

BELFAST HIGH SCHOOL

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Principal: Mrs C Weir BA, MSc, PGCE, PQH
Chairman of the Board of Governors:
 Prof. R Millar, MA (Cantab), DPhil, CEng, FBCS, CITP, FHEA

**Voluntary Grammar School
 (Non-Denominational)**

Age Range of pupils: 11-18 years
Admissions Number: 136
Enrolment Number: 930

Open Morning 2024

The School will be holding an Open Morning from 9.30am – 12.30pm for pupils who may wish to enter Year 8 and their parents on **Saturday 20 January 2024**. The Principal will address parents and prospective pupils at 9.30am and 11.45am in the Assembly Hall.

Prospective pupils and parents/guardians are also most welcome to visit our school website for information on what Belfast High School has to offer (www.belfasthigh.org.uk).

To parents/guardians naming Belfast High School as a preference on your child’s online transfer application.

Entrance Test Results

Please ensure that you enter the score awarded by Schools’ Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG) and your SEAG Unique Pupil Number on the online transfer application and upload the statement of result.

Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision

Parents/guardians who wish their child to be considered under Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision should read carefully the information below. Parents/guardians who wish to apply to the school and believe that their child is eligible under Special Circumstances/Special Provision should complete SC Form /SP Form, obtainable from the School’s website. Please note that parents/guardians are required to upload with the online transfer application **all** such material that they consider necessary to assist the School’s Admissions Sub-Committee in determining if Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply.

Further details can be found in the section ‘Special Circumstances and Special Provisions’ below.

Capital Fee

£140 per annum

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

The Board of Governors has approved the admissions criteria outlined below and delegates to the Admissions Sub-Committee the responsibility for applying these criteria. The Admissions Sub-Committee consists of 3 Governors, the Principal, a Vice Principal and the Admissions Officer.

Belfast High School will not use as a criterion the position of preference given to the School on the online transfer application for example, a child who has chosen Belfast High school as a second preference school will be considered in the same way as all first preference applicants.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that ALL information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school’s admissions criteria is provided to the School, either on or uploaded with the online transfer application. When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will ONLY take into account information which is detailed on or uploaded with the online transfer application. Parents/guardians should note that information contained within an application will require verification.

Please note: sibling is defined as another ‘child of the family’. This includes: a child born to a married couple or a couple in a civil partnership; a child born to a co-habiting couple; a child born to a single parent; a child of either/any of those people by a previous marriage, civil partnership or relationship; a child living with a couple who has been treated as a ‘child of the family’ whether it is a marriage or a civil partnership or not; a child living with an individual who has been treated as a ‘child of the family’; an adopted or fostered child; a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family or individual.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

If the School is over-subscribed, the following criteria for entry will apply, in the order stated:

1. The Board of Governors will consider all children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School before any child not so resident.
2. The Board of Governors will then consider children who have taken the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment and been awarded a Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) by SEAG, subject only to the consideration of those children claiming 'Special Circumstances and/or 'Special Provisions', as defined below. Children will be placed in strict rank order of scores, highest to lowest, up to the approved admissions number. Parents/Guardians must enter the Total Standardised Age Score awarded by SEAG and the SEAG Unique Pupil Number on the online transfer application.
3. If more than one child is eligible for the last remaining place(s) because they have equal scores, then the final place(s) will be allocated using the following criteria in the order stated:
 - 3.1 Children who have a sibling ('child of the family' as defined above) enrolled at the School at the time of application.
 - 3.2 The use of a tie-breaker which shall be on the basis of computerised random selection. This process, as agreed by the Board of Governors and overseen by a minimum of 3 members of the Admissions Sub-Committee, will be as follows:
 - Applicants will be listed by their EA Application Number.
 - This application number will be allocated a random number electronically generated within Microsoft Excel using the Rand function.
 - These random numbers will then be ranked in order with higher numbers having preference.
4. If there are still places available after consideration of all the children who have taken the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment and been awarded a Total Standardised Age Score by SEAG, or awarded a score as a result of Special Circumstances or Special Provisions, the School will consider for admission any children who have not taken the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment. These children will be allocated to any remaining places, up to the School's admissions number, using criterion 1 followed by criterion 3 above.

Special Circumstances and Special Provisions

The purpose of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions is so that a child can be assigned a score equivalent to that which he or she would have obtained in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment under normal conditions. Consideration of a claim for special circumstances and/or special provisions consists of two parts: the first requires the consideration of whether there is sufficient material to permit a child to be considered as having special circumstances or attracting special provisions, or both; if a child is permitted to be considered as having special circumstances or as attracting special provisions or both, the second part of the consideration requires an educational judgement to be made on the totality of the material presented to the school so that a score equivalent to that which the child would have obtained in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment under normal conditions can be awarded.

It is for parents/guardians to present all such material as they consider will assist the School in performing both parts of the consideration described above. All such material should be uploaded with the online transfer application. It should be noted by parents/guardians that both parts of the consideration referred to involve an exercise in educational judgement and not precise calculation.

Educational Evidence to be provided in support of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions

In reaching the educational judgement needed to award the score that the child would have obtained in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment under normal circumstances, the School's Admissions Sub-Committee will consider any material presented by parents/guardians and uploaded with the online transfer application. This material may include any or all of the following:

- (i) The Total Standardised Age Score achieved in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment or the estimated outcome provided by SEAG if the child only sat one of the 2 Common Entrance Assessment papers;

- (ii) The results for the child of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in any end of year tests, conducted in Years 5 and 6, in English and Mathematics;
- (iii) Comparative information from the Primary School, including the results, without names, for other children in the child's Year 7 class of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in any end of year tests, conducted in Years 5 and 6, in English and Mathematics and where available, the respective Total Standardised Age Score awarded by SEAG;
- (iv) Any other relevant material.

Special Circumstances

Belfast High School has academic performance as its main criterion, subject only to the consideration of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment and which are supported by documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature. These 'medical or other problems' are commonly referred to as 'Special Circumstances'.

Please note - if a claim for the consideration of Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Special Access arrangements were granted for a child, the School will take into account the fact that the child was granted Special Access arrangements for those matters.

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Circumstances should complete the SC Form obtainable from the School website, stating the precise reason why they believe their child should be considered for Special Circumstances and upload it with appropriate evidence with the online transfer application. This must include contemporaneous medical, professional or other assessments of your child and supporting educational evidence to support the claim that the Total Standardised Age Score does not correspond to the academic ability of your child because he/she experienced medical or other problems before or during the time of the Common Entrance Assessment.

Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that a child's performance in the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to set out in the SC Form precise details of the problem and append evidence to corroborate its existence.

Where the problem is a medical one of short term duration which affected the child only at the time of the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment, parents/guardians should be aware that the Admissions Sub-Committee will attach greater weight to evidence indicating that the child was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the assessment.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents/guardians should set out in the SC Form precise details of the problem and append appropriate documentary evidence.

It should be noted that in all cases independent evidence will carry greater weight.

The Admissions Sub-Committee will consider the application for Special Circumstances and must determine if the Special Circumstances did affect the child's achievement in the Common Entrance Assessment and, if they determine that it did, adjust the Total Standardised Age Score achieved in the Common Entrance Assessment. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received an SEAG Total Standardised Age Score in the Common Entrance Assessment and the Admissions criteria applied.

Special Provisions

Special provisions will apply for:

- (a) children who have received more than half their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- (b) children whose parents/guardians wish them to transfer from schools outside Northern Ireland;
- (c) children who, due to a serious medical or other problem, which is supported by appropriate documentary evidence, were EITHER unable to sit the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment OR have an estimated outcome as they only sat one of the 2 Entrance Assessment papers.

Appropriate documentation must be provided in all cases.

Note: It is expected that all those seeking admission to Belfast High School should sit the SEAG Common Entrance Assessment, with the exception of those children who take up residence in Northern Ireland after 2 October 2023.

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Provisions should contact the school as soon as possible. In addition, they should complete SP Form, obtainable from the school website, stating the precise reason why they believe the child is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions and upload it with appropriate independent documentary evidence to the online transfer application. Parents/Guardians who are applying for Special Provisions under category (b) must do so by 4 March 2024.

The Admissions Sub-Committee will consider the application for Special Provisions. Where Special Provisions are accepted, the Admissions Sub-Committee will determine on the basis of the information available, including comparative data, an appropriate Total Standardised Age Score for the child. The Admissions Sub-Committee may require an assessment of an applicant’s abilities to be carried out using an additional assessment provided by a body approved by the School. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received an SEAG Total Standardised Age Score score and the Admissions Criteria applied.

Special Educational Needs

The procedures for children in receipt of a Statement of Special Educational Needs will operate outside the normal enrolment procedures in order to ensure that such children are provided with the most appropriate school placement. Further advice may be obtained from the Education Authority.

Admissions to Year 8 following completion of the Transfer Procedure

Should a vacancy arise after the completion of the Transfer Procedure in May 2024, all applications for admission to Year 8 that were initially refused, new applications, late 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 of the year following application.

The school will contact parents/guardians in writing if their child gains a place in the School by this method. The names of all applicants will be automatically added to the list. Parents/guardians should contact the school if they wish for their child’s name to be removed from the list.

Should the Board of Governors determine that a child who has arrived in Northern Ireland after the Transfer Procedure has been concluded is suitable for admission, and the School’s Admissions Number has been reached, it will seek approval from the Department of Education to admit the child through the allocation of an additional place.

THE VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY APPLICANTS

Those making application should note that the information contained within an application that qualifies the child for admission will be verified.

The Board of Governors therefore reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any transfer application. This information will be requested from those whose applications have been successful on or shortly after they have been notified of their allocation of a place at Belfast High School. Those making applications should also note the provision of false information or incorrect information, or the failure to provide verifying documents according to the required deadline, may result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the school to offer a place.

Number of Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions Number	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2021/22	138*	356	144**
2022/23	136	164	136
2023/24	136	202	142**

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

*The school was granted a temporary variation of 2 in 2021.

** Includes children who were admitted to the School with a statement of special educational needs and children admitted on appeal.

ENTRY TO YEARS 9-12

Those wishing to apply for entry to Years 9 – 12 must make formal application each year using the School Application Form in the School’s Admissions Policy (Years 9-12) which is available to download from the school website.