

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA 2012/2013

If you have any queries regarding the school or its Admissions Criteria please contact the Principal, Mr Paul McBride.

SECTION 1: ADMISSIONS OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2012

To Parents/Guardians naming Assumption Grammar School as a Preference on their child's Transfer Form.

Entrance Assessment Results

Assumption Grammar School will give preference to, (apart from those who qualify either for Special Circumstances or Special Provision), those pupils awarded a grade by GL in completing the GL Entrance Assessment on **Saturday 19th November 2011** or the supplementary GL Entrance Assessment on **Saturday 10th December 2011** as specified by the School. In Section C of the Transfer Form parents/guardians must state the GRADE achieved and attach to the Transfer Form a copy of the GL Entrance Assessment statement of results which they receive on **Saturday 4th February 2012**.

Special Circumstances

Special Circumstances refer to the claim that as a result of medical or other problems a pupil's performance in the GL Entrance Assessment was affected. Any parent/guardian claiming Special Circumstances must complete the documentation in the "Claiming Special Circumstances Pack" available from Assumption Grammar School or from its website. Claims for Special Circumstances must be made by **4.00pm on Friday 16th December 2011** using the **SCR** Form. Claims not registered within this period may not be considered. Independent evidence in support of Special Circumstances is not required to be produced at this stage. This documentation, together with the independent, verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be attached to the Transfer Form and include the SC1 Form.

Further details can be found in the section 'Note on Special Circumstances and Special Provision' in Section 5.

Special Provision

Special Provision may be made by the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors for girls:

- a) who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland;
- b) who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- c) whose educational provision to date has been negatively affected by serious medical or other problems which is supported by independent verifiable

documentary evidence, and who have not taken either the GL Assessment or its supplementary assessment.

1. For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision should be made on **Form SP1** and attached to the Transfer Form. Form SP1 is available from the school or its website. Parents wishing to claim Special Provision should also forward a copy of Form SP1 directly to Assumption Grammar School, by **7th March 2012**.
2. After this date, claims for Special Provision should be made directly to Assumption Grammar School and the relevant Education and Library Board Transfer Section notified.

Further details can be found in the section 'Note on Special Circumstances and Special Provision' in Section 5.

SECTION 2: OPEN EVENING INFORMATION

Thursday 1st December 2011 from 7.00pm - 9.00pm

Principal's Address: 7.00pm and 8.00pm

SECTION 3: SCHOOL PROFILE (Further information available on website and in prospectus)

Assumption Grammar School is a Catholic Girls' Grammar School providing second level education up to advanced level for pupils from a wide catchment area (including Co Down, South Belfast and Ards Peninsula). The school currently has an enrolment of 869 and a teaching staff of 62. Our values are based on the philosophy of the Missionary Sisters of the Assumption who founded the school in 1933. Emphasis is placed on a broadly based sound education in a supportive and caring environment.

Assumption was designated as a Specialist School for Music with PE in 2009. This has provided a framework for continuous school improvement and strengthens collaboration among partner schools and the Ballynahinch Learning Community.

The new and very well resourced building has all the facilities to support a wide and varied curriculum and an extensive programme of extra curricular activities. It includes state-of-the-art Science and Home Economics labs, a Sports Hall and Fitness Suite, a new Library, Drama and Music Suites with the latest Apple Technology, ICT and Business facilities, a Careers Section, Sixth Form Centre and third and second generation floodlit sports pitches. The new Oratory will be completed during this academic year.

CURRICULUM

In Years 8-10, pupils follow a common curriculum based on the general areas of study in the NI Curriculum. This is enhanced by the inclusion of such subjects as Latin, Relationships and Sexuality Education and Religious Education. Year 8 pupils study Spanish, French and Latin. In Year 9 they study two of the former in addition to Irish. Year 10 pupils will choose two of these languages. Pupils from a Bunscoil are given discrete Irish classes and can take GCSE and AS Irish earlier.

Pupils normally study 10 GCSEs out of the total of 28 subjects. Most pupils return to continue their studies at A level. The majority choose 4 AS and 3 A2 subjects from an extensive list of 30 subjects. There is an opportunity for pupils to opt for an 11th GCSE via Fast Track Music and Statistics courses. (Details in Curriculum Document).

'AS' students may take a Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (COPE). This provides an opportunity to find relevant links between their studies and life and work. An Enrichment Programme offers an extended curriculum. Subjects include: Leisure Activities, Survival Cookery, First Aid, COPE, ASPIRE Leadership, Beauty Science, Art and Craft, Additional Mathematics.

The majority of pupils continue their studies at University or other Institutes of Higher Education. Study skills guidance is offered to all pupils and a member of staff has special responsibility for this area. A number of teachers act as mentors, available for students experiencing difficulties. Pupils are also prepared for interview at Oxbridge Colleges.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care is of major importance. A carefully planned programme helps to foster and promote the personal, spiritual and academic development of the pupils. Our structures ensure that each pupil is known as an individual, cared for and encouraged. The Form Teacher assigned to each group normally remains with the same pupils throughout their junior and then senior years and has daily contact with them at assemblies and registration.

An elected School Council provides a forum for pupils' voices to be heard in matters pertaining to school life. An effective counselling service for pupils is also available.

High standards are expected from pupils. Great emphasis is placed on the importance of daily study, homework, good behaviour, in and outside school, punctuality and regular attendance. Pupils are also required to adhere to full school uniform regulations.

CAREERS & EMPLOYABILITY EDUCATION GUIDANCE

This important dimension of the pupils' education is carried out by a well-structured programme for all pupils. Pupils follow the Education for Employability Programme during the first 3 years. Guidance is given for GCSE options in Year 10 and pupils are introduced to Personal Career Planning. Pupils may choose Learning for Life and Work at GCSE. Prior to AS and A2, each student is interviewed regarding subject choices. Speakers from various professions give talks to Year 13s to help them gain an insight into future careers. This is enhanced by a Work Experience Programme. Year 14 students receive interview training. Guidance is provided in preparation for third level education.

The Careers Department is well staffed and resourced and pupils have access to the library, including the relevant ICT software. Our biennial Careers Convention hosts representatives from a very wide range of occupational areas.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Many co-curricular activities enhance pupils' educational experiences. These include chamber orchestras, choirs, traditional group, barbershop, brass, string & jazz ensembles, debating, public speaking, Drama, Politics, Science and History of Art Clubs. Sporting activities include camogie, gaelic football, netball, tennis, basketball, athletics, gymnastics, horse-riding, ice skating and aerobics. School teams have attained highly in netball and dance and we have a number of international players. The U14B and U16B Gaelic Football teams are now Ulster Champions.

The Drama Festival, European Languages, Cross Curricular, and Geography Action Weeks, Concerts, Sports Day and Netball Tournament are annual events. We stage dramatic productions and musicals regularly, the most recent being "The Sound of Music". A showcase of GCSE, AS and A2 level Drama has become a yearly event. The Annual Concert is held in the Waterfront Hall.

We continue to enrich our lives through many and varied trips abroad. Last year, there were trips to South Africa, India (with Saphara), Spain and Malawi (with Habitat).

PARENTS

The school recognises the important contribution made by parents to their child's formation and education. Regular contact is maintained through reports twice yearly, annual Parent-Teacher meetings, Information for Students and Parents Booklet, our website, the Board of Governors' Report and the school magazine. At times, more informal contact may be necessary or helpful and parents are welcome to contact us when they feel the need to do so.

COMMUNITY

As part of their personal and social development, pupils are encouraged to grow in awareness of the needs of others in society and to respond appropriately. There is a strong record of generous commitment by our pupils to support local charities and the needs of the Third World. We recognise the importance of links with the local community. This is manifested in our participation in many local community-based activities. School life is enhanced by the frequent involvement of relevant people from the community.

VOLUNTARY SUBSCRIPTION

We ask parents to make an annual contribution of £60 to help meet the costs of additional facilities.

SECTION 4: ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Board of Governors, having agreed the criteria for admissions, has delegated to the Admissions Committee, consisting of 4 members of the Board of Governors, the Principal, the Vice Principals and Head of Junior School, the authority to decide which particular applicants shall be admitted to the school in accordance with the admissions criteria.

The Admissions 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 application form/transfer form.

Parents/Guardians should note that they may be asked to produce verifying information pertinent to the school's admission criteria. Original documents are required. Photocopies or facsimiles are not acceptable.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within deadlines set by the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors can result in the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the school to offer a place.

All girls residing in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school will be selected for admission before any girl not so resident.

The Admissions Committee will not use as a criterion the position of preference given to the School on the Transfer Form. This means that a pupil who has chosen Assumption Grammar School in any position on the Transfer Form will be considered equally with those who have put this school as first choice.

IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF PROSPECTIVE PUPILS TO ENSURE THAT ALL INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA/SUB CRITERIA OF ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL IS SUBMITTED EITHER ON THE TRANSFER FORM

OR IS ATTACHED TO THAT FORM AT THE TIME OF SUBMISSION TO THE SCHOOL FOR ADMISSION.

SECTION 5: NOTE ON SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SPECIAL PROVISION

The Admissions Committee will first consider applicants claiming that Special Circumstances or Special Provision exist. Where it is determined that Special Circumstances exist, the Admissions Committee will award, on the basis of the information available, an appropriate grade equivalent for the applicant. Such applicants will then be considered with all other applicants who have received a GL Entrance Assessment grade and the admissions criteria applied.

A SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Special Circumstances refer to the claim that as a result of medical or other problems a pupil's performance in the GL Entrance Assessment was affected.

Special Circumstances must be supported by documentary evidence of a medical and/or other appropriate nature in keeping with the Post Primary Transfer Consortium's Entrance Assessment: "Access Arrangements and Special Circumstances Policy" and "A Guide to Claiming Special Circumstances for Children taking the GL Entrance Assessment" available from the school website www.assumptiongrammar.org.uk or directly from the school as required.

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 Admissions Committee.

Claims for Special Circumstances must be made by **4.00pm on Friday 16th December 2011** using the appropriate form (SCR) available from the school. Claims not registered within this period may not be considered. Independent evidence in support of Special Circumstances is not required to be produced at this stage. This independent evidence will need to be attached to the Transfer Form at the time of application to the school.

All documented evidence in support of any claim must be forwarded to the School via the relevant Education and Library Board/Education and Skills Authority attached to the Transfer Form, using the SC1 Form, in **February 2012**.

DETAILS OF MEDICAL OR OTHER PROBLEMS:

Where it is claimed that a pupil's performance in the GL Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, independent evidence of its existence must be provided to the school. Where the problem is a medical one of short term duration which affected the pupil only at the time of the GL Assessment, the school will require the production of evidence including dates that the pupil was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the GL Assessment. This evidence should be provided on the headed note paper of the medical practitioner and signed by him/her.

Where the problem is of a non medical nature the parents/guardians **must** set out precise details of the problem and append any appropriate independent evidence to corroborate its existence to the Transfer Form. This evidence **must** be verified by an appropriate professional. **Please refer to the "Access Arrangements and Special Circumstances Policy" and "A Guide to Claiming Special Circumstances for Children taking the GL Entrance Assessment".**

EDUCATIONAL EVIDENCE:

Please note that sufficient documentary evidence must be provided by the parents/guardians applying for Special Circumstances and accompany the Transfer Form and verified by the Primary School to enable the Admissions Committee to reach a decision.

The following information **should** be provided on Form SC1 in relation to the applicant:

- 1) **All the applicant's school standardised test results in English/Literacy and Mathematics/Numeracy from the beginning of the Key Stage 2 period:**
 - a) All test results must be dated and verified by the Primary School;
 - b) Results from all tests should be accompanied by the name of the standardised test and the supplier of test.
 - c) Results should include scores for English/Literacy and Mathematics/Numeracy;
 - d) Any other relevant material.
- 2) The Primary School's comments on the pupil's academic achievements in relation to the standardised tests taken during Key Stage 2.

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parents/guardians 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 have a right to obtain such information under the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) Regulations (NI) 2009 as amended and also the 'Data Protection Act'. Further

information on parents' rights can be obtained from the Information Commissioners Office at www.ico.gov.uk.

The Admissions Committee may decide, in relation to an applicant in this category of Special Circumstances, that the grade which the applicant achieved in the GL Assessment is the grade which the applicant would have achieved under normal circumstances.

Once a decision has been made the applicant will be considered alongside applicants within that category.

Please note that the judgement of Special Circumstances will be at the absolute discretion of the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors.

B SPECIAL PROVISION

Special Provision may be made by the Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors for applicants:

- a) who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland;
- b) who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- c) whose educational provision to date has been negatively affected by serious medical or other problems which is supported by independent verifiable documentary evidence, and who have not taken either the GL Assessment or its supplementary assessment.

Applicants in categories a) and b) above, who wish to apply under Special Provision do not need to take the GL Entrance Assessment or the supplementary assessment unless their parents/guardians so wish, in which case the GL Entrance Assessment grade obtained would also be considered.

The Admissions Committee of the Board of Governors may require a suitably qualified person or body approved by the school to make an assessment of the applicant's ability. The Admissions Committee, within the operation of its admissions criteria, will decide whether these children should be admitted on the basis that they fall within the ability range of other pupils being admitted in that year.

For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision should be made on **Form SP1** and attached to the Transfer Form. Form SP1 is available from the school or its website. Parents wishing to claim Special Provision should also forward a copy of Form SP1 directly to Assumption Grammar School, by **7th March 2012**. After this date, claims for Special Provision should be made directly to Assumption Grammar School and the relevant Education and Library Board notified.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to provide precise reasons why the applicant qualifies for Special Provision and to submit appropriate verified documentary evidence attached to the Transfer Form.

Further guidance on applying for Special Provision is provided with the SP1 Form available from our school or website.

Once the Special Circumstances and Special Provision applications have been considered and decisions made, then the Admissions Committee will go through the process of allocating places to Year 8.

SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR YEAR 8 PUPILS TO ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BALLYNAHINCH

Assumption Grammar School will initially consider only those pupils who have taken the GL Entrance Assessment and who have been awarded a grade or assigned a grade pursuant to "special circumstances" or "special provision". Information on the GL Entrance Assessment is available from the school or can be downloaded from the school website at www.assumptiongrammar.org.uk

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

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

- A Pupils who have been awarded Grade A in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade A.
- B Pupils who have been awarded Grade B1 in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade B1.
- C Pupils who have been awarded Grade B2 in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade B2.
- D Pupils who have been awarded Grade C1 in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade C1.
- E Pupils who have been awarded Grade C2 in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on

the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade C2.

- F Pupils who have been awarded Grade D in the GL Assessment and also those pupils to whom Special Circumstances or Special Provision apply and who on the documented evidence submitted appear to be of comparable ability to pupils awarded Grade D.

G Other Pupils

If there are more applicants in a category under consideration (i.e. Grades A, B1, B2, C1, C2, D and Other pupils) than there are number of places available, priority will be given in descending order to those who indicate on the Transfer Form that they are:

- (i) Pupils who have a sibling presently enrolled at the school or already accepted for the coming year. (Name and Form of sibling to be stated on Transfer Form).
- (ii) A pupil who is the eldest or only girl in her family or the first girl to have had the opportunity to enter a grammar school. This criterion covers 'only' children and will treat twins or other multiples as joint eldest. For the purpose of this sub-criterion "eldest child of the family" will be interpreted in accordance with Annex 2 paragraphs 3-5 of DE Guidance to Primary School Principals, Post-Primary School Boards of Governors and Principals, and Education and Library Boards/Education and Skills Authority on Post-Primary Admissions for 2010/2011 School Year.
- (iii) A pupil who is entitled to Free School Meals. "Entitled to Free School Meals" will mean applicants who are listed on the Education and Library Board/ESA register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has signed their post-primary Transfer Form. If it is stated on the application form that a pupil is currently registered as Free School Meal Entitled, and that claim is decisive in qualifying her for admission, then that information will be verified. If it is found to be incorrect, then any place offered because of it will be withdrawn.
- (iv) A pupil for whom Assumption Grammar School is the nearest Catholic Grammar School which caters for girls. Distance will be measured from the pupil's permanent place of residency to the front gate of Assumption Grammar School using grid references provided by Land and Property Services.

- (v) A pupil whose sister has completed her grammar school education at Assumption Grammar School. (Name and year of leaving to be stated on the Transfer Form).
- (vi) A pupil who is a daughter of a past pupil. (Mother's maiden name and year of leaving to be stated on the Transfer Form).

In the event that there are fewer applicants complying with a particular criterion than there are places available or remaining, those applicants complying with that criterion will be admitted and the next criterion will be applied to the remaining applicants.

In the event that there are more applicants complying with a particular criterion than there are places available or remaining, those applicants complying with that criterion will go forward to be considered under the next criterion and those not complying with that criterion will be eliminated.

In the event that there are more applicants than there are places available or remaining on the application of the last criterion which can be applied, applicants will be selected for the remaining places on the basis of the initial letter of the surname as identified on the birth certificate presented at registration for the Entrance Assessment by 17th September 2011. The order is set out below

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

The order was determined by a randomised selection of the alphabet.

In the event of the surnames beginning with the same letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order using the above randomised selection. In the event of two or more identical surnames the alphabetical (randomised) order of the initial of the forenames will be used. Where names cannot be separated by this process, children will be accepted by date of birth with preference given to the oldest.

SECTION 7: ADMISSION TO YEAR 8 AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Applications for admission to Year 8 after the beginning of the school year will be examined by the Board of Governors or its sub-committee. If there are vacancies within the admissions number for that year, the admission criteria which apply to initial admission into Year 8 before the commencement of the 2012 school year will be used.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS 2009 - 2011

	Applications			Admissions		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Grade A	71	84	73 (inc 2 SP)	71	86* ^	73 (inc 2 SP)
Grade B1	22	21	14	22	21	14
Grade B2	30	28	24	21	14	23
Grade C1	16	12	8	4*	0	8
Grade C2	11	14	9	1*	0	2
Grade D	12	6	8	1*	0	0
Other	4	3	1	4	2	0
On Appeal				2	1	2
Total	166	168	137	124	122	122

* *inc upgrades under Special Circumstances*

^ *inc 1 accepted under Exceptional Circumstances*