



# School Information

School Year  
2023-2024

*We care ~ We share ~ We learn*

Dear Parent

We hope that the information contained in this is useful.

Curriculum updates are provided by teachers throughout the year.

We aim to keep up to date with everything that is happening in New Row St. Patrick's through:

- Weekly Sway (uploaded to website)
- X feed (@NewRowPS)
- Website newrowps.com
- Other letters etc. as required

Please do not hesitate in contacting me should you require any further information about your child's time at New Row St. Patrick's.

With every best wish,

Mrs Deirdre Graffin (Principal)

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## The School Team Staff as of Sept 2023

Teacher	Key Responsibilities
Mrs Deirdre Graffin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal</li> <li>Child Protection &amp; Safeguarding team</li> </ul>
Mrs Claire Shivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vice Principal &amp; Y1 teacher</li> <li>SENCo &amp; Designated teacher for Child Protection</li> </ul>
Mrs Michelle Diamond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 teacher</li> <li>Deputy Designated teacher for Child Protection</li> </ul>
Miss Nuala McCloskey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 2 teacher</li> </ul>
Miss Niamh O'Donnell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 3 teacher</li> </ul>
Mrs Catherine Hudson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 4 teacher</li> <li>Literacy Coordinator</li> </ul>
Mrs Oonagh Kelly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 5 teacher</li> <li>Numeracy Coordinator</li> <li>Deputy Designated teacher for Child Protection</li> </ul>
Miss Caoimhe McGurk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 6 teacher</li> </ul>
Mr Conor Hasson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 7 teacher</li> <li>Shared Education &amp; Health and Wellbeing Coordinator</li> </ul>

Classroom Assistants (including temporary staff)	
Miss Emma Brown Mrs Pauline Cleary-Vong Mrs Roisin Cuskeran Miss Clare Devlin Mrs Demelza Dinsmore Mrs Lisa Dobbin Mrs Joanne Doey Miss Shannah O' Boyle	Mrs Ann Kerr Mrs Nicola Long Mrs Jane McIvor Mrs Roisin McElhinney Mrs Maura McGuckin Mrs Una McLaughlin Miss Sian Milne Mrs Jeanette Irvine
Lunchtime Supervisors	Mrs Roisin McElhinney Mrs Demelza Dinsmore
Canteen Staff	Miss Marie McKenna (Kitchen Supervisor) Mrs Shauna Kearns Mrs Caroline Diamond
Building Supervisor	Mr Kevin Mullan Mr Stephen Cullen
Cleaner	Miss Emma Brown
Senior Clerical Officer	Mrs Sharon Keenan & Mr Seamus McNicholl

***This list will be updated if/when staffing arrangements change throughout the year***

Board of Governors: Reconstituted Term 1 2018/19

Mrs Mary White (Chair)	Mr Maurice Diamond	Very Rev John Gates
Mrs Clare Heaney	Mrs Marian Loughlin	Mr Dean Mooney
Mrs Ciara Shivers	Mrs Claire Shivers	
Mrs Deirdre Graffin (Principal & secretary)		

**Friends of New Row St Patrick's PS**

Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Grainne Diamond	Claire Coleman	Pat Hanson

**The School Day**

Breakfast Club from 8.15am-8.50am
Children arrive from 8.50am
Day begins with morning prayers at 9.00 am
Morning lessons begin at 9.05
<b>BREAK:</b> 10.30-10.45am
Midmorning lessons 10.45-12.15 Foundation Stage (Y1&2) 10.45 -12.30 KS1 and KS2 (Y3-7)
<b>LUNCH</b> 12-12.45: Foundation Stage (Y1&2) 12.15-1.00: KS1 (Y3 & 4) 12.30 – 1.10: KS2 (Y3-7)
<b>HOMETIME</b> 2pm for P1, P2 and P3; 3pm for P4 – P7 <i>Please note: Friday finish times Y1-3: 1.50pm, Y4-7: 2pm</i>
<b>Afterschools club from 2-3pm / Homework club from 3- 4pm</b>

**Breakfast club from 8.15-8.50 (£1.50 daily including cereal, toast and drink)**

All children are welcome when the bell rings at 8.50am. No child should be in school before the bell goes at 8.50am unless they are attending the breakfast club. Only those at breakfast club are supervised in the hall. No child should be left unsupervised outside school before 8.50am.

**School begins** promptly at 9.00am. Should your child be absent for any reason, please contact the office.

*Making a good start to the day*

In the interests of promoting self-management skills, we ask that parents of all pupils do not accompany their child to the classroom door. Children can be left off at the front door or the back gate. The children are growing in independence and confidence and are more than capable of organising themselves at the start the school day. Should a parent/carer wish to pass on any information to school staff, they can do this via the school office. Appointments with class teachers can of course be arranged for anything that may take longer to discuss.

## Attendance

### Absences from school: illness

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please make sure you let the teacher know on the morning of the first day. You can do this by notifying the office. We must be able to account for all absences. Teachers will not send home extra work if your child is sick. Let them rest properly and make a full recovery. They can do some extra reading which teachers agree would be of greater benefit.

### Absences from school: other reasons

Holidays/trips during school time interrupt children's learning and cannot be condoned by the school. Any unavoidable absence should be explained by sending in a short note for our records. We must record all such absences as 'unauthorised'. Unauthorised absences are monitored by the school in conjunction with Education Welfare. No work will be prepared by teachers for these absences.

### Appointments & children going home due to illness

Appointments should be made for outside of school time, but we understand that this is not always possible. In the interests of Health & Safety and Child Protection, anyone collecting/returning a child should sign them in/out in the office. An 'out/in' book is in use.

### Arriving late to school

Children should arrive from 8.50am onwards (unless at breakfast club). There is no supervision before 8.50am. Class begins with prayers at 9am and the security buzzer at the front door turned on. Any child arriving from 9.10am will be marked as late in the register. Education Welfare requires us to monitor lateness and parents will be asked for a reason which will be recorded. It is understandable that it is difficult for a child to enter a class where everyone has already settled into learning.

### Home time Collection

For health and safety reasons we would appeal to all parents to collect their children promptly at the appropriate time each day. Children should be collected promptly and supervised by parents at all times once handover has taken place. This is particularly important when pedestrians are passing through the church car park. The safety of our pupils is paramount.

Teachers will escort children to their nearest exit:

Y1	Y2 & 3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7
Front door	Back gate	Front door	Back gate	Front door	Back gate

Y6 and 7: Parental consent can be given for children to walk down the church pathway and across church car park (unsupervised), crossed over by a New Row St. Patrick's staff member or leaving (unsupervised) via Chichester Ave gate. A link to the consent form is shared at the start of the academic year.

### After school Club

We run an afterschool club from 2-3pm and a homework club from 3-4pm every day. (£2.50 per hour –booking required). These must be booked in advance and no later than midnight the previous day. This facility is very popular. If there are no spaces, contact the office to be added to the waiting list.

## Communication between home & school

We aim to provide a quality educational service at all times. Our main forms of communication:

- A weekly Sway circulated to all families on the website
- Our school website ([www.newrowps.com](http://www.newrowps.com))
- Seesaw
- Regular updates on our X feed (@newrowps)
- Text messaging service
- Other relevant letters as appropriate

***Please ensure the school is informed of any change to your contact information immediately.***

Concerns and complaints are addressed in a professional way. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any concerns, big or small. The procedure for dealing with concerns, complaints etc. is as follows:

- If appropriate contact your child's class teacher at a time that is suitable to their teaching day.
- Arrange an appointment through the office.
- Contact the school office to make an appointment with the Principal.

We aim to resolve issues that arise as quickly as we can but ask parents to appreciate that it isn't always possible to speak to the principal/teacher without notice due to classroom commitments. A copy of the school's complaints policy and procedure is available at [newrowps.com](http://newrowps.com) along with a range of other school policies, as appropriate and relevant.

### Parent/Teacher Meetings

Term 1: (October)	Term 2: (Feb/March)	Term 3: (June)
Overview of year & how best to support your child	Progress update	Written report

Other meetings and events will be organised throughout the year if/when appropriate.

### ***Supporting children with additional needs: working in partnership with parents***

Sometimes teachers/parents can have concerns about a pupil's development. Teachers are trained to identify when a child has challenges and what actions/support can be put in place to help overcome these challenges. The class teacher may wish to arrange to speak to a parent about challenges identified at times other than the parent/teacher meetings. Similarly, a parent may wish to discuss challenges and should in the first instance approach the class teacher to arrange a suitable time. Mrs Shivers is SENCo (Special Needs Coordinator) and her role includes overseeing this process and any further actions/steps as necessary, including liaising with outside agencies such as the school's assigned Educational Psychologist. This is in keeping with our Special Needs Policy, a copy of which is available from the office on request.

***Copies of all school policies are available on request from the office, with those relating to Safeguarding & Child Protection available at [www.newrowps.com](http://www.newrowps.com)***

### Child Protection

Chair of Safeguarding Team and Principal	Mrs Deirdre Graffin
Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs Claire Shivers (VP)
Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection	Mrs Oonagh Kelly Mrs Michelle Diamond
Chair of Board of Governors	Mrs Mary White
Governor Representative for Child Protection	Mr Maurice Diamond

Our safeguarding team undertakes regular reviews of practice to ensure our children's safety remains paramount. Regular updates include an annual 'Child Protection Week', with staff training and classroom activities to remind pupils and staff alike of important child protection messages. We also have a strong emphasis on eSafety, with planned lessons delivered throughout the year in Y1-7. If you need to speak to anyone in our Safeguarding Team, please do not hesitate in making an appointment. All issues are dealt with professionally and with the appropriate level of confidentiality.

*Remember also that a select number of Safeguarding & Child Protection policies are available online and hard copies of all relevant policies available from the office on request.*

### Mobile Phones/Smart devices & watches in school

Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school, including on trips. All communication with children regarding messages about collection etc. should be made through the school office. In accordance with safeguarding procedures, children are also not permitted to wear smart watches that can send/receive messages or record images or audio.

### School Uniform

There is an expectation that all children will wear their full uniform at all times in school, apart from a few designated non-uniform days. Parents will be notified in advance of any such days. All uniforms will be checked for names during the first week of each term. Please make sure all items are labelled. This really helps avoid problems, especially in identifying jumpers.

<b>Sportique</b> 7 Rainey St Magherafelt  Some uniform items also available to order online at: <a href="http://www.sportique-ni.com">www.sportique-ni.com</a>	<b>Select Schoolwear</b> 12 Rainey Street (Meadowlane Shopping Centre Carpark) Magherafelt BT45 5AG
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Girls	Boys
Light blue crested polo shirt Navy crested jumper or cardigan skirt or pinafore or plain navy blue track bottoms plain navy tights or white/navy knee socks Plain black footwear	Light blue crested polo shirt Navy crested jumper Plain navy blue track bottoms/trousers Navy/grey/black socks Plain black footwear



**PE:** Children Y4-7 are expected to wear the PE uniform. However, this is currently being reviewed and information will be shared as soon as an affordable, yet durable solution has been finalised. Y1 do not need a PE uniform. Y2 & 3 parents may purchase if they wish. P.E uniform should be worn to school on P.E days. When the PE timetable has been finalised, all parents will be notified to ensure they are aware of which day(s) their child will need their PE kit.

In the interim, we ask that all children wear *plain* navy shorts. These should not be branded or have logos, should not be 'football-style' and should be knee-length.

### **Summer Uniform (Optional)**

**Girls:** checked blue dresses (widely available)      **Boys:** plain navy knee-length shorts or PE shorts with school polo shirt (not PE t-shirt).

All children are expected to wear their uniform always. Make sure your child's name is clearly marked on all items of uniform.

### **Swimming in Key Stage 2:**

All children Y5-7 receive swimming lessons in Greenvale Leisure Centre for one term per year. The current weekly cost is £4 (including transport), with £1 each week for lockers (refundable).

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 6	Year 7	Year 5

All children are required to bring swimwear (no bikinis or longer shorts), goggles and a towel in a suitable bag.

## **Break & Lunch Arrangements**

**New Row St Patrick's PS is a NUT FREE school.**

We operate a healthy eating policy at break and lunch time.

### **Canteen break**

A daily snack is available in school. It is payable at the start of each month (£5.50 per month). Toast is very popular in the Y1&2 classrooms with all children eating it daily & very few exceptions (if any). All canteen breaks are delivered to the classroom, with no time wasted queuing during playtime. Our new monthly canteen break arrangement is very popular as it is easy to organise and the children do not lose or forget money. Remember that break is like your milk order. The kitchen is unable to refund if your child is absent from school as the food is pre-ordered. If you wish your child to stop taking break, the kitchen must be informed by the parent before the end of the month. Any alternatives should be in keeping with healthy eating policies.

**Milk:** Paid termly or monthly: £4, Term: £16. Milk is ordered monthly. If your child is off school, we cannot refund milk money or only charge you for the days they were present.

### **Lunch time**

Your child can either bring a healthy packed lunch or purchase a dinner from the school's canteen. School dinners are available for £2.60 per day. A menu is shared with parents/carers every month.

## **Making payments to school**

- School payments for dinners, break, milk, breakfast club and afterschool clubs are made through School Money. There are other payments throughout the year also through School money e.g. music tuition, clubs, swimming, trips etc.

If you think your child might be entitled to free school meals, please fill in a form (available from the office). As well as helping families, higher numbers of pupils taking free school meals helps our budget too.

## **School Supplies**

All children in P1-2 should use a book bag with the school logo rather than a traditional school bag. Many of the children will be able to use their existing book bag but if it has become worn and it needs replaced a new one can be purchased from the office, costing £5.

The older children should have their own pencil cases with a supply of pencils, crayons, rubber, sharpener etc. Markers will be used in school, but pupils should have a set of pencils or crayons at home for homework activities.

Written homework should be completed in pencil and colouring pencil-no markers or pens please. We encourage parents to monitor homework activities closely and insist upon a high standard of neatness and presentation.

### **Homework Diaries Y4-7**

In an effort to make our children more independent, the teachers have introduced homework diaries for Y4-7. Children will note down all homework daily, as well as reminders and other information. To support the children in developing independence, we ask that parents sign the diary every Thursday night. By doing so, you can keep a track of their organisational skills, praising them for their efforts. We do also hope it will help parents keep in touch with their children's schoolwork. However, we do not consider this to be a suitable means of communicating directly with parents. Should you have any concerns, please contact your teacher in the usual ways, including contacting the office to arrange an appointment or phone call.

## **Health and Medication**

Please ensure that the school has been informed of any allergy, illness, or condition that your child may suffer from. Medical records are managed and updated via the school office. Our teaching staff First Aid officers are Mrs Catherine Hudson and Mr Conor Hasson.

### **Medication at school**

Important update: We have been instructed by the school nurse that we are not allowed to administer medicine such as Calpol or Piriton unless it has been prescribed by a doctor. Any medication to be administered must be signed into the office by the child's parent. Only medicine prescribed specifically for a child (with a dispensing label displaying the child's name and correct dosage) may be administered by designated school staff. Medication should never be kept in the child's schoolbag or in the classroom.

### **General reminders**

- Children should not be brought to school if they are unwell.
- If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please notify the office on the morning of the first day, before 9.30am.

- Please do not send sick children to school. Even though they may want to come, we have a duty of care to all the children and staff. There are good reasons for this:
  - It is important that they enjoy their time at school and feel well enough to participate in all activities.
  - If your child has diarrhoea, vomiting or other infections please keep him/her at home until it has cleared (at least 24 hours). This is essential to prevent the unnecessary spread of infection to other children and staff.

### **General health reminders:**

Some children in our school have allergies and in the interest of their safety and well-being we can no longer allow children to bring in birthday cakes to share with their class.

Please remember to apply sun cream and to provide a sun hat for your children in the warm weather.

Head lice are common among primary-aged children. Please check your child's head regularly. Many treatments are available from the local pharmacy, and many are available on prescription. It would also be useful to inform the class teacher so a general reminder could be issued (of course without highlighting your child!).

## **Reconstituted Board of Governors 2018-2022 (2023)**

Following a ratification process conducted by DENI, EA & CCMS, our Board of Governors were constituted and ratified in December 2018. The process for reconstitution scheduled for 2022 has been postponed by DENI until 2023. Feedback from parents/carers in the past has indicated that parents feel that the management of the school at governor level is working very well. However, feedback also suggested that parents were unsure of the role of the governors. This is not unusual in schools. We hope the information below is useful.

### **School governors**

The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the school principal, supported by the vice principal and leadership team. The overall management responsibility for the school falls to the Board of Governors. These volunteers come from within the school and wider parish community and reflect the various parts of the school community e.g. representatives from the parent group, teaching staff, school trustees, Education Authority and Dept. of Education.

### **The role of the Board of Governors**

Every school is managed by a Board of Governors. They work with the school principal to meet the educational needs of the school pupils in a secure and safe environment. The role of the Board of Governors is to make sure that the school provides pupils with a good education.

Boards of Governors meet approximately once per term, although there may be a few other additional meetings as necessary throughout the year. However, the day-to-day running and related decisions are managed by the professional lead – i.e. the principal, assisted by the vice principal, senior school leaders and other staff.

### **What does a parent representative do?**

Just as the teacher rep is expected to contribute to discussions and decisions at governor level considering things through the eyes and ears of a teacher, the parent rep is expected to contribute as any parent might. The Board of Governors meetings are not somewhere that specific concerns of parents are discussed. If such concerns exist, they should not be directed to the parent representative (or indeed any specific governor) but brought to the principal, as normal, using the recognised and appropriate channels of communication. It is very important for all parents to understand this role.

## **Friends of New Row**

New Row St. Patrick's has a very hard-working, active and enthusiastic parents' and friends' association, currently chaired by Mrs Grainne Diamond. Friends of New Row works hard to strengthen links between home and school by involving parents in the life of the school and encouraging a two-way exchange of information and viewpoints. Their prime aim is to coordinate fundraising and social events for the school community, that in turn supports the school by enhancing the pupils' educational experiences. The committee meet once or twice a term and meetings last approximately one hour. You do not have to become a member to help at any of the events. Just ask! Please help Friends of New Row continue to move forward and support in any way that you can, always keeping in mind that everything is for the benefit of the children.

*Watch out for more information about upcoming events in the weekly newsletter, Seesaw and on X.*

## **Other useful information**

### **Birthday invitations**

Often, we are asked to give out invitations and if there is one for everyone in the class or all the boys/girls, our staff don't mind helping give these out. However, we understand that it is not possible to always invite everyone – nor should parents be expected to. Unfortunately, when invitations are only given to certain children, we are often met with a sad face asking where their invitation is or why they didn't get an envelope. Children cannot understand the genuine reasons for this and feel rejected or less popular. With the children's feelings at heart and for this reason, we ask that no party invitations are distributed in school unless there is one for everyone in the class or all boys/girls. Please ensure other invitations are given outside of school to help avoid those sad faces and awkward feelings. Nowadays social media makes spreading the word about a party much easier. You may also wish to talk to your child about why, for practical reasons, they may not get invited to all parties. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

### **Birthday Cake**

Sometimes parents feel it necessary to send in a cake on the day of their child's birthday. This is a lovely thought. However, please see earlier health note re allergies and intolerances. Therefore, we ask that parents refrain from doing this and keep it for a celebration at home.

## SCHOOL YEAR 2023-24

August	Thurs 31 <sup>st</sup> August – School opens for all <b>Y1 &amp; Y7 pupils only</b> 9.30-12 noon
September	Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept: All Y2-7 pupils, <b>Y1 Intake Group A</b> 9.30-1pm Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Sept: All Y2-7 pupils, <b>Y1 Intake Group B</b> 9.30-1pm Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept: All Y2-7 pupils, <b>Y1 Intake Group C</b> 9.30-1pm Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept: All Y1 attend 9am-1pm every day in Sept Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Sept – Staff Development Day ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
October	Y1 in from 9am to 2pm every day and 1.50 on a Friday Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> – Tues 31 <sup>st</sup> Oct – Mid Term Break
November	Wed 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov - Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov Mid Term Break Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov - Staff Development Day ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> ) Children return to school Mon 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov
December	Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec - School closes at 11am Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec - Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Dec (Christmas holidays)
January	Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan – Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan (Christmas holidays) Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan - Staff Development Day ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> ) Children return on Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2024
February	Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb – Staff Development Day ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> ) Tues 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb – Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb Mid Term Break Children return to school on Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb
March	Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> Mar (St Patrick’s Day holiday) Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup> Mar – School closes at 11am Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> Mar – Easter Break
April	Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr to Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Apr Easter Break Children return to school Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> April
May	Mon 6 <sup>th</sup> May Bank Holiday Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> May Staff Development Day ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> ) Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> May & Mon 27 <sup>th</sup> May: School closure
June	Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> June – School closes at 11am for summer

These dates are subject to change

Pupils **do not attend** on Staff Development Days

Parents are requested not to take children on holiday during term time.

Every effort has been made to block holidays to facilitate parents.