

DOWN HIGH SCHOOL

MOUNT CRESCENT

DOWNPATRICK

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Headteacher: Mrs M Perry BATH PGCE PGDip NPQH

Chair Board of Governors: Mrs Avril Heenan LLB, MResTh

CONTROLLED GRAMMAR SCHOOL

AGE RANGE: 11-18

ADMISSIONS NO: 128

ENROLMENT NO: 934

Due to the current circumstances, Down High School will place a virtual tour, prospectus and a message from the Principal on the school website from Monday 24 January 2022.

TO PARENT(S)/CARER(S) NAMING DOWN HIGH SCHOOL AS A PREFERENCE ON YOUR CHILD'S TRANSFER APPLICATION.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or uploaded with the Transfer Application, and the score awarded by AQE. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on or uploaded with the Transfer Application.

Entrance Test Results

The score in the AQE Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) and the AQE Candidate number should both be entered on the Transfer Application. The ORIGINAL notification received from AQE indicating your child's AQE CEA score should be uploaded to the Transfer Application. Parents/Carers should note that they are required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria. If the documents are not uploaded with the Transfer Application, as details below, they will be requested after notification of an offer of a place at the school.

Sub-criteria

Please ensure that you indicate on the Transfer Application which of the sub-criteria apply, and if more than one sub-criterion applies, all relevant sub-criteria should be indicated.

Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision

If you are making a claim for your child to be considered under Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision, please note that you are required to present all such material as you consider will assist the Board of Governors in determining if Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision apply and to enable an educational judgement to be made so that a whole number mark can be assigned. You should upload the form the Form SC22 (obtainable from the School or AQE) and upload it with appropriate documentation described below to the Transfer Application.

Further details can be found in the Section 'SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SPECIAL PROVISION' below.

RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS TO THE SCHOOL

The Board of Governors, with the assistance of the Principal, draws up the Admissions Criteria and applies them.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2022

The Board of Governors has determined that preference will be given to pupils who are resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School over pupils who are not so resident.

The child's Birth Certificate and proof of home address should be uploaded with the Transfer Application. Proof of address should be by any TWO of the following documents, with sensitive information removed: Recent bank/building society statement from the last three months; recent utility bill from the last three months (e.g. electricity, gas, landline telephone); addressed payslip; TV licence; letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit; mortgage statement; Land and Property Services rates demand; current driving licence; rental agreement.

Parents/Carers should note that they are required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria. If the documents are not uploaded with the Transfer Application, as detailed above, they will be requested after notification of an offer of a place at the school.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or uploaded with the Transfer Application, and the score awarded by AQE (or awarded as a result of consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision). Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the Transfer Application or uploaded with the Transfer Application. Parents/Carers should note that they are required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the School's Admissions Criteria.

The Board of Governors will **not** use as a criterion for admission the position of preference given to the school by the applicant on the Transfer Application; for example a pupil who has chosen Down High School as a second (or other) preference (and whose application to their first preference school has been unsuccessful) will be considered in the same way as all first preference applicants.

An academic criterion is used in the selection process, by reference to the Score awarded by AQE following pupils sitting the CEA operated by AQE Ltd ("the Score"), subject only to where the Board of Governors will assign to each pupil claiming "Special Circumstances" or "Special Provision" a mark in accordance with the arrangements for "Special Circumstances" and "Special Provision" set out below. Those pupils will then be considered as if they had been awarded a Score equal to this mark by AQE.

The following criteria will apply in the following order if the number of applications is greater than the Admissions Number:-

1. Preference will be given to those pupils for whom a Score relating to the AQE CEA has been produced (by AQE Ltd) or a Score assigned (by the Board of Governors) in accordance with the arrangements for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision set out below. The School will award places on the basis of these Scores, in strict rank order, with the pupil(s) with the highest Score being awarded the first place(s) firstly and then working in descending rank order until the number of places that would be awarded is equal to or greater than the admissions number. The Score in the AQE CEA should be entered, along with the AQE Candidate Number, on the Transfer Application. *It is the responsibility of parents/carers to make sure that the original Statement of Result received from AQE indicating their child's AQE CEA score is uploaded with the Transfer Application.*

It is the responsibility of parents/Carers to make sure that the original Statement of Result received from AQE indicating their child's AQE CEA score is uploaded with the Transfer Application.

If following the application of the above criterion it is not possible to identify for admission the exact number of children equivalent to the admissions number by virtue of pupils with the same Score being tied for the final place(s), the following sub-criteria will be applied in the stated order, to distinguish between such pupils:-

- (a) pupils with a sibling* enrolled in the school for the 2021-2022 academic year [state name(s) and Registration Group(s) on the Transfer Application];
- (b) pupils who are the eldest** child of the family*** (including only child) in their family to be eligible to transfer to a mainstream Post-Primary School (details to be supplied on the Transfer Application; Where applicable, twins (or other multiples) will be treated as joint eldest.

In the event of over-subscription after the above sub-criteria being applied, the tie-breaker will be used (see number 3 below).

For the purpose of the sibling*, eldest** child of the family*** sub-criteria, these will be interpreted in accordance with DE Circular 2016/15, Annex 2 paragraphs 2-5 of The Procedure for Transfer from Primary to Post Primary Education issued by DE ie:

***Sibling:** applicants qualify for the sibling criterion according to whether or not they have another 'child of the family' already attending the school in question.

****Eldest:** applicants qualify for the eldest criterion if they are the first child of the family eligible to apply for a post-primary mainstream school. Twins and other multiple birth applicants will be regarded as joint eldest. Eldest 'child of the family' eligible to transfer includes cases where the eldest child has completed his/her post-primary education, the eldest child of a reconstituted family, the eldest child of the family was stated or attended a

special school or where a family has relocated to Northern Ireland. Proof of eldest child should be uploaded with the Transfer Application – a letter on headed note paper, stating that the child is the eldest eligible child and that the family is known to the verifier, from one of the following who is not a family member of the applicant: a Primary School Principal, a medical practitioner, a solicitor, an elected public representative, a member of the clergy or a police officer.

*****Child of the family:** defined 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”. The Department of Education has been advised that this definition of a 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 the same-sex partners whether there is a civil partnership under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 or not; an adopted or fostered child; a situation where, for example, an orphaned cousin is being brought up with the family.

2. Other pupils

If the number of pupils for whom a Score relating to the AQE CEA has been awarded (by AQE Ltd) or a Score assigned (by the Board of Governors) is less than the admissions number, the following sub-criteria will be applied, in the stated order, to distinguish between those pupils for whom a Score relating to the AQE CEA has not been awarded or assigned:-

- (a) pupils with a sibling* enrolled in the school for the 2021/2022 academic year; year [state name(s) and Registration Group(s) on the Transfer Application];
- (b) pupils who are the eldest** child of the family*** (including only child) in their family; Where applicable, twins (or other multiples) will be treated as joint eldest.

3. Tiebreaker

If, following the application of the above criteria and sub-criteria, it is not possible to identify for admission the exact number of children equivalent to the admissions number (in the event of pupils being tied for the final place(s) on the basis of either the Score awarded by AQE Ltd or a Score assigned by the Board of Governors then the following tie-breaker criteria will be applied, in the stated order, to distinguish between pupils tied for the final place(s).

- (i) pupils will be selected for admission on the basis of the initial letter of their surname (as entered on their Birth Certificate) in the order set out:

O, Z, Y, X, A, G, F, B, V, C, D, E, W, I, Mc, Mac, T, R, N, K, U, H, L, P, S, M, Q, J.

This order was determined by a randomised selection of the letters of the alphabet.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order.

In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames (as entered on their Birth Certificate) will be used.

- (ii) In the event of tie-breaker (i) not being sufficient to resolve the issue due to the pupils having the same surname and initials, pupils will be selected for admission on the basis of their date-of-birth with greater preference being given the older a child is.
- (iii) In the event of tie-breakers (i) and (ii) not being sufficient to resolve the issue due to the pupils having the same surname and initials and the same date of birth, the final selection will be by lot.

Important Note to Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are strongly advised to indicate on the Transfer Application which of the above sub-criteria apply and if more than one sub-criterion applies all relevant sub-criteria should be indicated.

If a pupil meets sub-criterion (a) then parents/carers are asked to include the name and current Registration Group of the sibling* on the Transfer Application.

If a pupils meets sub-criterion (b) parents/carers are asked to provide independent written confirmation [see above**] to confirm that the child is the eldest eligible child of the family to transfer for a post-primary mainstream school. This should be uploaded to the Transfer Application

The score in the AQE CEA and the AQE Candidate number should both be entered on the Transfer Application. The ORIGINAL notification received from AQE indicating your child's AQE CEA score should be uploaded to the Transfer Application. This information will be verified by the school.

Parents are asked to include on the Transfer Application the name of the child and date of birth as entered on his or her Birth Certificate in order to facilitate the use of the tie breaker set out above.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SPECIAL PROVISION – GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision is so that a child can be assigned a whole number Score equivalent to that which he or she would have obtained in the AQE assessments under normal conditions. Consideration of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision 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 Provision, or both; if a child is permitted to be considered as having Special Circumstances or as attracting Special Provision 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 mark equivalent to that which the child would have obtained in the AQE assessments under normal conditions can be assigned.

It is for parents/Carers 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 uploaded to the Transfer Application.

Educational Evidence to be provided in support of a claim for Special Circumstances and/or Special Provision

In reaching the educational judgement needed to award the Score that the child would have obtained in the AQE assessments under normal circumstances, the Board of Governors will consider the totality of the material presented (uploaded to the **Transfer Application**) by the parents/carers. This material may include any or all of the following:

- i) The Score awarded by AQE in the Common Entrance Assessment (if the child sits two or three AQE CEAs) or the 'raw score' provided by AQE (if the child only sits one of the AQE CEAs, due to the child's illness, self-isolation or other unforeseen circumstances).
- ii) The results for the child of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Year 5 and Year 6;
- 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 and Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Year 5 and Year 6 and, where available, AQE CEA practice paper Scores;
- iv) Any other relevant material.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Down 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 Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) and which are supported by independent documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature, including educational evidence. 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 pupil, the School will take into account the fact that the pupil was granted Special Access arrangements for those matters.

Parents/Carers who wish to apply to the School under Special Circumstances should complete the relevant form SC22 (obtainable from the School or AQE) stating the precise reason why they believe the child should be considered for Special Circumstances. The SC22 form and appropriate documentary evidence should be uploaded with the Transfer Application. The Board of Governors will consider each application for Special Circumstances. Where a Special Circumstances claim is upheld, the Board of Governors 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.

The onus is upon parents to ensure that all relevant supporting information and accompanying form(s) are provided to the school. The Information Commissioner's Office website www.ico.gov.uk contains guidance for parents to access information held by primary schools in relation to their child.

Details of Medical or Other Circumstances

Where it is claimed that a pupil's performance in the CEA has been affected by a medical or other circumstance, it is the responsibility of the parents/carers to set out in the relevant form SC22 (obtainable from the School or AQE) precise details of the circumstance and append independent evidence to corroborate its existence.

Where the circumstance is a medical one of short term duration which affected the pupil only at the time of the CEA, the School will require the production of evidence that the pupil was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the assessment. For children who have tested positive for COVID-19, documentary evidence such as a positive PCR test should be uploaded with the Transfer Application. Where the problem is of a non-medical nature the parents/carers should set out in the Form SC22 precise details of the problem and upload appropriate documentary evidence with the Transfer Application. It should be noted that independent evidence will carry greater weight.

The Board of Governors will consider the application for Special Circumstances. Where this is accepted, the Board of Governors will determine, on the basis of the information available, a Score for the pupil. Such pupils will then be considered with all other pupils who have received an AQE CEA Score and the admissions criteria applied.

Special Provision

Special Provision will apply for:

- (a) pupils whose parents/Carers wish them to transfer from schools outside Northern Ireland;
- (b) pupils who have received more than half their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- (c) pupils entered for the AQE CEA, who because of unforeseen and **serious** medical or other problems (including absence for all three CEAs due to the child having COVID-19 or the need for the child to self-isolate for all three CEAs due to COVID-19) which are supported by appropriate 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 pupils who take up residence in Northern Ireland after the 24th September 2021.

Parents/Carers who wish to apply to the School under Special Provision should complete the relevant form SC22 (obtainable from the School or AQE), stating the precise reason why they believe the pupil is eligible for consideration under Special Provision, and providing appropriate independent documentary evidence, which must be uploaded to the Transfer Application. For children who have tested positive for COVID-19, documentary evidence such as a positive PCR test should be uploaded with the Transfer Application.

For those pupils whose parents wish them to transfer from a School outside Northern Ireland, applications for Special Provision should be received by the School via the Transfer Section of the Education Authority on or before 29th April 2022.

The Board of Governors will consider the application for Special Provision. Where this is accepted, the Board of Governors will determine, on the basis of the information provided, an appropriate AQE CEA Score for the pupil. The pupil will then be considered with all other pupils who have received an AQE CEA Score and the admissions criteria applied.

Duty to Verify

Those making applications should note that the information contained within an application that qualifies the child for admission will 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 Transfer Application. 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.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that the Transfer Application is completed in full and that all relevant information is uploaded with the Transfer Application.

If the Board of Governors becomes aware of any irregularity in the details uploaded or included on the Transfer Application, it reserves the right to reject the application made on behalf of the child for admission to the School.

Waiting Lists

Down High School operates a waiting lists policy. For Year 8, all applications for admission to Year 8 that were initially refused will be automatically placed on the Year 8 waiting list. New applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will also be added to the Year 8 waiting list. This waiting list will be in place until 30 June 2023, that is, the end of Year 8. Please contact the school if you wish your child's name to be removed from the Year 8 waiting list.

Should a vacancy arise after the day on which placement letters have been issued from the Education Authority, the procedure outlined in the Admissions Criteria for entry to Year 8 will be followed. The School will contact you if your child gains a place in the School by this method.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Year	Admissions No	Total Applications <i>ie.</i> <i>All preferences</i>	Total Admissions
2018/19	128	182	128
2019/20	128	177	139
2020/21	128	224	138