

OUR LADY AND ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE, KNOCK

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BELFAST

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College Principal: Miss Deborah McLaughlin

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mr Leo O'Reilly

**VOLUNTARY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
DENOMINATIONAL CO-EDUCATIONAL**

AGE RANGE: 11-19

ADMISSIONS NO: 190

ENROLMENT NO: 1330

OPEN DAY INFORMATION 2025

Parents/Guardians and P7 children are warmly invited to attend the College's Open Day on **Saturday, 11 January 2025 from 9.00am to 12.30pm**. There will be an address by the Principal at 9.00am and 11.00am followed by tours of the College with student guides.

To Parents/Guardians naming Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock as a preference on their child's Transfer Application.

SEAG Entrance Assessment Results: In assessing academic ability, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock will use the Band and, as a sub-criterion, the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS), awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment (scheduled for Saturday, 16 November 2024 and Saturday, 23 November 2024) as specified by the College. Parents/Guardians must enter the applicant's Band and Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) from the SEAG Entrance Assessment and upload a copy of the applicant's statement of results with the Transfer Application. Results are available on 25 January 2025.

Special Circumstances or Special Provisions: If you are applying for Special Circumstances or Special Provisions, please see the relevant sections below.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

There is no capital fee. We ask parents/guardians for a voluntary contribution of £150 per family per annum to assist with the provision of additional facilities and equipment.

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

The Board of Governors, having agreed the Admissions Criteria, has delegated to the Admissions Committee, consisting of four members of the Board of Governors, the Principal, a Vice Principal and the Head of the Junior School, the authority to decide which particular applicants shall be admitted to the College in accordance with the Admissions Criteria and any appropriate statutory regulations issued by the Department of Education. Any reference to the term 'Board of Governors' includes any Committee appointed by the Board of Governors for the purposes of applying the Admissions Criteria set out herein. The Board of Governors may require the support of the College's administrative staff in order to fulfil its duties and they are so authorised by the authority of the Board of Governors.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is a Catholic, co-educational, selective voluntary grammar school under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Down and Connor. The College accepts those who are academically suited for the type of education it offers whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the Catholic philosophy and aims of the College.

The Board of Governors has determined that the educational outcomes from the SEAG Entrance Assessment will be used to admit applicants [see criteria A to F and subsidiary criteria H1 to H7]. Information on the SEAG Entrance Assessment is available from the College or from www.knock.co.uk.

In accordance with the 1997 Education (Northern Ireland) Order (Section 16 (4)), pupils resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission will be selected for admission before any child not so resident may be selected.

Applicants claiming Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions (see below) will be considered first. In light of the documentary evidence submitted, the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors will decide whether these applicants should be considered under the Band and Total Standardised Age Score actually achieved in the SEAG Entrance Assessment or an allocated higher Band and/or Total Standardised Age Score. The College will use a Special Circumstances Protocol (available from the College on request) to decide if any increase in Total Standardised Age Score and/or Band is required. Once a decision has been made, the applicant will then be considered along with all applicants of the same Band/Total Standardised Age Score for the purpose of applying the Admissions Criteria.

The Board of Governors will NOT use as a criterion the position of preference given to the College on the Transfer Application, i.e., an applicant who has chosen Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock in any position on the Transfer Application will be considered equally with those who have put the College first.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR YEAR 8 PUPILS TO OUR LADY AND ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE, KNOCK

In order to determine which applicants will be accepted into Year 8, the following criteria will be applied in the order set down.

- A** Applicants who have been awarded Band 1 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 1.
- B** Applicants who have been awarded Band 2 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 2.
- C** Applicants who have been awarded Band 3 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 3.
- D** Applicants who have been awarded Band 4 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 4.
- E** Applicants who have been awarded Band 5 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 5.
- F** Applicants who have been awarded Band 6 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and also those applicants to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provisions apply and who, on the documented evidence submitted, are in the opinion of the Board of Governors of a comparable ability to applicants awarded Band 6.
- G** Other applicants.

Parents/Guardians must upload a copy of the applicant's statement of results from the SEAG Entrance Assessment with the Transfer Application.

If there are more applicants in a category under consideration (i.e., Bands 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and Other) than there are number of places available, such places will be allocated in accordance with the consecutive application of the following subsidiary criteria H1 to H7 in the order set down. In the event that there are more applicants complying with a subsidiary criterion than there are places available or remaining, those applicants complying with that subsidiary criterion will go forward to be considered under the next subsidiary criterion in order H1 to H7 and those not complying with that subsidiary criterion will be eliminated.

- H1** Applicants who, at the date of their application, have a child of the family currently/previously enrolled at the College or already accepted for admission in the coming year (2025/26). Name and year group of present pupil and name/maiden name and dates of attendance of former pupil must be provided. ["Child of the family" will be defined in accordance with Department of Education guidance.]

H2 Applicants:

- (i) who are the eldest* or only child of the family; or
- (ii) whose sibling** is an eldest child who achieved a grade A in the PPTC GL Assessment (2009-2022) or a Band 1 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment (2023) and applied to the College. The sibling's application was provided to the College by the Education Authority and was considered by the Board of Governors but he/she was not selected; or
- (iii) where every older sibling of the applicant did not achieve a top grade/band in the Entrance Assessment used by the College to determine Year 8 admissions (PPTC 2009-2022; SEAG 2023).

*Twins, triplets, etc. will be entitled to recognition as 'eldest' in family if twins, triplets, etc. are the first born to a family.

** Include the name and date of birth of the sibling who is an eldest child and the year of his/her application.

The H2 Verification Certificate should be completed and uploaded with the Transfer Application. It must be signed by one of the following who knows the applicant and family for at least two years and is not a member of the applicant's family. There is no requirement that the verifier must be a resident in Northern Ireland/GB.

- a primary school Principal
- an elected public representative
- a medical practitioner
- a lawyer
- a member of the clergy

H3 Applicants who are entitled to Free School Meals (FSME). 'Entitled to Free School Meals' means applicants who are listed on the Education Authority's register as entitled to free school meals at the date on which their parent/guardian has submitted their post-primary Transfer Application or at any date up to and including 25 February 2025 (not later than 4pm).

H4 Applicants for whom Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is the nearest Catholic grammar school, based on distance, from their permanent place of residence. Distances will be measured overland using grid references provided by nidirect - Distance Measurement Tool. Place of residence will be the applicant's address as it appears on the Transfer Application. The completed H4 Verification Certificate, uploaded with the Transfer Application, must be signed by one of the verifiers as stated in H2.

H5 Applicants who have achieved the highest Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) in the SEAG Entrance Assessment or allocated Band and TSAS due to Special Circumstances/Provisions. The highest scoring candidate will be ranked first, the next highest candidate being ranked second, etc.

H6 If there are applicants who have the same SEAG Entrance Assessment Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) or allocated Band and TSAS due to Special Circumstances/Provisions tying for the final place(s), applicants will be selected for admission on the basis of the initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on the birth certificate or court order) in the order set out below, as determined by a randomised selection:

M D Z Y Mac N K I P X W G Mc J C A S F U B Q L H E O R T V

If clarification is needed on the surname(s) and/or forename(s) on birth certificates, the College will use the H2 Verification Certificate signed by one of the verifiers or advice from the relevant consulate.

H7 In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in the order set out above. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the forenames (as entered on the birth certificate or court order) will be used.

Should two or more applicants have the same surname and forename and thereby qualify for the last available place(s), those applicants will be placed in rank order of eldest child by date of birth as entered on the birth certificate or court order.

Where, after this process has been applied, any applicants continue to tie for a final place, places will be allocated by randomised computer selection.

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that all of the above information is provided. When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will take into account information which is entered on or submitted with the Transfer Application, or has been provided on request. Parents/Guardians should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's Admissions Criteria is stated on the Transfer Application or submitted with it. The final date/time for receipt of new applications/documentation in support of applications is Tuesday, 25 February 2025, not later than 4pm.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Two documents are available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk for the parents/guardians of children who have taken the SEAG Entrance Assessment 2024 and wish to claim Special Circumstances:

- Claiming Special Circumstances - A Guide for Parents & Guardians
- Claim for Special Circumstances (SC Form)

The College has academic performance as its first criterion. Special Circumstances refer to the claim that a child experienced a medical or other problem which may have affected his/her performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment. Special Circumstances must be outlined on **Claim for Special Circumstances (SC Form)** and supported by documentary evidence of a medical, educational or other appropriate nature. Documentary evidence must be submitted with the Transfer Application and SC Form on the Education Authority's online Portal - EA Post Primary Applications.

Consideration of a claim for Special Circumstances consists of three stages. Stage 1 requires consideration of whether there is, in the judgement of the Admissions Committee, sufficient contemporaneous medical, professional or other evidence to warrant acceptance that the case is valid for consideration under Special Circumstances. If an applicant is permitted to be considered as having Special Circumstances, Stage 2 requires an educational judgement to be made by the Admissions Committee on the verifiable educational evidence provided to assess if the Total Standardised Age Score/Band achieved by the child in the SEAG Entrance Assessment does not correspond to the academic ability of the child. If Stages 1 and 2 are met, at Stage 3 the Admissions Committee will award a mark up to the top of the confidence band in the Special Circumstances Protocol (available from the College on request), taking into account the nature of the Special Circumstances claimed by each individual.

If a claim for Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Access Arrangements were provided to an applicant sitting the SEAG Entrance Assessment on 16 and/or 23 November 2024, the Admissions Committee may take into account the fact that the applicant was provided with such Access Arrangements.

Note on COVID-19

Special Circumstances will not be applied solely due to lost teaching and learning time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specific COVID-19 impacts which are unique to the applicant may, however, still be applicable to Special Circumstances.

Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that an applicant's performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, **independent** evidence of its existence must be provided to the College. Where the issue is of a medical nature of short-term duration, which affected the applicant only at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessment, the College will require the production of evidence that the applicant was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessment. Where the issue is of a non-medical nature, the parents/guardians must set out the precise details of the issue and append independent evidence, verified by an appropriate professional, with the Transfer Application to corroborate its existence.

Independent Evidence of Medical or Other Problems

This evidence must be verified by one of the following who is not a member of the applicant's family:

- a primary school Principal
- a registered health or social care professional
- a medical practitioner
- a lawyer
- a member of the clergy

Details of Educational Evidence

Educational evidence must be provided by the parents/guardians on the SC Form, verified by the primary school Principal, to enable the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors to reach a decision. The Board of Governors will, when considering the weight to be given to submitted evidence, consider standardised test results as ranking in priority to other submitted evidence.

General Note on Special Circumstances

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that all of the above information is provided. Failure to provide such information may result in the College being unable to accept the application for Special Circumstances. Parents/Guardians have a statutory right to request and obtain information on their child. Further information on the rights to access pupil records is available from the Information Commissioner's Office or from the website: <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

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.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Two documents are available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk for the parents/guardians of children who wish to claim Special Provisions:

- Claiming Special Provisions - A Guide for Parents & Guardians
- Application for Special Provisions (SP Form)

Special Provisions may be made by the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors where the applicant:

1. has received more than half of their education* outside Northern Ireland; or

*based on the time from the start of Primary 1 (1st September 2018) to the 28th February 2025 i.e. more than 3 years and 3 months.

2. wishes to transfer to a post-primary school that uses the SEAG Entrance Assessment from a school outside Northern Ireland; or
3. due to a serious medical issue supported by appropriate documentary evidence or for a demonstrably valid reason also supported by appropriate documentary evidence, was either unable to sit the SEAG Entrance Assessment OR has estimated Outcomes from SEAG because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment Papers.

For those pupils currently in P7 in primary schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provisions should be made on the **SP Form** and uploaded with the Transfer Application by **Thursday, 20 February 2025 (12 noon)**. After this date, claims for Special Provisions should be made directly to Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock, and parents should notify the Education Authority's School Admissions Team. The final date/time for receipt of new applications/documentation in support of applications is **Tuesday, 25 February 2025**, not later than 4pm.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to complete the SP Form, provide the documentary evidence and the required educational evidence, and to upload this evidence with the Transfer Application. The Board of Governors will assess each applicant's claim for Special Provisions and may contact the parent to arrange further assessment of the child by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the College. This will be known as the Special Provisions Assessment. The Admissions Committee will then determine, based on the information available, an appropriate Band and TSAS equivalent for the applicant. Such applicants will then be considered with all other applicants who have received a SEAG Entrance Assessment Band and TSAS and the Admissions Criteria will be applied.

Where Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is not the applicant's first preference school and the applicant has sat a Special Provisions Assessment in another school, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock will use the results of that Special Provisions Assessment in the Special Provisions Procedure.

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 Application. Parents/Guardians should note that they may be asked to produce original documents verifying information pertinent to the College's Admissions Criteria. Original documents are required; scanned copies or photocopies are not acceptable. If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline specified by the Board of Governors, 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.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS AFTER 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

In the event of a place becoming available in Year 8 after 1 September 2025, the above criteria will be applied to any unselected applicants. The College maintains a waiting list for those seeking a place in Year 8 which will be in place until 30 June 2026. Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the College if you would like your child's name to be removed from the list.

A fresh application must be submitted for each subsequent year in accordance with the Admissions Criteria for the particular year group, i.e., Years 9-14. Further details on Admissions Criteria and the operation of the waiting list are available from the College or its website www.knock.co.uk.

If the application is made for a child who arrived in Northern Ireland after the transfer process has been concluded and the Admissions Committee determines that the child is suitable to be admitted, the College may seek Department of Education approval to admit the child as an additional place. If such approval is given, the child will be admitted.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Year	Admissions Number	Total Applications <i>All preferences</i>	Total Admissions*
2022/23	180	230	218
2023/24	190	323	201
2024/25	190	283	212

* Includes Special Educational Needs students and those admitted on Appeal and by the Exceptional Circumstances Body. An additional 32 places were permitted under Temporary Variation in 2022/23, with an extra 3 places in 2023/24 and 11 places in 2024/25.