



# Rathfriland High School



## 2025 Prospectus

"Big Enough to Deliver, Small Enough to Care"



Rathfriland High School's

# MISSION STATEMENT

'To instil, through the teaching and learning within the school, the pursuit and realisation of excellence alongside values, attitudes and beliefs which foster self growth, self confidence and an appreciation of cultural identity coupled with an understanding and acceptance of diversity.'



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The content of the Prospectus is accurate as of January 2025  
The school reserves the right to make alterations as it sees fit.

## WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Primary 7 Pupils,

Rathfriland High is a school which delivers high quality education in a caring and supportive environment. Located at the heart of the community, we welcome pupils of all abilities and have a proven record of delivering academic outcomes consistently above the N. Ireland average. This is achieved in an ordered and caring environment, which provides excellent pastoral care, in a family-like atmosphere.

The school prides itself on being 'Big Enough to Deliver, Small Enough to Care.' This means we can offer a diverse curriculum of over thirty subjects at GCSE or equivalent level. We are proud of our pupils' achievements in public examinations, performing consistently above the N. Ireland average. In 2024, 73% of our pupils achieved five or more GCSE or equivalent grades at A\*-C, with a remarkable 70% of those pupils going on to achieve seven or more grades at A\*-C. These impressive results underline our position as a high performing non-selective post primary school.

The school has experienced significant growth in recent years, recognised by an increase to our enrolment and admissions numbers. Our current enrolment of 387 pupils ensures your child will quickly become known to our dedicated staff and receive first class pastoral care from subject teachers, year tutors and senior staff. They will also have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including football, rugby, netball, athletics, cross country, scripture union, choir, and the school band. There is truly something for everyone and pupils are encouraged to participate to broaden their skills, make new friends and develop as individuals.

Our mission statement highlights the pursuit of excellence in our learning and teaching, but recognises the importance of values, attitudes, and beliefs in reaching this goal. These are instilled through forming close partnerships with our parents and setting high expectations for engagement, conduct, respect, and tolerance. This ensures a safe and orderly environment, which fosters academic and personal development.



Rathfriland High School is a community in which staff, pupils, parents, and governors work together to enable each child to realise their potential.

I hope this prospectus is useful in providing you with further information about our school. I also encourage you to visit our website at [www.rathfrilandhigh.co.uk](http://www.rathfrilandhigh.co.uk) and attend our Open Evening on 22nd January 2025.

Alternatively, please feel free to contact me at the school to discuss any issues relating to your child's transfer to post-primary education.

Kind regards,  
I Matthews



## Charging and Remissions Policy

Education in Rathfriland High School is provided free of charge for all lessons and activities connected with the child's entitlement under the Education Reform Order. Payment may be required for board and lodging on an overnight trip, though charges will be remitted to those parents on Income Support or Family Income Supplement.

In Technology and Home Economics, pupils may purchase completed products or produce. The charge made will reflect school provided components or ingredients. The school will, as it has done in the past, appeal to parents from time to time for voluntary donations but it is stressed that no child will be disadvantaged in any way if parents choose not to make a contribution.

The School may take part in 'optional extras' which are not connected with the School's formal curriculum, such as visits to the theatre or trips abroad. Charges will be made for these but it is again stressed that opting not to participate in these will not affect a child's performance at school. Written parental consent will be required before a child participates in school trips.

### School Fund

This is a voluntary contribution which we hope parents will support. The rate is £25 per family for 2025 - 2026.

This money helps us to meet expenses which are not fully paid for by the Department of Education or the Education Authority. Such items include travelling expenses of sports teams, running costs of the school minibus, subsidising the cost of school outings and/or educational visits and supplementing the purchase of books and equipment. A copy of the School Charging Policy is available from the school.



## Our School Aims . . .

To enable each pupil to develop his or her potential to the full – mentally, intellectually, emotionally, physically, morally and socially, thus equipping each pupil to fully contribute to the community in which he/she lives.



To enhance pupils' self-esteem, self-discipline and self-confidence, thus encouraging them to take responsibility for themselves and their activities.



To motivate pupils and make learning a worthwhile and enjoyable experience.



To encourage life-long learning.



To promote tolerance of the views and opinions of others and to be aware of other people's needs and be positive contributors to the community.



To encourage pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle by involving them in activities and interests which promote mental and physical well-being.



## Governors and Staffing

### Board of Governors 2019 - 2024

Mr I McConnell **Chairman** | Mr A Kinley **Vice-Chairman** | Mr I Matthews **Secretary**  
Mrs H Wilson | Rev P Cleland | Rev S Burke | Mr W Walsh | Mrs D McCartan | Mrs S Bennett | Mrs R Upritchard

### Teaching Staff 2024 - 2025

Mr I Matthews (Principal) MEd, BEd (Hons), PQH(NI), CTeach(Leadership)  
Mr P Robinson (Vice Principal) ) MEd, BSc, PGCE, PGCert  
Mrs S Seffen (Senior Teacher) BA (Hons), PGCE  
Mrs D Wilson - Elias (Senior Teacher) BEd  
Miss H Brady (Senior Teacher) BTh (Hons), PGCE  
Mr J Percy (Senior Teacher) BSc (Hons), PGCE  
Mrs J Adams BA (Hons), PGCE  
Mrs L Annett (4 day) BEd (Hons)  
Miss A Bready BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs L Budde (4 day) BEd (Hons)  
Mr M Cole BA (Hons), PGCE  
Mrs V Fitzpatrick BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs L Gough BEd  
Ms S Groves (4 day) BSc (Hons), PGCE  
Mrs C Hanna (4 day) BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs L Hare BAg(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs L Hawthorne (4 day) BMus, PGDE, DipLCM  
Mrs L Martin BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Ms C McAllister BA(Hons), PGCE

Mr J Richardson MSc, BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs C Stevenson BA(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs C Tumilty (4 day) BA(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs E Wallace (3 day) BSc(Hons), PGCE  
Mrs H Wilson (4 day) BA (Hons), PGCE

#### Clerical Staff:

Mrs J Cantley  
Mrs L Laffin  
Mrs J Stoops

#### Technicians:

Mr T Donaldson  
Mr S Heenan  
Mrs A McDowell

#### Classroom and Domestic Assistants:

Mrs H Irvine  
Mrs A Halliday  
Mrs J Heenan  
Mrs L Johnston

Mrs V Johnston  
Mrs E Kernaghan  
Mrs L Laffin  
Mrs J Martin  
Miss N Murray  
Miss S McAdams  
Mrs A McCready  
Mrs S Sloane  
Mrs A Rogers

#### Building Supervisor:

Mr S Heenan

#### Lunchtime Supervisory Assistants:

Mr S Heenan  
Mrs V Johnston  
Mrs L Laffin  
Mr R Stoops

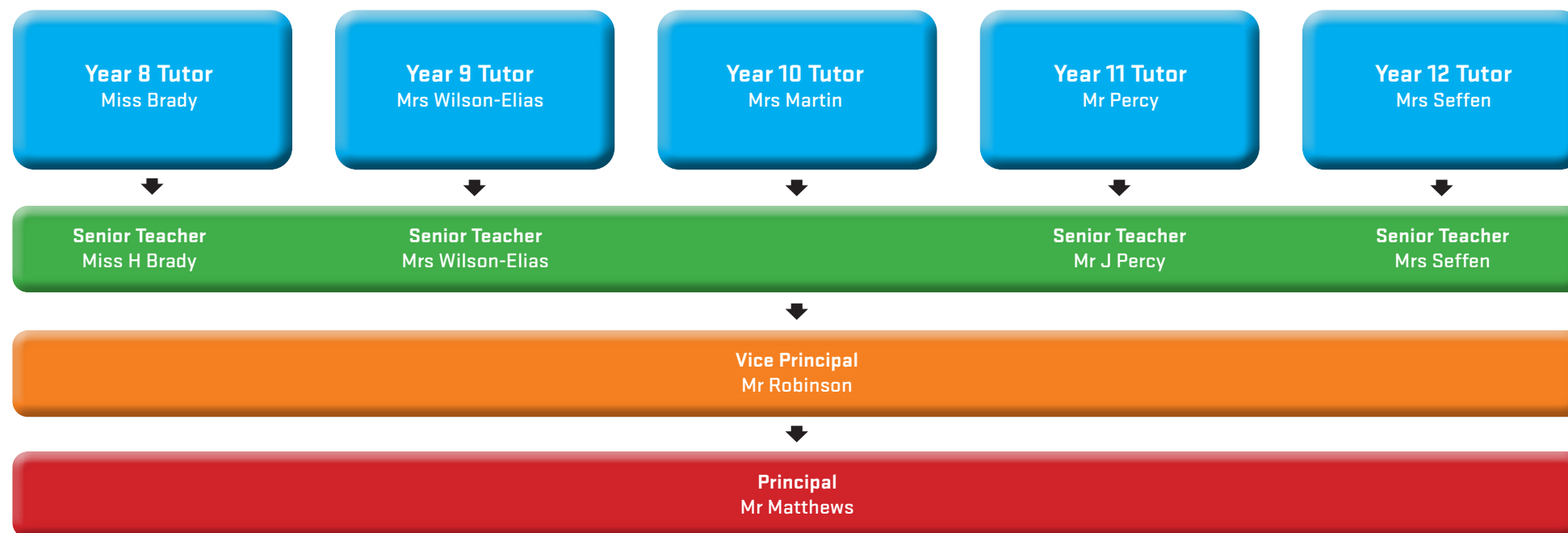
Rathfriland High School is a Controlled Secondary School catering for Boys and Girls aged 11 – 16 years of age. The expected enrolment for September 2025 is 375.



## Pastoral Care

### Pastoral Organisation

Pupils are placed in a Form Class with a Form Teacher and a Year Tutor. The Year 8 Tutor is Miss Brady.



Parents with concerns regarding their child's welfare or progress should first make contact with the Year Tutor.

If concerns continue then contact a Senior Teacher who may inform the Vice Principal and/or the Principal if further action is needed.

### Form Teachers and Year Tutors

During time with Year Tutors and Teachers school rules are highlighted, the reasons behind them explained and why they are important in contributing to an ordered and safe school community. Academic progress, Merit Awards, Attendance, Behaviour and Uniform are also monitored.

Rathfriland High School adopts a positive approach to behaviour, expecting pupils to behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and by showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other people. This standard of behaviour is expected from all pupils at all times, both inside the school as well as on their way to and from school.

## Pastoral Care

### Kathleen O'Higgins - School Counsellor

#### School Counsellor

The pastoral guidance given by Year Tutors and the Senior Teachers is supported by the School Counsellor. The Counsellor is fully qualified and works in school one day a week.

#### Working with Parents

The co-operation of parents is sought actively in relation to maintaining high standards of behaviour with regard to pupil attendance, punctuality, personal appearance, and the correct wearing of full school uniform. They should also ensure that their child is properly equipped for school including school bag, pens, pencils, PE kit and that they supervise homework.

The following policies help support Pastoral Care in our school:

- Anti-Bullying
- Child Protection
- Attendance
- Positive Behaviour and Discipline
- Pastoral Care
- Substance Abuse
- Special Educational Needs
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Health and Safety
- Health and Wellbeing



**Miss H Brady**  
**Year 8 Year Tutor**

The Anti-Bullying and Child Protection Policies are available via the school website. Parents who wish to receive a copy of any policy are welcome to contact the school.

## Parent Testimonials

### Mr M. Megaw

Moving from primary to secondary school brings a level of uncertainty and concern for parents and pupils alike and in September this change came for our son. Any concerns we had were quickly put to rest as he settled into life at Rathfriland High School from the very first day. The school with its friendly staff, its pupil-centred focus, along with a very busy schedule of sporting and educational activities gave him many areas of interest to help keep him occupied and fully engaged in his ongoing development. Rathfriland High School also incorporates an achievement scheme with subsequent rewards which has further encouraged him to give his absolute best in every subject and area of interest.

### Mrs L. Kennedy

Our daughter's transition from primary to Rathfriland High School has been a very smooth and positive experience. The school's welcoming atmosphere and strong focus on supporting each child have helped her settle quickly into the new routines and embrace secondary school life. The school offers a wide range of extracurricular activities and educational trips which reflects their commitment to personal and academic development. The nurturing environment and many opportunities to build new friendships have made Rathfriland High School the perfect place for her to thrive.

### Mr G. Wharton

Having two children that have already attended, we knew the high level of tuition and what to expect from Rathfriland High School. Our twins have settled in really well, making lots of new friends and they both love the curriculum the school has set for the new Year 8's. (Especially after school activities). It's great the school keeps parents informed regularly with emails and the merit system is fantastic. We are really looking forward to seeing what the future holds for our twins.

## The Curriculum

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Table

Subject	Year 8	Number of Periods	Year 9	Number of Periods	Year 10	Number of Periods
Art & Design	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
Careers Education					✓	1
English	✓	6	✓	6	✓	6
Geography	✓	2	✓	3	✓	2
History	✓	3	✓	2	✓	2
Home Economics	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
ICT	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
Literacy	✓	1	✓	1	✓	1
Form Class	✓	1	✓	1	✓	1
French	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
Music	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
Mathematics	✓	6	✓	6	✓	6
Numeracy	✓	1	✓	1	✓	1
Physical Education & Games	✓	4	✓	4	✓	4
LLW	✓	1	✓	1	✓	1
Religious Education	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2
Science	✓	6	✓	5	✓	6
Technology & Design	✓	2	✓	2	✓	2

For the first three years in Rathfriland High School pupils follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Classes are streamed going into Year 10 for all subjects. After parental, pupil and teacher consultation, choices are made towards the end of Year 10. All pupils in Rathfriland High School follow examination courses to GCSE, BTEC Level 2 First Award, OCN NI Level 2 awards. Pupils, depending on choices made, have the opportunity to study up to 9 GCSEs or equivalent. Our results are consistently above the relevant N. Ireland average.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Table

Subject	Years 11 & 12 Statutory	Option Choice	Number of Periods
Art & Design GCSE		✓	4
Business & Communication Systems GCSE		✓	4
BTEC First Certificate in Children's Care, Learning & Development		✓	6
BTEC Level 1 Level 2 First Award Engineering		✓	6
BTEC Level 1 Level 2 First Award in Creative Digital Media		✓	6
BTEC Level 1 Level 2 First Award in Travel & Tourism		✓	6
BTEC Level 1 Level 2 First Award in Sport		✓	6
BTEC Level 1 Level 2 First Award in ICT		✓	4/6
Careers Education	✓		1
Construction and the Built Environment GCSE		✓	6
English GCSE/Essential Skills	✓		5
English Literature GCSE		✓	4
Games	✓		2
Geography GCSE		✓	4
Health and Social Care GCSE		✓	4
History GCSE		✓	4
Home Economics: Food and Nutrition GCSE		✓	4
Taught Personal Development	✓		1
Form Class			1
French GCSE		✓	4
Music GCSE		✓	4/6
Mathematics GCSE	✓		5
Further Maths GCSE		✓	4
Motor Vehicle & Road User Studies GCSE		✓	6
Occupational Studies Single/Double Award		✓	9
Prince's Trust Award		✓	3
Religious Education GCSE		✓	4
Statutory Requirement Religious Education	✓		1
Science - Double Award		✓	8
Science - Single Award		✓	4
Science - Occupational Studies	✓		4
Technology & Design GCSE		✓	4
Technology - Occupational Studies		✓	3/4
OCN NI Vocational Skills		✓	4
OCN IN ICT		✓	4



## Special Needs Education, Homework and Religious Education

### Special Needs Education

The progress of all pupils is monitored throughout the year through a process of formal testing, assessment, reviews and reports. Our aim is to ensure that prompt intervention strategies are put in place when deemed necessary.

Those pupils identified as having a Special Educational Need will benefit from Individual Education Plans drawn up according to their statement of need.

Staff provide help and support as required to meet the individual needs of the pupil and facilitate teaching and learning in the key areas of reading, writing, communication skills and mathematics, enabling pupils to achieve.

Emphasis is placed on the skills in which the pupil already has confidence and these are built on in a caring atmosphere to encourage each child to overcome particular difficulties.

The School follows the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) legislation.

### Homework

An annual Key Stage 3 Homework Timetable is drawn up and each pupil is provided with a homework diary to enable an accurate record to be kept for both the pupil and parents.

The school sees homework as an integral part of the learning process and to this end homework is regularly set and marked.

Homework provides an opportunity for pupils to:

- Develop good work habits and study skills
- Complete work done in class
- Extend work done in class
- Practise skills learned in class

Homework may take any of these forms:

- Oral work • Reading
- Writing • Practical
- Research • Projects • Coursework

How can parents help?

- Parents are asked to encourage pupils by checking that homework set is completed and handed in on time.
- Provide a quiet place to work.
- Encourage a routine for homework.
- Sign Pupil Planner weekly.

### Religious Education

During the week pupils attend collective acts of worship in the morning conducted by Senior Staff supported by local clergy. The content of the morning assembly is centred on Christian teaching thus supporting the ethos of the school.

Religious Education is taught to all classes with Years 8 to 10 following the guidelines set out in the core syllabus for Religious Education in Northern Ireland. In Years 11 and 12 pupils follow external examination courses as appropriate, and a course ensuring compliance with the statutory requirements.

Any parent wishing to absent their children from collective worship and/or Religious Education classes should arrange to meet with the Principal.



**Learning Support Staff**



**Mrs Hawthorne**  
**Learning Support Co-ordinator**



## Banbridge Area Learning Community

Rathfriland High School works in partnership with 6 other schools in the Banbridge area and the local Southern Regional College to provide a broader curriculum offer, exceeding the Entitlement Framework. This allows the school to offer BTEC Level 2 First Awards which are equivalent to 1 GCSE pass at A\*-C level. Double Award Occupational Studies is also available and carries an equivalence of 2 GCSE subjects. The current curriculum offer to pupils is 20 general subjects and 12 applied subjects.



## Careers and Reporting

### Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Young people leaving Rathfriland High School are faced with challenges and choices that are, in many ways, very different from those faced by previous generations.

The high quality programme at Rathfriland High School enhances effectiveness and raises achievement by maximising an individual's potential, promoting positive attitudes to learning, raising aspirations, increasing motivation and linking learning to the world of work.

CEIAG provision consists of 5 core components:

#### 1. Careers Education

Discrete Careers Education takes place at Key Stage 3 and 4.

#### 2. Development of Employability Skills

Meaningful learning opportunities are provided which give the pupils the skills that they will be able to use in their lifelong learning process.

#### 3. Work Related Learning Experiences

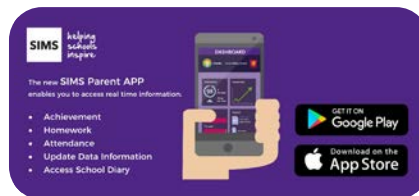
All year 12 pupils benefit from engaging with a range of speakers and visits to enhance their employability skills.

#### 4. Careers Information

High quality careers information enables pupils to make informed decisions regarding their careers planning and management. Pupils can avail of various resources such as ICT, the school library, guest speakers and external visits.

#### 5. Careers Advice and Guidance

The Careers Service NI provides direct support to pupils in school.



### Reporting

Parents are informed of their child's progress through regular class assessments and homework marking and will receive 2 Reports outlining progress throughout the year via the Parent App. A full written report is available in June of each year.

These assessments are used to ensure that pupils are placed in classes appropriate to their needs and ability. Pupils may be transferred to a more appropriate class depending on their performance and needs. Assessments in Year 10 are particularly significant for forthcoming GCSE class formation.

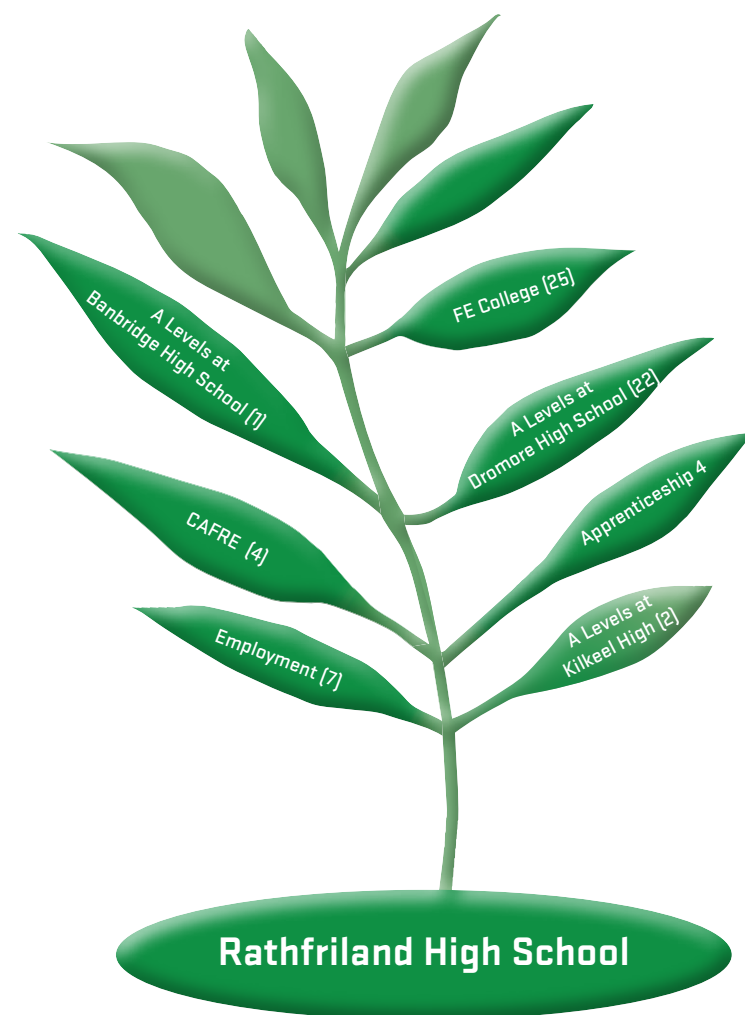
### Communication with Parents

The SIMS Parent App allows parents to access information on their child's conduct/achievements/attendance and academic performance. Up to date information on school dates, letters and events is also available. This information can be accessed by mobile phone/ App or an online portal.

### Leavers Destinations

A levels Dromore .....	22
A levels Kilkeel High .....	2
A levels Banbridge High .....	1
Employment .....	7
CAFRE .....	4
Apprenticeship .....	4
FE college .....	25

## Leavers Destinations







## Sport

### Aims

Physical Education at Rathfriland High School provides a broad and balanced educational experience which seeks to promote the “spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils at the school.” It is the desire of the PE Department to provide a PE curriculum which is both exciting and challenging and contributes towards sporting ability at all levels. Through this it is hoped that pupils will continue to participate in physical activity once they leave school.

### Sports Curriculum

Key Stage 3 PE – 1 or 2 periods of PE and 2 periods of Games

Key Stage 4 PE – 2 periods for Games

Option at GCSE level to study BTEC First Level 2 in Sport

### Sports Offered

Athletics | Badminton | Basketball | Cross-Country  
Dance | Gymnastics | Netball  
Rugby | Football | Table-Tennis | Tennis | Volleyball

### Sports Facilities

1 3G pitch  
1 Gymnasium  
1 Fully equipped Fitness Suite  
1 Rugby/Football Pitch  
1 Athletics track  
1 Netball court  
4 Tennis courts





## Extracurricular Activities

There are a wide range of clubs and activities in Rathfriland High School which pupils are encouraged to join including:

- Athletics and Cross Country
- Choir
- Cultural Visits
- Dance
- Drama
- Equestrian Club
- Football - boys and girls
- Homework Club
- Music Tuition - brass, woodwind, guitar, voice, piano, strings, drum-kit
- Netball
- Rugby boys & girls
- School Band
- School Newsletter
- Ski Trip
- Scripture Union
- Theatre Trips
- European Trips
- Various Subject Support Sessions
- Science Events



## Admissions Criteria - [Admissions Number: 76 | Enrolment Number: 380]

The lodging of an application is interpreted by the Board of Governors as an indication that the parents and the child concerned accept and are in agreement with the ethos, philosophy, aims, policies and regulations of the school including any code of conduct or discipline policy of the school. Information in relation to these may be obtained from the school.

### Admission to Year 8

(either in September 2025 or during the course of the 2025/2026 school year)

In selecting children for admission, children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school will be selected before any child not so resident.

**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 application. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application or submitted with it.**

**1. Children who attend one of the following primary schools:**

Abercorn | Ballydown | Bronte | Cumran | Dromara | Drumadonnell  
Edenderry (Banbridge) | Fairhill | Iveagh | Newcastle | Poyntzpass | Windsor Hill

**2. Children for whom Rathfriland High School is the nearest controlled secondary school.**

**3. Other children.**

In the event of over-subscription within any of the above 3 criteria the following sub-criteria will be applied as appropriate, in the order indicated, to determine which children should be admitted:

- i. Children who at the date of application, have a **child of the family\*** currently enrolled at the school and children of present permanent members of staff.
- ii. Children who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family eligible to apply for admission to the school; are the sibling of an eldest child whose admission to Year 8 at the time of the transfer procedure was refused on a previous year due to oversubscription; are 5 years younger than their next sibling; where the family has moved residence from another area; or where an older sibling cannot attend a mainstream school.
- iii. Those pupils who live closest to the school (as the crow flies) measured by Google Maps, using door to door measurements.

Sub-criterion (iv) then (v) then (vi) will be used as the deciding factor should oversubscription occur within sub-criterion (i) or (ii) or (iii).

- iv. Children who, at the date of application, are the eldest as established by date of birth as entered on a Birth certificate.
- v. Children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

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

This order was determined by random selection. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used.

- vi. Children will be ranked for acceptance on the basis of a computer based process, which will make use of the names as entered on the online application.

\* Please note the board of governors consider a **'Child of the family'** to cover:

- 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;
- A situation where for example an orphaned cousin is being brought up with a family or individual; The child should be a child of the family as at the date of application.

**During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on Tuesday 28th January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of Thursday 20th February 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 20th February 2025 and up to 4pm on 25th February 2025 will be treated as a late application.**

### DUTY TO VERIFY

Applicants should note that where an address contained within a Transfer Form qualifies it for admission, then the information may be verified. The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any Transfer Form. Applicants will be notified directly by the school should any such verification be required.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by the school can result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's Transfer Form.

**WAITING LIST:-** The school does not operate a waiting list.





## Rathfriland High School Year 8 2024-2025

### Admissions Table: Year Eight Intake 2024-2025

Year	Admissions Number	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions [includes statemented pupils]
2022/23	66	73	74
2023/24	76	73	76
2024/25	76	72	76

#### ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR YEARS 9 – 12

A pupil will be admitted provided that the following conditions are met:

- [a.] The school's enrolment number is not exceeded.
- [b.] The admission of the pupil, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, would not prejudice the efficient use of resources in the school.

Parents and prospective pupils will be invited to visit the school during

**‘Open Evening’**

on

**Wednesday 22nd January  
2025 at 7pm.**

## EXAMINATIONS RESULTS

GCSE RESULTS SUMMARY	2024
Pupils achieving 5+ A* to C in at least 5 subjects	93 %
Pupils achieving 5+ A* to E in at least 5 subjects	98 %
Pupils achieving 5+ A* to C in at least 5 subjects. (Including English and Maths)	73 %
Pupils achieving 7+ A* to C in at least 5 subjects. (Including English and Maths)	70 %
% of pupils gaining no grades at A* to G	0 %

Subject	Total	Pass	Fail
Prince's Trust	16	16	0
OCN NI Vocational Skills	19	19	0
OCN NI ICT	16	16	0
OCN NI Level 1 Application of Number	14	12	2
OCN NI Level 2 Application of Number	14	4	10
OCN NI Level 1 Communication	14	11	3
OCN NI Level 2 Communication	14	8	6

### Performance in Public Examinations

Performance Indicator	2021 - 2022		2022 - 2023		2023- 2024	
	School	NI Average	School	NI Average	School	NI Average
% Achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grades A* - C (or equivalent)	97	Not Available	97	Not Available	93	Not Available

## Examinations Entry

**2024 GCSE RESULTS BY SUBJECT** Number of pupils entered and achieving grades:

Subject	No. of Pupils	A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G	U	C+
Art	17	4	0	2	3	3	3	2	0	0	0	12
Business Comm.	26	1	7	6	4	0	5	2	0	0	1	18
Design and Technology	13	0	2	3	3	1	1	1	0	1	1	9
Drama	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Eng. Lit.	19	1	7	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	19
English	51	0	11	11	13	16	0	0	0	0	0	19
French	19	0	0	3	2	5	2	5	2	0	0	10
Geography	21	1	5	4	2	5	2	1	0	0	1	17
H&S Care	26	1	9	3	5	5	3	0	0	0	0	23
History	24	1	3	3	8	5	3	0	0	0	1	20
Home Economics	9	0	2	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	6
Maths	52	0	13	13	12	8	4	0	1	1	0	46
Further Maths	11	0	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	10
Music	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
MV & RUS	12	0	2	3	0	3	0	1	3	0	0	8
RE	19	3	4	4	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	18
SA Science	24	1	5	3	6	7	1	0	0	1	0	22

Subject	Total	**	*A	AA	AB	BB	BC*	C*C*	C*C	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	EF	FF	FG	GG	U	CC+
Double Award Science	24	0	4	7	1	5	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24

**BTEC First Level 2 Certificates**

Subject	Total Entries	Distinction*	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Level 1
BTEC Sport	15	3	0	2	9	1
BTEC ICT	12	0	0	9	2	1
BTEC Media	2	0	0	2	0	0
BTEC Engineering	7	0	0	3	4	0
BTEC Childcare	12	2	3	3	2	2





## Head Boy

Hello, my name is Jack McConnell, and I am very pleased to welcome you to our school! I am very honoured and pleased to be Head Boy at Rathfriland High School.

I was once in your shoes. Moving from a Primary school to a big scary High School. Well, that's how I used to see High School. Although over the years I have been welcomed with open arms by all our amazing staff and students here at Rathfriland High School. When I was in P7 I feared not making friends or feeling left out but that was not the case. I have made so many friends and good memories during my time here at Rathfriland and I believe you will too.

Head Boy is a role that demands leadership. Over my time here at Rathfriland High School I have developed my leadership skills significantly. When I was in P7 I didn't understand what it took to be a leader but here at Rathfriland High School I have learnt through being captain of the rugby team, the example set by teachers and from past pupils, leading the way.

Rathfriland High School is unique and special for so many reasons. From the support our amazing staff provide to the family feel within the school community, all students will be taken care of including you. Our school seeks to include all pupils within school life, something I have very much experienced. Before High School I had never played rugby, but the supportive staff and students here encouraged me to give it a go. This sparked a big interest in my life, and I now play for the school team and Banbridge Rugby Club. Rathfriland High school certainly lives up to its motto 'Big enough to deliver, small enough to care.'

Another highlight of our school is the vast scale of subjects provided. From Technology and Music to Science and ICT Rathfriland High School is sure to have what you are looking for. Personally, one of my favourite things about my school is the teachers. The quality of teaching is outstanding, and this has been proven through the consistently good

grades we produce every year. Extracurricular activities, throughout my years here there have been so many new extracurricular activities developed. Girls' rugby, Girl's football, Boys rugby and football, SU, Netball... the list goes on.

Rathfriland High School has benefitted me so much. It has helped develop many key skills such as Leadership, Communication, Teamwork and so many more. Joining Rathfriland High School has had such a positive impact on me and will help me in the future, as I move on. My confidence within school has increased drastically and I am no longer scared of High School, instead I am now confident and embrace all elements of school life.

My most memorable experience throughout my time must be the Manchester Rugby tour. I got to travel to Manchester with the school to train with the famous rugby team Sale Sharks. This benefited me so much. From further developing my leadership skills to making lifelong memories and creating deeper friendships. Within in my time on the rugby tour I got to play against different opponents and visit different places such as Old Trafford and Alton Towers. This experience helped me form teamwork skills and leaderships skills that I will use in the future as I travel through the world of work.

Finally, I would like express how much joining Rathfriland High School can benefit you. I once had to decide on which High School to go to and I am so grateful I picked Rathfriland High school. The students, staff, subjects, and memories all make up our special caring community. I would strongly advise you to embrace school life and involve yourself in everything it has to offer. Rathfriland High School was certainly the perfect school for me, and I will never forget the friends and memories I have created over the years.

*Jack McConnell*

Head Boy 2024-2025

## Head Girl

My name is Emma Harshaw and this year I am honoured to be Head Girl at Rathfriland High School. It is a privilege to have received this important position, and I would like to give back to the school through my role as Head Girl. I have taken on a range of roles and responsibilities and have had many opportunities to represent the school.

My time at Rathfriland High so far has been very enjoyable and I can confidently say I will miss it when it's time for me to leave. When I joined Year 8 back in 2020, it would be a lie to say I wasn't nervous! However, there was nothing to be scared of, from the moment I came in, I felt at home. Teachers, staff and pupils have always been there for support and looking back I couldn't have asked for a better High School experience.

Rathfriland High School has a reputation for being supportive, inclusive and caring – this couldn't be closer to the truth. I believe our school stands out from the rest because of the amazing staff who put the pupils first. Each individual is valued, respected and encouraged to always do their best. There is something for everyone at Rathfriland High, from sport to extra-curricular activities. Personally, I have been involved in the netball team as well as painting the sets for the school production. These experiences have helped me to grow in confidence, taught me leadership, dedication and perseverance, skills I will undoubtedly use in the future.

There is a wide range of subjects offered at our school and each one is made enjoyable through the enthusiastic teaching and continual, genuine expectation to do well from the teachers – this made it difficult to choose GCSE subjects as I enjoyed them all. In August, my friends and I celebrated our hard work when we opened our Year 11 GCSE results. Our efforts in class are also rewarded at the annual prize night as well as regular reward trips and outings, such as the popular breakfast at the Milestone! Sporting success is also commemorated at the Sports Awards Dinner each year at Loft 56. One thing I can say about the school is that hard work never goes unnoticed.

Throughout my time here, I have had many memorable experiences. Following our victory in the netball league, I attended the Manchester Sports Tour at the beginning of this school year, which I really enjoyed. We had the opportunity to be coached by a professional netball team, Manchester Thunder. As well as playing netball, we took a tour around Old Trafford and spent a day at Alton Towers. The whole trip was an amazing experience, and I highly recommend going on any trip you are offered at Rathfriland High, as you will create lifelong memories and friendships. Another standout moment would be taking part in the school play. Last year, I was involved in the artwork used in the production, it was so rewarding to see all our hard work pay off on the night of the show!

The process of becoming Head Girl was challenging but worthwhile. It began with an application to be a prefect, then some of us were selected to take an interview in front of Mr. Matthews and other senior teachers to be part of the senior team. This was a great experience for me as it taught me how to stay calm under pressure. I received so much support and encouragement from friends and teachers, which helped me through this new experience. I have always looked up to the Head Girl, so to be able to take on that role now and be an example for younger students means a lot to me.

I can't believe how fast the five years have gone, and I will be sad to leave the school behind me next year. I will never forget the warm and friendly atmosphere of Rathfriland High. If you are thinking about joining our school, I can't recommend it enough! You will make so many memories, learn so much about yourself and develop friendships that will last a lifetime! I'm delighted I chose to come here, and I can safely say that Rathfriland High really is, 'Big Enough to Deliver, Small Enough to Care.'

*Emma Harshaw*

Head Girl 2024-2025



# UNIFORM

## School Uniform Code of Conduct 2024/25

The wearing of school uniform is **compulsory**, it develops a sense of school identity, encourages children to take pride in their appearance and contributes to the promotion of good order and discipline.

### Girls' School Uniform



Blazer	Black blazer with school badge	
Skirt	Black skirt with double inverted pleats	
Shirt	White long-sleeved or short sleeved blouse	
Tie	Clip on School tie or prefect tie (elected prefects)	
Jumper	Black v neck jumper (optional)	
Shoes	Black shoes, low heeled (not trainers)	
Socks/Tights	Black knee socks or black tights	
Coat	Plain black coat or PE kit supplier hoodie/padded jacket etc.	
Scarf	School scarf or plain black scarf (optional)	

### Boys' School Uniform



Blazer	Black blazer with school badge	
Trousers	Black trousers	
Shirt	White long-sleeved or short sleeved shirt	
Tie	Clip on School tie or prefect tie (elected prefects)	
Jumper	Black v neck jumper (optional)	
Shoes	Black shoes (not trainers)	
Socks	Black socks	
Coat	Plain black coat or PE kit supplier hoodie, padded jacket etc.	
Scarf	School scarf or plain black scarf (optional)	





Uniforms can be purchased from the following retail outlets:

- Robin Fields, Banbridge
- S.D. Kells, Banbridge
- S.M. Shoes, Rathfriland
- Maxwell's, Lurgan
- Threads for Tomorrow, Rathfriland (Pre-loved uniform swap shop)



PE Kit - PLAYR-FIT via online order at <https://playr-fit.com/rathfriland-high-school-students>

If parents purchase a blazer without a school badge, badges for blazers are available from the school.

## Girls' P.E. Kit



Top	School PE jersey	
Bottoms	School PE shorts or school PE leggings	
Midlayer	1/4 zip Midlayer or P.E. Kit Hoodie	
Optional outdoor clothing	School P.E. kit coats, padded jackets, gilets and hats may be purchased and worn to and from school and at break and lunchtime.	
Socks	School PE socks	
Shoes	Gym shoes / trainers	

## Boys' P.E. Kit



Top	School PE Rugby jersey (used for all activities)	
Bottoms	School PE shorts or skinny pants	
Midlayer	1/4 zip Midlayer or P.E. Kit Hoodie	
Optional outdoor clothing	School P.E. kit coats, padded jackets, gilets and hats may be purchased and worn to and from school and at break and lunchtime.	
Socks	School PE socks	
Shoes	Gym shoes / trainers	
Boots	Football boots / rugby boots	





# Our Rules

**1. Be Safe    2. Be Respectful    3. Be Prepared**

## OUR REWARDS/RECOGNITIONS

- Praise
- Achievement points
- Prize Night Recognition
- Certificates
- Website Recognition
- Merits System
- Student Council

## OUR LEARNING HABITS

- Punctuality and attendance
- Respectful attitude
- On-task behaviour
- Tidy appearance
- Meet deadlines
- Correct Equipment

## OUR VALUES

- Respect
- Trust
- High Expectations
- Safety
- Inclusivity
- Tolerance

## OUR RIGHTS

- To learn and teach without unnecessary interruption
- To be safe
- To be heard

## OUR POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

- Exceptional class work
- Good or improved effort
- Improved behaviour
- Participation in class
- Success in assessments
- Assisting Staff
- Helping out at school events
- Extra Curricular activities



## Drug Education and Child Protection Arrangements

### Drug Education

The school's pastoral care system, the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the school policy on Substance Abuse ensures that the well being of our pupils is paramount. Through our teaching, pastoral procedures and specific health related events; our pupils are enabled to make healthy, informed choices by providing them with knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.

The school takes seriously its responsibility with regard to the issue of drugs awareness and in line with Department of Education advice and regulations we are continually developing our policies and strategies in this area of the School Curriculum. Drugs related issues are built into the curriculum through the school's Learning for Life and Work classes whilst the teaching programmes of Science, Religious Education and Home Economics in particular highlight specific topics.

### Child Protection

Rathfriland High School aims:

- To seek to provide a safe, pleasant and regulated environment for all children.
- To ensure the safety and welfare of pupils.
- To foster a caring atmosphere where pupils feel valued and able to voice their concerns.
- To develop an awareness amongst all school staff of potential signs of abuse in children.
- To establish clear procedures to be followed in a case of suspected abuse.
- To comply with relevant legal requirements and implement relevant DE guidance.

Mr Robinson the Vice Principal is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection . Senior Teachers, Mrs Wilson-Elias, Mrs Seffen, Mr Percy (nominated) and Miss Brady (nominated) are the Deputy Designated Teachers for Safeguarding.





## Anti-Bullying

Rathfriland High School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

This school has a clear policy on the promotion of good behaviour. It is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour, it is wrong and will not be tolerated. It is important that pupils and parents are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether teacher or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at Rathfriland High School.

### What can Pupils do if they are being Bullied?

- Remember that their silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell themselves that they do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is wrong!
- Be proud of who they are; it is good to be an individual
- Try not to show that they are upset; it is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people, there is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive shout "No", walk confidently away, go straight to a teacher/member of staff/Year Tutor.
- Do not fight back - it may make things worse.
- Always try to tell an adult they trust straight away - they will get immediate support.



### RHS Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

#### What action is taken by Rathfriland High School when Bullying is suspected?

- Talk to the person experiencing bullying behaviour and the person exhibiting bullying behaviour, and any witnesses.
- When bullying behaviour is identified, all pupils involved are supported to resolve the situation.

Rathfriland High School  
Addressing Bullying





# Year 8 Impressions of RHS

**Zoe McRoberts - Iveagh P.S.**

Starting Rathfriland High School was exciting but a bit scary too! I was nervous on my first day, but everyone was so friendly. The teachers were welcoming and helped me find my way around, which made me feel more comfortable. The school is quite big, with great classrooms and excellent facilities. I've already made a few friends, and we're all getting used to things together. I especially enjoy H.E., Art and Design and I.C.T. So far, it feels like a fantastic place to learn and make new friends!



**Seth Megaw - Bronte P.S.**

On my first day, I felt both excited and nervous about moving to a larger school. However, I felt very welcomed right from the start, which helped me settle into Rathfriland High School quickly. The teachers and pupils are friendly and kind. I soon got used to the layout of the school and classrooms and if I couldn't find a particular room, someone was always there to help. If you are considering Rathfriland High School, I would highly recommend it. I've also enjoyed being part of the football and rugby teams. We are very fortunate to have excellent pitches to play on.



**Ellise McCready - Drumadonnell P.S.**

Starting Rathfriland High School was exciting but a bit scary too! I was nervous on my first day, but everyone was so friendly. The teachers were welcoming and helped me find my way around, which made me feel more comfortable. The school is quite big, with great classrooms and excellent facilities. I've already made a few friends, and we're all getting used to things together. I especially enjoy H.E., Art and Design and I.C.T. So far, it feels like a fantastic place to learn and make new friends!



**Anna Henning - Bronte P.S.**

Hello, my name is Anna Henning, and I came from Bronte Primary School. On my first day, I was both nervous and excited. Since then, I have made lots of new friends. My favourite subjects are Art and Design, Home Economics, P.E., Maths and English. Some of my favourite teachers are Mrs. Seffen, Mrs. Hanna, Mrs. Stevenson, Mrs. Wallace, and Miss Brady. I really enjoy Games because we play netball, which is one of my favourite activities. So far, I've found my way around the school with no trouble. Overall, I'm having a great time at Rathfriland High School and I find all of the teachers very friendly.



**Ava Macauley - Drumadonnell P.S.**

Hi, my name is Ava Macauley, and I attended Drumadonnell Primary School. I am currently enjoying life at Rathfriland High School. On my first day, I was nervous but excited at the same time. I particularly enjoyed meeting my new teachers. I was most excited about meeting new people and moving around the different classes. My favourite subjects are P.E. and Art and Design. My favourite teacher is Mrs. Seffen, although I like all my teachers because they are friendly and supportive. I also take part in girls' football after school, which is really fun. I'm looking forward to playing lots of matches and, hopefully, winning them all.



**Joey Henning - Iveagh P.S.**

At first I felt nervous, it's a big school, but everyone was very welcoming. I quickly found my bearings. If I needed help there was always someone to ask. The facilities at Rathfriland High School are brilliant, I particularly love the Music department. I also enjoy staying after school to play football and rugby. The teachers are all great, you can enjoy a bit of craic with them, and the other pupils are sound as well. So far, my favourite subjects are Music, History, Geography, and P.E. I really enjoy all my subjects, but those are my favourites.







## RATHFRILAND HIGH SCHOOL

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