

ST MARY'S CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Principal: Mrs Siobhan Kelly BA, M.ED, PQH (NI)

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mr Sean Mahon

**Voluntary Grammar School
Boys' Grammar**

Age Range: 11-18

Admissions No: 175

Enrolment No: 1180

OPEN EVENING INFORMATION

**Thursday 26th September 2019 – 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm & Thursday 16th January 2020 – 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm
Principal's address at 8.30 pm**

Parents and pupils will be invited via primary schools, parishes and the local press.

To Parents / Guardians naming St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School as a Preference on your child's Transfer Form.

Entrance Assessment Results

St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School intends to use the grade awarded to pupils completing the GL Entrance Assessment on Saturday 16th November 2019 or the supplementary GL Entrance Assessment on Saturday 7th December 2019 as specified by the school. In Section C of the Transfer Form parents/guardians must state the grade achieved and attach to the Transfer Form a copy of the statement of results which they receive on Saturday 25th January 2020.

Special Circumstances

St. Mary's will admit pupils strictly in the order of the Entrance Assessment Grade which they obtain, subject only to the consideration of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the 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".

Such adverse circumstances may include:

- temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the Assessment;
- immediate family bereavement at the time of the Assessment;
- serious and disruptive domestic crisis arising at the time of the Assessment;
- terminal illness of a parent/guardian;
- life threatening illness of the child or member of immediate family;
- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or relative;
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack;
- recent serious physical assault.

A hard copy of the appropriate **Special Circumstances** Claim Form (SCR) must be received by 2.00 pm on 13th December 2019 at the school where your child sat the GL Assessment. Supporting evidence is not necessary at this stage but the reasons for the claim and the child's full name, address and date of birth must be included. Claims not registered within this period may not be considered.

Educational Evidence which could support a claim for Special Circumstances:

Where it is claimed that a pupil's performance in the Entrance Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, independent evidence of its existence **must** be provided by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to the school when completing the Transfer Form. This evidence should be attached to the Transfer Form using **Form SC1**. The evidence should also be in keeping with the documents 'GLA Entrance Assessment: Access Arrangements and Special Circumstances Policy' and 'A Guide to Claiming Special Circumstances for Children taking the GLA Entrance Assessment'. Both documents are available from the School website www.stmaryscbgs.com or directly from the School on request.

Where the problem is a medical one of short term duration which affected the pupil only at the time of the Entrance Assessment the school will require the production of evidence that the pupil was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature the parents should set out in the Transfer Form precise details of the problem and append any appropriate evidence to corroborate its existence. Examples of this type of evidence might include a letter from a Priest / Minister of Religion or a death certificate in the case of a family bereavement or a solicitor's letter in the case of a family separation.

This evidence should be dated prior to the release of GL Results to be considered.

The Centre at which the child took the assessment should be named and a copy of the Special Circumstances claim also attached.

St. Mary's will not be obtaining from a primary school information which would support an applicant's claim of special circumstances.

Regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) (Transitional) Regulations (NI) 2007 makes clear that, upon receipt of a request made in writing by a pupil's parent or legal guardian, a school must disclose the relevant pupil's formative record of progress and achievement to the parent.

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that all relevant information, to enable the possibility of an upgrade to be considered, is provided to the School.

Such relevant information should normally include the records of the child's performance in all standardised English and Mathematics (and Irish, in the case of children attending Irish medium schools) assessments throughout Key Stage 2. Results from all tests should be accompanied by the name of the standardised test and the supplier of test.

The Board of Governors Admissions Committee will consider all relevant evidence as provided by parents/guardians.

Please note that judgement of the importance of documentation forwarded in support of Special Circumstances will be at the discretion of the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors.

Adjustments will be made by the Admissions Committee if they are satisfied that a child's performance in the GL Assessment was directly affected by special circumstances. Any adjustment will reflect the average score of the child in English and Mathematics standardised assessments in P6. The sum of the standardised age score for PTE/PTM from P6 will be used. We are comparing these against the standardised age score for the GL Assessment (with corresponding grades). The Admissions Criteria will then be applied.

GL Grade Boundaries

Grade is awarded on total combined Standardised Age Score (SAS) for Maths & English

GL Grade Boundaries	Max	A	B1	B2	C1	C2	D
Total SAS - Maths + English	282	234	229	224	219	213	<213

We combine a pupil's SAS in PTE and PTM from assessments completed during their Primary 6 year. We compare this combined SAS with the GL grade boundaries tabulated above to inform us of a GL comparative grade for that pupil.

(The Board of Governors Admissions Committee will consist of a Governor, the Principal, the Pastoral and Curriculum Vice-Principals, the Senior Teacher in charge of KS3 and the school SENCo). **The Admissions Committee will meet to consider claims for Special Circumstances at each round of the process.**

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parents to ensure the above information is provided to the school. Failure to provide such information may result in the school being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. Parents claiming that medical or other problems affected the performance of their child in the School's Entrance Assessment must have submitted an application for such **by 2.00 pm on Friday 13 December 2019 to the Centre, at which the applicant sat the Entrance Assessment.**

The Board of Governors may require an assessment of an applicant's abilities to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the school.

Special Provision

Special Provision may be made by the Board of Governors for boys:

1. moving or recently moved to Northern Ireland:
 - a. whose parents/guardians wish them to transfer to post-primary schools from schools outside Northern Ireland;
 - b. who, by the 9th November 2019, have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland.
2. whose educational provision has been negatively affected by serious medical or other problems which is supported by independent verifiable documentary evidence and who have not taken either of the GLA Entrance Assessments.

Applicants, from categories 1a and 1b above, who wish to apply under Special Provision, do not need to take the GLA Entrance Assessment or the supplementary assessment unless their parents/guardians so wish, in which case the GLA Entrance Assessment grade obtained would also be considered.

The Board of Governors will require an assessment of an applicant's abilities to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the school. Within the operation of our admission criteria, the Board of Governors of St. Mary's will decide whether these children should be admitted on the basis that they fall within the ability range of other pupils being admitted in that year.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to provide precise reasons why the applicant did not take part in the Entrance Assessment and to submit appropriate documentary evidence attached to the Transfer Form. It is also for parents/guardians to present all such material as they consider will assist the Admissions Committee in its deliberations and to have it appropriately verified.

For those applicants currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision should be made on Form SP1 (detailing precisely why they are applying for Special Provision) and attached to the Transfer Form. The SP1 Form is available from the school or its website. Parents/guardians wishing to claim Special Provision should forward a completed copy of Form SP1 directly to St. Mary's Grammar School **by 2.00 pm on 10th March 2020 to the Centre, at which the applicant sat the Entrance Assessment.**

The Admissions Committee will consider each application for Special Provision. Where this is granted, the Admissions Committee will determine, on the basis of the information available, an appropriate grade equivalent for the applicant. Such applicants will then be considered with all other applicants who have received a GLA Entrance Assessment grade and the admissions criteria applied.

Further guidance on both Special Provision and Special Circumstances are contained in the Post Primary Transfer Consortium documents. These are available on the school website or copies can be obtained in the school office.

FEES:

From September 1990 parents of all pupils admitted to St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School (except in the case of pupils who are not resident in Northern Ireland and who are non EU nationals) will not be required to pay Tuition Fees. A voluntary contribution (currently £50 per annum) is charged in regard to all pupils.

RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS TO THE SCHOOL

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates to an Admissions Sub-Committee, which includes the Principal, the responsibility for applying these criteria. Any reference herein to the term "the Board of Governors" includes any Committee or Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of Governors for the purposes of applying the Admission criteria set out herein.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2020

The religious and educational philosophy of St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School for boys is that of a Christian and Catholic School.

It is expected that an application to attend St. Mary's will indicate that there is an acceptance to respect the ethos and traditions of the school and to comply with all school rules and regulations.

Grammar schools are required to accept children up to the school's admission number as set by the Department of Education. If that number is exceeded by the number of those applying for places, the Criteria below will be used to select those who will be admitted. The Board of Governors reserves the right to apply to the Department of Education for a reduction in the admissions number if it considers that to be educationally appropriate.

The Board of Governors decide which applicants will be admitted and the Principal will administer the admission process on their behalf.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS ENTITLEMENT (FSME)

The Board of Governors reflected carefully on the Department's guidance on admissions criteria and particularly on the criterion of Free School Meals (FSME). The Board believe that this will be fulfilled as a natural outcome of our intake. In the last school year of 2018-2019, St. Mary's had an average of 35% of our students entitled to FSM while, in the same period, the overall grammar school average was 7%.

OUR ENTRANCE CRITERIA AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES

After decisions have been made in relation to the grades to be allocated to applicants under the above headings 'Special Circumstances' and 'Special Provision', the following criteria shall then be applied to all applications:

Those who have achieved, or have been allocated, a grade A in the GL Entrance Assessment held on November 16th 2019 (or the 7th December 2019) will be given first preference. Remaining places will be offered strictly in order of the Entrance Assessment grade.

Preference shall be given to applicants with Grade A over applicants with Grade B1, those with Grade B1 over applicants with Grade B2, those with Grade B2 over applicants with Grade C1, those with Grade C1 over applicants with Grade C2, and those with Grade C2 over applicants with Grade D until all the places have been filled.

The further sub-criteria published below from (i) to (vi) will be applied in sequence:

- to decide between applicants who have the same grade
 - in the event that places remain after the GL Entrance Assessment process.
- (i) Boys who have a son of the family (i.e. a brother) currently enrolled in St Mary's **(The name of the child of the family and his year group are required on the Transfer Form).**
- (ii) A boy who is the eldest son in the family or the eldest child at the date of application, eligible to transfer to St Mary's, or the only child. The parents/guardians must provide evidence stating that the son is the eldest and that the son and family are known for at least two years to the verifier of such evidence. It must be written on headed notepaper and signed by a verifier who is not a member of the applicant's family. Examples of this might include a medical practitioner, a solicitor, a Priest / Minister of Religion or a primary school Principal. This criterion will treat twins or other multiples as joint eldest.
- (iii) Boys who have a female child of the family currently enrolled in St Dominic's High School Belfast. **(The name of the child of the family and her year group are required on the Transfer Form.)**
- (iv) Boys transferring from Primary Schools under the ERST trusteeship, or formerly under the Trusteeship of the Christian Brothers.
- (v) Boys transferring from our listed feeder schools:
- Ballymacward, Ballymacrickett, Bunscoil Phobal Feirste, Bunscoil an tSleibhe Dhuibh, Christ the Redeemer, Cranmore, Good Shepherd, Gaelscoil na bhFal, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, Hazelwood, Holy Child, Holy Cross, Holy Evangelists, Holy Family, Holy Rosary, Holy Trinity, Oakwood, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Lady of Lourdes, Scoil na Fuisseoige, John Paul II, St. Aloysius, St. Anne's, St. Bernard's, St. Bride's, St. Clare's, St. Colman's (Lambeg), St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph's (Slate Street), St. Joseph's (Carryduff), St. Joseph's (Lisburn), St. Joseph's (Crumlin), St. Ita's, St. Kevin's, St. Kieran's, St. MacNissi's, St. Malachy's, St. Mary's-on-the-Hill, St. Matthew's, St. Michael's, St. Oliver Plunkett, St. Paul's, St. Peter's, St. Teresa's, St. Therese of Lisieux, St Vincent de Paul, Scoil an Droichid.*
- (vi) Should there be over-subscription at the last criterion that can be applied, selection for all places remaining in this category will be on the basis of the initial letter of the surname as identified on the Green Transfer Form received from the Education Authority.

The order is set out below:

F J de M T Z V A Mc U C W Mac H R Ua N B X O Ó L G E I S O' P Q D K Y

The order was determined by a randomised selection witnessed by a Governor and the Principal.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order using the above randomised selection. In the event of two or more identical surnames the alphabetical (randomised) order of the initials of the forenames will be used. Where names cannot be separated by this process, children will be accepted by date of birth with preference given to the oldest.

Please Note:

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or attached to the Transfer Form. Parents should ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the Transfer Form or attached to it. A copy of the child's Birth Certificate should be attached to the Transfer Form.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any applicant's Transfer Form.

If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline given, this will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

WAITING LIST POLICY

Should a vacancy arise after the transfer results are published, all applications for admission to Year 8 that were initially refused will make up the waiting list. We will accept additional information not received at the time of the transfer process. We will also accept new applications from pupils who did not initially apply through the Transfer process. The published criteria above will be applied. This waiting list will be in place until 31st October 2020. The school will contact by telephone if your child gains a place in the school by this method.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Year	Admissions No	Total Applications <i>ie. All preferences</i>	Total Admissions
2017/18	175	225	175
2018/19	175	285	176*
2019/20	175	233	176*

*includes pupils who won their Appeal Tribunal