

RATHMORE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Kingsway, Finaghy
Belfast, BT10 0LF

Telephone No: 028 9061 0115

E-mail: info@rathmoregs.belfast.ni.sch.uk

Website: www.rathmoregrammarschool.org

Principal: Dr Arthur Donnelly BSc, PhD, PGCE, PQH

Chair of Board of Governors: Mr John Morrissey

**Voluntary Grammar School
Co-educational**

Age Range: 11-18

Admission No: 180

Enrolment No: 1260

OPEN DAY

Saturday 17 January 2026 9.30 am – 1.00 pm. Address by the Principal at 9.30 am and 11.15 am.
A virtual tour of the school, prospectus and information pack will also be made available on our website www.rathmoregrammarschool.org at that time.

To Parents/Guardians naming Rathmore Grammar School as a preference on your child's online Transfer Application Year 8 in 2026.

Entrance Assessment Results

In assessing academic ability Rathmore Grammar School will use the Band/TSAS awarded to pupils completing the SEAG Entrance Assessment on **Saturday 15 and Saturday 22 November 2025**. Parents/guardians must state the Band achieved and upload, with the online Transfer Application, a copy of the Statement of Outcomes which can be accessed from a secure area on the SEAG website from Saturday 24 January 2026.

SEAG is very clear that its Entrance Assessment consists of two papers. A pupil who only takes one paper (i.e. either Paper 1 or Paper 2 but not both) will not have completed the full Entrance Assessment. Such pupils will, however, have their "single paper" marked by GL Assessment and will receive a Statement of Outcomes. 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; Band 4e.

Pupils who have taken only one paper may be considered for admission under Special Provisions.

Special Circumstances

Special Circumstances usually refers to the claim that as a result of medical or other problems an applicant's performance in the SEAG Assessment was affected. Any parent/guardian claiming Special Circumstances must complete Form SC which is included in the Special Circumstances pack available from Rathmore Grammar School or its website. The completed form, together with the independent, verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances claim, must be uploaded with the online Transfer Application.

Special Provisions

For those pupils currently in P7 in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland and for those wishing to Transfer from outside Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provisions should be made on Form SP and uploaded with the online Transfer Application together with the independent, verifiable documentary evidence which corroborates the Special Provisions claim. Form SP is available from the school or its website.

Further details can be found in the sections 'Note on Special Circumstances' and 'Note on Special Provisions' below.

CAPITAL FEE

There is no Capital Fee.

All pupils are asked to pay a Voluntary Contribution (currently £120 per annum).

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

The Board of Governors, having agreed the criteria for admission, has delegated to the Admissions Committee which includes the Principal, the authority to decide which particular applicants shall be admitted to the school in accordance with the criteria and any appropriate statutory regulations issued by the Department of Education.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

It is the sole responsibility of the Parent/Guardian of a prospective pupil to ensure that there is submitted, with the online Transfer Application, all the information required to enable the Admissions Committee to apply the Admissions Criteria of the School to the application of the prospective pupil. Only evidence submitted either on the online Transfer Application or uploaded with the application at the time of submission to the School for admission shall be considered by the Admissions Committee in the allocation of a place to the applicant. ***The EA online portal closes for Year 8 post-primary applications on Thursday 19 February 2026 at 12 noon.***

LATE APPLICATIONS

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria, punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 12 noon and an application submitted by the closing date of Thursday 19 February 2026 at 12 noon will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon on 19 February 2026 and up to 4.00 pm on 24 February 2026 will be treated as a late application.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2026

Rathmore Grammar School will initially consider only those applicants who have taken the SEAG Entrance Assessment and who have been awarded a Band or assigned a Band pursuant to the application of the Special Circumstances or Special Provisions procedures and will admit pupils based on the Band achieved and the Total Standardised Score, TSAS, in the assessment or otherwise awarded.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SPECIAL PROVISIONS PROCEDURES

The Admissions Committee will consider applicants claiming that Special Circumstances or Special Provisions exist. These will be considered first. Where this is granted, the Admissions Committee will determine, on the basis of the information available, an equivalent Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) and an appropriate Band equivalent for the applicant. Such applicants will then be considered with all other applicants who have received a SEAG Entrance Assessment TSAS and Band, and the admissions criteria applied.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that such claims for Special Circumstances or Special Provisions, along with all verifying information and requested educational evidence, are included on form SC or form SP respectively, and uploaded with the online Transfer Application.

NB: The existence of Special Circumstances or Special Provisions DOES NOT in itself lead to automatic admission to the School. Each case is considered on its own merits by the Board of Governors.

If a claim for the consideration of Special Circumstances or Special Provisions is made in respect of matters for which access arrangements were granted or could have been granted had they been made known to the assessment centre, the Admissions Committee may take into account the fact that the applicant was granted access arrangements or could have been granted access arrangements for those matters. Where a need or problem is identified in advance of the assessment taking place, an application for Access Arrangements should have been made.

Please refer to the following documents: 'SEAG 2025 Entrance Assessment ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS Policy Statement', available on the SEAG website.

NOTE ON SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Special Circumstances allow for a post-examination adjustment or provision of a Band to an applicant who is eligible for consideration.

Special Circumstances should be claimed only for applicants who sat both SEAG papers and where events on the day(s) of the assessment or factors unknown at the time are considered to have directly influenced the outcome on the day(s) on the SEAG Assessment papers.

Requests for Special Circumstances must be made by completing form SC which should then be uploaded by the parent/guardian to the online Transfer Application along with full, supporting documentary evidence when an application is made for post-primary transfer for the child.

Circumstances relating to the application for Special Circumstances must apply at the time of the Entrance Assessment and be supported by appropriate written evidence. A Special Circumstances claim will not be considered without such evidence.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardian/carers to ensure that such claims and all verifying information are included on form SC and uploaded with the online Transfer Application.

Details of Medical or other Problems:

Where it is claimed that a pupil's performance in the Entrance Assessment has been affected by a medical or other problem, details and 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 pupil only at the time of the Entrance Assessment, 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 SEAG Entrance Assessment. This evidence should be provided on headed notepaper of the medical practitioner and signed and dated by him/her.

Where the problem is of a non-medical nature, the parent should set out in the School's Special Circumstances Claim Form, SC form, precise details of the problem and append any appropriate evidence to corroborate its existence.

Please refer to the following documents:

'Claiming Special Circumstances - A Guide for Parents & Guardians' and **'Special Circumstances Application Form' Form SC**, both available on the school website www.rathmoregrammarschool.org.

Details of Educational Evidence:

At the time of completing the online Transfer Application, details of the Special Circumstances and independent supporting evidence must be provided and uploaded with the online Transfer Application.

The following information should be provided by parents/guardians on Form SC in relation to the applicant:

- The Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) awarded by SEAG in the Entrance Assessment.
- The results for the child of any standardised tests in English (PTE) and Mathematics (PTM) conducted in Years 5, Year 6 and Year 7. These must be verifiable and must be signed off by the Primary School Principal. The verified results must be uploaded with the online Transfer Application or its equivalent.
- Comparative information from the Primary School for other pupils in the child's Year 7 class (without names) of any standardised tests in English and Mathematics conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results in any end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Year 5 and Year 6, and, where available, the respective SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) awarded.
- Any other relevant material presented by parents/guardians.

The Admissions Committee will, when considering the weight to be given to submitted evidence, consider standardised test results as ranking in priority to other submitted evidence.

Applicants considered under Special Circumstances will be judged by the evidence made available to the school and this may result in the Band/TSAS awarded being adjusted accordingly. Please note that judgement of the importance of documentation forwarded in support of Special Circumstances will be at the discretion of the Admissions Committee.

The Admissions Committee may decide in relation to an applicant in this category of Special Circumstances, that the Band which the applicant in fact achieved in the SEAG Assessment is the Band which the applicant would have achieved if the applicant had sat the SEAG Assessment under normal circumstances. Once a decision has been made the applicant will be considered alongside applicants within that category.

General Note on Special Circumstances

It is emphasised that **the onus is on the parents/guardians/carers** to ensure that the above information is provided by the primary school. Failure to provide such information may result in the School being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances. **Parents/guardians/carers have a statutory right to request and obtain information on their child.** Further information on the rights to access pupil records is available from the Information Commissioner's Office or from the following website: <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

NOTE ON SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Applications which fall into this category shall be considered before the consideration of the applications of those who sat the SEAG Entrance Assessment under normal circumstances.

Special Provisions may be made by the Admissions Committee for applicants:

- a) who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland;
- b) who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland;
- c) who, due to a serious medical or other problem, supported by appropriate documentary evidence, or for a demonstrably valid reason, also supported by appropriate documentary evidence, were either unable to sit both the SEAG Entrance Assessment papers OR have an estimated outcome from SEAG because they only sat one of the two Entrance Assessment papers.

Parents/Guardians who wish to apply to the School under Special Provisions should complete Form SP, available from the School or its website, stating the precise reason why they believe the child is eligible for consideration under Special Provisions along with available educational and assessment details and then upload it along with appropriate independent evidence with the Transfer Application.

Please refer to the following documents:

'Claiming Special Provisions - A Guide for Parents & Guardians' and **'Special Provisions Application Form' Form SP**, both available on the school website www.rathmoregrammarschool.org.

Applicants in categories (a) and (b) above who wish to apply under Special Provisions do not need to take the SEAG Assessment unless their parents/guardians so wish, in which case the SEAG Assessment Statement of Outcomes obtained would also be considered.

Special Provisions Procedure

The Admissions Committee will consider each application for Special Provisions. Where Special Provisions are accepted, the following procedures will apply. The Admissions Committee will consider the assessment information as detailed in Form SP:

- Where available, SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) or estimated score awarded.
- The results for the child of any standardised tests in English and Mathematics conducted in Years 5, Year 6 and Year 7 (the last three years of Primary School) and the results of any end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Year 5 and 6 (the last two years of Primary School), these must be verifiable, signed off by the Primary School Principal and uploaded with the online Transfer Application or its equivalent.
- Comparative information from the Primary School for other pupils in the child's Year 7 class (without names) of any standardised tests in English and Mathematics conducted in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 7 and the results of any end of year tests in English and Mathematics in Year 5 and Year 6, and, where available, the respective SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) awarded.
- Any other relevant material presented by parents/guardians.

The Admissions Committee will consider each application for Special Provisions and, where this is granted, will review the evidence made available to the school. Where available, the applicant's SEAG Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) or estimated score may then be adjusted accordingly. Please note that judgement of the importance of documentation forwarded in support of Special Provisions will be at the discretion of the Admissions Committee.

The Admissions Committee may require a suitably qualified person or body approved by the School to make a further assessment of an applicant's ability. This will be known as the Special Provisions Assessment and in this case parents/guardians will be contacted to arrange a date and time for the applicant to sit the assessment in the School. A report on the applicant's assessed outcomes will be provided and may be shared with other schools were necessary.

Where Rathmore Grammar School is not your first preference school and you have sat a Special Provisions Assessment in another school, Rathmore Grammar School may use the results of that Special Provisions Assessment in the Special Provisions Procedure.

Parents of pupils wishing to claim Special Provisions should complete the appropriate documentation, stating the case for eligibility under this category, and upload with the pupil's online Transfer Application before it is sent to the Education Authority (Transfer Department) by the closing date of 19 February 2026 at 12 noon (GMT).

After this date, late applications for Special Provisions should be uploaded with the pupil's online Transfer Application by no later than **4.00 pm on 24 February 2026**.

ALLOCATION OF PLACES

Rathmore Grammar School will give preference to those pupils for whom a Band/TSAS relating to the SEAG Entrance Assessment method has been awarded by SEAG or assigned by the Admissions Committee pursuant to the Special Circumstances/Special Provisions procedures. Information on the SEAG Entrance Assessment is available from the School, or available to download from the School website at www.rathmoregrammarschool.org.

All pupils resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School will be selected for admissions before any pupil not so resident.

In order to determine which pupils will be accepted into Year 8, the following criteria will be applied in the order set down:

Groups of Applicants with a Band 1:

- (i) applicants who, at the date of their application, have a child of the family currently or previously enrolled at the School. (Name and year of present pupil and name and dates of attendance of past pupil must be given.)**
- (ii) applicants** whose parent is a member of the permanent staff of the School.
- (iii) applicants** who are the eldest* child **of the family** to have achieved a Band 1 or the only child **of the family** to have achieved a Band 1 and have no siblings who achieved a grade A in the GL transfer or, whose brother or sister is an eldest child who achieved a SEAG Band 1 or a grade A in the GL transfer and applied to the School but was not selected. **(Certificate of Verification must be provided.)**

* twins and other multiples who are eldest in the family and have each achieved a Band 1 or the particular Band being considered are treated as joint eldest children.

If oversubscribed in Criterion (iii) applicants will be selected by rank order according to the combined Standardised Age Score attained in the SEAG Assessment tests, the highest scoring applicant being ranked first, the next highest candidate being ranked second etc. Applicants will be admitted in rank order up to the maximum order of the school's admissions number (180).

Where 2 or more applicants have an identical combined Standardised Age Score and their position in the rank order means that there are insufficient places to admit all of them, priority will be given to

- (a) applicants in receipt of Free School Meals Entitlement at the time of application.
- (b) the remaining 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 online Transfer Application.

- (iv) applicants** who are not allocated to any of the groups (i) to (iii) above.

If oversubscribed in Criterion (iv) applicants will be selected by rank order according to the combined Standardised Age Score attained in the SEAG Assessment tests, the highest scoring applicant being ranked first, the next highest candidate being ranked second etc. Applicants will be admitted in rank order up to the maximum order of the school's admissions number (180).

Where 2 or more applicants have an identical combined Standardised Age Score and their position in the rank order means that there are insufficient places to admit all of them they will be ranked for acceptance on the basis of points (a) and (b) as above.

If all places are not filled by applicants with a Band 1, the same process will be applied to applicants with a Band 2 and then to each subsequent Band in turn until all places are filled.

Twins and children of other multiple births

Where twins and other children of multiple births are eligible for criterion (iii), the procedure will be conducted as set out – applicants will be selected by rank order according to the combined Standardised Age Score attained in the SEAG Assessment tests but, on completion of the procedure, the ranking number of the second and any subsequent child of the multiple birth, within the Band under consideration, will be changed to that number immediately after the ranking number of the first child and the ranking number of all other applicants will be changed accordingly as a result.

N.B. exception – as the school is not permitted to exceed its admission number (180), in the event of the first child of a multiple birth being ranked 180 the second and any subsequent child of that multiple birth cannot be admitted in the manner provided above.

Applicants who have a **Statement of Special Educational Needs** will have their applications dealt with by the Education Authority under separate arrangements and are supernumerary to the school's admissions and enrolment numbers.

WAITING LIST POLICY

Should a vacancy arise after 11 May 2026 all applications for admission to Year 8 that were initially refused, new applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. This waiting list will be in place until **30 June 2027**. The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the school by this method.

Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish for your child's name to be removed from the list.

DUTY TO VERIFY

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Admissions Committee will only take into account information which is detailed on or uploaded with the online Transfer Application. Parents should ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the online Transfer Application and uploaded with it.

The Certificate of Verification and an Admissions Criteria Checklist compiled by the Board to assist parents in completing the Form are available from the School. If it is found, whether prior to enrolment or post-enrolment, that false information has been given in support of an application, the school will not offer the child a place or will withdraw the offer of a place if it has already been made.

Applications and Admissions

| Year | Admissions No | Total Applications <i>i.e. All preferences</i> | Total Admissions |
|----------------|---------------|---|------------------|
| 2023/24 | 180 | 258 | 181* |
| 2024/25 | 180 | 266 | 181* |
| 2025/26 | 180 | 213 | 185** |

*includes children admitted through the Exceptional Circumstances Body or Admission Appeals Tribunal

** includes children admitted through the Exceptional Circumstances Body or Admission Appeals Tribunal & children who have a statement of Special Educational Needs

Criteria for admission to Years 9 onwards - Available on request from the school.