

## ST MARY'S COLLEGE

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Principal: Mr Brendan McGinn

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mrs Sarah Kelly

Voluntary Maintained

Secondary School

Girls

Age Range: 11 – 18

Admissions No: 130

Enrolment No: 825

Roll: 873

### OPEN DAY

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2026 / 9.15am – 12.30pm

Principal's Address: 9.15am & 10.30am

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

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates to an Admissions Sub-Committee, which includes the Principal, the responsibility for applying these criteria. Any reference herein to the term the Board of Governors includes any Committee or Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of Governors for the purposes of applying the Admissions Criteria set out herein.

## ADMISSIONS CRITERIA 2026-27

As currently required by the law, priority will be given to pupils normally resident in Northern Ireland before children who normally reside elsewhere. In the event of over-subscription, the following criteria, which was drawn up by the Board of Governors of St Mary's College, will be applied in the order set down, to select pupils for Year 8 entry in 2026/27.

1. Applicants whose sister(s), half-sister(s), step-sister(s) or foster-sister(s) are presently or were formerly enrolled at the school **and** who have chosen St Mary's College as their **first preference**.

*Please note that for criterion 1, each parent/guardian is required to provide in the Admissions Criteria Notes section of their online / written application the **full name and date of birth** of the sister(s) or equivalent (as defined above) whether referring to a present or past pupil(s). This is important in order to validate eligibility for this criterion. If the sister(s) or equivalent is currently at St Mary's College, each parent/guardian is also asked to indicate "yes" at the "Sister at School" option.*

2. Applicants who presently reside in the **following parishes** (in no particular order) and who have chosen St Mary's College as their **first preference** school:

Ardmore
Claudy (Cumber Upper & Learmount)
Culmore
Faughanvale & Lower Cumber
Glendermott/Waterside (St Columb's - Chapel Road, Immaculate Conception - Trench Road, St Mary's - Newbuildings)
Holy Family (Ballymagroarty)
Our Lady of Lourdes (Steelstown)
St Mary's (Creggan)
Strathfoyle: Strathfoyle/Enagh Lough
Templemore (St Eugene's, St Columba's, Long Tower)
Three Patrons (St Patrick's - Pennyburn, St Brigid's - Carnhill, St Joseph's - Galliagh)

*Please note that for criterion 2, each parent/guardian is required to provide in the Admissions Criteria Notes Section of their online application / written application the **name of the parish** that the applicant resides in from the list provided above to validate their eligibility for this criterion.*

3. Applicants presently resident in the above named parishes (in no particular order) who have chosen St Mary's College as their first preference non-selective school.

*Please note that for criterion 3, each parent/guardian is required to provide in the Admissions Criteria Notes section of their online / written application the **name(s) of the selective / grammar school(s)** chosen ahead of St Mary's College and the **name of the parish** the applicant resides in from the list provided above to validate their eligibility for this criterion.*

4. Applicants presently resident in the above named parishes (in no particular order) and who have placed at least one non-selective school ahead of St Mary's College.

*Please note that for criterion 4, each parent/guardian is required to provide in the Admissions Criteria Notes section of their online / written application the **name(s) of the non-selective school(s)** chosen ahead of St Mary's College and the **name of the parish** the applicant resides in from the list provided above to validate their eligibility for this criterion.*

5. Applicants who are presently resident in other parishes in Northern Ireland.

*Please note that for criterion 5, each parent/guardian is required to provide in the Admissions Criteria Notes section of their online / written application the **name of the parish** the applicant resides in to validate their eligibility for this criterion.*

6. Applicants whose applications are late (received after noon - GMT) on 19th February 2026.

*Please note that for criterion 6, each parent/guardian is required to supply all information pertaining to their child(ren)'s relevant criterion (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5).*

Sister to be defined as applicants who at the date of their application have a sister(s), half-sister(s), step-sister(s) or foster-sister(s) currently or previously enrolled at the school.

The permitted admission number for Year 8 as determined by the Department of Education for the academic year 2026/2027 is 130.

## Board of Governors

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only consider information which is detailed on the Education Authority Admissions Portal and equivalent as approved by EA. Parents / Guardians should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the EA portal or equivalent. Examples of such information include the child's name as it appears on the birth certificate, parish details, whether the child has sisters (or equivalent as defined in criterion 1) attending the school and the supporting evidence for this and the listing of schools where applicable (criterion 3 & 4). The Board of Governors therefore strongly encourages all interested parties to read carefully and adhere to the guidance provided for each criterion.

Furthermore, applicants whose sister(s), halfsister(s), stepsister(s) or foster sister(s) are presently or were formerly enrolled at the school and who have not chosen St Mary's College as their first preference will depending on their choices of post primary schools / residency in one of the named parishes be eligible for criterion 3, 4 or 5 (or 6 if defined as a "late" application). The governors wish to remind applicants that the "eldest child" criterion is no longer used as part of the school's admissions process.

### Over-subscription

The following random selection process will be applied in the event of over subscription in any of the criteria listed based on the initial letter of the pupil's surname (as stated on their long birth certificate) in the order set out below.

**Z H N i B L E W M P K Y C D M c O ' J T X R Q V I O S M a c G N A F U**

The order was determined by a random selection of letters witnessed by the Board of Governors on 22<sup>ND</sup> October 2025.

In the event of oversubscription, St Mary's College will retain a waiting list for admissions. The waiting list will be drawn up in accordance with St Mary's College Admissions Criteria 2026-27 as outlined above. In the event of a place becoming available, the pupil at the top of the list will be offered a place. This waiting list will remain valid until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026.

### Surnames / Forenames Identical

- a) In the event of **surnames** beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surnames will be used in alphabetical order.
- b) In the event of 2 identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initials of the forename will be used. In the event of **forenames** beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the forename will be used in alphabetical order.
- c) In the event of **identical surnames and forename**, the initial of the second forename will be used. If any of these applicants do not have a second forename, they will be placed ahead of those with a second forename. If applicants have identical surnames and forenames, they will be placed in rank order of eldest child by date of birth as stated on their birth certificate and admitted in this order.
- d) If, after this process, any applicants still tie for a final place, the place(s) will be allocated by **random computerised selection**.

### Punctual and Late Applications

The application procedure opens on 27th January 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 19th February 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 19th February 2026 will be treated as a late application. The order of late applications (criterion 6) will be determined by the random selection of letter (above) as generated and witnessed by the Board of Governors on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025.

### Importance of Documentation / Supplementary Evidence

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application/transfer form. All applicants should note that all information within an application that qualifies a child for admission will be verified before the child is admitted to the College. The provision of false or incorrect information, insufficient information or the failure to provide verifying documents within the deadlines set may result in the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the College to offer a place. Original verification documents are required.

To enable the Board of Governors to verify the applicant's address the following documents, in their original form, must be supplied within the timeframe set by St Mary's College following a provisional offer of a place. In on-line applications please follow the requirements as set out in the online guidance provided; electronic copies of the required documentation will suffice.

1. To verify the applicants name and date of birth, the long version of the applicant's birth certificate is required.
2. To verify the applicant's address, any **two** of the following is required:
  - A current letter awarding Child Benefit, Tax credit or Universal credits in respect of the applicant or another letter relating to this benefit
  - The applicant's Medical Card showing the applicant's current normal place of residence
  - A current bank, post office, Credit Union or Building Society statement which shows the address at which the applicant is resident
  - An addressed payslip

- A current utility bill (e.g. electricity, gas, television licence, telephone) which shows the address at which the applicant is resident

**Please note that other documents equally capable of verifying your information, or other equally capable means of verification, will be considered at the discretion of the Board of Governors.** If, therefore, you are unable to provide the specific documents listed above, please contact St Mary's College to establish how you can verify your application.

Your provision of these documents is essential if we are to offer your child a place at St Mary's College. By law, St Mary's College's Board of Governors has a duty to verify the important information within your child's application in order to ensure that it has applied its admissions criteria correctly and that the admissions process is accurate and fair. The school reserves the right to contact parents / guardians directly should the need arise to assist with the verification process.

## Important Dates to Note

<b>Tuesday 27th January 2026 (noon)</b>	Online EA Portal open for applications to Year 8
<b>Thursday 19th February 2026 (noon)</b>	Online EA Portal closed for applications to Year 8
<b>Saturday 9th May 2026</b>	Applicants receive notification of outcome of applications on Saturday 9th May via email, where one is held, or letter. EA Online Portal open.

## Procedures For Operating a Waiting List for Admission to Year 8 In 2026/27

On 1st September 2026, a new waiting list will be drawn up, replacing the previous one, consisting only of those who have made known to the school their wish to remain on the waiting list after 1st September 2026.

The rank order of the new waiting list will follow that laid out in our Admissions Criteria 2026-27. This waiting list will cease to operate after **30th June 2027**.

## Applications and Admissions to Year 8

Year	Admissions Number	Total Applications	Total Admissions
<b>2023/2024</b>	130	166	137*
<b>2024/2025</b>	130	147	137*
<b>2025/2026</b>	130	133	135*

\*Includes Statemented and Temporary Variation pupils

***\*\*The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all Year 8 children admitted to the school including those who have a statement of special educational needs.***

## ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO YEARS 9 – 12

For admission to years 9-12, please complete an AP1 form and contact the school directly.