

Saint Mary's Primary School Kircubbin



Prospectus
2023

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General Information

St Mary's Primary School was opened in 1981 in the village of Kircubbin to serve the community of the village, nearby Greyabbey, Cloughey and the parish of Ardkeen. The building is very pleasantly situated in close proximity to Strangford Lough and affords panoramic views, which stretch from Scrabo Tower to the Mourne Mountains.

The school is sited well away from the main thoroughfare and children who walk to school are safe. At present there are 142 pupils on roll.

Great emphasis is placed on respect and good manners. A high standard of work, personal achievement and conduct is maintained by pupils and staff working harmoniously. There is a designated school uniform. Good attendance, punctuality and good conduct are the norm.

Accommodation

The well-kept accommodation comprises 8 classrooms including two Social Communication Units; spacious general-purpose areas within each classroom area; fully equipped Sensory Room; fully equipped and accessible Hygiene Room; The Den After Schools' Room/Tuition Room; Computer Suite; assembly/dining/physical education hall; staff room; administrative block and meals kitchen.

The immediate environment of the school is much enhanced by the wide, open green spaces, which surround the school, including spacious hard surface play areas, large pitch area, trees, Outdoor play area for Foundation Stage and Soft surface Play area for Social Communication Units.

General Aims of the School

- To create a happy, trusting, Christian and Catholic environment where pupils are afforded the opportunity to develop spiritually morally, emotionally, intellectually and aesthetically.
- To allow pupils to grow in maturity self-confidence and independence.
- To make pupils aware of their own dignity, personal qualities and talents
- To foster within each pupil responsible and caring attitudes and values based on the love of God and the love and neighbour.
- To provide a broad, balanced curriculum conducive to enjoyable learning.
- To develop aesthetic sensitivity and appreciation.
- To develop in pupils a tolerance of other cultures and religions. (We currently have a vibrant Shared Education Partnership with Victoria Primary School, Ballyhalbert.)
- To encourage good eating habits and a healthy life style.
- To make full use of available resources (both human and material) e.g. Home/School liaison is vitally important and in addition to formal arrangements (P/T Meetings etc.) every opportunity must be afforded to parents and teachers to combining their expertise.
- To ensure continuous progression in each area of knowledge throughout the school.
- To integrate the cross curricular areas of knowledge within the existing organisational structure of the school where possible.

- To record the progress of each pupil (Assessment - Achievements Social and Academic) and report it.
- To provide essential provisions where weaknesses are apparent.
- To make pupils more aware of their local environment and to encourage them to care for it.

The School Uniform

Taking account of DE policy, we have made every effort to ensure that our school uniform provides exceptional value for money.

Winter Uniform

Boys P.1-P.3.

Navy Trousers
 *Navy Sweatshirt
 With School Badge
 Sky Blue Polo Shirt
 Black School Shoes

Girls P.1-P.3

Navy Skirt/Pinafore/Trousers
 *Navy Sweatshirt
 with School Badge
 Sky Blue Polo Shirt
 Black School Shoes
 Navy tights/White socks

*school holds a small stock of the sweatshirts. School tracksuits, which are optional, can be ordered from David Crawford Uniforms, Newtownards.

Summer Uniform (optional)

Boys

Navy Shorts

Girls

Blue/White checked dress

The School Day

The school day begins early for many children with the breakfast club 7.30 am - 8.45am. at the breakfast club your child can purchase cereal, porridge, toast, sausage, fruit, and tea. Costs are minimal and after breakfast your child may play a variety of games or read a range of books.

8.45 - 8.55 am	Assembly takes place every day with prayers
8.55 - 10.30 am	Lessons
10.30 - 10 45 am	Break
10.45 - 12.00pm	Lessons
12.00 - 12.45pm	Lunch
12.45 - 1.45pm	Lessons *school ends for P1 - P3 pupils
1.45 - 3.00 pm	Lessons * school ends for P4 - P7 classes

On Fridays all classes finish at 1.45 pm.

** There is a wide range of after school activities on offer (Mon - Thursday) and many children stay on for an extra hour.*

Homework

The Purpose of Homework

- Develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in fostering children's learning.
- Consolidate and reinforce the children's skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Encourage children to exploit all kinds of resources for learning.
- Offer children the opportunity to extend their school learning to the home.
- Encourage children as they get older to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own and to prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.

The Type and Amount of Homework

- The main focus of homework in the primary school is on literacy and numeracy.
- In KS1 homework largely consists of regular reading with parents and carers, and looking at books together.
- Fluent readers should read on their own for at least 15 minutes a day.
- Other literacy related homework will include learning spellings and practising correct punctuation.
- Numeracy homework can consist of number games and tasks and more formal exercises for older children.
- Older children will be given homework gradually increasing in its demands. This may include finding out information, reading in preparation for lessons, preparing oral presentations or more traditional written assignments.

- Homework tasks are often differentiated so that they are appropriate to the needs and abilities of class groups. At other times tasks are differentiated by outcome, allowing children to respond according to their own ability.
- If the child is spending too much time at homework parents should consult class teacher.
- If homework is unsatisfactorily completed on a regular basis parents will be consulted.

The Curriculum

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum suited to the needs of every child in our care.

The content of the curriculum is statutory and varies little from school to school. However, at St Mary's we believe that having taken in account modern research on learning theories and multiple intelligences, we are well placed to meet the needs of your child.

The main learning areas in school will be Mathematics and Numeracy, Language and Literacy, Personal Development, Physical Education, The World around Us, Religious Education and The Arts.

Assessment

Detailed monitoring of pupil progress takes place throughout the year. For example, after each topic is taught in class your child will complete an assessment activity in school. It will be then sent home for you to view, sign and return to school. As well as informing the

teacher of your child's future learning needs it also keeps you informed about how they are coping with school work.

Parent/Teacher consultations take place early in the second term when pupils' work is reviewed and assessed.

A detailed end of year written report is issued in mid-June and parents are given the opportunity to come to school to discuss this report if they so wish.

In addition to the above the school complies fully to meet any requirements of statutory assessment.

Religious Education

Catholic Education takes place a community inspired by the Spirit of Christ.

Christ's commandment to love God and neighbour inspires a caring ethos, which is expressed in relationships within and beyond our school and is rooted in the Gospel values.

St Mary's is a community of Faith, Service, Prayer and Worship. Using the Religious Education Programme "Grow in Love" we aim to promote:

- ✓ A respect for each other and the community through exploring issues within the 'Grow in Love'.

- ✓ A love of the Sacraments.

- ✓ Catholic beliefs and values already begun by you the parents at home.
- ✓ A happy, homely, structured environment where respect and good relationships are promoted between pupil and teachers.
- ✓ A love of the Catholic faith that children will hopefully carry into their adult lives.
- ✓ A positive attitude towards parents and seek to involve them in the Religious Education of their children.

The local faith community gather in school each Wednesday morning to celebrate the Eucharist, in which the children play a full role.

Provision is made for children of other faiths and none by following selected elements within the Grow in Love programme. Their parents are fully informed and consulted about the content of the programme.

Shared Education

This forms a very important role within our work and we currently have links with Victoria PS Ballyhalbert.

Children undertake a wide range of educational activities in each other's schools and at various educational venues throughout Northern Ireland.

We believe that in our shared future there must be room and respect for our individual identities.

Special Educational Needs

Early identification of Special Educational Needs is a priority in St. Mary's.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will provide assistance to the class teacher in identification of special needs and in the drawing up of our education plan matched to the needs of the pupils. This plan is monitored and evaluated on a Termly basis.

If progress continues to be unsatisfactory assistance will be sought from Educational psychology, which may lead to access to external provision or a Statement of that child's needs being issued by Education Authority.

The process of determining that a child has Special Educational Needs in accordance with the Code of Practice involves S.E.N.C.O. teacher, parent and relevant professionals.

Booster Group is provided for those children who need an extra boost to their Reading or Numeracy; this is subject to school budget at the time.

All children in school take part in the Buddy Reading System where older children are paired with younger children for 10 minutes on alternate days to read to each other.

Admissions

P.1 Intake

The following criteria will be applied, in the order set down by the Board of Governors of St. Mary's Primary School, Kircubbin in selecting children for admission to Primary 1 in September each year.

1. Children of compulsory school age who normally reside in the parish of Ardkeen.
2. Children of compulsory school age who have brothers/sisters (half brothers/sisters) currently enrolled in the school.
3. Children of compulsory school age who had brothers/sisters (half brothers/sisters) formerly enrolled at the school.
4. Children of compulsory school age whose parent/guardian is currently a permanent member of the school teaching/ancillary staff.
5. Children of compulsory school age who reside outside the parish of Ardkeen and whose parents want them to attend this school.

After Enrolment

School Organised

- a) Parents are invited to come to the school in the month of June to meet their child's teacher.
- b) Parents will be invited to the school to take part in such activities

as open evenings, book fairs, carol services, concerts and games as they occur from time to time.

b) Parents of P.3, P.4 and P.7 children are invited to meetings during the year in preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

c) Parents will be welcome to meet their child's teacher to discuss progress in November.

We operate an "open door" policy for parents and encourage them to always seek advice and consult with teachers regarding any concerns they have.

Links with Parents

At St. Mary's we consider our partnership with our parents to be crucial. We believe that teachers, parents and especially the children, benefit greatly.

We have a wide range of links which include: -

- ✓ Parents Support Group
- ✓ Parent-teacher interviews
- ✓ Weekly Masses
- ✓ Book Fair
- ✓ Social and fund-raising events
- ✓ Parents helping with Sporting events
- ✓ Special Assemblies
- ✓ Reading Partnership
- ✓ Parents helping with Educational Visits
- ✓ Sports' Day
- ✓ Christmas Fair
- ✓ Fun night
- ✓ Sacraments
- ✓ Training offered

Various leaflets provided by school- including

- ✓ Helping with Homework
- ✓ Helping with Reading P.1/2
- ✓ Helping your Child Become a Reader P.2 to P.4
- ✓ Discipline Policy
- ✓ Homework
- ✓ Bullying Policy
- ✓ Pastoral Care
- ✓ Child Protection Policy

Residential Courses and Educational Visits

Children's experience of life is extended by taking them out of school on day visits. These are closely linked to the work of the class. Older children experience residential to Share Centre Fermanagh, where they enjoy outdoor activities.

Extra Curricular Activities

At St Mary's we recognise the importance of after school activities as a means to develop the interests and abilities of the young people in our care. We also recognise this as an opportunity to get to know our pupils on a more relaxed basis when fun, enjoyment and participation are the focus of each activity.

The following is a sample of the activities on offer. It is not exhaustive and will be enhanced depending on pupils' particular interests and opportunities available at the time.

Hurling
Camogie

Soccer
Rugby

Judo
Homework club

The Den

School also provides after school care based in school. The Den can be booked on a weekly/daily basis and is reasonably priced to help provide affordable support and provision for our parents. It closes at 6pm.

Mission Statement

In St. Mary's Primary School, we aim to create a caring community in which all pupils are encouraged to fulfil their spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, aesthetic and emotional potential.

Central to this aim is the recognition of the worth and value of every child, the fostering of Catholic values and the promotion of mutual understanding and respect for others.

We aim to establish a community wherein all pupils, staff and parents enjoy a sense of belonging and each has an important role to play in the success of that community.

At St Mary's we are committed to educating Mind, Heart & Spirit.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Policy of St. Mary's includes all pupils, parents and staff involved in the life of the school.

We aim to promote a caring school which values all who are part of it, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in which the children feel secure and happy and all staff work together as a team, supportive of one another and sensitive to each other's needs.

The curriculum is seen as a whole curriculum which includes a pastoral care policy for the pupils. In line with the policy of maximising the potential of each pupil's physical and emotional well-being. The school will endeavour to provide a comfortable and a 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 his/her class. Class teachers will attempt to resolve the worries of new pupils and relieve their anxieties.

When a child is sick or injured the school will in the first instant attempt to bring the child home or bring the parent to school. If this is not possible the child will be brought to the local Health Centre or to the Hospital if needs be. Parents are advised to nominate an emergency contact. In all cases it will be the school policy to act in the best interests of the child.

School Discipline

In St. Mary's we adopt a positive approach to discipline expecting pupils to behave in a responsible manner by showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other people at all times. This standard of behaviour is expected both inside school as well as on their way to and from school.

St. Mary's aims to create an atmosphere of "Love of God and Love of Neighbour". Children are taught to show respect to priests, teachers, kitchen, cleaning and ancillary staff, visitors and to one another.

The co-operation of parents is sought in relationship to maintaining high standards of pupil attendance, punctuality, personal appearance, the wearing of school uniform, having proper equipment for learning and the supervision of homework.

Teachers also make an important contribution to maintaining a positive approach to discipline.

Good behaviour is found where teachers enjoy good relationships with their pupils, have high expectations of their pupil's work and who provide a curriculum and teaching methods evenly matched to an individual pupil's needs.

If problems, do arise we like to involve the parents at an early stage rather than leave it until later and we hope that you as parents will do the same with us. An upset at home can cause your child to behave differently at school just as worry over schoolwork can cause you problems at home.

In any case involving a serious breach of rules, parents will be involved either by receiving a written report from school or by being invited to come to the school to discuss the matter.

Anti- Bullying

We have a comprehensive anti-bullying policy, which is continually under review. Parents are given a copy when children enrol. There are 3 key areas, which require your co-operation.

1. Inform the school immediately if a problem arises.
2. Try to get as much information as possible from your child in the comfort and safety of your home.
3. Work with the principal and class teacher to resolve the issue quickly.

The designated teacher for child protection is Miss McAuley. Pupils are made fully aware of this and may talk to her, their class teacher or Principal at any time.

Whilst bullying is not a problem in St Mary's incidents can arise from time to time. Please be assured that if you have a problem it will be dealt with sensitively, quickly and efficiently.