

**ST DOMINIC'S HIGH SCHOOL**

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**Principal:** Mrs Orla O'Neill BSc. PGCE PQH (NI)

**Chair of Board of Governors:** Mr Rory Galway

**Voluntary Grammar School**

**Girls' Grammar**

**Age Range:** 11-18

**Admission No:** 141

**Enrolment No:** 966

**OPEN DAY 2024**

**St Dominic's Open Day will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024 from 9.00 am – 1pm.**

**To Parents/Guardians who wish to choose St. Dominic's as a preference on your child's Transfer Application**

**SEAG Entrance Assessment Results**

In assessing academic ability, St Dominic's High School will use the Band and, as a sub-criterion, the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS), awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2023** and on **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023**, as specified by the school.

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 27 January 2024.

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

**Information on admissions in the last three years are set out below. Further details will be provided in the information pack on the school website. Parents are asked to pay a Voluntary Contribution (currently £100 per annum for the first child in the family, £50 per subsequent child)**

**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 Committee, which consists of three members of the Board of Governors, the Principal and the two Vice Principals, the authority to decide which particular applicants shall be admitted to the school in accordance with the Admissions Criteria and any appropriate statutory regulations issued by the Department of Education. 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. The Board of Governors may require the support of the school's administrative staff in order to fulfil its duties and they are so authorised by the authority of the Board of Governors.

**ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2024**

NOTE: IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER OF A PROSPECTIVE PUPIL TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS SUBMITTED, EITHER ON THE ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION OR TOGETHER WITH THE TRANSFER APPLICATION, ALL THE INFORMATION REQUIRED TO ENABLE THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO APPLY THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA OF THE SCHOOL TO THE APPLICATION OF THE PROSPECTIVE PUPIL. ONLY EVIDENCE SUBMITTED EITHER ON THE ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION OR ATTACHED TO THAT APPLICATION AT THE TIME OF SUBMISSION TO THE SCHOOL FOR ADMISSION SHALL BE CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN THE ALLOCATION OF A PLACE TO THE APPLICANT.

**The final date/time for receipt of new applications/documentation in support of applications is Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024, no later than 4pm.**

The Board of Governors will consider applicants claiming that Special Circumstances and /or Special Provisions exist. These 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 school will use a Special Circumstances Protocol (available from the school 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 school on the Transfer Application i.e., an applicant who has chosen St Dominic's High School in any position on the Transfer Application will be considered equally with those who have put the school first.

### **ALLOCATION OF PLACES**

St Dominic's Grammar School will give preference to those pupils for whom an outcome relating to the SEAG Entrance Assessment method has been assigned by GL/SEAG or assigned by the Board of Governors pursuant to the special circumstances/special provisions procedures.

In accordance with the 1997 Education (Northern Ireland) Order Section 16 (4) All girls resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school will be selected for admissions before any girl not so resident.

To determine which pupils will be accepted into Year 8, the following criteria will be applied in the order set down:

### **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

**Applicants shall be selected in the order of priority set down below:**

- 1.** Applicants awarded a **BAND ONE** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BAND ONE**.
- 2.** Applicants awarded a **BAND TWO** in the SEAG Entrance assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BAND TWO**.
- 3.** Applicants awarded a **BAND THREE** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BANDTHREE**.
- 4.** Applicants awarded a **BAND FOUR** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BAND FOUR**.
- 5.** Applicants awarded a **BAND FIVE** in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BAND FIVE**.
- 6.** Applicants awarded a **BAND SIX** in the GL Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provisions* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the Admissions Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded **BAND SIX**.

**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 who satisfy any one of the criteria 1-6 when they are being applied in the order of priority set down above than there are places available, then applicants within that criterion shall be selected to fill the remaining places by applying the following Sub Criteria in the order of priority set down below: -

- (a)** Applicants of whom a sibling (sister or half-sister or stepsister or legally adopted/foster sister or half-sister) is currently or formerly was a pupil enrolled in the school. State the name of the pupil, year group and years

attended (in the case of a former pupil). Provide maiden name if appropriate.

- (b) Applicants of whom a sibling as defined in (a) above qualified for admission under Criteria 1-6 for entry into St Dominic's (e.g., a twin) in the current admissions year (2024-25).
- (c) Applicants who are the eldest girl of the family (*"of the family" will be defined in accordance with Department of Education guidance*) eligible to transfer to mainstream secondary school. This criterion covers 'only' children. Twins or other multiples will be treated as joint eldest.  
(Please provide verifying letter in relation to (a), (b) and (c) written on headed notepaper signed by one of the following: (i) School Principal (ii) Family Doctor (iii) Parish Priest.  
*If a girl has an older sister who did not gain entry to St. Dominic's in previous years due to not sitting an Entrance Assessment for transfer to post primary education or who applied to St Dominic's but did not achieve a grade which enabled her to gain entry, she should be considered with all first/oldest girls (evidence must be provided).*
- (d) Applicants who are a Child Looked After (as defined in accordance with the Department of Education Guidance)
- (e) Applicants who are entitled to Free Schools Meals\*

If there are more applicants who satisfy any one of the Sub Criteria (a)-(e) when they are being applied in the order of priority as set down above than there are places available, applicants within that sub-criterion will be selected by rank order of the total standardised age score (TSAS) attained in the SEAG Entrance Assessment tests, or allocated Band and TSAS due to Special Circumstances/Provisions. the highest scoring applicant being ranked first, the next highest candidate being ranked second etc. In the event of two or more candidates having the same total standardised age score (TSAS) or allocated Band and TSAS due to Special Circumstances/Provisions and qualifying for the last place(s) the award of place(s) shall be granted to the applicants who ordinarily reside within the shortest radial distance as the crow flies from the school as measured from the school entrance gate on the Falls Road, Belfast to the applicant's home using the following website – [www.freemaptools.com](http://www.freemaptools.com)

\* "Entitled to Free School Meals" will mean applicants who are listed on the Education Authority register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has signed their post-primary Transfer Application, or at any date up to and including 4 March 2024 at 4 pm.

### NOTE ON SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Two documents are available on the school website at [www.stdominics.org.uk](http://www.stdominics.org.uk) for the parents/guardians of children who have taken the SEAG Entrance Assessment 2023 and wish to claim Special Circumstances:

- Claiming Special Circumstances – 'A Guide for Parents & Guardians of children who wish to transfer to post-primary school in September 2024'
- Claim for Special Circumstances (Form SC)

The school 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 (Form SC)** and supported by documentary evidence of a medical, educational or other appropriate nature. Documentary evidence must be submitted with the Transfer Application and Form SC 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 school 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 11 and/or 25 November 2023, 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.

**NB: The existence of special circumstances DOES NOT in itself lead to automatic admission to the school. Each case is considered on its own merits by the Board of Governors.**

### **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 school by attaching it to the online transfer application. Where the issue is a medical one of short-term duration which affected the applicant only at the time of the SEAG Entrance Assessment the school 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. This evidence should be provided on headed notepaper of the medical practitioner and signed and dated by him/her.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature the parents/guardians/carers **must** set out in the Transfer Application precise details of the problem and append any appropriate independent evidence to corroborate its existence. **(Please refer to the following document: 'Claiming Special Circumstances: A Guide for Parents & Guardians of children who wish to transfer to post-primary school in September 2024').**

### **EDUCATIONAL EVIDENCE:**

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

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians/carers to ensure that such claims and all verifying information are included on form SC and attached to the Online Transfer Form/Application

At the time of completing the Online Transfer Application, details of the Special Circumstances and independent supporting evidence should be provided and attached to the Transfer Application.

The following information should be provided on form SC: -

- Records of the results of all available KS2 CAT4 (verbal and quantitative) and/or PTE/PTM results. These must be verifiable and should be signed off by the Primary School Principal. The verified results should be attached to the Transfer Application/ Form or its equivalent.
- All test results should be accompanied by the name of the standardised test and the supplier of the test 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 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 Applications:**

It is emphasised that **the onus is on the parents/guardians/carers** to ensure that the above information is provided by the primary school. Failure to provide such information may result in the school being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. **Parents/guardians/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>

For further information, please refer to the following policy document: **'Claiming Special Circumstances: A guide for parents & guardians of children who wish to transfer to post-primary school in September 2024'**. The guidance documentation is available from the school or to download from the school website [www.stdominics.org.uk](http://www.stdominics.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.

## NOTE ON SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Two documents are available on the school website at [www.stdominics.org.uk](http://www.stdominics.org.uk) for the parents/guardians of children who wish to claim Special Provisions:

- Claiming Special Provisions – ‘A Guide for Parents & Guardians of children who wish to transfer to post-primary school in September 2024’
- Application for Special Provisions (Form SP)

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 (1<sup>st</sup> September 2017) to the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 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 or other problems, 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.

For those pupils currently in P7 in primary schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provisions should be made on **Form SP** and uploaded with the Transfer Application by **Thursday, 22 February 2024 (12 noon)**. After this date, claims for Special Provisions should be made directly to St Dominic’s High School, 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 **Monday, 4 March 2024, no later than 4pm**.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to complete Form SP, 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 St Dominic’s High School is not the applicant’s first preference school and the applicant has sat a Special Provisions Assessment in another school, St Dominic’s High School will use the results of that Special Provisions Assessment in the Special Provisions Procedure.

Such applications will **then** be considered with all other applicants who have received a SEAG Assessment outcome, and the admissions criteria applied.

## **DUTY TO VERIFY**

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support/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 School’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.

### **The responsibility to ensure that:**

- the Online Transfer Application and other necessary documentation is correctly completed.

## Admissions Criteria for entry September 2024

- any Special Circumstances/Special Provisions being claimed are properly documented as described in detail above and in the guidance documentation; and
- any required verification documents are provided within specified deadlines, **lies with the parents/guardians of the child.**

### **WAITING LIST POLICY**

Should a vacancy arise after 20 May 2024 all applications for admission to Year 8 that were initially refused, 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 2025. The school will contact you in writing 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.

If the application is made by a child who arrived in Northern Ireland after the transfer procedure has been concluded and the Admissions Sub Committee deems the child is suitable to be admitted, the school may then seek approval for an additional place from the Department of Education. Admission is dependent upon the Department of Education making an additional place available for said pupil and the school being able to accommodate an additional pupil.

The child will be required to sit an appropriate assessment which enables the school to ascertain if the child would have gained entry through the transfer procedure.

#### **Applications and Admissions**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Admissions No</b>	<b>Total Applications <i>ie. All preferences</i></b>	<b>Total Admissions*</b>
<b>2021/22</b>	141	308	**166
<b>2022/23</b>	141	169	144
<b>2023/24</b>	141	178	145

\* Includes Special Educational Needs students.

\*\* DE granted St. Dominic's a temporary variation to the school's admission number in 2021

#### **Criteria for admission to years 9 onwards.**

Available on request from the school.