

Admissions Criteria for entry September 2021

BALLYMENA ACADEMY

89 Galgorm Road

Ballymena

BT42 1AJ

Telephone: 028 25652782/3

Fax No: 028 25630855

Website: www.ballymenaacademy.org.uk

E-mail: info@balacademy.ballymena.ni.sch.uk

Principal: Mr S W BLACK, M.Sc., PGCE, PQH (NI)

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Dr D JOHNSTON, O.B.E., M.B., M.Sc., M.Med.Sc., F.R.C.G.P.

Voluntary Grammar School (Non-Denominational)

Age Range of pupils: 11-18 years

Admissions Number: 176

Enrolment Number: 1200

**An on-line 'Open Day' presentation will be made available
to P.7 pupils and their parents.
A prospectus, information booklet and video material will be placed on the school website –
details will be published in January.**

To Parents/Guardians naming Ballymena Academy as a preference on their child's Online Transfer Application. Please ensure that you provide the following information on or with the application :

Entrance Assessment Registration

Ballymena Academy will use proof of registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) provided by the Association for Quality Education Limited (AQE) as specified by the school. Parents should record their child's candidate number for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment on the online application and upload a copy of the AQE Examination Card or the AQE Registration Letter with the online application.

Special Provision

Parents/Guardians wishing to claim Special Provision must complete Form SP20 available from Ballymena Academy.

The completed Form SP20, together with appropriate documentary evidence corroborating the claim for Special Provision, must be uploaded with the online application no later than 16th March 2021. Special Provision will not be considered in advance of the deadline for submission of online applications.

Capital Fee

There is a capital fee of £140 per annum (set by the Department of Education), which is payable by all Parents/Guardians of pupils enrolled in the school.

Parents/Guardians are also asked to make a voluntary contribution to the Education Enrichment Fund. This voluntary contribution helps to support the educational and co-curricular provision within the school. The suggested contribution for 2020/2021 was £120.00.

A detailed prospectus and information on school policies and organisation may be obtained from the school, free of charge. Detailed information is also available on the school website.

Respective function of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to Admissions to the school

The Board of Governors is the relevant admissions authority for Ballymena Academy. The Board of Governors draws up and approves the Admissions Criteria and delegates to an Admissions Panel - nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, to include the Principal - the responsibility for considering all applications for admission to Year 8.

Any reference to the term 'the Board of Governors' within these Admissions Criteria includes the Admissions Panel, nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, for the purposes of applying the Admissions Criteria set out in this document.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

In producing these criteria, the Board of Governors of Ballymena Academy has had regard to relevant material on the Transfer Procedure, issued at various times by the Department of Education. These materials have been given active and receptive consideration; the decisions taken reflect the Board of Governors' focus on communicating clearly, complying with legal guidance and providing an efficient and effective service for children and parents.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on, or uploaded with, the online application. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the online application or uploaded with it.

Parents of all children transferring from Primary to Post-Primary school are eligible to apply for a place in Ballymena Academy.

If there are more applications than places available, registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment will be used as part of the admission procedure. Precedence will be given to those applications which include evidence of registration for the Common Entrance Assessment provided by AQE or for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made.

1. Eligibility, Priority, Considering Applications and Verification of Information

ELIGIBILITY:

- 1.1 For a child to be considered eligible for admission to Year 8 in Ballymena Academy ("the School") in September 2021, an application in his/her name on a completed Online Transfer Application, must be submitted according to the requirements of the Transfer Procedure conducted through the Education Authority.

PRIORITY to be given to applications:

- 1.2 In determining those children to be admitted, the Board of Governors will consider children who are resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School before those children who are not so resident.
- 1.3 Priority shall be given, on equal terms, to two categories of application:
 - Applications for children who have registered for the Common Entrance Assessment (provided by AQE, as specified by the School) in an approved Assessment Centre.
 - Applications for children for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made (Special Provision: see Sections 4 and 5 below).

Then, if places remain after all applications in these categories have been accepted, all remaining applications will be considered.

CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS

- 1.4 If, after consideration of 1.3, there are still places available, all remaining applications shall be considered as follows.
 - If the number of applications remaining does not exceed the number of places available, all shall be accepted.
 - If the number of such applications exceeds the number of places available, the procedure identified in section 2 shall be applied until all places are allocated.

VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

- 1.5 **Duty to Verify:** Parents should be aware that the Board of Governors of the School reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify the information on, or uploaded with, any online application. The obligation rests with parents to provide this evidence for verification purposes on request.
- 1.6 The provision of false or incorrect information, or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by the School, can result in the withdrawal of a place or the inability to offer a place.

2. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2021

Applications for children who have registered to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment specified by the School

(or for whom a valid Special Provision claim has been made)

Where the number of applications for children who have registered to sit the Common Entrance Assessment specified by the School, along with those for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made, exceeds the School's Admissions Number, the Admissions Panel will apply the following criteria, in order, to admit children up to the School's Admissions Number. Parents/Guardians must provide appropriate documentary evidence that the child was registered for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment or a valid claim for Special Provision.

Precedence shall be given, in the following order to an application for a child:

- 2.1 who has sibling(s)* currently enrolled in the School, or has sibling(s) already approved for acceptance by the School in the current admissions process.
(**N.B.** Preference shall be given on the basis of the greatest or greater number of siblings).
- 2.2 who is the eldest** or only child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school (details to be supplied on the online application).
- 2.3 (a) who at the time of application is registered either as a pupil who is educated at home or as a pupil at a Primary School from which pupils have been admitted to Ballymena Academy within the past five years (a list is available from the School Office or on the school website).

(b) In the event that there remain more applications than there are places available, preference will be given to those children who at the time of application are registered either as a pupil who is educated at home or as a pupil at a Primary School from which 3 or more pupils have been admitted to Ballymena Academy over the past five years. A list of these Primary Schools is provided in the following table.

Antrim P.S.	Clough P.S.	Longstone P.S.
Ballykeel P.S.	Cloughmills P.S.	Maine I.P.S.
Ballymena P.S.	Creavery P.S.	Moorfields P.S.
Braidside I.P.S.	Duneane P.S.	Portglenone P.S.
Broughshane P.S.	Fourtowns P.S.	Randalstown Central P.S.
Buick Memorial P.S.	Gracehill P.S.	Rasharkin P.S.
Camphill P.S.	Groggan P.S.	St. Colmcille's P.S.
Carnaghts P.S.	Hazelbank P.S.	St. Mary's P.S. (Portglenone)
Carnalbanagh P.S.	Kells & Connor P.S.	St. Paul's P.S. (Ahoghill)
Carniny P.S.	Kilrea P.S.	Templepatrick P.S.
Carnlough I.P.S.	Kirkinriola P.S.	The Diamond P.S.

- 2.4 In order of preference with first preference applications being selected before second preference applications and so on.

* Where applicable "sibling" is defined as another child of the family (Article 2(2) of the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980) to include, for example, half-brothers and sisters, together with children who are adopted or fostered.

** Twins and other multiples who are eldest in the family are treated as joint eldest children.

Admissions Criteria for entry September 2021

- 2.5 If, after the implementation of each of 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 there remain more applications than there are places available, then the following random selection process as determined by the Board of Governors and overseen by the Admissions Panel shall be applied to determine the remaining applications to be accepted:
- each application to be considered at this stage is allocated a random number electronically generated within 'Microsoft Excel';
 - the applications are then ranked in order of the random number, with higher numbers having precedence.

Applications for children who have not registered for the Entrance Assessment specified by the School

(and for whom a valid Special Provision claim has not been made)

- 2.6 Should any place(s) remain after all applications which include evidence of registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment or are made on the basis of a valid claim for Special Provision have been accepted, then other applications shall be considered for the remaining place(s).
- 2.7 If the number of such applications does not exceed the number of places available, all the applications shall be accepted up to the School's Admissions Number.
- 2.8 Where the number of such applications exceeds the number of places available, sub-criteria 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 shall be applied in the stated order until all places have been allocated up to the School's Admissions Number.

3. Admissions following conclusion of Transfer Procedure

- 3.1 Should a vacancy arise after the Transfer Procedure concludes, between 19th June, 2021 and 31st July, 2021, further admission to Year 8 shall be considered if fewer pupils are enrolled in Year 8 than the Admissions Number allows. At that point all applications (including those received after the final date for changes of preference) will be considered, and the published admissions criteria applied (see 2.1 – 2.8 above).

Parents/Guardians who wish to have their child considered for admission in the event of a place becoming available after 1st August, 2021 should write to the Principal stating this. An acknowledgement will be issued. If any place(s) subsequently become available and there are more applicants than places available, then a decision will be made upon application of the Admissions Procedure set out at Section 2 to those children seeking admission at the time the place(s) become available.

- 3.2 If the School's Admissions Number has been reached, an application for a child moving into the area can be considered, subject to the Department of Education granting a temporary extension to the Admissions Number.

4. Special Provision: Context & Summary

- 4.1 'Special Provision' refers to applications which claim that children did not register to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment on the basis that:

- (a) they are transferring from Primary Schools outside Northern Ireland; or
- (b) they have received more than half of their Primary School education outside Northern Ireland.

5. Special Provision

- 5.1 Applications for Special Provision must be uploaded with the online application and be made in line with the detailed procedures set out below. This includes the appropriate Form SP20, a copy of which should be uploaded with the online application and requires parents to submit appropriate, independent, documentary evidence in support of the claim.

Admissions Criteria for entry September 2021

- 5.2 Special Provision claims may be considered for children who have not registered to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment:
- (a) who are transferring from Primary Schools outside Northern Ireland; or
 - (b) who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland.
- 5.3 It is the parents' sole responsibility to ensure that information is provided for the School to be able to determine if the child is eligible for Special Provision.

Year 8 Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2018/19	176	241	176
2019/20	176	207	176
2020/21	176	178	175

This table does not include children who were admitted to the school with a statement of special educational needs.

- N.B.** The Department of Education has determined that the Transfer Criteria will not provide parents with detailed information on the pattern of applications and admissions to this school. Additional information may be obtained on request from the school or on the school website.