

Bangor International Choral Festival
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St. Congall's Primary School, Bangor



Prospectus 2023-24



Dear Parent ...



Principal Welcome

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to St Comgall's Primary School. St Comgall's is a Catholic Maintained co-educational primary school which serves the Parish of Bangor. We strive to place the individual child at the heart of our educational provision; leading to a school with a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where every child feels valued as part of our school family. We celebrate the uniqueness of every child, made in the image and likeness of God.

We are a progressive, innovative and exciting school with high standards of learning and teaching. We have an exceptionally skilled team of staff who work together for the benefit of all children in our care.

St Comgall's is a nurturing school that welcomes children and families from all faiths and works closely in partnership with the parish and parents/carers to achieve the very best for our children.

Working in partnership with you, the parents/carers, will help us develop your child's whole personality and talents.

I hope that you find our prospectus informative and provide you with a snapshot of life in St Comgall's. I'd encourage all parents/carers with a child starting primary school in September 2024, to come to our Open Night on Thursday 7th December 2023 with the Principal address at 7PM. Here, you will experience the warmth of the inclusive nature of our school. If you are unable to attend, please contact the school office and we would be delighted to arrange an appointment for you to visit.

The staff and I look forward to welcoming you to our school.

Matt McGinley
Principal



Welcome to St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor



Situated on the Brunswick Road, St Comgall's National School opened its doors in October 1890 with an enrolment of just forty-eight pupils. In 2020, St Comgall's PS proudly celebrated its 130th anniversary with an enrolment in excess of 300 pupils.

The modern, child-focussed school building consists of nine permanent classrooms, three on either side of large central resource topic-learning areas as well as three large modular classrooms, a Learning Support/School Counselling room, Sensory Corridor, ICT & Library Areas as well as a multi-purpose gymnasium with school kitchen.

In addition, pupils have benefitted greatly from an outstanding outdoor and forest school learning deck and dens, a FS/KS1 soft play area, a KS2 Eco-Trail, an Eco-Garden and Greenhouse.

As a parish school, we also make great use of the outstanding facilities available within the adjacent St Comgall's Parish Centre, which boasts a dedicated youth centre, learning hub, excellent staging and one of the largest halls in the Borough which we use often for sporting events, musical recitals, school community celebrations and concerts/performances.



St Comgall's PS is very well resourced with a wide range of digital technology including CleverTouch interactive screens in all classrooms, class sets of iPads, Apple TVs, coding devices, Green Screening and podcasting tools.

As a recognised Digital Schools Award we make best use of technology in all aspects of our school and home learning and share our best practice with other local schools and families to support their learning.

Our Mission and Aims ...



Quality Learning, Friendship for All

The vision for all staff is to ensure St Comgall's is a safe, spiritual, nurturing environment to provide every child with the education they need.

St. Comgall's is committed to the aims and ideals of Catholic education and through this, we are committed to develop each child's full potential in a climate of joy, challenge, co-operation and celebration in partnership with and between Home, School, Parish and the wider community.

Mission Statement

We believe the school to be a vital part of the Catholic Community.

We are firmly committed to providing a loving and caring atmosphere, which embodies our Catholic Ethos in which the children can grow and develop to their full potential in all aspects of their life.

We, the Governors and Staff of St. Comgall's Primary School believe the school to be a vital part of the Community.

We, as a staff, aim to cultivate and nurture a Catholic and Christian ethos which will permeate every aspect of school life.

Positive inter-personal relationships with all at St. Comgall's are the cornerstone of this principle. The Governors and Staff of St. Comgall's are firmly committed to:

- the aims of the school
- providing effective education for all our children
- developing pastoral care in the school
- establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

St. Comgall's seeks to establish an educative community centred on Christ so that His values and gospel message pervade the whole life of the school.

Statement Of School Aims

As a Catholic School we are committed to:

- fostering and nourishing Christian values for life
- creating a happy, caring, safe environment
- providing a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum
- promoting innovative teaching and an investigative skills-based approach to learning
- embracing new initiatives in our quest for life-long learning
- using a varied up-to-date range of learning resources
- providing an enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits endeavouring to strengthen partnerships (between school, home, parish and community)



St Comgall's provides a wide variety of learning opportunities to nurture the development of all our children and follows the statutory curriculum for Northern Ireland. The Primary Curriculum is set out in Six Areas of Learning as follows:

- **Language and Literacy**
- **Mathematics and Numeracy**
- **The Arts**
- **The World Around Us**
- **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**
- **Physical Development and Movement**

At the heart of the curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and operating effectively in society. Through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum children will progressively develop:

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

- **Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making**
- **Self-Management**
- **Working with Others**
- **Managing Information**
- **Being Creative**

Cross Curricular Skills:

- **Communication**
- **Using Mathematics**
- **Using Information and Communications Technology.**



Language and Literacy



In St Comgall's, we know that the ability to communicate effectively is key to lifelong learning. As a school we aim to nurture children's ability to confidently communicate through writing, reading and talking and listening, in a range of contexts and across the curriculum.

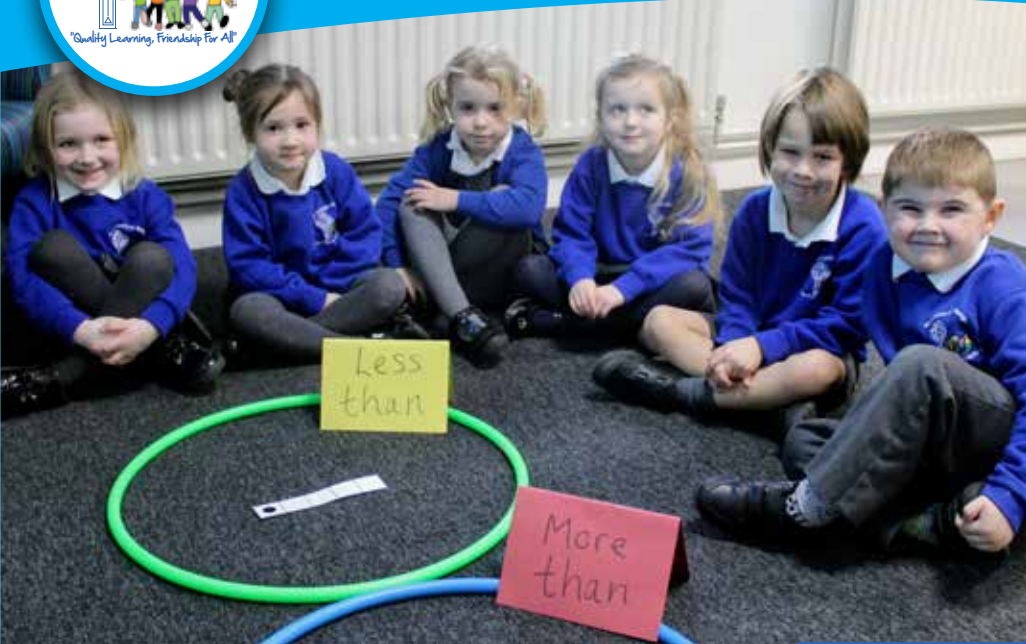
Our pupils use an extensive stock of shared, guided and independent level reading books and online texts to enable children to read with fluency and understanding and foster a love of books. We strive to promote a culture of reading across the school community with class visits from parents and grandparents as mystery readers in the early years. This love of reading is fostered through class visits to the local library and reading partnership programmes with Business in the Community (BiTC) groups and local post-primary students. ERIC (Everyone Reading In Class) time provides a daily period of reading for enjoyment. 'Today's readers are tomorrow's leaders!'

Our children are given imaginative opportunities to develop writing skills for a range of purposes and audiences. Through our topics, we aim to provide a range of opportunities for the children to use and apply the communication skills they have. From developing oracy skills to writing their own exhilarating stories, we love to see the communication skills of the children flourish.





Mathematics and Numeracy & WAU



At St Comgall's Primary School, we inspire all children to become confident and enthusiastic mathematicians who are willing to take risks. We foster a culture where children are not scared of making mistakes but where they see the opportunity to learn from those mistakes.

We aim to develop mathematical and numeracy skills and to provide opportunities for their application in meaningful, real-life situations. We strive to provide the children with exciting and challenging investigations, thereby increasing motivation and promoting a positive response to mathematics. We make use of a wide range of up-to-date practical resources and ICT support (including iPads) to enhance all areas of mathematical learning.

World Around Us

This area of the curriculum combines the subjects of history, geography, science and technology. It enables the children to experience and explore through a wide range of topics, which they plan with their teachers. We foster an active and experiential approach aiming to develop enquiring learners through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths). Our outdoor learning spaces and open plan shared resource areas enable children to have the opportunity to explore and experiment. This is supplemented with educational trips and visits which bring topics to life.

Recently, we achieved the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award (2023) and are proud advocates of the Northern Ireland Forest School Association (NIFSA) with staff trained to lead exciting outdoor opportunities for our pupils.



Using ICT



U ICT is a core aspect of our curriculum. Through the use of the latest technology, iPads, Surface Pros, CleverTouch Boards and desktop computers we prepare the children for an ever-increasing technological world.

Each class has a bank of iPads and our KS2 area houses our desktop computers. We ensure coverage of statutory requirements for ICT as set out under the 5 'E's- Explore, Express, Exchange, Evaluate and Exhibit.

Through the use of coding from Year 1 upwards our pupils are equipped with the skills that boost their problem solving and digital literacy.

We are a SeeSaw Ambassador School and use this to communicate with parents/carers and to showcase the amazing work of our pupils.

Internet Safety

We recognise that the internet provides our children with a wealth of information to support, enhance and share their learning. St Comgall's has internet access in every classroom and throughout the school. All traffic is subject to rigorous protection through our filtering service.



Pupils are provided with opportunities in school to develop knowledge and understanding of e-safety and acceptable online behaviour with a particular focus during 'Internet Safety Week.' Any use of the Internet will be strictly in accordance with the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, copies of which may be obtained from the school office.



Religious Education

As a Catholic School, we promote and foster the development of the Catholic faith. As a school community, we are committed to preparing pupils to become responsible citizens who are respectful of diversity and each other's uniqueness. However, Catholicism is inclusive and all are taught to have and demonstrate respect for others.

We welcome and embrace children of all and non-faith backgrounds.

Central to all our work and positive relationships is Religious Education. We believe that this is not a subject to be taught; rather it is a way of living our faith. Religion is not confined to the time-tabled programme within the school. It is an integral part of the life of St. Comgall's Primary School.

We use the 'Grow in Love' Programme and prepare the children for their role in the Catholic Community. The parish works closely with the school to prepare the children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

School assemblies are held every week to gather as a school community. Parents/carers are invited to attend special class assemblies.

The promotion of charity, social justice, global awareness, and concern for others leads to practical outreach within the community and beyond. We regularly support charities such as St. Vincent de Paul and Trocaire and share our skills and talents with our elderly friends and neighbours in St. Comgall's Friendship Club and local care homes.

If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from religious education or collective worship, they should contact the Principal to discuss alternative arrangements.



The Arts and Music



The Arts

Art and drama are a natural form of expression and a source of relaxation and pleasure. We encourage pupils to develop their creative and imaginative talents through learning skills and techniques whilst using a variety of tools and materials. Art and drama also greatly enhance children's learning across other curriculum areas. They have many opportunities to take part in dramatic events in class and share their talents through assemblies, school shows and competitions.



Music

In St Comgall's, we have a proud tradition of musical talent. Our award-winning choir practise on a regular basis and make a tremendous contribution to the sacramental and religious life of the school. They regularly perform at assemblies, special events and school shows. Our musical outreach includes participation in the Peace Proms in the SSE Arena, and contributions to the community by performing in nursing homes and various locations around the city. Working in partnership with Ards CCE and local musicians, pupils have opportunities to attend tuition lessons for a wide variety of instruments. Our fantastic traditional group, also perform on various school occasions across the year. The group work collectively to produce authentic and high-quality traditional music which has led to many achievements and accolades.





P.E.

The children receive a broad and balanced P.E. Curriculum involving the areas of gymnastics, games, dance and athletics. Children in Key Stage 2 also attend weekly swimming lessons. When possible, we make use of the input of external coaching staff in gymnastics, Gaelic football, soccer and netball to enhance our P.E. provision during the year. As part of our commitment to support pupil wellbeing, the classes take part in the Daily Mile. Our KS2 Sports Day winners qualify to compete in the North Down athletics championship in June each year.

Teams and Clubs

St Comgall's provides an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities and a wide range of clubs supported by school staff and the After Schools Programme. Our current range of clubs includes Gaelic football, soccer, cross country running, friendship club, netball, basketball, art projects and athletics.

Children represent the school in local schools' soccer and Gaelic football tournaments. The netball team is going from strength to strength and we regularly compete in local cross country events.



Supporting Learning



Our first priority is to identify those children in a class who are displaying difficulties. Once the class teacher has identified a child, evidence of progress is collated and a referral is made to the school Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo).

The provision for Special Educational and Additional Needs will be reviewed and assessed and a decision will then be taken as to whether the child should/should not be placed on the Special Educational Needs Register.

The identified educational needs of each child will be catered for by his/her class teacher through differentiation i.e. group and individual teaching and through withdrawal for further specialised learning and/or additional support from appropriate agencies. Some children progress within their own peer group where the class teacher provides work at the appropriate level.

Other children require more specific help. Each child's progress is assessed and monitored with frequent contact with parents/carers and other involved professionals and agencies.

We are fortunate to have qualified Reading and Maths Recovery Tutors on our staff.

Additional In-School provision is offered to those children identified as requiring extra support or booster sessions in consultation with staff and parents. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Group Education Plan (GEP) is prepared for all those requiring additional help. There is close liaison with parents and children at all stages. St. Comgall's also caters for the needs of Gifted and Talented children. Work is differentiated and designed to be challenging.

Our older pupils have very important mentoring and buddy roles. This supports the younger children with work, friendships and helps them settle into the school. We are very proud of the older children, who act as role models, developing their sense of responsibility and support for others.





Pupil Voice...



Pupil Voice; School and Eco Council

The pupil voice plays a significant part in helping us to make decisions about changes to the life of the school. The school council is elected annually from each class from P.4 - P.7 and the representatives meet with their classes to discuss the areas they are working on. Through this process children learn to consider pros and cons, their rights and responsibilities and consideration of others' views.

The Eco Council includes children and adults from across the school who are interested in making the school more environmentally friendly. They complete an action plan to identify improvements, meet with classes and produce information for parents relating to their project area. We are very proud of our Green Flag Status. In St Comgall's, as a member of the Forest School Family, we love to get outside to learn. Our grounds make use of the green space to enhance the pupils' learning and support the work of the Eco Council. Parents and families are always welcome to come along and help out.

We play an active and very successful part in the local community within the Bangor Parish through our Eco-Schools & FairTrade work, Shared Education partnership with Grange Park PS, Inter-Generational work with local Nursing Homes & Pensioner Groups, Transition partnerships with pre-schools and post-primary schools.

PTA

We have a very vibrant and energetic parent/carer group who fund-raise tirelessly on behalf of the school. Everything they do enhances the pupils' experiences and we are very appreciative of all of their efforts. Our school counselling service is provided thanks to donations from the PTA. We encourage all parents/carers to join and lend a hand.



In St. Comgall's, teachers are constantly vigilant to and closely monitor pupils' progress. The assessment of work is constructive and designed to support and engage pupils and at the same time facilitate future planning. The children are assessed from entry into school and throughout their movement across year groups and key stages. The school actively seeks to promote and maintain these high standards. The quality of provision for teaching and learning and pastoral care... is outstanding" (ETI, April 2014 and *Sustaining School Improvement Inspection, May 2017)

Pastoral Care and Safeguarding/ Child Protection

Our school is a happy place for children and a welcoming place for parents/carers. This philosophy is based on the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith. The whole school community work as a dedicated team to create a caring, loving and safe environment. We take our role of educating your son/daughter very seriously.

The well-being of every child - spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually is central to school life and permeates all areas of the curriculum. We are concerned with the needs of every pupil and our approaches and programmes are designed to bring out the best in your child.

Our Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr Sean Ennis. In his absence, Miss Bronagh Carey is Deputy Designated Teacher. We also have a dedicated school counsellor available to pupils one day per week.

At any time, the principal will happily arrange to meet with you to discuss your concerns.





St. Comgall's Primary School adopts a positive approach to discipline expecting pupils to behave in a responsible manner by showing consideration, courtesy and respect for others at all times. This standard of behaviour is expected from pupils both inside the school as well as on their way to and from school. The school aims to create an atmosphere of "Love of God and Love of Neighbour." Children are taught to show respect to everyone. Good behaviour promotes effective learning and the development of application, concentration and honest effort. We praise and encourage good work, effort, self-discipline and respect.

Our children make a Good Choice when they:

- **Show Respect**
- **Keep Control**
- **Be Safe**
- **Be Positive**

We seek the co-operation of parents/carers in promoting high standards of behaviour, attainment, and pupil attendance, punctuality, personal appearance and the wearing of school uniform.

In the unlikely event that the need for pupil suspension or expulsion should ever arise, we shall follow the procedure laid down by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

Anti-Bullying

St Comgall's does not tolerate any form of bullying. As a school, we will endeavour to prevent bullying by:

- Promoting a culture of respect and care for others through the promotion of the everyday ethos of the Catholic school
- Encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour
- Developing confidence and self-esteem
- Ensuring adequate and vigilant supervision.

In addition, children and parents will be provided with information about who to contact if they have concerns or complaints about bullying. The policy is available through the school office and is underpinned by The Addressing Bullying in School's Act (NI) 2016.

Complaints

Complaints concerning the curriculum and other matters referred to in Article 33 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 33 and regulations subsequently made by the Department of Education. A Complaints Policy is in place and follows CCMS guidelines including referral to the Ombudsman if complaints are not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction. A copy is available from the office.

Parents are advised to consult the Principal in relation to any and all concerns for any child.



Before and After Schools Engagement (BASE)



In St Comgall's we believe in educating the whole child. We believe in offering children a wide range of activities to develop their interests and extend their skills and talents.

As a family-friendly school, we operate a very popular Breakfast & Morning Activity Club operating daily 8am – 8.40am. In addition, we offer a range of after-school clubs. These clubs seek to deepen friendships, promote physical and creative activity and support working parents. There is a charge for these services but costs are kept to a minimum.

Sleepy Hollow Group, Northern Ireland's largest and leading childcare company, offers onsite afterschool childcare to our pupils. This starts at 2pm and runs until 6pm. It also operates during some school holidays.

*** A copy of the school's Charging & Remissions Policy is available upon request.**

Visiting Arrangements/Making Contact

During the course of the year the Staff will endeavour to keep you well informed of the life of the school and your child's progress. We use a highly effective, parent Digital App (available on all platforms) called Seesaw to communicate with our parents/carers. In addition, we also use the online payment system, School Money. As an Eco-School, this has helped us dramatically lower our waste, carbon footprint and has made communication with parents as easy as the touch of a button.

You can expect to receive updates via Seesaw in relation to;

- **Monthly Newsletters, School Policies etc**
- **Weekly School News**
- **Homework & Tutorial Help**
- **PTA Events**
- **School trips, Visitors & Events**
- **Autumn Term Parent/Teacher Consultations**
- **Work completed in class, achievements & successes**
- **Communication from your class teacher as apt**

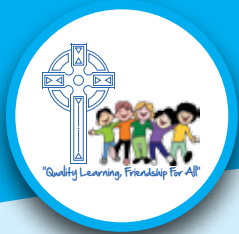
In June you will receive an annual written report about your child's yearly progress.

At any time, if you have any concerns, please contact the school office to arrange a time to meet with your



class teacher. St Comgall's PS enjoy a great online presence via Twitter, please follow our school on @StComgallsPS and Instagram stcomgallspbs for daily updates on school life.

An appointment can be made to visit the school/chat to staff by contacting the Office on 02891 463194 or email: ajones169@c2ken.net (Mrs Amanda Jones – Secretary).



School Uniform

Uniform gives the pupils a sense of identity and belonging and promotes self-esteem, equality and good discipline within the school.

We are particularly proud of our school uniform and it is the policy of the school that it is worn by all pupils. If a pupil is unable to wear their uniform an explanation should be forwarded.

- School branded uniform can be purchased from Signature Schools, Balloo Drive, Bangor, or online from www.signatureschools.co.uk
- Non branded school wear is available from most retailers.

Primary 1 - Primary 2

Boys	Girls
Royal Blue School Sweatshirt with Logo	Royal Blue School Sweatshirt with Logo
White Polo Shirt	White Polo Shirt
Grey Trousers	Grey Skirt
Black Shoes	Dark Shoes
P.E Kit from Signature Schools	P.E Kit from Signature Schools
	School Dress (optional for summer term)

Primary 3 - Primary 7

Boys	Girls
Grey V-Neck Jumper	Royal Blue V-Neck Jumper
White Shirt	White Blouse
Grey Trousers	Grey Skirt
Dark Shoes	Dark Shoes
Blue/Grey School Tie	Blue/Grey School Tie
White short sleeved shirt (optional for summer term)	School Dress (optional for summer term)

PE Uniform

PE
Royal Blue School Branded Sports T-Shirt
School Branded Navy Quarter Zip Jacket
Navy Track Bottoms
Training Shoes (Not fluorescent)



Health & Safety

- Only stud earrings and watches are permitted. Other jewellery should not be worn.
- All items of uniform should be clearly marked with the pupil's name.
- Long hair should ideally be tied back at all times.

Times of Attendance

Class	Time
Primary 1	8.40am -1.50pm daily
Primary 2	8.40am -2.00pm daily
Primary 3 (Term 1)	8.40am -2pm daily, (Term2 and 3): 8.40am-3.00pm (*excluding Wed/Fri, 2.00pm)
Primary 4	8.40am-3pm daily, except Wed/Fri - 2pm finish
Primary 5-7	Mon-Thurs 8.40am-3.00pm and Fri 8.40-2.00pm.

Dinners

A hot meal is provided in the middle of the school day. Menus will be provided for parents and children can avail of the service on any day they wish. The daily cost is £2.60. We use the School Money App to order and pay for dinners. We would encourage all parents who are eligible to apply for free school meals, application forms are available from the school office. Alternatively, children may bring a packed lunch.



Admissions Information



Please note all applications for P1 must be made online from 12noon 9th January and close at 12noon on 26th January using the EA School Application Portal. Further information and update criteria can be found on the EA website at www.eani.org.uk/admissions

Current Admissions Criteria for entry in September 2024

The Board of Governors of St Comgall's Primary School has determined that the following criteria shall be applied in the order set down by the Board of Governors in selecting children for admission to Year 1 in St Comgall's Primary School in September 2024, in the event of the number of pupils applying for places being greater than the admissions number.

Duty to Verify

It is helpful to note that it is a parent(s) responsibility to ensure that any information which is relevant to the criteria is included on the application form at the time. Only information provided on the form can be taken into account.

Year 1 Intake:

- 1 Children whose *sibling(s) (i.e. *a child of the family - see definition below) is currently enrolled in St. Comgall's Primary School at the date of application. (Please state the family member currently in attendance clearly on the application form).
- 2 Children who reside in the Parish of Bangor and are the only/eldest child of the family *eligible to apply to Primary School. (*Eligible means that on admission the pupil will be the eldest child in Primary School).
- 3 Children who attend Bangor Parish or other Pre-Schools or Nursery settings such as St Comgall's Pre-School Education Centre, Trinity Nursery School, St Malachy's Nursery & Pre-School Unit or Bangor Integrated Nursery School.
- 4 Children whose *brother(s)/sister(s) or parent/guardian(s) are past pupils of the school. (Please state clearly the family member and dates of attendance on the application form).
- 5 Children seeking Catholic education in St Comgall's PS whose elder siblings were not



Admissions Information



- successful in gaining entry to the school. (Please state name of sibling, current school and DOB on the form)
- 6 Children for whom St Comgall's PS is their nearest suitable school as decided by a straight-line digital measurement using the postcode of their normal residence to the postcode address of St Comgall's PS using maps.google.co.uk
 - 7 Children seeking catholic education who will reside in the Parish of Bangor at the time of commencing school.
 - 8 Children other than those who belong to the Parish of Bangor.

*A child of the family denotes brothers/half/step brothers, sisters/half/step sisters of pupils, Children Looked After (CLA) and cohabiting families (cohabiting families refers to children living in the same household as a St Comgall's pupil but who are not legally a half- or step- brother or sister).

If over-subscribed, when the above criteria have been applied in the order listed above, the following tie-break criteria will be applied:

Tie-Breaking Criteria:

- (a) children on the basis of chronological age (oldest first).
- (b) in cases where it is not possible to distinguish between applicants on the basis of age, pupils will then be selected for admission on the basis of the initial letter of their surname (as entered on the birth certificate) in the randomised order set out below:

**S E Mc Y U T X P Mac N R G D C
L V B I W H J F M A K Q Z O**



"Quality Learning, Friendship For All"

St. Comgall's Primary School, Bangor

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