




# St. Colmcille's

Primary School



*Be the best  
you can be!*



A photograph of two young girls in school uniforms playing on a wooden climbing frame. The girl on the left is wearing glasses and a dark blue school uniform with a white collar and a dark skirt. She is smiling and holding onto a green rope. The girl on the right is also wearing a dark blue school uniform with a white collar and a dark skirt, and she is smiling and holding onto a green rope. They are both standing on a wooden log that is part of the climbing frame. The background shows a blue safety mat and some greenery.

*“Our school is a happy, family environment, hardworking and successful. The child is at the centre of everything we do.”*





## WELCOME TO ST. COLMCILLE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYMENA

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*Thank you for taking an interest in our school.*

St. Colmcille's is in the parish of Kirkinriola, serving the community through the provision of a caring and effective Catholic education service, which enables children to make the most of their potential for academic, religious and human development.

Our school is a happy, family environment, hardworking and successful. The child is at the centre of everything we do.

Our whole school community shares one common goal – to do the very best for all children in our care. Your child will be made most welcome and

I trust the next seven years will be happy and rewarding.

I hope that you will find this prospectus informative and interesting. It is intended to offer you some information about life in St. Colmcille's. It outlines what we stand for and what we offer your child. However, no booklet can convey the 'real' atmosphere of any school.

I warmly invite you to visit the school on our Open Day for parents and new entrants, or to arrange a visit to the school when we will be most pleased to see you.

*Mr Henry Walls / [Principal](#)*



## OUR VISION

*Be the best  
you can be!*

## ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

**St. Colmcille's Primary School is a Catholic Maintained Primary School and enrolls both boys and girls. It supports the people in the parish of Kirkinriola and is located on the Cullybackey Road in the town of Ballymena.**

St. Colmcille's Primary School is situated in a state-of-the-art building. It is not only beautifully designed but also incorporates some of the most modern, up-to-date facilities available in a school in Northern Ireland.

The building is positioned within secure school grounds that consist of a car park, landscaped grounds to the front, two hardcore play areas, and grassed play areas to either side of the building. The accommodation comprises of spacious classrooms, resource areas, a large hall, multipurpose rooms, and a computer suite. There is also an attractive welcoming reception area and offices. Each classroom has its own cloakroom and toilet area, with access to purpose built resource areas.

The experienced and dedicated staff have the overall well-being of the children as their priority. A nurturing atmosphere permeates throughout the school allowing children to feel secure and effective learning to take place.

**Principal:** Mr Henry Walls  
**Chairperson,**  
**Board of Governors:** Mr Diarmuid O'Loan  
**Enrolment Number:** 410  
**Admission Number:** 59  
**Age Range of Pupils:** 4-11yrs





## OUR MISSION

**We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:**

- a caring and supportive environment;
- a broad and challenging curriculum;
- stimulating surroundings;
- innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning;
- a learning partnership between school, home and the wider community.

**We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning school by:**

- striving for continuous improvement in all that we do;
- working collaboratively towards common goals;
- investing in people.

## OUR AIMS

**St. Colmcille's Primary School promotes high achievement and learning for life by working with children to:**

- practise the Catholic faith;
- be tolerant and respectful of themselves, others and the environment;
- acquire knowledge and skills to be their individual best;
- be highly motivated life-long learners;
- be able to work independently and collaboratively;
- gain technological skills to equip them for the 21st century.





*“ St. Colmcille’s is an outstanding school which nurtures every child and ensures that the teaching and learning is of the highest quality. Pupils are happy and thriving. What more could any parent want? ”*



# SCHOOL HOURS

Supervision of pupils begins at 08.30 each morning and are received by their class teacher at 08.45 in order to prepare for lessons. The school operates staggered pick up times, with one collection time per family based on the finishing time of the eldest sibling. Younger siblings are supervised free of charge until it is their collection time.

## School Begins: 08.55

<b>Break:</b>	10.15 – 10.30 (Years 1, 3 & 4) 10.30-10.45 (Years 2, 5, 6 & 7)
<b>Lunch:</b>	12.00 – 12.45 (Years 1, 3 & 4) 12.30 – 13.15 (Years 2, 5, 6 & 7)
<b>School Ends:</b>	13.55 (Years 1 & 2) 14.30 (Year 3) 14.45 (Years 4 & 5) 14.55 (Years 6 & 7)

The school will be closed during the months of July & August. All other planned holidays are distributed at the beginning of the academic year.

It is the aim of St. Colmcille's to fully involve parents in the education of their children and to inform and consult with them regularly about their children's progress.

### THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE:

#### Induction Programme

All parents of Year 1 children are invited to meet the Principal and their child's teacher in June prior to enrolment.



#### Progress Reports

Mid-way, during the first term and second term, parents are invited to a consultation with their child's class teacher to discuss progress and the programme of study for the remainder of the year.

A written report is issued in June of each year in which the performance of the child in each of the Curricular Areas is reported.

#### Parent Workshops

The school hosts workshops to inform parents of how they can support their child in their learning, e.g. Phonics, reading strategies and mental maths workshops.

Parents are very welcome to come to the school at any time if they feel the need to. In these circumstances they should contact the school to arrange a suitable time for consultation with the class teacher.







## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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**Catholic Education is the centre point of the child's personal and intellectual development. The staff are aware of the spiritual needs of the children and of the important part Religious Education plays in a child's upbringing. With the assistance and encouragement from our school chaplain we ensure that these needs are catered for.**

The Grow in Love programme is the core resource for the teaching of Religious Education in our school. We also deliver 'The Wonder of My Being' programme for RSE which supports the complete development of the child. In St. Colmcille's, we work in close partnership with parents and our parish to hand on the faith to our children.

The children are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation in Year 3, First Eucharist in Year 4 and for Confirmation in their final year.

Another initiative the pupils are involved with is 'Children of the Eucharist' which aims to enhance the faith of children by guiding them gently in quiet prayer in the presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

The Faith Council come together to discuss the Catholic life of the school and how we can promote important values across our school.

We work closely with other schools in our parish to participate in faith development activities.



## PASTORAL CARE

**Our Pastoral ethos promotes a happy, caring and secure environment where every member of our school community is valued for their uniqueness and individual contributions to school life.**

We provide a positive and open atmosphere, instilling a sense of pride and belonging. We set high expectations for learning, behaviour and attitudes. Our pupils' efforts in striving to achieve these are recognised and celebrated.


All staff have participated in the 'Whole School Together' approach to behaviour, which involves the whole school community working together to ensure the highest standards of behaviour. Consistent and clear behaviour strategies are employed throughout the school. The child's emotional health and well-being is central to all that we do in St. Colmcille's.

### **We will endeavour to:**

- Treat children with fairness and consistency;
- Encourage good social and personal skills, self-respect and respect for others;
- Nurture self-esteem, confidence and independence;
- Develop in our pupils a set of moral and religious values in keeping with the Christian and Catholic ethos of the school.

### **The main elements of this approach will be:**

- Good pupil-teacher relations;
- Suitable curriculum content;
- Classroom organisation;
- Teaching methods;
- An awareness of and sympathy towards the needs and requirements of individual pupils;
- Rewards for good behaviour and a positive disposition.



*“ St. Colmcille's is serving the community through the provision of a caring and effective Catholic education service, which enables children to make the most of their potential for academic, religious and human development. ”*



## SAFEGUARDING

**In St. Colmcille's, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We endeavour to maintain an environment where children feel safe and secure. Our children and parents are made aware of the procedures in place if a child or parent feels worried or has any concerns.**

All forms of bullying are considered to be unacceptable and are not tolerated within our school. All incidents will be dealt with in accordance to our Anti-Bullying Policy which is available on our school website or in the school office.

We believe that promoting an ethos of mutual respect and equality minimises incidents of bullying and helps to raise self-esteem and self-confidence.

**Parents are encouraged to notify the school when someone other than the parent or usual carer will be picking the child up from school.**

Parents should always inform the school of any accidental bruising or other injuries that might otherwise be misinterpreted. They should also inform the school of any changes in home circumstances.

Parents can feel confident that procedures are in place to ensure that all staff appointed have undergone appropriate screening to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.







*“ St. Colmcille's is a happy safe environment which inspires pupils with their learning and teaching methods. Pupils and parents are very proud of their school. ”*





*“ I felt very supported when I raised a concern about my child with the teacher, time was taken to discuss the issue, changes were implemented in the classroom, the issue was investigated and follow-up was made. ”*



# CURRICULUM

**We are fully committed to ensuring that our pupils enjoy a broad and challenging curriculum. We ensure the requirements of the Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum are met through regular monitoring and reviewing. We incorporate assessment for learning which promotes independent and life-long learners.**

The curriculum is made up of a range of learning areas which seek to develop our pupils academically, physically, spiritually and socially.

As a school we are continually seeking ways to improve our teaching and learning. We have extensively invested in initiatives to further progress pupil outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy.

We use the Sounds Write programme to introduce our youngest pupils to reading, writing and spelling. Using a variety of stimulating lessons and resources, we create opportunities for our pupils to read, write and spell simultaneously.

We are a Maths Mastery school which means we deliver a mathematical curriculum that builds upon learning and allows pupils to make deep connections across topics. As well as providing plentiful opportunities for practical learning experiences, we place great emphasis on the use of language to communicate mathematical understanding.



## Whole Curriculum Skills and Capabilities

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using ICT
- Managing Information
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Problem Solving & Decision Making
- Working with Others
- Self-Management

## Learning Areas

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- Religious Education
- Personal Development & Mutual Understanding
- The World Around Us
- Physical Education
- The Arts

## AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

**We offer a wide range of clubs within school and after school. These include:**

- Choir;
- Music – string, woodwind, brass, guitar
- Choral Speaking;
- Sport – Gaelic, Hurling, Soccer, Athletics, Basketball & Netball;
- Cycling;
- Art;
- Drama;
- Dance;
- Cooking;
- Competitions – Ballymena Festival, Quizzes, Technology Challenge.
- Sentinus programmes;
- STEM workshops;
- Educational Visits;
- Community Relations Projects with Carniny PS and Camphill PS;
- Community Activities – Intergenerational links, Charities and Eco projects



## ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

**In order to ensure that every child realises his/her true potential at school our teachers will ensure that activities and content of lessons are carefully matched to individual needs. Every effort will be made to provide maximum access to the curriculum for children with additional learning needs.**

Teachers will liaise closely with the parent in drawing up Individual Educational Plans for their child and regular reviews of progress will be initiated. The school also employs a Learning Support teacher who works with small groups to consolidate learning.

The school's Special Needs and Inclusion Policy is in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Act. This enables the staff to fully implement the requirements of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs published by the DENI.







*“ My child really loves school and I feel that this is due to the very positive relationships between staff and pupils. ”*





*“ The school environment for our children at St. Colmcille's continues to be warm, caring and nurturing, as well as professional, progressive and educationally excellent. ”*



# ASSESSMENT

**The ultimate aim of the school is to ensure that every child reaches their full potential**

The school has a very strong record of academic excellence. Detailed monitoring of pupils' progress takes place throughout the school year.

Teacher/Parent consultations are scheduled in the first and second terms. An end of year written report is issued in June.



# HOMEWORK

**Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's education and their success depends greatly on liaison between home and school.**  
**In St. Colmcille's we value co-operation with the parent or guardian.**

Homework is not only an essential part of our pupils' learning but is an opportunity for parents to become involved in their children's learning and progress. Homework is reinforcement of learning done in school and is an excellent home/school link.

Homework can be written, oral or online and include:

- **Play-based Activity;**
- **Reading;**
- **Maths;**
- **Spellings;**
- **Writing;**
- **Talking & Listening;**
- **Learning songs/poems/prayers;**
- **Research.**

# SCHOOL UNIFORM

**There is a school uniform which is expected to be worn at all times:**

## Girls' Uniform:

- White Blouse
- Navy Pullover with school crest
- Grey Skirt

## Boys' Uniform:

- White Shirt & School Tie
- Navy Pullover with school crest
- Grey Trousers

## PE Uniform:

Children should wear a plain white t-shirt/ polo shirt and navy/black shorts/tracksuit bottoms.

## Footwear:

All children will require black plimsolls for indoor use..

## ADMISSION

**If the school's enrolment (410) and admission (59) numbers have not been reached the school will enrol all the children whose parents wish them to attend. In any year when these numbers are exceeded the Board of Governors will use criteria in deciding which pupils should be admitted.**



## ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

Parents wishing to commence their child's schooling in September of any year must complete an official application form.

This can be obtained from  
[www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions](http://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions).

If parents wish to discuss the enrolment of their child to St. Colmcille's Primary School they are advised to contact the school to arrange a meeting with the Principal, or to attend the open day in January.









St. Colmcille's  
*Primary School*

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[www.stcolmcilles.com](http://www.stcolmcilles.com)