

## CEA

### Common Entrance Assessment

#### A Guide for Parents

##### **Belfast Area**

Belfast Royal Academy  
Bloomfield Collegiate Grammar School  
Campbell College  
Grosvenor Grammar School  
Hunterhouse College  
Methodist College Belfast  
Royal Belfast Academical Institution  
Strathearn School  
Victoria College  
Wellington College

##### **North-Eastern Area**

Antrim Grammar School  
Ballyclare High School  
Ballymena Academy  
Belfast High School  
Cambridge House Grammar School  
Carrickfergus Grammar School  
Coleraine Grammar School  
Dalriada School, Ballymoney  
Larne Grammar School

##### **Western Area**

Enniskillen Royal Grammar School  
Foyle College  
Limavady Grammar School  
Omagh Academy  
Strabane Academy

##### **South Eastern Area**

Bangor Grammar School  
Down High School  
Friends' School, Lisburn  
Glennola Collegiate School  
Regent House School  
Sullivan Upper School  
The Wallace High School

##### **Southern Area**

Banbridge Academy  
The Royal School, Armagh  
The Royal School, Dungannon

- From 2009 pupils have not sat the 11 plus examinations. Any child entering P7 after 2009 who wishes to apply to any of the schools listed above should sit the Common Entrance Assessment (CEA).
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the CEA application form is completed.
- Please read this document carefully before making your decision.

# CEA: A Guide for Parents

*Please note that while every effort has been made to present accurate information in this guide, some of the details may be subject to revision.*

- 1. What is the Common Entrance Assessment?** The CEA is the method which the grammar schools listed below will use to facilitate the continuation of academic selection following the ending of the 11+ transfer tests.
- 2. Why is the CEA necessary?** Schools are legally entitled to include an assessment of academic ability in their menu of criteria for admission. The Minister of Education, Ms Ruane, ended the 11+ but refused to offer an alternative method of selection. Without some form of selection grammar schools would become all-ability comprehensives. The schools named here have adopted the CEA to fill the vacuum and avoid children being asked to sit a series of tests in different schools.
- 3. Which schools are participating?** Schools offering the CEA are listed on the front cover and below:

|                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Antrim Grammar School                | Glenlola Collegiate School           |
| Ballyclare High School               | Grosvenor Grammar School             |
| Ballymena Academy                    | Hunterhouse College                  |
| Banbridge Academy                    | Larne Grammar School                 |
| Bangor Grammar                       | Limavady Grammar School              |
| Belfast High School                  | Methodist College                    |
| Belfast Royal Academy                | Omagh Academy                        |
| Bloomfield Collegiate Grammar School | Regent House School                  |
| Campbell College                     | Royal Belfast Academical Institution |
| Cambridge House Grammar School       | Strabane Academy                     |
| Carrickfergus Grammar School         | Strathearn School                    |
| Coleraine Grammar School             | Sullivan Upper School                |
| Dalriada School                      | Victoria College                     |
| Down High School                     | The Royal School, Armagh             |
| Enniskillen Royal Grammar School     | The Royal School, Dungannon          |
| Foyle College                        | The Wallace High School              |
| Friends' School                      | Wellington College                   |

- 4. Will all children have to sit the CEA?** No. Only those hoping to be admitted to one of the schools on the above list will have to sit the CEA.
- 5. What will be the format of the CEA?** The CEA will be based on three one-hour tests which take account of the English and Maths components of the present primary school curriculum. Only marks in the better two will count. If they wish, parents may elect to enter their child for only two of the three tests. Unlike the 11+, there will not be a supplementary test.

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6. **What have parents to do if they wish to enter their child for the CEA?** They will have to register an application with AQE. Forms will be available in the final term of the P6 year from the AQE Office or from the participating schools. Advice about completion will be available if required.
7. **Will there be a charge?** A fee of £46 to cover costs of administration will be payable at the time of registration. This will apply irrespective of whether the child is being entered for two or three tests. The fee will be waived if the registration form is accompanied by proof that the child is entitled to free school meals.
8. **When will the CEA be held?** The tests will take place on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.
9. **Where will the CEA be held?** Pupils will sit the assessments in the participating grammar schools. Parents will be asked by AQE to list in order of preference four schools at which they would like their child to sit the assessments. If any special arrangements are required in order to complete the assessments this should be indicated at the time of registration and in such cases parents will be advised of the arrangements that can be made.
10. **Will it not be particularly stressful for pupils to sit the assessments in the surroundings of grammar schools with which they are unfamiliar?** Once parents are advised where their child will sit the CEA there will be an opportunity to visit the school, see where the assessments will take place and be briefed on arrangements.
11. **Why are there three papers?** There are three papers to give pupils the best opportunity to display their abilities and reduce the chances of them not doing themselves justice by having “an off day” when one of the assessments are held.
12. **Will the CEA be available in the Irish language?** Yes. Parents will have the opportunity to indicate on the registration form that they wish their child to sit the CEA in Irish.
13. **Will there be any provision for special circumstances?** Yes. Many circumstances will be accounted for by discounting the assessment in which the pupil gains the lowest mark. Any parents who feel that there are other reasons warranting consideration should follow the route of Special Circumstances. Information on this may be found from the website, from the AQE Office or from any AQE School.
14. **How has the CEA been designed?** The CEA has been designed employing procedures similar to those used for “A” levels, having a chief examiner with extensive knowledge of test design, together with a team of revisers who are teaching professionals at primary level with long experience of preparing pupils for the 11+.

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15. **Will primary schools prepare pupils for the CEA?** There is no obligation on primary schools to undertake specific preparation for the CEA. But it should be remembered that these assessments will reflect the teaching given to pupils in their normal classes. Past papers can be purchased from AQE via an order form on our website to enable pupils to familiarize themselves with the format of the assessments.
16. **How will parents be informed of the outcome of the CEA?** AQE will inform parents on a set date in January/February of the score gained by their child. AQE will also inform Primary Schools and the school at which your child sat the CEA. Parents/Guardians can request that their child's score is not sent to their Primary School by contacting the AQE Office directly.
17. **What is the procedure parents have to follow after they have been informed of the marks?** All post-primary schools will be required to publish a menu of their admissions criteria. Schools participating in the CEA will indicate how the CEA results will be applied within their individual framework. Parents will complete their post-primary choices with their Primary School Principals, usually in February. Admission numbers and total enrolment for each school will continue to be set by the Department of Education. ***AQE Ltd. strongly advises parents to contact the AQE schools to which they intend to apply for entrance for their child well before the results of the CEA are known, to find out the minimum scores accepted by those schools in previous years.*** These scores will be very useful guide when the results of the CEA are published, and at the time of the completion of the admissions form with the Primary Schools Principals.
18. **Will children who have a statement of special educational needs have to sit the CEA if they are to be considered for a grammar school?** No, as at present this decision will be made in conjunction with parents, the relevant Education Authority and the receiving post-primary school.
19. **Will children, other than children with a statement of special educational needs, be considered for a school participating in the CEA if they have not sat the CEA?** Parents should consult the admissions criteria of the schools to which they wish to have their child admitted. The CEA will be used to determine which applicants best satisfy a school's academic criteria. As with the 11+, however, there will be a small number of exceptional circumstances in which this will not be the case. These will be explained in the criteria of individual schools. Since the 2006 Education Order requires all schools to fill to their enrolment, schools will be required to allocate places using other criteria in the unlikely event that they receive insufficient applications from pupils who have sat the CEA.
20. **What will be the position in regard to grammar schools not offering the CEA?** Parents are advised to contact these schools directly to ascertain what criteria they will use to determine entry.