

PUPIL AND PARENT UNIT

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Circular No 2010/13

12 January 2010

To: Principals of all Primary Schools and Royal School Armagh (Preparatory Department)

***Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education in September 2010
Transfer Interviews***

Dear Principal

Department of Education Circular 2009/07 (revised) which was issued on 16 December 2009 states that Principals should invite parents to an interview in February 2010 in order to complete the Transfer Form and list on it, in order, the parent and child's preferred post primary schools.

Specific details on the Transfer Meetings with Individual Parents are contained in Annex 2 of the afore-mentioned Circular. This includes information on the new Free School Meal aspect of Transfer.

I would also draw your attention to the letter issued to the Chairs of the Board of Governors and the Principals of all Grant-aided Primary Schools, Special Schools and Grammar Schools with Preparatory Departments on 9 November 2009 regarding Primary Schools' Duties with Regard to the Provision of Educational Information on their Pupils to Other Parties.

1 Completion of Transfer Forms

You will appreciate that it is essential that all parts of the Transfer Form are correctly completed before it is returned to the board for processing. Principals are asked to ensure in particular that the following information is included:

- The name of the primary school;
- The pupil's name as recorded on the Birth Certificate;
- The date of birth;
- The Pupil's Reference Number, which is the ID number on The Transferee Report issued with Circular No 2009/263 on 24 November 2009;
- The name and address of the parent(s) including the postcode;
- The preferences; and
- The parent's signature.

A Transfer Form should be completed for all Primary 7 pupils with the exception of those who have a statement of special educational needs or for whom overage retention has been approved. The Pupil and Parent Unit is currently dealing with a number of requests for overage retention and board advice will be issued to the individual schools concerned as soon as it becomes available. Unless the Board of Governors has already formally agreed that the child concerned should remain in the school for a further year the child remains part of the Transfer Procedure. Please be sure to include a Transfer Form for any child who was admitted to your school since September 2009.

Please note that for Transfer 2010, parents/children have the option of applying in either Irish or English, by completing either an Irish or English version of the Form (refer to Department of Education Note ii – with Transfer Forms).

2 *Birth certificates*

- Some birth certificates are still outstanding.
- If your school has been contacted please submit the birth certificate as a matter of urgency and ensure that you identify the school when sending the Birth Certificate in.
- All birth certificates received by the Pupil and Parent Unit will be returned to schools shortly.

3 *Parental Responsibility*

Where a parent is not living with the child but still holds parental responsibility, both parents are entitled to attend a Transfer Interview and to nominate preferences. Where a dispute arises it is for the parents to come to a joint decision.

Although not particularly desirable it is acceptable for separate interviews to be held. If there has been an element of dispute it is strongly recommended that both parents sign the Transfer Form.

Please contact the Pupil and Parent Unit to obtain further advice and guidance if you are in doubt.

4 *Invitations to Interviews*

An exemplar letter is enclosed with this circular. I would remind principals that paragraph 2 - Stage 2 (Annex 2) of Department Circular 2009/07 (revised) recommends that a photocopy of the partially completed Transfer Form is issued about a week in advance of the interview.

5 *Parents not attending for interview*

Where parents indicate that they do not wish to participate in an interview please send all copies of the Transfer Form to the parent. The parent/parents can then indicate their preferences and sign the Transfer Form. They should keep the pink copy of the Transfer Form and ensure that the other four copies are returned to the principal before submission of the three top copies to the Pupil and Parent Unit for processing. The Principal should write 'Did not attend for interview' at the bottom of the Transfer Form. *If you encounter particular difficulties with regard to this arrangement please contact Mrs Jean Gordon Telephone (028) 3741 0084.*

6 *Preferences*

Please ensure as far as possible that parents carefully consider the implications of their preferences before nominating schools as changes of preferences cannot be guaranteed a place especially after the issue of placement letters.

Any change of preferences must be notified to the Pupil and Parent Unit by Wednesday 10 March 2010 unless there are significant circumstances e.g. a substantial change of address.

The final date for receipt by boards of changes of preference in exceptional circumstances is Wednesday 12 May 2010.

As you are aware because of the 'clearing house' system and the fact that schools by law are not permitted to include preference in their admission criteria, a pupil 'provisionally selected' can be displaced at any time in the procedure by another applicant who better satisfies the school's admission criteria e.g. a first preference applicant can be displaced by a fourth preference applicant.

Where a child is displaced 'late' in the procedure it is not always possible or practical for the board to seek further preferences. **Please note that Friday 30 April 2010 is the last date for boards to request additional preferences which are to be returned by parents to the board on or before Wednesday 12 May 2010. Any additional preferences received after this date will not be processed.** In these circumstances parents will receive letters advising them that their child is unplaced.

In the past the ripple effect of displacement impacted on a number of schools on the day that the letters were due to be posted, the dates outlined above are necessary to allow both boards and post-primary schools to bring the post-primary admissions procedure to a close in adequate time to ensure that letters are issued to the parents of all applicants in accordance with the timetable.

7 Assistance with Transport

Parents may only be granted assistance with transport if there have been unsuccessful applications to all suitable schools within three miles of a pupil's home. Please study carefully paragraph 4 on pages 15 & 16 of The Guide for Parents before giving parents advice. I would draw your attention to the new information in relation to Entrance Test Schools.

8 Claims of Special Circumstances

Details on claiming Special Circumstances are contained within the admission criteria of each school where applicable. Form SC1 no longer exists.

9 Confidential Information

The board can make special arrangements to deal with very sensitive information. Contact should be made with Mrs Jean Gordon (028) 3741 0084 and I would ask you to ensure that parents are aware of this facility.

10 Return of Transfer Forms to the Pupil And Parent Unit

Many schools in non-selective areas will hold Transfer Interviews soon and parents will complete Transfer Forms before the end of January. Make sure however that parents have had the opportunity to attend open days/nights in the relevant schools.

It would be appreciated if completed Transfer Forms are forwarded to the Pupil and Parent Unit for processing as soon as they become available. This will facilitate the inputting of information so that Post Primary Schools receive the 1st preference applications by the due date (Friday 19 March 2010).

It is quite acceptable to send the Transfer Forms in batches including forms signed by parents who have indicated that they do not wish to participate in interviews. These may be forwarded at an early date with the balance being forwarded after the interviews are completed.

All Transfer Forms to be returned as soon as possible and by Friday 19 February 2010 at the very latest but do remember we welcome the return of forms as soon as they are available.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS FROM ETHNIC MINORITIES

I would remind you of the availability of interpreting and translations services which are funded through a single regional budget managed by the Ethnic Minority Advisory Service, c/o NEELB, Antrim Board Centre, 17 Lough Road, Antrim, BT41 4DH Telephone (028) 94 482200.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to make contact with me or the relevant staff in the Pupil and Parent Unit.

Yours faithfully

Mairead Maguire (Mrs)

Head of Pupil and Parent Unit

☎: 028 3751 2411 – direct line

MM/JG

Enc

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD
TRANSFER FROM PRIMARY TO POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION

_____ School Telephone No _____

Date _____

Dear

Interviews with parents of pupils due to transfer to secondary schools in September will take place in school between _____.

I invite you to come and see me at the school on _____ at _____ a.m./p.m.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss your child’s progress and the choice of post-primary schools. At this meeting you will be helped to complete the Transfer Form.

In preparation, I have sent you a copy of the partially completed Transfer Form and would ask you to be good enough to check that all the details given in Section A are correct. It is recommended that you attend the relevant Open Days/Nights at your local post-primary schools (where you will probably be given a copy of the school’s prospectus), and that you also read very carefully the Department of Education advice leaflets for parents and the Board’s booklet – A Guide for Parents 2010/11 before listing your preferences. The Board’s Transport Policy as stated in this booklet may influence your choice of schools.

Please complete, sign and return the reply slip to me as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL

FORM TP/10/PP

Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education: 2009/2010 School Year

A CHILD’S DETAILS

Name of Child: _____ **D.O.B:** _____
 (as per birth certificate)

Present School: _____

Home Address: _____

_____ **Postcode:** _____

B ATTENDANCE AT MEETING
(please tick relevant box)

(a) I intend to be present for interview as requested.

(b) I cannot attend for interview as requested. I would be available at the following time(s)/date(s) if an interview can be arranged.

 (No guarantee can be given that an interview will be arranged for alternative times/dates.)
 I can be contacted by telephone on _____ during school hours.

(c) I cannot attend for interview and would ask you to forward the actual Transfer Form so that I can indicate the preferred post primary schools.

C ACCURACY OF INFORMATION ON PARTIALLY COMPLETED FORM

(a) I confirm that the information in Section A above is correct

or

(b) I have amended Section A to provide the correct information.

Signed: _____ **Parent/Guardian** **Date:** _____

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL