

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS

Saint Francis' Primary School

Aghaderg

2020 / 2021



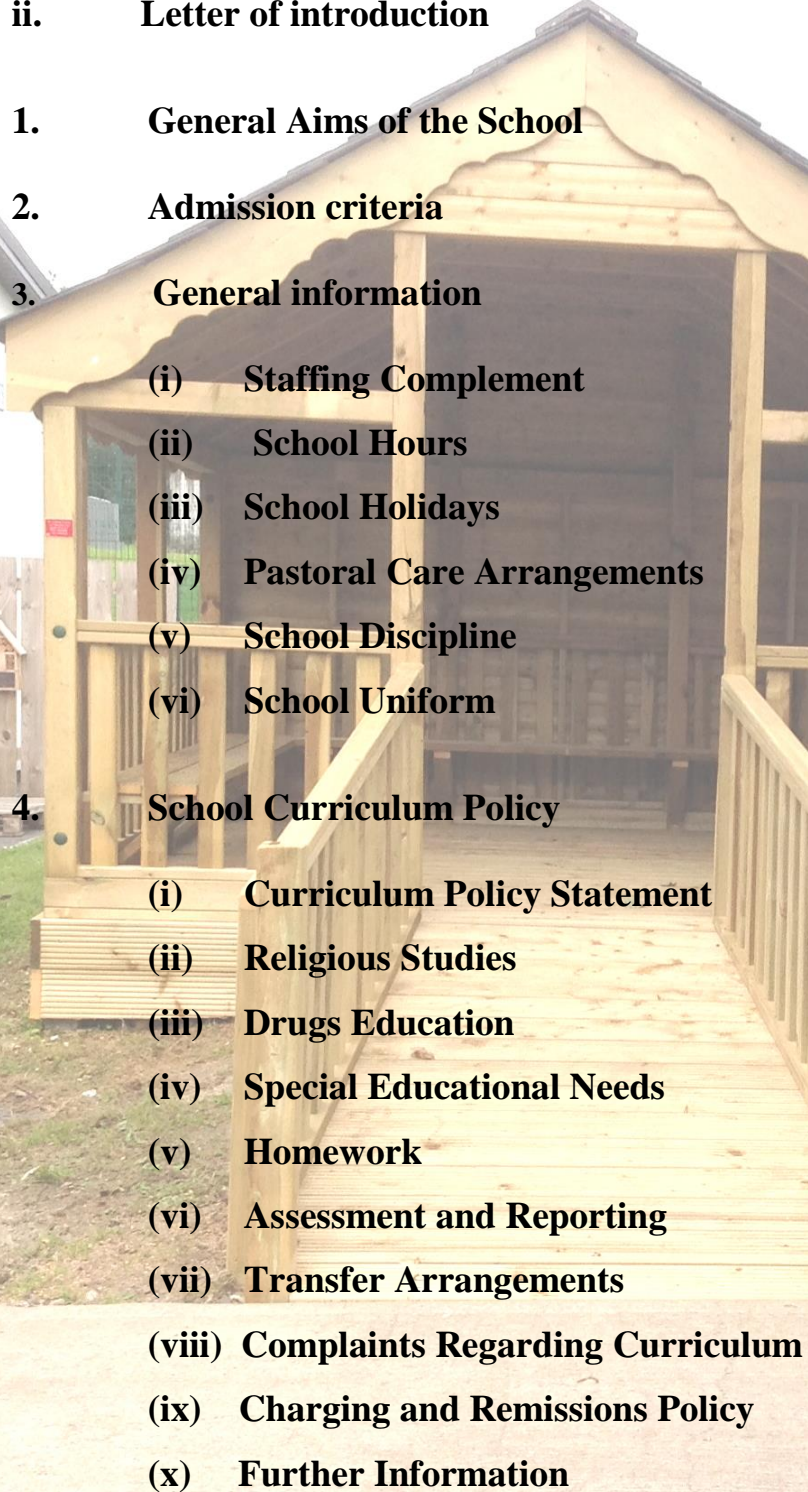
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MISSION STATEMENT

“St. Francis’ Primary School is a learning community characterised by a strong Catholic ethos wherein each and every individual is encouraged to achieve his/her learning potential.

Each individual is adequately prepared for the role they will play as a contributor to society, the economy and the environment. As responsible citizens, they will be entering a dynamic world which will be challenging and increasingly technological.”



Letter of Introduction

24 Donard View Road
Loughbrickland
Banbridge
BT32 3LN
Tel: (028) 4062 8044
Email: info@stfrancis.aghaderg.ni.sch.uk

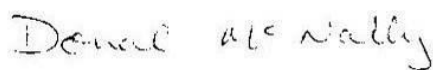
Dear Parents / Guardians

May I take this opportunity of welcoming your child and yourselves to St. Francis' Primary School, Aghaderg. As a Catholic school, our overriding aim is to establish and foster Christian values for life. To do this it is essential that we work in partnership with all our parents and the parish community. Indeed, the success of our school depends on good co-operation between staff, pupils and parents.

This booklet has been designed to give you the basic information we believe you need, to ensure your children will enjoy their stay at the school. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you require any further information. Parents of prospective pupils are encouraged to contact the school secretary for further advice or to arrange a visit to the school.

An online application process has been introduced. The Education Authority (EA) will not be publishing reference copies of the admissions criteria in booklet form, each school's criteria will be made available to parents on the EA's website **www.eani.org.uk** from Friday 13th December 2019. Parents who may not have internet access can, on request, obtain a hard copy of the published admissions criteria from the school or can request a copy through the Primary Admissions Office on 028 3741 0082. The online admissions portal operates from Tuesday 7th January 2020 until 12:00 midday on Thursday 30th January 2020. Birth certificates continue to be required for all applicants and should also be provided directly to the first preference school. Parents may be required to provide verifying documents (e.g. verification of address) stipulated in admissions criteria directly to the first preference school.

Yours sincerely



Donal McNally
PRINCIPAL

GENERAL AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

In this prospectus the Board of Governors considers it important to state clearly:

what the school believes in;
what it aims to do for your children; and
what are the values we want to give them.

VALUES AND AIMS

- *To guide and support the intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral, social and emotional development of every pupil at this key developmental stage in their lives.*
- *To provide a Christian environment for learning that is safe, stimulating, child-centred and which will broaden horizons and optimise individual ability by removing barriers to learning.*
- *To develop a reasoned set of personal attitudes and values.*
- *To be an open and welcoming learning community where all children and adults are cared for and valued in an atmosphere of mutual respect, joy and celebration.*
- *To help the children to appreciate their environment, both at a local and global scale.*
- *To provide high quality teaching and learning that will provide young people with the ability to think for themselves, make healthy choices, engage with the emerging technologies, contribute positively to society and live independent lives in the future.*
- *To provide effective leadership that realises the school vision and the high expectations of pupils and their parents.*
- *To promote inclusion, tolerance and support for those who are disadvantaged and provide equity of access and provision for all.*
- *To recognise and support the professional development of skilful and competent teachers and support staff and the contribution that parents make to their children's learning.*
- *To engage in a collaborative process of continual improvement and raising of standards that will ensure high quality educational experiences for all.*



St Francis' Primary School (Aghaderg)
24 Donard View Road
Loughbrickland
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BT32 3LN

Maintained Primary School

Enrolment Number: 175
Admissions Number: 25

Telephone/Fax No: (028) 4062 8044
Email: info@stfrancis.aghadarg.ni.sch.uk
Website: www.stfrancisaghadarg.com

PRINCIPAL: Mr D McNally
CHAIR OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS: Mrs Maeve O'Neill

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.

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 7 January 2020 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 30 January 2020 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 30 January 2020 will be treated as a late application.

The Board of Governors will apply the following criteria in the order indicated to identify which children should be admitted either at initial admission to education or on transfer from another school.

1. Children of compulsory school age who have brothers/sisters (half-brothers/sisters) currently enrolled in the school. (This is to ensure that siblings can be educated together).
2. Children of compulsory school age who normally reside in the Parish of Aghaderg.
3. Children of compulsory school age who reside in other areas.

In the event of over-subscription in any one of the criteria, taken in order, the following sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down:

- i. Children of compulsory school age who have listed St Francis' Primary School Aghaderg as their first preference.
- ii. Children of compulsory school age whose parent/guardian is a prior pupil of the school, or former parish schools.
- iii. In the event of over-subscription in any criterion, selection for all places remaining in this category will be on the basis of initial letter of the surname, in the order set out below.

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

The above was determined by a randomised selection of letters of the alphabet carried out by the Board of Governors on 5th November 2019. Where surnames begin with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surnames will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application form. 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. Birth Certificates must be supplied to the school by 7th February 2020.

WAITING LIST POLICY

Should a vacancy arise after 28th April 2020, all applications for admission to Primary 1 that were initially refused, new applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided, will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. This waiting list will be in place until 30th June 2021. The school will contact you in writing if a child gains a place in the school by this method.

Your child's name **will not** be automatically added to the list. **Please inform the school in writing if you want your child's name added to the list.**

ADMISSION TO P2-P7

Admission to Primary 2 to Primary 7 and admission to Primary 1 later in the school year are subject to the enrolment number not being exceeded and to any admission not being prejudicial to the efficient use of resources.

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS TO PRIMARY 1		
Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2017/2018	24	24
2018/2019	20	20
2019/2020	20	20



General Information

STAFFING COMPLEMENT 2019/2020

TEACHING STAFF

1.	Miss N McNally	P1	
2.	Mrs McCone	P2	
3.	Mrs K Trainor	P3	Vice Principal
4.	Mrs E Macauley	P4	
5.	Miss G O'Dowd /Mr McNally	P5	Principal
6.	Mr E O'Malley	P6	
7.	Mrs B Woods	P7	

ANCILLARY/AUXILIARY STAFF

1.	Mrs M Conlon	Secretary
2.	Mrs J McAvoy	Primary 1 Classroom Assistant
3.	Mrs M Murphy	General Assistant
4.	Mrs F Colgan	P2 Classroom Assistant/Bus Club Supervisor
5.	Mrs G McSherry	General Assistant
5.	Mrs Marta Quinn	Classroom Assistant
6.	Miss M Murnaghan	Caretaker/ School Crossing Patrol
8.	Mrs P Hyland	Catering Manager (Cook)
9.	Mrs P Copes	Dining Assistant & School Cleaner

The school employs four Lunch Time Supervisory Assistants, they are: Mrs Michelle Conlon, Mrs Geraldine McSherry, Mrs Margaret Murphy and Mrs Marta Quinn.

The school Chaplin is the Very Reverend Fr. Tony Corr PP.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school hours are as follows:

P1 – P3 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

P4 – P7 9.00 am – 3.00 pm

The school opens at 8:00am for children attending our Morning Club. For children **not** attending the Morning Club the school will open at 8.45am; all children should be in the school for roll call at 9.00am. Lunch is from 12.15pm – 1.00pm. A 'Bus Club' operates from 2.00 until 3.00pm for children who travel to or from school by bus. A range of after-school activities operate from 2:00pm until 3:00pm for Primary 1 – 3 pupils and from 3:00pm until 4:00pm for Primary 4 – 7 pupils. Please contact the school for further details on the Morning Club or after school activities. Parents are asked to arrange to have their children collected by 3.10 pm as on occasions the staff have to attend In-Service Training Courses after school.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (Draft)

Please note:

The finalised holiday list for the 2020/2021 school year will be issued in September.

DAY/DATE

OCCASION

Tuesday 1 st September 2020	School Reopens
Wed 28 th Oct to Fri 30 th Oct 2020	Halloween (Mid Term) (School closed)
Tuesday 22 nd December 2020	Christmas Holidays (half day)
Thursday 7 th January 2021	School Reopens (Term 2)
Mon 15 th to Wed 17 th February 2021	Mid Term (to be confirmed)
Wednesday 17 th March 2021	St Patrick's Day
Thursday 1 st April 2021	Easter Holidays (half day)
Monday 12 th April 2021	School Reopens (Term 3)
Monday 3 rd May 2021	Bank Holiday
Mon 31 st May & Tues 1 st June 2021	Bank Holiday
Wednesday 30 th June 2021	Summer Holidays (half day)

Information about all other holidays and other closures will be available at the start of the school year. The school utilises a texting system and a school app to inform parents; the success of these systems depends on parents providing us with up to date contact details or downloading the school app. In the event of an emergency closure every attempt will be made to notify parents to enable them to make alternative arrangements. Please check that we have your full address and at least one up to date phone contact number.

PASTORAL CARE ARRANGEMENTS

We will endeavour to provide a comfortable and safe environment for learning. Each class teacher has the responsibility to look after the pastoral needs of the children in his/her class. Parents are asked to inform the teachers of any medical problems their child may suffer, any medication their child is receiving and an up to date address or phone number at which they (or the child minder) may be contacted. In the event of an emergency, arrangements will be made to have the child taken to hospital. In all cases it will be the school policy to act in the best interest of the child. In the event of a parent having concerns about a Pastoral Care or Child Protection issue the following teachers should be contacted:

Mr E O'Malley (Designated Teacher for Child Protection) or

Mrs K Trainor (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection).

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

In St. Francis' Primary School, we believe that without discipline there is no learning. A positive approach is used. Children will be encouraged to be polite and good mannered to teachers, other members of staff, visitors and to each other. In the interest of safety, children will be encouraged to walk at all times within the school and show caution in the school grounds. Good behaviour will be expected from all pupils within the school grounds and at all times when pupils from St. Francis' leave the school during school hours for school trips, sporting activities or religious ceremonies. Merit and reward systems operate at class level to encourage positive behaviour. Unacceptable conduct such as, disruptive behaviour within the classroom, bad manners, insolence, disobedience, foul language, physical attack, unsporting behaviour and rough play will not be tolerated. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, the necessary sanctions will be employed as detailed in the School's Discipline Policy.

Copies of the School's Child Protection, Behaviour Management and Discipline Policies are available in the school.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

Pupils of St Francis' will be encouraged to wear the full school uniform at all times.

<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>
Jumper - maroon Trousers/shorts – grey Tie – maroon / grey striped Shirt – white Socks - grey	KS 1 – Pinafore – grey KS 2 – Skirt – grey Cardigan / Jumper – maroon Tie – maroon / grey striped Blouse – white Socks / tights – grey/maroon Summer Dress – Red & White checked dress
A maroon waterproof fleece with embroidered crest is also available. An embroidered school crest will be presented on enrolment. Additional crests, at a cost of £1, can be purchased in the school.	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FOOTWEAR:</u> Sensible black shoes are to be worn.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Suitable clothing is to be worn for PE</u></p> <p>The Board of Governors suggest the following Primary 1 & 2 PE kit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grey jogging trousers Maroon sweatshirt with the school crest sewn on White polo shirt Trainers <p>Children in P1 and P2 may wear this uniform to school on P.E. day.</p>	



SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

Curriculum Policy Statements

It is the policy of the Board of governors of St Francis' Primary School that each child will receive, at a minimum their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

“The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives”

It comprises seven general learning areas: Language and Literacy; Mathematics and Numeracy; the World Around Us; the Arts; Personal Development; Physical Education and Religious Education. At the heart of the curriculum lies an emphasis on the development of skills: (a) Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and (b) formally assessed cross curricular skills: using Mathematics, Communications and ICT. The Northern Ireland Curriculum embraces the principles of Assessment for Learning with an emphasis on improvement, raising achievement and celebrating success.



This curriculum will seek to build on the range of learning experiences children will have experienced before they enter formal education in Primary 1. It aims to provide children with the skills and competencies they will need to succeed in school and future life. The curriculum seeks to prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Other aims of the school are to maximise the potential of each pupil, to develop self-confidence in the pupils and to promote a spirit of tolerance towards others.

St Francis' Primary School offers a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the intellectual, spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical development of pupils. The curriculum is designed to encourage the desire to learn and to stimulate thinking and reasoning. It is important that children learn to apply themselves to their school work. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is important; however this must be placed in the context of the development of sound moral values based on Catholic Faith. The school will promote the principles of Catholic Education by giving everyone the opportunity to make themselves educated Christian persons. Staff will be available to attend to children's needs, these problems and confidences will be taken seriously so that they gain in self-confidence and are certain of the teacher's love and friendship.



Learning will be a source of pleasure; this can be achieved through work of a practical nature. Practical work includes Drama in Literacy, RE and History; practical work and experiments in Numeracy, Science and Geography and field studies in the World Around Us. Pupils are offered a range of extra-curricular activities, either within the school day or after school. Participation in these activities is voluntary, though places may be limited. Activities on offer include; Gaelic football, camogie/hurling, tin whistle, fiddle, choir, Irish dancing, Spanish, art and cycling proficiency. Music tuition is also offered by the EANI Music Service. After school activities include: drama, soccer, Gaelic football, ukulele and yoga.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Francis' is a Catholic school conducted in accordance with the rites, practices and observance of the Catholic faith. It is expected that children admitted to the school will take a full and active part in the religious life of the community. The school will promote the principles of Catholic education by giving all the opportunity to make themselves educated Christian persons. Christian belief and attitudes will pervade all teaching. Christian values and beliefs are not just confined to the Religion class but are part of the whole school curriculum. Formal religious education takes up at least 10% of teaching time and is based principally upon the Grow In Love religious scheme. Prayer is part of the daily school life and school masses, confessions and other religious services are part of the yearly programme. We acknowledge the role of parents in the children's religious education; the school builds on the foundation they have laid. Parents are also involved in the preparation of their children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation. Fr Corr and parish representatives also assist the children and their parents in the preparation for these sacraments.

Parents of children from a non-Catholic background can contact the school regarding arrangements for religious instruction.



DRUGS EDUCATION

St Francis' Primary School, Aghaderg is a caring, responsible school with the children at the core of our activities. We strive to respond to the personal, emotional, social and educational needs of our pupils through our interaction with them in the classroom and beyond.

Each primary school is obliged to refer to its drugs education policy within its prospectus. The emphasis of our drugs education programme is on the dangers involved in the misuse of tobacco, alcohol and medicine. The school avails of the Education Authority's Pastoral Care and Personal Development team for the delivery of the RSE programme. As our programme responds to need, we will include other substances when appropriate. This programme is delivered mainly through religious education, PDMU and the World Around Us curriculum. All other subjects contribute to this, where and when appropriate.

We do not condone the misuse of drugs nor do we wish to sensationalise or dramatise the drugs situation. We believe in providing a drugs education programme, which is appropriate to the experience of children in our school. The programme we provide helps to equip our pupils with the skills to respond and react appropriately to situations, which are hazardous to their health. Underpinning our teaching is the belief in building the children's self-esteem; in helping them value themselves and others; in giving them a sense of their responsibility to themselves and others. We recognise this as a partnership between the school and the parents, where we work together towards educating and preparing our children for each stage of their lives.



CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Some of the children attending the school will have special educational needs. These may arise from the child's physical incapacities or learning difficulties. As it is the policy of the school to maximise the potential of each pupil – the school will endeavour, within its resources, to meet these needs. Having been informed of, or having identified, an educational need the school will follow the requirements of the Code of Practice in regard to parental involvement, school based help and the involvement of other agencies (e.g. Educational Psychologists).

A Register of pupils with Special Educational Needs is maintained by the SENCO. To supplement differentiation within the classroom, children experiencing difficulties may receive additional assistance.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of the learning process. It is a means of revising work done in class, extending work done in school and using information, which is not available in the school. Homework also involves the parents in the learning process and is a means of keeping parents abreast of the curriculum that is being taught. Homework will be based on one or more of the following: Reading, Spellings and written Numeracy or Literacy. Homework may involve work from other curricular areas or personal research. The amount of homework should generally not exceed that which can be done in:

- 15 minutes in Primary 1 and 2
- 20 minutes in Primary 3
- 40 minutes in Primary 4 and 5
- 60 minutes in Primary 6 and 7.

Normally homework will be set each week night, though this may be relaxed for holidays and other special occasions.



ANNUAL ATTENDANCE RATE

The Annual Attendance Rate for 2018/19 was 96%.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Knowing how your child is performing at school is important. Monitoring progress has always been a key responsibility for teachers. The main purpose of assessment is to:

1. Establish through a variety of means the progress that each child is making.
2. Assist the teacher in planning appropriate tasks for each child.

Formal assessments are carried out at the end of Key Stage 1 (P4) and Key Stage 2 (P7) and the results of these are included in the child's end of year report. A written record of achievement will be provided for each child transferring from the primary school to a secondary school. Information on the school's end of Key Stage results is available on request. Parents will be informed of their child's general progress at the November Parent – Teacher meetings and through the annual report which is issued in June. The Principal or teacher can arrange a special meeting for an individual parent if there are particular matters of concern. Children on the Special Education Register will have Individual Education Plans or Personal Education Plans, parents will be invited to review their child's progress on these plans with the class teacher or SENCO.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING CURRICULUM

In St Francis' PS Aghaderg, we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the centre of all that we do. In this regard, we would encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. We believe that if concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction. Many issues can be dealt with simply by talking to the relevant staff in the school who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school staff, parents/guardians and other school users is vital to the effective management of the school. We welcome open communication with our staff; you can contact our staff by phoning the school or writing to the teacher to request a meeting. Concerns about matters other than in the classroom should be raised with the Principal. We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

Where parents consider that their concern has not been satisfactorily resolved they should follow the Two Stage Complaints Procedure by firstly writing to the Principal; if the parent is unhappy about the investigation, then they should write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. Further information is available in the school's Complaints Policy.



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Education in St Francis' Primary School is provided free of charge for all lessons and activities connected with the child's entitlement under the Education Reform Order. In the event of a school trip or music tuition (not statutory lessons), payment may be required.

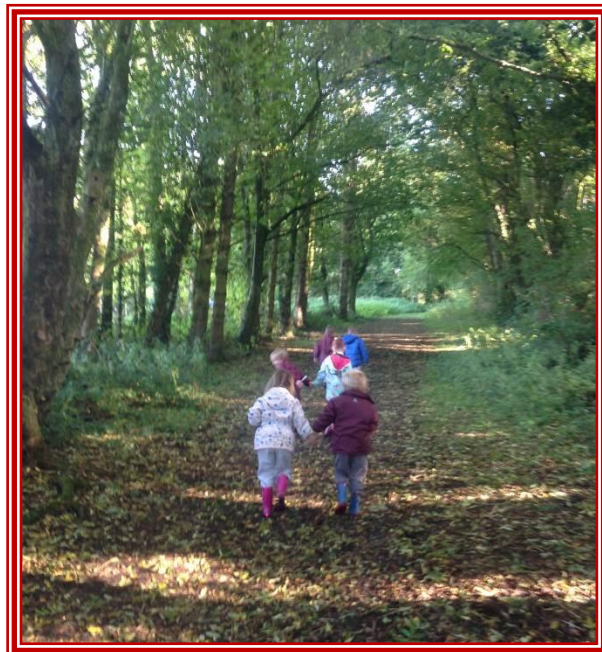
The Morning Club, Bus Club and various After School activities are in addition to statutory requirements; these are voluntary activities and payment will be required.

The school may appeal to parents for voluntary contributions but no child will be disadvantaged if parents choose not to make a contribution.

FURTHER INFORMATION

It is hoped that this prospectus has given you the information that you require. However, more detailed information is available on the school website www.stfrancisaghadarg.com, the school app, from the Principal or in the various school policies that have been produced. Parents will also be kept abreast of any changes that may arise during the year through letters and a school news sheet issued every half term.

Parents of prospective pupils, particularly those who are new to the school, are encouraged to contact the school secretary to arrange a visit to the school or for assistance with the completion of the application form.



www.stfrancisaghadarg.com

