

STRATHEARN SCHOOL
188 Belmont Road
Belfast BT4 2AU
Telephone No: 028 9047 1595
Fax No: 028 9065 0555
E-mail: info@strathearn.belfast.ni.sch.uk
Web-site: www.strathearn.org.uk
Principal: Mr D Manning BSc PGCE
Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr N McKeown



Voluntary Grammar School
Non-denominational
Girls' Grammar
Age Range: 11-18
Enrolment September 2011: 768
Approved Admissions No for 2012: 110
Approved Enrolment No for 2012: 770

To: Parents / Guardians naming Strathearn School as a preference on their daughter's Transfer Form.

Entrance Test Results

Strathearn School intends to use the score awarded by the Association for Quality Education (AQE) in the Common Entrance Assessment (CEA). Please record in Section C of the Transfer Form the AQE Candidate Number followed by the AQE CEA score.

Special Provisions and/or Special Circumstances

If you are making a claim for your daughter to be considered under Special Circumstances or Special Provisions, please read carefully the information given in the relevant sections below and act accordingly.

Open Morning - Saturday 21st January 2012

9.15am – 12.30pm

By invitation through Primary Schools and local press

Strathearn is renowned for the academic, sporting, musical and drama successes enjoyed by its pupils. In its stimulating educational environment the girls can excel and prepare to meet the challenges of adult life with confidence. We emphasise the value of balancing a strong academic curriculum with a range of other skills and interests. The small class size and the character of the School make for an environment where the girls are well known as individuals, enjoy the attention and encouragement of staff, and quickly get to know their peers. The School's spacious and pleasant setting fosters this sense of belonging, security and well-being.

On entering the School the girls are placed in one of five non-streamed classes of 22 and every girl becomes a member of one of four Houses. Inter-House competitions in sport, drama and other events are an enjoyable feature of life in Strathearn. The individual progress, well-being and pastoral care of the girls are the responsibility of their Form Teacher, who also establishes links with parents. Parents are invited with their daughter to a consultation with subject teachers in the course of each year of her school career. School uniform is worn by all pupils, except the Upper Sixth in their last term.

The Strathearn Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 aims to give every girl a broad, balanced and appropriately challenging education. In Form 1 each girl studies: Art & Design, English, French, Geography, History, Home Economics, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Science and Technology & Design. In Forms 2 and 3 each girl also studies a second modern language. In the weekly Learning for Life and Work session, which is led by their Form Teacher, the girls investigate a range of themes including Personal Development, Employability and Local and Global Citizenship. Full details of all the subjects studied and the choices available for GCSE and A level are available in the School Prospectus or on the School website.

The school stands within extensive mature grounds and the excellent facilities available on site encourage a very high rate of participation in a wide range of sports. Our Sports Hall is most impressive and has equipment for a full range of physical education activities. It is large enough to accommodate indoor hockey, five badminton courts, indoor tennis, netball, volleyball and aerobics, and has a fully equipped Fitness Suite. For September 2012 we will have one 'astro-turf' and two 'all-weather' hockey pitches on site. Strathearn pupils enjoy great individual and team success in sports such as Tennis, Hockey, Swimming, Netball and Athletics. Other sporting activities include Aerobics, Badminton, Cross-country running, Football and Gymnastics.

Music and Drama are very strong within the School. There are regular drama productions and each year there is a House play competition run entirely by the girls. Musical activities include our orchestra, choirs and a traditional music group with various opportunities for performance throughout the year culminating in our very successful Spring Concert. Individual music tuition is also available. In addition to the Sport, Music and Drama detailed above, girls can also join in other activities such as Scripture Union for Seniors and Juniors, the Debating Societies, Drama Club, Games Club, Public Speaking, Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, and a wide range of charity efforts.

Construction of our new school with additional accommodation and sports facilities began in March 2011. All the general classrooms and science laboratories are due for completion in August 2012 and the complete work finished in August 2014. The School was last inspected in September 2010 and a copy of the report is available on the School website www.strathearn.org.uk under the tab 'About Strathearn' / 'Prospectus'.

From September 1990 parents of all pupils admitted to Strathearn School (except in the case of pupils who are not resident in Northern Ireland and who are non E.C. nationals) will not be required to pay Tuition Fees. (Capital fees still apply). The Capital Fee is currently £140 per annum. The Governors also request a payment of £150 per annum to be used for whole school activities and resources as necessary. This is known as a payment to the 'Contingency Fund'. The option is available to pay by Direct Debit on a monthly basis or by credit/debit card.

The Admissions Criteria given below have been drawn up and approved by the Board of Governors; their application has been delegated to the Principal.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA YEAR 8 2012-2013

Strathearn (the 'School') is an all girls grammar school offering a wide-ranging curriculum of academic courses. The School will initially consider only those pupils who have taken the Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) provided by the Association for Quality Education (AQE). The School will use the 'score' as awarded by AQE to a pupil in the CEA, subject only to the consideration by the Board of Governors of those pupils claiming Special Circumstances or Special Provisions as explained below. Information on the CEA is available from the School or the AQE website (www.aqe.org.uk).

The score in the AQE CEA should be entered in Section C of the Transfer Form in the following format: 'AQE CEA score', followed by the score and the AQE Candidate number. This information will be verified by the School with AQE.

Strathearn will **not** use as a criterion the position of preference given to the school by the applicant on the Transfer Form. Therefore, a girl who has listed Strathearn as a second or subsequent preference school will be considered in the same way as those who have placed Strathearn first on the list.

Girls resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School will be selected for admission before any girl not so resident.

- 1 The first 100 places from the admissions total of 110 will be allocated to girls on the basis of the rank order of their respective scores; those achieving higher scores being allocated places before those with lower scores. If more than one girl is eligible for the 100th place because they have equal scores, then all such girls will be allocated places up to the School's admission number, using, if necessary, the criteria listed in 4 below.
- 2 Following the allocation of places as described in criterion 1, a pool of 15 girls will be identified on the basis of the rank order of their respective scores; those achieving higher scores being allocated places to the pool before those with lower scores. If more than one girl is eligible for the 15th place because they have equal scores, then all such girls will be allocated to the pool. Girls from this pool will be allocated to the remaining places on application of the criteria listed in 4 below.
- 3 If, following the application of criteria 1 and 2 above, all the available places have not been filled, the School will consider for admission any girls who have not taken the CEA. Allocation of the remaining places will be made by applying the criteria listed in 4 below.
- 4 If as specified above, the number of applications exceeds the number of available places, the following further criteria will then apply, in the order stated:
 - (i) girls enrolled in the School's Preparatory Department as of 1 September 2010;
 - (ii) girls with a child of the family currently enrolled in the School's Secondary Department (details to be supplied) or accepted for enrolment in September 2012;
 - (iii) girls who are the eldest child of the family to be eligible to be admitted in September 2012 (details to be supplied);
 - (iv) girls who are entitled to Free School Meals*;
 - (v) girls with a sibling who has attended the School's Secondary Department (name and date of attendance to be supplied);
 - (vi) girls
 - with a sibling currently enrolled in Years 8 to 14 or accepted for enrolment in September 2012, in Campbell College or RBAI (Senior School) (details to be supplied), or
 - having a parent currently employed by the School for a continuous minimum period of one year at the date of transfer, or
 - with a parent or guardian who has attended the School's Secondary Department (name and date of attendance to be supplied);

- (vii) if, after all the criteria 4(i) to 4(vi) have been exhausted it becomes necessary to make a further selection, places will be allocated to girls on the basis of the rank order of their respective scores; those achieving higher scores being allocated places before those with lower scores;
- (viii) if more than one girl is eligible for the final place because they have equal scores, priority will be given to the girl 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 front door of the girl's home to the front entrance of the School's main administrative building. Home will be taken to mean the girl's address appearing at the commencement of the Transfer Application Form.

* "entitled to Free School Meals" will mean girls who are listed on the Education and Library Board register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has signed their post-primary Transfer Form, or at any date up to and including 9 May 2012.

The School emphasises that it is the responsibility of the applicants to notify the School on the Transfer Form where the above criteria apply, and to furnish relevant details.

Duty to verify

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any applicant's Transfer/Application Form.

To this end, the School will adhere to the Department of Education's verification procedures (Circular 2011/20) which state:

'The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by schools can result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's Transfer Form'

'If you state within your application that your child 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.'

Special Circumstances

Strathearn 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 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 pupil, the School will take into account the fact that the pupil was granted Special Access arrangements for those matters;

Parents who wish to apply to the School under Special Circumstances should complete Form SC11 obtainable from the School or AQE, and attach it with appropriate documentary evidence to the Transfer Form, as detailed below.

• Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that a pupil's performance in the CEA has been affected by a medical or other problem, it is the responsibility of the parents 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 pupil only at the time of the CEA, the School will give greater weight to evidence that the pupil 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 should append appropriate evidence.

It should be noted that in all cases independent evidence will carry greater weight.

- **Educational Evidence**

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide the educational evidence as detailed in the Form SC11. This should include (where they exist):

the score awarded in the Common Entrance Assessment;

the results for the pupil of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in any end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Years 5 and 6;

additional comparative information from the Primary School for other pupils in the pupil's Year 7 class (without names) and which should include the results of any standardised tests conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7, the results in any end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Years 5 and 6, and, where available, the respective CEA scores.

A panel of Governors will consider the application for Special Circumstances. Where Special Circumstances are accepted, the panel 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 a CEA score and the admissions criteria applied.

Special Provisions

Special provisions will apply for:

- a) pupils whose parents 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 Common Entrance Assessment, who because of unforeseen and **serious** medical or other problems 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 start of the Year 7.

Parents who wish to apply to the School under Special Provisions should contact the School as soon as possible. In addition they should complete Form SC11, obtainable from the School or AQE, stating the precise reason why they believe their daughter is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions and provide appropriate independent documentary evidence. A copy of SC11 and all the documentary evidence should be attached to the Transfer Form.

For those pupils whose parents wish them to transfer from schools outside Northern Ireland, applications for Special Provisions should be received by the School by 19 April 2012.

A panel of Governors will consider the application for Special Provisions. Where Special Provisions are accepted, the following procedure will apply:

- a) the School will consider any assessment information and may choose to commission an independent assessment of the pupil's ability in English, Mathematics and/or Verbal Reasoning;
- b) a panel of Governors will determine, on the basis of all the available assessment information, an appropriate score for the pupil. The pupil will then be considered with all other pupils who have received a CEA score and the admissions criteria applied.

Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admission
2009/10	110	169	110
2010/11	110	174	110
2011/12	110	154	111