



Department of  
**Education**

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**To: Principals and Chairs of Boards of Governors  
of Primary Schools**

**9 February 2010**

**TRANSFER 2010: PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES PLANS OF  
ENTRANCE TEST SCHOOLS**

1. The Department's policy on Transfer 2010 was clearly and comprehensively stated in its Transfer 2010 Guidance, published on 25 June, 2009: the Department clearly recommended against post-primary schools' continued use of academic admissions criteria.
2. The Guidance advised schools continuing to use academic admissions criteria to bear sole responsibility in all aspects of any academically selective procedures that they might attempt. In particular, in the interests of primary schools and the children they serve, such grammar schools were advised to develop a special circumstances procedure that ascribed no role to a primary school.
3. The organisations responsible for providing grammar schools with entrance tests for Transfer 2010 have recently published forms which parents are requested to complete if they wish, on behalf of their child, to apply to an entrance test school's Special Circumstances Procedure. As many primary principals will be aware, the completion of these forms by parents, and the Special Circumstances Procedures proposed by many entrance test schools generally, require parents to obtain information from their child's primary principal.
4. In the absence of any form of consultation on the part of grammar schools with the Department or the primary sector, the Department is issuing this further guidance. This guidance reflects the fact that tests sat by children in primary schools were sat for the constructive educational purposes of the primary school and were not designed, or operated, for the admissions processes of post primary schools.
5. In relation to the special circumstances arrangements of grammar schools, primary principals should consider their role according to the following points:
  - Parents/guardians have a legal right to any information held by a primary school that relates solely to their child;



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- Primary schools are not required, in law, to provide information in a specifically requested format;
- Primary schools should not provide performance information to parents or guardians relating to any child other than their own;
- A primary school should not, in law, provide performance information relating to any of its pupils to any other school.<sup>1</sup>

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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<sup>1</sup> Excepted from this is a school's provision of a pupil's records to a school into which the pupil has been accepted for admission and will shortly transfer - as specifically provided for in legislation.