



The Education system in Northern Ireland

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Primary education

- ▶ Nursery School
- ▶ aged 3 to 4.
- ▶ Primary school
 - ▶ Foundation Stage
 - ▶ Primary 1, age 4 to 5
 - ▶ Primary 2, age 5 to 6
 - ▶ Key Stage 1
 - ▶ Primary 3, age 6 to 7
 - ▶ Primary 4, age 7 to 8
 - ▶ Key Stage 2
 - ▶ Primary 5, age 8 to 9
 - ▶ Primary 6, age 9 to 10
 - ▶ Primary 7, age 10 to 11 (Transfer procedure exams to determine secondary school placement.)

Secondary education

- ▶ Secondary school or grammar school
 - ▶ Key Stage 3
 - ▶ Year 8, age 11 to 12
 - ▶ Year 9, age 12 to 13
 - ▶ Year 10, age 13 to 14
 - ▶ Key Stage 4
 - ▶ Year 11, age 14 to 15
 - ▶ Year 12, age 15 to 16 (GCSE examinations)
- ▶ Secondary school, grammar school, or further education college
 - ▶ Sixth form
 - ▶ Year 13, age 16 to 17 (AS-level examinations)
 - ▶ Year 14, age 17 to 18 (A-levels (A2))

School holidays in Northern Ireland

- ▶ School year September – June
- ▶ Less than 1 weeks holiday at Halloween
- ▶ Up to 2 weeks holidays at Christmas
- ▶ Up to 2 weeks holiday at Easter
- ▶ 8 weeks Holiday July and August

Further education

- ▶ **Further education** (often abbreviated "FE"), is a term mainly used in connection with education in Further education colleges.
- ▶ It is post-compulsory education (in addition to that received at secondary school), that is distinct from the education offered in universities (higher education). It may be at any level above compulsory education, from basic training to Higher National Diploma or Foundation Degree.

FE in Northern Ireland

- ▶ FE in Northern Ireland includes education for people over 16, usually excluding universities. It is primarily taught in FE colleges for example South West College

Higher education

- ▶ Higher education ("HE") which is education at a higher level than secondary school, usually provided in distinct institutions such as universities. But is also taught in some further education colleges linked to universities, for example South West College delivers several degree programmes in business, caring and technology.