

P6 practice transfer tests update for parents April 2021



Dear Parents,

As we begin the summer term, we wanted to bring you up-to-date with the relevant information regarding the post-primary transfer process and our preparations in school.

This week you should have received a copy of an advice leaflet from the Department of Education setting out the main steps in the post-primary transfer process. If you haven't received it, please check your child's schoolbag! Further copies can be downloaded from the Department's website <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/advice-parents-children-primary-6-2021> or from the Letters section of our school website. Please read this leaflet carefully and keep it somewhere safe as you may need to refer to it over the coming months.

At this stage of P6, we would usually be able to give you further details about the AQE assessment process for those who are considering applying to a grammar school during your child's P7 year in 2021/22. Due to the current situation and the related restrictions, AQE has not yet issued any guidance about testing nor provided any dates for applications. However, when asked if they expect the 2021/22 assessments to go ahead, AQE has stated that

“AQE and its participating grammar schools intend to initiate preparations for proceeding with the Common Entrance Assessment for the next academic year but, cognisant of public safety, we will be guided by the latest advice from the NI Executive in relation to the lifting of restrictions and the reopening of schools.”

So where does this leave our P6s? At this stage, we simply do not know whether these assessments will proceed. However, it looks like the grammar schools plan to use these AQE assessments if restrictions are lifted in time.

Therefore, we plan to proceed with our usual teaching and preparations in P6 as we await further details from AQE.

The AQE tests are based on the English and Maths that we are already covering in P6 and P7. Over the next four weeks, we will be looking at AQE-style practice papers with all our P6 pupils as part of our class teaching to familiarise the children with the format of these assessments. We will be using the P6 versions of these papers which are easier and much shorter in length and therefore less intimidating. We will look at a few questions each day, talk about them as a whole-class and complete them together with no pressure on the children as they learn how to set out their working-out and begin to think about time management. These are important skills for all pupils to develop, whether or not they will be taking the AQE assessments, which is why we include every child at this stage.

We hope that, by the time we have finished looking at these initial papers, we will have received further information from AQE and the grammar schools and we aim to keep you informed at every step of the process. In the meantime, you can check AQE's website www.aqe.org.uk for any updates.

With best wishes,

Mrs Bell, Mr Massey and Mr Coetzee