

**TRANSFERS TO THE SCHOOL OUTSIDE OF THE ‘NORMAL’ EDUCATION AUTHORITY PROCESS AND THE OPERATION OF A SCHOOL WAITING LIST**

Agreed by Board of Governors: **DRAFT SEPTEMBER 2016** To be reviewed: In line with DE advice

**PURPOSE OF THE POLICY:**

The school has an enrolment number of 160 students.

The ‘normal’ admission process takes place for P7 students between February and May and decides the placement of students in year 8 in September of the following academic year. Parents can at any time request a transfer to the school ‘outside’ of this ‘normal’ process for admission into any year group 8-12. This policy relates to our procedures for admission to the school outside of the normal process. Admissions to the Sixth Form are dealt with in a separate policy.

If a year group is full, the Board of Governors of the Belfast Model School for Girls operates a waiting list for transfer into the school. Our practices in relation to the operation of a waiting list are defined in this policy in line with DENI Circular 2012/10.

The policy ensures that our approach is clear and transparent for all prospective parents and to further ensure that all places are allocated in a fair way.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Any reference to ‘parent’ in this policy may be taken to include any person who holds parental responsibility for the child defined in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

For the purposes of this policy, a waiting list is defined as a record of the names of all students who wish to be considered for admission to the school when a place becomes available.

**THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS FOR APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE OF THE NORMAL PROCESS:**

All transfers are done via form AP1 available from the Education Authority website. The school defines two possible scenarios for admission to the school outside of this normal process.

1. STUDENTS IN P7 WHO WISH TO TRANSFER INTO THE SCHOOL FOR SEPTEMBER AND DID NOT GET A PLACE VIA THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY POST-PRIMARY TRANSFER POLICY

Between the months of May and September, parents of a student is in P7 may request a transfer into the school for a September start. Should the incoming year 8 be full, parents will be offered a place on the waiting list and must confirm that they want to be on the waiting list in writing.

1. STUDENTS WHO WISH TO TRANSFER INTO THE SCHOOL ‘IN-YEAR’

Any pupil who wishes to transfer into the school in Years 8-14 after the start of the school year should contact the school and complete form AP1, available from the Education Authority via their website. We would also expect parents to have discussed this with the school they are proposing to leave. The school will respond to a request for a place within 10 school days and a meeting with a senior member of staff will follow.

If there are less than 160 pupils in the year group, then an application for a transfer can be considered. The school does have the right to refuse an application for transfer outside the normal process if the Principal and Board of Governors feel that the admission of a child would be prejudicial to the efficient use of resources.

If there is not a place available in a given year group, then parents can chose to join the waiting list for that year group. Parents should confirm they want to do this in writing.

**HOW DOES THE WAITING LIST OPERATE?**

Article 13 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 requires that where a school has more applications than places available the Board of Governors must apply its admission criteria in order to decide which pupils to admit. This applies to our waiting list, where pupils will be rank ordered according to the school’s current admissions criteria. Parents can request to know how many pupils are on the waiting list, and the position of their child on that list.

If a place in the school becomes available, we will contact the first family on the list. There will be a seven day period to accept the place. Should a family chose to accept the place, we will then begin the process of transfer.

We will work down the waiting list in order, giving each family 7 days to respond before moving to the next until such time as the place is accepted.

At the end of each school year, we will write to parents of children on our waiting list to see if they wish to remain on the list. They will have 30 days to respond. If we do not receive a written response, we will remove that family from the waiting list.

**COMPLAINTS**

Parents do have the right to appeal and complain if they feel this policy has not been applied correctly. These complaints procedures are detailed in the guidance notes for Form AP1.