

Table Showing Comparative School Years for Children within the Different State Education Systems of the Devolved Governments

	ENGLAND, WALES, SCE		SCOTLAND		NORTHERN IRELAND			
Birthday Between	1 Sept - 31 Aug		1 Sept - 29 Feb	1 Mar - 31 Aug	1 Sept - 30 Jun		1 Jul - 31 Aug	
Age	School Year	Exam Stage	School Year	School Year	School Year	Exam Stage	School Year	Exam Stage
5	R	KS1	P1		P1	KS1		
6	Y1	KS1	P2	P1	P2	KS1	P1	KS1
7	Y2	KS1	P3	P2	P3	KS1	P2	KS1
8	Y3	KS2	P4	P3	P4	KS1	P3	KS1
9	Y4	KS2	P5	P4	P5	KS2	P4	KS1
10	Y5	KS2	P6	P5	P6	KS2	P5	KS2
11	Y6	KS2	P7	P6	P7	KS3	P6	KS2
12	Y7	KS3	S1	P7	Y8	KS3	P7	KS2
13	Y8	KS3	S2	S1	Y9	KS3	Y8	KS3
14	Y9	KS3	S3	S2	Y10	KS3	Y9	KS3
15	Y10	KS4		S3	Y11	GCSE	Y10	KS3
16	Y11	GCSE	S4 Std Grd		Y12	AS	Y11	GCSE
17	Y12	AS	S5 Higher	S4 Std Grade	Y13	A2	Y12	AS
18	Y13	A2	S6 Adv Higher	S5 Higher			Y13	A2
				S6 Adv Higher				

To use the table

R = reception KS = KEY STAGE P1 = PRIMARY 1 Y1 = YEAR 1 S1 = SENIOR 1 AS/A2 = A-Level

For any academic year, example:

A child who is 6 between September and February would be in Y1 in England, P2 in Scotland and P2 in NI.

A child who is 6 between February and June would be in Y1 in England, P1 in Scotland and P2 in NI.

A child who is 6 between July and August would be in Y1 in England, P1 in Scotland and P1 in NI.

AGE and Entry: (Refer to Table above)

The Scottish school year starts in August. The entry class is primary 1 (P1) and a child must be 5 before the end of the following February to gain admission to P1. In England term starts in September, the entry year is reception (R) and children must be 5 before August 31 the following year. Different cut off dates and exam system can lead to problems. Difficulties will only generally arise with school year differences if your child is born between March and August. Those aged 11 or 12 can find that a move North of the border will move them back from Secondary school in England to Primary School in Scotland. Moves North to South can see the same child jumping from primary school in Scotland to the second year of secondary schooling in England depending on time of move.

The School Year

EVENT	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND
School Year Begins	Approx 4 September	Approx 20 August
Sept Weekend	-	Fri & Mon of 3rd wk in Sept
October 1/2 term	5 days (Wk 3 or 4)	5 days (Wk 2 or 3)
Christmas	2 weeks	2 weeks
Feb 1/2 term	5 days	1 day
Easter	2 weeks	2 weeks
May day	1 day	1 day
Whitsuntide 1/2 term	5 days	-
School Year Ends	3rd week in July	Last week in June
In Service days	5 - usually added to holidays	

The Exam System

In England and Wales children follow the National Curriculum and sit National Tests in English and Maths. Testing takes place at the end of KS1 (Y2 when children are 7), KS2 (Y6 when children are 11) and KS3 (Y9 when children are 14). There is a set date when testing is carried out in all schools. Tests are marked externally. League tables are published but should be read with caution as no account is taken of value-added.

In Scotland children follow the 5 - 14 curriculum external tests are devised for each level with children tested internally by schools when the school believe the child will achieve that level. Tests are marked by the schools and reported nationally. Schools are given targets to meet based on previous performance and the pupil mix.

GCSE and Standard Grade:

These are broadly equivalent exams. Standard Grades are sat in S4 (ie 4 years after entering secondary school - remember in Scotland a child must be 11 by the end of February to enter secondary school the following August.) The mix and range of subjects will be similar to those on offer at GCSE which is taken in England by those pupils in Y11 ie 5 years after entering secondary school. In Scotland there is only one exam board the SQA in England there are many with a corresponding broad range of syllabi.

Grading: Standard Grades are awarded passes at grades 1 & 2 (Credit suitable for continuing study to higher level) 3 & 4 (General passes at this level would suggest a pupil should follow Higher still courses at Intermediate Level 2) 5 & 6 (Foundation passes at this level would suggest a pupil should follow Higher still courses at Intermediate Level 1).

GCSE's are graded A-G. Passes at A-C are accepted as higher grade passes suitable for Advanced studied. (though in some subjects a grade B will be needed for schools to recommend study at A-level.)

A-Levels, AS and Highers. Highers and Advanced Highers are broadly equivalent to As And A-Levels these would be accepted by Universities as evidence that a student was capable of degree level study. Highers are not as in depth as A-levels and students would be expected to gain more higher passes than A-levels. The Higher still programme that exists in Scotland provides qualifications equivalent to GCSE and Standard Grade.

Both systems also offer a broad but differing range of vocational qualifications.

School Admissions

For England please see separate article. As with England parents are free to choose which school they wish to send their child but most historically choose the local school. Problems with school admissions in Scotland are less marked. Maximum class sizes exist and schools may be capped if they reach these levels. In most areas schools are not capped. In areas where there is a large turnover of pupils moving in and out of an area schools are allowed to take account of this and hold over places for those known to be arriving later. If a local school is capped the education Authority has to take responsibility for finding an alternative place and for funding additional associated costs eg transport.

If you feel your child may be affected by a move North or South of the border do speak with the school SCE. It may be possible to minimise some of the perceived problems.

Teaching in Scotland

Anyone wishing to teach in Scotland must be registered with the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTC).

Contact Details:

The General Teaching Council for Scotland

Clerwood House

96 Clermiston Road

Edinburgh EH12 6UT

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