

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School



*School Prospectus
2022/2023*

*Our Lady of Lourdes PS
279 Crockanboy Road
Greencastle
Omagh
BT79 7QP.*

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Dear Parent

Your child has now reached the very important and special stage where formal compulsory education is soon to begin. Starting school is a major step into a new world and this new stage in your child's development should be viewed positively.

We are pleased you have chosen to entrust your child's education to Our Lady of Lourdes P.S. that serves the parish of Greencastle and the upper reaches of the parish of Badoney. The staff accept you have done so expecting that your child will be given the opportunities to develop his/her talents, skills and confidence. The staff will fulfil your hopes by creating a caring and pleasant environment in which your child's potential will be realised. We hope your child will find the time spent in Our Lady of Lourdes enjoyable and rewarding.

This prospectus will help you learn something of what the school has to offer for the personal and educational development of your child as an individual. As it cannot convey the real atmosphere of the school you are most welcome to visit with your child to meet the class teacher and myself before your child actually starts school.

If you have any queries or difficulties at any time you are most welcome to contact or visit the school and we will be happy to discuss matters with you.

*Yours sincerely
Mrs Donnelly
Principal*

MEMBERS OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of *Governors* has overall responsibility for the effective management of the school.

TRUSTEE REPRESENTATIVES (NOMINATED)

Mr Michael Coyle
Fr E Gallagher
Mrs Michelle Clarke

W.E.L.B. REPRESENTATIVES (NOMINATED)

Mr Stephen Brogan
Mrs J Tracey
Mrs Leona Teague

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE (NOMINATED)

Mrs Geraldine Scullion Chairperson

PARENT REPRESENTATIVE (ELECTED)

Mrs Una Tuohey

TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE (ELECTED)

Mrs Grainne Conway

PRINCIPAL

Mrs Donnelly

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Our Lady of Lourdes is a Catholic school and as such is an extension of your Catholic home. It is there that our pupils first experience the Catholic faith in practice from you, the parents.

In this school one of our main aims is to promote values and a way of life in keeping with our shared faith and your aspirations. The staff firmly believes the total atmosphere in the school is very important for the positive growth of each child. Staff members recognise that our faith must be evident throughout the teaching programme and reflected in the school's pastoral care provision.

We appreciate the very important partnership role which you, the parents, play in the education of your child who has been learning from you in the crucial early years. The interest and example you have shown will now be evident.

The active and constructive co-operation between parent/teacher and home/school must be on-going and based firmly on mutual respect and understanding.

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STATEMENT OF AIMS

The staff of Our Lady of Lourdes are responsive and sympathetic to the individual needs and abilities of our pupils and aim to:-

- help your child develop values, beliefs and attitudes in keeping with our Catholic faith;
- recognise your child's individuality, talents and potential;
- provide your child with a broad and balanced curriculum in keeping with the requirements of the Revised N. I. Curriculum;
- promote the development of your child's self-confidence, self-respect and self-discipline;
- encourage your child's understanding of each person's present and future role as a valued and contributing member of our community;
- encourage your child to be aware of and respect the immediate environment leading to a better understanding of the widening world and its resources;
- encourage in your child a sense of community with tolerance and respect for others who differ in religion, culture, social background or nationality;
- help your child develop an open, enquiring mind and the ability to question and make informed decisions;
- help your child to value the importance of personal health and fitness.

It is the aim of the staff to provide for the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural and physical development of your child in a friendly, caring and disciplined environment.

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum on offer consists of a very wide range of learning experiences and activities. Since September 2007 The NI Revised Curriculum has been phased in across all classes and now all pupils learn through these new arrangements.

The curriculum consists of the following:-

AREA OF STUDY	SUBJECTS
Religious Education	Religious Education
Language+Literacy	Talking + Listening Reading Writing ICT
Mathematics + Numeracy	Mathematics ICT
The World Around Us	Science Technology and Design History Geography ICT
Personal Development and Mutual Understanding	
Creative and Expressive Studies	Art & Design Drama Music Physical Education

Delivery of the curriculum is through a variety of approaches - subject based, cross curricular, independent study. Pupils are taught in composite classes of mixed ability. On some occasions it will be appropriate for pupils to be taught by a teacher other than the class teacher.

ASSESSMENT

Regular assessment is carried out to evaluate pupil progress and the success of teaching strategies.

Assessment takes the following forms:-

Regular testing by class teachers eg. Maths, English and end of topic tests.

Standardised testing in Maths and Literacy.

Statutory assessment (Years 4 and 7). Tests supplied by CCEA.

Cross Curricular Skills

The results of these assessments are made known to the parents and comparison details for NI schools can also be provided. Results of Year 7 pupils are forwarded to the post- primary schools they will attend.

CROSS CURRICULAR THEMES

In addition to the compulsory subjects the curriculum includes several Cross Curricular Themes. These are not separate subjects in themselves but will be taught through the compulsory (curricular) subjects.

These are: Communication.
 Using Mathematics.
 Using ICT.

Comprehensive schemes of work detailing the content of the **programmes of study** and linking the relevant educational themes are being devised to ensure development and progression throughout the **Key Stages**.

These policy statements and schemes of work are available in the school for parents.

KEY STAGES

At primary level, the seven year period of compulsory schooling is divided into:-

Foundation Stage	Years 1 and 2.
Key Stage 1 (KS1)	Years 3 - 4
Key Stage 2 (KS2)	Years 5 - 7

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Religious Education programme builds on the faith the children have received from you and helps to extend and deepen their knowledge and practice of our faith. It also aims to increase their understanding and appreciation of the life and liturgy of the Church by promoting active participation in it. Presently we are phasing in the new Religious Education programme, *Grow In Love*, which develops moral and spiritual values that are in keeping with our faith and contribute to the ethos of the school and the development of a meaningful community spirit. Years 1-4 are currently being resourced to follow the *Grow In Love* programme. Years 5-7 will continue to use the "Grow in Love".

PASTORAL CARE

"Catholic schools are called to recognise and respect the uniqueness of all individuals, to enable them to realise their potential and help create the world as God intends it to be." (John Paul II *Redemptor Hominis* 1979)

The school's pastoral care programme seeks to support the learning and development of the children in all aspects of school life.

Pastoral Care is an integral part of the school's ethos and curriculum and permeates every aspect of school life. All members of the school community need to feel valued as they work together. Staff members, teaching and non-teaching, are involved in Pastoral Care.

A designated teacher has been appointed (Mrs Donnelly) to promote good pastoral practice within the school and to monitor the policy.

Liaison with parents is a very important aspect of the policy.

Many opportunities, formal and informal, are available for contact with the staff to inform, to advise and to discuss your child's progress or deal with any other relevant matter.

CHILD PROTECTION

The principles and philosophy which underpin our work at Our Lady of Lourdes are those set out in the "UN Convention on The Rights of The Child" (UK Agreement 1991) and enshrined in Children (NI) Order 1995 (effective from November 1996). In particular the principle we support is that every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and with the proper care given to their physical, emotional and spiritual well being, by those looking after them.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers with responsibility for Child Protection in our school are **Mrs Conway** and **Mrs Mc Cann**. Our Safeguarding Committee consists of two Governors, Chair **Mrs Geraldine Scullion** and **Mrs Una Tuohey** as well as **Mrs Conway** and **Mrs Mc Cann**.

A copy of the full school policy on Child Protection is available from the school on request.

DRUGS POLICY

Drugs Education is part of the school's Health Education programme. The main aims of this element of the programme are to educate our pupils so that they are aware of the dangers associated with drug abuse and to develop their confidence and self-assertive skills to help them cope with the peer pressure they may encounter in the wider community.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (S.E.N.)

Children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. Initially they will be catered for within their own class. The teacher will do this by matching the work to your child's level of ability. If your child continues to have difficulties additional support will be provided. This support may involve your child being withdrawn from the class and given tuition on a one to one basis or in a small group situation. Support may also be given when the S.E.N. teacher works with the individual child or small group in the classroom along with the class teacher.

Your child's progress will be monitored closely and you will be given regular updates. As parents your co-operation and home support will be invaluable.

Further support and guidance will be sought by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from outside agencies eg. Education Authority's Psychology Department.

Parents are advised of any such requests and subsequent reports.

HOME SCHOOL CONTACTS

During your child's time in the school you will have many opportunities for formal and informal links with the staff. You are invited to avail of them for the benefit of your child.

Listed below are the main occasions for home/school contacts:

- Initial meeting for parents of Year 1 pupils,
- Parent/Teacher consultation meeting usually in November.
- Sacramental preparation - First Confession, First Communion, Confirmation,
- Post - Primary Transfer Meetings (Year 7),
- School Performances
- End of year Mass
- Assemblies

You are also encouraged to visit the school at any other mutually convenient time to discuss any aspect of your child's education.

Information relating to the numerous events throughout the year will be detailed in letters to the parents of the pupils concerned.

Composite Classes

It would be great for planning and school organisation if the same numbers of children came to school each year. It doesn't happen! This year we will have an intake of 24 P1 pupils.

This leads to us having composite classes. We try to keep composite arrangements to a minimum. Various factors are considered when class placements are made. In all cases we seek to do what is best for each child. Whichever class children are in they are given work which is suited to their ability and which challenges them to grow and learn.

The criterion agreed by the governors is that in the event of a class having to be split the oldest children will move to the higher year group, but we will also strive to ensure where possible that gender balance is maintained.

In September 2022 with the make-up of numbers as they are we will find ourselves with composite classes throughout the school with the exception of our Year 1 class.

Appointments:

Please make medical, dental and other appointments for outside school hours if this is at all possible.

DISCIPLINE

"Every child is entitled to be educated, but no child is entitled to be educated at the expense of the education of others. Disruptive pupils will sometimes deprive other pupils of their rights." (Rodgers Report 1987)

The school's discipline policy in keeping with its Catholic aims and ethos, is based on fairness and respect.

Emphasis is placed on self discipline and pupils are treated as individuals.

Good behaviour and discipline are necessary for your child to enjoy a pleasant learning atmosphere in school. A responsible and tolerant attitude and a respect for the rights and property of others are essential for the community spirit of the school. A positive foundation established in early years will help our pupils develop a civic sense of responsibility.

Any form of bullying is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

If you feel your child is being bullied please contact the school immediately so that the matter can be dealt with.

If your child is involved in bullying your support will be sought in addressing the problem.

In this school we aim to:

- provide a supportive environment where the child can learn effectively
- help the pupil develop a sense of self-esteem and self control
- encourage the development of caring and responsible pupils

The school rules and standards of behaviour are explained to the children and are available to parents. The rules are based on the principles of common sense and courtesy and designed to maintain a safe and pleasant environment for pupils and staff. Pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner as far as their level of maturity permits.

The co-operation and support of parents is very important in maintaining effective discipline in the school.

Acceptance of admission to the school implies your acceptance of the school's discipline policy.

SCHOOL RULES

The rules set down and the standards expected in this policy are considered reasonable, acceptable and within the capabilities of our pupils. They are designed to develop in each pupil a sense of self-discipline and responsibility. You will find a copy of all policies relating to Pastoral Care, Discipline and Anti Bullying in our Parent Information Booklet.

Pupils must:

- come to school on time
- enter and leave the grounds by the small gate
- assemble in playground as instructed by teacher/supervisor before entering school (mid-morning, lunch break)
- walk in a quiet and orderly manner within the school
- take proper care of school books, equipment and property
- complete homework tasks in a manner satisfactory to the teacher
- avoid littering the school building and grounds
- obtain permission before leaving classroom, dining hall, grounds

- obey instructions given by teachers and supervisors including those occasions when involved in school activities off the school premises
- show respect for all staff, visitors and peers
- avoid fighting, bullying, threatening behaviour
- avoid using foul language or engaging in indecent behaviour
- behave on way to and from school - on foot, by car, by bus
- avoid going unnecessarily on areas of grass
- wear the standard school uniform
- refrain from chewing gum, spitting

Acceptable use of the Internet

The greatest impact on education in recent times has come through Information Communication Technology (ICT). In school the number of personal computers is rising, many homes also have high-level machines.

Presently in Our Lady of Lourdes we have 18 networked computers and twenty-five iPads.

We are connected in school to the Internet. The World Wide Web is a vast network, which has much to offer of educational value. We require all our pupils to have parental consent so that they can gain access to the Internet. Once your permission is given, then the child can use this facility under teacher guidance.

The internet is used:

- To skill children in using e-mail.
- To investigate and research school projects.
- To help develop children's ICT skills and research skills.
- To help with homework and presentation of work.

Children must be vigilant in the use of the Internet.

Having been recently upgraded the service now used in school is Fronter. This is designed to give protection against accessing unsuitable material. Pupils are

warned that they should immediately tell the teacher if unsuitable material is screened. The filters and firewall that protect the school's computers are very good but no system can offer a 100% guarantee against some unsuitable material or content getting through.

Please be vigilant at home about children using the Internet.

In Our Lady of Lourdes School, we agree with the Department of Education's recommendations that:

- Parents should discuss safe use of the internet with their children.
- Parents should get to know the sites their children visit and talk about these.
- Parents should ensure that children do not give out personal information, such as names, phone numbers, addresses.
- Parents should tell children not to respond to unwelcome or abusive messages.

UNIFORM

The uniform gives the children a sense of belonging and reflects the individuality of the school.

Pupils are encouraged to take care with their appearance and to take pride in the wearing of the uniform.

Parents should ensure that their child is provided with, and wears the uniform as detailed below. **There has been a tendency of late for children to wear tracksuit bottoms and Gaagles in place of the proper school uniform. A note will go out shortly about the need to wear full and proper uniform to school at all times.**

BOYS

Grey trousers

Blue Shirt

Wine school pullover with badge

GIRLS

Grey skirt/grey tights

Blue shirt

Wine school pullover with badge

School Tie

School tie

Quarter zip hoodie

Quarter zip hoodie

Fleece, rain jacket and hat are also available but are not essential items of uniform. Information and advice about where to purchase the uniform are available from the school office.

Footwear should have a non-marking sole eg. a trainer type shoe.

For P.E. pupils should wear shorts football or t-shirt and slippers/trainers. You are asked to make sure your child brings the P.E. gear on those days timetabled. For health and hygiene reasons pupils must change their clothing for P.E.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CHILD'S NAME CLEARLY ON ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING.

At Lunch Time Children may have Set Dinner or Packed Lunch

Set dinners are available every day and must be paid for in advance that morning. The canteen will send out a copy of the monthly menu in advance and that can help you decide which days you may want to avail of school dinners as an option.

Please try to ensure the correct money is sent with your child.

If you believe your child is entitled to have free meals you should complete an application form and send it to the Education Authority, 1 Hospital Road, Omagh, County Tyrone. We would encourage as many of you as possible to complete these forms to ensure that your children are not missing out on something they are entitled to.

Application forms are available online. They should be submitted in June each year if you want to ensure that your child's name is included on the Free School Meals list for the start of the new term in September. Only pupils on the official FSM list are entitled to receive Free School Meals. All other meals must be paid for.

Lunches and drinks should be packed separately from books to avoid damage in the event of spills. At this time of much debate on healthy eating and lifestyle choices, we would ask you to ensure that your child has as nutritious a lunch as possible. As part of our Health Promoting Policy we are continuing to implement

The Healthy Lunch Box Challenge to improve eating habits and oral health. Please try to include fruit and healthy snacks as opposed to bars of chocolate and snacks that are high in sugar or salt.

Your child's name should also be put on his/her lunch box.

Please note: **NO GLASS BOTTLES.**

CHARGES AND REMISSIONS

No charges will be made for normal curricular provision. Charges for transport, admission and accommodation will be made for the additional educational and cultural activities provided. The school will attempt to keep these charges to a minimum.

HEALTHY EATING

Children have a break each day (10:45 - 11:00am). Children may bring a snack that is in keeping with our Healthy Snacks Policy. Children are expected to show respect for their food, whether this is the lunch that has been prepared at home or dinner from the school canteen.

In Our Lady of Lourdes, we expect a good standard of behaviour during lunchtime. Children should show the same good standard of behaviour that we expect while sitting at our tables as they would at home.

Once again, this year Our Lady of Lourdes will be involved in a Healthy Eating programme and will hope to build on the success of receiving Gold Award status in Health Promoting Schools.

BREAKFAST CLUB

The breakfast club is reviewed on a termly basis therefore information regarding this club will be distributed in September 2022.

SCHOOL DAY

Pupils should arrive at school no later than 9:00am.
You are asked to have your child in school on time.
The staff will provide supervision each morning before our daily assembly.

9:10am - 12.30pm	Morning Session
10:45am - 11:00am	Morning break (supervised)
12:30pm - 1:15pm	Dinner/Lunch
1:15pm - 2:00pm	Afternoon Session - Years 1 and 2
1:15pm - 3:10pm	Afternoon Session - Years 3 - 7

ATTENDANCE

It is important that your child attends regularly.

If your child is unwell it is best for him/her to remain at home.

Please Note: In addition to the child's home telephone number at least one other contact person and telephone number must be available in the event of illness or emergency. Please ensure these numbers are current and that you inform the office of any changes.

Parents are asked to arrange medical/dental appointments outside school hours to avoid absences and disruption to your child's school day.

On your child's return to school following absence you should send a note giving the reason for the absence. This information is required by the Education Welfare Officer (E.W.O.) who regularly monitors attendance.

ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL



Anyone needing to visit the school at any time must first visit the secretary's office and report there. Please ensure that this procedure is followed and that the secretary is made aware as to the purpose of your visit. Most issues can be dealt with this way and the office should always be your first port of call (not to your child's classroom). Your co-operation with this arrangement is important for the safety of all pupils.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

The following school closings are presently planned for the school year 2022/23. Closing may be rearranged in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

AUTUMN TERM:

The autumn term dates to follow.

Other closures, including Halloween, Christmas, Mid Term and Easter holiday closures will follow later.

INTAKE ARRANGEMENTS

YEAR 1

There is one intake in September for those of compulsory school age. A letter regarding these arrangements, and "going home" times will be sent out.

EARLY DAYS

You should bring your child to school on time. Before leaving reassure your child you will return later. Parents who accompany children to and from school should use these opportunities to teach Road Safety.

In the interests of safety pupils must use the footpath on all occasions.

To help your child cope with starting school and to ensure that the settling in period is as easy as possible class for Year 1 pupils will end at 11:30am for the first week of term.

It is very important that all pupils, especially those in Years 1 and 2 are aware of the arrangements for getting them home.

Parents who call to collect children should wait until the class is dismissed.

Try not to be late as this can cause your child anxiety.

AFTER SCHOOL

At first your child may find school tiring but given time, attention and regular bedtime, will be much better able to cope.

Let your child know and see that you are interested in what is happening at school. Set aside time each day to talk about what he/she has been doing.

If your child sees you value education then he/she will appreciate more fully the importance of ongoing effort on his/her part.

HOMEWORK

It is important that homework is seen and valued as an integral part of your child's schoolwork. It extends learning opportunities and helps your child get used to the discipline of home study. Homework allows teachers to assess the effectiveness of their teaching by providing evidence of the child's level of understanding of work. You are asked to find time in order to provide active support and a suitable environment to ensure the required work is done. The homework activities given may involve oral preparation, written exercises, revision and practical work. Homework is most beneficial when it is given adequate time and done with care and attention. It is important that written work is well presented. Learning homework should also be seen as equally important.

You should contact the teacher if difficulties regarding homework are experienced. It may also be necessary for the teacher to contact you should problems arise in this area.

RESPECT FOR OTHER TRADITIONS

Commitment to the Catholic system of education does not imply a disregard for the religious and cultural traditions of other people in our community.

The Board of *Governors* and staff actively encourage meaningful contacts between our pupils and other schools, groups and cultures within both the local and the wider community.

The pupils enjoy these exchanges through our *Extended Schools* and extra curricular programmes which include sports events, inter-schools projects and competitions, visits to places of interest in the north of Ireland and the Republic and also association with numerous charitable and community organisations.

MEDICINES

If your child has asthma and needs to take an inhaler regularly it is advisable that one is kept in the classroom or school office. Inhalers should be clearly labelled with the child's name and instructions for use. Children should not bring any other medicines into school.

If an inhaler is required, then a parental consent note must be completed. These forms are available from Mrs Conway or Mrs Donnelly.

ILLNESSES AND ACCIDENTS

In the event of illness or accident we will try to contact you at home. Please make sure that any changes of telephone numbers are given to the secretary, including mobile numbers.

If we are unable to contact parents and your child needs attention we will contact your doctor's surgery or go to the minor injuries unit at Tyrone County Hospital. At all times we will seek to act in the best interests of your child.

If your child is ill before the beginning of the school day please do not send him or her to school. It is much better to stay at home until he or she is fully well.

We are advised by the School's Medical Service about infections and other conditions. Some of these, such as chicken pox, measles etc require exclusion from school for varying lengths of time. Others require no exclusion. A copy of this advice is available from the school.

HEAD LICE

Notes of advice are no longer issued from the school and the school nurse no longer carries out any head examinations.

The current advice issued through Homefirst is that parents should regularly check hair. Shampoo containing pesticides should only be used if lice are found. Nits (eggs) should be brushed or combed out. Advice leaflets are available from your local pharmacy.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In keeping with the ethos of the school for the development of the whole child many additional experiences and activities are provided by the staff.

These activities may take place on or off the school premises.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in outdoor and indoor sports -

Gaelic, soccer, netball, handball

cross country, athletics, swimming,

drama performances, choir, theatre visits,

art and craft exhibitions,

quiz competitions,

field trips and educational visits including residential stays.

Afterschool Clubs

Sport

Choir

Drama

Art

Healthy Lifestyles

Admission to these clubs depends on the number of children wishing to take part with priority being given to senior pupils.

Clubs take place 2 -3pm and 3:10pm - 4:10pm. Parents are responsible for transport arrangements of children after the club activity ends.

Children Learn What They Live

*If a child lives with criticism
she learn to condemn.*

*If a child lives with hostility,
he learns to fight.*

*If a child lives with ridicule,
she learns to be shy.*

*If a child lives with shame,
he learns to feel guilty.*

*If a child lives with tolerance,
she learns to be patient.*

*If a child lives with encouragement,
he learns confidence.*

*If a child lives with praise,
she learns to appreciate.*

*If a child lives with fairness,
he learns justice.*

*If a child lives with security,
she learns to have faith.*

*If a child lives with approval,
he learns to like himself.*

*If a child lives with acceptance
and friendship,
she learns to find love
in the world.*