



# St Patrick's Primary School Prospectus

We are all valued,  
We always do our best.



## Welcome

Dear parents,

May I take this opportunity to welcome you and your children to St Patrick's Primary School. We are the parish school of Glenariff, providing for the educational needs of its primary school aged children. St Patrick's Primary School is a caring school where the whole school community shares a common goal - to do the very best for all the children in its care.

This prospectus is intended to help you to know more about the life and work of the school. It outlines what we stand for and what we offer your child. We will strive to ensure that the next seven years your child will spend with us will be a happy and rewarding time for your child and for you. You can rest assured that his/her wellbeing will be our concern at all times throughout the years ahead.

It is by this open communication between home and school that we can build a strong and harmonious relationship, which will both support and encourage your children throughout their time in St Patrick's Primary School. Each child is an individual with his/her own personality and needs. Starting school can be traumatic for some children, but by working as a partnership between home and school together, we are confident that we can overcome any difficulties that may arise. Should you require further information about a particular aspect of school life please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff or myself through the school office.

We look forward to welcoming your child to our school.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Dinsmore (Principal)

**Tel. & Fax: 028 2177 1619**

**e-mail: [info@stpatricks.glenariff.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stpatricks.glenariff.ni.sch.uk)**

**School Year: 2023/24**

***Principal: Mr Mark Dinsmore***

**Status: Catholic Maintained Primary School**

**Age Range of pupils: 4-11 years**

**Expected total number of pupils 2024/25: 85**

**Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Mrs Anne Harvey**



# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## The School Day

**8.50am** School gates open and supervision of children begins

**9.00am** Class teaching commences

**10.45am-11.00am** Break

**12.15pm-1.00pm** Lunch

**2.00pm (Monday-Thursday)** School finishes for children in Primary 1&2

**3.00pm (Monday-Thursday)** School finishes for children in Primary 3-7

**2.00pm (Friday)** School finishes for all children

Children should arrive in school punctually to begin lessons at 9.00am.

School starts for all children on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

It is planned that Primary 1 children will finish school at 12.00pm for the first two weeks. The following week from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September, they will stay for lunch/dinner and go home at 1.00pm. However, these dates are flexible and will depend on how quickly the children settle into school. Normal school hours are scheduled to apply from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September.

It is essential (in September)

- that you give the school a list of the names of people who may be collecting your child throughout the year at the earliest opportunity.

It will be helpful if you

- let Mrs McAuley know who will be collecting your child after school each day.
- collect your child promptly in order to avoid distress.

Only those people's names who have been given to the school, will be permitted to collect any child.

## Attendance

To enable children to progress in their work, regular and punctual attendance is essential. Should a child be absent for any reason, it is essential that parents contact the school office on **028 2177 1619** and provide a note of explanation for any absence on your child's return to school. Following Department of Education guidelines, St Patrick's Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the significant impact they can have on pupils' learning. In the interests of safety, no child is allowed to leave the school at any time without permission from the Principal.

## Absences/Appointments

If your child has to leave school for an appointment at the eye-clinic, doctor or dentist, please notify the school in advance and ensure that he/she is collected from school by a responsible adult.

It is essential that Parents let the school know of any change in family circumstances which might affect the child's learning or behaviour in school.

## **Staff**

Principal	Mr M Dinsmore
Teachers	Miss M McQuillan (SENCO/Child Protection DT) Mrs C McAuley (Child Protection Deputy DT) Mrs A McDaid Mr M Dinsmore Mrs L Higgins
Secretary/Caretaker	Mrs J Kerr
Classroom Assistants	Mrs R Darragh, Mrs C Ward, Mrs H Elliott, Mrs J McLaughlin, Miss KA McNaughton
Supervisory Assistants	Mrs R Darragh, Mrs C Ward, Mrs J Kerr, Mrs H Elliott, Mrs J McLaughlin.

## **Board of Governors**

Mrs Anne Harvey (DE Representative - Chairperson)  
Rev. Fr. D White (Trustee - Vice Chairperson)  
Mr Mark Dinsmore (Principal)  
Miss M McQuillan (Teacher Representative)  
Mr Joe Mitchell (Trustee)  
Mrs MaryRose Black (Trustee)  
Mrs Lucy Mc Killop (EA Representative)  
Mrs Kathryn Wheeler (EA Representative - SEN Governor)  
Mrs Paula Mc Naughton (Parent Representative)  
Mrs Patricia Allen (Trustee - Safeguarding & Health & Safety Governor)

## **Child Welfare**

Children should not be brought to school if they are unwell but kept in the comfort of the home until they are fully recovered. If your child is unwell during the school day, we will make every effort to contact you. It is important that we have up-to-date home/mobile/work telephone numbers. Until we have contacted you, we will take any action required in the interests of the child.

## **Parent Requested Consultations**

Parents are welcome to the school if they wish to discuss any aspect of their child's education. Please contact the school office on **028 2177 1619** to arrange an appointment.

## **Queries, Concerns, Complaints**

At St Patrick's Primary School, we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the heart of all we do. In this regard, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible.

Many issues can be addressed simply by talking to the relevant staff in school who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school staff and parents is vital to the effective management of the school. You can speak to staff by contacting the school office to make an appointment with the class teacher or by requesting a telephone appointment.

In the case of serious complaints, the concerns should be detailed in writing and given to the Principal or Secretary to the Board of Governors, to enable the matter to be examined and a reply to be made. A copy of the school's Complaints Procedure Policy is available on the school website or is available from the school on request.

## School Meals/Milk

Our school uses ParentPay as a way of operating a cashless school. It reduces the need for children to carry cash in to school and for school staff to handle money and organise change. You will be asked to sign up to ParentPay and will be issued with usernames and passwords for your child/children. The website will allow you to pay for breaks, lunches and any other payments that may be required throughout the school year.

A school dinner at a set daily price of £2.60 is offered to the children. Each Thursday your child will receive a menu for the following week, with copies also uploaded to the school website. Parents of Primary 1 to Primary 7 children are asked to fill in the next week's choices and return the completed sheet to the class teacher on or before the first day of the week.

At break we operate a healthy eating policy and we ask you to choose one healthy option for your child/children. Snacks are also available at break-time from the canteen (toast, wheaten, soda bread or fruit) and should be ordered on or before the first day of the week. School milk is supplied at a cost of 21p per carton. We ask you to pay for the whole term in advance (again through ParentPay). Details will be sent out via the school website and newsletters.

## Holidays

A provisional holiday list is in your Primary 1 pack, including 5 closures for Staff Development Days. Sometimes the exact dates of holidays may change but you will be kept well informed.

## Uniform

We are proud of our school uniform as it gives the school its own identity and offers to all children a common form of dress. It is important that each child comes to school neat and tidy with full school uniform as outlined below, unless otherwise advised.

- Navy knee length skirt/pinafore
  - Navy trousers/tracksuit bottoms
  - If tracksuit bottoms are preferred, please purchase **plain navy - no stripes or writing.**
  - Navy sweatshirt (with school crest)
  - Sky blue polo shirt (with school crest)
  - The school fleece (optional)
  - In the summer months, a white and blue knee length summer dress or navy shorts can be worn.
- Children are not permitted to wear make-up or jewellery to school. In the interest of health and safety, children with pierced ears must only wear studs.
  - Primary 1 do not need schoolbags. The school will provide the children with a folder to keep their reading books, homework and correspondence in.

All clothing and footwear, especially sweatshirts and coats should be clearly marked with your child's name. The uniform is available from Select Kidz or TeamKit Sportswear, Ballymena.

**Shoes** – Many children will wear trainers as their normal school shoes. However, if your child will be wearing black school shoes, we would encourage you to send in a pair of plimsolls or trainers to keep in school for P.E.

**To encourage lots of outdoor play, we would ask you to provide a pair of wellies to be kept in school, clearly labelled with their name on them. Please remember to replace the wellies if your child's feet size changes throughout the school year. We have now got a supply of waterproof bottoms in school for the children to borrow which can be worn with their normal coats.**

## **Curriculum**

September 2007 saw the beginning of the Revised Curriculum for all Primary 1 children in N. Ireland. Primary 1 and 2 are called the **Foundation Stage** which builds on the valuable work undertaken at pre-school. During the Foundation Stage, teachers are able to teach at a pace which is developmentally appropriate for very young children. There is a strong emphasis on play-based learning and personal, social and emotional development. Skills and capabilities are developed throughout all six Learning Areas

- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU)
- The World Around Us (WAU)
- Physical Development and Movement
- The Arts
- Religious Education.

The Programme of Study is that laid down by the Northern Ireland Curriculum. As we plan our curriculum, we are conscious that the pupils we serve form a cross section of the total population. Therefore, the targets we set are realistic yet sufficiently demanding to match the range of abilities of our pupils. In doing so, we hope to provide opportunities for each child to achieve success, thereby encouraging and promoting self-confidence.

Teaching and learning are presented in an ordered, secure and happy environment. The teaching methods used are intended to combine the best elements of "traditional" teaching with the "active learning" promoted by current educational thinking.

Pupils' progress is continually assessed, monitored and recorded and parents are kept informed through formal and informal parent/teacher meetings and by a written report in June.

## **Assessment**

Children in St Patrick's Primary School participate in a variety of formal and informal assessment, which includes end of Key Stage assessments and annual Standardised Tests. The information from these assessments is used to inform planning and to support children to continue to make progress.

## **Religious Education**

St Patrick's Primary is a Catholic school, where the religious education of our pupils is supported through the use of our Religious Education Programme 'Grow in Love', as well as the Wonder of My Being RSE Programme.

Religious Education is not confined to the timetabled programme within the school but pervades the whole life of the school.

Whilst at St Patrick's, pupils will have the opportunity to make some of their sacraments including First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

If parents would prefer their children not to participate in the Religious Education Programme/sacraments, they are welcome to contact the school to discuss this matter.

## **Pastoral Care**

Our pastoral care policy reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and involves all members of the school community: children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the wellbeing of each child. The atmosphere in the school is based on good relationships between staff, pupils and parents.

The overall aims of the school are:

- To provide a supportive environment which will foster the growth and development of caring and responsible pupils.
- To create a well-ordered school in which pupils can learn effectively.
- To develop in our pupils a sense of self-worth and self-control.

We expect our school community to act in a positive and caring way towards each other. The school rules are displayed in the classrooms and dinner hall. Each teacher regularly discusses the rules with their class. The school rules are implemented fairly and consistently.

Any concerns a parent may have about their child's safety should be brought to the attention of the Principal immediately. Our designated teacher for Safeguarding/Child Protection is Miss McQuillan. Mrs McAuley is the deputy designated teacher. Copies of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Positive Behaviour policies are available from the Principal, on request. Parents are requested to familiarise themselves with and sign the Intimate Care Policy in Primary One.

## **Additional Needs**

Pupils with special educational needs are identified and placed, if appropriate, on the school's SEN register. Each class teacher gives these children special attention and devises specific Individual Educational Plans to meet their requirements. The teachers are supported by our Special Needs Coordinator, Miss McQuillan, and if necessary other relevant outside agencies. A copy of the school's Special Educational Needs and Inclusion policy is obtainable on request from the Principal. We are also fortunate to be linked with the RISE team. They support us with certain children in many areas from Speech and Language to the physical development of their motor skills.

## **Homework**

We believe that homework is good training for children and a means of revising work done in school, involving parents in their children's work and developing good work habits. Homework is regarded as an integral part of every pupil's learning. We ask our parents to be actively involved in supervising their children's homework. We encourage parents to:

- Provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which children can do their homework.
- Show children that they value homework and support the school by creating time for homework.
- Encourage their children and praise them when they have completed their homework.
- Sign the homework record on completion where required.

Homework is usually given from Monday to Thursday. As a general rule, the children have no homework at weekends. Homework takes many forms - reading, spelling, handwriting, projects, reports, interviews, mathematics etc. In Primary One and Two we use the Seesaw app to facilitate blended learning and to keep parents updated with what the children have been doing in class. Teachers will draw attention to homework that has not been completed or attempted by writing a note in the appropriate book - this is to inform and assist parents. Please ensure you provide an up-to-date email address as it is very useful as an alternative form of communication. To give children time to develop hobbies and private interests, homework generally will not exceed 30 minutes up to Primary 3 and 40-60 minutes for Primary 4 - Primary 7.

## **Home/School Links**

Cooperation between home and school is imperative for the wellbeing and education of your child/children. We hope you will participate fully in the life of the school while your child is with us. Parents may contact the school at any time to arrange a meeting with the Principal or with the class teacher, by prior arrangement via the school secretary.

## **Parish/Community**

We see the school as a vital part of Glenariff parish and take every opportunity to contribute to the life of the parish. In order to do this, we liaise closely with Fr White

- in the prayer life of the school
- in school assemblies and
- in preparation for the Sacraments.



First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation are joint school/parish celebrations.

Over the last few years, the school has worked closely with community organisations and the school hall has been used by outside organisations. Coaches from the GAA come into the school to provide Fundamental Skills and training for the children in Hurling and Camogie.

## **Links With Other Agencies**

In order to ease each child's transition to second level education we have established close links with the secondary schools to which our children will be transferring.

We cooperate with and fully support the work carried out by the local Health Authority personnel and when necessary, we seek the help and advice of other statutory agencies. Visitors including the school nurse, dentist, doctor and educational psychologist call at the school in order to cater for the needs of our children.

## **Class Groupings**

Classes in the school are apportioned taking account of the needs of individual children and an equitable pupil:teacher ratio. Class groupings change from year to year, but decisions are made in the best interests of all children.

## **Reporting To Parents**



In addition to the end of year written report, parents have an opportunity to visit the school to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. This is usually in October/November. Individual parents may also visit the school at any time by prior arrangement via the school secretary.

## Admissions

Over the years the school has been able to accept all the children who applied for admission.

<b>2024</b>	<b>18 children</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>9 children</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>18 children</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>14 children</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>12 children</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>5 children</b>

An open morning/afternoon is normally held in June each year so that parents of the incoming Primary One pupils, with their children, may meet the teacher and classmates and familiarise themselves with their new classroom and the school environment. Prospective parents who wish to visit the school are very welcome to do so by arranging an appointment with the Principal via the school secretary on **028 2177 1619**.

## Charges And Remissions Policy

The Board of Governors has adopted the charges and remissions policy of the Education Authority. They have also agreed to allow the Principal to ask parents for voluntary contributions in support of school activities, both during and outside school hours, unless the Governors decide to subsidise part of the cost of the activity out of school funds.

## Sporting Activities

Hurling/camogie training was offered in 2023/24 to children from Primary 1 to Primary 7. The children attend many local competitions held in North Antrim and have an opportunity to meet the children from other schools in the area.

One of our established afterschool clubs is netball. Our children from Primary 5 to Primary 7 have competed successfully in tournaments and friendly fixtures.

Primary 6 &/or 7 have swimming lessons in Larne Swimming Pool, every week in Term 3 for approximately 8-10 weeks. School Sports Day is held in May/June. The children make good use of our extensive grounds and specialist PE equipment at both break and dinner times to expend a lot of energy during their school day.

## School Council & Eco Council

The Role Of The School & Eco Council, members of which are voted for by their peers on an annual basis, plays an important part in decision making and the school management endeavours to listen to the wishes of our children. The Eco Council takes account of environmental issues relating to our school and the local community.

In 2022/23, in recognition of our various efforts to promote an environmentally friendly ethos in our school, we were delighted to receive our third Eco Schools green flag. Mrs McDaid is passionate in this area of school life, giving our children the opportunity to develop the biodiversity of the school grounds, our meadow, pond,



trees and garden areas, our various environment challenges, walk to school and big pedal campaigns. We hope to continue and build on this work in the years to come.

## Other Activities

The school keeps the children well informed of the sporting activities held locally including Irish dancing, Hurling, Camogie, Gaelic football. We believe that our children should be made aware of the plight of children throughout the world who are not as well off as themselves. We run charity functions and activities during the year and especially like to support Trócaire during Lent.

The children have enjoyed a wide range of outings over the years, and we have brought in a variety of visitors, storytellers and drama groups to enhance the curriculum, promote Health and Wellbeing or deliver a safety message.

There is a strong focus on mental health and wellbeing in our school, which has seen us being awarded as a Take 5 Level 3 school. We enable children to recognise and talk about their feelings, as well as providing them with strategies to cope with worries.



## Collecting Children

Parents collecting Primary 1 & Primary 2 children are normally asked to wait in the covered entrance area. To prevent accidents, parents collecting and delivering children in the morning and afternoon are asked to park **outside the gates (outside the yellow zig-zag lines)**. In the interests of safety, the school car park is for staff and deliveries only. If you need to collect your child during the school day for an appointment or if he/she is ill or injured, you may use the car park, providing it is not at a peak time when the children are coming to school or going home.

Each day a teacher supervises the children leaving the premises and travelling by bus. We need to know exactly who will collect your child from school. If there is any change in this arrangement, you must let the school secretary or class teacher know.

## Active Travel

We are one of only seventeen schools in the country to have been awarded with the Sustrans Gold Award for active travel. As such, we actively encourage the children who live in the village to walk/cycle to school. As we have many children who live in the Glen we do not expect them to put their lives in danger walking or cycling on the country roads. However, many children arrange drop off points with their parents to allow them to travel actively where possible in the summer term.



## Security

A security system is installed. The children should enter the school by the two front entrances. If your child arrives at school after 9.15am you must ring the buzzer and a member of staff will bring your child to the classroom. When it is necessary for you to collect your child during the school day, please ring the buzzer, wait in the lobby area and a member of staff will bring your child to you. Parents may not enter a classroom without the permission of the class teacher or Principal. In line with Child Protection procedures, parents are not permitted in the toilet/cloakroom area of the classrooms.

## Discipline

Disciplinary arrangements in St Patrick's Primary School are designed to ensure that each child in the school has the opportunity to grow and learn in a happy and safe environment. Our priority is the establishment of positive relationships based on the respect and trust of everyone involved in the life of the school. A high code of conduct, courtesy and good manners is expected from all children in their relationships with other children and all members of staff and visitors to the school. They are also expected to respect the school buildings, property and grounds.

## Contact Us

If you would like further information or would like to arrange another tour of the school, please contact us on **028 2177 1619**.

Alternatively you can contact us via email: [info@stpatricks.glenariff.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stpatricks.glenariff.ni.sch.uk) or by visiting our school website: <http://stpatrickspsglenariff.co.uk>