



## Types of School in the United Kingdom

### Maintained

Maintained schools are divided into four categories:

1. **Community** - Previously known as county schools. The LEA employs the staff, owns the school buildings and the land on which they are situated, and has primary responsibility for admission arrangements.
2. **Foundation** - Many foundation schools were formerly grant maintained schools. The governing body employs the staff and has primary responsibility for admissions arrangements. The school land and buildings are owned by the governing body or a charitable foundation.
3. **Voluntary Aided Schools** - Many VA schools are church schools. The governing body employs the staff, decides admission arrangements and also contributes towards the cost of running the school. The school land and buildings are normally owned by a charitable foundation.
4. **Voluntary Controlled Schools** - VC schools are almost always church schools, and the land and buildings are often owned by a charitable foundation. The LEA employs the staff and has primary responsibility for admissions arrangements.

Community, foundation and voluntary schools all work in partnership with other schools, receive funding from LEAs and deliver the national curriculum. They can be primary or secondary schools.

### Specialist Schools

Any maintained secondary school in England may apply to be designated as a specialist school in one of ten key areas. School can combine any two of the following specialisms:

- Arts (performing, visual or media)
- Business and enterprise
- Engineering
- Humanities
- Languages
- Maths and computing
- Music
- Science
- Sports
- Technology

Specialist schools meet full national curriculum requirements, but have a special focus on the chosen specialisms. They have a key role in revitalising education especially in disadvantaged areas.

## Other types of school

**City Technology Colleges (CTCs)** - These are funded directly by the government and offer a wide range of vocational qualifications alongside A-levels. They teach the national curriculum with a specific focus on science, maths and technology. CTCs have developed close links with employers.

**City Academies** - These are publicly funded independent schools, set up where there is an unmet demand for school places or to replace schools in challenging circumstances. They are owned and run by sponsors, who meet the significant capital costs of the school, the balance being met by the Government. Academies provide free secondary education to pupils of all abilities including those with Special Educational Needs, and offer a broad curriculum with a key specialism. Their state-of-the-art facilities and expertise are shared with other schools and the wider community.

**Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)** - PRUs are established and maintained by LEAs to provide education for those children who might not otherwise get it. Candidates can include teenage mothers, pupils who have been excluded from other schools and pupils in the assessment phase of a statement. The focus of PRUs is to get pupils back into a mainstream school.

**Grammar schools** - Grammar schools select most or all of their pupils on academic ability. Current policy on grammar schools dates back to 1995 and states that there will be no new grammar schools; selection will only end where there is a local demand for this to happen.

**Non-maintained special schools** - These are not-for-profit charitable schools which are partly funded by the LEAs through the placement of special needs pupils.

**Independent schools** - Funded by fee-paying pupils and not maintained by the LEA or central government.

**Trust schools** - A Trust school is a state-funded Foundation school supported by a charitable trust. It is made up of the school and partners working together for the benefit of the school. Any maintained school can become a Trust school. A Trust school manages its own assets, employs its own staff, sets its own admissions arrangements and chooses which partners to work with - for example, businesses, business foundations, colleges, universities or community groups.

This is a fairly recent government initiative and is still at the pathfinder (trial) stage. Nonetheless, over 140 primary, secondary and special schools have applied to become Trust schools, alongside the 70 Trust pathfinder schools which are already working towards Trust status. The first of the pathfinders plan to function as Trust schools from September 2007.

## Wales

Types of schools in Wales are defined as in England.

Welsh is a compulsory subject for all students in mainstream state schools in Wales. Pupils study Welsh either as a first or second language depending on where they live in Wales.

Pilots of a new Foundation Phase curriculum for three- to seven-year-olds to replace Key Stage 1 have begun in Wales. By 2008 the foundation phase should replace Key Stage 1 in all schools.

## Northern Ireland

Secondary education is largely selective with pupils going to grammar schools or secondary schools according to academic ability. There is also a large voluntary school sector and Catholic maintained schools.

**Controlled** - Controlled schools are owned and funded by the Education and Library Boards although boards of governors are increasingly taking control. The education board employs teaching and non-teaching staff but here too they are relinquishing responsibility to governors. The role of the board is to plan provisions for schools, employ teachers and meet recurrent costs. These are mainly Protestant schools and the church is represented on the board of governors.

**Catholic Maintained** - These schools are owned by the Catholic Church through a system of trustees. They are managed by a board of governors. Regular costs are met by the Education and Library Boards and they are responsible for employing non-teaching staff. Teachers are employed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

**Other Maintained** - These are owned by the Protestant church through a system of trustees and they are managed by a board of governors. Regular costs are met by the Education and Library Board who also employ the non-teaching staff.

**Voluntary Grammar** - These are owned by the school trustees and are managed by a board of governors, who employ all the staff. Regular costs are funded by the Department of Education.

**Grant Maintained Integrated** - These are usually partially owned by trustees and managed by a board of governors who employ all staff. Regular costs are met by the Department of Education.

**Special Needs** - Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland have to provide education for pupils with special educational needs up to the age of 19. They can be taught in mainstream primary and secondary schools but there are also separate special units for some students.

## Scotland

**Mainstream schools** - The Scottish Executive offers all three and four-year-olds free education, and then primary education between the ages of 5 to 12, which follows the national curriculum.

The vast majority of secondary state schools in Scotland are comprehensive.

### Other types of school

**Denominational schools** - The majority of denominational schools in Scotland are Roman Catholic. Denominational schools are primary and secondary schools in which the study and observance of a particular religion forms a part of the curriculum. In all other respects denominational schools follow the same curriculum as non-denominational schools, and they must accept pupils who do not follow the religion of the school.

**Gaelic Medium Schools** - Gaelic is Scotland's longest-established language, and education in Gaelic is available in around 60 primary schools. Most of these are located in the Highlands

and Islands, with others in cities and towns in the Lowlands. Gaelic features in primary and secondary schools, both as a subject and as a teaching language in class. At secondary and further education levels there are separate courses and examinations for fluent speakers and learners.

**Special needs support** - It is the responsibility of the education authority to provide education for four- to 16-year-olds with special educational needs. Most special needs pupils are integrated into mainstream schools, but there are special schools designed to meet the needs of those who cannot attend mainstream schools. Some special schools are independently run, for instance by charities. If there are no state special schools within the area covered by an education authority, they will pay for a pupil to attend a private school or a school in another area.