

ST MARY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

3 Castledawson Road

Magherafelt

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Website: www.stmarysmagherafelt.com

Principal: Mr P McClean

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mrs AM Campbell

**Voluntary Grammar School
(Denominational)**

Age Range of pupils: 11 – 18

Admissions No: 153

Enrolment No: 1070

St Mary's Grammar school is a Catholic coeducational school with a Catholic ethos under the Trusteeship of St Patrick's Educational Trust, Archdiocese of Armagh. The school provides a faith-based education centred on gospel values of love, respect, justice, compassion and hope. We warmly welcome learners from the Catholic tradition, other Christian traditions and non-Christian traditions as well as those who do not identify as having any religious faith.

Open Day

The school will be open for visits by parents/carers and prospective pupils on:

Saturday 18 January 2025

Pre-booking is essential. Further details are available from the school website www.stmarysmagherafelt.com

Those who are not able to attend on this date can contact the school office to arrange a visit to the school.

To Parents/Carers naming St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt as a preference on your child's on-line Transfer Application

Entrance Assessment Results

St Mary's Grammar School will give preference to (apart from those who qualify for either the Special Circumstances or Special Provision procedures) those applicants awarded a Total Standardised Age Score by SEAG in completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment on Saturday 16 November 2024 and Saturday 23 November 2024.

Please **ensure** that you provide the following information on your child's on-line Transfer Application via the Education Authority (EA) portal:

- The name of the Assessment Centre where your child sat the SEAG Entrance Assessment.
- The combined, Total Standardised Age Score provided by SEAG for your child (and upload a copy of SEAG outcomes to the on-line Transfer Application).

Special Circumstances

- Any parent/carer claiming Special Circumstances must complete a SC form and upload details of your claim and the supporting evidence to the Education Authority (EA), through completion of the Post-Primary Transfer Application. Further details on Special Circumstances can be found in Point (2).

Special Provision

- Any parent/carer claiming Special Provision and making an application to one or more of the schools which use the SEAG Entrance Assessment outcomes, **must** complete a SP form and upload details of your claim and the supporting evidence to the Education Authority (EA), through completion of the Post-Primary Transfer Application on or before **Thursday 20 February 2025**. Further details on Special Provision can be found in Point (3).

FEES

Parents are requested to make an annual voluntary contribution of £120 per pupil, up to a maximum of £240 per family, to help develop existing facilities. This should be paid by October of each year. Charges for educational trips/visits will be made according to DE regulations. In addition, there is a £20 stationery fee.

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

During the admissions procedure, when applying the criteria, punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 28 January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 20 February 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 20 February 2025 will be treated as a late application.

The Board of Governors draws up the Admissions Criteria and delegates to the Principal, and a Selection Committee, the responsibility of applying the criteria.

1. NOTES OF INFORMATION

- a) In accordance with DE regulations, all children 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.
- b) It is the **sole responsibility of the parents/carers** of prospective pupils to ensure that all information relevant to the Admissions Criteria of St Mary's Grammar School is submitted either on the on-line Transfer Application or uploaded to that Application at the time of submission. Only evidence submitted either on the on-line Transfer Application or attached to the Application at the time of submission shall be considered by the Board of Governors in the allocation of a place.
- c) The SEAG Entrance Assessment will incorporate a standardised assessment in English and Mathematics. Further information on the SEAG Entrance Assessment is available on the school website (www.stmarysmagherafelt.com) or directly from the school. The Board of Governors will initially consider applications for a place in St Mary's Grammar School for entry to Year 8 in September 2025 from pupils who have completed the SEAG Entrance Assessment and have been awarded or assigned a Total Standardised Age Score pursuant to the application of the Special Circumstances or Special Provision procedures and will admit pupils based on Total Standardised Age Score achieved in the assessment or otherwise awarded.

2. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Special Circumstances allow for a post-assessment adjustment or provision of a Total Standardised Age Score to an applicant who is eligible for consideration.

Special Circumstances usually refers to the claim that, as a result of medical or other problems, a pupil's performance in the Entrance Assessment was adversely affected. Special Circumstances should be sought only where events on the day of the assessment or factors unknown at the time are considered to have directly influenced the outcome on the day of the SEAG Assessment. Information relating to making a claim for Special Circumstances can be obtained from the school website (www.stmarysmagherafelt.com) or directly from the school.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that such claims and all independent, verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be attached to the on-line Transfer Application along with a completed SC form.

Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that a pupil'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 school. Where the problem is a medical one, of short-term duration, which affected the pupil only at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessment, the school will require the production of evidence that the pupil was examined by a medical practitioner, in relation to the illness, at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessment. Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents/ carers **must** set out the precise details of the problem and append any appropriate, independent evidence to corroborate its existence, to the on-line Transfer Application.

Educational Evidence

Sufficient objective documentary evidence **must** be provided by parents/carers applying for Special Circumstances and accompany the on-line Transfer Application and verified by the primary school to enable the Board of Governors to reach a decision.

At the time of completing the on-line Transfer Application, details of the Special Circumstances and independent supporting evidence must be provided and uploaded to the on-line Transfer Application.

The following information **should** be provided on SC form:

- Records of the results of all available Key Stage 2 CAT4 (verbal and quantitative) and/or PTE/PTM results. These must be verifiable and must be signed off by the Primary School Principal. The verified results must be uploaded to the on-line Transfer Application.
- All other test results should be accompanied by the name of the standardised test supplier, and be dated and verified by the primary school (e.g. signature of Principal, school stamp/headed notepaper);
- Any other relevant educational material from the primary school;
- The primary school's comments on the pupil's academic achievements in relation to the standardised tests taken during Key Stage 2.

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.

The Board of Governors may decide in relation to an applicant claiming Special Circumstances, that the Total Standardised Age Score which the applicant in fact achieved in the SEAG Assessment is the Total Standardised Age Score which the applicant would have achieved if the applicant had sat the SEAG Assessment under normal circumstances. Once a decision has been made the applicant will be considered alongside all other applicants who have been awarded a Total Standardised Age Score or received a Total Standardised Age Score equivalent and the admissions criteria applied. Applicants considered under Special Circumstances will be judged on the evidence made available to the school using the school's protocol which is available on request to parents/carers whose claims for special circumstances have been registered and accepted.

General Note on Special Circumstances

It is emphasised that **the onus is on the parents/carers** to ensure that the above information is provided by the primary school. Failure to provide such information may result in St Mary's being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. Parents/carers 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 following website: <http://www.ico.org.uk>

3. SPECIAL PROVISION

Special provision may be made by the Board of Governors where the applicant:

- a) 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.*
- b) is transferring from a school outside Northern Ireland; or
- c) 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 an estimated outcome from SEAG because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment papers.

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to provide precise reasons why the applicant did not take part in the SEAG Entrance Assessment or has an estimated outcome from SEAG because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment papers and to upload appropriate documentary evidence to the on-line Transfer Application.

If the school decides that further assessment of educational evidence is required, the school will arrange an agreed date for this assessment. The assessment will be administered by a suitably qualified person and you will receive a report on your child's assessment outcomes. Please note, that this report may be shared with other schools listed on the post-primary transfer application.

The Board of Governors, within the operation of its admission criteria, 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.

Parents/Carers wishing to claim Special Provision **must** complete a SP form, available from the school website (www.stmarysmagherafelt.com), stating the case for eligibility under this category, and upload along with supporting evidence to the on-line Transfer Application on or before **Thursday 20 February 2025**.

Where St Mary's is not your first preference school and you have sat a Special Provision Assessment in another school, St Mary's will use the results of that Special Provision Assessment in the Special Provision Procedure.

If applicants in categories a) and b) above wish to take the SEAG Entrance Assessment, the SEAG Entrance Assessment Total Standardised Age Score obtained will be considered.

Such applicants will **then** be considered with all other applicants who have received a SEAG Entrance Assessment Total Standardised Age Score and the admissions criteria applied.

4. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Applicants claiming Special Circumstances or Special Provision will be considered first. The Board of Governors will assign, on the basis of the information available, an appropriate Total Standardised Age Score equivalence for these applicants.

Once this process is completed, pupils will be placed in a single list based on their combined, Total Standardised Age Scores in the Entrance Assessment or otherwise awarded. Those with the highest score will be at the top of the list, which will, therefore, be in rank order of merit. On the basis of this rank order, pupils will be admitted up to the school's admission number of 153.

In the event of equal combined Total Standardised Age Scores, then the criteria set out below from (a) to (e) will be applied, in sequence, to allocate the final place(s):

- (a) Children who, at the date of application, have a child of the family currently enrolled at the school;
- (b) Children: -
 - (i) who at the date of their application, are the eldest of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school; or
 - (ii) where a child of the family is more than 7 years younger than their next sibling (the **name** and **date of birth** of next eldest sibling must be provided if more than 7 years' difference; or
 - (iii) where a family has moved residence so that a child who is not the eldest child of the family is the first child of that family to have the practical opportunity to apply to the school; or
 - (iv) where the eldest child of a family attends a non-mainstream school and the child applying is the next eldest sibling;

A letter of verification of eldest child should also be uploaded with the transfer application. The letter 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 - a primary school principal, an elected public representative, a medical practitioner, a lawyer or a member of the clergy.

- (c) Children selected on the basis of age with the eldest candidate being selected first, established by date of birth as entered on a birth certificate (a copy of the child's birth certificate must be uploaded with the online Transfer Application).
- (d) In the event of two or more children having the same date of birth, children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on birth certificate) in the order set out below:

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

This order was determined by random selection.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used.

- (e) If children are tied after application of admissions criteria (a) – (d), final selection will be made on the basis of a computer-based process.

The process is carried out by means of a computer program which, for each applicant, generates a ranking number using the details from the on-line Transfer Application as the seed for a random number generator. The ranking number for any given applicant, is dependent on the applicant's name (as written on the on-line Transfer Application). Applicants with the lowest ranking numbers will be given places up to the number of places available.

In the event that places remain, after those who have taken the Entrance Assessment have been admitted, consideration will be given to those children who have not taken the Entrance Assessment required by the school using the above criteria (4a-e) in sequence, until the final place has been allocated.

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 online Transfer Application. Parents/Carers should ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admission criteria is stated on the on-line Transfer Application or attached to it.

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 on-line Transfer Application. 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 10 May 2025, all applications for admission to Year 8 that were not placed, new applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. This waiting list will be in place until 30 June 2026. The school will contact you if your child gains a place in the school by this method. Your child’s name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish for your child’s name to be removed from the list.

Number of Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2022/23	153	218	155
2023/24	153	203	165*
2024/25	153	185	163*
* Additional places granted			

This table does not include children who were admitted to the school with a statement of special educational needs.

ENTRY TO YEARS 9-12

Those wishing to apply for entry to Years 9-12 must make a formal application each year using the School Application Form and provide the two most recent reports from their present and any previous schools. Full details, including the School Application Form, may be obtained by contacting the Principal’s Secretary or by downloading from the School website www.stmarysmagherafelt.com