

Important information for Parents and Carers of Primary Six pupils in relation to Transfer 2022-23 in the Newry/Kilkeel area

Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Our Lady's Grammar School, Sacred Heart Grammar School, St Colman's College, Newry and St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel have acted together as a local consortium of Grammar Schools in the Newry/Kilkeel area. These five schools, either wholly or in part, have previously used the outcomes of GL Entrance Assessment as the basis of selection of P7 pupils for admission to their respective schools. As a local consortium, these schools have operated a central registration procedure with all applicants from the same Primary School sitting the GL Entrance Assessment in one of the five schools listed.

The Boards of Governors and the Principals of Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Our Lady's Grammar School, Sacred Heart Grammar School, St Colman's College, Newry and St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel have considered the impact of school closures on the local community. They recognise that there has been significant disruption to the education of pupils since March 2020 and understand that there may be further disruption for children throughout the remainder of the 2021-22 academic year and beyond. The respective Boards of Governors are particularly aware of the impact of school closure on the current P6 pupils who were also affected by school closure as P5 pupils.

The Boards of Governors of the five schools in the Newry and Kilkeel Consortium have agreed, in light of the ongoing circumstances, that academic Admissions Criteria in each of the five schools will not be used for the academic year 2022-23.

- The five schools had previously made the decision in May 2020 to amend their Admissions Criteria for one year only. As a consequence of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the temporary amendments to their Admissions Criteria will continue for a second year. The suspension of the use of GL Entrance Assessment outcomes for the 2022-23 academic year is specifically in response to the circumstances which the Covid-19 pandemic has presented.
- As a result, none of the five schools will use outcomes from GL Entrance Assessment as part of their Admissions Criteria for the academic year 2022-23. Pupils applying to these schools will not be required to provide a GL Entrance Assessment result.
- All five schools will temporarily amend their Admissions Criteria for the 2022-23 academic year accordingly.
- Aside from some minor amendments at an individual school level, the Admissions Criteria for the 2022-23 academic year will largely be based on the sub-criteria from the school's pre-Covid Admissions Criteria i.e. broadly similar to the Admissions Criteria for 2021-22.
- Each school's Admissions Criteria will be published by the Education Authority (EA) according to its normal timetable. For reference, the 2021-22 Admissions Criteria are available in each school's prospectus.

The decision not to use the outcomes of the GL Entrance Assessment for the 2022-23 academic year is specific and particular to this group of five schools in the Newry and Kilkeel area who otherwise collaborate in the operation of the GL Entrance Assessment. Each school remains committed to its own ethos and academic focus on high quality teaching and learning. Those who would normally apply to be admitted to each individual school are encouraged to continue to do so.

Careful consideration was given to this decision to temporarily remove the academically selective element of each school's Admissions Criteria for the academic year 2022-23. It is hoped that both the decision to temporarily amend Admissions Criteria and the timing of this notification will provide clarity in the local area for P6 pupils and their parents/carers.

From the Boards of Governors of:
Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Newry
Our Lady's Grammar School, Newry
Sacred Heart Grammar School, Newry
St Colman's College, Newry
St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel

31st March 2021