



# CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL



2026 PROSPECTUS

# Principal's Welcome

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**KNOWLEDGE**

**OPPORTUNITY**

**RESPECT**



# Principal's Welcome

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A very warm welcome to Carrickfergus Grammar School, a thriving, exciting, ambitious, happy and thoroughly aspirational selective school.

Our main aim is to offer our students a world-class education, reinforced by the most robust research-based evidence into high-quality learning and teaching. The Carrickfergus Grammar 'brand' of learning and teaching is a brand which we firmly believe will ensure our pupils are exposed to high aspiration, high expectation and huge opportunities in order to surpass potential.

Our aim is to give our pupils the powerful knowledge, the cultural capital and the most effective study skills in order to give them the edge academically - both in school and in later life.

## In the past two years the following has occurred:

- the school entered the Times and Sunday Times Parent Power School League Tables as **one of the top 80 state schools in the UK** in December 2025;
- the school recorded its highest ever results at A Level in 2025, with **90% of pupils achieving 3 or more A Levels at A\*-C. A remarkable 80.9% of all grades awarded were A\*-B;**
- English results at GCSE in 2025 were **16.1% above Grammar School averages at A\*-B**, with Maths results a **record 18.9% above Grammar School averages at A\*-B;**
- **18 subjects** at A Level were above Grammar School averages at A\*-C in 2025, with 19 subjects at GCSE surpassing Grammar School averages at A\*-C;
- the school was named in June 2024 as the '**Families First School of the Year** for the Northern Region', and was shortlisted to the final three schools for the title of 'Northern Ireland School of the Year 2024';
- the school secured five million pounds for the development of infrastructure, which will result in state-of-the-art sporting facilities to rival any school in the country.

With 18 subjects surpassing Northern Ireland Grammar School averages for A\*-C at A Level, and 19 subjects at GCSE, this is a school which has a clear resolve.

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No matter what their background, needs, interests or academic potential, every single student will be taught in a manner which will expedite opportunities for the greatest possible social mobility - including access to all Higher Education pathways at age 18.

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This is achieved within an atmosphere which we describe as warm and strict. We care for, support and guide our pupils, and endeavour to build their resilience at every opportunity. We believe in the good, old-fashioned principles of manners, honesty and hard work. We view ourselves here as a big family - caring for, and looking out for each other.

*We welcome you to our Open Evening in school on Thursday 15th January 2026 between 6:30pm and 9:00pm, with the Principal's presentation at 6:30pm and 8:30pm in the Assembly Hall.*

J.A Maxwell  
Principal

# Student Reflections

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## **Olivia Woodside - Head Girl**

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Carrickfergus Grammar School. From the first day of Year 8, the teaching and non-teaching staff have always been so supportive and helpful. Thanks to them, I have exceeded my expectations academically and developed skills which will set me on great paths in life. Next year I am hoping to pursue a career in Engineering. I believe every pupil here has the opportunity to succeed and to become the best version of themselves in an encouraging and caring school environment. I have particularly enjoyed sport during my time here, including hockey and athletics. Extra-curricular activities and tours have given me some of my greatest memories which I will cherish for my lifetime.

## **Max Matuszewski- Head Boy**

As I look back on the past seven years at Carrickfergus Grammar, I can see the immense positive impact this school has had on me. The school has helped me to grow in resilience and determination when approaching my studies which have helped me to achieve exam success. However it will be the extra curricular activities I'll remember most, from doing my Duke of Edinburgh in the mountains with my friends to playing rugby in Barcelona. The experiences this school has provided me with are nothing short of incredible. I've received so many great opportunities not only through sports but also through the Music Society and Scripture Union. I became a part of a community that turned into a family. As I grew older I had more ways of giving back to the school which I didn't hesitate to take, including Sports Committee, SU Committee, Homework Mentoring and now in Year 14 even Peer Tutoring. Next year, I hope to study Mathematics with Physics at Cambridge University. Carrickfergus Grammar will always have a warm place in my heart with relationships that I hope will last a lifetime.



## **Mitchell Brown - Deputy Head Boy**

I am totally grateful for my time at this school - it has transformed me into a confident communicator and someone who has learned the importance of caring for others. I have acted as a Homework Mentor in the past year, helping junior pupils after school with aspects of their homework. My roles as Chair of the School Council and the Scripture Union Committee have really enhanced my organisational skills. The school grants you respect and develops, cares and supports you. I really hope to take the valuable lessons learned at school into adult life.





# Student Reflections

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## **Josh Millar - Deputy Head Boy**

My seven years here have been instrumental in preparing me for the future. The school environment fostered extensive opportunities for both academic advancement and personal development, thanks to the dedicated staff. Reflecting on my time, from the initial days of Year 8, I remember the strong sense of safety and camaraderie that defines this community. I have formed lasting friendships and accumulated countless memories through extra-curricular pursuits such as the Music Society, Scripture Union and The Duke of Edinburgh Award. Next year, I am excited to start an engineering degree at Queens University Belfast, building on the strong curriculum we have at Carrickfergus Grammar.

## **Olivia Jordan - Deputy Head Girl**

Being part of the CGS community for the past seven years has been an extraordinary journey. I am really grateful for the opportunities. I have grown from a shy Year 8 to a confident individual through the supportive environment of teachers and students, helping me build valuable skills for the future. I have pursued my passion for hockey and sports alongside academic endeavours, fulfilling the roles of Hockey Captain amongst others. CGS definitely brings out the best version in yourself. I have created happy memories, including trips abroad, which will stay with me my whole life.



## **Emily Winsby- Deputy Head Girl**

I am beyond grateful for my experience at CGS; the continuous support from the staff has allowed me to achieve my potential, and I have acquired many friendships which I will cherish for years to come. The community has allowed me to grow in confidence and develop my skills, preparing me for later life. In particular, the relationships throughout the school have been one of my highlights, between both teachers and pupils. The rapport created truly demonstrates the incredibly caring and supportive environment of the school, which is extended into extra-curricular activity. There is something for everyone. Specifically, hockey has allowed me to express myself since Year 8, through building friendships within my team and building resilience. The opportunities provided by this school are extensive and have allowed me to build life-long memories.



# Staff List

## Principal

Mr J A Maxwell BA PGCE MSc PQH

## Vice-Principal

Miss F McKinley MEd BA PGCE PQH

## Senior Leadership Team

Mrs L Kane BA DASE PGCE

Mr P McKittrick MSc BSc PGCE PQH

Mr K Marshall MEd BSc DipEd PQH

Mr M Roberts BA (Hons) MA PGCE

Mr P Baxter BSc BAgr PGCE

Mr P Irwin BSc PGCE

Mrs A Turner BSc DASE PGCE

Mrs K Withers MEd Bmus PGCE

Mr N Massey MSc BSc PGCE

Mr K Crooks MEd BSc PGCE Adv Cert

Mr S Martin BED

## Teachers

Mrs J Beattie BA PGCE

Mrs J S Botha BA PGCE

Mr A Brown MBA BA PGCE

## Administrative

### Senior Executive Officer

Mrs T Livings HNC

### (Senior) Executive Officer

Mrs K Campbell HNC

### Senior Clerical Officer

Mrs K Newell

### Clerical Officer

Ms S Phillips

### Grainger Centre Supervisor

Mrs J Taylor JEB Dip Ed

Mrs R Butler BA PGCE

Ms B Claver López MA PGCE

Mr E Craig MA Bmus Dip ChD FNCM PGCE

Mrs G Craig BSc GPT

Mr M Crawford MEd BSc PGCE

Mr R Currie BSc PGCE

Miss S Elliott BA PGCE

Mr A Fittis BSc PGCE

Mr R Gorman MEd BA PGCE

Mrs R Graham MA BA PGCE

Mrs J Hamilton BA PGCE

Mr K Hamilton BA PGCE

Mr E Hawthorne MSci PGCE

Mr M Irwin BED

Mr N Kennedy BSc PGCE

Miss W Lemon MEd BED

Mr A Macdonald BA PGCE

Miss S Mawhinney BSc PGCE

Miss P Maxwell MSc BSc PGCE

Mr J Mackay BED

## Technical

### Senior Technician

Mrs R McCullough

### Technology and Art

Mr P Newell

### Information Technology

Mr M Blair BA BSc

### Home Economics

Mrs R Patterson

### Language Assistants

#### French

Mrs B Gourley

#### Spanish

Mrs E Casales Martinez

Mrs B McKeeman BSc PGCE

Mrs B McMaw MEd BA PGCE

Mr R McMorris BSc PGCE

Mrs R Mooney BED

Mr L Morrow MSc BSSc PGCE

Mrs S Murray MA PGCE

Miss S Patterson MEng PGCE

Mrs C Penney BA PGCE

Mr R Reaney BSc PGCE

Mrs C Reid MA BED

Mr W J Reid BSc PGCE

Mr A Ross MSc BSc PGCE

Mrs V Ross BA PGCE

Mrs S A Simms BSc PGCE

Mrs E Squires MSc BSc PGCE Mrs

Mrs E Wills BA PGCE

Miss N Wylie MA BA PGCE

## Support Staff

### Learning Support Assistants

Mrs S Shannon

Miss E O'Lynn

Mrs L Hooks

Miss R Beasant

Miss T Lockhart

Ms S Duff

Ms N Chambers

Miss R Topping

Mrs V Meeke

Mrs K Harpur

Ms C Lockhart

Miss E Cardy

Mr D Wright

### Building Supervisor

Mr M Murphy

Mr D Vine (Assistant)





# A world-class education

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We aim to offer our students a world-class education. We look nationally and internationally to identify and understand what the highest quality learning and teaching looks like. We base our developments on world-renowned research. We send our staff overseas to see for themselves what outstanding practice looks like, and to explore how it can be translated into the classroom in Carrickfergus Grammar School.

- In September 2024, the school hosted Northern Ireland's first ever ResearchED conference for teachers and educators across the world;
- In September 2022, Carrickfergus Grammar School introduced a knowledge-rich curriculum for students in Years 8-10, incorporating more depth into learning and helping to ensure that our students accumulate powerful knowledge which will give them the edge in later life. The Minister of Education now hopes to facilitate such a curriculum in all schools in Northern Ireland;
- In 2025 Carrickfergus Grammar School welcomed some of the world's leading experts in education who wanted to learn about the school's approach;
- Carrickfergus Grammar School has become the first school to appoint a Director of Research, Mr Mark Roberts.

Effective learning and teaching, which is central to the life of the school, depends, among other things, on outstanding teacher subject knowledge, excellent subject-specific and general pedagogy, high-quality relationships both inside and outside the classroom and quality communication between students, staff, parents and others in the development of a secure and stimulating learning environment in which all can prosper.

It is the purpose of Carrickfergus Grammar School to provide an educational environment suited to all of the students entrusted to its care, with the highest of aspirations and expectations for all. The school will seek to promote a disciplined, well-ordered, caring and supportive environment, where staff and students can work and learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect and without fear of interruption or learning being hindered, so that each and every student is encouraged to achieve the highest level of academic, intellectual, personal, physical and social development of which he or she is capable.



# Our Values:

## KNOWLEDGE

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Carrickfergus Grammar School articulates its ethos and vision around three core pillars: **Knowledge**, **Opportunity**, and **Respect**. These values are not merely abstract principles but are actively pursued and underpin all aspects of school life, from academic standards and teaching practices to extra-curricular provision and the school environment itself.

The value of Knowledge at Carrickfergus Grammar School is intrinsically linked to our commitment to providing a world-class education and achieving high academic standards. It is defined as the School's approach to learning and teaching, focusing on the standards and outcomes pupils achieve. The fundamental aim is to offer access to the highest quality learning and teaching opportunities, enabling pupils to attain grades and qualifications that will give them an edge in later life and serve as a passport for future success and happiness.

This pursuit of Knowledge is driven by several key factors:

**Research-Based Evidence:** The school's learning and teaching model is reinforced by robust research-based evidence into high-quality practices. The school's developments are based on world-renowned research, and its commitment to research has been evidenced through hosting ResearchED Belfast in September 2024. Teaching staff survey responses indicate that developments at the school are increasingly research-driven, with 95.6% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. CGS actively brings in external expertise, having hosted leading educationalists and being featured in a case study book on retrieval strategies by leading educationalist Kate Jones. Notably, the school appointed Mr Mark Roberts as Northern Ireland's first Director of Research, reflecting a clear vision to pursue the highest standards and become a regional and national centre of excellence for learning and teaching and educational research.

**Standards and Outcomes:** The results attained in public examinations are seen as a testament to the school's approach. The school was named in the Sunday Times as one of the top 15 schools in Northern Ireland for GCSE and A Level results in December, ranking 7th for A Levels and 13th overall.

**High Aspiration and Expectation:** The school's approach is designed to expose pupils to high aspiration and high expectation. The School believes that children rise or fall according to the expectations set for them, and setting the bar high encourages pupils to aspire. Parental survey data shows strong agreement that the school sets high academic standards and expectations (99.6%) and nurtures academic ambition and aspiration (88.5%). Teaching staff also overwhelmingly agree the school sets high standards (100%) and promotes academic values (100%).

**Knowledge-Rich Curriculum and Pedagogy:** CGS employs a knowledge-rich curriculum approach, particularly at Key Stage 3, to embed core knowledge in long-term memory and provide foundations for success in assessments and examinations. This aligns with international educational research highlighted in the TransformED NI strategy, which emphasises the importance of disciplinary and powerful knowledge as a prerequisite for advanced learning, critical thinking, and equitable opportunities. The school ensures that core knowledge is built upon cumulatively, strategically, and deliberately throughout a pupil's seven years to facilitate progression from novice to expert.

**Effective Teaching Principles:** The school has identified six key principles that shape consistency in learning and teaching: stretch and challenge for all, effective questioning and oracy, effective modelling, scaffolding, independent practice, and robust assessment and feedback. Strategies employed in the classroom to embed powerful knowledge include regular retrieval and quizzing, effective questioning, the modelling of excellence, and opportunities for practice. Teaching staff survey data supports this, with 95.7% agreeing that a strong focus on core knowledge at Key Stage 3 will build foundations for success.

**Assessment and Feedback:** Assessment and reporting are seen as key elements in measuring pupil progress and planning for improvement. The school uses a combination of formative, summative, and standardised assessments to provide tailored feedback, identifying targets for progress. Parental survey data indicates high levels of agreement that children are aware of their current progress (91.3%) and what they need to do to improve (87.4%), and that they receive regular feedback (87.7%). Teaching staff also report levels of agreement that pupils act on feedback to improve their work.



# Our Values:

## OPPORTUNITY

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**Opportunity**, the second pillar, stems from the School's belief in the potential of its pupils and its commitment to helping them achieve their potential, regardless of background. The school aims to ensure that every pupil feels a sense of aspiration, possibility, and opportunity from the moment they join until they leave.

**Social Mobility:** A core aim is to teach every student in a manner that expedites opportunities for the greatest possible social mobility, including access to all Higher Education pathways and Higher Apprenticeship pathways at age 18. This aligns with the broader educational goal of increasing equity and ensuring disadvantaged children have the opportunity to reach their potential. It aligns with the School's knowledge-rich curriculum, which aims to eradicate the so-called 'Matthew Effect', ensuring all children share the same core, powerful knowledge in long-term memory. Year 8 students visit a local University to envision future possibilities, and initiatives like the SistersIn Programme link senior female pupils with senior business leaders, providing exposure to high-profile industries. "No labels, no limits" is a key mantra of the School.

**Broad Curriculum:** CGS aims to offer a wide and varied range of subjects, providing pupils with core knowledge and skills for later life and career pursuits. Parental survey data supports this, with 92.7% agreeing their child has the chance to study a wide range of subjects. This is complemented by formalised, timetabled Personal Development, Citizenship and Careers lessons at various key junctures in a child's educational journey.

**Subject-Specific Opportunity:** The School provides opportunities at a subject-specific level to broaden pupils' horizons and facilitate competition at a regional and national level. Examples include participation in academic competitions like Science Olympiads and debating cups, and subject-specific trips.

**Extra-Curricular Provision:** Recognising that a well-rounded education involves opportunities outside the classroom, CGS offers a broad range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. These activities are seen as crucial for developing character, building resilience, fostering friendships and bonding, and developing leadership and creative skills. The variety of options aims to ensure there is a place for everybody. Parental surveys indicate high satisfaction with the range of extra-curricular opportunities (80%).

**Personal Development and Enrichment:** Beyond academics and clubs, the School emphasises personal development. Year 14 pupils undertake enrichment activities, including partnering with local primary schools, which helps develop skills and provides leadership opportunities. The School aims to provide an educational environment that supports students' development across academic, intellectual, personal, physical, and social domains.

**Careers Education:** This area is highlighted as important by ETI and the Transformed NI strategy. Teaching staff survey responses show agreement that the school equips pupils with relevant information and guidance for informed choices in personal development, careers, and otherwise. Pupils undertake specific timetabled Careers classes at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, ably co-ordinated by the Head of Careers Mr Martin.



# Our Values:

## RESPECT

**Respect, the third pillar, focuses on fostering a positive and supportive environment built on mutual respect and strong relationships. This value is integral to creating a safe and stimulating learning environment where all can prosper.**

**Pastoral Care:** The school places great emphasis on providing appropriate pastoral care for all pupils. Knowing learners well, listening to them, and supporting their personal development within positive relationships that foster trust and support are valued practices. Parents agree that the staff know their child as an individual, including their interests and strengths.

**Behavioural Standards:** Whilst fostering a caring environment, CGS insists upon very high standards of behaviour, including principles like "Respect always". The School works in partnership with parents to ensure a well-disciplined environment.

**Positive Relationships and Community:** CGS views itself as a "big family," where individuals care for and look out for each other. Students and staff interact with mutual respect. Students highlight the sense of safety and community, positive relationships between pupils and staff, and the friendly atmosphere.

**Safe and Supportive Environment:** The school provides a disciplined, well-ordered, caring, and supportive environment where learning is not hindered by interruption. The high quality of pastoral care has been recognised as a strength by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Parental surveys show high levels of agreement that children feel safe at school (92.2%) and that discipline is good (85.4%). Teaching staff also strongly agree that children behave well (100%) and are respectful (100%).

**Wellbeing linked to Gratitude:** Respect extends to valuing individuals and promoting wellbeing. The school emphasises gratitude extensively, encouraging pupils to thank others for their support and guidance, which is linked to enhancing wellbeing.

**Positive Reinforcement and Recognition:** The Positive Note System is a key initiative fostering respect by acknowledging and encouraging outstanding values and positive behaviours, making pupils feel valued. This includes recognising responsible behaviour, gratitude, good manners, leadership, academic effort, and contributions to school life. Parental survey data shows high agreement that children enjoy receiving Positive Notes and feel valued (78.6%). Teaching staff agree that the system helps children feel valued (76%).





# Director of Research

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Carrickfergus Grammar School has appointed Mr Mark Roberts as Northern Ireland's first Director of Research. Mr Roberts is one of the leading thinkers and writers on English education, a regular columnist for the Times Educational Supplement and author of three best-selling books.

First and foremost, Mr Roberts describes himself as a classroom teacher, and says: "Nothing still gives me greater joy than standing in front of a room of young people, teaching them Shakespeare and creative writing, poetry and rhetoric. In June 2020 he released a best-selling book 'You Can't Revise for GCSE English! Yes You Can' published by Collins. As an English literature obsessive, he has also written introductions to the Collins classroom classics version of Romeo and Juliet, and Frankenstein.

Mr Roberts also teaches English at Carrickfergus Grammar School.

In his previous role as Assistant Principal at a large school in Devon, Mr Roberts led on staff professional development and teacher training, with a specific focus on using educational research to enhance teaching and learning. Mr Roberts' role at Carrickfergus Grammar School is to provide teachers with the best professional development possible, ensuring high-quality classroom teaching as a result.

Previously, he worked as Head of English at a school in Manchester. This experience prompted an enduring fascination with boys' academic performance, culminating in the release of his best-selling book *Boys Don't Try? Rethinking Masculinity in Schools* (co-authored with Matt Pinkett), which was published by Routledge in April 2019. It was featured in *The Guardian*, *The Irish Times* and gained a 5-star review from *Schools Week*. He has also written a book called *'The Behaviour Whisperer'* which focuses on positive reinforcement strategies in schools.

The appointment of Mr Roberts reflects the school's clear vision to pursue the highest standards and outcomes, and the highest quality learning and teaching, for its students, with the aim of the school becoming a regional and national centre of excellence for learning and teaching, professional development of staff and educational research over the next years.

# Standards and Outcomes

In the last two years, Carrickfergus Grammar School has achieved record results.

In 2025, 18 out of 21 subjects at A Level were above NI Grammar School averages at A\*-C



In 2025, 19 out of 21 subjects at GCSE were higher than NI Grammar School averages at A\*-C

In 2025, 75% of pupils attained 7 or more A\*-B passes at GCSE

In 2025, 34 pupils achieved two or more A\*/ A grades at A Level, representing 42% of the cohort



In 2024, 98.4% of boys attained 5 or more passes at GCSE including English and Maths

In 2025, every single girl attained 7 or more passes at A\*-C at GCSE

In 2025, Mathematics results at GCSE were 18.9% above Grammar School averages

Almost 81% of grades awarded at A Level in 2025 were A\*-B







# Standards and Outcomes

## GCSE 2025

	CGS 2021	CGS 2022	CGS 2023	CGS 2024	CGS 2025
5 or more A*-C at GCSE	99.17%	100%	100%	99.1%	100%
5 or more A*-C at GCSE inc. English and Maths	97.52%	100%	100%	98.2%	100%
7 or more A*-C at GCSE inc. English and Maths	96.99%	100%	98.29%	96.5%	98.1%

	CGS 2022		CGS 2023		CGS 2024		CGS 2025	
5 or more A*-C at GCSE	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 98.4%	Girls 100%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%
5 or more A*-C at GCSE inc. English and Maths	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 98.4%	Girls 98.1%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%
7 or more A*-C at GCSE	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 98.25%	Girls 98.33%	Boys 95.1%	Girls 100%	Boys 96%	Girls 100%
7 or more A*-C at GCSE inc. English and Maths	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 98.25%	Girls 98.33%	Boys 95.1%	Girls 98.1%	Boys 96%	Girls 100%

## A Level 2025

	CGS 2021	CGS 2022	CGS 2023	CGS 2024	CGS 2025
3 or more A*-C	88.3%	93.8%	79.2%	86.5%	90%
2 or more A*-C	99%	100%	97%	100%	100%

### CGS BY GENDER - 'A' LEVEL

	CGS 2022		CGS 2023		CGS 2024		CGS 2025	
3 or more A*-C	Boys 91.4%	Girls 95.7%	Boys 79.1%	Girls 79.3%	Boys 77.4%	Girls 92.3%	Boys 87.5%	Girls 91.5%
2 or more A*-C	Boys 100%	Girls 97.6%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%	Boys 100%	Girls 100%

# GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS 2025

## COMPARISON AGAINST NORTHERN IRELAND GRAMMAR AVERAGES

	CGS A*-C %	NI A*-C %	CGS A*-B%	NI A*-B%
Art & Design	94.4	92.8	55.6	67.1
Biology	98.8	97.9	73.8	79.4
Business Studies	92.9	88.1	75	61.4
Chemistry	100	97.4	77	79.7
Child Development	96.9	95.2	84.4	69.9
Digital Technology	100	91	92.3	70.1
Drama	-	-	-	-
English Language	100	96.9	90.9	74.8
English Literature	99.1	96.7	81.8	78
French	100	89.4	91.3	61.2
Further Mathematics	96.1	93.7	86.3	84.9
Geography	84.2	93.4	57.9	72.7
German	100	90.9	100	61.6
History	100	93.6	83.6	72.4
Engineering	-	-	-	-
Mathematics	100	94.7	98.2	79.3
Music	100	95.1	92.9	80.3
Food and Nutrition	100	93.5	78.9	69.4
Physical Education	100	91.9	63.2	65.4
Physics	100	98.2	87.9	84.5
Religious Education FULL	90.8	89.7	73.4	68.6
Spanish	100	94.7	82.6	66.7
Technology	80.6	92.5	50	68.4



# ‘A’ LEVEL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2025

## COMPARISON AGAINST GRAMMAR SCHOOL AVERAGES

	CGS A*-C %	NI A*-C %	CGS A*-B%	NI A*-B%
Accounting	83.3	-	83.3	-
Art & Design	100	96.5	100	78
Biology	100	90.3	70.4	70.3
Business Studies	100	90.4	71.4	68.4
Chemistry	92.3	90.9	76.9	74.9
Digital Technology	100	79	100	49.7
English Literature	94.4	96.8	72.2	74.8
Environmental Technology	100	87.7	50	60.6
Nutrition and Food Science	88.9	91.8	33.3	65
French	100	93.6	100	77.1
Further Mathematics	100	98.3	100	90.8
Geography	100	90.8	87.5	68.1
Government and Politics	100	93.7	66.7	72.5
Health and Social Care	100	96.6	92.3	77.8
History	100	92	88.9	72
Mathematics	95.7	91.7	87	76.8
Music	100	86	100	64.3
Photography	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Physical Education	100	94.8	90.9	69.5
Physics	90.9	83.2	45.4	65.7
Religious Studies	95.5	93.5	95.5	71.6
Spanish	92.3	96.6	69.2	77.5
Technology	100	89.1	91.7	62.3

# Learning and Teaching

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Carrickfergus Grammar School has identified six key principles which shape and embody its pursuit of consistency in learning and teaching in the classroom.

These six principles are:

- Stretch and challenge for ALL pupils;
- Effective questioning and oracy;
- Effective modelling;
- Scaffolding;
- Independent practice;
- Robust assessment and feedback.







*“The pupils attain very good standards in Mathematics”.*

ETI Inspection October 2016

Key features of learning and teaching at Carrickfergus Grammar School include:

- Beginning a lesson with a short review of previous learning;
- Presenting new material in small steps with student practice after each step;
- Asking a large number of questions and checking the responses of all students;
- Providing models;
- Guiding student practice;
- Checking for student understanding;
- Providing scaffolds for difficult tasks;
- Monitoring independent practice;
- Engaging students in weekly and monthly review.

*“The standards attained by the students in English are very good”.*

ETI Inspection October 2016



# Assessment and Reporting

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Assessment and reporting are key elements in measuring pupil progress and planning for improvement.

Carrickfergus Grammar School fuses formative, summative and standardised assessments in order to ensure that feedback from assessment is tailored to the individual needs of students, with the aim of identifying targets for progress which will allow them to meet and exceed potential.

Students' work is marked regularly and within a reasonable amount of time. Attention is given by all teachers to literacy and numeracy according to the whole school Literacy and Numeracy policies. Assessments are therefore a regular and extensive feature of all academic subjects, but a number of 'Core Assessments' are formally tracked for each student in each subject in each academic year.

**Current arrangements for assessment and reporting include the following:**

- Parent consultations providing opportunities for parents to speak to teachers regarding their child's progress;
- The use of diagnostic data and examination board data to benchmark student performance and negotiate targets for improvement;
- Regression analysis and standardised scores at Key Stage 3;
- Use of homework as a learning tool, properly marked with suggestions for improvement, following the School and Department Homework Policies;
- Moderation of student work within subject departments;
- External moderation for public examinations at GCSE and A Level;
- Utilisation and reporting of DfE Benchmarking data for comparison of school and NI performance in external examinations and identification of areas for improvement;
- Publication to the wider community of school and pupil achievement.





# Pastoral Care

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The high quality of Carrickfergus Grammar's pastoral care provision has been recognised as a strength by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) and the school places great emphasis on the provision of appropriate pastoral care for all pupils. We foster a warm and happy school environment, and the size of the school allows for a real family ethos.

Our robust attendance rate of 95% means that we are well above the average for Northern Irish schools.

A pastoral system has been designed to build up the students' confidence, enabling them to thrive academically, to understand themselves as individuals and to develop sound relationships with other students and staff at the school.

The pastoral care system places great emphasis on the moral and social welfare and development of each of our students, as well as their intellectual, physical

and cultural needs. Our staff work collaboratively to meet the needs and aspirations of each student. The pastoral care team provides informed and sensitive guidance to support students in their personal development and in times of personal, family or social difficulty. Some students may at certain times benefit from the opportunity to work through any difficulties with a trained counsellor and this service is available through school.

Our experienced Learning Support Co-ordinators work to ensure that the pathway for children identified with additional educational needs is tailored appropriately, whilst maintaining the highest of aspirations and expectations. Individual Education Plans / Personal Education Plans are in place for relevant students, with reasonable adjustments where necessary.

*“The provision for care and support of the students is very good”.*

ETI Inspection October 2016

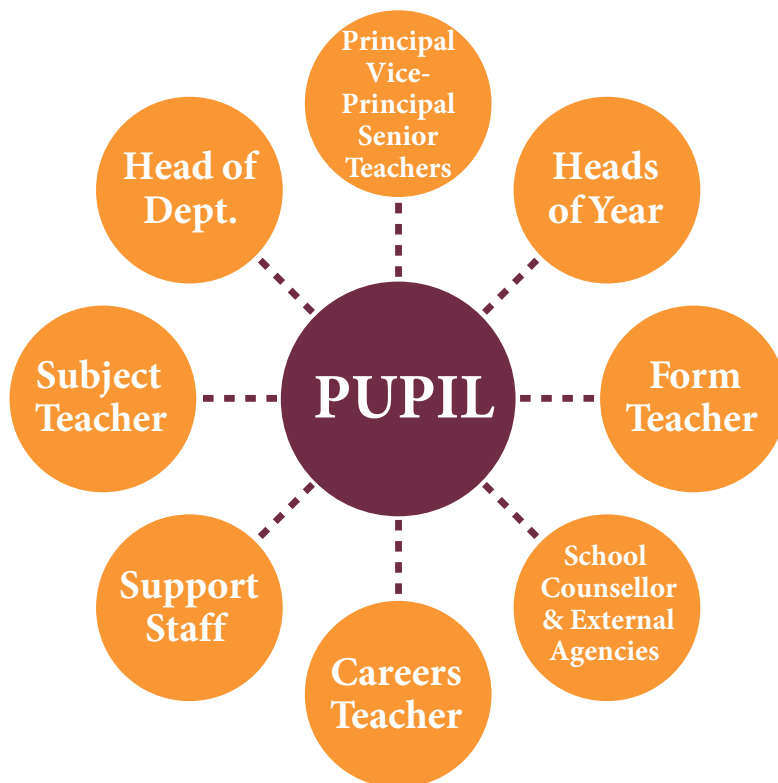
# Pastoral Care

*“There is a clear and inclusive ethos... pupils are supported well and sensitively by the teachers”*

ETI Inspection October 2016



The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Kane, whilst the Deputy Designated Teacher is Mr Gorman. The Principal, Mr Maxwell, is also a member of the safeguarding team alongside the Designated Governor for Child Protection, Mrs Cubitt.



*Mrs Kane is the Senior Teacher in charge of Pastoral Care at the school, ably assisted by 7 Heads of Year and 28 Form Teachers.*



# Behavioural Standards

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Carrickfergus Grammar School insists upon very high standards of behaviour.

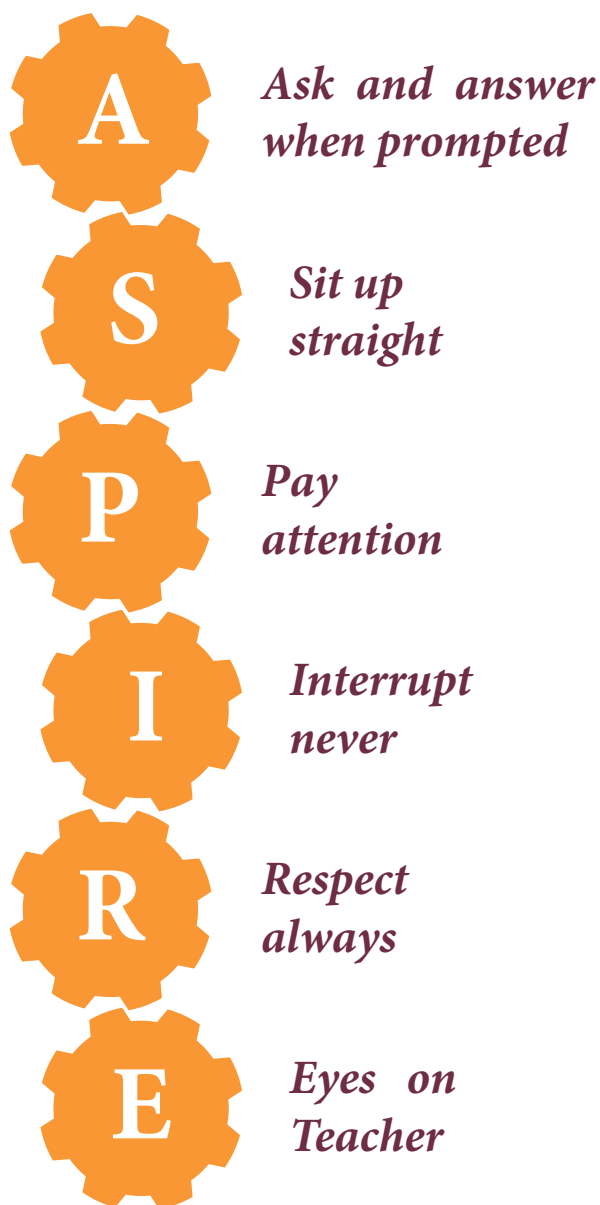
**We believe that:**

- **Children thrive on routines and boundaries;**
- **Children are ultimately happier when school is a well-disciplined environment;**
- **Behaviour becomes unacceptable at the very moment a teacher has to stop teaching to speak with a child.**

At this school we believe that if you look after the pennies, the pounds will look after themselves. If our students get the 'small' things right such as wearing uniform to a very high standard, not slouching in seats in class and listening attentively to the teacher at all times, the 'bigger' things will fall into place, not least a high standard of education, robust learning and good grades.

**We encourage our students to ASPIRE in line with the graphic opposite.**

At the start of Year 8, parents are asked to sign a contract indicating their support for the school's behaviour management system. We fully appreciate the support of parents in ensuring that the school environment is well-disciplined.



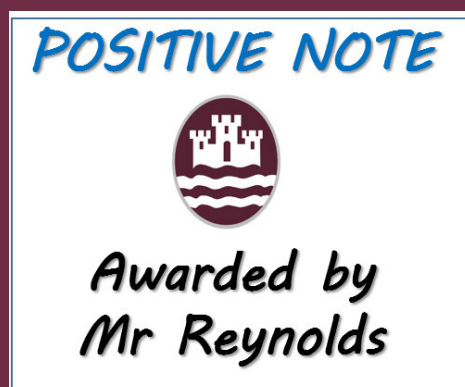
# Positive Notes

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Carrickfergus Grammar School has introduced a Positive Note System aimed at fostering and encouraging outstanding values in all aspects of school life, and acknowledging the many positive behaviours staff witness from students on a daily basis.

Students can receive Positive Notes, amongst other things, for:

- Acting in an exceptionally responsible manner
- Demonstrating stoicism
- Exceptional display of gratitude
- Exceptional display of good manners
- Exceptional display of leadership
- Exceptional classwork
- Exceptional homework
- Exceptional contribution to school life
- Exceptional helpfulness
- Improved effort / attitude
- Exceptional examination performance
- Exceptional fundraising and charity work
- Exceptional contribution to extra-curricular activity



# Families First School of the Year 2024

*Carrickfergus Grammar School has been named as the Families First 2024 'School of the Year' for the Northern Region*

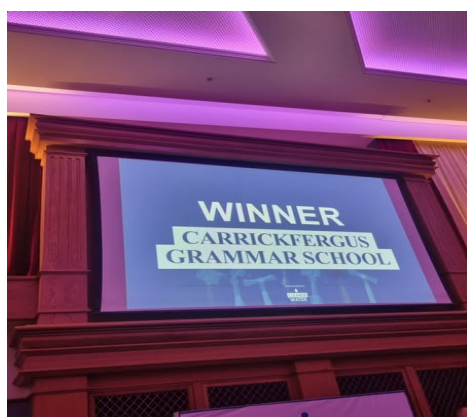


Of the 39 finalist schools across the country, there were 3 schools announced as 'Schools of the Year', of which Carrickfergus Grammar School was one. Over 100 nominations were received by the adjudicating panel in support of the school.

The following observations were made about the school:

- the excellent educational outcomes being achieved by pupils;
- the school's unique and innovative approaches to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, including the partnership with Mid and East Antrim Council to provide a satellite centre for Year 10 pupils at Oakfield Community Centre;
- the school's leading initiatives in relation to evidence-based learning and teaching, and the fact that it was bringing ResearchED to Northern Ireland for teachers and educators;
- the dedication of all staff;
- the excellent pastoral care and systems for SEN pupils;
- the school was viewed as a 'cornerstone school' in the community.

Congratulations also to Mrs Sharon Shannon who won the title of Learning Support Assistant of the Year 2024.





# Curriculum

The Curriculum at this school meets the requirements of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

## KEY STAGE 3

- English
- Mathematics
- Religious Studies
- PE / Games
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- History
- Geography
- French
- Spanish
- Home Economics
- Art and Design
- Technology
- Music
- Drama (Year 10)
- ICT
- Learning for Life and Work

*\* On offer through the  
Carrickfergus Learning  
Community.*

## KEY STAGE 4 (GCSE)

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Religious Studies
- PE / Games
- PE (GCSE)
- Art and Design
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Business Studies
- Digital Technology (ICT)
- Drama
- History
- Geography
- French
- Spanish
- Food and Nutrition
- Child Development
- Learning for Life and Work
- Music
- Technology
- Careers
- Engineering

## KEY STAGE 5 (A LEVEL)

- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Religious Studies
- Accounting
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Art and Design
- Business Studies
- Environmental Technology
- History
- Government and Politics
- Geography
- French
- Spanish
- Nutrition and Food Science
- Health and Social Care
- Music
- PE (A Level)
- Photography
- Sociology
- Technology
- Information Technology
- Applied ICT
- Media Studies\*
- Moving Image Arts\*
- Sports Studies\*
- Travel and Tourism\*
- Games
- LLW
- Careers



# Extra-Curricular

- Animal House
- Army Cadet Force
- Athletics
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Book Club
- Breakfast Club
- Bridge
- Chess
- Choir
- Cookery
- Cricket
- Debating
- Drama
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Equestrian
- Football
- Gaming
- Golf
- Gym
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hockey
- ICT
- Instrumental Ensembles
- Jag Tag (American Football)
- Minecraft
- Modern Languages
- Netball
- Orchestra
- Orienteering
- Photography
- Reading
- Rugby
- Running
- Science
- Show Jumping
- Scripture Union
- STEM
- Strings
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Warhammer
- Young Enterprise





# YEARS 8-10

## EXPERIENCES



**Alex Trueick**

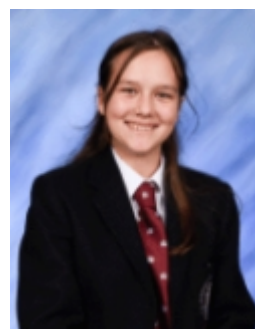
**Carrickfergus Model Primary School**

I loved meeting my teachers on the first few days, especially Mrs Turner! She is our Form Teacher. I like History, Physics and Geography. My brother, who also goes to this school, taught me a lot about Physics. I have tried the Warhammer and Drama Clubs in school.

**Sofia Andronic**

**St Nicholas' Primary School**

My favourite subject is Art as you can be really creative. I settled at the school really quickly as everyone helps you to fit in. Hockey and choir are my favourite activities after school. They are really fun. My tip to new Year 8 pupils: don't stress and be excited because there are many opportunities and activities to do at "big school"!



**Matt Davey**

**Sunnylands Primary School**

Chemistry is my favourite subject as we get to do experiments. I go to ICT Club after school. I also go to Chess Club which is great fun. At ICT Club we play Minecraft. At Chess Club I get to play against pupils from all age groups and skill levels. My tip to new Year 8 pupils: if you encounter a challenge, embrace it and learn from it. You will find the teachers here really supportive!

**Lola Bowen**

**Woodlawn Primary School**

My favourite trip in Year 8 was the trip to Queen's University as I got to look around the huge buildings and see what subjects and clubs there are. My favourite subjects so far are Art and English. I love drawing, writing poems and reading books.



**Rhys Finney**

**Eden Primary School**

My favourite subjects are Biology and Maths. I like learning about cells in Biology, and I love angles and fractions in Maths. I was a bit nervous about playing rugby when I first started, as I hadn't really played it much before, but it is great fun. My tip to new Year 8 pupils: try to socialise, be nice and join clubs. There is a club for everyone at this school!



# YEARS 8-10

## EXPERIENCES



**Daisy Dunn**  
**Whitehead Primary School**

On my first day of school I was nervous but I have made lots of great friends and love PE and netball. I love getting Positive Notes and getting good feedback on my work. I hope to be a teacher when I grow up and the teachers are great role models to look up to. I like being with my friends at lunch time, talking about my day and hearing about theirs!

**Andrew McNeill**  
**Victoria Primary School**

On my first day I was a little nervous, but then I started talking to some people and they were really nice and now we are good friends! My favourite subject is Biology. I like learning about the different cells and looking through a microscope is fun. I am in a number of clubs such as Dungeons and Dragons, and Men's Voices.



**Eliza Bovill**  
**Islandmagee Primary School**

Everyone here is very welcoming and friendly. I settled in quickly and found friends. My favourite subject is Physics and my favourite teacher is Miss Patterson, although all the teachers are very nice! I have joined the hockey team and enjoyed all of the matches, including our away matches. My top tip is to always try new things! At the end of Year 8, I went on the trip to Paris!

**Ciara Diola**  
**St Nicholas' Primary School**

I really enjoyed meeting my teachers for the first time, and it was a unique experience moving from class to class. My favourite subjects are Music and Technology. I love to play Music and I love to do project work in Technology. I play hockey after school and am in the Junior Girls' Choir.



**Faye Ayre**  
**Victoria Primary School**

My favourite subjects are English, Home Economics and Biology! I love Home Economics because I do practical work with a wonderful friend. We make delicious food! I go to hockey and I love that, too! The matches are so much fun, and our coaches Mrs Botha and Mrs Butler are the best!

# Uniform Policy

Full school uniform must be worn correctly at all times, including on the journey to and from school. We take pride in our uniform.

Please note that – as a result of the “School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill” which is currently awaiting Royal Assent - this uniform policy will be subject to amendments in upcoming months. A full uniform policy for September 2026, including rationale, will be sent out to the parents of children at the school, as well as incoming Year 8 parents.



GIRLS' UNIFORM	BOYS' UNIFORM
Standard Carrickfergus Grammar School blazer and school tie, as supplied by outfitters	Standard Carrickfergus Grammar School blazer and school tie, as supplied by outfitters
Mid-grey, box-pleated skirt worn to the mid-calf or below, as supplied by outfitters	Plain, black, school trousers, as supplied by outfitters (no skinny fit trousers accepted)
Plain white, standard school blouse	Plain white, standard school shirt
Plain navy, V-necked school jumper or cardigan as supplied by outfitters	Plain navy, V-necked school jumper or cardigan, as supplied by outfitters
Plain black tights or white ankle socks	Plain dark grey or plain black socks
Plain black leather shoes with low, flat heels (no boots or trainer-type shoes are accepted)	Plain black leather shoes with low, flat heels (no boots or trainer-type shoes are accepted)
Navy / white striped apron for H.E. (available from school)	Navy / white striped apron for H.E. (available from school)
<p>All uniform should be labelled with the owner's name.</p> <p>Only the following outdoor clothing is acceptable to and from school: a dark (rain)coat (navy, dark grey or black). A fluorescent band or strip is encouraged for dark mornings / evenings. No hoodies are permitted to and from school and will be confiscated.</p> <p>Only the school scarf should be worn. All other scarves will be confiscated.</p>	

GIRLS' P.E. UNIFORM	BOYS' P.E. UNIFORM
Navy school shorts and/or skort	School rugby jersey
Maroon school polo-shirt	Navy blue rugby shorts
School leggings / retro track bottoms / stadium pants	Navy blue school polo shirt
School hooded sweater / retro top	School hooded sweater / retro top
Navy and maroon socks	School retro track bottoms / stadium pants
Sports trainers*	Navy and maroon socks
	Sports trainers*
	Football / rugby boots
<p>*Training shoes must offer sufficient protection and support for young feet.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that these are purchased from a recognised sports retailer.</p> <p>Casual footwear and light plimsolls or Converse™ brand are not acceptable.</p> <p>All P.E. kit should be labelled with the owner's name. Shinguards and gum-shields are needed for hockey and rugby. Pupils should bring a towel and deodorant for all P.E. / Games classes.</p> <p>No valuables should ever be left in the school changing-rooms: We cannot be responsible for the loss of any items which are not given to us for safe-keeping.</p>	

# Uniform Policy

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## Saturday Games/Away Fixtures

Pupils must wear full school or PE uniform on the way to school or when travelling to away fixtures. This includes blazer/navy overcoat with uniform or school hooded sweater / retro top with PE uniform.

**Skirts** are to be worn to the mid-calf or below. As such, parents are advised to purchase a skirt at the start of the year which allows for growth. Girls are not permitted to roll skirts up.

Hair must be kept neat and tidy. Unnatural colours (e.g. blue, pink, burgundy etc.) and prominent stylings (e.g. blocked dying, stripes, buzzed/razor cuts etc) are not acceptable. Hair should be kept a natural colour at all times. We do not permit hair colouring, tints, dyes, highlights (boys and girls), knots or extreme shapes and styles where one part of the head looks very different from another part. This includes tipped or 'double-dip' (including ombre / balayage) dyed hairstyles. There is no discrimination between genders on hair length although neither boys nor girls may have any section of hair cut shorter than grade number 2. This means that the scalp should not be showing at any time. Lines shaved into the head or eyebrows will not be tolerated. In practical lessons hair must be tied back when requested by a member of staff.

**Make-up:** Discreet foundation only- no coloured nail-varnish/gel nails or eyelash extensions are permitted. No fake tan is permitted.

**Jewellery:** No earrings are permitted, even if concealed by hair or sticking-plasters. No other facial or visible body-piercings, including transparent retainers, are permitted, even when covered by a sticking-plaster. No wrist jewellery may be worn. One, flat-surfaced ring may be worn. Rubber wrist bands are not permitted.

**Badges:** The following badges are the only ones permitted to be worn on school uniform:

- 1 A badge representing a recognised youth organisation
- 2 A school badge
- 3 A badge noting significant achievement eg DoE Award
- 4 A charity badge

*The Principal reserves the right to send a pupil home for unacceptable uniform / appearance.*





# Year 8 Parent Survey

## Satisfaction Levels over 95%

Carrickfergus Grammar School undertook a very comprehensive and broad-ranging survey with Year 8 parents in 2024.

Whilst 75% is often considered as a strong indicator of satisfaction, we were delighted that so many responses achieved a satisfaction rate of over 95%. The percentage indicates the number of responses which either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the statement, and does not include responses marked as 'neutral'.

96.4%

My child enjoys receiving Positive Notes and feels valued as a result.

97.6%

Carrickfergus Grammar School is well led and managed.

100%

There is a clear vision for school development.

100%

Carrickfergus Grammar School sets high academic standards and expectations for my child.

100%

Carrickfergus Grammar School students wear their uniform and PE kits well and with pride.

100%

My child has the chance to study a wide and varied range of subjects.

96.4%

There are a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer to my child.

98.9%

Discipline at Carrickfergus Grammar School is good.

96.1%

I feel comfortable about approaching school if I have an issue or concern.

95%

The induction processes at Carrickfergus Grammar School helped my child to settle well.

97.6%

I agree with the school's knowledge-rich curriculum.



# SCHOOL LIFE



First XI Hockey Team



Merit Award Winners



Top Achievers A Level



Sailing Competition



Year 8 Barcelona Trip



Warhammer Club



Equestrian Team



The Animal House with Daniel Oreo + Olivia Bean



Duke of Edinburgh Award



Home sweet home



# Trips and Tours

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At the end of Year 8, pupils have the opportunity to travel to either Spain (Barcelona) or France (Paris)! They also visit the Queen's University of Belfast to learn about exciting degree opportunities. Various sports tours and ski trips also exist, alongside subject-specific trips.





## CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

120 North Road

Carrickfergus BT38 7RA

**Telephone:** 028 9336 3615

**Fax:** 028 9336 4270

**E-Mail:** info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk

**Website:** www.carrickfergusgrammar.com

**Headmaster:** Mr J. A. Maxwell BA (Hons) PGCE MSc PQH (NI)

**Chairperson of the Board of Governors:** Mr M Smith BSc MBA CEng MIET

**Controlled Grammar School**

**(Non-denominational)**

**Est 1962**

**Age Range of pupils:** 11-18

**Admissions Number:** 116

**Enrolment Number:** 800

**An Open Night for P6 / P7 pupils and their parents / guardians will be held in school on Thursday 15 January 2026 from 6:30pm-9:00pm. The Principal will speak in the Assembly Hall at 6:30pm and 8:30pm. The prospectus will be placed on our school website.**

**To parents/guardians naming Carrickfergus Grammar School (herein referred to as 'the School') as a preference on your child's Transfer Application**

### Entrance Assessment Results

Please ensure that you enter the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) awarded by the Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG), together with the SEAG Unique Pupil Number, on the Transfer Application and please note it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make sure that the original Statement of Outcome received from SEAG, indicating their child's SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS), is uploaded with the Transfer Application.

**SEAG is very clear that its Entrance Assessment consists of two papers. A pupil who only takes one paper (i.e. either Paper 1 or Paper 2 but not both) will not have completed the full Entrance Assessment. Such pupils will, however, have their "single paper" marked and will receive a Statement of Outcomes. Outcomes for pupils who only sit one paper will have the designation "e" (for estimate) immediately after the Outcome, e.g. Total Standardised Age Score TSAS 196e; Band 4e. Such pupils may be considered for admission by Carrickfergus Grammar School under Special Provisions.**

### Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions

If you are making a claim for your child to be considered under Special Circumstances and / or Special Provisions, please read carefully the information given in the relevant section overleaf. **Please note that you are required to upload with the Transfer Application all such material as you consider will assist the Admissions Sub-committee in determining if Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions apply.**

Claims for consideration for a child under Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions will be examined and decided upon **before the application of any of the Admissions Criteria.**

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions should complete SC Form and/or SP Form obtainable from the School and upload it with appropriate documentation described in section 2.

Parents/Guardians should note that they are required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria. If the documents are not uploaded with the Transfer Application, as detailed below, they will be requested after notification of an offer of a place at the school.

### Respective functions of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to Admissions to the school

Carrickfergus Grammar School is a co-educational, non-denominational controlled grammar school. The Board of Governors of Carrickfergus Grammar School has approved the criteria for admission described below, and have delegated to an Admissions Sub-Committee and the Principal the responsibility of applying its admissions criteria to identify which children are to be admitted to Carrickfergus Grammar School. This includes decisions in respect of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions.

## 1. ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2026

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 12 noon (GMT)** and an application submitted by the closing date of **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 12 noon (GMT)** will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and up to 4pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 will be treated as a late application.

The Board of Governors will not use as a criterion the position of preference given to the school by the applicant on the Transfer Form. When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will take into account **only** information which is detailed on or uploaded with the Transfer Application, including the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) provided by the Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG) as a result of the child's performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment (or the score assigned as a result of consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions). It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make sure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the School's admissions criteria, as outlined below, is stated on, or uploaded with, the Transfer Application. Parents/Guardians should note that they are required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria.

**If the number of applications is greater than the Admissions Number determined by the Department of Education, the following criteria (to include sub-criteria) shall be applied in the order listed below until the point where the admissions number is reached.**

**If there are fewer applicants complying with a particular criterion or sub-criterion than there are places available or remaining, those applicants complying with that criterion or sub-criterion will be admitted and the next criterion or sub-criterion will be applied to the remaining applicants.**

**If there are more applicants complying with a particular criterion or sub-criterion than there are places available or remaining, those applicants complying with that criterion or sub-criterion will go forward to be considered under the next criterion or sub-criterion and those not complying with that criterion or sub-criterion will be eliminated.**

- 1.1 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.

*The child's Birth Certificate and proof of address should be uploaded with the Transfer Application. Proof of address – any TWO of the following recent (within the past 6 months) documents with sensitive information redacted: Bank/building society statement; Utility bill (e.g. electricity, gas, TV licence, telephone); Addressed payslip; Letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit; Mortgage statement; Land and Property Services Rates Demand; Financial statement such as ISA, Pension or Endowment; Current Driving licence; Rental agreement.*

- 1.2 The Board of Governors will consider children who have taken the Entrance Assessment administered by the Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG). The Board of Governors will use the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) as awarded by SEAG to a pupil in the Entrance Assessment, subject only to the consideration of parent/guardian(s) claiming 'Special Circumstances' and / or 'Special Provisions' as defined overleaf. Places will be allocated in strict rank order of the scores, starting with the highest score and working in descending rank order, up to the Admissions Number (116). The TSAS in the SEAG Entrance Assessment should be entered, along with the SEAG Unique Pupil Number, on the Transfer Application.

*It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make sure that the Statement of Outcomes received from SEAG, indicating their child's SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS), is uploaded with the Transfer Application.*

1.3 Places will then be allocated using the following sub-criteria, in the order listed:

- I. Children who, at the date of their application, have another child of the family<sup>1</sup> currently enrolled at the school *[state name(s) and Registration Group(s) on the Transfer Application]*;
- II. Children who are the eldest eligible child<sup>2</sup> to be eligible to be accepted for enrolment in the School in September 2026. *Proof of eldest child should be uploaded with the Transfer Application – a letter on headed note paper, stating that the child is the eldest eligible child and that the family is known to the verifier, from one of the following who is not a family member of the applicant: a Primary School Principal, a medical practitioner, a solicitor, an elected public representative, a member of the clergy or a police officer.*
- III. Children attending one of the School's contributory Primary Schools as defined below or attending another school which is closer as the crow flies<sup>3</sup> than any of the School's contributory Primary Schools;
- IV. Children will be selected for admission on the basis of a random selection process. Each application to be considered at this stage will be allocated a random number electronically generated within "Microsoft Excel"; the applications will then be ranked in numerical order, with higher numbers having preference over lower numbers.

The School's contributory Primary Schools are:

Abbots Cross	Acorn	Ashgrove	Ballycarry	Carnmoney
Carrickfergus Model	Central Integrated	Earlview	Eden	Glengormley Integrated
Greenisland	Islandmagee	King's Park	Mossley	Oakfield
Silverstream	St Nicholas	Straid	Sunnylands	Victoria
Whiteabbey	Whitehead	Whitehouse	Woodburn	Woodlawn

If there are still places available after consideration of all the children who have taken the SEAG Entrance Assessment and been awarded a Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) by SEAG (or a score assigned by the Admissions Sub-committee in accordance with the arrangements for Special Circumstances and Special Provisions as set out below), the School will consider for admission any children who have not taken the SEAG Entrance Assessment. Such children, if they satisfy Criterion 1.1, will be allocated to the remaining place(s) up to the School's Admissions Number using the sub-criteria listed in section 1.3 in the order set out.

## 2. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES and SPECIAL PROVISIONS

### General

The purpose of a claim for special circumstances and/or special provisions is so that a child can be assigned a Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) equivalent to that which he or she would have obtained in the SEAG Entrance Assessment under normal conditions. Consideration of a claim for special circumstances and/or special provisions consists of two parts: the first requires the consideration of whether there is sufficient material to permit a child to be considered as having special circumstances or attracting special provisions, or both; if a child is permitted to be considered as having special circumstances or as attracting special provisions or both, the second part of the consideration requires an educational judgement to be made on the totality of the material presented to the

<sup>1</sup> Child of the family covers: a child born to a married couple or to a couple in a civil partnership; a child born to a co-habiting couple; a child born to a single parent; a child of either/any of those people by a previous marriage, civil partnership or relationship; a child living with a couple who has been treated as a "child of the family" whether there is a marriage or a civil partnership or not; a child living with an individual, who has been treated as a "child of the family"; an adopted or fostered child; a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family or individual.

<sup>2</sup> 'Eldest eligible child of the family' includes applicants who, although not chronologically the eldest in the family, are to be treated as the 'eldest eligible child of the family' in the following circumstances: where the applicant is more than seven years younger (by birth date) than the next eldest sibling; where the applicant is the eldest child of a reconstituted family; where the applicant is the first in the family to transfer to a mainstream post primary school in Northern Ireland due to an elder sibling being statemented or attending a special school; where a family has relocated to Northern Ireland. Twins and other multiple birth applicants will be regarded as joint eldest.

<sup>3</sup> as measured using the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) online Distance Measuring Tool, using 6-figure northings and eastings grid references to identify distance from the front gates of Carrickfergus Grammar School to individual schools.



Admissions Sub-committee so that a Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) equivalent to that which the child would have obtained in the SEAG Entrance Assessment under normal conditions can be assigned.

Please note, parents/guardians are required to upload with the Transfer Application all such material that will assist the Admissions Sub-committee in performing both parts of the consideration described above. It should be noted by parents/guardians that both parts of the consideration referred to involve an exercise in educational judgement and not precise calculation.

### **Educational Evidence to be provided in support of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions**

In reaching the educational judgement needed to assign a Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) that the child would have obtained in the SEAG Entrance Assessment under normal circumstances, the Admissions Sub-committee will consider any material uploaded with the Transfer Application by the parents/guardians. This material should include all of the following:

- i) The Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) score awarded by SEAG in the Entrance Assessment (if the child sits both SEAG Entrance Assessments) or the TSAS estimate provided by SEAG (if the child sits only one of the Entrance Assessments, due to the child's illness or other unforeseen circumstances);
- ii) The results for the child of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7;
- iii) Comparative information from the Primary School, including the results, without names, for other children in the child's Year 7 class of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and, where available, the respective SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) awarded;
- iv) Any other relevant material. Parents should be advised that comparative standardised data as outlined in the points above will carry greater weight.

### **Special Circumstances**

Carrickfergus Grammar School has academic performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment as one of its criteria, subject only to the consideration of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and which are supported by documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature. These 'medical or other problems' are commonly referred to as 'special circumstances'.

Please note that if a claim for the consideration of Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Special Access arrangements were granted for a child, the Admissions Sub-committee will take into account the fact that the child was granted Special Access arrangements for those matters.

Parents/guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Circumstances should complete Form SC, obtainable from the School, stating the precise reason why they believe the child should be considered for Special Circumstances. The SC Form and appropriate documentary evidence should be uploaded with the Transfer Application.

The Admissions Sub-committee will consider each application for Special Circumstances. Where a Special Circumstances claim is upheld, the Admissions Sub-committee will assign, on the basis of the information available, an equivalent Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) for the child. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received a SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) score and the Admissions Criteria applied.

### **Details of Medical or Other Problems**

Where it is claimed that a child's performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessments has been affected by a medical or other problem, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to set out in the Form SC precise details of the problem and upload with the Transfer Application the evidence to corroborate its existence.

Where the problem is a medical one of short-term duration which affected the child only at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessments, parents / guardians should be aware that the Admissions Sub-committee will attach greater weight to evidence indicating that the child was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the assessments.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents/guardians should set out in the Form SC precise details of the problem and upload appropriate documentary evidence with the Transfer Application. It should be noted that independent evidence will carry greater weight.

## Special Provisions

Special provisions will apply for:

- (a) children whose parents/guardians wish them to transfer from schools outside Northern Ireland;
- (b) children who have received more than half their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- (c) 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 SEAG Entrance Assessment OR have estimated Outcomes from SEAG because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment Papers.
- (d) religious observance whereby faith precludes from sitting tests on the designated SEAG Assessment days.

Note: It is expected that all those seeking admission should sit the SEAG Entrance Assessments, with the exception of those children who take up residence in Northern Ireland after **25 September 2025**.

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Provisions should contact the School as soon as possible. In addition, they should complete Form SP, obtainable from the School, stating the precise reason why they believe the child is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions and upload appropriate documentary evidence with the Transfer Application including any educational evidence as detailed under Special Circumstances above that might assist the panel to determine an appropriate score. A copy of Form SP and all the documentary evidence should be uploaded with the Transfer Application.

The Admissions Sub-committee will consider each application for Special Provisions. Where Special Provisions are accepted, the following procedure will apply:

- a) The applicant will have the opportunity to sit a standardised independent assessment of ability in English, Mathematics and/or Verbal Reasoning, chosen by the School; and
- b) The Admissions Sub-committee will assign, on the basis of the information available, an equivalent Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) for the child. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received a SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) and the Admissions Criteria applied.

### 3. NOTE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

**It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the Transfer Application is completed in full and that all relevant information is uploaded with the Transfer Application.**

If the Board of Governors becomes aware of any irregularity in the details uploaded or included on the Transfer Application, it reserves the right to reject the application made on behalf of the child for admission to the School.

### 4. DUTY TO VERIFY - THE VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION PROVIDED

Those making applications should note that the information contained within an application that qualifies the child for admission will be verified. The Board of Governors therefore reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any Transfer Application. Those making applications should also note the provision of false information or incorrect information, or the failure to provide verifying documents according to the required deadline, may result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the School to offer a place.

### 5. ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8 FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE TRANSFER PROCESS

Carrickfergus Grammar School operates a separate waiting list for Year 8. All applications for admission to Year 8 that were unsuccessful in obtaining a place in the school will be automatically added to the waiting list. New applications and applications where new information has been provided will also be added to the waiting list. The Year 8 waiting list will be in place until **30 June 2027**. Please contact the School if you wish your child's name to be removed from the list. Should a vacancy arise after the date upon which placement letters have been issued from the Education Authority, the procedure outlined above in the Admissions Criteria for entry of children to Year 8 will

be followed in relation to those applications on the Year 8 waiting list. The School will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the School by this method.

Should the Admissions Sub-committee of the Board of Governors determine that a child, who has arrived in Northern Ireland after the Transfer Process has been concluded, is suitable for admission, it will seek approval from the Department of Education to admit the child through the allocation of an additional place.

### Applications and Admissions to Year 8

Year	Admissions Number	Total Applications	Total Admissions
<b>2023-2024</b>	116	169	116
<b>2024-2025</b>	116	158	116
<b>2025/26*</b>	116	151	118

*\*The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all Year 8 children admitted to the school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS.*

*(SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)*

## 6. ADMISSIONS TO YEARS 9-11

The school operates a waiting list for places in Years 9-11. If parents wish their child to be added to the waiting list, they should contact the school and complete form AP1 available from the School. Admission will only be considered if there are vacant places in the Year Group, if the school's overall enrolment number is not exceeded and if admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.

If the number of applications is greater than the school's Admissions Number, the following conditions shall be applied progressively in the order set out below:

- Children will be placed in rank order of their aggregate score in tests completed in the year prior to entrance to the school, which will be set by the Board of Governors of this school incorporating English and Mathematics;
- If children are tied on the same aggregate score, then pupils shall be selected by the application of Criteria as set out in the current Transfer Booklet until the school's admissions number has been reached.

Applicants will then be interviewed as part of the application process and this interview will form part of the selection process. Prior to interview, parents/guardians of applicants will be required to provide copies of their child's most recent school report from their current school.

School reserves the right at discretion not to award a place to an applicant if the academic reports and / or behavioural information from the applicant's previous school are not satisfactory.

The parent or guardian of the pupil and the pupil themselves must also commit to abiding by the protocols, high standards of behaviour and school routines as have been adopted by all pupils and their parents/guardians who are currently enrolled in the school.







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