



## St Finian's Primary School

Dear Parent/Guardian

Thank you for taking the time to consider what Saint Finian's Primary School has to offer your child. I am delighted to present you with this year's prospectus and I hope that it will provide you with a brief flavour of life at our school.

As a Catholic school, our core aims and values are to establish an environment where children "Love to learn and Learn to love." Saint Finian's has a very committed and caring team which in partnership with Parents, Parish and Governors will strive to deliver quality standards of pastoral, academic and interpersonal education. We seek to nurture the whole child by trying to provide broad, balanced, challenging, connected and



stimulating learning within a safe, caring, well resourced and happy learning environment.

All parents and prospective parents are most welcome to visit the school and experience the warm atmosphere and positive relationships between children and adults. We believe that if children feel safe and valued they will flourish both as learners and as individuals. At Saint Finian's every child counts.

I look forward to meeting you and welcome your child into the community at Saint Finian's.

Yours in good faith,

Hugh O'Prey  
Principal

### Our Aims

St Finian's Primary School is committed to the aims of Catholic Education in which all children can develop as individuals.

We at Saint Finian's aim to:

- Provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment in which we equip the children in our care with the faith, skills, attributes and knowledge to succeed in an ever-changing environment.
- Provide opportunities and experiences for the spiritual, cultural, physical, moral and intellectual development of every child in our care.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum, suitably differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Help children identify and develop their own personal talents, skills and abilities.
- Develop a lively and enquiring mind, the ability to question and make informed decisions/judgments.
- Develop a love of learning, knowledge of how to learn, and the motivation to produce their best work.
- Provide opportunities to enhance and enrich their learning experiences across the curriculum, through the use of ICT.
- Promote a positive Pastoral Care system incorporating fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness - whilst setting appropriate standards of respect for self and others.
- Form an awareness of, and an appreciation for their environment, both locally and global, through acquiring knowledge and understanding of the wider world in which we live.
- Develop respectful, interpersonal relationships and encourage effective communication between all members of the school community.
- Promote and develop productive relationships with parents, other local schools/playgroups, Parish and community groups.

### Vision and Ethos

As a Catholic Primary School Saint Finian's will provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment in which we equip the children in our care with the faith, skills, attributes and knowledge to succeed in an ever-changing environment.

### Pastoral Care

The school Pastoral Care and Discipline policy emanates from the vision of the school. We aim to promote a caring school community in which every individual feels valued. The school recognises the importance of the rights, needs, mutual awareness and responsibilities of all members of the school community. Our positive behaviour policy is maintained, monitored and regularly evaluated. Our school recognizes all achievements and celebrates success of pupils, teachers and parents at regular assemblies, daily prayer sessions and daily parental interaction as well as in letters and newsletters. Certificates, trophies and awards are promoted weekly to reinforce and celebrate the values the school stands for. Parents are expected to share responsibility for ensuring their child's behaviour reflects the values of the school. The school liaises with the EWO service to promote positive attendance and support families in need of assistance.

### Curriculum

We adopt a child centred approach to the curriculum ensuring that we provide a broad and balanced education for every pupil in our care. Lessons are planned in order to stimulate and provide suitably challenging opportunities, allowing all pupils to achieve through interactive, practical and enjoyable lessons. The children have full access to the complete range of subjects prescribed by the Statutory Curriculum which are as follows

- Language and Literacy (including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing)
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music)
- The World Around Us (Including Geography, History, and Science and Technology)
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- ICT

### Assessment

Children are encouraged to take risks with their learning which fosters self esteem and develops their self-confidence. Learning is essentially open ended and

taught to identify, use and evaluate thinking skills and personal capabilities through the range of learning areas. They are encouraged to self reflect through a variety of assessment for learning strategies. Assessment is an integral part of learning in St. Finian's. Detailed monitoring of pupil progress takes place throughout the year and children are assessed regularly and systematically in order for teachers to build a comprehensive picture of each pupil, their progress and future learning needs. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress throughout the school year with parent/teacher consultations and detailed end of year reports. In addition to the above, the school complies fully with the ever changing requirements of statutory assessment procedures.

### Special Educational Needs

The early identification of children with Special Educational Needs is a priority at St. Finian's. Our Designated Educational Needs Coordinator liaises with class teachers in identifying specific needs and developing education plans in order to meet the needs of these pupils. Children have opportunities to work in small groups or on a one-to-one basis with a special needs teacher, availing of the latest resources and teaching methods. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress during regular consultations. The school also works closely with outside agencies (medical, social, educational and psychological) in order to meet the needs of all our pupils.

### Religion/Living Faith

As a Catholic school Saint Finian's provides an open, respectful, caring and trust-filled atmosphere where children feel valued. Through the teachings of Christ we aim to develop each child as an individual and lead them in their journey of faith. The Alive-O Programme is the foundation Children of other faiths are welcomed in Saint Finian's and encouraged to take part in most elements of the religion programme. Parents are consulted and fully informed of the programme content at the beginning of the year.



### Mission Statement

In St Finian's Primary School we aim to provide a caring environment which will enable children to make the most of their potential for academic, spiritual and human development.

As a Catholic Maintained Primary School, we seek to promote an ethos throughout the school which reflects the Christian teaching and values of the Church. St Finian's seeks to establish a caring community centred on Christ so that his values and Gospel message instil the life of our school. The central focus in terms of our ethos is a 'child centred' approach, whereby all partners involved in the pupils' learning development have a key role to play. We consider our parents to be a proactive force in the partnership between home, school, parish and wider community.

We promote a strong and positive Pastoral Care system that permeates all aspects of school life, thus providing a caring service, which recognises the human value of the pupil, teacher and parent and facilitates efficient and effective learning and teaching.

The service we provide, and in particular the curriculum we offer, is one that is planned, developed, monitored and evaluated to the highest professional standards so that each pupil gains the maximum amount of benefit from their pastoral and academic experience at our school.

### Contacts

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We are proud of the learning and teaching at the school and more importantly proud of each and every child in our care.

### Extra Curricular

As part of our physical development provision we offer swimming and gymnastics coaching. The school works closely with the Down GAA coaching structures and the IRFU and IFA coaches to provide a provision for Year 1- Year 7 children for physical activity and multi skills development. Our extended schools provision is flourishing with music tuition (including a Tin Whistle and Traditional Music Club) and a languages club. Each term there are a variety of after schools clubs on offer which include Netball, Football, Rugby, Dance, Cycling Proficiency, Science, Computers and Art and Craft and a Key Stage 1 Drama Club. Activities are arranged according to the children's wishes.

### Education For Mutual Understanding /School Community Relations Programme.

EMU provides opportunities for children to build relationships with children of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds. Our school is currently linked with Londonderry Primary, Millisle Primary and Castle Gardens Primary. Activities related to environmental awareness and cultural heritage are carefully planned by the teachers involved. From Year 3 onwards children meet in each other's schools and on educational trips to venues such as Castle Espie, Mount Stewart, Lisburn Linen Museum, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and the Saint Patrick's Centre. Close liaison with West Winds Primary School and the CPNI organisation allows Year 7 children to visit America during the summer months and stay with host families. As part of a shared future, children are taught to acknowledge and respect all identities and cultures.

### Home Based Learning

Our aim in setting homework is to foster initiative and develop independent learning skills and allow for the practice, application and consolidation of what has been learnt in school. Our homework policy aims to differentiate tasks in order to accommodate the learning needs of each individual child. The success of home learning activities depends on the support and involvement of parents.

- Homework establishes a vital link between home and school creating an effective partnership in fostering children's learning.
- It provides opportunities to share learning experiences at home and encourages communication between parents and children.
- Homework informs parents of their child's progress, attainment, and ability as well as the nature of the work being undertaken and the teaching methods used.

The main focus of homework in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is Literacy, Numeracy and topic work. As well as written work, children in all classes are expected to carry out reading activities each night particularly with their parents.

Parents can also contribute actively to the life of the school by assisting Saint Finian's PTA in organising

activities for the children, the adult community and supporting fundraising.

### Accommodation

At Saint Finian's we believe that the surroundings in which we work should be inviting and inspiring for both pupils and staff. The standard of interactive display work around the school building, created by pupils, has been highly commended during recent inspections and creates a colourful and welcoming environment. Classroom displays and equipment are carefully organised in order to maximise their learning potential and stimulate the pupils. The original school building was built in 1911 and has grown over the years to become the school we see today. The accommodation comprises nine classroom bases, on two levels with active learning centres. A library/computer suite is equipped with 21 computers and is timetabled for each class to utilise. A Special Educational Needs room allows individuals or small groups of children to work without distraction, and a Connected Learning room allows children the space to develop creativity using a wide variety of mediums. The assembly hall, complete with stage, is used regularly for P.E. lessons, school productions, visiting speakers, school assemblies, PTA events and celebrations. It is also used as the dining hall at lunch time where hot meals can be availed of. Outside areas include two large playgrounds, which are equipped with a wide variety of outdoor games equipment, an adventure/nature garden, an outdoor play activity centre with soft surfacing and an extensive grass playing field. St. Finian's Playgroup is also located on the school premises. Several minor works projects are ongoing to enhance the site and expand its potential.

### School Uniform

#### Winter

**Boys** - Grey trousers, green polo shirt, navy sweatshirt, black shoes.

**Girls** - Grey skirt/pinafore, green polo shirt, navy sweatshirt, navy tights/ white socks, black shoes. School coats and fleeces and hats are also available.

#### Summer

**Boys** - grey shorts  
**Girls** - green / white checked dress

**PE Uniform**-Tracksuit / White polo Shirt/ plain navy shorts

### The School Day

A breakfast club runs daily throughout the year starting at 8:00 am. For a small fee children can enjoy cereal, fruit, toast and fruit juice, as well as a wide variety of fun games and learning activities.

8:00am - 8:45am	Breakfast Club
8:45am - 9:10am	Playground Activity
9:10am - 10:40am	Learning
10:40am - 10:55am	Break
10:55am - 12:15pm	Learning
12:15pm - 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Learning
2:00pm	School finishes for P.1 and P.2
pupils	
2:00pm - 3:00pm	Learning (P.3 - P.7)

3:00pm	School finishes for P.3 - P.7
pupils	
3:00 - 4:00pm	Extended schools activities
1:00 - 3:00pm	Adult learning classes in partnership with SERC

### Enrolment

Enrolment forms are available from the school office all year round and parents with children who begin school in September should return their completed applications by mid January. Parents of Year 1 children will be invited to attend an induction meeting in June to help their child acclimatise to the new surroundings and meet their teachers. Parents of children of all other school ages can make appointments for a visit and tour of the school.

