

ST LOUIS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Cullybackey Road, Ballymena,
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Website: www.stlouisgrammar.com

Principal: Mrs J O’Neill, BSc (Hons), PGCE, MBA, PQH(NI)

**Voluntary Grammar
(Denominational)**

Age Range of Pupils: 11-18

Admissions Number: 139

Enrolment Number: 960

Chairperson of Board of Governors: Mrs Mary Black CBE, MA Ed; BSc (Hons); Post Grad Dip H Ed; Cert H Econ; P Dip (Executive Coaching); HMFPH

Open Nights

For prospective pupils and their parents/guardians/carers:

Wednesday 24th January and Thursday 25th January 2024 from 7.15pm

A Prospectus will be available on our school website www.stlouisgrammar.com in January 2024.

Admission of Pupils to Year 8 in September 2024

To Parents/Guardians/Carers naming St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena as a preference on your child’s online Transfer Application.

SEAG Assessment Results

In assessing academic ability St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena (“the School”) will use the Total Standardised Age Score awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Assessment on Saturday 11th November 2023 and Saturday 25th November 2023 as specified by the School. On the online Transfer Application (Documents Section) parents/guardians/carers must state the Total Standardised Age Score achieved by the pupil and upload a copy of the statement of results which they receive on Saturday 27th January 2024.

Special Circumstances

Parents/Guardians/Carers wishing to claim Special Circumstances must complete the SC Form contained in the ‘Claiming Special Circumstances Pack’ available from the school website. Following this, the completed SC Form, together with appropriate documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be uploaded with the online Transfer Application.

Special Provision

Parents/Guardians/Carers wishing to claim Special Provision must complete SP Form, available from St Louis Grammar School or from the school website: www.stlouisgrammar.com

The completed SP Form, together with appropriate documentary evidence corroborating the claim for Special Provision, must be uploaded with the online Transfer Application. Special Provision will not be considered in advance of the School’s receipt of the online Transfer Application from the Education Authority.

Upon receipt of a request in writing by a pupil’s parents/guardians/carers, a primary school must disclose the relevant pupil’s record of progress and achievement. The onus is on the parents/guardians/carers to obtain, from the primary school, full information on the pupil’s academic performance and test results and to provide this to St Louis Grammar School. No information will be sought by St Louis Grammar School directly from the primary school.

If you are applying for Special Circumstances or Special Provision please see the appropriate section of our Admissions Criteria below.

St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena is a Catholic coeducational school with a Catholic ethos under the Trusteeship of the Sisters of St Louis (St MacNissi’s Trust).

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.

The Board of Governors is the relevant admissions authority for the School. The Board of Governors draws up and approves the Admissions Criteria and delegates to an Admissions Panel – nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, to include the Principal – the responsibility for considering all applications for admissions to Year 8 including applications for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision.

Any reference to the term ‘the Board of Governors’ within this Admissions Criteria includes the Admissions Panel, nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, for the purposes of applying the Admissions Criteria set out in this document.

In determining those children to be admitted to the School, the Board of Governors will consider children who are resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School before those children who are not so resident.

The School will initially consider only those applicants who have taken the required SEAG Assessment which is provided by the Schools' Entrance Assessment Group.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

The Board of Governors of the School will not use as a criterion the position of preference given to the School on the online Transfer Application, i.e. a child who has chosen the School in any position on the online Transfer Application will be considered equally with those who have put the School first.

Preference will be given in the strict order of SEAG Assessment Total Standardised Age Score in rank order until all places have been filled up to the School admissions number of 139 pupils.

References to SEAG Assessment Total Standardised Age Score include those deemed to be equivalent after consideration of Special Circumstances and Special Provision (see note below).

In the event that two or more applicants are eligible for the remaining place or places because they have the same SEAG Assessment Total Standardised Age Score the Tie Breaker criteria below will be applied in the order set down until the final place has been allocated.

AC1 Sibling

Applicants who, at the date of their application, have a *child of the family currently enrolled at the School. Name and year group of present pupil must be provided.

AC2 Eldest Child

This criterion to be defined as "children who, at the date of their application, are the eldest *child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the School". This wording covers "only" children and is also intended to treat twins (or other multiples) as joint eldest. Eldest child must be stated on online Transfer Application at time of application.

AC3 Basis of Age

Applicants will be selected on the basis of age with the oldest applicant 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.**

AC4 Random Selection of Letters

The final selection will be made on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on birth certificate) in the order set out below:

U, V, P, Y, W, E, A, I, T, B, D, H, C, S, X, K, O', Mc, G, O, R, Z, L, N, Q, F, Mac, M, J

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 forename(s) on the birth certificate will be used. Hyphenated surnames, consisting of two separate surnames will be treated as one complete word for selection purposes.

*Child of the family as defined by the Department of Education to include, for example, half-brothers and sisters, together with children who are adopted or fostered and this fact is included on the online Transfer Application or uploaded with it.

In the event that places remain, after those who have taken the SEAG Assessment have been admitted (including those admitted following claims for Special Circumstances/Special Provision), then remaining places will be allocated using the above criteria in the order set down until the final place has been allocated. This includes children who have not taken the SEAG Assessment required by the School.

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 30th January 2024 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 22nd February 2024 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 22nd February 2024 and up to 4pm on 4th March 2024 will be treated as a late application.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND/OR SPECIAL PROVISION

The Board of Governors will consider applications claiming “Special Circumstances” and “Special Provision”. Where it is determined that Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision exist they will be considered first.

The Admissions Panel will consider applications on behalf of pupils whose performance in the SEAG Assessment was affected by medical or other problems in accordance with the ‘Special Circumstances’ information that is set out in the ‘Claiming Special Circumstances Pack’ which is available from the School or from the school website: www.stlouisgrammar.com Parents/Guardians/Carers should read this carefully.

If a claim for Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Access Arrangements were provided to a pupil sitting the SEAG Assessment on 11th November 2023 and 25th November 2023, the Admissions Panel may take into account the fact that the pupil was provided with such Access Arrangements.

- All claims for Special Circumstances must include objective and relevant educational evidence of a pupil’s academic ability. This evidence must be sufficient to enable the Admissions Panel to reach a decision as to whether any adjustment should be made to the score achieved by the child in the SEAG Assessment. All information provided must be verifiable.
- Educational evidence provided to the Admissions Panel should include recent results from the primary school administered standardised tests in English/Literacy and Mathematics/Numeracy taken since the beginning of the Key Stage 2 period.
- 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 St Louis 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>
- When the online Transfer Application is completed in January/February 2024, full details of the Special Circumstances together with independent supporting evidence must be provided and uploaded with the online Transfer Application.
- Please see “Details of Medical or Other Issues” below.

Having examined the documentary evidence that is submitted, the Admissions Panel of the Board of Governors will decide whether the applicant should be considered for admission under the score actually achieved in the SEAG Assessment or should be allocated a higher score using the School’s Special Circumstances Protocol (which is available on request). Once a determination of the appropriate score has been made, by the Admissions Panel, that score will be used to place the child in a rank order with all other applicants in order to allocate places.

The judgement of the weight to be attached to the supporting documentation asserting Special Circumstances will be at the discretion of the Admissions Panel of the Board of Governors.

Where Special Circumstances are requested by parents/guardians/carers, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians/carers to produce sufficient, objective, probative documentary evidence to establish that a pupil should have achieved a higher score in the SEAG Assessment than that actually achieved. This is an exercise in educational judgment, not precise calculation and the determination of the Admissions Panel will be based only on consideration of the documentation uploaded with the online Transfer Application. It is strongly emphasised that a claim of Special Circumstances does not, of itself, lead to automatic upgrading or admission to the School nor does the allocation of a higher score necessarily result in the offer of a place in the School.

DETAILS OF MEDICAL OR OTHER ISSUES

Where it is claimed that a child’s performance in the SEAG Assessment has been affected by a medical or other issue, independent evidence must be provided and uploaded with the online Transfer Application. Where the problem is a medical one of short-term duration, which affected the child only at the time of the SEAG Assessment the School 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 SEAG Assessment and the result of that examination. Similarly, if the medical problem is other than of short-term duration, the School will require evidence from a medical practitioner who treated the child and which explains the condition and how it could have affected the child in the SEAG Assessment.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents/guardians/carers must set out the precise details of the problem and upload with the online Transfer Application all appropriate, independent documentary evidence

which corroborates its existence. The name of the assessment centre at which the child sat the SEAG Assessment must also be included. Please refer to the Claiming Special Circumstances Pack from our school website www.stlouisgrammar.com

CLAIMING SPECIAL PROVISION

Special Provision may be made by the Board of Governors for pupils:

- Who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland;
- Who have received more than half of their education in a school outside Northern Ireland;
- Who due to a serious medical or other problem 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.

In the case of a pupil who could not participate in the SEAG Assessment, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians/carers to provide (a) precise reasons why the pupil did not take part in the Assessments, (b) appropriate corroborative documentary evidence of this, in keeping with the Special Circumstances Pack and (c) objective and relevant educational evidence of their child's academic ability, in line with the procedures indicated previously in relation to Special Circumstances.

Claims for Special Provision should be made on SP Form and uploaded with the online Transfer Application. Parents/Guardians/Carers wishing to claim Special Provision should also forward a completed copy of SP Form directly to St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena by 12 noon on Thursday 22nd February 2024. The SP Form is available from the School or its website. After this date, claims for Special Provision should be made directly to St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena only and the Transfer/Open Enrolment Ballymena Branch, Education Authority notified by parents/guardians/carers. The final date for receipt of new applications/additional information is Monday 4th March 2024, no later than 4pm.

On receipt of an application for Special Provision for a child, the Admissions Panel of the Board of Governors will require an assessment of the child's ability to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the School. This is known as the Special Provision test. The Admissions Panel will form an educational judgement based on the available evidence of the child's ability, including the result of this assessment. The Admissions Panel will decide whether this child should be considered for admission on the basis that he or she falls within the ability range of other pupils being admitted in that year.

Parents/Guardians/Carers may be required to provide additional appropriate documentary educational evidence which should include the results of standardised testing carried out during Key Stage 2, or its equivalent period, in primary school. In exercising their judgement, the Admissions Panel will consider this along with the educational evidence referred to in the previous paragraph.

It is strongly emphasised that a claim of Special Provision does not, of itself, lead to automatic admission to the School. Further guidance on applying for Special Provision is provided on the SP Form and the 'Guidance for Special Provisions' which is available from the school website.

If applying to St Louis Grammar School through the Special Provision process, applicants must sit the Special Provision test in St Louis Grammar School.

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, or uploaded with, any applicant's online Transfer Application.

Parents/Guardians/Carers should note that they may be asked to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria.

The provision of false or incorrect information or 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. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

NOTE

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parents/guardians/carers to ensure that all of the above information is provided. When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on and/or uploaded with the online Transfer Application. Parents/Guardians/Carers should ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the School's Admissions Criteria is stated on the online Transfer Application and/or uploaded with it.

WAITING LIST PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8

St Louis Grammar School retains a Waiting List for admission to the School where a place becomes available in Year 8. Parents/Guardians/Carers who wish to have their child considered for admission to the School, in the event of a place becoming available in Year 8, should write to the Principal clearly stating this request. In the event of a vacancy arising, after 1st September 2024, the above Admissions Criteria will be applied, in the order set down, **to these applications only**. The School will contact parents/guardians/carers if their child gains a place in the School by this method.

FEES

Parents/Guardians/Carers are requested to make an annual contribution of £100 per pupil, up to a maximum of £200 per family, to help develop existing facilities. There is no capital fee.

Number of Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2021/22	139	261	163*
2022/23	139	220	182*
2023/24	139	218	160*

*This table includes pupils who were admitted to the School with a statement of special educational needs/on Appeal/via Exceptional Circumstances Body/via Temporary Variation

Criteria for Years 9 and onwards – available on request from the School.