

# Admissions Criteria September 2023

## THORNHILL COLLEGE

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Principal: Ms S Mallett BSSc, MSc, MSc, PGDFHE, PQH

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mrs Siobhan Porter BArch, DipArch

Girls Age Range: 11 – 18

Admissions Number: 200

Enrolment Number: 1410

Roll Number: 1402

## Open Night

Thursday 26 January 2023 - 3.30pm – 5.30pm Principal's Address - 4.30pm

### TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS NAMING THORNHILL COLLEGE AS A PREFERENCE ON YOUR CHILD'S TRANSFER FORM.

#### Entrance Test Results

The Board of Governors has determined that admission to Thornhill College in 2023 will be by an Entrance Test. All girls who wish to be considered for admission are advised to sit English and Mathematics tests administered by GL Entrance Assessment on Saturday 12 November 2022 or the supplementary GL Entrance Assessment on Saturday 10 December 2022. Any girl can choose to sit the test in the most convenient venue offering the GL Entrance Assessment Test.

**WHEN CONSIDERING WHICH CHILDREN SHOULD BE SELECTED FOR ADMISSION, THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WILL ONLY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INFORMATION WHICH IS DETAILED ON OR SUBMITTED WITH THE ONLINE TRANSFER FORM. PARENTS/GUARDIANS MUST THEREFORE ENSURE THAT ALL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THEIR CHILD AND RELEVANT TO THE SCHOOL'S ADMISSIONS CRITERIA IS STATED ON THE ONLINE TRANSFER FORM BEFORE THE ONLINE PORTAL APPLICATION DEADLINE AT 4.00PM ON THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023.**

Please ensure that you provide the following information on/with your child's Online Transfer Form:

1. The grade achieved in the GL Entrance

Assessment Test i.e. A, B1, B2, C1, C2, D must be recorded in the Additional Information section of the Online Transfer Form.

2. A copy of the Statement of Results issued by the Assessment Centre must be submitted with your child's Online Transfer Form.

### Special Circumstances

Any parent/guardian claiming Special Circumstances must complete the documentation in the Special Circumstances Pack available from Thornhill College or from the College website. An initial notification of a claim for Special Circumstances must be made by 2.00 pm on Wednesday 14 December 2022 (time being of the essence), using the appropriate form available from the College. This documentation, Form SC1, together with the appropriate independent evidence which corroborates the Special Circumstances, must be submitted with the Online Transfer Application Form. Any claims for Special Circumstances received after that will be considered out of time and will not be considered.

### Special Provision

For those pupils currently in P7 in primary schools in Northern Ireland, claims for Special Provision must be made on Form SP1 which is available from Thornhill College or the College website at [www.thornhillcollege.org.uk](http://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk). Parents/Guardians wishing to claim Special Provision must forward a copy of Form SP1 directly to Thornhill College by 2.00 pm

on Friday 17 February 2023 in addition to the Online Transfer Application Form. If a child is moving/arrives in Northern Ireland after this date, claims for Special Provision must be made directly to Thornhill College and the EA School Admissions Office notified.

N.B. If you are applying for Special Circumstances or Special Provision, relevant information is continued overleaf.

### 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 2023

**The results of the tests will be ranked by GL Entrance Assessment as follows: A, B1, B2, C1, C2 and D.**

- 1 Applicants will be admitted in grade order of priority beginning with grade A and followed by grades B1, B2, C1, C2 and D.  
Or  
Applicants for whom Special Circumstances/ Special Provision have been accepted by the

authorised Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors and who are deemed to be of comparable ability to those being considered within the relevant Grade boundary.

2 If there are more applicants with a particular grade than places remaining, then the available places will be allocated by the application of the following sub-criteria in the order of priority set down below:

(i) Applicants who, at the date of application, have a child of the family\* currently enrolled at the College or who will be in the coming year.

(ii) Applicants who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family to be eligible\*\* to apply for admission to the College.

\*Child of the family as defined in DENI Circular 2022/15. The Department considers that “child of the family” covers:

- a child born to a married couple or to a couple in a civil partnership;
- a child born to a co-habiting couple;
- a child born to a single parent;
- a child of either/any of those people by a previous marriage, civil partnership or relationship;
- a child living with a couple who has been treated as a “child of the family” whether there is a marriage or a civil partnership or not;
- a child living with an individual, who has been treated as a “child of the family”;
- an adopted or fostered child; or,
- a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family.

### **The child should be a child of the family as at the date of application.**

\*\* Eldest child of the family eligible to apply for admission as defined in DENI Circular 2022/15. This wording covers:

- “only” children and is also intended to treat twins (or multiples) as joint eldest;
- Eldest can include eldest girl in the case of single sex schools;
- Where a family has not had the opportunity to have an elder child already and currently enrolled e.g. in the cases where a child is more than 7 years younger than their next sibling; cases where a family has moved residence; or cases where an older sibling cannot attend mainstream school, for example attends a special school.

3. In the event of oversubscription after the application of sub-criteria 2 (i-ii), applicants will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname as entered on the pupil’s long birth certificate in the order set out below:

**T M A P Z H L M c X W V M a c J U K D C S F R E O I G Y N B Q**

This order was determined by random selection and witnessed by an independent adjudicator.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surnames will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initials of forenames will be used. In the event of the forenames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the forenames will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of identical surnames and forenames, 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. If, after this process, any applicants still tie for a final place, the place(s) will be allocated by random computerised selection.

4. Applicants other than those satisfying criteria 1 – 2 (i-ii) above.

5. If there are more applicants meeting criterion 4 above than places remaining, then the available places will be allocated by the application of the following sub-criteria in the order of priority set down below:

(i) Applicants who, at the date of application, have a child of the family\* currently enrolled at the College or who will be in the coming year.

(ii) Applicants who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family to be eligible to apply\*\* for admission to the College.

\*Child of the family as defined in DENI Circular 2022/15. The Department considers that “child of the family” covers:

- a child born to a married couple or to a couple in a civil partnership;
- a child born to a co-habiting couple;
- a child born to a single parent;
- a child of either/any of those people by a previous marriage, civil

- partnership or relationship;
- a child living with a couple who has been treated as a “child of the family” whether there is a marriage or a civil partnership or not;
- a child living with an individual, who has been treated as a “child of the family”;
- an adopted or fostered child; or,
- a situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family.

**The child should be a child of the family as at the date of application.**

\*\* Eldest child of the family eligible to apply for admission as defined in DENI Circular 2022/15. This wording covers:

- “only” children and is also intended to treat twins (or multiples) as joint eldest;
- Eldest can include eldest girl in the case of single sex schools;
- Where a family has not had the opportunity to have an elder child already and currently enrolled e.g. in the cases where a child is more than 7 years younger than their next sibling; cases where a family has moved residence; or cases where an older sibling cannot attend mainstream school, for example attends a special school.

6. In the event of oversubscription after the application of sub-criteria 5 (i-ii) applicants will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname as entered on the pupil’s long birth certificate in the order set out below:

**T M A P Z H L Mc X W V Mac J U K D C S F R E O I G Y N B Q**

This order was determined by random selection and witnessed by an independent adjudicator.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surnames will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initials of forenames will be used. In the event of the forenames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the forenames will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of identical surnames and forenames, 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. If, after this process, any applicants still tie for a final place, the place(s) will be allocated by random computerised selection.

**CHILD OF THE FAMILY CURRENTLY ENROLLED OR WHO WILL BE IN THE COMING YEAR VERIFICATION**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of children transferring should be aware that if they are using criteria relating to child of the family currently enrolled at the College or who will be in the coming year, then that information will be verified. At the time of the Online Transfer Application, it is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure full details of any child of the family currently enrolled at the College (name and class) or who will be in the coming year is submitted/uploaded to the Online Transfer Application.

**ELDEST/FIRST GIRL / AGE VERIFICATION**

Parents/guardians of children transferring should be aware that if they are using criteria relating to a child’s age or child’s relationship, then that information will be verified. At the time of the Online Transfer Application, a copy of the child’s birth certificate and a verifying letter stating that the child is the eldest girl and that the family is known to the verifier must be submitted/uploaded to the Online Transfer Application. The verifying letter must be written on headed notepaper and signed by one of the following who is not a member of the applicant’s family:

- (i) a primary school principal
- (ii) a medical practitioner
- (iii) a solicitor
- (iv) a clergyman or equivalent

**ADDRESS VERIFICATION  
AT THE TIME OF ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION, ADDRESS VERIFICATION DOCUMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED/UPLOADED TO THE ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION. ADMISSION WILL NOT BE FINALISED UNTIL VERIFICATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED.**

All parents/guardians of children resident in Northern Ireland transferring must verify their address in Northern Ireland by providing any two of the following nine documents:

- (i) A bank or building society statement of the Parents/Guardians/Child which shows the address at which the child is resident;
- (ii) A utility bill of the Parents/Guardians (electricity, gas, television licence, telephone (landline), Land and Property Service rate demand which shows the address at which the child is resident;
- (iii) A letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit;
- (iv) The child’s Medical Card;
- (v) Electoral ID card;
- (vi) Driving Licence;

- (vii) Addressed payslip;
- (viii) Mortgage statement;
- (ix) Rental agreement.

## NOTES

**APPLICANTS RESIDENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE TIME OF THE PROPOSED ADMISSION WILL BE CONSIDERED BEFORE ALL OTHER APPLICANTS.**

**WHEN CONSIDERING WHICH CHILDREN SHOULD BE SELECTED FOR ADMISSION, THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WILL ONLY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INFORMATION WHICH IS DETAILED ON THE ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION. PARENTS/GUARDIANS MUST THEREFORE ENSURE THAT ALL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THEIR CHILD AND RELEVANT TO THE SCHOOL'S ADMISSIONS CRITERIA IS INCLUDED/ SUBMITTED ON THE ONLINE TRANSFER APPLICATION.**

**THE PROVISION OF FALSE OR INCORRECT INFORMATION, OR THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE VERIFYING OR OTHER DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BY THE REQUIRED DEADLINE, MAY RESULT IN EITHER THE WITHDRAWAL OF A PLACE OR THE INABILITY OF THE COLLEGE TO OFFER A PLACE.**

**THE COLLEGE SEEKS AN ANNUAL VOLUNTARY PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION. THE PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2022-2023 HAS BEEN SET AS FOLLOWS: £50 FOR 1 CHILD; £80 FOR 2 CHILDREN AND £100 FOR A FAMILY OF MORE THAN 2 CHILDREN. THIS IS USED TO ENHANCE AND ENRICH PUPILS' EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH ACTIVITIES THAT OTHERWISE COULD NOT BE FINANCED FROM THE SCHOOL BUDGET.**

**A WAITING LIST OF PUPILS WILL BE KEPT. SHOULD A VACANCY ARISE AFTER 20 MAY 2023 ALL APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO YEAR 8, INCLUDING APPLICATIONS THAT WERE INITIALLY REFUSED, NEW APPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS WHERE NEW INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED WILL BE CONSIDERED AND THE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (1-6) ABOVE WILL BE APPLIED TO FILL THE AVAILABLE PLACE(S).**

**YEAR 8 POST PRIMARY ONLINE PORTAL APPLICATION PROCESS OPENS FROM 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2023 AND CLOSES AT 4.00PM ON THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023.**

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

**NOTE: RECEIPT OF CLAIM FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE GIVEN BY THE TEST CENTRE BUT THE INFORMATION MAY BE SHARED WITH ALL OF THE SCHOOLS TO WHICH THE CANDIDATE APPLIES.**

## **AN APPLICANT WHO APPLIES FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ENTRANCE TEST CANNOT THEN APPLY FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE SAME REASON.**

- Special Circumstances are when the parents/guardians of the applicant claim that medical or other problems affected the performance of their child. It is a post examination adjustment to the grade of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. Where a need or problem is identified in advance of the test taking place, candidates must apply for Access Arrangements or, where applicable, take the Supplementary GL Entrance Assessment Test. Special Circumstances should be sought only where events on the day of the GL Entrance Assessment Test or factors unknown at the time are considered to have directly influenced the outcome of the GL Entrance Assessment Test.
- Circumstances relating to the application must apply at the time of the assessment and be supported by all relevant documentation including any and all written evidence to substantiate or support "the circumstances" as set out in the Special Circumstances application. Any written evidence provided by a relevant professional must support the circumstances as set out in the Special Circumstances application and if appropriate originate from the relevant professional with such knowledge of the circumstances. No alteration of grade will be considered without such evidence.
- An initial notification of a claim for Special Circumstances must be made by 2.00 pm on Wednesday 14 December 2022 (time being of the essence), using the appropriate form available from the College. The College will acknowledge receipt of such a notice of intent if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included. No consideration of the award of grade for this application will be given at this stage.
- All documented evidence in support of any Special Circumstances claim must be submitted with the Online Transfer Application, using the SC1 Form and must be forwarded to the College via the EA as part of the normal Transfer process.
- It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure that any claim for Special Circumstances is supported by independent documentary evidence. Please refer to the Entrance Assessment: Access Arrangements and Special Circumstances Policy available from the College or from the College Website.

## **The following information must be provided on Form SC1 in relation to the applicant:**

All the applicant's school standardised test results in English/Literacy and Mathematics/Numeracy from the beginning of Key Stage 2 period.

- (a) All test results must be dated and verified by the primary school.
- (b) Results from all tests must be accompanied by the name of the standardised test and the supplier of the test.
- (c) Results must include scores for English/Literacy and Mathematics/

Numeracy.

(d) Any other relevant material.

Failure to provide such information will result in the College being unable to consider the application for Special Circumstances.

- Parental/Guardian requests for consideration of Special Circumstances for a child will have their claims considered before the application of the Admissions Criteria.
- The authorised sub-committee of the Board of Governors, on the basis of all documented evidence available to them at the time of reaching their decisions, will decide the grade to be used in the application of the Admissions Criteria to applicants under Special Circumstances applications. The Admissions Criteria shall then be applied.

### SPECIAL PROVISION

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

- a) Children who are transferring from primary schools outside Northern Ireland or who have recently moved to Northern Ireland.
- b) Children who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland.
- c) Children whose educational provision to date has been **negatively** affected by serious medical or other problems supported by independent, verifiable documentary evidence and who, as a consequence, may have been unable to sit either the GL Entrance Test or the GL Supplementary Test.

Applicants from categories a) and b) above, who wish to apply under Special Provision do not need to take the GL Entrance Assessment or the Supplementary Assessment unless their parents/guardians so wish, in which case the GL Entrance Assessment grade obtained will also be considered.

The parents/guardians of Applicants claiming Special Provision must complete SP1 Form available from the College stating the case for eligibility under this category and return it to the College by 2.00 pm on Friday 17 February 2023. If a child is moving/arrives in Northern Ireland after this date, claims for Special Provision must be made directly to Thornhill College and the EA School Admissions Office notified. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to provide precise reasons why the applicant did not take part in the GL Entrance Assessment and to submit appropriate documentary evidence relating to their specific reason for Special Provision application, in order to assist the Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors with its deliberations.

The authorised Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors will expect to see any recent primary school reports and may require an assessment of the applicant's ability to be carried out by a suitably qualified person or body approved by the College. The Admissions Committee will decide

whether applicants shall be admitted on the basis that they fall within the ability range of other pupils being admitted in that year. Thereafter applications will be assessed by the application of sub-criteria as set out above.

### NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS APPLICANTS WHO HAVE A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS WILL HAVE THEIR APPLICATIONS DEALT WITH BY THE EA UNDER SEPARATE ARRANGEMENTS AND ARE SUPERNUMERARY TO THE COLLEGE'S ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT NUMBERS.

YEAR	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2020/21	200	227	202*
2021/22	200	228	203*
2022/23	220	263	222*

\* Includes figures exceeding the school's approved admissions number due to either statemented children or successful appeals.

Admission to Years 9 – 12

Pupils will be considered for enrolment provided that:

1. Their admission will not cause the school to exceed its enrolment number;
2. Their admission will not cause the particular year group to exceed the admissions number set for it, at its time of entry. This limitation will not apply to pupils recently come to reside in the area;
3. In the opinion of the Board of Governors, their admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.

Where there are more applicants who meet these criteria than there are places, preference will be given as follows:

- (i) Applicants who held a place in a grammar school elsewhere and who have moved into the catchment area of the College.
- (ii) Applicants whose sibling(s) are pupils of the College in the year in which the application is made.
- (iii) Applicants who had originally applied for a place in the College and whose grade was equal to that of the minimum scored by those accepted that year.

Applications for admission at the start of a school year will normally be considered in late August. Applications for admission during the school year will be considered as soon as possible after the application is received.