



# Dalriada School

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14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

As you are well aware by now, this year's Common Entrance Assessment, provided by AQE has been cancelled due to health concerns. You and your child have been through a turbulent time in recent weeks as the tests were postponed and then cancelled. As a member of the Board of AQE I can only say that we did everything in our power to ensure that the test would proceed but yesterday, after taking account of the deteriorating Covid 19 situation, and the real health risks to candidates, schools and markers, it was unanimously agreed to cancel the test.

Obviously this decision creates more uncertainty for parents and pupils as schools now have to produce "Contingency Admissions Criteria" which have to be provided to the Education Authority's Post Primary Admissions Office by Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021.

As far as Dalriada's position is concerned, our Board of Governors met last night and agreed in principle on our criteria to be used. This will require further refinement in the days ahead but I want to reassure you that Dalriada remains committed to academic selection and this will be reflected in our updated Admissions Criteria.

At this stage I wish to share the following points regarding our Admissions Criteria 2021-22.

It is expected that all those seeking admission to Dalriada School should have applied to sit the Common Entrance Assessment for admission in 2021-22 conducted by AQE. The AQE candidate number should be entered on the online application.

If the number of applications for Year 8 in September 2021 exceeds the number of places available, pupils will be

1. Selected for admission with evidence of academic ability being our primary criterion.

Evidence of academic ability, if available from the candidate's primary school. Examples of the evidence would include recent mock AQE test results, results of any standardised tests and results of any end of year tests in English and Maths.

Any parent who is unable to offer written evidence of their child's academic ability from their Primary School should contact Dalriada.

Our criteria for Special Circumstances and Special Provision will remain broadly similar to previous years with some slight amendments to be made.

Similarly, in the event of a tie situation regarding academic ability the following criteria will apply.

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2. Those children who have siblings (with a common parent) currently in attendance at Dalriada School.
3. Those children who have had a sibling (with a common parent) who previously attended the Secondary Department of Dalriada School (dates to be supplied).
4. Children who, at the date of their application are the eldest child (including twins and other multiples) of the family eligible to apply for admission to Dalriada School.
5. Children who are entitled to free school meals\*.
6. The age of the child, preference being given to an older child.

\* "entitled to Free School Meals" will mean applicants who are listed on the Education Authority register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian completed their post-primary Online Transfer Application, or at any date up to and including 12 April 2021.

I must stress that the finer details of our criteria have yet to be finalised but we feel that the above criteria best meet the needs of candidates applying for a place in Dalriada and allows all their hard work in preparing for the transfer test to be recognised. Once our finalised admissions criteria are agreed, I will supply you with a copy.

I will also be writing to the Principals of our feeder primary schools today to make them aware of our contingency admissions criteria.

I hope this provides some comfort to you and your child and will bring closure to what has been a stressful time for all of us.

Regards.



T. Skelton  
Headmaster