read carefully the admissions criteria for each school that you wish to nominate as a preference.

You should complete your application providing all the relevant details about how your child meets each school's admissions criteria.

Documentation to Support Applications

It is important that you support your application with any documents requested in the admissions criteria of the post-primary schools to which you are applying, for example, proof of address, eldest child/eldest eligible child status or an entrance test result certificate etc.

A birth certificate needs to be uploaded for every child.

If you do not supply the documents requested this could lead to the withdrawal of a place or the inability of a school to offer a place to your child.

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).

It is strongly recommended that you should list at least four preferences and you may need to nominate more than four schools if the schools you are nominating are normally oversubscribed. You should include 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 the school you are applying to has a Boarding Department or Irish Medium Unit in which case you may list either or both.

Carefully 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.

You should be aware that some schools give priority to applicants who have listed their school as first preference, therefore, applicants who list the school at a lower preference may have less chance of obtaining a place at the school.

If relevant, consider whether transport assistance will be available from the EA. Your admissions preferences can affect eligibility for transport assistance. For more information see Information on eligibility for transport assistance.

Transfer Tests

AQE and PPTC/GL tests are unregulated entrance assessments organised independently by schools. The EA is not involved in these tests nor does it have information on the scores/grades.

Information on unregulated tests is referred to in the admissions criteria published by schools. However as these tests are unregulated any specific queries regarding scores/grades, arrangements for special circumstances and special provision etc should be raised directly with the school(s) to which you are applying.

Special Circumstances

Most schools which use entrance tests will consider medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the test(s) and which are supported by independent documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature. These medical or other problems are commonly referred to as special circumstances.

Special Provisions

Special provisions refer mainly to pupils transferring from schools outside Northern Ireland or pupils who have received more than half of their primary education outside NI. Special provisions may also include cases where a child was unable to sit any entrance tests.

If you are making a claim for consideration of special circumstances or special provisions you should read very carefully the requirements set out in the admissions criteria of each school, to determine if and how they may apply to your child. This can differ from school to school so it is important to read the admissions criteria for all schools to which application is being made.

You must upload all relevant documents and information required to your online application.

Late Applications

The closing date for post-primary applications is 4pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022.

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

Applications received later than 4pm on 23 February 2022 will not be processed until after the conclusion of the admissions process, unless in exceptional circumstances whereby they may be permitted until 4pm on 9 March 2022.

Notification of the outcome of applications

You can log in to the online application to view the outcome of your child's application on Saturday 21 May 2022.

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.