



**St Joseph's Primary  
School  
Strangford**

**School Prospectus  
2024/2025**



A school at the heart of the community.  
Community at the heart of the school

"The children's attitudes and dispositions towards learning are outstanding; they are highly motivated, work very effectively independently and with one another in pairs and small groups. The children's interactions with other children and with adults reveal very high levels of respect, kindness and consideration; their behaviour is excellent".

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Jan 2017)

Our full 2017 ETI Inspection report is available at:  
<https://www.etini.gov.uk/>

Go to 'Inspection reports' and enter "St Joseph's Strangford" in the 'key words' dialogue box.

Dear Parents

May I take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to St Joseph's Primary School. I do hope the years ahead will be fulfilling and rewarding. We, at St Joseph's Primary School, do our utmost to fully realise every child's potential.

St Joseph's Primary School first opened in 1964, and since then, our school has prospered and its good reputation has blossomed. Our pupils have enjoyed success not only academically but also in a wide range of other extra-curricular areas. This success is primarily due to the fact that our children are encouraged and challenged to explore their gifts, intellectual, physical and social, in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Our enrolment figure has risen by 93% over the last number of years and we currently have 86 pupils on the register, only 5 off full capacity (September 2024).

We believe that children cannot learn if they are not happy. Therefore, every effort is made to provide all the support that children need. We pride ourselves on the excellent staff-pupil relationships which exist in St Joseph's Primary School and on the effectiveness of our Pastoral Care provision.

This prospectus has been designed to provide you with an insight into the life and work of our school. Our hope is that it reflects the genuine concern we feel, with regard to meeting the needs of all our pupils and staff.

If you require more detailed information on any aspect of school life, please do not hesitate to contact me. I wish you and your child, happiness and success in the years ahead.

Yours faithfully

*Laura Fitzsimons*



## Vision Statement



**ST. JOSEPH'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



" A school at the heart of the community,  
community at the heart of the school "

### Aims

In our school we aim to:

- ✓ Create a safe, enjoyable learning environment in which effective learning is facilitated and quality learning and teaching is provided.
- ✓ Implement all aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum .
- ✓ Help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning.
- ✓ Value, respect and nurture every child in our care.
- ✓ Encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another.
- ✓ Develop and strengthen each pupil's understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school.
- ✓ Equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society.
- ✓ Involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

St Joseph's Primary School  
31 Downpatrick Road  
STRANGFORD  
Co Down  
BT30 7LZ



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Website address: [www.stjosephsstrangford.org](http://www.stjosephsstrangford.org)

Telephone number: 028 44881615

Principal: Mrs Laura Fitzsimons

Chair of The Board of Governors:

Members of the Board of Governors:

“ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors bring a range of skills and expertise to their roles and play a key role in the school improvement process. They are very well informed about the work and life of the school, have established very effective working partnerships with the staff and are proactive in bringing about school improvement”.

Mr F McStay  
Fr A Brankin  
Mr B McMullan  
Mr J Fitzsimons  
Mrs J O'Reilly  
Mr L McGurnaghan  
Dr D Hull  
Mrs S McAllister  
Mr K Kearney  
Mrs L Fitzsimons  
Mrs C McCabe

Admissions to Primary One		
Year	Applied	Accepted
2018/19	12	12
2019/20	8	8
2020/21	14	14
2021/22	12	12
2022/23	10	10
2023/24	6	6

# **Staff in St Joseph's Primary School, Strangford**

## **Teaching Complement**

Mrs Donna Hughes	P1 & P2 Teacher
Mrs Laura Fitzsimons	Principal & P3 Teacher
Mrs Coleen McCabe	P4 & P5 Teacher
Miss Grainne McClean	P6 & P7 Teacher
Miss Catherine McStay	Principal Release Teacher

## **Classroom Assistants**

Mrs Jacqueline Rooney  
Mrs Liz Daniel  
Mrs Laura-Jane Morris  
Mrs Miriam Moore  
Mrs Leona Murphy  
Mrs Rebecca Vaughan  
Mrs Tereza Patterson



## **School Secretary**

Mrs Jennifer Coates

## **Caretaker & Lunch Time Supervisory Assistant**

Mrs Alexandra Hynds

## **Catering Assistant**

Mrs Louise Holland

## **Reading Tutor & ECO Committee (Volunteer)**

Mrs Helen Elliot

## **Admissions Criteria**

Priority will be given to those children who will have attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission, over those who will not have attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission.

In selecting children for admission, children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission will be selected for admission to the school before any child not so resident.

### **Year 1 Intake**

If the school Y1 intake is over-subscribed, pupils will be admitted according to the following criteria applied in the order set down:

1. Children who normally reside in the Shore Road, Strangford Village, Lower Blackcauseway Road, Ballyculter and Churchtown Road areas of the parish of Kilclief.
2. Children who have brother(s)/sister(s), half-brother(s)/sister(s) presently enrolled in the school.
3. Children whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is presently a permanent member of the school teaching/ancillary/auxiliary staff.
4. Children whose parent(s)/guardian(s), brother(s)/sister(s), half-brother(s)/ sister(s) are prior pupils of the school.
5. Children from other areas.

If over-subscribed in any one of the criteria, taken in order, final selection will be on the basis of the closeness of the home to the school as measured by shortest walking distance by road using Google Maps distance measuring tool.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that any relevant information, regarding criteria, is included on the Application Form or attached to that form.



### **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.

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

### **Waiting List Policy**

This Policy is available from the school.

### **Applications for admission to Y1 after the beginning of the school year.**

Criteria as above.

### **Y2 - Y7 Intake**

Criteria as for Y1 intake will be applied in the order set down 1-5 by the Board of Governors of St Joseph's Primary School Strangford in selecting children for admission to Y2-Y7 in September 2025.

### **Visiting The School**

Parents are welcome to contact the school, to make an appointment to meet our Principal and to view our classrooms and school environment. It has always been the policy of St Joseph's Primary School to involve parents in the education of their children and to inform them as fully as possible about their children's progress.

### **Year One Pupils**

Induction for the new Y1 intake will take place during the final week of June (Monday 23 - Thursday 26 from 9.30am - 12noon). You will receive further information in due course.

## **Reporting On Your Child's Progress**

During October/November all parents will be invited into school for a parent/teacher consultation. Year 1 Baseline interviews will take place in Mid-October. The class teacher will inform parents of the progress their child has made settling into Year 1 and provide an insight into the curriculum for the year ahead. Parents will receive a written report on their child's progress at the end of the school year.

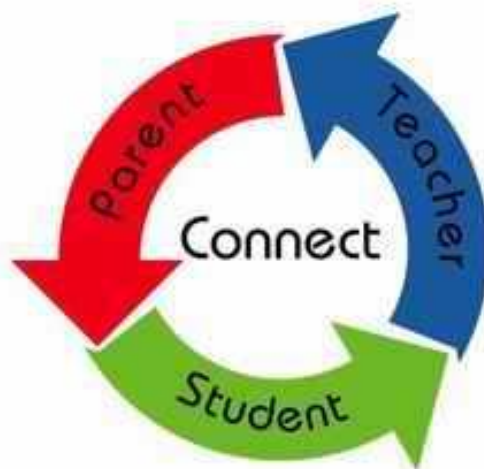
## **Parent Meetings**

If parents have any concerns or queries about their child's progress or problems of any kind, it is important to contact the school to have these resolved. To avoid disruption of classroom work, the following procedures are followed:

In an emergency, parents should telephone the school and arrange to meet the Principal.

In a non-emergency, parents should contact the school, via the office, to arrange a meeting with their child's class teacher.

Parents will be invited to the school for a range of activities such as Active Travel initiatives, assemblies, prize giving and fund-raising events.



## **Learning At St Joseph's**

"All of the lessons observed during the inspection were effective in promoting learning; most were very good or outstanding. These lessons were characterised by highly effective questioning, skilful differentiation and multi-sensory, active approaches which encouraged in-depth thinking and collaborative learning". ETI January 2017.

## **Curriculum Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Board of Governors of St Joseph's Primary School that all our pupils will receive their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum and that the school will go beyond the entitlement in areas where there are particular abilities or strengths among the children. Staff receive frequent opportunities for Continued Professional Development linked to our school's priorities within our School Development Plan and specific to the needs of our pupils.

St Joseph's Primary School will offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of the pupils. This curriculum is concerned with the values and attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills. It is designed to help pupils become independent learners and to prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A recent focus is on the development of a 'Growth Mindset' and on equipping children with the knowledge to support next steps in their own learning, through valuable teacher feedback.

It is also an aim of the school to maximize the potential of each pupil, to develop children's self-confidence and to promote a spirit of tolerance towards others. This is recognised in our recent Shared Education programme and our Rights Respecting School initiative.

The curriculum aims to stimulate thinking, reasoning and a love of learning in pupils.

Our school strives to stimulate our pupils in relation to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and character development, within the context of our Christian beliefs.

## **Curriculum content**

For a full copy of The Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum please visit [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk).

In St Joseph's, we strive to ensure every child in our care reaches his/her full potential. We tailor our teaching styles to cater for the needs of all our learners and differentiate lesson content by both task and outcome.

### **The Make-up of the Primary Stages:**

- 📖 Foundation Stage: Years 1 and 2
- 📖 Key Stage 1: Years 3 and 4
- 📖 Key Stage 2: Years 5, 6 and 7

### **The six areas of learning:**

1. Language and Literacy (including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing; schools are also encouraged to teach additional languages).
2. Mathematics and Numeracy (focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum).
3. The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music).
4. The World Around Us (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology).
5. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community).
6. Physical Education (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities).

## **Curriculum Delivery**

The distribution of time to the various subjects and areas of study will be in accordance with guidance from CCEA. This allocation of time will reflect the responsibility to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum to each and every child. Detailed planning for delivery takes place on a monthly/half termly basis and teachers also meet to engage in short term planning. Timetables and planners are available in the school for examination by the parents of both current and prospective pupils. Planners are rigorously monitored by all teaching staff through Collegiate Book Monitoring sessions.

St Joseph's Primary School has a tradition of excellence in Music and drama and it is the intention of the Board of Governors that this will continue. All children will access music, both singing and they will also have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. We currently provide drumming, guitar and tin whistle tuition. At various times throughout the school year, parents will be invited into the school to see performances eg: grandparents' assemblies, plays, dramas and musicals.

## **Leadership and management**

"The school leadership at all levels is underpinned by a strong sense of collegiality and a clear focus on meeting the needs of the children, enhancing their learning experiences and improving further their standards and achievements. The leadership is diligent, highly reflective and works tirelessly to promote further improvement. The staff have benefitted from a very good range of professional development opportunities which have enhanced their professional expertise and are impacting positively on learning and teaching. There is extensive evidence that the school is living out its vision statement, 'A school at the heart of the community, community at the heart of the school.' There are excellent levels of consultation and communication with the children and the parents and the leadership inspires the confidence of the wider school community." ETI January 2017

# How Will Your Children Learn?

Through:

A wide range of teaching methods

Well planned and challenging play

Making choices & decisions about their learning

Interactive enjoyable experiences

Whole class, group and individual activities

Being given equality of opportunity to learn in a variety of ways and different social groupings

Being actively involved in planning, carrying out and reflecting on their work



In St Joseph's Primary School, we use information from all our stakeholders to help us reflect upon, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what we provide and we continuously strive towards sustained improvement. We encourage and welcome all comments and views from everyone in our school community.

### **Responses from our recent parents' questionnaire (June 2024)**

- We love the school. It has been the most positive move for the children.
- My daughter absolutely loves school life. She has a great circle of friends. Staff are fantastic. Thank you for everything that you do for her!
- I feel completely involved in my child's education and school activities. Any issues I can directly speak to school staff and it is dealt with professionally and accordingly. St Joseph's have a great relationship with the local community and I am grateful to be part of it all. I am happy with all communication and information provided by the school and feel totally content with my p2 year old boy attending this wonderful school.
- Excellent supportive, professional environment with the best interests put at the heart of everything the leadership team and staff do. Thank you.
- St Joseph's is a great school, my child loves to go every day and enjoys all the extra curricular activities. We feel very welcome and confident that the teachers do a great job.
- Fantastic staff, dedicated and friendly. An amazing place for any child to start their learning experiences.
- Very Child focused, respects individuality of the child, promotes independence and autonomy of the child. Excellent communication between child and staff daily. Excellent communication between staff and parent regularly. My children feel safe and welcome at St Joseph's school. They go in and come home happy and love to talk about their day.
- My daughter Clara has spent 7 happy years at St Joseph's and although she is looking forward to the next stage on she will be sad to leave. She has loved helping with the younger children and we think the buddy system is first class. It boosts the children's

confidence and forges positive links between the younger and older pupils. I could go on and on about all the positive aspects of the school and ALL the staff. Thank you ALL for all your hard work and support to Clara over the last 7 years.

- I couldn't ask for better teachers and a better school. I am so impressed with St Joseph's and all the staff. The children are always so happy and content and leaving your child off to a school that they enjoy, thrive in and trust the staff just makes me a happy parent.
- My child enjoys school every day and is now happy to walk in on their own in a confident manner.
- Community, inclusivity, care and kindness, high standards, knowing every child and supporting them to fulfil their potential.
- Teachers are so supportive. School has high expectations of all students and high standard of discipline and behaviour.
- Staff are a continuous support system for parents, every child's ability is catered for irrespective of their learning ability. Parents are kept very well informed of behaviour and good behaviour is very well recognised. Safe and effective learning environments provided through outdoor learning and forest school. Great range of after schools activities provided.
- Staff are experienced; Closely working with each child and their specific needs.
- Positive communication; Child focused. Staff take on board parental concerns and evidence of action taken.
- The school ethos, policies, relationships, education, play..... the school has many strengths and stands out in all the departments.
- Excellent support for children with additional needs. Good communication with teaching and support staff.
- St Joseph's is a school at the heart of the community. How the children are supported in everything they do. Both inside and outside school. My daughter was part of putting on an Irish dance display outside side of school. The staff came to watch the performance. As a parent that was really appreciated.
- St Joseph's provides variety for the kids. The kids are in a number of different environments (indoors and outdoors).



The strengths of St Joseph's are:

- Community links; Outdoor class activities; Friendly and approachable staff; Encouraging children to be as good as they can be.
- Good strong community building strong educational but also daily life educating such as emotions mental health positive and caring attitudes support for children and parents.
- Heart of the community, excellent teachers and well lead.
- Welcoming and kind. I think it is great that the majority of the pupils all know each other and look after each other.
- Variety -the school provides a variety of teaching environments both indoor and outdoor.
- Well managed school with good community involvement.
- Happy children make happy learners. Our experience of the school so far is excellent. Keep up the good work team.
- Promotes independence and integrity of the child as an individual. Staff are respectful of each child and expect respect of staff equally.
- I'm just delighted with how my daughter is thriving at school. As a parent the school is very proactive in assessing and supporting a child who requires extra support.
- I honestly don't see any areas for development as a parent I am extremely happy with the care and educational aspects my child receives.

#### **Responses from our recent pupils' questionnaire (June 2024)**

- Yes I do enjoy school because there are people looking after me.
- I like school because I can see my friends every day.
- I like school it is fun.
- New play stuff.
- I enjoy school because I get to see my friends.
- I enjoy the activities because they're very entertaining.
- A lot of fun with all of my friends at lunch and break!
- I like being at school because I get to learn knowledge and I get to see my friends.
- I love playing games in school.
- I love coming to school to see my friends.

- I enjoy being at school because it is such a happy and friendly place for us to learn and play. It is nice knowing that we are learning through every step we take in school, and I am enjoying my time here a lot.
- Yes, I do enjoy school because it's fun and exciting to come to every morning.
- I like to work and play in school.
- I enjoy being at school because of my friends and maths and lots of other work and the rewards.
- I really enjoy being at school, it is really fun and I have lots of amazing friends.
- Yes I do enjoy school because I have lots of fun and friends.
- I like how all the teachers are kind and caring.
- There's lots of people to be friends with and everyone's really nice. The teachers and staff are nice in our school.
- It's fun and safe and I'm never worried when I'm in school.
- I love the fact that when we do well in school we get a marble in the jar when we get all the marbles we get golden time to do something FUN.
- There are so many good things about St Josephs but my favourite things are how there are so many things to play with and we are always safe.

#### **Responses from our recent staff questionnaire (June 2024)**

- The children all play together, they feel comfortable and safe with the staff.
- Very focused on individuals and their particular situations.
- Community based.
- Leadership is fantastic. The pupils and parents are fully supported. The children are all so happy and are treated to many extra curricular activities provided in the school programme.
- Very dynamic leadership which has contributed to the growth and development of the school and its standing in the community. The principal clearly displays just how important the continued growth and development of the school is to her on a personal level and involves the staff in decisions to promote the school as we strive to enhance the learning experiences of each and every child. The role of the parents as partners is continually reinforced.

## **Religious Education (Grow in Love Programme)**

Being a Catholic Maintained School, St Joseph's Primary School's duty is to provide Catholic Education for the children in the Parish of Kilclief and Strangford. Whilst being a catholic school, inclusivity and diversity are central to our ethos, and we welcome children from a variety of religious beliefs and backgrounds. We promote inclusion through our Shared Education programme and our recent participation in becoming a Rights Respecting School.

Children will be prepared for the sacraments of First Penance in P3, First Holy Communion in P4 and for the sacrament of Confirmation in P7. Children who do not receive the sacraments are always welcome to participate in the celebration alongside their friends.



## **Rights Respecting School**

In September 2019, we embarked on our Rights Respecting School journey, alongside our Shared Education partner schools, Ballywalter Primary and Portaferry Integrated Primary. We are delighted to announce that we recently received our Silver Award in November 2021.

We have developed, together with our pupils, six core values, which are now fully embedded in the learning culture and ethos of our school.

They are to be:

- Respectful (to respect others and ourselves).
- Friendly (to be a good friend to everyone in our school community).
- Caring (to show care towards everyone throughout the school day).
- Courageous (to have the courage to stand up for what we know is right).
- Ambitious (to have high expectations. To always strive to be the best we can be in our work and in our play).

- Enthusiastic (to have a positive attitude towards our work and embrace a 'love of learning').

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Our **whole school charter** reflects the principles for positive behaviour in our school which have been agreed by the whole school community.

They are:

<b>Adults respect this by...</b>	<b>WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO...</b>	<b>Children respect this by...</b>
Listening to, valuing and respecting each other's ideas	<b>be listened to</b> A10, 12, 13, 14, 15 (respectful)	Listening to, valuing and respecting each other's ideas
Caring for everyone and everything at school	<b>be safe</b> A6,9,10,11,16,17,19,21,25 , 26,27,32,33,34, 35,36,37,38,39 (caring)	Caring for everyone and everything at school
Providing healthy food, water, exercise and rest	<b>be healthy</b> A6,24,26,27,31,32,33,39 (self-respect and respecting others)	Making healthy choices
Providing us with all that we need to learn	<b>an education</b> A17,28,29,30,31,34 (ambitious, enthusiastic and ready to learn)	Being enthusiastic and ready to learn.
Being ambitious for us in all that we do	<b>become the best we can be</b> A29 (ambitious)	To be ambitious in all that we do
Providing a time to play and relax	<b>relax and play</b> A31 (friendly)	Being friendly towards each other when relaxing and playing.
Treating each other fairly and having the courage to stand up for what you feel is right.	<b>be treated fairly</b> A2,7,8,14,15,20,22, 23,25,30,37,40 (friendly and courageous)	Treating each other fairly and having the courage to stand up for what you feel is right.

## **Children with Additional Educational Needs**

Provision for pupils with Additional Educational Needs is an important priority in St Joseph's Primary School. The school is particularly aware of the difficulties experienced by children with disabilities and will endeavour to facilitate their needs whatever these may be. The aim of ensuring that those who experience barriers to their learning are fully integrated into the school community will remain a constant focus.

Children who encounter learning difficulties will have access to a comprehensive programme of remediation. This programme will be devised by the class teacher in consultation with the Learning Support Co-ordinator (Mrs Fitzsimons). Parents may request a copy of school's Additional Educational Needs Policy from the secretary's office.

"The teachers' knowledge of the needs of individual children and the thorough analysis of the school's wide range of data are used very effectively to inform the provision for learning, provide tailored support for individual children and track each child's progress. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning benefit from excellent support including that provided by the highly skilled classroom assistants." ETI January 2017

## Homework

Homework is given weekly to all classes. It is given out in a pack on a Friday to be returned the following Thursday. All work given is a consolidation of the learning that has taken place in school. There are a number of reasons why homework is given in St Joseph's Primary School and the following are seen to be the most important:

- It gives parents an insight into the type of work the children are doing in school.
- It provides an opportunity for children to revise and consolidate work already covered in class and showcase their learning to parents and family members.
- It provides an opportunity for children to work independently and to develop responsibility for their work.

A copy of our homework policy is available for parents upon request.



## **Pastoral Care Arrangements**

In our most recent inspection of January 2017 the ETI reported;

"The provision for pastoral care is outstanding; it is highly effective in promoting the well-being of every child and in creating a very close-knit school community. The school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy lifestyles; this is realised effectively through the curriculum, the wide range of sporting activities and effective engagement in initiatives with external partners. This work has been recognised by accredited awards over a sustained period of time".

Pastoral care is one of the many strengths of the close knit community within St Joseph's. All families receive a copy of the school's Pastoral Care Leaflet and related information on an annual basis. Copies of the policies are available upon request, from the Principal's Office.

The school recognises that it has a responsibility to do everything possible to care for each pupil's physical and emotional well-being. The school will endeavour to provide a comfortable and safe environment for its pupils. Due to the nature of primary education it will be the responsibility of each class teacher to look after the pastoral needs of the children in their class. The Designated Teacher and/or the Principal will attempt to resolve any significant problems experienced by the pupils. Staff will attempt to resolve the worries of new pupils and to relieve their anxieties. Parents are asked to provide the Principal with information about any difficult home circumstances which may be causing distress or anxiety to a child.

When a child is sick or injured, the school will contact the parent(s). We have two members of staff trained in First Aid. Where necessary, the child will be brought to the GP's clinic or in more serious cases, an ambulance will be called. If the parents have not arrived by the time the ambulance is leaving the school, the Principal or Class Teacher will go in the ambulance with the child. In all cases it will be the school policy to act in the best interests of the child.

**The Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Teacher is Mrs McCabe. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Teacher is Mrs Fitzsimons.**

## **Road Safety**

The Governors and Staff of our school believe that we have an important role to play in educating our children for life and view road safety as a basic life skill. Consequently the teaching of road safety is planned for Y1-Y7 through our Sustrans Active Travel programme. We have recently received our 'Gold Award' from Sustrans. Y5-Y7 pupils are also offered cycling proficiency lessons. All pupils are given a Hi-Vis vest to be worn daily, while travelling to and from school, during the darker months (Nov-Feb).





# **Code of Conduct**

## **Caring and friendly**

- We show good manners and respect.
- We care for everything and everyone in our school.
- We are kind to each other in our words and in our actions.
- We keep hands, feet and objects in our own space.
- We tell an adult if we are worried about our friends.

## **Learning (we are ambitious and enthusiastic)**

- We try our best and always 'have a go'.
- We come to school on time.
- We start our work quickly and always try to finish on time.
- We ask for help when we need it.
- We work quietly and when talking with our partner we use our inside voice.

## **Talking and listening**

- We use 'Give Me 5' to listen.
- Eyes on speaker, ears listening, lips quiet, hands free, feet still.
- We listen to each other.
- We raise our hand/thumb when we want to respond and we wait our turn.

## **Safety and movement**

- We want a safe school therefore we walk rather than run.
- We sit safely in our seats.
- We handle all equipment carefully and respectfully.

## **In the dinner hall**

- We move quietly and carefully.
- We use our indoor talking voices.
- We put our rubbish in the bin.
- We remain seated until we are asked to line up.
- We show good table manners.
- We keep our space tidy.
- We show good manners and respect to the lunchtime supervisors.

## **In the playground**

- We are happy and we play safely.
- We let others join in our games.
- We listen to the supervisors and show respect.
- We tell a supervisor if we are going to the toilet.
- We tidy equipment away carefully.
- We use kind words and gentle hands.
- We walk to our line and line up quietly.
- If we see someone feeling upset, we report it.

## **Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying & Child Protection**

The school's policies and leaflets on Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Child Protection continue to be reviewed regularly by the staff and Principal. Copies of the policies are given out in September or are available on request.

## **Good Behaviour and Discipline**

The Positive Behaviour Policy and Procedures are reviewed regularly. A positive approach to behaviour is fostered at all times and reinforced with a well-established award/reward system. We believe that modelling good behaviour creates the conditions for effective learning and helps to develop in pupils, responsible attitudes and values for life. Staff consistently encourage high standards of behaviour within the school and beyond, in the interests of both the pupils and the wider community. In St Joseph's there is an excellent relationship between pupils and staff, good order is maintained, not simply by a regime of sanctions and rewards, but by encouraging respect through our whole school charter. To enhance the standard of behaviour and encourage pupils' contribution to a positive learning environment, a Pupils' Council has operated since September 2015. The Council provides pupils with opportunities to discuss relevant school issues under the direction of the Principal and staff and to contribute to the decision making processes within the school.

## Eco-Schools

An Eco Council is also established within our school, as we wish to make a positive contribution to our environment. Our Eco Programme provides an ideal way for fostering environmental awareness in the entire school and we link it to many curriculum subjects. Our aim is to make environmental awareness and actions an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of St Joseph's Primary School. We were awarded 'Eco School of the Year' for Newry, Mourne & Down in June 2022.

## Forest Schools

We are a level 3 accredited Forest School - all our pupils participate in Forest Fridays in our local woodland school connecting with nature.



## Breakfast Club

Our school operates a Breakfast Club, for a minimal charge of £1, which aims to provide a home from home for our pupils from 8am each morning. The children are provided with a breakfast from a choice of: cereal and toast; milk or fruit juice; yogurts; fresh fruit, with a 'treat breakfast' at the end of each term.



A range of stimulating and fun activities are available including: board games & toys; art materials; games and much more!

## After School Enrichment Programme

St Joseph's Primary School believes that the extra-curricular activities offered in school, add a very valuable dimension to the holistic education of the children in our care.

These activities include:

- Guitar
- Tin whistle
- Gardening Gang
- Reading Gang
- Gaelic Football/soccer
- Drama & Musical Theatre
- Arts & Crafts Club
- Hurling / Camogie / Gaelic (Kilclief Ben Dearg)
- Languages
- Actisport
- Eureka Seekers
- Lego/Construction Club
- Fun Club
- Computer Coding Club
- Film & Animation Club





## School Uniform

There is a school uniform and it should be worn to the highest standard at all times. If a child cannot wear the uniform on any day, they should bring in a note from the parents to provide an explanation.

The school uniform consists of:

<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Red crested sweatshirt	Red crested sweatshirt
White polo t-shirt	White polo t-shirt
Navy school skirt/pinafore	Navy tailored school trousers
Navy/red tights	Black school shoes
Black school shoes	



## **Library**

The Library is timetabled for use by all classes and use of the library is an integral part of learning and teaching in St Joseph's PS.

## **Physical Education**

PE is an essential part of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. In St Joseph's Primary School we aim to develop the children physically and to promote and encourage the enjoyment of physical education. PE lessons take place in our assembly hall and on the hard play area to the side of the school. The children access dance, athletics, games, soccer and Gaelic Games during PE lessons. Swimming lessons on Wednesdays are timetabled termly for Year3-7 pupils. We ensure there is sufficient progression and continuity in PE lessons for all pupils, by using our recently reviewed and updated PE policy. Parents are asked to encourage their child to dress and undress at home independently, in the early years, so as to make changing when swimming more manageable for staff. We have recently received the Irish FA School Quality Mark Bronze Accreditation.

## **Parent, Teacher & Friends Association**

We have an active PTFA which organises social fundraising events for the families and children of the school and actively volunteer for the school regularly; such as helping out at school sports day, providing refreshments at various events throughout the year such as First Holy Communion, Confirmation etc. They also organise and volunteer at the regular events held each year to assist with social fundraising throughout the school, together with any other events or matters to which they can support the school and the families of the pupils within the school.



It is an excellent way to bring together parents, teachers and our local community to raise money and to support our school. It provides an opportunity for everyone to work together towards a common goal. All parents, teachers and school staff can get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time available.

### **The School Day**

Year 1, 2 & 3 pupils from 8.50 am - 2.00 pm

Year 4, 5, 6 & 7 pupils from 8.50 am - 3.00 pm (2pm finish on a Friday)

Break time: Year 1-3 from 10.30 am - 10.45 am and Year 4-7 from 10.45 am - 11.00 am.

Lunch time: 12.05 pm - 1.00 pm

### **Healthy Break**

We promote a healthy break initiative in order to support our children in learning about the importance of making healthy choices from a young age.

All pupils should bring a healthy break to school and a bottle of water daily.



### **Lunch Time Arrangements**

School meals are served in the dining hall and cost £2.60 each, payable via our school money app. Free School Meal application forms are available online. School will keep you fully updated on this process and support parents in their application, if necessary.

### **Further Information**

The Board of Governors of St Joseph's Primary School realises that the information given in this prospectus, while updated annually, may change over the course of each academic year. Parents are very welcome to make arrangements with the Principal, to visit the school to access additional information.

## Conclusion

Now that you have read the school prospectus you will have an idea of the rich and varied life your child will have whilst attending St Joseph's Primary School. Be assured that your child's well-being will be a primary concern, at all times, throughout his/her years here. I look forward to working with you and I thank you for entrusting your child into our care.

*Laura Fitzsimons*  
Principal



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