

Admissions Criteria for entry September 2026

Portadown College

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Principal: Miss G R Gibb, BA (Hons), MSc, PGCE, PQH (NI)

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr P H Aiken, BA (Hons), DMS, CFCIPD

Controlled Senior High School (Grammar)

Age Range: 14-18

Admissions No: 220

Enrolment No: 780

OPEN NIGHT 2026

4:00 – 6:00pm on Thursday 5 February 2026.

RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSION TO THE SCHOOL

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates to an Admissions and Development Sub-committee, which includes the Principal, the responsibility for applying these criteria. Any reference herein to the term Board of Governors includes any Committee or Sub-committee appointed by the Board of Governors for the purposes of applying the Admission Criteria set out herein.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Portadown College will consider for admission those students who, in the judgement of the Board of Governors, are suited to and will benefit from the courses and form of education on offer in the College.

The lodging of an application for a place at Portadown College is interpreted by the Board of Governors as an indication that parents/guardians and the student concerned accept and are in agreement with the ethos, philosophy, aims, policies, rules and regulations of the College including any code of conduct or behaviour management policy of the College. Information in relation to this may be obtained from the College.

The lodging of an application for a place at Portadown College is interpreted by the Board of Governors that parents/guardians consent to the College receiving, storing and processing data for the purposes of admission.

Children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission will be selected for admission to the School before any child not so resident.

When considering which students should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on, or attached to, the application form alongside the provision of relevant information as indicated below. Parents/guardians should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their young person and relevant to the College's admissions criteria is uploaded to the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal by the date and time specified.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application/transfer form.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide verifying documents by the required deadlines may result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the College to offer a place.

1. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO YEAR 11 AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2026/2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Priority will be given to applications stating Portadown College as 1st preference.

The number of places to be made available for each of the Contributory Junior High Schools will be based on the academic attainment of the students from each school who have applied for admission to Portadown College. The 2026 allocation will have regard to the allocation of places in Year 11 in previous years and historical performance data. Table

Please see information below (Table 1) on how to access the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal and key dates for September 2026 admissions (<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/admission-to-senior-high-schools-age-14>):

Table (1)

Monday 13 April 2026 (12 noon)	<u>Junior to Senior High application process opens with online portal available (from 12 noon) for applicants to apply for Year 11 admission.</u>
Thursday 30 April 2026 (12 noon)	<u>Online portal closes at 12 noon for Junior to Senior High applications.</u> Note: The online portal will not be accessible for JHS-SHS applications after this date/time.

A. Contributory Junior High Schools

The Contributory Junior High Schools to Portadown College are: Clounagh Junior High School, Killicomaine Junior High School and Tandragee Junior High School.

Notwithstanding the information contained below in Section B, in the event of there being more applications on behalf of students attending any one particular Contributory Junior High School than places available for students from that school, the Board of Governors will select students on the basis of the overall Transfer score and rank order (highest to lowest).

(i) This selection will be based on the rank order of academic evidence provided to Portadown College in the form of the Transfer score.

(ii) In a contingency situation, the rank order of academic evidence provided for the student(s) affected by the contributory schools will be taken from their continuous assessment and/or standardised data.

The rank order of academic evidence recorded on the required proforma must be provided to the College by the Contributory Junior High School **on or before Friday 1 May 2026.**

B. Schools other than Contributory Junior High Schools

Up to 10 places are available to students attending schools other than the Contributory Junior High Schools (NB: the Contributory Junior High Schools are: Clounagh Junior High School, Killicomaine Junior High School and Tandragee Junior High School).

The Board of Governors will select students on the basis of an assessment of evidence made available to it of previous academic attainment and the suitability of the education on offer at Portadown College.

The evidence of previous academic attainment must include the most recent report provided by the student's transferring school and should also include standardised test results for Key Stage 3 or its equivalent.

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Students will be selected on the basis of a rank order (highest to lowest) established through inspection of the academic evidence provided.

Evidence of academic attainment of students **not** attending one of the Contributory Junior High Schools must be uploaded to the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal **no later than 12 noon on Thursday 30 April 2026**.

It is incumbent on parents/guardians to ensure that this academic evidence is uploaded to the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal within the timescales stated in Table 1.

2. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Special Circumstances will be given to students whose normal progress has been adversely affected by medical or other problems which have impacted on their academic performance.

Parents/guardians who wish to make a request for Special Circumstances must complete and upload the Application for Special Circumstances (ASC) Form to the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal, with accompanying documentary evidence attached, no later than **12 noon on Thursday 30 April 2026**. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to select the appropriate box when applying via the Portal to declare a request for Special Circumstances. Form ASC must be verified by the student's transferring school Principal. Form ASC is available to download from the Portadown College website or may be obtained upon request made to the College.

3. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Special provisions will apply for:

(a) children who have received more than half their Key Stage 3 education outside Northern Ireland;

(b) children who due to a serious medical issue supported by appropriate documentary evidence, or for a demonstrably valid reason, also supported by appropriate documentary evidence, were either unable to sit the Transfer Examinations in the Contributory Junior High School

OR

have estimated Outcomes from the Contributory Junior High School because they only sat some of the Transfer Examinations.

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Provisions must complete and upload the Application for Special Provision (ASP) Form to the EA Junior to Senior High Application Portal, stating the precise reason why they believe the child is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions with accompanying documentary evidence attached, no later than **12 noon on Thursday 30 April 2026**. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to select the appropriate box when applying via the Portal to declare a request for Special Provision.

The Admissions and Development Sub-committee will consider each application for Special Provisions. Where Special Provisions are accepted, the Admissions and Development Sub-Committee will assign, on the basis of the information available, a ranking for the child:

- **Within their Contributory Junior High School ranking** - based on the provisional score/ranking and supporting data which should include the most recent report provided by the student's transferring school and standardised test results for Key Stage 3, if available, or its equivalent.
- **Within the ranked order for children applying from any other school** (a maximum of 10 places)– based on the most recent report provided by the student's transferring school and should also include standardised test results for Key Stage 3 or its equivalent if available.

It should be noted by parents/guardians that both parts of the consideration referred to above involve an exercise

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in educational judgement and not precise calculation.

4. ADMISSIONS SUB-CRITERIA

In the event of not being able to separate applicant students down to the last available place the Admissions Sub-Criteria listed below will apply in the order given.

Should there be more applications at any time than places available the following sub-criteria will be applied to identify the students to be admitted in the following order:

1. Sibling in attendance at Portadown College.
2. Children who, at the time of application, are the eldest child of the family eligible to apply.
3. Sibling previously attended Portadown College.
- 4.i. Initial letter of surname (as entered on birth certificate) in the order set out below:
K T S L Mac Z Q O G N A M c I H F V P R W D B C U J X E O' M Y
- 4.ii. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in the order set out below:
B R U J X E Q G N C F H Z O V P A M Y K W T I S L D
- 4.iii. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the letters of the forenames (as entered on birth certificate) will be used.
5. If applicants are still tied after this then priority will be determined amongst them by a method of computerised random selection capable of leaving a clear audit trail.

5. WAITING LIST POLICY

Portadown College operates a Waiting List Policy. For Year 11, all applications for admission to Year 11 that were initially refused will be automatically placed on the Year 11 Waiting List. Any applications after the closure of the Education Authority portal (using the AP14+ Form, rather than through the EA Portal) will also be added to the Year 11 Waiting List. This Waiting List will be in place until **Friday 18 September 2026**. Please contact the school if you wish your child's name to be removed from the Year 11 Waiting List.

Should a vacancy arise after the date upon which placement notifications have been issued from the Education Authority, the procedure outlined in the Admissions Criteria for entry to Year 11 will be followed in relation to those applications on the Year 11 Waiting List. The school will contact you if your child gains a place in the school by this method.

In circumstances whereby a child, who has arrived in Northern Ireland after the Transfer Process has been concluded, is suitable for admission on the basis of an assessment of evidence made available to the Board of Governors of previous academic attainment, it will seek approval from the Department of Education to admit the child through the allocation of an additional place contingent upon the school's capacity to facilitate the student. The evidence of previous academic attainment must include the most recent report provided by the student's transferring school and should also include, if available, standardised test results for Key Stage 3 or its equivalent.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 11			
Year	Admissions No	Number of Applications	Total Admission (inc. SEN applicants)
2023/2024	220	244	221
2024/2025	220	255	222
2025/2026	220	268	226

6. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION DURING THE COURSE OF YEAR 11 AND AT THE BEGINNING OF OR DURING YEAR 12

Consideration can only be given where places are available at the time of application.

Given that GCSE courses are of two years' duration, applications for admission to Year 12 will only be considered if the courses taken by the applicant in his/her previous school are compatible with those on offer in Portadown College.

The Board of Governors will allocate any available place on the basis of an assessment of evidence made available to it of previous academic attainment and suitability of the education on offer at Portadown College. The evidence of previous academic attainment must include the most recent report provided by the student's transferring school and should also include standardised test results for Key Stage 3, or its equivalent, if available.

7. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION AFTER GCSE (16+)

Students wishing to transfer to Portadown College for Sixth Form Courses should contact the Principal. Interested students are invited to the Open Night on Thursday 5 February 2026. Students wishing to register their interest in Sixth Form should contact the College Office (Tel: 028 38332439 or email: info@pc.portadown.ni.sch.uk) by Friday 26 June 2026.

Admission will be based on:

- (a) Evidence of academic attainment based on externally validated examinations. A minimum of 3 Grade B and 5 Grade C*/C GCSE passes are required ("the Minimum Academic Criteria").

or 12 points (i.e. based on GCSE grades, or their numerical equivalences, where A* = 4 points, A = 3 points, B = 2 points, C* = 1.5 points, C = 1 point) in a minimum of seven GCSE subjects.

- (b) Meeting the subject specific entry requirements for a minimum of three subjects.
- (c) Availability of places in chosen subjects or courses.

The admissions criteria for admission after GCSE will be applied by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Governors.

Students who are currently attending the College and who have attained the Minimum Academic Criteria will be offered places in preference to students from other schools.

Students from other schools who meet the minimum criteria will be offered places on the basis of rank order of achievement in descending order based on total points (i.e. based on GCSE grades, or their numerical equivalences, where A* = 4 points, A = 3 points, B = 2 points, C* = 1.5 points, C = 1 point) and their entry is subject to places being available and/or the Principal requesting additional places from DENI with the support of the Education Authority.

Applications from students with qualifications other than GCSE will be assessed on the basis of GCSE equivalence where possible.

Portadown College criteria for any extra places made available by the Department of Education for admission into Year 13 (Sixth Form)

The Department of Education may, on request, increase the number of students that the College can admit to its Year 13. Places that become available in this way shall be allocated only to students who meet the basic eligibility criteria to be applied in the order set down.

1. Students who have most recently completed Year 12 in Portadown College.
2. Students from other schools where admission to an extra place at Portadown College has been agreed by the Department of Education.*

*Parents/guardians should note how the Department of Education (DE) will, in response to a school's request, increase the school's enrolment number in order to allow an extra post-16 student to enrol. DE will first check whether there is another school or schools of a type suitable for that student within an hour's journey of where the student lives. If there is, DE will then check whether this other school or schools with places available may provide all of the post-16 courses that the student wishes to pursue. If these checks find that no other suitable school may provide all of the post-16 courses that the student wishes to pursue – then DE will agree a school's request for an extra place.

What is a school of a type that is suitable for a student? To determine this, DE first considers all schools to be one of 4 types: (i) Denominational (ii) Non-denominational (iii) Integrated and (iv) Irish-Medium. A school requesting an extra place for a post-16 student will belong to one of these 4 types and DE will consider any other school or schools from this type as suitable for the student. DE will also consider as suitable for the students any school from the same type as the type of school that the student attended in Year 12.

Force Majeure

In appropriate circumstances, the College will give due consideration to any circumstances which it feels qualifies for force majeure.