

Notes of Guidance for Parents on Admission to Primary One for 2018/19 School Year

Children born between 2 July 2013 and 1 July 2014 (inclusive) must commence primary education in September 2018

NB: This form is **not** to be used for application to a Preparatory Department of a Grammar School or an Independent School. It can be used for an application for a reception place in a primary school.

How do I apply for a primary school place? Fill in the application form attached to these notes of guidance. You should complete only **ONE** application form and on it list **ALL** the schools where you would be willing to accept a place. You should state clearly the published name and locality of each school you are listing. Even if your child's name is already on a waiting list for admission you must still submit an application form.

In Section A of the application form you are asked to give information about the child whom you wish to have enrolled. You must use the names recorded on the child's birth certificate. The child's home address should be the child's normal place of residence and not that of a child minder, another relative or a business address. It is important to include house number, road/street name and postcode. If you change address after completing the application you must inform the Education Authority (EA) of your new address in writing.

In order to complete Section B of the form you should carefully examine the admissions criteria of the schools in your area and clearly demonstrate on your form how you meet the admissions criteria for each school that you list. It is vitally important that you give the school all the information as to how your child meets a particular criterion. If you do not put down the information then the school cannot give your child consideration under this criterion. There is no upper limit to the number of preferences you can list but you should list at least four schools on the application form as there is no guarantee that your child will be successful in obtaining a place at the first preference school. You will **NOT BE** asked for further preferences during the process therefore it is very important that you list all schools where you would accept a place or you risk your child being unplaced.

Read the declarations, sign and date the form in Section C. **NB:** If a parent gives false or misleading information (e.g. date of birth, home address) and because of this the child obtains a place, the place will be withdrawn.

Where do I return the form to? Send your completed form and your child's birth certificate to your **FIRST** preference school no later than 12 noon on Wednesday 10 January 2018. Please read the admissions criteria of the school to see if any other documentation is to be submitted with the application.

Where can I find information on primary schools? Admissions criteria for each school can be found on the EA website at (www.eani.org.uk/admissions). Here you will find a schools' directory which you can search to identify all the schools in your area. You can view, download or print the admissions criteria of the schools you are interested in. A reference booklet containing criteria for primary schools in your area is available in each primary school. Local schools will give you a copy of their own criteria on request.

How does the admissions procedure operate? The Department of Education determines the number of pupils which each school may admit to Primary 1, known as the school's admissions number. If there are more places available than there are applications, then the school will accept all these applications.

If there are more applications than places available, then the school must select children for admission by applying its admissions criteria. The application forms of those children not selected will be forwarded to the EA for onward transmission to the next school named on the application form. This procedure continues until:-

- the child is selected by a school named on the form;
- all preferences named have not selected the child; or
- the time allowed has elapsed.

Can I change my preference? Apart from those necessitated by exceptional circumstances, no changes of preference will be processed if received after 12 noon on Wednesday 10 January 2018. If you wish to change your preference, for any reason other than in exceptional circumstances, you must withdraw the original application and submit a new application. If this occurs after 12 noon on Wednesday 10 January 2018 your new application will be treated as a late application. If you wish to change your preference because of exceptional circumstances, you must submit a written request for a change of preference for approval by the EA e.g. you have moved house which necessitates a change of preference along with verification of the exceptional circumstances. If approved, the EA will amend the original application form and send it to the new first preference school. If the original form was received on time by the original first preference school, it will be regarded by the new first preference school as a punctual, first preference application. The final date by which the EA will process any changes necessitated by exceptional circumstances is Wednesday 28 March 2018 at 4pm. This is also the final date by which the EA will process any additional information or new applications. Parents should be aware that after Thursday 26 April 2018 a number of schools will have allocated all their places and can only give consideration to a change of preference in the event that a place becomes available.

When would my application be considered late? If your application is received after 12 noon on Wednesday 10 January 2018 your application will be treated as late and will not be considered until all punctual applications have been dealt with and vacancies still remain. The EA does not have the discretion to treat an application received after 12 noon on Wednesday 10 January 2018 as punctual.

Can I submit more than one application? **NO.** If you submit more than one application form you will have made a false declaration. In the event that parents are discovered to have lodged more than one application form, then the first application lodged will normally be treated as the formal expression of parental preference and all other application forms will not be considered.

When will I be notified of the outcome of my application? Letters will be issued on Thursday 26 April 2018 by the primary school your child has been placed in. In the event that your child is not offered a place by this time, the EA will provide information on those schools in which places are still available and ask you to nominate which of these schools you would wish to enrol your child in. Primary schools are not permitted to advise parents of the outcome of applications before Thursday 26 April 2018.

What are the rules on eligibility for transport assistance? Transport assistance is provided in accordance with Department of Education circular 1996/41 – School Transport (updated 2009). The EA has a statutory responsibility for the provision of transport assistance to facilitate the attendance of non-fee paying pupils, resident in Northern Ireland, at a grant aided school. The circular states:- “Where there is/are suitable school/schools within statutory qualifying distance (2 miles) from a pupil's home and a pupil attends a more distant school, transport assistance will be provided only where the pupil has been unable to gain a place in any suitable school/schools within statutory qualifying distance”. A suitable school is defined as: Primary : controlled, maintained, integrated, Irish medium or other voluntary (i.e. Church of Ireland maintained). Where there is no suitable school within statutory qualifying distance from a pupil's home, transport assistance will be granted provided there is EA or public transport already available to or in the vicinity of the school attended. Parents should also note that the transport policy makes no exceptions for those parents who disregard the requirements to apply to all suitable school(s) within the qualifying distance of a pupil's home on the basis of possible rejection by those school(s).

Applicants are required to demonstrate that they were unsuccessful in gaining admission in all nearest school(s) in the same category within statutory qualifying distance in order to qualify for assistance – application is made by listing a pupil's order of preference on the application form. The categories of school do not extend to take account of other factors such as range or nature of curriculum provided, proficiency at particular sports, relationship with parish boundaries, patterns of enrolment, or single sex/co-educational schools. Preference expressed on these or similar grounds will not qualify for transport assistance if an otherwise suitable school exists within the qualifying distance and the chosen school lies outside the qualifying distance.

All applications for transport must be made ON-LINE via the EA's website at www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to/get-advice-on-home-to-school-transport/apply-for-school-transport/

Transport assistance for eligible pupils can be provided by a variety of means including the issue of sessional tickets (commonly referred to as 'bus passes') for public transport, the operation of EA vehicles, the hire of buses/taxis or a financial payment.

Where there is no 'suitable school' within statutory qualifying distance (2 miles) of the child's home, transport will be provided to the school in which the child is enrolled, provided that a suitable EA or public transport service to, or in the vicinity of the school is already available. The EA is not obliged to provide transport where either the service is deemed unsuitable or the cost of doing so could be regarded as an unreasonable public expenditure. Parents must satisfy themselves when seeking admission to schools for their children that a suitable transport service is available. Gaining a place in a school does not automatically commit the EA to providing transport assistance. The EA is not required to provide 'door to door' transport. Parents are responsible for ensuring the safety of their children on the journey to and from a designated bus stop if necessary.

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 application form.

Where can I find out about free school meals and school uniform allowance? Information in relation to applying for free school meals and school uniform allowance can be accessed on the EA website at: <http://www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to/fsm/>

How can I contact the EA? Contact details are provided below.

Admissions Helpdesk ☎ **0300 200 7824**

E-mail ✉ primaryadmissions@eani.org.uk

Post 📧 Primary Admissions, Education Authority, 3 Charlemont Place, the Mall, Armagh BT61 9AX

These notes are not intended to be a substitute for the *Procedure for Admission to Primary One 2018* which is available online at www.eani.org.uk/admissions

PLEASE READ THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ALL SCHOOLS NAMED OVERLEAF AND LIST THE DOCUMENTS, IF ANY, WHICH YOU ARE ATTACHING TO THIS FORM.

Please tick if your child is being assessed for Special Educational Needs?

If you have further preferences please continue on a separate sheet and put the name of your child at the top. Please tick if further preferences are attached.

SECTION C – DECLARATION (to be signed by parent)

I hereby certify that:

- (a) This is the ONLY application submitted for primary education in respect of the child named overleaf (excluding Independent/Preparatory Schools).
In the event that parents are discovered to have lodged more than one application form, then the first application lodged will normally be treated as the formal expression of parental preference and all other application forms will not be considered.
- (b) I have read the published admissions criteria of the school(s) nominated above.
- (c) The address which I have given is the child's home address and NOT the address of a child minder/another relative or a business address.
- (d) I understand that it is my responsibility to provide all relevant information on or attached to this application form.
- (e) The details I have given on this form are correct. I am aware that if a place is awarded on the basis of false or misleading information it will be withdrawn.

SIGNED _____ **Parent**** **DATE** _____

*** (Parent = The person who has legal custody of the child)*

THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE FIRST PREFERENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL LISTED OVERLEAF

NO LATER THAN

12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY 2018

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT – The information on this form is required by the Education Authority for the purpose of processing your application. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the Education Authority to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

For the purposes of provision of services to children, the information you have provided in this form will be shared within the Education Authority and, where required, will be shared with other schools listed on the form; relevant Northern Ireland Government Departments, school employing authorities, education bodies and the Public Health Agency.