



St Mary's P.S. Stewartstown



Prospectus 2023 – 2024

Believing in ourselves, each other,
our abilities and potential



"The strengths of St Mary's includes the exemplary behaviour of the children and their positive attitudes to learning; the well-maintained, attractive and stimulating learning environment."

Welcoming Schools Report

Welcome

Witam Cię

Добро пожаловать

Вітаємо

A warm welcome to St. Mary's Primary School. Here at St. Mary's we pride ourselves in knowing that we are a busy, thriving school in the Stewartstown community area. As a staff we are committed to offering an education which gives our children a love for learning, broadens their horizons and enables them to make informed choices in life. We celebrate the uniqueness and talents of all our children including those from other ethnic backgrounds and cultures.

We have high expectations of behaviour and achievement in all areas. We focus equally on the personal, social and academic development of all our children.

We expect them to leave St. Mary's as confident and highly motivated independent learners as well as caring and positive citizens who can make meaningful contributions to their community and society in general.

The commitment of the staff and the quality of teaching and learning in the school are excellent. We work in close partnership with parents keeping them fully informed of their child's progress. We are a very open and welcoming school and we value the ideas and opinions of all our community.

I hope you enjoy reading and viewing this prospectus. If you are considering St. Mary's as a place for your child, why not give us a call and come in and see and experience for yourself all of the exciting things going on!

Marian Hamill

Principal

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Our Aims

St. Mary's Primary school is committed to the aims of a Catholic maintained school. Working together we aim to provide a positive learning environment when



- all are valued, respected and supported through our Catholic ethos;
- pupils and staff are happy, enjoy learning together and share their school's values and expectations;
- the importance of a healthy lifestyle is shared by all;
- pupils are involved in their own learning and decision making within the school and are able to develop their social and emotional skills, have confidence in their abilities and have high self esteem;
- teaching and learning maintains high standards of achievement so that all pupils attain their personal goals and develop their full potential; and
- there is mutual respect between staff, pupils, parents and governors through effective communication.



We work towards these aims by providing a range of challenging and interesting activities in which the children can be involved individually, in groups or as a whole class.

We achieve this through careful individual and joint planning and by using different teaching strategies and approaches which suit a range of learning styles and the differing abilities and interests of individual children. We provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced and which develops a child's love for learning in an environment which is safe, comfortable and at all times stimulating. We endeavour to promote children's self-esteem through regular celebration of their talents and successes.

Helping children to achieve and enjoy



The curriculum experienced by all pupils at St. Mary's complies with the N.I. Curriculum and has an emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for life-long learning. These whole curriculum skills and capabilities consist of the **Cross-Curricular Skills** and **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities** and are embedded and infused throughout the Curriculum. At each key stage, all pupils have opportunities to acquire, develop and demonstrate these skills in all areas of the curriculum.

Cross-curricular Skills

Cross-curricular skills formally assessed	Thinking Skills & Personal Capabilities
Communication	Self Management
Using Mathematics	Working with Others
Using Information and Communications Technology (I.C.T.)	Being Creative
	Thinking, Problem solving and Decision Making
	Managing Information

We believe that personal and interpersonal skills and capabilities underpin success in all aspects of life. We endeavour to nurture and support children in their development of these skills whether at whole school or an individual level.

Learning Areas that your child will experience

Language & Literacy
Mathematics & Numeracy
Personal Development & Mutual Understanding
The Arts (Art, Music & Drama), Religious Education
The World Around Us (includes History, Geography & Science & Technology)
Physical Education

Areas of Learning your child will experience

Literacy focuses on developing each child's ability to understand and use language as an integral part of learning in all areas. This enables them to interact effectively with the world around them, to express themselves creatively and to communicate confidently (through Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing) using a variety of skills and media. Language and Literacy are also so important for thinking, learning and interacting in personal, social and work contexts throughout life. We believe Literacy is a key to learning as well as a key to enjoyment and personal growth and as such remains part of our school development plan. Mrs M Hamill is the school's Literacy coordinator.



Numeracy is the development and application of mathematics across the curriculum and in real life situations. Skills in Numeracy enable children to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

Our pupils engage in a wide range of purposeful activities which involves them in different modes of mathematical learning, including playing, exploring and investigating, doing and observing, talking and listening, asking questions, reflecting, drafting, reading and recording. Mrs Duffy is the school's Numeracy coordinator.

The Arts area of learning comprises the subjects of Art and Design, Drama and Music. We provide a varied range of opportunities for developing creativity, allowing children to express their ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world through pictures, sound, drama and dance. Once every two years we concentrate our efforts into a P2-P7 school production at Christmas time.



Areas of Learning your child will experience

The Arts continued includes music and St. Mary's provides a well-structured approach to the learning of music. The emphasis is really on enjoyment and the children are encouraged and motivated to discover and develop their own abilities and talents as much as possible.

For a nominal fee P4—P7 children avail of weekly lessons in tin-whistle. P3—P7 pupils can also avail of piano lessons. The children get regular opportunities to show case their talents.

The World Around Us comprises the subjects of geography, history and science and technology. Our aim is to help children make greater sense of the world around them, to recognise their roles and responsibilities in relation to their environment and to develop a thorough understanding and appreciation of the past. We provide a hands-on approach to this area in Foundation stage with the addition of an extensive outdoor learning area. Mr Reilly leads this area of learning in school.



Through an extensive and varied **Physical Education** curriculum, we provide the opportunity for specific attention to be given to the physical development, health and well-being of the children at St Mary's. We regularly invite coaches in to share their expertise. This is often facilitated through after school activities in which children can take part. Our Annual Sports day takes place in June. Our sports facilities include a large multi function hall equipped with wall bars, climbing frames and gymnastic equipment. The large outdoor surfaced areas are marked out making it suitable for football and netball and smaller games e.g. hopscotch etc. The large grassed area is suitable for football, athletics and hurling.



Religious Education

As a Catholic school our R.E. programme is not only part of the curriculum but pervades all aspects of school life. Through R.E. and the school's ethos, pupils develop a positive sense of themselves and their beliefs, along with a respect for others. Class Assemblies are an integral part of our R.E. programme where each class has the opportunity to showcase its talents and abilities. Throughout the year we invite parents of those children presenting a Class Assembly to share in the occasion.



Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

(P.D.&M.U.) focuses on encouraging each child to become personally, emotionally and socially effective, to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives and to become confident, independent and responsible citizens, making informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

Languages

Conversational Irish is taught to all pupils as part of the development of their knowledge about their culture, past and present. All children are encouraged to participate in a community Irish Language Festival (Feis) in the Spring term.

Access to the Curriculum & Learning Environment

We believe that children learn best in an environment which is well cared for, which fully supports the curriculum and which clearly shows we value the learners within it. We aim to offer an exciting, stimulating environment for learning, whilst promoting attitudes of mutual respect, concern and consideration for all within our school. The curriculum is seen as being available to all learners and no pupil will be discriminated on grounds of religion, gender or disability. Each classroom contains displays of the children's work, celebrating the range and diversity of talent amongst children of all abilities. All pupils have access to quality up-to-date resources including SMART boards in each classroom. We also have a well equipped Sports Hall. In addition we have a Learning Support room, two libraries and an extensive outdoor learning area which meets the needs of all learners at St. Mary's.



Encouraging you and your child to take a full part in school life

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Parents and visitors often remark about the atmosphere in our school and the welcoming, courteous and co-operative way in which the children behave. We pride ourselves in knowing that our school is a community where behaviour is based on mutual respect and consideration for others. We aim for each member of staff and each child to teach and model good behaviour. Through a generic set of Golden Rules based on clear responsibilities and rights, an integrated P.D. & M.U. area of learning and the teaching of positive behaviour strategies we expect our children to become self-disciplined, to understand the consequences of all their actions and to view a mistake as an opportunity for improvement. We encourage children to talk and share their concerns and we listen. We have clear sanctions for misbehaviour but we expect to use them infrequently and instead focus on achievements. We are very proud of the positive way children behave in our school and the caring attitudes they display towards adults, their peers and the wider community. Mrs O Duffy is the school's designated teacher for Child Protection, with Mrs M Hamill supporting her in this role.



Reward System

We reinforce positive attitudes to work, attendance and behaviour by acknowledging what our children have achieved. Achievement certificates are presented to children for following the school rules and good work. In this way we aim to encourage high self-esteem and a sense of responsibility from a young age.

Special Educational Needs

St Mary's is an inclusive and welcoming school. This means we value the unique contributions of all children from all backgrounds, ensuring equal access for all and providing effectively for their learning needs and styles. This is made available through high quality support, modern resources and high quality differentiated teaching. We have adapted our school building to provide for disabled access. Children with additional learning needs are identified by staff, their needs are discussed with parents/carers and a personal learning programme is set up to enable them to realise their full potential. Children may receive support from the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SEN Co), a trained classroom assistant, or an outside specialist agency. The parents/carers of children with statements are invited each term to review their child's provision. Mrs O Duffy and Mrs M Hamill share the role of SEN Co in school.



Encouraging you and your child to take a full part in school life

After Schools Provision

Children's experiences at St Mary's are greatly enhanced through the After Schools provision that we are able to offer for a nominal fee. These classes usually happen after school and are an important part of developing children's abilities and talents and exposing them to a broader range of experiences. Classes offered can include: ICT, Numeracy, Drama, Cookery, Gardening and Multi- skills (sports).



Eco School and School Council

St. Mary's places a tremendous amount of effort to promote care and respect for the environment. The school has worked hard on raising the pupils awareness of local and global environmental issues whilst enhancing the school grounds. Pupils have the opportunity to weed, plant and harvest as part of the school's outdoor learning environment. The school council is elected annually and participates in monthly meetings where issues raised by the pupils are discussed.

Fund Raising

Each year a local or a national charity is chosen to fund-raise for, and the children also support the work of Trocaire during Lent. In addition we have termly fund raisers for school funds. These fund raising events help towards costs with travel and school equipment.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Uniform

It is school policy that all children wear the full uniform when attending school, or when participating in school-organised events outside school.
A complete list of the items needed for school uniform is listed below:

GIRLS		BOYS	
Light blue polo shirt (with school logo) Navy Blue ‘V’ neck sweatshirt (with school logo)			
Navy pinafore or Navy skirt Navy knee high socks/tights White ankle socks (warm weather) Summer dress (blue and white check (warm weather))		Navy trousers (no jogging bottoms/ trousers with logos/stripes/ankle zips) Navy shorts (warm weather)	
Black shoes			
OUTDOOR CLOTHING			
Navy waterproof fleece (with school logo)			
PE CLOTHING			
Plain white t-shirt <u>or</u> O’Neill’s School Jersey Plain navy shorts Trainers/Black plimsoles			

We insist that all items of clothing be clearly labelled.

New Admissions

A welcome meeting is arranged in June for parents of children who are to be admitted during the following academic year. This informal welcome meeting explains a typical day at school, the P.1 curriculum and the children's routine. Parents also get the opportunity to find out about important policies in the school. At other times of the year parents of prospective pupils are most welcome to make an appointment with Mrs Hamill who will be glad to answer questions and show them the school and children at work.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Maintaining Standards

St. Mary's Primary School is known for its excellent standards using modern approaches combined with traditional standards. In applying for a place in St. Mary's, we assume that you, as a parent/guardian, recognise and will support the staff in maintaining the standards outlined within this prospectus. These are based upon safety and mutual respect for the needs and aspirations of all within the school.

Board Transport to and from School

The EA maintains a school bus to St. Mary's in the morning and at 3pm in the afternoon. This is available to pupils who live on the bus route and are more than two miles from the school. Details of the routes serviced and timetables are available from the Transport Department at the EA.

Charging & Remissions Policy

Education at St. Mary's Primary School is provided free of charge for all lessons and activities. However, there may be occasions when payment is required.

1. The school may take part in 'optional extras' which are not connected with the school's formal curriculum.
2. When an overnight school trip provides education outside school hours which is not part of the formal curriculum, then a charge will be made to cover travel, materials, non teaching staff costs, entrance fees, insurance costs, board and lodging.
3. The Board of Governors may, at their discretion, make charges or fines for breakages, damage, or loss of school property or equipment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Healthy Breaks

St. Mary's operates a 'Healthy Breaks' policy whereby children are asked to choose the healthier option and bring a piece of fruit, a sandwich, a yoghurt to school for their snack at break time. Water or milk is the only drink allowed as part of the Healthy Breaks scheme.

School Meals

A healthy hot school meal is provided in school at the cost of £2.60 per day. Dinner money must be paid in advance. A copy of the school menus is available on the school website and posted on Dojo.

First Aid

Two members of staff are fully trained and have been awarded a HSENI First Aid Certificate. All staff have received basic First Aid training and follow school procedures when an accident occurs.

Accidents & Sickness

In the unfortunate event of a child being sick or injured, the school will make every effort to contact the parents to inform them. If we are unable to contact the parents and we deem your child needs medical attention, we will contact a doctor or go to Minor Injuries at South Tyrone Hospital. If necessary we will take your child to the A&E at Craigavon Hospital. In all cases, it is the policy of the school to act in the best interests of the child.



Obtaining and Inspecting School Documents

Documents relating to the curriculum are available for public inspection and can be obtained on request from the school office.

School Hours

P1- P.3: 09:10- 2.00 pm

P.4-P.7: 09:10-3.00 pm

Pupils are supervised from 8.50 am. P1 pupils access the school via their own classroom door.

A fifteen minute supervised morning outdoor play is available and recommended for all pupils. All pupils not engaged in extra curricular activities should have left the premises by 3.00 pm unless a previous arrangement has been made.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Keeping in touch

All children have a Home School Planner through which we encourage exchange of information between parents, teachers and children. Information is also available via Dojo or on our school website:

www.stmarysstewartstown.com

We strive to operate an 'Open Door' Policy and we encourage parents to feel that they are an important part of school life. Formal Parent teacher meetings take place in the first term for all classes and are an ideal way of discussing the progress of pupils. Further meetings take place in term 2 where it is deemed necessary.

Each term the children participate in various events. At Halloween there is a 'Fancy Dress' parade for children and in Term 2 we have an Easter Bonnet Parade and Easter Egg hunt. Finally in Term 3 we celebrate at both Sports Day and our Annual Prize Giving events. Parents are always invited along to all of our religious celebrations, Sacramental preparations, school Mass, First Communion and Confirmation, details of which are included in the Parents' Booklet which is distributed in September.

At all of these occasions we look forward to meeting up with parents. We encourage parents to have access to school and staff at any time, however, unless there is an emergency, we ask that an appointment be made with either the Class teacher or the Principal to discuss any issues of concern.



Complaints Procedure

At St. Mary's our emphasis is on partnership and we hope that all problems concerning any child will be dealt with speedily. However if there are any complaints about any aspect of the school, we ask that they be brought to the Principal's attention as soon as possible. In such instances we will adhere to the school's Parental Complaints Policy.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Complaints regarding the curriculum

If a parent wishes to discuss the content of the curriculum he/she should in the first instance speak to the class teacher. If the parent or carer feels that the concern has not been resolved they should then make arrangements to speak to the Principal. If the concern remains unresolved the parent or carer can write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors outlining their concerns.

Homework

The homework set at St. Mary's Primary School is seen as a valuable way to reinforce/revise work taught in school. It is a useful way for children to develop good work habits and to involve parents in their child's studies. Against this must be balanced each child's need for recreation and the development of personal interests and hobbies. Therefore the amount of homework should not exceed that which can be done in under 20 minutes in the KS1 classes and up to 60 minutes in P4 - P7. To ensure regularity, it will be school policy that homework will be set each night (Monday to Thursday) for all pupils though this may be relaxed for special occasions and around holidays. We recommend that homework is completed early in the evening in quiet surroundings. This should be beneficial to both parent and child as time spent together will enrich the relationship with your child and make you aware of your child's current work level and progress. Parents will receive a copy of the school's Homework Policy prior to their child starting school.

Attendance

Attendance at St. Mary's continues to remain at a high level with the overall percentage record being 96% for pupils from P.1 to P.7.

We hope that this Prospectus gives you all the practical information you need. You are also most welcome to visit the school - all you need to do is give us a call and make an appointment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pastoral Care

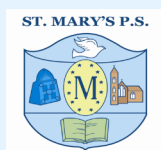
In line with the policy of maximising the potential of each pupil, the school recognises that it has a responsibility to do everything possible to care for each pupil's physical and emotion well being. As such the school will endeavour to provide a comfortable and safe environment for learning.

Due to the nature of primary education it will be the responsibility of each class teacher to look after the pastoral needs of the children in their class. Class teachers will attempt to resolve pupils concerns. The Principal will be grateful for information about any difficult home circumstances, which may be causing distress or anxiety.

Child Protection Procedures are established in school and if any concerns cannot be resolved by the class teacher then the child or parent can speak to Mrs Duffy or Mrs M Hamill (Child Protection Designated Teachers).

When a child is sick or injured, the school will contact a parent (or carer as nominated by the parent). Parents should notify the school immediately if there are any changes in contact telephone numbers and names of carers.

Prior to starting school, parents will be asked to complete a form indicating any medical ailments/concerns or allergies their child may have. In all cases, it will be the school policy to act in the best interest of the child.



St Mary's Primary School 22 West Street Stewartstown Dungannon BT71 5HT Telephone/Fax No: (028) 8773 8388 Email: mhamill472@c2kni.net Website: www.stmarysstewartstown.com	Maintained Primary School Enrolment Number: 140 Admissions Number: 20 PRINCIPAL: Mrs M Hamill CHAIR OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS: Rev Fr Eugene O'Neill
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RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS

The Board of Governors draw up and apply the criteria for admissions.

ADMISSION

If the school's admission and enrolment numbers have not been reached the school will admit all children of the appropriate age whose parents wish them to attend the school. These children are:-

- i those of compulsory school age (children who reach their fourth birthday on or before 1 July 2023).

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 10th January 2023 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 27 January 2023 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 27 January 2023 will be treated as a late application, this is also the last date and time for processing a change of preference in exceptional circumstances. After 4 pm on 31st January 2023 no applications will be processed until after the close of procedure on 27 April 2023.

Priority will be given to children who will have attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission, including those children whose parents deferred their admission to primary school in September 2022 as defined by the new School Age (NI) Act (both groups to be treated equally).

The Board of Governors will apply the following criteria in the order indicated to identify which children should be admitted at initial admission to education.

Children who normally reside in the Parish of Ballyclog and Donaghenny.

Children who will have brothers or sisters, half-brothers or half-sisters in attendance during the 2023/2024 school year.

Children with exceptional circumstances (medical, social or other problems) that necessitate admission to St Mary's Primary School, Stewartstown rather than any other primary school. The circumstances should be personal to the child and must be supported by independent and appropriate documentation, providing evidence of the circumstances being described as being exceptional.

The remaining places will be allocated on the basis of the proximity of the child's home to the school, priority being given to those living nearest to the school as measured using the shortest driving distance by public road.

Where there is oversubscription within a criterion children to be admitted will be identified on the basis of proximity of the child's home to the school, priority being given to those living nearest to the school.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require supplementary evidence as it may determine, to support or verify information on any application. Documentation submitted in support of your application should be provided directly to the school of first preference.

If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline given, this will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

WAITING LIST POLICY

The school does not operate a Waiting List Policy.

ADMISSION TO P2 - P7

The following criteria will be applied in the order set down 1-4

A pupil will be considered for enrolment provided that the school will not exceed its enrolment number as determined by the Department of Education.

A pupil may be accepted provided that this would not cause a class size in any year to exceed 30.

3. A pupil may be accepted provided that in the opinion of the Board of Governors, their admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.
4. Pupils will be accepted in order of application. If oversubscribed on this criterion children will be selected on the basis of the following sub-criteria in the order set down.

Children of families who have come or are coming to reside in the Parish of Ballyclog and Donaghenny.

P2 children before P3, P3 before P4 etc.

Applications and Admissions to Primary 1		
Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2020/2021	13	12
2021/2022	10	9
2022/2023	14	14