

ST COLMAN'S COLLEGE

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Principal: Mr Cormac McKinney BA(Hons), PGCE, MEd, PQH(NI)

Chairperson of Governors: Dr. Damian Scullion

Voluntary Grammar School

Boys

AGE RANGE: 11-18

ADMISSIONS NO: 125

ENROLMENT NO: 860

Open Day: Saturday 18th January 2025 10:00am – 1:00pm

To Parents/Guardians naming St. Colman's College as a preference on your child's Transfer Application

Entrance Test Results

In assessing academic ability, St Colman's College will use the **Band** awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment on **Saturday 16th November 2024** and **Saturday 23rd November 2024** as specified by the College. Parents/guardians must upload a copy of the result slip which they receive on **Saturday 25th January 2025** with the Transfer Application and the **band** should also be entered on the Transfer Application.

Special Circumstances

Special Circumstances usually refers to the claim that as a result of medical or other problems, an applicant's performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment was affected. Any parent/guardian claiming Special Circumstances must complete the **SC Form** in line with the guidance in the College's policy document "**Claiming Special Circumstances – A Guide for Parents & Guardians**" available from St. Colman's College or from its website. This documentation, together with the independent, verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be uploaded with the Transfer Application.

Special Provision

Special Provision applies to pupils who meet the criteria for Special Provision as outlined in the note on Special Provision below. For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision should be made on the **SP Form** in line with the guidance in the College's policy document "**Claiming Special Provision – A Guide for Parents & Guardians**" available from St. Colman's College or from its website and uploaded with the Transfer Application.

If you are applying for Special Circumstances or Special Provision, please refer to those sections within the Admissions policy provided below.

A Voluntary Contribution is charged to all pupils as outlined in the College's Charging and Remissions Policy.

Respective functions of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to Admissions to the school

The Board of Governors has delegated the responsibilities for the task of applying the criteria as indicated below to a Subcommittee. Where this policy refers to the decision taken by the Board of Governors, it is with reference to the work of the Subcommittee set up by the Board, with its full approval and subject to its final ratification.

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

St. Colman's College, Newry, is a Catholic grammar school for boys. The College normally accepts boys who are academically suited for the type of education it offers and whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the aims and ethos of the College.

When considering which children can be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which parents/guardians detail on the Transfer Application. Parents/guardians must ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admission criteria is stated on the Transfer Application or included as an uploaded attachment. An example of such information is whether the child has or had a sibling (list name of sibling) who was enrolled in the school or whether the child is registered with the Education Authority as being entitled to Free School Meals.

Please note:

In accordance with the 1997 Education Northern Ireland Order (Section 16 (4)), St. Colman's College has been directed to select for admission all children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission before any child not so resident may be selected for admission.

The child's Birth Certificate and proof of address must be uploaded with the Transfer Application. Proof of address – any TWO of the following recent (within the past 6 months) documents with sensitive information redacted: Bank/building society statement; Utility bill (e.g. electricity, gas, TV licence, landline telephone); Addressed payslip; Letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit; Mortgage statement; Land and Property Services Rates Demand; Financial statement such as ISA, Pension or Endowment; Current Driving licence; Rental agreement.

Special Circumstances

Boys will be admitted strictly as described below according to the **band** achieved in the SEAG Entrance Assessment subject only to the consideration of **medical or other problems** which may have affected their performance in the Entrance Assessment and which are supported by verified documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature. These medical or other problems are commonly referred to as **Special Circumstances** and are described in the College's policy document "**Claiming Special Circumstances – A Guide for Parents & Guardians**" available from the College or its website. Parents/guardians should read this policy document carefully.

If a claim for the consideration of Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Access Arrangements were granted or could have been granted, had they been known to the Assessment Centre, the Board of Governors may take into account the fact that the child was granted Access Arrangements or could have been granted Access Arrangements.

The claim for Special Circumstances supported by the required documentary evidence using **Form SC** must be uploaded along with appropriate independent documentation. Gathering and submitting the documentary evidence as described above is vital for the consideration of a claim for Special Circumstances.

Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that a child's performance in the Entrance Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, independent evidence of its existence must be provided to the College. Where the problem is a medical one of short-term duration which affected the child only at the time of the Entrance Assessment, the College will require the production of evidence that the child was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the Entrance Assessment and the result of that examination. If the medical problem is other than of a short duration, a doctor must provide a letter on headed notepaper which explains the medical condition and how it could have affected the child in the Entrance Assessment. Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents/guardians must set out the precise details of the problem and submit with the Transfer Application all appropriate independent documentary evidence which corroborates its existence. The name of the Assessment Centre at which the child sat the Entrance Assessment must also be included. Please refer to the policy document "**Claiming Special Circumstances – A Guide for Parents & Guardians**" available from the College or its website.

Educational Evidence

All claims for Special Circumstances must include objective and relevant educational evidence to show that the medical or other problem experienced by the child at or around the time of the Entrance Assessment caused the child to underachieve. This educational evidence must be provided by the parent/guardian of the child and verified by the Primary School Principal. The evidence should be sufficient to enable the Board of Governors to reach a decision on any adjustment to the **band** achieved by the child in the Entrance Assessment. This evidence should include all of the results from the child's school administered standardised tests in English/Literacy and Mathematics/Numeracy taken from the beginning of the Key Stage 2 period and should be provided on the **SC Form**.

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parent/guardian to ensure that all of the above information is verified and provided by the Primary School to the parent/guardian under the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 and under the Data Protection Act (2018). Failure by the parent/guardian to provide such verified information will result in the Board of Governors being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. The material referred to above will assist the Subcommittee in making its judgement, however it is not intended to be restrictive and the Subcommittee will consider any and all material presented and uploaded with the Transfer Application. It should be noted by parent(s)/guardian(s) that such considerations involve an exercise in judgement and not precise calculation.

Special Provision

For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision should be made on the **SP Form** in line with the guidance in the College's policy document "**Claiming Special Provision – A Guide for Parents & Guardians**" and uploaded with the Transfer Application. The **SP Form** and policy document is available from the College or its website.

Special provision will be made by the Board of Governors for boys:

1. who have received more than half of their education outside Northern Ireland (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), or
2. who wish 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 or other problem(s), which are supported by appropriate documentary evidence, was EITHER unable to sit the SEAG Entrance Assessment OR has an estimated outcome because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment papers.

The Board of Governors will decide whether these boys should be admitted on the basis that they fall within the ability range of other boys being admitted in that year and/or meet one or more of the Admission Criteria 1 to 8 as listed below. The Board of Governors may require an assessment of the pupil's abilities to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the College.

Parents/guardians may provide additional appropriate educational evidence which should include the results of standardised testing carried out during Key Stage 2 or its equivalent period in any Primary School. This will be considered by the Board of Governors along with the educational evidence described above in exercising their educational judgement in these matters. The onus lies with the parents/guardians to provide this educational evidence and to have it appropriately verified.

Those children to whom clause 1 and 2 (above) applies may have, if their parents/guardians wished, sat the Entrance Assessment in which case the **band** or score obtained would also be considered.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that information relating to Special Provision, or indeed information regarding the existence of any other relevant factor(s), is included on or uploaded to the Transfer Application as described in the guidance documentation. It should be noted by parent(s)/guardian(s) that such considerations involve the exercise of judgement and not precise calculation.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA 2025-2026

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria, punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 28th January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 20th February 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 20th February 2025 and up to 4pm on 25th February 2025 will be treated as a late application.

The results achieved by boys in the Entrance Assessment provided by SEAG Assessment and administered by the Assessment Centre on **16th November 2024 and 23rd November 2024** will form the primary evidence to be considered by the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will admit boys strictly on the following basis

1. Boys awarded **Band 1** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 1**.
2. Boys awarded **Band 2** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 2**.
3. Boys awarded **Band 3** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 3**.

4. Boys awarded **Band 4** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 4**.
5. Boys awarded **Band 5** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 5**.
6. Boys awarded **Band 6** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those boys regarding whom parental claims for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded **Band 6**.
7. All other boys who have applied to be admitted to St. Colman's College.

*In the event of more applications being received than places available within a particular **band** or category **1 to 7** above (**oversubscription**), all applicable subcriteria **i to vi** below, will be applied initially to*

- i. those applicants within the oversubscribed category whose application expresses a **first preference** on the Transfer Application to St. Colman's College, then to*
- ii. those applicants within the oversubscribed category whose application expresses a **second preference** on the Transfer Application to St. Colman's College, then to*
- iii. those applicants within the oversubscribed category whose application expresses a **third preference** on the Transfer Application to St. Colman's College, then to*
- iv. those applicants within the oversubscribed category whose application expresses a **fourth or lower preference** on the Transfer Application to St. Colman's College.*

*This will result in those who express a **higher preference** for St. Colman's College in the oversubscribed category, being ranked, using subcriteria **i to vi** below, above those who expressed a **lower preference** for St. Colman's College using subcriteria **i to vi** below.*

Notwithstanding oversubscription, the individual rank within each criteria is determined by the extent to which any applicant qualifies for the criteria and sub criteria applied in the order set down. This results in a complete rank order of all applicants. The first ranked 125 applicants as outlined above will be admitted.

8. The sub criteria therefore are as follows:
 - i. Boys who, at the date of their application, have a parent/guardian who is a member of the permanent teaching, administrative, or non-teaching staff of St. Colman's College.
Applicants must state name of member of staff and nature of relationship (mother, father, guardian) on the Transfer Application
 - ii. Boys who, at the date of their application, have another child of the family (as defined by DE Circular 2023 15 – Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education) enrolled in the College or having been selected for admission to the College in the coming academic year.
Applicants must state the name, date of birth and registration group of the child enrolled in the College on the Transfer Application.
 - iii. Boys who have had another child of the family (as defined by DE Circular 2023 15 – Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education) previously enrolled in the College.
Applicants must state the name, date of birth and the dates that the previously enrolled child attended the College.
 - iv. Boys who are the first boy of the family to transfer to secondary education, i.e. the eldest boy of the family as defined by DE Circular 2023 15 – Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education. Eldest boy includes
 - a) the eldest boy of the family by age
 - b) a boy whose older brother attends a special school or unit within a mainstream school
 - c) a boy of a family which has moved to the area (within 30 miles of the school, as measured from the postcode of the school to the postcode of the applicant) within two years of the start of the academic year 2025-26 (i.e. since 1 September 2023).
 - d) A child whose older brother is more than 7 years older than the applicant.

Proof of eldest boy must be uploaded with the Transfer Application – a letter on headed note paper, stating that the child is the eldest eligible child and that the family is known to the verifier, from one of the following who is not a family member of the applicant: a Primary School Principal, a medical practitioner, a solicitor, an elected public representative, a member of the clergy or a police officer.

- v. Boys, who at the date of their application, are entitled to Free School Meals Provision (as defined by DE Circular 2023 15 – Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education)
‘Entitled to Free School Meals’ will mean applicants who are listed on the Education Authority register and who are entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has completed their Transfer Application. Should family circumstances change after completion of the Transfer Application it is essential that parents/guardians inform the Education Authority before 4pm on Tuesday 25th February 2025.
- vi. Tie Breaker Criteria outlined as follows. *The process is carried out by means of a computer program which, for each applicant, generates a ranking number using the details from the full name **as entered on the Transfer Application** as the seed for a random number generator. The outcome, for any given applicant, is dependent only on the applicant’s name (as entered on the Transfer Application) and is not affected by the details of any other applicant. Although the process is repeatable, and the results may therefore be subsequently verified, it is not possible to predict, in advance of running the program, what the result will be for any given set of details. Applicants with the lowest ranking numbers will be given places up to the number of places available. [Each letter of the alphabet will be given a random value. Some will be positive and the others negative numbers.] This will be overseen by the Admissions Sub Committee of the Board of Governors.*

Where, after this process has been applied, two or more applicants have identical ranking numbers and thereby qualify for the last available place(s), places will be allocated by random selection.

Tie Breaker Criteria for twins and children of other multiple births

Where, in the event of having to use the tie breaker in the process of determining rank order for twins and other children of multiple births, the procedure will be conducted as set out above but, on completion, the ranking number of the second and any subsequent boy of the multiple birth will be changed to that number immediately after the ranking number of the first boy and the ranking number of all other applicants whose ranking was lower than that of the first boy will be changed accordingly as a result.

Verification of all Information

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on the Transfer Application or appended to the Transfer Application by parents/guardians.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide any requested verifying documents within the deadline set by St. Colman’s College will result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the College to offer a place.

The responsibility to ensure that:

- **The Transfer Application and other necessary documentation is correctly completed;**
- **Any required verification documents are provided within specified deadline**

lies with the parents/guardians of the child. Failure to ensure that this occurs will lead to the application not being considered by the Board of Governors and/or the withdrawal of a place in the College. Information on the College’s waiting list is available from the College or Website.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO YEAR 8 AFTER THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Should a place in Year 8 become available for any reason after the start of the school year place(s) will be offered to those whose applications were considered by the Admissions Subcommittee and who were not admitted. All such unsuccessful applicants will have been placed in a Rank Order determined by the published criteria; should a place in Year 8 become available, it will be offered to the pupil placed first in that Rank Order.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8

Year	Admissions No	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2022/23	125	159	130*
2023/24	125	159	133*
2024/25	125	128	125

*Includes pupils admitted on Appeal or through SEN provision

ADMISSIONS POLICY TO YEARS 9 to 14

The Board of Governors delegates the admission of pupils other than to Year 8 to the College Principal.

Admissions to Years 9 -12

The following criteria will be applied to applicants for Admissions to Years 9 -12 in the following order:

1. There must be a place available in the required year, within the College's approved enrolment number.
2. In every case, suitability for Grammar School education will be an over-riding consideration. Convincing evidence of this suitability must be provided from his former school including reports, examples of classwork and homework and copies of completed examination papers. The College may also require applicants to complete assessments in Literacy and Numeracy.
3. The parent/guardian must provide all additional relevant information in a timely manner to allow decisions to be made in the best interests of the pupil and for the efficient discharge of the College's resources.
4. A pupil must come with the recommendation of the Principal of his previous school.

Conditions

Application for entry will include an interview with the Principal and/or Vice-Principal;

- The applicant must show an acceptance of the required academic standard and a willingness to achieve and maintain this standard.
- The applicant must have demonstrated a very good behaviour and attendance record in his previous school.
- The applicant and his parent(s)/guardian(s) must accept the rules and regulations of the College.

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR SIXTH FORM

The following criteria will be applied to applicants who wish to study AS/A2 in St. Colman's College.

As a Catholic Grammar School, St. Colman's College aims to ensure that every individual pupil will realise his full potential in spiritual, moral, social and academic terms. While it is assumed that pupils who enrol in St. Colman's in Y8 – Y12 will remain to study A Levels, entry into Sixth Form for existing St. Colman's pupils is conditional on:

- A very good academic record of 7+ A* - C or equivalent at GCSE including English and Mathematics.
- A very good behaviour and attendance record.
- A very good level of performance in the subjects or curriculum areas that he wishes to study in Sixth Form, normally a B grade or equivalent or better.
- Attending a meeting on results day with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to confirm subject choices.

These conditions reflect that which would have been expected from a St. Colman's pupil throughout his education at the College. If a pupil's achievements do not meet the conditions listed above but he wishes to apply to return to the College to study A Levels, he will have to attend an interview with the Principal and/or Vice-Principal for his individual case to be considered. In the best interests of each pupil, it is expected that a good level of achievement, application, behaviour and attendance is demonstrated at AS level and consideration is given to this as the pupil progresses from AS to A2 Level.

Pupils applying to join Sixth Form from other Colleges and Schools

The Department of Education may, on request, increase the number of pupils that the school can admit to its Year 13. Places that become available in this way shall be allocated only to pupils who meet the basic eligibility criteria for Sixth Form study (as below) and shall be allocated in the order determined by the criteria to be applied in the order set down.

1. Pupils who have most recently completed Year 12 in St. Colman's College, Newry.
2. Pupils from other schools where admission to an extra place at St. Colman's College, Newry has been agreed by the Department of Education*.

* Parents/ guardians should note how the Department of Education (DE) will, in response to a school's request, increase the school's enrolment number in order to allow an extra post-16 pupil to enrol. DE will first check whether there is another school or schools of a type suitable for that pupil within an hour's journey of where the pupil lives. If there is, DE will check whether this other school or schools may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue. If these checks find that no other suitable school may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue – then DE will agree a school's request for a place.

Admissions criteria for entry September 2025

What is a school of a type that is suitable for a pupil? To determine this, DE first considers all schools to be one of 4 types: (1) denominational (2) non-denominational (3) integrated and (4) Irish-medium. A School requesting an extra place for a post-16 pupil will belong to one of these 4 types and DE will consider any other school or schools from this same type as suitable for the pupil. DE will also consider as suitable for the pupil any school from the same type as the type of school that the child attended in Year 12.

Pupils applying to join Sixth form from other colleges and schools will be required to attend an interview with a member of the SLT. The interview process will establish if St. Colman's College is the most appropriate option for the individual candidate.

Conditions

- i. There must be a place available in the College for the pupil.
- ii. There must be a place available in the specific subject(s) that the pupil wishes to study.
- iii. The pupil must be able to demonstrate a very good level of performance in the subjects or curriculum areas that he wishes to study in Sixth Form, normally a B grade or better at GCSE or equivalent.
- iv. The pupil must be able to demonstrate a very good academic, behaviour and attendance record.
- v. The pupil must show an acceptance of the required academic standard and a willingness to achieve and maintain this standard.
- vi. The pupil and his parent(s)/guardian(s) must accept the rules and regulations of the College.
- vii. The parent/guardian must provide all additional relevant information in a timely manner to allow decisions to be made in the best interests of the pupil and for the efficient discharge of the College's resources.
- viii. Applicants must bring a copy of their GCSE or equivalent results slip and their two most recent school reports with them to their interview.

In the event of there being more applicants than places available either in the year group or in an individual subject then the applicants shall be ranked according to a points score for GCSE subject(s) or equivalent according to the following scale, with the higher ranking pupil(s) being offered a place. Numerical scored subjects shall be included according to the respective numerical score achieved from 9 – 1 as outlined below.

A* (9) = 5 points A (8,7) = 4 points B (6) = 3 points C* (5) = 2 points C (4) = 1 point

In the best interests of each pupil, it is expected that a good level of achievement, application, behaviour and attendance is demonstrated at AS level and consideration is given to this as the pupil progresses from AS to A2 Level.