



Department of  
**Education**

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AN ROINN  
**Oideachais**

MÄNNYSTRIE O  
**Lear**

# TRANSFER 2012



## Advice For Parents



## I. INTRODUCTION

This leaflet sets out the main steps in the post-primary transfer process for September 2012 admissions (Transfer 2012). It then explains:

- The role of parents: what you can do to help your child transfer to post-primary school.
- How parents can prepare for this role: what things you can think about in choosing a school for your child.
- How parents complete their child's application (the **Transfer Form**) to post-primary school.

Pupils with a statement of special educational needs have a separate transfer process. The relevant Education and Library Board (ELB) will discuss with the parent a suitable post-primary school placement for their child as part of the review of the child's statement.

In addition to Irish and English, this leaflet is also available in Polish, Chinese, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Latvian and Slovakian. Copies can be obtained from your ELB.

This leaflet is also published on nidirect ([www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)).

If you require this document in other formats (such as large print, Braille etc) or in a language other than those listed above, please contact School Access Team using any of the following methods.

By email to: [schoolaccessteam@deni.gov.uk](mailto:schoolaccessteam@deni.gov.uk)

By writing to:

School Access Team  
Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
Balloo Road  
BANGOR  
Co Down  
BT19 7PR

By telephone: 028 9127 9326

By text phone: 028 9127 9472

By fax: 028 9127 9417

## 2. MAIN STEPS IN THE TRANSFER 2012 PROCESS

January 2012	<p>You will receive, from your child's primary school, a Transfer Booklet. This will contain information about each post-primary school in your area, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How many places are available at each school;</li> <li>■ The admissions criteria that will be used by each school to decide which children are admitted if the school receives more applications than it has places available.</li> </ul>
January 2012	<p>You can ask any post-primary school to supply you with a free copy of its prospectus. This will contain additional information.</p> <p>You will also be able to visit schools on their Open Days/Nights. Details of dates and times may be found in local newspapers, Transfer Booklets or directly from schools.</p>
January 2012	<p>Your child's primary school will provide you with a Transfer Form and guidance notes to help you complete the form.</p> <p>On the Transfer Form you will be asked to list, in order of preference, the post-primary schools (at least three) which you would like your child to attend.</p>
17 February 2012	<p>When you have completed and signed the Transfer Form it should be passed to the primary school in good time to allow the school to forward your form to the ELB by 17 February 2012.</p>
From 17 February 2012 until the issue of placement letters	<p>ELBs process Transfer Forms according to parental preference, initially passing the form to the school named as a first preference so that it can apply its admissions criteria based on the information provided. The form may need to be passed to other schools named as preferences before the process is complete.</p>
Towards the end of May 2012	<p>A letter informing you which post-primary school your child has been placed at (the placement letter) will issue towards the end of May.</p> <p>If your child has not been accepted by any of the schools listed on the Transfer Form, you will be asked to nominate other schools drawn from a list of schools with places still available. This letter will also advise on how you can appeal against an admissions decision.</p>
Up to 11 June 2012	<p>During the period between placement letters issuing and 11 June 2012 you can submit an appeal against an admissions decision.</p> <p>Appeals can only be upheld if it can be shown that a child has not been admitted because admissions criteria have been applied incorrectly.</p>

### 3. THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE TRANSFER PROCESS

You have a very important role to play in the transfer process:

- You will help your child decide at which post-primary schools he/she will seek a place.
- You will then complete your child's application to these schools on a **Transfer Form**.

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).

### 4. WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL

You will help your child decide at which post-primary schools he/she will seek a place. In making these decisions it may be helpful for you and your child to think about:

- Your child's views on where he/she would be happiest.
- Your child's strengths and which school will provide the education best suited to your child.
- Your own, and your child's, impressions of schools.
- Travel to school and the arrangements for the provision of home to school transport.

Other useful information that may help inform your decision about specific schools may include:

- The range of public examinations taken at schools (eg GCSEs) and their pupils' success in these exams.
- The arrangements schools make for pupils who may require special help.
- Schools' policies on homework, uniform, discipline, etc.
- The range of extra curricular activities available in schools.
- School fees (if relevant).

This information will help you decide which schools you would like your child to attend for a variety of reasons, but you also need to consider the likelihood of your child being able to secure a place at your preferred schools. To do this you need to consider the level of competition for places at the school and the extent to which your child might be able to successfully compete for these places (ie the degree to which your child meets the school's admissions criteria). To assist you to make these judgements it may be helpful for you to have important information about:

- The pattern of applications and admissions to a school in previous years - that is, the number of applications received in each of the previous few years, and the number of applicants actually admitted in those years. Remember that the pattern of applications may change from year to year. **A school that receives fewer applications than it has places available must admit all of those applicants.**
- How schools will select children for admission if they have too many applicants. In this situation schools have to use **admissions criteria** to choose which children to admit. In deciding whether or not to apply to a school, it may be very helpful to have a good understanding of that school's **admissions criteria**.

There are a number of ways you can get the information you need to help you decide at which school(s) to seek a place for your child and these are set out below.

## 5. TRANSFER BOOKLETS

ELB Transfer Booklets on post-primary education will be published by early January 2012. You should read the relevant booklet for your area very carefully because:

- This booklet contains information that will help you decide which post-primary schools to list on your child's **Transfer Form**.
- The booklet will tell you how many children a school can admit. It will also tell you how popular a school has been in recent years and whether it has had more applicants than places available. **A school that receives fewer applications than it has places available must admit all of those applicants.**
- The booklet will set out all schools' **admissions criteria** and how these will be applied. These admissions criteria will be how a post-primary school will select children for admission if it has more applicants than places.
- Understanding the admissions criteria of the post-primary schools in which you are interested can help you see how your child's application might fare. It can also help you understand what information it will be important for you to provide when completing your child's **Transfer Form**.

So, to make best use of the Transfer Booklet:

- Look at the sections dealing with the schools in which you are interested.
- Check how popular these schools have been in recent years: has it had more applicants than places available?
- Carefully read the admissions criteria for each school you are considering.
- Think about how these criteria might apply to your child.
- Think about what information you should provide when completing your child's **Transfer Form**.

## 6. SCHOOLS IN OTHER ELB AREAS

If you wish to consider applying to a school in another ELB area you should contact your primary school for details of how to access Transfer Booklets relating to other areas.

## 7. SCHOOL PROSPECTUSES

Every post-primary school is required to produce a prospectus. This is a booklet that:

- Provides details about the school and the educational opportunities it can provide for your child; and
- Contains information about subject choices available at the school, public examination results, the numbers of applications received and the number of places granted in past years.

Prospectuses are available from schools free on request. You should obtain prospectuses from all the schools you are considering by contacting those schools directly. Contact details for schools are found in the Transfer Booklets.

## 8. OPEN DAYS/NIGHTS

You should also take the opportunity to visit each of the post-primary schools you are considering by attending their open days/nights. Details of dates and times may be found in local newspapers, Transfer Booklets or directly from schools. During the open day/night the principal will normally explain how their school's admissions criteria operate. You will have the opportunity to see around the school, see examples of pupils' work and talk to teachers and some pupils.

## 9. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The expense and practicality of transporting your child to the schools you are considering may be a major factor in deciding which schools to list on the Transfer Form. You should give this matter careful consideration and ensure that you understand the rules governing eligibility for transport assistance.

**Please note that the rules governing eligibility for transport assistance may alter during your child's time at any particular school and this should be taken into consideration when choosing schools to list as preferences on the Transfer Form.**

Your child will only be eligible for transport assistance in circumstances where he or she:

- Enrols at a school which is further than 3 miles from their home; **and**
- He or she has been unsuccessful in gaining a place at **all** schools of the same category within that 3 mile limit. This includes applying to, and being turned down by, schools within the 3 mile limit where your child clearly does not meet their admissions criteria (eg your child has not entered for or sat an unregulated entrance test where a school is using academic admissions criteria), before applying to schools of the same category beyond the 3 mile limit.

For the purposes of qualifying for transport assistance there are six categories of school:

- Controlled secondary schools;
- Maintained (ie Catholic) secondary schools;
- Integrated schools (including Controlled Integrated Schools);
- Irish-medium schools;
- Denominational (ie Catholic) grammar schools; and
- Non-denominational grammar schools.

Bi-lateral schools - ie schools with separate secondary and grammar intakes - may fall into any of these categories, but for the purposes of transport assistance:

- an application to the secondary stream will be treated as an application to a secondary school in one of the other categories; and
- an application to the grammar stream of a bi-lateral school will be treated as an application to one of the two grammar school categories.

## EXAMPLE

- You want your child to attend a particular non-denominational secondary school (school A) that is more than 3 miles from your child's house.
- There is another non-denominational secondary school (school B) less than 3 miles from your child's house.
- If you apply to school A as your first preference and apply to school B as a lower preference (or do not apply to school B at all), your child will not be eligible for transport assistance to school A.
- If you apply to school B as your first preference, do not obtain a place at that school and subsequently obtain a place at your second preference, school A, your child will be eligible for transport assistance to school A.

The entry for each school in the Transfer Booklets will state the category of school. You should study very carefully the detailed information about transport arrangements set out in the ELB Transfer Booklet. It may be helpful for you to discuss with your ELB how the possible outcomes of your application to post-primary schools may determine your eligibility for transport assistance. Contact details are provided at the end of this leaflet.

## 10. COMPLETING YOUR CHILD'S APPLICATION TO POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL

- The application form for all post-primary schools is known as the **Transfer Form**;
- **Transfer Forms** are sent by ELBs to primary school principals to pass on to parents for completion. The completed forms are then returned to primary schools who in turn forward them to ELBs;
- **Completed forms must be returned to your primary school in good time for it to be forwarded to the ELB by 17 February 2012.**

**The Transfer Form is a very important document.** It will contain all the information which your chosen post-primary schools will use to consider your child's application.

A specimen Transfer Form is included as an Annex to this leaflet so that you can familiarise yourself with the form before you need to complete it. When the time comes to complete the form you will receive from your primary school a set of guidance notes to help you.

## Expressing Your Preference for Post-Primary Schools

The form asks you to list in order of preference the schools which you would like your child to attend:

- **You should list at least 3 schools on the Transfer Form.** In some circumstances it would be wise to list more than 3 - for example, where schools tend to get more applications than they have places available and in areas where there are many schools.
- If you do not list at least 3 schools, this could reduce the possibility of your child being admitted to a school of your preference. **You can list as many schools as you wish.** This may be significant. As preferences are processed your child, having met the criteria of one of the schools listed as a high preference school on your transfer form, may be displaced by another child later in the process who better meets that school's criteria despite listing the school as a lower preference.
- You should not enter the same school more than once.
- If you seek a place for your child in a grammar school **it is very important** to include at least one other category of school in your list. If you do not do this it may reduce the possibility of your child being admitted to a school of your preference.

## The Importance of Providing Relevant Information About Your Child's Application

You will also be asked to provide information about your child when completing the **Transfer Form**. This is very important because:

- If one of your chosen schools has more applicants than places available it will have to choose which children to admit.
- A school will do this by applying its admissions criteria to its applicants.
- **The information about your child that you provide when completing the Transfer Form will be what a school will use to see how your child meets its admissions criteria.**

The sort of information that it will be important for you to provide will vary from school to school. It will often be information like:

- Whether your child has any brothers or sisters already attending the school to which you are applying. The **Transfer Form** contains a specific place for this information. You should also provide the names of any such siblings in Section C on the form.
- Whether the child is the eldest child, only child or the eldest boy/girl in the family.
- Whether your child is registered, with the ELB, as being entitled to Free School Meals.

It is therefore vital that you read very carefully the Transfer Booklet provided by the ELB to ensure that you understand what information is needed by all the schools you list and provide this information when completing the **Transfer Form**.

## Free School Meal Entitlement

The Department has recommended that schools use their admissions criteria to make sure that they admit a fair number of children registered as entitled to Free School Meals.

- To make this possible, the **Transfer Form** will ask you if your child is currently listed on the ELB register of children entitled to Free School Meals.
- If this applies to your child you should record this in the appropriate part of Section C on the **Transfer Form**.
- Your claim of Free School Meal Entitlement registration will be checked.

### What happens if:

- **My child only becomes registered as entitled to Free School Meals after I have completed their Transfer Form?** In this case, you will have the opportunity to update this information up to and including 9 May 2012 - see the “Change of Circumstances” section below.

## Checking and Signing the Transfer Form

Before signing the **Transfer Form** and returning it to your child’s primary school, please note:

- That you should check all the information carefully before signing the form. You should ensure that all relevant information is provided when completing the **Transfer Form** to enable all the schools you have listed as preferences to consider your child’s application. **You and you alone are responsible for ensuring that all relevant information is provided.**
- **That if you do not provide relevant information you may reduce the chance of your child being admitted to a school of your preference.**
- **That it is also your responsibility to ensure that the information you provide is correct.** Post-primary schools may be required to verify information provided as part of your child’s application and information found to be false can lead to non-admission.
- The information that you provide on the form is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your signature on the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow an ELB to use the information on the form for the purpose of processing your application.

When you have completed and signed the Transfer Form it should be passed to your child’s primary school in good time to allow the school to forward your form to the ELB by 17 February 2012.

## Change of Circumstances After Completion of the Transfer Form

Your personal circumstances may change after you have completed and signed the Transfer Form. For example:

- Your address may change; or
- Your child may become registered as entitled to Free School Meals.

If your circumstances do change in a way that may be important for the transfer process, you should contact the ELB Transfer Officer to provide this new information. Contact details are at the end of this leaflet. Additional information can only be accepted up to and including **9 May 2012**.

## 11. PLACEMENT LETTERS AND THE INDEPENDENT ADMISSIONS APPEAL TRIBUNALS

Towards the end of May 2012 a letter will be sent to you to tell you the outcome of your post-primary application. This **Placement Letter** will tell you the post-primary school in which your child has been placed.

If your child does not get a place in a school of your choice and you feel that this is because the school(s) did not apply their admissions criteria correctly, you can appeal to an Independent Admissions Appeal Tribunal. The **Placement Letter** you will receive towards the end of May 2012 will contain information about your right to appeal and who you should contact if you wish to make an appeal.

## 12. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It may be that you believe your child needs to attend a particular post-primary school for reasons other than simply because you prefer that post-primary school. There may be compelling and exceptional reasons why your child should attend a specific post-primary school.

If you feel that this applies in your child's case, you should note that:

- The **Placement Letter** issued to you towards the end of May 2012 will tell you in which post-primary school your child has been placed.
- If this post-primary school is **not** the post-primary school that your child needs to attend for compelling and exceptional reasons; then,
- You will have the opportunity to apply to have your child's case considered as part of an Exceptional Circumstances process.

- **A claim of Exceptional Circumstances can only be considered after you have applied to the post-primary school through the normal admissions process and been refused a place.**
- Claims for Exceptional Circumstances can be considered at the same time, though separately, from admissions appeals.
- Advice about how to obtain detailed information about the Exceptional Circumstances process, including how to apply to have your case considered, will be included in the **Placement Letter** issued to you towards the end of May 2012.

Further information is available at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/parents/schools-learning-and-development/choosing-a-school/appealing-a-school-place-decision.htm>

### **13. USEFUL ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Contact details for the Transfer Officers located within each ELB and for the Department's School Access Team are provided below.

Belfast Education and Library Board  
40 Academy Street  
BELFAST  
BT1 2NQ

Tel: 028 9056 4080

Email: [patricia.hughes@belb.co.uk](mailto:patricia.hughes@belb.co.uk)

North-Eastern Education and Library Board  
County Hall  
182 Galgorm Road  
BALLYMENA  
BT42 1HN

Tel: 028 2566 2306

Email: [maxine.harris@neelb.org.uk](mailto:maxine.harris@neelb.org.uk)

South-Eastern Education and Library Board  
Grahamsbridge Road  
Dundonald  
BELFAST  
BT16 2HS

Tel: 028 9056 6200

Email: [florence.mccaw@seelb.org.uk](mailto:florence.mccaw@seelb.org.uk)

Southern Education and Library Board  
3 Charlemont Place  
ARMAGH  
BT61 9AZ

Tel: 028 3751 2200

Email: [mairead.maguire@selb.org](mailto:mairead.maguire@selb.org)

Western Education and Library Board  
Campsie House  
1 Hospital Road  
OMAGH  
BT79 0AW

Tel: 028 8241 1571

Email: [liane.armstrong@welbni.org](mailto:liane.armstrong@welbni.org)

Department of Education  
School Access Team  
Rathgael House  
Balloo Road  
BANGOR  
BT19 7PR

Tel: 028 9127 9326

Email: [schoolaccessteam@deni.gov.uk](mailto:schoolaccessteam@deni.gov.uk)

**November 2011**

## SPECIMEN TRANSFER FORM

(FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY - DO NOT COMPLETE)

<p><b>Section A</b></p> <p>Pupil's Surname* _____</p> <p>Forenames* _____ <i>(please list all forenames)</i></p> <p>*As recorded on birth certificate</p> <p>Names of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) _____</p> <p>Postal Address _____</p>	<p>Boy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Girl <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Tick appropriate box)</p>	<p>Pupil's Date of Birth*  <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p><b>FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL USE ONLY</b></p> <p>ELB _____</p> <p>Primary School _____</p> <p>School Tel No _____</p> <p>School Ref No <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Pupil Ref No <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Special Educational Needs Assessment in Progress? _____ Yes/No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i></p>																		
<p><b>Section B</b> (List at least 3 different schools) Parents' preference of schools - to be completed by parent or guardian <i>(tick boxes where appropriate)</i></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> _____ brother/sister already attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> _____ brother/sister already attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> _____ brother/sister already attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> _____ brother/sister already attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>5<sup>th</sup> _____ brother/sister already attending? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Application for admission to a boarding department? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Is the child the eldest child of the family/only child? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Is the child the eldest boy/girl of the family? Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>FOR ELB USE ONLY</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Selected</th> <th>Not Selected</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1<sup>st</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2<sup>nd</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3<sup>rd</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4<sup>th</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5<sup>th</sup></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Selected	Not Selected	1 <sup>st</sup>			2 <sup>nd</sup>			3 <sup>rd</sup>			4 <sup>th</sup>			5 <sup>th</sup>		
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<p><b>Section C</b></p> <p>Parents should enter here any reasons for their preferences of post-primary schools and any information about their child that is relevant to the admissions criteria of the post-primary schools they have listed above. Parents should, therefore, study carefully the sections in the Transfer Booklets that deal with the schools they have listed. These sections detail the admissions criteria of these schools. Parents applying to schools that, despite the Department's guidance, are using academic criteria should particularly note what these schools require within an application. This will be detailed in the sections within the Transfer Booklets that deal with these schools. These sections also detail how to complete an application that includes a claim of special circumstances/special provisions.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>																					
<p><b>ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS</b></p> <p>Parent/Guardian - please tick this box and sign beside it <b>only</b> if your child is <b>currently</b> listed on the ELB register as entitled to free school meals. If your child becomes registered as entitled to free school meals at a later date but on or before 9 May 2012, you should communicate this in writing to your ELB Transfer Officer who will ensure that your application details are updated to reflect this.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>																					
<p><b>FOR ELB USE ONLY</b></p> <p>If the parent has claimed the FSME registration of their child in Section C, can you verify this? <i>(please delete as appropriate, sign and date)</i> Yes/No _____</p> <p>If the answer to the above is "No", but a subsequent and verifiable claim of FSME registration for this applicant is received on or before 9 May 2012, please tick the box below and sign and date alongside.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>																					
<p><b>Section D</b></p> <p><b>Parent Declaration</b> - I have read this form (and associated guidance notes) and understand that it is my responsibility to provide all relevant information and ensure its accuracy. The address I have given is the pupil's normal place of residence. I am aware that if I provide any information on this form which leads to the offer of a place, and that information is subsequently found to be false, the offer of a place will be withdrawn. I consent to the use of this information under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 for the purpose of processing this application.</p> <p>Signature of Parent*/Guardian _____ Date _____</p> <p>(* "Parent" = the person who has legal custody of the child)</p>																					



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