

FAQ about Loughries Integrated Primary School

Where is Loughries Integrated Primary School?

Loughries Integrated Primary School is a small rural school set in an idyllic location just outside Newtownards. Parents often comment that as we are just outside Newtownards, travelling times to drop off your child and collect is far quicker as you are often travelling in the opposite direction to most traffic.

What is an integrated school?

As an integrated school we bring children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other beliefs, cultures and communities together. We ensure that children from Protestant and Catholic religious and/or cultural backgrounds, as well as others who identify differently are educated together every day in the same classrooms. It is important to note that we are essentially Christian in character but proactively strive to ensure everyone's tradition is respected and included. Empowering adults, children and young people as thinking individuals is a priority for our school so that as they grow and mature, they'll be able to affect positive change in the shared society we live in.

For our parents who wish their child to receive sacramental preparation we have a teacher and resources to enable us to do this. Sacramental preparation is very much a collaborative process, involving commitment and support from parents as well as the children.

The promotion of equality and good relations extends to everyone in the school and to their families regardless of their religious, cultural or social background. Integrated education is value driven and child centred. It is delivered through a holistic approach with an emphasis on developing every aspect of a child's or young person's potential. Parents can find out more about the integrated ethos of the school in the 'Statement of Principles' for Integrated Education, which is available on our school website: <https://www.loughriesips.com/our-school/integration>

All children learn about World Religions. The P3/4 class learn about 'Celebrating Differences,' the P5/6 learn about 'Knowing me, knowing you' and the P7 class learn about 'Flags and Symbols.'

We invite a range of people from different faiths to our assemblies on a Friday.

Where do the children come from?

A small number of children walk to school, but the majority arrive by car. We have children who travel from Bangor, Conlig, Millisle, Ballywalter and Newtownards. The travelling times to Loughries from our local areas are short, as often you are travelling in the opposite direction to most of the traffic. We have a drop off system where parents drop off and leave which allows most children to be dropped off very close to the school. We also have a staggered pick up time which again allows the children to be picked up close to our school. Our children attend local nurseries and playgroups and then move to Loughries to begin their primary education.

Place	Time
Newtownards	6 minutes
Carrowdore	7 minutes
Conlig	9 minutes
Bangor	10 minutes
Millisle	11 minutes
Donaghadee	13 minutes
Comber	15 minutes
Mount Stewart	16 minutes
Greyabbey	18 minutes
Ballywalter	19 minutes

Which schools do the children go to after Loughries?

Our P7 children transfer to Regent House, Bangor Grammar, Glenlola Collegiate, Strathearn, Strangford College (Loughries is a feeder school to Strangford), St Columbanus College, Priory Integrated, Movilla and Glastry.

How many classes do you have in your school?

We have four classes: P1/2, P3/4, P5/6 and P7. All the children know each other, and all the teachers know the children very well. As our P7 class is a small straight class the teachers can tailor the delivery of lessons to suit each pupil's needs and interests. As it is a small class the teachers can give the pupils more attention and provide them with personalised learning opportunities.

What are the benefits of a small class size?

Our small class sizes create a nurturing learning environment where every child gets noticed, which means learning barriers can be addressed as soon as the teacher sees them. Our teachers have the time to get to know each pupil, understand their skills, weaknesses and learning preferences. This helps the whole school to create an engaging environment where personalised learning helps pupils achieve their potential.

Our children are encouraged to collaborate and in small class sizes everyone can really get to know each other. Pupils feel more comfortable with their classmates and teacher and they are more likely to engage with and support each other.

Our teachers can adjust the pace and depth of their lessons as with fewer pupils to manage the teacher can spend more time teaching and working with the pupils. Teachers can explore topics in depth or slow down the pace to suit the needs of the pupils. More time is allocated for difficult concepts, which results in greater understanding.

Small class sizes encourage and nurture pupils' curiosity. Our pupils can pursue their thinking of ideas and find answers to their own questions. Within a small class all children can have their questions answered. Our teachers can spend more time on topics which interest our pupils which encourages them all to become active participants in their learning.

Our small class sizes provide a happy, calm, secure and stimulating environment where pupils can develop at their own pace, express their ideas and connect with the children in their class. Our children feel comfortable asking for help.

Our small class sizes allow for continuous assessment and feedback. Our teachers can ensure that each pupil receives helpful feedback from themselves and other classmates.

Our children feel more confident to put up their hand and ask questions and share their ideas. By working closely with their classmates and teachers, our pupils learn to be kinder, more respectful and empathetic of others. Our class sizes allow teachers to

create safe and secure environment, where pupils can continually pursue their strengths and work through challenges. This builds their resilience, perseverance and character.

How are the children taught in composite classes?

The teachers plan Numeracy and Literacy for each year group from P1 – P7. The work is differentiated so it matches the children's ability. The teachers in composite classes plan using a two-year cycle. The class teachers have Year one topics and Year 2 topics. The younger children benefit from experiencing the Learning Intentions set for the older children and the older children benefit from reinforcement of previously taught skills. At the start of each school year the class teacher already knows half of the class from teaching them last year and so can start teaching straight away as they do not need to spend time getting to know each child.

What is this school's approach to student discipline?

Our Positive Behaviour Policy encourages all children to behave appropriately. The children created our School Contract which is displayed in the Dinner Hall. The children help to negotiate classroom rules in each class. Children behaving well receive a lot of positive praise and the children soon learn that they get more attention from adults when they behave well. Visitors to our school and members of the public often comment how well behaved our children are when visiting our school and when meeting us outside of school. The children are taught and shown good manners by all adults within our school.

How do you celebrate achievements?

Pupil of the week certificate and badge for each class are presented in our whole school assembly. We celebrate achievements both in school and outside school. Our children share their sporting and musical achievements outside school in our weekly assembly and photographs are uploaded to our Website/FaceBook.

Does the school have an Anti-Bullying Policy?

Yes. All our Policies are available on our school website.

How much homework do students receive?

Each class teacher will set different amounts of homework. P1/2: word boxes, Maths, English and Reading. P3-P7: Literacy, Numeracy, Spellings, Tables and Reading and other areas throughout the year. Our Homework Policy is available under the Policies section on our school website.

Do you offer extra reading resources?

The Library Bus visits the school every other week on a Monday and each class can visit the Library bus and choose a book to take home and read. Each class has their own class Library. We also use the Belfast Library Service and each class teacher orders books related to their topic each ½ term. As well as several reading schemes we also have novels for the children to read. The children take part in silent reading every day where they can choose their own book to read.

How is ICT used to support teaching and learning?

Each class has an iPad and laptops and the Interactive White Board which can be used by both the class teacher and the children. The staffroom is also used as our computer room and each class is timetabled weekly to use this. Each teacher plans for ICT activities each week. The children can reinforce the skills taught in the classroom through the many apps/ educational games available on the C2K network. The children also participate in the South Eastern Mental Maths Sumdog Competition throughout the year. All children have their own login details so that they can access this resource at any time. Our children always perform very well against other schools in NI.

Is there a school choir, band or orchestra?

A KS2 choir is formed each year and they sing in the local community. They have visited the Donaghadee Garden Centre, Tesco in Newtownards and residential homes.

What extracurricular opportunities are available for students?

There are a wide range of clubs on offer throughout the year including: Transfer Club, Dance Club, Recorder Club, Science Club, Winter Craft Club, Rounders Club, Netball Club, Coding Club, Recorder Club, Outside Club, Football Club, Gardening Club, Yoga Club and Cookery Club.

The school also provides music tuition on a Thursday and Friday afternoon. The children can learn different musical instruments.

Are you a healthy eating school?

Yes, we encourage a healthy snack Monday to Thursday, then a treat on a Friday.

Does the school have a programme for gifted students?

Children who are identified as gifted and talented receive a targeted plan which is written for each child. Extension activities are available for these children.

How does this school support students who have academic, social or emotional difficulties?

Individual Education Plans are written to support these children. We have a SEN Teacher, Mrs Rea, who works with our children every afternoon. The Principal also takes Booster Numeracy lessons each week. The children take part in Mental Health Week each year. We have an outside classroom which is used as an extra learning space for children. All children can visit our outside garden and polytunnel and grow a range of fruit and vegetables throughout the year.

Does the school offer Physical Education (PE) classes?

All children receive PE lessons twice a week. We use the Ards Evangelical Church Hall when the weather does not allow us to use our school grounds. From P5 the children attend the Blaire Mayne Leisure Centre where they participate in weekly swimming lessons which are taken by a qualified coach. We have a range of P.E. equipment which also includes Badminton and Archery set. The children participate in the Daily Mile each day.

Is there an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA)?

Yes, we have a very active PTFA. They organise several events throughout the year, e.g. Family Fun Day, Fireworks Display, Summer BBQ. Parents also help on school trips.

Do the children go on class trips?

Yes, we value the opportunity for each class to go on class trips throughout the year and learn outside the classroom. A P6/7 Residential takes place in May/June each year.

What are some of the school's greatest accomplishments?

We have won the Mental Maths Sumdog competition. This competition is where the children are asked to answer 1000 maths questions against other children in NI. We participate in the Carson's Art Awards and we have been successful achieving first place in the primary section. We enter the Glastery Football and Rounders competition each year and we always perform very well against the other local schools. The P7 class take part in Design and Technology Challenges. As a small school the children's high self-esteem, confidence, resilience and excellent academic results allow the children to continue to achieve at their post primary school.

How can I find out more about the school?

Our School website and Facebook page provides a great insight into the experiences of the children at Loughries. Individual tours are available throughout the year by contacting the school. If you have any further questions which you would like to ask, then please do not hesitate to contact the school.

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