ST COLUMB'S COLLEGE
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Principal: Mrs Caroline McLaughlin BA, MA (Ed), PGCE
Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mr P Kelly BA

Voluntary Grammar School

Boys Age Range 11 – 18

Admissions Number: 220
Enrolment Number: 1540
Roll: 1218

Open Day
Saturday 17 January 2026
Session 1 – 10.00 am - 11.30 am **Prospective pupils with Surnames A - L**
Session 2 – 12.00 noon – 1.30 pm **Prospective pupils with Surnames M - Z**
Principal's Address – 9.45 a.m. (for Session 1) and 1.15 p.m. (for Session 2)

Entrance Test Results
The Board of Governors has determined that admission to St Columb's College in 2026 will be by an entrance assessment. All boys who wish to be considered for admission are advised to sit the tests administered by SEAG on Saturday 15 November 2025 and Saturday 22 November 2025.

When completing your son's Online Transfer Application, parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) should make a clear statement that he sat the SEAG Entrance Assessment and should attach to or enter on the Online Transfer Application:

1. The Band received in the SEAG Entrance Assessment, i.e. Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5, Band 6;

2. A copy of the official notification of his result in that assessment.

Special Circumstances
If an application is being made for Special Circumstances, an Application Form for Special Circumstances (SC Form), available from the College, must be completed. This documentation, SC Form– together with the appropriate independent evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances – must be attached to the Online Transfer Application.

Special Provision
If an application is being made for Special Provision, an Application Form for Special Provision (SP Form), available from the College, must be completed and attached to the Online Transfer Application as early as possible and no later than 4.00 pm on Friday 6 February 2026 If a child arrives after this date, claims for Special Provision should be made directly to St Columb's College and the Education Authority School Admissions Office notified.

The type of information which the Board of Governors requires for all those applying for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision is detailed in the section below: *"Advice re the Submission to the Governors of Relevant Information and Documentary Evidence".*

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION
The College seeks a Parental Contribution of £50 per family, which is used to enhance and enrich pupils' educational experience through activities that otherwise could not be financed from the school budget.

RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS
In order to select pupils for admission in 2026, the Board of Governors has delegated to the authorised Sub-Committee, including the Principal and three Governors, the responsibility for applying these criteria.

ADMISSIONS OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8
The Band (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6) attained by the applicant in the SEAG Entrance Assessment shall be used to determine his position in the rank order of students, as detailed in the Admissions Criteria below.

Boys who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs will have their application dealt with by the Education

Authority under separate arrangements and are supernumerary to the College's Admissions and Enrolment Numbers.

NORTHERN IRELAND RESIDENTS

Applicants who are domiciled in Northern Ireland or who will be so domiciled by the start of the 2026/2027 academic year shall be admitted before applicants who are not domiciled in Northern Ireland or who will not be so domiciled by the start of the academic year.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA 2026

During the admissions procedure, when applying the criteria, all applications will be treated equally by the authorised Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors has determined that, in the event of the number of applicants being greater than the Admissions Number for the school, applicants shall be selected in the order of priority set down below, based on the information provided at the date of application.

1 Applicants awarded BAND 1 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 1.

2 Applicants awarded BAND 2 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 2.

3 Applicants awarded BAND 3 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 3

4 Applicants awarded BAND 4 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 4.

5 Applicants awarded BAND 5 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 5.

6 Applicants awarded BAND 6 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment and those applicants regarding whom parental claims for consideration of *special circumstances* and/or *special provision* have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Sub-Committee, based on the documented evidence submitted, are of comparable ability to those pupils awarded BAND 6.

7 Applicants other than those satisfying any one of criteria 1 - 6 above.

If there are more applicants who satisfy any one of criteria 1 - 7 when they are being applied in the order of priority set down above than there are places available, then pupils 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 brother* is a pupil in the school or will be in the coming year.

b. (i) Applicants who are the eldest/first** boy of the family or,

(ii) in the case of a family which has arrived on or after 1 January 2021 in the College's traditional catchment area *(details of which are to be found in a leaflet available from the College)*, applicants who are the first boy to reach transfer age of that family since its arrival in the College's traditional catchment area; or

(iii) Applicants of whom a brother* previously attended the school but has since left; or

(iv) Applicants with elder brothers*, all of whom have already completed their post-primary education at a school other than St Columb's College.

c. Applicants of whom a parent or step-parent or legally adopted parent is a permanent member of staff of St Columb's College.

d. Applicants other than those satisfying any one of the sub-criteria (a) – (c) above.

If there are more applicants who satisfy any one of sub-criteria (a) – (d) when they are being applied in the order of priority set down above than there are places available, the authorised Sub-Committee shall fill the remaining places by selecting on the basis of the initial letter of the surname (as appears on the birth/adoption certificate/ legal document to confirm that a change has been made to the applicant's name as it appears on his Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
I	P	R	K	U	E	N	B	D	S	J	T	Z	M	X	O	L	H	F	Q	W	A	Y	V	G	C

The order was determined by a random selection, witnessed by the Board of Governors. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surnames will be used in the order set out above.

In the event of two identical surnames, the initial and the subsequent letters of the forenames as they appear on the birth certificate etc. will be used in the order set out above. In the event of over-subscription in the last criterion that can be applied, selection for available places will be decided by lot.

* Brother refers to the phrase 'child of the family' as defined in Article 2 (2) of the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980. The term covers:

- a child born to a married couple or to 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 there 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; or,
- a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family or individual.

The child should be a child of the family as at the date of application.

** This would include cases where an older brother cannot attend mainstream school, for example attends a special school.

<u>Advice re the Submission to the Governors of Relevant Information and Documentary Evidence</u>

To enable the Board of Governors to apply the above criteria, it is the responsibility of parent(s)/ guardian(s)/carer(s) to ensure that all relevant information is given on, or attached to, the EA Post-Primary Application (with the exception of information required to verify an applicant's address). This is particularly important for Sub-criteria (a), (b)(i) and (b)(iii) where full details should be provided of brothers who are/will be/have been pupils at the College. Also, for Sub-criterion (b)(iv), full details should be provided of brothers who have been pupils at a school other than St Columb's College.

Special Circumstances

NOTE: 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 MADE KNOWN TO SEAG, THE AUTHORISED SUB-COMMITTEE MAY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT THE CHILD

WAS GRANTED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS OR COULD HAVE BEEN GRANTED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THOSE MATTERS.

RECEIPT OF CLAIM FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE GIVEN BY THE TEST CENTRE BUT THE INFORMATION WILL BE SHARED WITH ALL OF THE SCHOOLS TO WHICH THE CANDIDATE APPLIES.

- Special Circumstances are when the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) of the applicant claim(s) that medical or other problems affected the performance of their child. It is a post examination adjustment to the Band of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. Where a need or problem is identified in advance of the tests taking place, candidates must apply for Access Arrangements. Special Circumstances should be sought only where events on the day(s) of the SEAG Entrance Assessment(s) or factors unknown at the time are considered to have directly influenced the outcome of the SEAG Entrance Assessment.
- Circumstances relating to an application for Special Circumstances must apply at the time of the assessment(s) and be supported by appropriate written evidence from a relevant professional. No alteration of Band will be considered without such evidence.

An Application Form for Special Circumstances (SC Form) is available from the College in respect of those pupils who wish to apply for Special Circumstances. Where a parental/guardian/carer claim of *special circumstances* is being made, i.e. that medical or other problems affected a child's performance in the SEAG Entrance Assessment, a completed SC Form should accompany the Online Transfer Application. Information and appropriate independent evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances must be attached to the Online Transfer Application. Supporting documentary evidence should show that medical or other problems directly influenced the outcome of the SEAG Entrance Assessment and that the boy's ability is genuinely higher than that indicated by his SEAG Entrance Assessment Band.

Where the pupil's problem is a medical one, the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) will be required to produce supporting medical evidence from a relevant practitioner in support of the claim. Where the problem is of a non-medical nature the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) should describe it in detail and provide independent evidence to corroborate its existence.

In all such cases parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) will be required to supply standardised test scores in Literacy and Numeracy from Primaries 5, 6 and 7. Parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) may also supply other evidence of an educational nature including relevant school reports. To this end:

- All test results must be dated and verified by the primary school.
- Results from all tests should be accompanied by the name of the standardised test and the suppliers of the test.

The onus is on the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) to ensure that the above information is provided to the College. Failure to provide such information will result in the College being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances.

Special Provision
Special Provision may be made for applicants:

(i) has received more than half of their education** outside Northern Ireland; or
***based on the time from the start of Primary 1 (1 September 2019 to the 27 February 2026 i.e. more than 3 years and 3 months.*

(ii) wishes to transfer to a post-primary school that uses the SEAG Entrance Assessment from a school outside Northern Ireland; or

(iii) 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.

An Application Form for Special Provision (SP Form) is available from the College in respect of those pupils who fall into any one of categories (i) – (iii) above. Parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) of pupils who fall into any one of these categories ought to complete the Application Form (Form SP) and attach or upload it to the Online Transfer Application as early as possible and no later than 4.00 pm on Friday 6 February 2026 In this application, parent(s)/ guardian(s)/carer(s) should provide reasons, with supporting documentary evidence, as to why the pupil did not take part in the SEAG Entrance Assessment(s). In all such cases parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) will be required to supply standardised test scores in Literacy and Numeracy from Primaries 5, 6 and 7. Parent(s)/ guardian(s)/carer(s) may also supply other evidence of an educational nature including relevant school reports. The Board of Governors, where it deems it necessary/advisable, will arrange for a suitably qualified person to conduct an assessment to determine the pupil's Band to be used in the admissions process.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The authorised Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any EA Post-Primary Application. **Therefore, information contained within an application that qualifies the applicant for admission will be verified *(See above: 'Advice re the Submission to the Governors of Relevant Information and Documentary Evidence')*.**

VERIFYING INFORMATION

To enable the Board of Governors to verify information regarding an applicant's name and date of birth, information will be requested. At the time of Online Transfer Application, one of the following should be provided:

- The child's Birth Certificate;
- The child's Adoption Certificate;
- Any other legal document to confirm that a change has been made to the applicant's name as it appears on his Birth Certificate.

In the case of an applicant whom it is claimed is the eldest/first boy of the family, a verifying letter must be attached or uploaded to the Online Transfer Application. This letter must state that the child is the eldest/first boy of the family and that the child and family are known to the verifier. The letter must be written on headed notepaper and signed by one of the following who is not a member of the applicant's family and who has known the applicant for at least two years:

a. a primary school Principal;
b. a medical practitioner;
c. a solicitor;
d. a member of the clergy or equivalent.

To enable the Board of Governors to verify information regarding an applicant's address, information will be requested from those applicants who have been admitted to St Columb's when they are being notified of their allocation of a place in the school. **(This information does not need to be supplied with the EA Post-Primary Application)**. Any **two** of the following eight documents should be provided**:**

- A bank or building society statement of the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) or child which shows the address at which the child is resident;
- A utility bill (electricity, gas, Television Licence, telephone {excluding mobiles}) of the parent(s)/ guardian(s)/carer(s) which shows the address at which the child is resident;
- A letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit;
- Driving Licence;
- Addressed payslip;
- Mortgage Statement;
- Rental agreement;
- Land and Property Services Rate demand.

Original documents are required and not facsimiles or photocopies.

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All supporting documentary evidence should be supplied to the Education Authority in time for its dispatch together with the EA Post-Primary Applications of first preference to post-primary schools.

All **verifying information** regarding an application should be supplied as requested by the authorised sub-committee of the Board of Governors.

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) to ensure that the above verifying or other information is provided. PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)/CARER(S) SHOULD NOTE THAT THE PROVISION OF FALSE OR INCORRECT INFORMATION, OR THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE VERIFYING OR OTHER DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BY THE REQUIRED DEADLINE, MAY RESULT IN EITHER THE WITHDRAWAL OF A PLACE OR THE INABILITY OF THE COLLEGE TO OFFER A PLACE.

WAITING LIST POLICY

If a place(s) become(s) available in Year 8 between Saturday 9 May 2026 and Friday 25 September 2026 and there are more applicants than there are places available in Year 8, pupils will be selected to fill the available place(s) by applying the criteria for admission of pupils in Year 8. Thereafter, parent(s)/guardian(s)/carer(s) who wish their child to be considered, should a place become available, must make a new application in writing. Should a vacancy arise following this, the admissions criteria above will be applied to select pupils from this waiting list.

NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2023/24	220	214	214
2024/25	220	190	190
2025/26*	220	156	158

The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all Year 8 children admitted to the school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS.
(SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO YEARS 9 – 12

CRITERIA FOR THE ADMISSION OF BROKEN COURSE PUPILS (YEARS NINE-TWELVE INCLUSIVE)

The school wishes to accept boys who are suitable for the type of education it offers, and whose parents are in agreement with the Philosophy and Aims of the school and who will give an undertaking of continuing support of the aims and acceptance of responsibility for the pupil's meeting the school's standard of behaviour.

Applications for admission to the school will normally be considered by the Board of Governors in late August. An application for admission to the school for a pupil whose family are arriving from outside the Traditional Catchment Area (see current Prospectus) to reside within it will be considered by the Board of Governors as soon as practicable after the application is received.

A pupil will be considered for enrolment at the school provided that:

(1) his admission will not cause the school to exceed its approved enrolment number; and

(2) in the opinion of the Board of Governors, his enrolment would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources; e.g. the admissions number set for a particular year group would be exceeded.

If, at the time of consideration of applications, there are more eligible applicants than there are places available, pupils will be admitted to the school in the order determined by the application of Sub-criteria (a) to (d) of the school's Admission Criteria to Year 8, applied in the order of priority set down therein. If a place (places) subsequently becomes (become) available after 1 September in any academic year and there are more eligible applicants that there are places available, pupils will be selected to fill the available place(s) by the application of Sub-criteria (a) to (d) of the school's Admission Criteria to Year 8, applied in the order of priority set down therein.

No accommodation will be made for a pupil to repeat Year 12 except where the Governors deem that 'special circumstances' (i.e. medical or other problems which, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, may have affected a pupil's performance in Year 12 or in the GCSE examinations) pertain.