



PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Dear Parent,

Welcome to St. Patrick's, Annaghmore. We look forward to meeting you and getting to know both you and your child.

Our aim is to create a happy and hardworking atmosphere where your child can obtain a high quality education. The early years are critical in children's development and we are committed to providing the very best start to their school life.

We anticipate and appreciate your co-operation and support in the task of educating your child. It is a two-way process; should problems arise it is vital that we get together as soon as possible to resolve them.

We have tried to include as much information as possible in this booklet to help you to prepare your child for their first experience of full-time education. We understand that this can be an exciting but unsettling time for both children and parents and we aim to make the transition from pre-school setting to our school as smooth as possible.

Yours sincerely

Anne Mc Guinness

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St Patrick's Primary Annaghmore
Our Mission Statement.

*"Inspired by our faith in Christ,
St. Patrick's Catholic P.S. will provide:-
A happy, secure and caring learning environment
Which promotes all to be the best they can be;
Full of optimism, ambition and
with a love of learning.
Working in partnership with our community, we will
ensure St. Patrick's P.S. makes a difference."*

In Our School:-

***We are gentle**
We are kind and helpful
We play fair and well with others
We look after our school and each other
We respect ourselves and each other
We listen to each other
We are honest
**We are allowed to make mistakes and learn from
them.***

"Be the best we can be every day, in every way!"



St Patrick's Primary Annaghmore

UNIFORM



Our parents have agreed to a school uniform. St Patrick's Primary School Annaghmore uniform is as follows:

- Navy sweatshirt (with school crest)
- Navy bottoms / Skirt
- Light blue polo shirt.

The uniform is available from Maureen's Lineside Coalisland and Coalisland Clothing located opposite Super Valu, Coalisland. It helps if children can easily recognise their own belongings. **Please ensure that your child's name is clearly marked on each item of their uniform.**

Physical Education

Primary 1 children use the hall regularly for physical activities. A change of footwear is required. Pull on plimsoles are easiest for the children to manage. These should be clearly marked with your child's name.





Our School Day

- 9:00am Doors open
- 9:10am School starts
- 11:00am - 11:15am Morning Break
- 12:00 - 12:40pm Lunch P.1/2/3
- 12:50 - 1:30pm Lunch P.4/5/6/7
- 1.50pm P.1 Dismissed
- 2:00pm P.2 / 3 Dismissed
- 3:00pm P.4/5/6/7 Dismissed

Please note that Primary 1 Children finish at the earlier time of 1.50pm. This is to elevate the problem of traffic at the school.



Literacy in Primary 1



St Patrick's Primary Annaghmore
The First Few Days



Talk to your child cheerfully and calmly about coming to school. Tell him/her about the exciting and interesting things they will do and the new friends they will make. Try to be in good time so that you don't have to rush on the first day. Reassure your child that you will be able to come into the classroom with them. It is quite natural to be worried about your child settling in at school and you are more than welcome to talk to staff about your concerns. Please inform the class teacher of any problems or fears your child might have which may affect his/her behaviour at school.

Remember on the first morning:

- ***Inform the class teacher who will collect your child from school***
- ***Inform the class teacher about dinner / lunch***



Working Together in Primary 1



PREPARATION

The most important years in a child's life are the first ones. It is in these first years that the foundations for his/her future are established. The child will learn more quickly with you than at any other stage of his/her development.

We in school hope to support and deepen the development of the first four years. If you play your part in your child's development the transition from the home environment to the more formal atmosphere of school will indeed be a happy one.

Speaking and Listening

It really helps if your child can speak well. You can help by telling stories where he/she can join in and repeat lines. Teach nursery rhymes and look at and talk about picture books together. Enjoy sharing experiences and encourage your child to talk about them.

There will be many times during the school day when your child will need to listen to instructions and stories and will have to be quiet. You can help to prepare them for this by teaching them not to interrupt when you are speaking and giving lots of praise to encourage this. Try to give them opportunities to be quiet, perhaps when listening to a story or to someone talking.

Socialisation

Acceptable social behaviour is part of everyday life. As a parent you will have begun social training with your child. We continue this in school but your hard work in the early years really helps your child to settle in quickly into school life. Your child will learn to consider other children and their needs.



He/she will also need to adjust to being away from you for longer periods of time. Attending a playgroup or nursery will certainly help with this. Allowing them to spend time away from you with other people will also make a difference. Encourage mixing with children of the same age to help your child make friends and share in play activities, taking turns and being considerate towards others.

Using the toilet

It is important that your child is confident using the toilet before starting school. In school we make sure that children are reminded regularly about going to the toilet and we understand that accidents will occasionally happen. We do have a supply of replacement clothing and we would appreciate if they are returned promptly to the school. We have an Intimate Care Policy in place. If you have any concerns about this please speak to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Early Mathematical Experiences

Children experience maths as part of their everyday environment. The type of maths young children now do is not writing sums but sorting socks. They need to touch and do in order to learn, so their early maths is based on practical activities that can be incorporated into their play. Here are a few ideas to develop early mathematical skills at home.

- Role play shopping - using real money
- Setting the dinner table - counting, matching, ordering
- Sorting the washing for each person in the house, matching socks
- Water play - comparing volume, full and empty

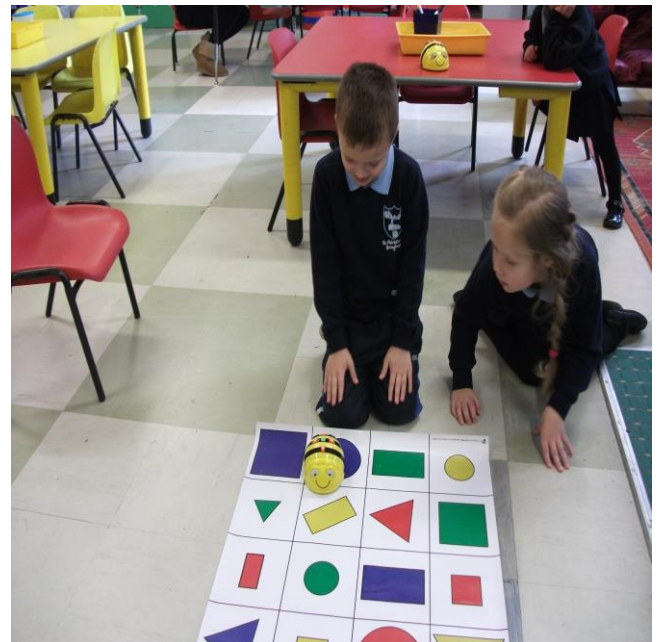


- Climbing frame - whole body experience of height and space
- Outdoor walk down the street - counting, looking for numbers, looking for shapes in the environment

Counting is a skill that children often pick up very early. At first, your child might chant numbers in a random way without focusing on each object. Don't worry if your child doesn't seem to count carefully to begin with, this will come later as they learn to match numbers and objects.

Remember to:-

- Point to each object as you count it
- Take the cue from your child - if your child is not interested now, try again another day
- Talk about numbers in context such as "there are five buttons on your coat, but only four on mine, you've got more than me"



Early Numeracy Experiences in Primary 1



WRITING

The main reason for writing is to communicate meaning. From the earliest mark-making children are showing an understanding that messages can be recorded. As they realise that print carries a constant message they recognise the need for more conventional forms of handwriting which other people can read.

Children progress through developmental stages before they have the necessary hand-eye co-ordination, fine motor skills and visual discrimination to produce conventional handwriting. You can help your child acquire the necessary skills by following the practical ideas below

Gross Motor Skills

Whole arm and shoulder actions developing anti-clockwise and vertical movements

- Wash windows - large paintbrushes, scraper and buckets of water.
- Wash bicycles and cars - sponges/water.
- Painting walls and ground with water and large paintbrushes.
- Making large patterns with paint on old wallpaper.
- Climbing equipment.
- Swing ball type activities, for example, suspend hollow balls on string and provide bats.
- Hoop rolling.
- Swirl sticks with ribbons.

Hand-eye Co-ordination and Fine Motor Skills

- Cutting with scissors.
- Playing musical instruments.
- Cooking - real or play-stirring, kneading, cutting.
- Pouring water.

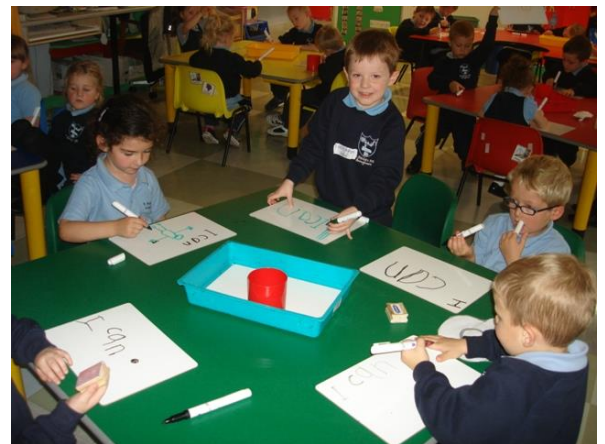
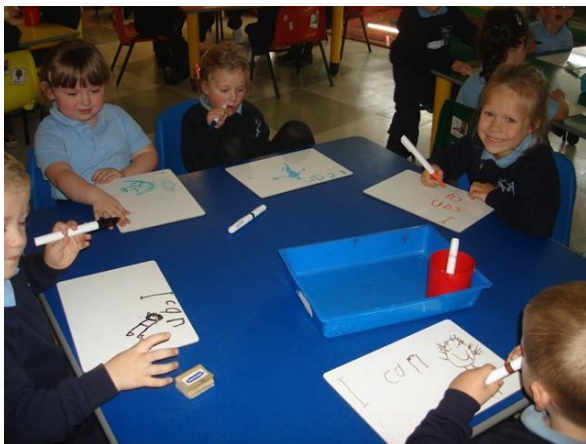


- Ball and bat games.
- Painting - various sized brushes, finger painting.
- Using clay tools.
- Drawing - felt-tips, chalk, pencils, crayons.
- Make patterns in wet or dry sand with fingers.
- Pegging dolls' clothes onto a washing line.
- Small world toys.
- Use malleable materials, for example, clay, play-dough, plasticine.
- Lacing and threading, for example, lacing beads onto string, peg boards.

Visual Discrimination

Noticing shape, direction and orientation.

- Matching shapes and pictures.
- Identifying differences between shapes or pictures, for example, odd one out, spot the difference.
- Jigsaws.
- Reproducing patterns, for example, threading beads, assembling multilink.
- Sorting letter shapes, for example, magnetic letters.



Early Writing Experiences in Primary 1



READING

Children develop a disposition to read as stories and books are read to them. They should see the reader as a role model of reading behaviour. When young children play at reading they imitate what they have seen - turning the pages, looking at the pictures, 'reading' the words in that special 'tone'. As parents you need to build on and extend this language play so that children develop a love of books and early reading skills.

While the central purpose of reading is to gain meaning from print, children also need to be encouraged to develop a curiosity about words, their sounds and patterns and how they are composed. Reading to children should be seen as an essential activity, providing a starting point for developing the thinking child. Reading stories with your child, if only for 10 minutes a day, helps build important skills as well as capturing your child's interest in books. Books are a rich source of information for your child as they contain words you might not use in everyday conversations. From their earliest days children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books.

You can help your child acquire the necessary skills by following the practical ideas below

- Spend time each day telling stories and reading together, and make it fun by choosing books you both enjoy
- Read a wide range of books to your child including fiction and non-fiction
- Retell familiar stories asking your child to join in
- Talk about the pictures and characters in the books and make up your own stories
- Use pictures to tell the story and make predictions



- Read as you walk down the street and round the shops, pointing out signs and words and talking about them
- Buy books as presents and join a local library
- Recite Nursery Rhymes with your child drawing attention to the rhyming words
- Play rhyming games / make rhyming strings eg can pan man
- Play games with sounds, making up silly words that all begin with the same sound (for example the first sound in their name)



Drama



Paired Reading



Our Favourite Author



JOURNEY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Arriving by Car

Parents are not permitted to drive into the school yard. Children and parents should enter the school via the small gate for safety reasons. Please consider the volume of traffic on the road and do not allow your child to get out of the car on the road side. Please do not obstruct the main entrance to the school.

Arriving by Bus

The school is currently serviced by Ulsterbus and S.E.L.B buses. Due to ongoing cutbacks, provision of bus services is always under review.

Children must behave appropriately on the bus. If seatbelts are available they must be worn. Children should remain seated for the duration of their journey.

The current cost of the Ulsterbus journey is 75p. A bus pass is available to purchase from the bus depot. This allows your child to travel at a reduced rate.

S.E.L.B bus services are currently free of charge. However, **you must apply to the Education Authority for your child to be allowed to travel on the Board Bus.**

Application forms are available from the School or can be accessed on the Education Authority website.



ROAD SAFETY

Please remember that you, as a parent, are responsible for the safety of your child on the way to and from school. Children are not mature enough to judge traffic. The journeys to and from school are ideal opportunities to teach your child about Road Safety. Their safety depends on this.



MEALS

Break Time

At morning break the school has a Healthy Eating Policy. **This means that pupils should only eat fruit, bread, vegetable sticks & drink still water.**

Lunch / Dinner Time

School meals are available at a cost of £2.50 per day. Dinner money can be paid on a daily or at the start of each week. Payment is made to the class teacher. Some children may be entitled to free school meals. A form can be obtained from the school office. This form should be returned to the relevant authority and not to the school before September 2016. Children can take a pack lunch in school. Please label their lunch boxes clearly.

We have children with severe nut allergy. And therefore:-

St Patrick's P.S. is a 'Nut-Free Zone.'

Children are not permitted to eat food containing nuts in school and we respectfully ask that no cakes are brought into school for sharing as we cannot ensure the content or the safety of such foods for every child in our care.



Dinner Time



DISCIPLINE

It is a primary aim of St Patrick's Primary School that every member of our school community feels valued and respected. The school is an extension to the home and an important part of the community. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. The key to successful discipline is a consistent and fair approach at all times by all staff. The school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way. Children should be given the opportunity to develop into well mannered, well-adjusted and confident members of society. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

Our school has a number of school rules, but the primary aim of the policy is a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn. This policy aims to help children to become positive, responsible and increasingly independent members of the school community. Good behaviour makes effective learning and teaching possible. In Primary 1 we use Golden Time as a means of promoting positive behaviour. Your child will tell you all about it when they begin school.



Primary 1 Trip to The Argory



ILLNESS

If your child has any illness, health problems or allergies please inform the class teacher.

While not wishing to encourage absenteeism, please do not send sick children to school.

Should a child take ill during the day it may be necessary to send the child home. It is therefore very important that you have provided the school with a contact telephone number / numbers. Should your contact details change during the year please inform the school immediately.

It is school policy that a written letter is sent into school to explain any absence on the day your child returns to class. This is due to the Education and Welfare Officer assigned to the school checking and monitoring each term any attendance issues and seeking explanations for these.

Useful Information

School Address	10 Annaghmore Rd Coalisland Co Tyrone BT71 4QZ
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School Telephone Number	02887740661
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School Fax Number	02887748517
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School Website *[Our website is currently under construction due to change in web provider. We will have the new web address for December 2016.](#)*



FINALLY

You will have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress during the year. The teachers will meet parents once during the year, usually October. A written report will be sent out in June. However, please rest assured that if we feel we need to speak to you at any other time we will arrange a meeting at a convenient time for all to do so.

Throughout the year information about various aspects of the school are distributed by the Principal. We now have a text messaging service in place. Text messages will be sent informing parents of relevant information. It is very important that parents inform the school about any changes to their mobile contact details.

Children are not allowed out of school during class time unless the teacher has been notified in writing or you have contacted the office. The class teacher should also be notified of any change in your child's usual travel arrangements.

The school nurse usually comes to see the new pupils during their first year. Parents will be notified and you can choose to be present.

Don't sit at home worrying about your child and discussing your problems with others. Come and see the teacher or the Principal. We care about the welfare of your child and we are always available to talk about your child's problems. Please contact the school to make an appointment.

After Halloween, when they have had a chance to settle into school life at St Patrick's, P1 children will be welcome to join



our supervised 'Morning Club' which begins at 8:30am and which takes place in the Assembly Hall. There is a small nominal fee of 50p per day per child to help towards staffing costs for the club. Children are involved in colouring activities as well as a range of table top games. At 9:00am the club finishes and, weather permitting, all pupils are then supervised outside until class begins at 9:10am or alternatively, they will remain in the Hall if the weather is not favourable.

We have whole school assembly each Monday morning at 9:10am and there will be parent assemblies for each class on a rotation basis each Friday morning. A timetable will be distributed for these early in September.

We at St. Patrick's Annaghmore look forward to getting to know you and your child. We hope you have many happy years in St. Patrick's P.S. Annaghmore and please remember:-

“Together we can achieve more for our children, our school and our community.”

Everyone involved in St Patrick's PS aim at all times:-

“To be the best we can be every day, in every way!”