

# **Belfast High School**

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

# **CONTENTS**

**Admissions Criteria (Year 8)**

**Admissions Criteria (Years 9 – 12)**

**Admissions Criteria (Sixth Form)**

**Appendix 1          Application Form (Years 9-12)**

**Appendix 2          Application Form (Years 13-14)**

**Appendix 3          School Entry Agreement**

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (YEAR 8)**

Respective functions of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to Admissions to the School  
In the event of the School being oversubscribed the Board of Governors has approved the criteria described below and has delegated the task of applying these criteria to the Principal. Decisions in respect of “Special Circumstances” and “Special Provisions” are taken in consultation with the Admissions Sub Committee to whom decision-making powers have been delegated by the full Board of Governors of the School. Further reference, therefore, to the Board of Governors may imply the Admissions Sub Committee or the Principal.

The Board of Governors will first consider for admission to Year 8, children who have taken the Association of Quality Education (AQE) Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) and been awarded a standardised score by AQE, subject only to the consideration of those children claiming “Special Provisions”, as defined below.

Consideration will also be given to those children claiming “Special Circumstances”, as defined below, in respect of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the Common Entrance Assessment.

Belfast High School will not use as a criterion the position of preference given to the school on the Transfer Form; 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.

### **Admission Criteria for Entry into Year 8**

The Board of Governors has determined that all children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School will be selected for admission before any child not so resident.

Parents/Guardians are advised to record the Age Standardised Score awarded by AQE, together with the AQE Candidate Number, in Section C of the Transfer Form and attach the statement of result. Parents/Guardians should note that they may be required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School’s Admissions Criteria.

If the number of applications is greater than the Admissions Number, the following criteria shall be applied in the order set down below.

- 1 Children who have taken the AQE Common Entrance Assessment and been awarded a score by AQE, or awarded a score as a result of Special Circumstances or Special Provisions, as defined below, will be considered before other children. If the number of applications is greater than the number of places available, children will be placed in **strict rank order** of scores, highest to lowest.
- 2 Places, up to the School’s Admissions Number (136), will be allocated to children on the basis of the rank order of their respective scores; those achieving higher scores being allocated places before those who have achieved a lower score. If a number of children are eligible for the 136<sup>th</sup> place because they have equal scores, then these children will be allocated to the remaining places up to the School’s Admissions Number, using the criteria listed in paragraph 4 below if required.
3. If there are still places available after consideration of all the children who have taken the AQE Common Entrance Assessment and been awarded a score by AQE, 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 AQE Common Entrance Assessment. Children from this pool will be allocated to the remaining places up to the School’s Admissions Number using the criteria listed in paragraph 4 below.
4. If as specified above, the number of applications exceeds the number of available places, children will be allocated a place by applying the following criteria progressively in the order set down. *If the Admissions Number is exceeded by the application of a particular criterion, then the remaining criteria will be used, in turn, as necessary to reduce the number of children still being considered for places until the correct Admissions Number is reached:-*

- (i) Children who have a sibling<sup>1</sup> currently attending the school;
- (ii) Children who are the eldest/only<sup>2</sup> child in the family (details to be supplied);
- (iii) Children who have older brothers or sisters who have since left the School (details to be supplied).
- (iv) Children who have a parent who is a former pupil of the School (details to be supplied).

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Twins and other multiples who are eldest in the family are treated as joint eldest children.

If there are more applicants with the last criterion in (i) to (iv) above which can be applied than there are places remaining then the Board of Governors will apply a tie-breaker. Priority will be given to the child whose home is closer to the School. Distance will be measured in a straight line using an Ordnance Survey web distance measurement tool from the pupil's home to the Reception entrance of the School. Home will be taken to mean the pupil's address appearing at the commencement of the Transfer Application Form.

**It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the Transfer Form is completed in full, including, for example, details of any family relationship with Belfast High School (including, for verification purposes, dates and maiden name if appropriate) and other relevant information.**

### **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 AQE CEA 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 AQE CEA 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 attached to the Transfer Form. 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 mark that the child would have obtained in the AQE CEA under normal circumstances, the Admissions Sub Committee will consider any material presented by parents/guardians (and attached to the Transfer Form) in support of the application. This material may include any or all of the following:

- i) The score achieved in the AQE Common Entrance Assessment (CEA);
- 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 AQE CEA score awarded;
- iv) Any other relevant material.

## **Special Circumstances**

Belfast High School has academic performance as its first criterion, subject only to the consideration of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the AQE 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 Form SC10, obtainable from the School or AQE, stating the precise reason why they believe the child should be considered for Special Circumstances and attach it with appropriate evidence to the Transfer Form.

## **Details of Medical or Other Problems**

Where it is claimed that a child's performance in the AQE CEA has been affected by a medical or other problem, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to set out in the Form SC11 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 AQE CEA, parents/guardians should be aware that the school 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 assessments.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature the parents/guardians should set out in the Form SC11 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. Where Special Circumstances are accepted, the Admissions Sub Committee will determine, on the basis of the information available, an appropriate AQE CEA score for the child. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received an AQE CEA score and the Admissions criteria applied.

## **Special Provisions**

Special Provisions will apply for:

- (a) children whose parents/guardians wish them to transfer from schools outside Northern Ireland;
- (b) children who have received more than half their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- (c) children, entered for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment, who because of unforeseen and serious medical or other problems which are supported by appropriate independent documentary evidence, were unable to participate in any of the assessments.

Note: It is expected that all those seeking admission should sit the AQE CEA, with the exception of those children who take up residence in Northern Ireland after the 16 September 2011.

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 Form SC10, obtainable from the School or AQE, stating the precise reason why they believe the child is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions and attach it with appropriate independent documentary evidence to the Transfer Form.

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, an appropriate AQE CEA score for the child. Such children will then be considered with all other children who have received an AQE CEA 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 NEELB or the Education and Skills Authority, as appropriate.

### **Admissions to Year 8 following completion of the Transfer Procedure**

Should the Board of Governors determine that a child who has arrived in Northern Ireland after the Transfer Process has been concluded is suitable for admission, and our 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.

Parents/Guardians who wish to have their child considered for admission in the event of a place arising after the beginning of the school year should write to the Principal stating this. An acknowledgement will be issued. If any places become available after 1 September 2012 and there are more applicants than places available, then decisions will be made on application of the Year 8 Admissions Criteria to those children seeking admission at the time of the place(s) become available.

**It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the Transfer Form is completed in full, including, for example, details of any family relationship with Belfast High School (including, for verification purposes, dates and maiden name if appropriate) and other relevant information.**

If the Board of Governors becomes aware of:

- (a) any material irregularity in the application made to the Association for Quality Education Limited in connection with the prescribed test, or
- (b) any falsification of any documents submitted to the Association for Quality Education Limited in connection with the prescribed test, or
- (c) any material breach of the conditions on the part of the child or his parents or guardians relating to the prescribed test

it reserves the right to reject the application to the School of such a child.

### **THE VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION**

Those making applications should note that the information contained within an application that qualifies the child for admission may 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 application form/Transfer Form. This information will be requested from those whose applications have been successful on or shortly after 31 May 2012 when 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.

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (YEARS 9-12)**

Those wishing to apply for entry to Years 9 – 12 must make formal application each year using the School Application Form provided (appendix 1) and provide the most recent reports from their present school. Full details, including the School Application Form, may be obtained in writing to the Principal's Secretary, Belfast High School, 740 Shore Road, Newtownabbey, BT37 0PX.

Following receipt of an application, the School will advise parents in writing of any decision to admit the child or otherwise. In the event that a place subsequently becomes available, it should be noted that those who have applied previously, but have failed to obtain a place in the School, will be placed on a reserve list until 1 May 2013, at which time their application is deemed to have elapsed.

The Board of Governors of Belfast High School delegates to the Principal the authority to select those pupils who meet the criteria. The Principal may consult with an Admissions Sub-Committee if necessary.

The Board of Governors will only consider applications if the following criteria are met:

1. Completion of an Application Form for admission to Years 9 – 12 at Belfast High School (appendix 1).
2. The Board of Governors may not admit an applicant if the admission would prejudice the efficient use of resources eg exceeding the maximum class size as determined by the Department of Education.
3. The parents/guardians of the child must accept the School Entry Agreement (appendix 3).

**If there are more candidates for admission who meet the criteria above than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order listed below:**

- (i) The process consists of a scored interview (see below for weighting), a CAT test and consideration of submitted material including the most recent school report and other relevant school documentation. Children will be ranked on attainment and aptitude, attendance, behaviour record, motivation, effort and attitude and extra-curricular contribution. (In the case of children whose attendance may have been affected by clearly documented medical or other problems, the Principal is empowered, in extenuating circumstances, to consider this. Each case will be carefully assessed by the Principal and will necessarily take into account appropriate documentary evidence – medical or otherwise).
- (ii) Children<sup>1</sup> who have a brother/sister currently attending the School.
- (iii) Children<sup>1</sup> who are the eldest/only<sup>2</sup> child to be eligible to be accepted for enrolment in September 2012 (details to be supplied).
- (iv) Children who have older brothers or sisters who have since left the School (details to be supplied).
- (v) Children who have a parent who is a former pupil of the School (details to be supplied).

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup> Twins and other multiples who are eldest in the family are treated as joint eldest children.

If there are more applicants with the last criterion in (i) to (v) above which can be applied than there are places remaining then the Board of Governors will apply a tie-breaker. Priority will be given to the child whose home is closer to the School. Distance will be measured in a straight line using an Ordnance Survey web distance measurement tool from the pupil's home to the Reception entrance of the School. Home will be taken to mean the pupil's address appearing on the Application Form.

### ***Weighting:***

*Attainment 20% (School Report), Aptitude 20% (CAT test), Attendance 15% (School/Report), Behaviour 15% (School/Report), Motivation, Attitude and Effort 15% (Interview), Extra-Curricular 15% (Interview).*

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (YEARS 13 - 14)**

**The Board of Governors of Belfast High School delegates to the Principal the authority to select those pupils who meet the criteria. The Principal may consult with an Admissions Sub-Committee if necessary.**

Pupils seeking admission to Sixth Form should contact the School after receiving their GCSE results (or equivalent). All pupils wishing to transfer to the School at Sixth Form level will be interviewed by the Principal or senior member of staff. Each case will be considered on its merits but the basic criterion to be applied will be that the pupil embarks on any 'A' level course with a high probability of success.

The School publishes annually a Sixth Form Information Booklet. This document contains details of all 'A' level subjects offered.

### **General Requirements**

1. Completion of an Application Form for admission to Years 13 – 14 at Belfast High School appendix 2).
  2. A minimum of 6 GCSE subjects at Grade C or above (evidence must be provided).
- and**
3. A minimum of 14 points (A\*=4, A=3, B=2, C=1).  
*Please note that in Short Course GCSE subjects the points score is halved.*
- and**
4. Meeting the subject requirements as stated in the Sixth Form Booklet.
- and**
5. A good School record with regard to attendance, behaviour, punctuality and uniform (a copy of the most recent school report must be provided).
- and**
6. The parents/guardians of the child must accept the School Entry Agreement (appendix 3).



## BELFAST HIGH SCHOOL

### APPLICATION FOR A PLACE IN YEARS 9 – 12

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:**

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request to start school on:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please give details of any special educational needs or access requirements:

Does your child have English as an additional language:      Yes       No

Copy of child's birth certificate enclosed:      Yes       No

Copy of child's most recent school report enclosed:      Yes       No

£10 enclosed to cover CAT test administration (*n/a for FSM children*):      Yes       No



## BELFAST HIGH SCHOOL

### APPLICATION FOR A PLACE IN YEARS 13 - 14

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:**

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request to start school on:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please give details of any special educational needs or access requirements:

  
  
  

Does your child have English as an additional language:      Yes       No

Copy of child's birth certificate enclosed:      Yes       No

Copy of child's most recent school report enclosed:      Yes       No

Copy of GCSE results enclosed:      Yes       No       Not yet available



## Belfast High School

# SCHOOL ENTRY AGREEMENT

Parents should note that in applying for a place for your child in Belfast High School you are indicating support for the ethos, policies and high standards expected in all aspects of school life. Parents should also note that the Capital Fee and Voluntary Fee totalling £180 should be paid before or at the start of each new academic year.

### To the Principal

I wish to enter my son/daughter for the term commencing .....

Pupil's name in full (block capitals) .....

Date of birth .....

Full postal address .....

.....

Present school ..... Since .....

Previous schools, with dates (if applicable) .....

Present form or standard .....

Name of parent/guardian .....

Home Telephone ..... Business ..... Mobile .....

E-mail address .....

On the admission of (name of pupil) ..... to the School. I agree that he/she shall be subject to all the rules and regulations of the School for his/her time at the School and that I will, in all matters relating to his/her connection with the School, be subject to the said rules and regulations.

**Signed:** ..... Parent/Guardian                      **Date:** .....

### FOR SCHOOL USE

**Form:** ..... **House:** ..... **Test Result:** .....

**Birth Certificate Received:** ..... **Returned:** .....