



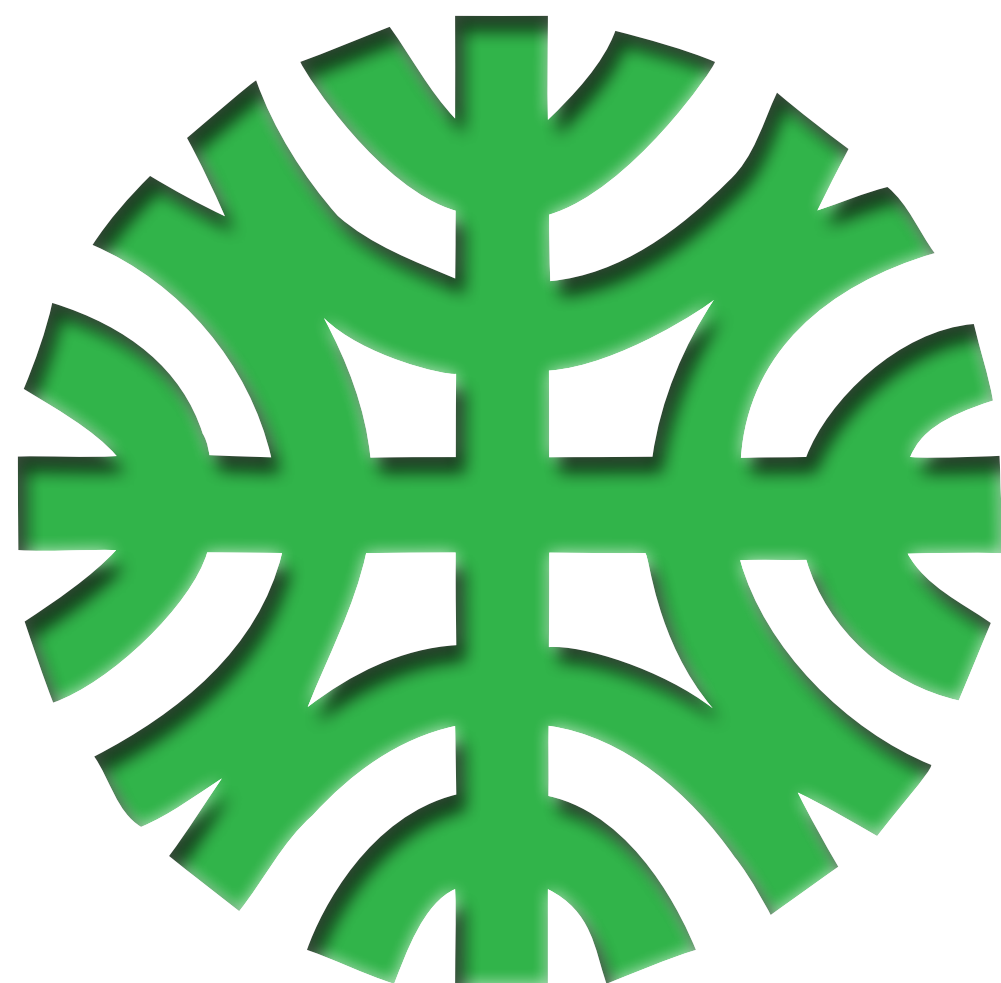
St Finian's Primary School

...love to learn

School Prospectus

Learning to love...





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Principal's Welcome

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer

Thank you for taking the time to consider Saint Finian's Primary School for your child's education. I hope you find this prospectus helpful and it provides you with a brief flavour of what life is like in St Finian's Primary School.

As a Catholic school, our core aims are to establish an environment where children "LOVE TO LEARN AND LEARN TO LOVE." St Finian's has a very committed and caring staff that work closely in partnership with the parents, parish and governors to deliver quality standards of pastoral, academic and interpersonal education. We seek to nurture the whole child by trying to provide broad, balanced, challenging, stimulated learning within a safe, caring, well-resourced and happy learning environment. St Finian's is an inclusive school which welcomes children from many different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.

Of course, no booklet can convey the real atmosphere of a school and it is only through visiting or spending time here in St Finian's that you will discover the wonderful ethos present and the positive relationships between children and adults. All parents and prospective parents are most welcome to visit the school and we look forward to meeting you and welcoming your child into the community of St Finian's.

Best wishes,

Mr B Coulter
Principal



Mission Statement

Through the example of Christ, we as a Catholic School work together to provide a caring, safe, inclusive environment, in which we nurture the faith, knowledge and values of all children and members of the school community as we journey together and grow in love together in the Kingdom of God.



~ CHRIST ~

Staff and Organisation

The Board of Governors consisting of representatives of the Catholic Church, Department of Education, South Eastern Education and Library Board, parents and staff has responsibility for the appointments of staff and running the school.

In St Finian's, the Board of Governors play an active role in all aspects of school life. They fully support the teaching and learning taking place in the school by:

- Monitoring and reviewing school policies on learning
- Supporting the staff of the school
- Self-evaluating their own governance
- Monitoring and evaluating school development planning and action planning.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff.

St Finian's has seven consecutive classes from P1 to P7. We currently employ nine teachers across these classes, including two who job-share. Additionally, we have a full-time learning support teacher who offers one-to-one and small group assistance in Literacy and Numeracy.

Our non-teaching staff is comprehensive, featuring full-time classroom assistants in P1 to P3. Special needs assistants are also available as required. Our non-teaching staff plays a crucial role in our school, working closely with our teachers to ensure each child receives the best education possible.

Background

Initially, the school was opened in 1910 as a separate boys' and girls' school but was extended and amalgamated as a co-educational school for boys and girls in 1965. St Finian's Primary School is a Catholic School that is inclusive and welcoming to all faiths.

At our school, we pride ourselves on fostering an inclusive and diverse environment where every child feels valued and respected. We believe embracing diversity enriches the learning experience, broadens perspectives, and prepares students for a global society. By celebrating differences in culture, background, and abilities, we create a supportive community that encourages empathy, collaboration, and mutual respect. Our inclusive approach ensures that all children have equal opportunities to succeed, promoting a sense of belonging and boosting their confidence. This nurturing environment helps students develop into well-rounded individuals who are open-minded, compassionate, and ready to thrive in an interconnected world.

Accommodation & Resources

The well-maintained accommodation comprises 8 bright, spacious classrooms, an assembly/PE/dining hall, a meals kitchen, a staff room, and an office and ICT resource room. We are extremely fortunate to have a large outdoor space for children to play in at break, lunch, and after school.

Admissions

The following criteria is currently applied in the order set down by the Board of Governors of St Finian's Primary School in selecting children for admission to P1. In the event of over-subscription in any one of the criteria, taken in order, pupils will be selected on the basis of proximity of their parents/guardians' home to the school as measured by the shortest

walking distance using google map. This criteria may change and should be checked on the EA website before completing an application.

1. Children who have a sibling* currently in attendance at St. Finian's Primary School.
2. Children who are the eldest (established by date-of-birth as entered on a birth certificate)/only child in their family.
3. Children who have not met any of the aforementioned admissions criteria.

* A Child who, at date of their application, has a child of the family currently enrolled at the school.

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Pastoral Care & School Discipline

Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs, and practices of our Catholic faith. We try to create caring, responsible children who will make a positive difference to the modern, technological world. The school recognizes the importance of the rights, needs, mutual awareness and responsibilities of all members of the school community.

The school focuses on developing a positive and caring climate, which is based on mutual respect for all people and the environment in which we live. It is a quiet yet firm insistence on

high standards of behaviour at all times and draws its strength from a collective responsibility, consistent practice and constant vigilance. There is a range of rewards and incentives, emphasising merited praise. Certificates, trophies and awards are promoted weekly to reinforce and celebrate the values the school stands for. Fair use of outlined sanctions in class rules, e.g. verbal reprimand, will be used to help direct each child's development. Discipline problems more detrimental to the child's development will be dealt with in line with the school policy (all policies can be obtained from school office).



Child Protection

The designated teacher for child protection is Mr Barnes. In her absence Mrs Dalzell/Mr Coulter will assume responsibility for child protection matters. For any clarification on child protection issues, or access to the full policy documentation, please contact the school.

At St Finian's Primary School
WE DEVELOP THE WHOLE CHILD



Uniform

It is important that children come to school neat and tidy. Our uniform reflects the individuality of St Finian's and offers a reasonably priced form of common dress.

EVERYDAY UNIFORM: WINTER

Boys -

Green polo shirt
Navy sweatshirt (with school crest)
Grey trousers
Black footwear

Girls -

Green polo shirt
Navy sweatshirt (with school crest)
Grey pinafore or skirt
Navy tights/white socks
Black footwear

Summer – optional

Boys – Grey shorts

Girls – green/white checked dress

PE:

P1-P3

School tracksuit bottoms (to be worn to school on day of PE)

Trainers

P4-P7

School tracksuit bottoms (to be worn to school on day of PE)/ navy shorts
White Polo shirt (to be changed into for P.E)
Trainers

All items of the school uniform can purchased in School Days or Crawfords in Newtownards.



Break & Lunch (No Nuts!)

If you think your child is entitled to free school meals **please apply online at EA Connect**. School dinners adhere to nutritional standards and are available from the canteen at a cost of £2.60 per day. Please keep packed lunches healthy, nut free, and with minimal packaging. We would ask that all children bring a healthy break of either fruit, vegetables or natural yoghurt.

Breakfast Club

St Finian's breakfast club runs daily from 7:40am to 8:45am in the school hall. Children are supervised by a teacher and classroom assistant until the bell goes at 8:45am. During this period they have the opportunity to play games and activities with their friends. Children have a choice of four cereals as well as toast or pancakes and a drink of juice.

Stay and Play Club

St Finian's offers a stay and play club from 2:00pm until 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Children are supervised by staff in the school building during this period. The children receive a small snack in the afternoon and can play with their friends or complete homework. Parents can book their child/ren in advance to the Stay and Play Club or on the day.



Charging & Remission Policy

Education in St Finian's Primary is provided free of charge for all children. The school may invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of activities organised by the school.



Our Curriculum

The curriculum is the sum of all the learning experiences present for each child, those planned by the teacher and those that emanate from our school ethos and environment. Our curriculum takes into account the uniqueness of each child and his/her individual needs. We adopt a child centred approach to the curriculum. Our balanced curriculum is in line with the Education (N.I.) Order 2010 and involves the learning areas of

- Language and literacy,
- Mathematics and numeracy,
- The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music)
- The World Around Us (including Geography, History and Science)
- Religious Education
- Personal Development and
- Mutual Understanding
- Physical Education.
- ICT

Across the curriculum we have an emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating effectively in society. These whole curriculum skills and capabilities include thinking skills and personal capabilities and cross-curricular skills.

Our links with St Finian's Playgroup are longstanding and allow children to develop positive attitudes and relationships. Progress from the playgroup to the Primary School is managed carefully and children are at ease, very early in their P1 days.



Homework

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 main focus of homework in both Key Stage One and Two is Literacy, Numeracy or Topic Work. As well as written work, children in all classes are expected to carry out reading activities with their parents.

The success of home learning activities depends on the support and involvement of parents.



Religion

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 Grow In Love Programme is followed throughout the school. We have a special relationship with our Parish and work closely with the Parish Priest to develop our partnership. Children of other faiths are warmly welcomed in Saint Finian's and encouraged to take part in most elements of the programme. Parents are fully informed of the programme content at the beginning of the year.



Parents

Children's education is an on-going partnership between home and school. Parents are the children's first educators and teachers. Home and school share in the child's education. Parents are always welcome in Saint Finian's and the staff are committed to fostering good home/school links.

To keep our parents well informed they are invited to the school in the first term for a curricular meeting which gives a general outline of the work to be covered and class routines. Also in the first term individual parent interviews are held to discuss and review your child's progress.

Parents who have any concerns or worries about their child can arrange further appointments with the class teacher or principal through the school secretary or seesaw. Parents also have a responsibility to the school. We would like our parents to:-

- Ensure their child has the best punctuality and attendance possible
- Ensure that their child is well equipped for school
- Do their best to keep the child healthy and fit for school
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect performance or behaviour at school
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general

We have a very active parents group who work throughout the year raising monies to fund anything from outdoor play equipment to trips. It is an excellent way to get to know the school and become active in the school community. A list of the P.T.A. monthly meetings is displayed on the school's information board. Please contact the school and get involved to make a difference in your child's education.

Special Educational Needs

The early identification of children with Special Educational Needs is a priority at Saint Finian's. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator liaises with class teachers and Learning Support teachers to identify specific needs and draw up individual education plans for these children.

The class teacher will cater for the identified educational needs of each child. Where pupils with special educational needs are identified, they may have the opportunity to work with the learning support teacher in small groups or individually. 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 the children.



Sports & Extra-Curricular Activities

The Board of Governors is aware of the importance of visits and other enrichment activities in the development of our children. These form a major part of St Finian's education. Children take part in a wide variety of visits throughout their school life.

We join with quality external agencies to provide a wide range of sporting and musical activities. We believe that every child should leave primary school with a sport they take part in. St Finian's offers soccer, netball, basketball, athletics, gymnastics, rugby and dance throughout the year. We have close links to local clubs and can introduce parents and children to them. We also offer a variety of after school experiences in Art & Crafts and Speech & Drama to further add to the breadth of experience on offer. St Finian's has a proud music tradition and has given a wide range of performances for the local community. Each child gets the chance to develop and extend his/her musical attainment. We offer tuition in guitar, tin whistle and a traditional music club.

Shared Education

St. Finian's Primary School has worked in collaboration with Londonderry PS and Newtownards Model PS on Shared Education. Around 250 children participate in this programme annually between the three schools.



Children learned together through different activities in Sport, STEM, Art and ICT. Through well organised lessons children made new friends and worked hand in hand with children from different faiths and cultures.

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The School Day

- ✓ **Breakfast Club**
7:45am - 8:45am
- ✓ **Playground activity**
8:45am - 9:00am
- ✓ **School Starts**
9.00am
- ✓ **Break**
10.30am - 10.45am
- ✓ **Lunch:**
12.15pm - 1.00pm
- ✓ **School Finishes: P1 and P2 children.**
2.00pm
- ✓ **School Finishes: P3 to P7 children**
3:00pm (2:00pm on a Friday)
- ✓ **After school clubs**
normally run from: 3.00pm - 4.10pm

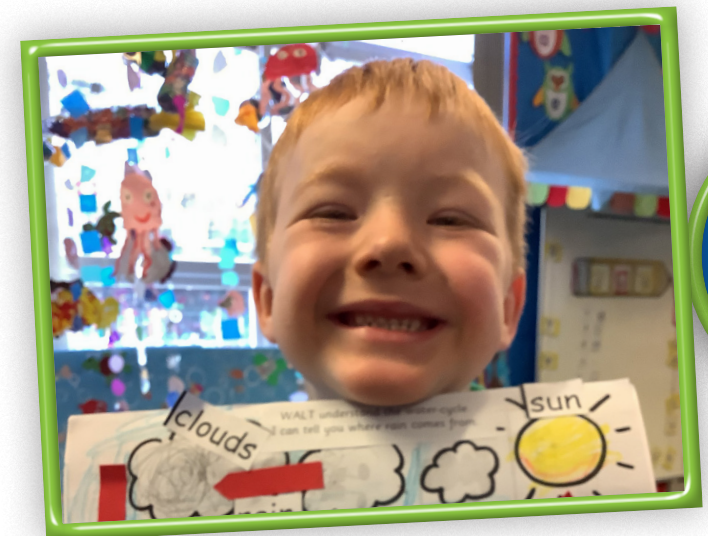
P3 finishing times vary on a termly basis. Details of the school year, holidays and events is available from the school office.

Saint Finian's Primary School
Ann Street
Newtownards
Co Down
BT23 7AD

Tel/Fax No: 02891815229

Email: info@stfiniansps.newtownards.ni.sch.uk

Website: www.stfinians.co.uk



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Quotes from Parents

"The pastoral care in the school is excellent – the staff provide a caring and nurturing environment where children are happy and safe. There is a caring ethos in the school and the staff have high expectations and good quality teaching."

"I believe St Finian's is the best primary school not only in the area but in relation to others further afield. The staff are approachable, make learning fun and keep up to date with new initiatives."

"I love the fact that St Finian's is a small school, it gives a very close knit feeling. The teachers know all children by their first names and have time for them. The nights run by the school have a homely community way with them."

"My son adores going to school and I feel that it's as much to do with the school's attitude to him as a pupil, as it is his attitude to going to school."

"The school works very closely on ensuring each child's happiness and promoting all the good qualities in the children - Fun, fairness, friendship, sharing, caring, kindness to each other. Learning together. I couldn't ask for more."

"St Finian's is a great school, it's like a family. My children have settled very well and are excited about coming to school. We all feel that we matter."

"My son has made a great start to his school life and is unfazed by 'big school' he feels comfortable and happy in P1."

Photo Gallery



Photo Gallery



Photo Gallery





Saint Finian's Primary School

Ann Street, Newtownards, Co Down BT23 7AD

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