

Admissions Criteria for Entry September 2026

SLEMISH COLLEGE

Larne Road
Ballymena BT42 3HA
Telephone: (028) 25630156
Fax:(028) 25632944
E-Mail:
info@slemish.ballymena.ni.sch.uk
Web: www.slemishcollege.org.uk

Grant Maintained Integrated School

Age range of pupils: 11-18
Admission Number: 140
Enrolment Number: 880

Principal: Mr M. Bennett BSc(Hons) PQHNI

Chairperson of Governors: Mrs J Jervis BSc(Hons)

The College will be open for visits by parents and transferring pupils on: -

1. **Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 6.30 pm**
2. **Thursday 22nd January 2026 at 6.30 pm**

Students wishing to transfer to the College Sixth Form in September 2026 are also welcome to attend.

SLEMISH COLLEGE – 2026/27 ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

Slemish College has been directed to select for admission, children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission before any child not so resident may be selected for admission.

The criteria have been determined by the Board of Governors and will be applied by the College's Admissions Committee who have been delegated by the Board of Governors to apply these criteria. Through the application of the criteria the Board of Governors seeks to establish an overall balance between religious affiliations. This is the pre-eminent feature which distinguishes an integrated school from all other schools. The College wishes to cater for grammar and all ability entry. With our all-ability intake our aim is to effect an intake which is as close as possible to the ratio of 40% Catholic, 40% Protestant and 20% of applicants of other faiths, or none, ('Other' category), however the College cannot guarantee that the admissions intake for Year 8 will equate to these exact ratios.

Admissions Criteria Stage I - Grammar Entry 35%

To Parents naming Slemish College, (the College) as a Preference on your child's Transfer Application for Grammar Based Entry:

Entrance Test Results

Please ensure that you provide the following information on the Transfer Application

- SEAG test result with the Total Standardised Age Score achieved by your child in the SEAG test and their candidate number.

For the Academic Year 2026/27 Slemish College uses academic criteria to select applicants for our Stage 1 Grammar Entry.

Admissions Criteria for Entry September 2026

The Board of Governors will consider applications from Primary 7 children who have taken the Entrance Assessment anywhere in Northern Ireland provided by SEAG.

Preference will be given to those pupils with the highest SEAG Total Standardised Age Score in strict rank order until all places have been filled up to 35% of the school admissions number. References to SEAG Total Standardised Age Score include those deemed by College's Admissions Committee to be equivalent after consideration of Special Circumstances and Special Provision (see page 4 below). In the event that two or more applicants are eligible for the remaining place or places because they have the same SEAG Total Standardised Age Score the Tie Breaker criteria below will be applied in the order set down until the final place has been allocated.

Tie Breaker Criteria:

- 1. Applicants who have a 'child of the family'*, currently enrolled at the College.**
Criterion 1 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 1 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned and used for Criterion 1 applicants to allocate places in ascending order. The name and class of the currently enrolled 'child of the family' must be noted on the application, for verification purposes. If not all the places have been filled, Criterion 2 will then be applied for the remaining places.
- 2. Applicants who are the 'eldest child'** currently in education, who have had a 'child of the family'*, previously attend Slemish College at least until the completion of Key Stage 4.**
Criterion 2 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 2 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned and used for Criterion 2 applicants to allocate places in ascending order. The name of the 'child of the family' who previously attended must be noted on the application, along with dates of attendance, for verification purposes. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 3 will then be applied for the remaining places.
- 3. Applicants who are the 'eldest child'**.**
Criterion 3 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 3 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned and used for Criterion 3 applicants to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 4 will then be applied for the remaining places.
- 4. Applicants who are currently enrolled at a grant maintained integrated primary school or controlled integrated primary school and have attended a grant maintained integrated primary school or controlled integrated primary school for all of Key Stage 2.**
Criterion 4 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 4 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned and used for Criterion 4 applicants to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 5 will then be applied for the remaining places.
- 5. Applicants who have a 'child of the family'* who have previously applied for Slemish College as their first choice for Year 8 entry, and who were unsuccessful in gaining a place.** For verification purposes, the pupil's name, primary school and year of application must be stated on the form.
- 6. All other applicants**
Criterion 5 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 5 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on

receipt of applications) will be assigned and used for Criterion 5 applicants to allocate places in ascending order.

*** 'Child of the family'** -Article 2(2) of the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980: 'Child of the family' in relation to the parties to a marriage or parties living together in the same household means:

- A child of both; and
- Any other child who has been treated by both of those parties as a 'child of their family'.
- 'Child of the family' covers:
 - A child born to a married couple;
 - A child born to a co-habiting couple;
 - A child of either of those people by a previous marriage or relationship;
 - A child living with same sex partners whether there is a civil partnership under the Civil Partnership Act 2014 or not;
 - An adopted or fostered child;
 - A situation where, for example, an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family. The child should be a child of the family as at the date of the application since these complex living arrangements may change rapidly.

**** 'Eldest child'** - is defined as 'children who, at the date of the application, are the eldest child of the family.' This wording covers 'only' children and is also intended to treat twins (or other multiples) as joint eldest. Applicants who have an older sibling who attended a post primary school, other than Slemish College, but have now left compulsory education will not be considered as eldest children. However, the Board of Governors wish for this criterion to cover other circumstances where a family has not had the opportunity to previously apply for an elder child to be enrolled in Year 8 at Slemish College, e.g. cases where a family has moved residence into the area; or cases where an older sibling cannot attend mainstream school, for example attends a special school. This should be clearly explained and verified on the application.

Applicants who are an eldest/only child, must satisfy the verification requirements as set out below: Parents should include a verifying letter with the application, or a copy of the verification form available from the College, or Primary school. The verifying letter/form must state that the child is the eldest /only child and that the 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:

- a medical practitioner, (this must be either a doctor; dentist; or registered nurse).
- a member of the clergy, or equivalent;
- a primary school principal

The letter must clearly state that the applicant is the eldest, or only child. Please note it should not state that the child is the *eldest girl*, *eldest boy*, or *eldest boy/girl/child currently in education*, this would not verify that the applicant is the eldest child.

In the case where the College is unable to verify that the child is the eldest child, applicants will not be considered for this criterion.

NB. All information relevant to the above must be clearly stated by the parents according to the requirements of the Transfer Procedure conducted through the Education Authority.

Special Circumstances and Special Provision Related to Stage 1 Grammar Entry Applications only

Special Circumstances

The Admissions Committee will admit students strictly in rank order of the SEAG Total Standardised Age Score, subject only to the consideration of medical or other problems which may have affected performance in the Assessment(s), and which are supported by documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature including educational evidence. These ‘medical or other problems’ are commonly referred to as “**Special Circumstances**”.

Sufficient documentary evidence must be provided by the parent. In addition to medical or other appropriate evidence, all the applicant’s standardised English and Maths scores at Key Stage 2 (preferably P6 and P7 scores) should be submitted and this information should be included with the applicant’s Transfer Application. These scores must be obtained from your son/daughter’s Primary School and verified by their School Principal.

In applying their admissions criteria to the Stage 1 Grammar Entry, the Admission Committee of the Board of Governors will take claims of special circumstances and special provision into consideration before the application of the criteria set out in Stage 1 Grammar Entry.

On 24th January 2026, parents should receive their child’s results, and they will be able to consider whether their child’s performance in the assessment was adversely affected by medical or other problems which their child experienced just before or during the Entrance Assessment.

If parents decide to proceed with a claim for Special Circumstances and they are making an application to one or more of the schools which use the Entrance Assessment outcomes, then they must complete an SC form and upload details of the claim and the supporting evidence to the Education Authority (EA), through completion of the Post-Primary Transfer Application.

Special Provision

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

- a. who has received more than half of their education* outside Northern Ireland; or
*(*based on the time from the start of Primary 1 (1st September 2019) to the 28th February 2026 i.e. more than 3 years and 3 months.)*
- b. wishes to transfer to a post-primary school that uses the SEAG Entrance Assessment from a school outside Northern Ireland; or
- c. due to a serious medical or other problem, 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.
(NB. Outcomes for pupils who only sit one paper will have the designation “e” (for estimate) immediately after the Outcome, e.g. Total Standardised Age Score TSAS 196e).

If a parent decides to proceed with a claim for Special Provisions and they are making an application to one or more of the schools which use the SEAG Entrance Assessment outcomes, then they must complete an SP form and upload details of the claim and the supporting evidence to the Education Authority (EA), through completion of the Post-Primary

Transfer Application.

The admissions committee will consider each application for Special Provision. Where this is granted, the committee will determine, on the basis of the information available, an appropriate Total Standardised Age Score for the applicant. Such applicants will then be considered with all other applicants. Criteria as outlined in Stage 1 Grammar entry will then be applied as necessary.

In the event that applications considered at Stage 1 exceed the number of places available (35% of the intake), all applications which are not admitted at Stage 1 will automatically be considered at Stage 2 All Ability Entry.

Admissions Criteria Stage 2 - All Ability Entry 65%

65% of the intake will be selected with no reference to grammar selection.

In the application of the criteria set out below the places will initially be divided as follows:

20% Applicants of other faiths or none ('Other' Category)

40% Roman Catholic applicants ('Catholic' Category')

40% Protestant applicants ('Protestant' Category')

Religious affiliation will be determined by information supplied on or with the Official Transfer Form. It is the responsibility of parents to designate students using the wording 'Catholic', 'Protestant' or 'Other' to categorise their child's religion.

In the event that the category is not clearly stated by the inclusion of the wording of '**Catholic**', '**Protestant**' or '**Other**', or where more than one category may be applicable, the Board of Governors will regard applicants from Catholic Maintained Schools as '**Catholic**' applicants and applicants from Controlled schools as '**Protestant**'. If the applicant has not attended a Controlled, or Catholic Maintained Primary school and the parent has not clearly and unambiguously stated the category, then the Board of Governors will regard the child as being in the '**Other**' category. The criteria will be applied first to applicants in the '**Other**' category until a maximum of 20% of the places, have been allocated. In the event that less than 20% of the places have been awarded, the balance will be equally divided between Catholic and Protestant applicants. Should an odd number of places remain, the additional place will be allocated to the main category having the greatest number of applicants. The criteria will then be applied separately to Catholic and Protestant applicants. Should there be fewer from either category than there are places available for that category then the balance of places will be allocated to the remaining category.

Parents should use the Official Transfer Form to provide information to assist the College in the application of its criteria.

NB: The provision of inaccurate, ambiguous or misleading information provided on or in support of any such application, may prejudice the offer of a place and may subsequently lead to the withdrawal of a place awarded to any child who shall be deemed to have gained unfair and improper advantage by submitting such information. **The Board of Governors reserve the right to authenticate and seek verification of the content of any application.** The failure to provide verifying documents according to the required deadline, may result in the inability of the College to offer a place. Applications for admission to the College from students residing within Northern Ireland at the time of proposed admission will take precedence over applications from those not so resident. In the event that there are more applicants for admission than there are places available for Stage 2 admission, the Board of Governors has determined that the following criteria

shall be applied.

1. Applicants who have a ‘child of the family’*, currently enrolled at the College who have selected Slemish College as their First Preference Post Primary school.

Criterion 1 will be applied, and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 1 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 1 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order. The name and class of the currently enrolled child of the family must be noted on the application, for verification purposes. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 2 will then be applied for the remaining places.

2. Applicants who have a ‘child of the family’*, currently accepted through Stage 1 Grammar Based entry for Year 8 in 2026/27 who have selected Slemish College as their First Preference Post Primary school

Criterion 2 will be applied and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 2 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 2 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 3 will then be applied for the remaining places.

3. Applicants who are the ‘eldest child’ currently in education, who have had a ‘child of the family’*, previously attend Slemish College at least until the completion of Key Stage 4, who have selected Slemish College as their First Preference Post Primary school.**

Names and dates of attendance at Slemish College for ‘child of the family’ must be clearly stated on the application. Criterion 3 will be applied and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 3 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 3 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 4 will then be applied for the remaining places.

4. Applicants who are the ‘eldest child’, who have selected Slemish College as their First Preference Post Primary school**

Criterion 4 will be applied and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 4 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 4 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 5 will then be applied for the remaining places.

5. Applicants who are currently enrolled at a grant maintained integrated primary school or controlled integrated primary school; have attended there for all of Key Stage 2 and who have selected Slemish College as their First Preference Post Primary school.

Criterion 5 will be applied and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 5 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 5 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order. If not all the places have been filled Criterion 6 will then be applied for the remaining places.

6. Applicants who have a ‘child of the family’* who have previously applied for Slemish College as their first choice for Year 8 entry, and who were unsuccessful in gaining a place. For verification purposes, the pupil’s name, primary school and year of application must be stated on the form.

7. All other applicants

Criterion 7 will be applied and eligible applicants awarded a place, however if Criterion 7 is oversubscribed, the unique random computerised number (which was allocated on receipt of applications) will be assigned for Criterion 7 applicants and used to allocate places in ascending order.

*** 'Child of the family'** -Article 2(2) of the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980: 'Child of the family' in relation to the parties to a marriage or parties living together in the same household means:

- A child of both of them; and
- Any other child who has been treated by both of those parties as a 'child of their family'.
- 'Child of the family' covers:
- A child born to a married couple;
- A child born to a co-habiting couple;
- A child of either of those people by a previous marriage or relationship;
- A child living with same sex partners whether there is a civil partnership under the Civil Partnership Act 2014 or not;
- An adopted or fostered child;
- A situation where, for example, an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family. The child should be a child of the family as at the date of the application since these complex living arrangements may change rapidly.

**** 'Eldest child'** - is defined as 'children who, at the date of the application, are the eldest child of the family.' This wording covers 'only' children and is also intended to treat twins (or other multiples) as joint eldest. Applicants who have an older sibling who attended a post primary school, other than Slemish College, but have now left compulsory education will not be considered as eldest children. However, the Board of Governors wish for this criterion to cover other circumstances where a family has not had the opportunity to previously apply for an elder child to be enrolled in Year 8 at Slemish College, e.g. cases where a family has moved residence into the area; or cases where an older sibling cannot attend mainstream school, for example attends a special school. This should be clearly explained and verified on the application.

Applicants who are an eldest/only child, must satisfy the verification requirements as set out below: Parents should include a verifying letter with the application, or a copy of the verification form available from the College, or Primary school. The verifying letter/form must state that the child is the eldest /only child and that the 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:

- a medical practitioner, (this must be either a doctor; dentist; or registered nurse);
- a member of the clergy, or equivalent;
- a primary school principal.
-

The letter must clearly state that the applicant is the eldest, or only child. Please note it should not state that the child is the *eldest girl, eldest boy, or eldest boy/girl/ child currently in education*, this would not verify that the applicant is the eldest child.

In the case where the College is unable to verify that the child is the eldest child, applicants will not be considered for this criterion.

NB. All information relevant to the above must be clearly stated by the parents according to the requirements of the Transfer Procedure conducted through the Education Authority.

Parents should ensure that all relevant information is included on the Official Transfer Application, as additional information which is subsequently received will only be considered in the event of a place becoming available after the issue of the initial placement letters.

Verification of all Information

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on the Official Transfer Application or appended to the Official Transfer Application by parents. For verification purposes original documents are required and not facsimiles or photocopies. The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide any requested verifying documents within the deadline set by the College will result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the College to offer a place.

It is the responsibility of the Parents to ensure that:

- The Transfer Application and other necessary documentation is correctly completed.
- Any Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision being claimed are properly documented as described in detail above and in the guidance documentation available from the College.
- Any required verification documents are provided within specified deadlines

ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8 AFTER 1 SEPTEMBER 2026

Parents who wish to have their child considered for admission in the event of a place arising after 1 September 2026 should write to the Principal clearly stating this.

In the event of such application, the Board of Governors will only make an offer if there is a place available. Should there be more applications than places available, the procedure outlined in the College policy 'Admissions to Slemish College Outside Normal Transfer Processes (Years 8 – 12)' will be applied.

Number of Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2023/24	160	299	160
2024/25	165	265	165
2025/26	165	266	165

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

Year 9 onwards criteria is available on the College Website.