

ABBEY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Principal: Mrs Regina Savage

Chairman of the Authority of Governors: Mr John Curran

Voluntary Grammar

Boys

Age Range: 11-19

Admissions Number: 125

Enrolment Number: 850

Open Afternoon
The Abbey will hold an Open Afternoon on
Wednesday 3 December 2025 from
3pm – 5:30pm

To Parents/Guardians naming the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School as a Preference on your child's Transfer Form

Entrance Test Results

In assessing academic ability, The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School will use the Band awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment on Saturday 15 November 2025 and Saturday 22 November 2025 as specified by the school. Parents / guardians must state the Band achieved and upload a copy of the statement of results which they receive on Saturday 24 January 2026 as part of the online Transfer Form application.

Special Circumstances

Any parent / guardian claiming Special Circumstances must complete the documentation in the Claiming Special Circumstances Pack available from the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School or from its website. This documentation, the **SC Form**, together with the independent verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be uploaded with the online Transfer Form application. Parents/Guardians are advised to read *Claiming Special Circumstances - A Guide for Parents & Guardians* available from Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School or from its website.

Special Provisions

For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provisions should be made on the **SP Form** and uploaded with the online Transfer Application no later than 4pm on Tuesday 24 February 2026. The SP Form and *Claiming Special Provisions – A Guide for Parents & Guardians* is available from the school or its website. Parents wishing to claim Special Provisions should also forward a copy of the SP Form directly to Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 24 February 2026. Further details can be found in the sections 'Note on Special Circumstances' and 'Note on Special Provisions' below.

1. After this date claims for Special Provisions should be made directly to the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School and to EA Post Primary Admissions.

If you are applying for Special Circumstances or Special Provisions please refer to those sections within the Admissions policy provided.

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

The Board of Governors has delegated the responsibilities for the task of applying the criteria as indicated below to a subcommittee. Where this policy refers to the decision taken by the Board of Governors, it is with reference to the work of the subcommittee set up by the Authority, with its full approval and subject to its final ratification.

When considering which children can be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will **only** take into account information which is detailed on or uploaded along with the Transfer Form. Parents should ensure that **all** information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admission criteria is stated on the Transfer Form or uploaded with it. Examples of such information include whether the child has or has had a **sibling** (list name of sibling) at the school.

(Please note: The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School has been directed by regulations to select for admission all children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission before any child not so resident may be selected for admission.)

The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School is a catholic grammar school for boys. It normally accepts boys who are academically suited for the type of education it offers and whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the philosophy and aims of the school.

Special Circumstances

Boys will be admitted strictly as described below according to the band achieved in the SEAG Entrance Assessment subject only to the consideration of **medical or other problems** which may have affected their performance in the Entrance Assessment, and which are supported by verified documentary evidence of a medical or other appropriate nature. These medical or other problems are commonly referred to as **Special Circumstances** and are described in the document **Claiming Special Circumstances - A Guide for Parents & Guardians** available from our school or its website. Parents should read this document carefully.

If a claim for the consideration of Special Circumstances is made in respect of matters for which Access Arrangements were granted or could have been granted, had they been known to the Assessment Centre, the Board of Governors will still consider the claim and may well deem that special circumstances can be applied.

The claim for Special Circumstances should be uploaded with the completed Transfer Form including the SC Form with appropriate independent documentation before EA Connect closes to online applications. Gathering and submitting the documentary evidence as described above is vital for the consideration of a claim for Special Circumstances and is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Details of Medical or Other Problems

Where it is claimed that a child's performance in the Entrance 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 child only at the time of the Entrance Assessment, the school will require the production of evidence that the child was examined by a medical practitioner in relation to the illness at the time of the Entrance Assessment and the result of that examination. Similarly, if the medical problem is other than of short-term duration, the school will require the production of evidence from a medical practitioner who treated the child and which explains the condition and how it could have affected the child in the Entrance Assessment. Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parents must set out the precise details of the problem and append to the Transfer Form all appropriate independent documentary evidence which corroborates its existence. The name of the Assessment Centre at which the child sat the Entrance Assessment must also be included. Please refer to **Claiming Special Circumstances - A Guide for Parents & Guardians** available from our school or its website.

Educational Evidence

All claims for Special Circumstances must include objective and relevant educational evidence to show that the medical or other problem experienced by your child at or around the time of the Entrance Assessment caused him to underachieve. This educational evidence must be provided by the parent/guardian of the child and verified by the primary school principal. The evidence should be sufficient to enable the Board of Governors to reach a decision on any adjustment to the score achieved by the child in the Entrance Assessment. This evidence should include all of the results from the child's school administered standardised tests in English / Literacy and Mathematics / Numeracy taken from the beginning of the Key Stage 2 period and should be provided on the SC Form.

It is emphasised that the onus is on the parent/guardian to ensure that all of the above information is verified and provided by the primary school to the parent/guardian under the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 and under the Data Protection Act (2018). Failure by the parent/guardian to provide such verified information will result in the Board of Governors being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. The material referred to above will assist the subcommittee in making its judgement: it is however, not intended to be restrictive and the subcommittee will consider any and all material presented and attached to the Transfer Form. It should be noted by parent(s)/guardian(s) that such considerations involve an exercise in judgement of the data received using the recommended GL guidelines.

Special Provisions

For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provisions should be made on the **SP Form** and uploaded with the online Transfer Application. The **SP Form** is available from the school or its website. Parents wishing to claim Special Provisions should also forward a copy of the SP Form directly to Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School by **no later than 4pm on Tuesday 24 February 2026**. After this, late claims for Special Provisions should be made directly to the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School and to EA Post Primary Admissions.

Special Provision will be made by the Board of Governors for boys:

1. Who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland and will become resident in Northern Ireland or,
2. Who have received more than half of their primary education* outside Northern Ireland
**based on the time from the start of Primary 1 (1st September 2019) to 20th February 2026 i.e. more than three years and three months or,*
3. Whose educational provision has been negatively affected by serious medical or other problems, which are supported by independent verifiable documentary evidence and who have not taken either of the SEAG Entrance Assessments on Saturday 15 November 2025 or Saturday 22 November 2025 **OR** has an estimated outcome because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment papers**.

An alternative application for those children who **only completed one of the Assessment papers on **either** 15 November 2025 **or** 22 November 2025, and who therefore received an estimated score in one of the assessment papers due to the failure to complete both papers, is available through Special Circumstances.

The Board of Governors will decide whether these boys should be admitted on the basis that they fall within the ability range of other boys being admitted in that year and/or meet one or more of the Admission Criteria as listed below. The Board of Governors may require an assessment of the pupil's abilities to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the school.

Parents/guardians may provide additional appropriate educational evidence which should include the results of standardised testing carried out during Key Stage 2 or its equivalent period in any primary school. This will be considered by the Board of Governors along with the educational evidence described above in exercising their educational judgement in these matters. **The onus lies with the parents/guardians to provide this educational evidence and to have it appropriately verified.**

Those children to whom clause 1 and 2 (above) applies may, if their parents/guardians wish, sit the Entrance Assessment in which case the score and Band obtained would also be considered.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that information relating to Special Provisions, or indeed information regarding the existence of any other relevant factor(s), is given on or appended to the child's uploaded Transfer Form as described in the guidance documentation. It should be noted by parent(s)/guardian(s) that such considerations involve an exercise in judgement of the data received.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

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The application procedure opens on Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 19 February 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) will be marked as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 19 February 2026 and up to 4pm on 24 February 2026 will be marked as a late application. Abbey CBGS will treat all applications equally.

The number of places available in Year 8 is limited to the admission number set by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland and is currently 125 places. The cut-off for admission will therefore be the 125th place.

For the academic year, 2026-27, the Board of Governors will continue to use academic criteria in the first instance to select pupils. The Board of Governors will consider applications from boys who have taken the entrance assessments anywhere in Northern Ireland provided by SEAG.

The results of the Entrance Assessments should be provided to the school attached to the Online Transfer Form. **It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the original copy of the respective result(s) is available with the Online Transfer Form.**

The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School will use the Band achieved by boys in the Entrance Assessment provided by SEAG and administered by the Assessment Centres on 15 November 2025 and 22 November 2025 to be the primary evidence to be considered by the Authority of Governors as outlined below.

The Board of Governors will admit boys strictly on the following basis:

1. Boys who have been awarded a Band 1 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 1.
2. Boys who have been awarded a Band 2 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 2.
3. Boys who have been awarded a Band 3 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 3.
4. Boys who have been awarded a Band 4 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 4.
5. Boys who have been awarded a Band 5 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 5.
6. Boys who have been awarded a Band 6 in the SEAG Entrance Assessment including those whose applications for consideration of Special Circumstances and/or Special Provisions have been accepted and who, in the opinion of the authorised Subcommittee, based on the documented evidence submitted as required, are of comparable ability to those boys awarded Band 6.
7. All other boys who have applied to be admitted to Abbey CBGS Newry.

If there are more boys who satisfy any one of the criteria 1 to 7 when they are applied in the order of priority set down above than places remaining, then boys will be selected according to the following sub-criteria applied in the order set down below: -

- (i) Boys who, at the date of their application, have a parent/guardian who is a member of the permanent teaching, administrative, or ancillary staff of the Abbey.
- (ii) Boys who, at the date of their application, have another boy of the family (as defined by DE in Transfer 2025/12 Guidance) attending the school or having been selected for admission to the school in the coming school year.
- (iii) Boys who have had another boy of the family (as defined by DE in Transfer 2025/12 Guidance) previously attend the school.
- (iv) Boys who are the first boy of the family (as defined by DE in Transfer 2025/12 Guidance) to transfer to secondary education, i.e. the eldest boy of the family as defined above.

A letter of verification must be completed and uploaded with the Online Transfer Form. It must be signed by one of the following who knows the child and family for at least two years and has no familial relationship with the applicant:

- i. a primary school principal
 - ii. an elected public representative
 - iii. a medical practitioner
 - iv. a lawyer
 - v. a member of the clergy
- (v) Boys who are the first boy of the family (as defined by DE in Transfer 2025/12 Guidance) to apply for a place in a school that admits pupils using academic criteria as its primary means of selection.
- (vi) Boys who, at the date of their application, are entitled to Free School Meals Provision (as defined by DE in Transfer 2025/12 Guidance).
- (vii) Boys whose names generate the lowest ranking number in the tie break criteria until all places up to the admissions number have been filled. Further details below.

Operation of sub criterion (vii): Tiebreaker

Sub criterion (vii) will be used where there remain more applicants than places available, applicants will be ranked for acceptance on the basis of a computer-based process which will make use of the names of applicants as shown on their Transfer Applications. The process is carried out by means of a computer program which, for each applicant, generates a ranking number using the details from the Transfer Application as the seed for a random number generator. The outcome, for any given applicant, is dependent only on the applicant's name (as submitted on the Transfer Application) and is not affected by the details of any other applicant. Although the process is repeatable, and the results may therefore be subsequently verified, it is not possible to predict, in advance of running the program, what the result will be for any given set of details. Applicants with the lowest ranking numbers will be given places up to the number of places available.

This will be overseen by the Admissions Sub Committee of the Board of Governors.

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 Transfer Form or appended to the Transfer Form by parents/guardians. 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 Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School will result in either the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the school to offer a place.

The responsibility to ensure that:

- **The Transfer Form and other necessary documentation is correctly completed.**
- **Any Special Circumstances/Special Provisions being claimed are properly documented as described in detail above and in the guidance documentation and lies with the parents/guardians of the child. Failure to ensure that this occurs will lead to any request for Special Circumstances/Special Provisions not being considered and/or the application not being considered by the Board of Governors and/or the withdrawal of a place in the school.**
- **Any required verification documents are provided within specific deadlines.**

Lie with parents/guardians.

Waiting List

The Abbey will admit all applicants to Year 8 according to its admissions criteria. Where a criterion is insufficient to allocate places or fewer places are available to meet the demand of the pupils satisfying any one criterion, the subsequent sub sections of criteria will be used to assign each applicant in list order. The first 125 places will be filled in this way and all other applicants will be listed from number 126 up to the last number needed in order to give a number to each applicant satisfying this criterion. In the event that all of these applicants are admitted, the process will be repeated for the students who meet the next criterion.

This forms the waiting list and students will be admitted into Year 8 in this order if and when a place becomes available. This waiting list will cease to operate after the 1st September of each academic year.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8

Year	Admissions No	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2023 / 2024	125	139	135*
2024 / 2025	125	141	135*
2025 / 2026	125	165	128*

*inc SEN & Appeals

ADMISSIONS POLICY TO YEARS 9 to 14

Applicants should provide documentary evidence that he is suited to an academically selective education in the Abbey, and then admissions may be made in the following order:

1. Applicants who wish to enter Sixth Form in order to follow post-16 studies subject to the criteria overleaf and where places are available in classes that are deemed a suitable curriculum for the applicant.
2. Applicants who wish to follow GCSE courses subject to an academic and behavioural report from their former school commensurate with an academically selective education.
3. Applicants to the Junior School subject to an academic and behavioural report from their former school commensurate with an academically selective education.

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR YEAR 13

All Applicants for Admission will be considered with reference to the following criteria. Additional places over the school's enrolment number will be allocated at the discretion of the DENI.

Firstly, those applicants who have shown by their record a commitment and motivation to academic studies and who:

- have demonstrated an appropriate work ethic and aptitude for post-16 studies.
- meet subject specific entrance requirements. Normally an applicant would be expected to have a minimum of a grade B in a specific subject to study it at an advanced level. However, some subjects require a GCSE grade A such as AS/A2 Mathematics while others will accept a C* grade.
- have an exemplary behavioural record.

Secondly, where places are available in classes that are deemed a suitable curriculum for the applicant.

In the event that a student has received additional support at any prior point in his education, the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the student must notify the school of this, and, if necessary, provide any documentation deemed relevant by the Board of Governors, in respect of such additional support, by Friday 28 August 2026.

Failure to provide any such requested documentation will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. In addition, if any information in respect of an admission application is supplied, or omitted, which appears to be false or misleading in any way, then the offer of a place will be withdrawn

In addition to any academic and behavioural criteria, the Board of Governors will also take into account the efficient discharge of the school's resources in respect of any admission decision.

Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School Criteria for any Extra Places made Available by The Department Of Education for Admission into Year 13 (Sixth Form)

The Department of Education may, on request, increase the number of pupils that the school can admit to its Year 13. Places that become available in this way shall be allocated only to pupils who meet the basic eligibility criteria for sixth form study (as above) and shall be allocated in the order determined by the criteria to be applied in the order set down.

1. Pupils who have most recently completed Year 12 in Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School.
2. Pupils from other schools where admission to an extra place at Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School has been agreed by the Department of Education*.

**Parents should note how the Department of Education (DE) will, in response to a school's request, increase the school's enrolment number in order to allow an extra post-16 pupil to enrol. DE will first check whether there is another school or schools of a type suitable for that pupil within an hour's journey of where the pupil lives. If there is, DE will then check whether this other school or schools with places available may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue. If these checks find that no other suitable school may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue – then DE will agree a school's request for an extra place.*

What is a school of a type that is suitable for a pupil?

To determine this, DE first considers all schools to be one of 4 types: (i) denominational (ii) non- denominational (iii) integrated and (iv) Irish-medium. A School requesting an extra place for a post-16 pupil will belong to one of these 4 types and DE will consider any other school or school from this same type as suitable for the pupil. DE will also consider as suitable for the pupil any school from the same type as the type of school that the child attended in Year 12.