Our Lady & St Patrick PS

Irish Unit & Specialist Provision

Bunscoil Mhuire & Phádraig



Réamheolaire

Prospectus

Our Lady and St. Patrick
Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig



"The hand of God at work"

"Lámh Dé ar Obair





Dear Parents,

Welcome to Our Lady and St Patrick P.S. Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig. It is with great pleasure that I introduce our school community to you, through our School Prospectus.

We are a caring school where the whole school community shares a common goal – to do the very best for all the children in our care.

The purpose of this prospectus is to give you the information you need to have so that you can have a better understanding of our school, how it operates and what we have to offer our pupils. I hope you find the contents both interesting and informative.

Of course, no booklet can convey the real atmosphere of a school. I warmly invite you, therefore, to visit the school virtually via our website and our Facebook page.

Finally, may I take this opportunity of thanking all our parents, for their co-operation and support in the past and of welcoming all those who are with us for the first time. I look forward to working with you during the forthcoming year.

Ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a ghabháil libhse, ár dtúistí as an tacaíocht a thugtar dúinn agus fáilte a chur roimh na teaghlaigh nua.

With sincere good wishes,

Le meas,

M. Robinson

Mr M. Robinson
Principal/Príomhoide



MISSION STATEMENT | Ráiteas Misin

"We, the Governors and staff of Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School, Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig, believe the school to be a vital part of the Catholic Community.

We are firmly committed to the aims of Catholic Education.

We seek to provide effective education for all our children; to develop positive and meaningful pastoral care systems and to secure close links with home, parish and the wider community."

OUR AIMS | Ár n-aidhmeanna

As a Catholic School, we aim to provide an education for the total child embracing the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetical, social and physical factors. We aim: -

To foster in each child responsible and caring attitudes towards society as a whole, based on love of God and neighbour.

To create an environment within the school where children feel accepted and loved as unique persons.

To foster an atmosphere of security, mutual trust and harmony which will enable the children to learn willingly and develop into responsible adults.

To involve parents, to co-operate with and to encourage them as the first educators of the child.

To ensure that each child, in so far as this is possible, achieves his/her potential academically.

It is the intention here in Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School/Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig, to provide the full range of activities necessary to fulfil our stated aims and to build on the many successes of our pupils.



GENERAL INFORMATION | Eolas ginearálta

OUR LADY AND ST PATRICK PRIMARY SCHOOL
Edward Street | DOWNPATRICK | BT30 6JD
Tel. No. 4461 3045
Email: mrobinson155@c2kni.net

Enrolment No. **460**

PRINCIPAL | PRÍOMHOIDE: **Mr. M. Robinson**

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS | CATHAOIRLEACH: **Mr. M. Higgins**

Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School, Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig, is a Catholic Maintained School founded in 2011 as a result of the amalgamation of St Patrick's Primary School and Convent of Mercy Primary School.

The mainstream of the school is Co-educational and caters for girls and boys. There is an Irish Unit within the school, which educates pupils through the medium of Irish. This unit is also co-educational. In addition the school has 2 Learning Support Centres for children with moderate learning difficulties and Specialist Provision for pupils with social and communication difficulties. These centres are housed within the main school building.





ADMISSIONS | Iontráil

The school's annual admissions number is set by DENI at 75.

Application forms may be obtained from the online portal which opens in January.

The link for this is www.eani.org.uk.

SCHOOL STAFF | Foireann na Scoile

The school caters for 460 pupils between the ages of 4 – 11 and has a dedicated teaching staff who are employed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

Teaching Staff | Múinteoirí

Mr M. Robinson (Principal)

Mrs L. Adams
Ms N. Ní Chatháin
Miss K. Ní Cheallaígh
Miss A. Connolly
Miss C. Nic Criosacáin
Mrs M. Croskery
Mrs C. Doherty
Mrs B. Fox
Miss S. Greene
Mrs T. Kearney
Miss A. Longeran
Mrs K. Madine
Mrs F. Mason
Mrs C. Mulvenna
Miss S. Napier
Ms D. O' Hagan
Mrs L. Oakes
Mrs P. Rice
Mrs M. Rodgers
Miss S. Sweeney
Miss M. Ní Thomhnaír
Mrs A. Vance
Mrs C. Watson

Auxillary Staff | Foireann Cúnta

In addition to the above staff the school has -

Executive Officer - Miss C. Fitzpatrick
Building Supervisor - Mr P. Quinn
7 Cleaners | Glantóirí
5 Lunch-time Supervisors | Cúntóir Lóin
School Crossing Patrol | Maor trachta - Mr. P. O'Neill
School Chaplain | Sagart na Scoile - Fr. Eugene O'Neil

We also have multiple Classroom and General Assistants to support individual and whole class learning.

ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES | Suíomh agus Áiseanna

Our school is a single storey building. It has 16 classrooms, 4 mobile classrooms, gym, ICT suite, offices, staff-room and storage areas. The Canteen is a separate building situated at the school gate. Outdoors we have separate all weather play areas for Year 1 -7, a grass play area at the rear of the school, polytunnel, sensory garden and outdoor classroom.



THE SCHOOL DAY - GENERAL REGULATIONS | An Lá Scoile - Rialacha Ginearálta

Children are expected

- to be obedient and polite
- to respect all school staff
- to treat all school buildings, and property with care.

Year 1 & 2	9.00 a.m. - 1.55 p.m. Monday - Thursday 9.00 a.m. - 1.45 p.m. Friday
Year 3	9.00 a.m. - 2.55 p.m. Monday - Wednesday 9.00 a.m. - 1.55 p.m. Thursday - Friday
Year 4 - 7	9.00 a.m. - 2.55 p.m. Monday - Thursday 1.55 p.m. Friday

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to ensure your child's progress.

The first bell rings at 8.55am. The second bell rings each morning at 9.00 a.m.

No child is allowed to leave the school at any time during the school day without permission.

A note, phone call or visit from a parent is required if -

(a) a child is absent from school - the Department of Education requires attendance to be registered on computer and all absences to be explained.

(b) a child is to leave school early for any reason - lunch/doctor/dentist appointment etc.

HEALTHY EATING POLICY | Bia Sláintiúil

Due to a number of children with known allergies the school is a NUT FREE ZONE. We would ask that children refrain from bringing nuts or any associated nut products into the school.

The school operates a healthy eating policy and recognises the important role of health and nutrition in child development and the need to encourage eating habits from an early age, to help children reach their full potential. We work closely with the school health team and have received the Gold Award for encouraging healthy eating habits within the school.

The children eat fresh fruit or vegetables at break time and drink still water which is more beneficial to their attention and learning whilst in school.

A copy of the Healthy Eating Policy is available at the school on request.

Year 1/2, R1/2 and Specialist Provision Centres receive snack in school daily. This includes a variety of fruits, breads, vegetables, yogurts and cheeses.

LUNCHTIME | Am lóin

Children may take lunch in school. In the interests of safety, glass bottles are not allowed. Please keep packed lunches healthy, NUT FREE, and with minimal packaging.

SCHOOL DINNERS | Dinnéar na Scoile

A menu for dinners is supplied at the beginning of each year. School dinners are available from the school canteen at a cost of £3.10 per day. Dinners can be paid through School Money, our online booking and payment system. If parents feel that their child is entitled to free dinners they should apply to the Education Authority South Eastern Region Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, Belfast, BT16 2HS. Application forms are available online at the Education Authority website.

Senior Staff and Supervisory Staff circulate during lunchtime each day.

PHONE CALLS | Scairteanna gutháin

Phone messages for pupils should be made only when necessary. Parents/ Guardians are required to ensure the school has a contact number. This should be the number of a parent or near relative. Children do not need to bring mobile phones to school. If it is necessary for a child to contact home, this will be done for her/him by a member of staff. Children who bring a mobile phone to school should leave it in the office.



AN t-AONAD | THE IRISH UNIT

Tá oideachas trí mhéan na Gaeilge anseo i nDún Pádraig le breis is cúig bhliain is fiche agus oideachas naíscoile níos faide siar arís.

Irish Medium primary school education has existed in Downpatrick for more than twenty five years and Irish Medium nursery education longer still.



BUNTÁISTÍ | ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUALISM;

Is mó na buntáistí atá aitheanta ag tumoideachas ar fud fad an domhain;

- súil eile ar an domhan
- méadú suntasach i bhforbairt cognaíocha
- meas ar chultúir eile
- réimse níos fearr i dtaca le fostaíocht

The numerous benefits of Immersion Education (Irish Medium in our case) are well renowned and documented worldwide;

- increased cognitive development and improvement in the executive function of the brain (working memory/flexible thinking/self-control)
- a deeper appreciation of other cultures
- increased prospects for future employment
- ability to learn another language comes easier

CURACLAM | CURRICULUM

Tá an curaclam céanna le clúdach ag na páistí agus an deis céanna acu teacht ar na háiseanna agus séirbhísí ar fad atá sa scoil; mar sin de tá sár-oideachas ar fáil ag gach eile dálta.

All pupils have to cover the NI Curriculum and have the same opportunities to avail of the resources and services within the whole school. As a result, your child can be ensured of a quality education. Our small class sizes, means teachers have more time to spend with each child.

Níos mó ná hoideachas den chéad scoth atá i gceist linn, is teaghlach muid.

We believe we're more than excellent education, we're a family!

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS | Laetha Saoire

The school closes during July and August, two weeks at Christmas, one week in October, one week in February and one week at Easter. A list of dates on which the school is closed will be sent to the parents at the beginning of each term. Please try to avoid arranging holidays during term time.

ROAD SAFETY | Sábháilteacht bhóthair

The school has one School Crossing Patrol – at the front gate of the school.

Children are given lessons in Road Safety in all classes. However it is the responsibility of parents to ensure the safety of their child on the way to and from school. While the Education Authority, South Eastern Region, will endeavour to provide a school crossing patrol service, they sometimes find it difficult to obtain temporary cover when regular patrol staff is absent. We would therefore suggest that you show your child where and when to cross and introduce him/her to the school crossing patrol. It is important that you prepare a contingency plan, which is fully understood by your child and which can be put into operation, should he/she discover that the regular Patrol is not on duty.





THE CURRICULUM
An Curaclam

DEFINITION | Cad é atá ann

When we speak of curriculum in our Catholic school we are talking about the learning experiences that are present for each child, those planned by the staff and those imbibed from our school ethos and environment. Since Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school, all our curriculum will attempt to reflect Christ's message. When planning our curriculum we take into account the uniqueness of each child and his/her individual needs. We develop attitudes and values based firmly on the Gospel message. Our aim is to offer each child a broadly based and appropriately balanced curriculum in line with the Revised Curriculum.

This involves the following:

- **Cross Curricular Skills:**
- **Communication**
- **Using Mathematics**
- **Using ICT**

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

Managing Information, Working with Others, Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making, Self-Management, Being Creative.

Areas of Learning | Achair fhoglama

The Arts, Language and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, Physical Education, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, The World Around Us, Religion.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION | Teagasc Críostaí

Our staff attaches great importance to Religious Education. It is not just confined to a timetabled programme within the school but is seen as an integral part of the life of our school.

The aims of Religious Education are -

1. To foster the faith of the child by helping him/ her grow in belief, knowledge and love of God and appreciation of the religious and spiritual dimensions of life.
2. To help him/ her to understand the truths of our Catholic faith and so grow in the characteristics of a follower of Christ.

These aims will be achieved through creating an atmosphere where each child can experience God through -

1. The daily life of the school.
2. The prayer life of the school, personal, class and whole school prayer.
3. The Religious Education Programme.

The Religious Education programme used throughout the school is the "Grow in Love" Series and I nGrá Dé in our Irish Medium Unit. As parents you are encouraged to show an interest in your child's workbook, asking to see it and discussing with him/her what has been done in class. During the years in primary school your child will be helped in developing an appreciation of the Sacraments and the Mass. We will provide opportunities for prayer, whole school Masses, class Masses, celebrations of special feasts, Penitential Services, Individual Confessions (Lent/Advent). Each child will be prepared with great care for the Sacraments of First Penance, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Meetings will be held for parents in the year that your child is receiving these Sacraments.

The teachers are assisted and supported in their work by our school Chaplain and the Diocesan Religious Advisers.

This programme goes beyond the requirements of the core Religious Education syllabus agreed by the main churches in Northern Ireland.

Language & Literacy | Litearthacht

Our Language and Literacy programmes continue to focus on developing pupils' abilities in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Emphasis has been on the integrative nature of language, embracing all areas of the curriculum.

Year 4 - 6 are regular visitors to Downpatrick Library.

Mathematics & Numeracy | Mata & Uimhreas

Our Mathematics and Numeracy policy emphasises the pupil's ability to perform both mental and written calculations. From an early stage the children are introduced to number, shape, measurement, and data handling based on the programme of study of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Work in mathematics is approached through practical activities, investigative work and use of calculators and computers. By the end of KS2 the children will have a sound grasp of the basic Mathematic processes.



The World Around Us | An Domhan Thart Orainn

The World Around Us is presented as four inter-related strands that connect learning across Science & Technology, History and Geography.

The main aims of Science are three-fold: -

- To help the pupils develop a specific range of skills.
- To engender in the children a set of attitudes appropriate to scientific study.
- To help the children assimilate various concepts related to the knowledge and understanding of science.

These aims are achieved by a whole school policy, which includes a scheme covering Year 1 - 7 in order to ensure continuity and progression.

The study of the World Around Us is an integral part of the broad and balanced curriculum offered to all the children in Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School/Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig.

Pupils are given the opportunity to study episodes and developments in both local and world history while our geography programmes focus on the study of both the immediate and distant environments.

Children will also be involved in the choice of topics which are of particular interest to them and as far as possible these will be linked to current events in the world around them.

The Arts | Na hEalaíona

Creativity is developed through every area of the curriculum. Art and Design, Drama and Music provide rich opportunities for developing creativity thus allowing our pupils to express their ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world in diverse ways, through pictures, sound drama and dance.

Our Art and Design policy provides a wide variety of creative and expressive experiences to enable pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding, which are central to the whole curriculum. We provide opportunities for observing, recording, designing, creating, imagining, communicating, and appreciating. We develop in our pupils concepts of colour, form, shape, structure, texture and patterns.

Music/Drama | Ceol/Dráma

We are proud to offer such a wide range of instrument tuition here at Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School/ Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig. We have talented tutors who come to school weekly to take lessons in piano, guitar, drums and violin. Our pupils are offered the opportunity to enter for music exams and grades.

Our school takes pride in having an excellent choir, comprising of pupils from Year 5 - 7. The school choir sings at events in both the local and wider community, such as, the Peace Proms in the SSE Arena.

Our music pupils have many opportunities throughout the year to celebrate their talents through participating in Assemblies, concerts and festivals.

Physical Education | Corpoideachas

The pupils in our school will experience a broad and balanced Physical Education Programme. This will enable them to participate and perform competently and confidently in a wide range of physical activities. Through regular participation in P.E. children will understand the benefits of physical activity and the relationship between this and good health.

We have a number of coaches from various sporting backgrounds who work with all children. Through these coaching schemes, children develop a range of skills including co-ordination, balance, team work and fair play.

All pupils will experience the following activities:
Athletics, Dance, Games, Gymnastics, Netball, Swimming, Soccer and Gaelic.

EXTRA - CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES | Gníomhaíochtaí Curaclaim sa bhreis

While at Our Lady and St Patrick/ Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig, children have the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of sports and activities. Children can attend after school coaching sessions and many pupils represent our school in a range of competitions and tournaments.

Gaelic football is offered to all pupils from Year 1 - 7 on a weekly basis. Children are given the opportunity to enhance their skills, develop new ones and learn match techniques. Our school Gaelic Team competes in a number of tournament and league competitions throughout the year.

We have a strong tradition in Cross Country running with our Year 5 - 7s taking part in the Rollercoaster Races and the highly contested Flahavan's Cross Country Competition, alongside many Down county and Ulster indoor athletic events.

Netball and Soccer are also offered as After school activities and the school teams compete to a very high standard in both sports.

Our children relish the opportunity to compete against different schools.

Educational Trips are very much an integral part of our curriculum.

Extended Schools Programme | Clár 'Extended Schools'

The extended schools programme aims to offer opportunities for pupils to promote healthy lifestyles, an enjoyment of learning and achieving, living in safety with stability, an opportunity to experience economic and environmental well-being and contributing positively to the community and society in which we live. This generally takes place outside of the normal school environment.

Through this programme we offer:

- **Breakfast Club every morning 7.45am to 8.30am**
- **Specialised homework support clubs**
- **Counselling and Mentoring from internal and external organisations**
- **Gap Club in school from 2pm to 3pm**
- **After School Club in the Patrician Youth Centre providing care from 3pm to 5pm Monday to Thursday for Year 1 - 7**
- **Friday Club in school from 2pm - 4pm**
- **A variety of Sport, Art and Craft and Drama Clubs in school**

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS | Riachtanais ar Leith

The staff of our school endeavour to ensure that each child experiences success, feels that his/her work is valued and realises his/her full potential. The class teacher will cater for the identified educational needs of each child and will be supported by the Principal and Special Needs Co-ordinator.

Where we feel that a child is experiencing learning difficulties we will discuss these with the parents and offer additional help from our Special Needs teacher and other relevant outside agencies.

Copies of the Special Needs Policy are available for consultation at the school.



CHARGING POLICY | Polasaí Táille

In line with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Education Reform Order 1989, it is the policy of the Board of Governors to:

- maintain the right to free school education for all pupils;
- establish that activities organised wholly or mainly during school time should be available to all pupils;
- require parents to pay charges for board and lodging for their children, on residential trips, taking account of any relevant remission arrangement;
- confirm its right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of activities organised by the school;
- make charges in respect of optional extras, as determined by the Board of Governors.

A copy of the full charging and remissions policy is available at the school for inspection by parents.

Homework Policy | Polasaí Obair bhaile

Homework is focused on reading, spelling and maths. Homework is regarded as an integral part of every pupil's learning. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's homework. Homework set by the school should be supervised and signed by parents. Pupils must become used to the discipline of home study and accept it as an extension of their school work. We encourage our parents to contact their child's teacher if there are any difficulties regarding homework. It may also be necessary for the teacher to contact the child's parents about any problems arising.

SPECIALIST PR

Our newly opened and state of the art Specialist Provision Centres provide support for children in Foundation/Key Stage 1 (P1 - P3) and Key Stage 1/2 (P4 - P7).

We have 4 Learning Support Centres, 2 FS/KS1 and 2 KS2. They are led by Mrs T. Kearney (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), Mrs M. Croskery, Mrs P. Rice, Mrs C. Doherty and Mr. C. McCormick.

The Specialist Provision Centres cater for children who have a statement of Special Educational Needs, with a wide range of needs including moderate to severe learning difficulty, Social, Behavioural & Emotional Wellbeing difficulties or Speech & Communication difficulties. In some cases, these needs could be accompanied with a medical diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

In the Specialist Provision Centres, the children are taught by specialised teachers who differentiate the work to their individual needs. Staff receive high levels of training which is continuously updated to ensure the highest standards for all our pupils.

Staff deliver a wide range of multi-sensory teaching strategies to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all. This is further enriched by a range of outside agencies that come into the school to work with the children to enable a holistic teaching approach.

As we encourage an ethos of acceptance and inclusivity, the children integrate with their peers in mainstream classes for many subjects, including Play based Learning, Religion and Physical Education.

In addition to joining their mainstream peers during break and lunch playtimes, children from mainstream classes also reverse integrate with the children in the Specialist Provision Centres.

An additional feature of our Specialist Provision Centres is a sensory break out room within each classroom, which enriches the provision for the children. The state of the art room is occupied at intervals throughout the day to provide the children with visual, tactile and auditory stimulation. In addition, it is also equipped with a wide range of sensory aids to develop emotional regulation.

The Specialist Provision Centres provide maximum support, communication and development for both pupils and parents.

ROVISION







Foundation/Key Stage 1 (P1 - P3)
and Key Stage 1/2 (P4 - P7)





PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE
Cúram an Pháiste agus Smacht

Here in Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School/Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and involves all members of our school community – staff, children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well being of each child. We see our school as a community of people, sharing a common vision of life based on faith in Jesus Christ. We strive to create an atmosphere where -

- **God's love is experienced by all members of the school community through their relationships with each other;**
- **Christ is the example to all;**
- **Each child is helped to develop to his/her full potential.**

We are a silver accredited Rights Respecting School, an award achieved through our dedication to equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. Children's rights are taught throughout the curriculum, learned, respected, protected and promoted by all members of our school community.

The atmosphere within the school is based upon developing good relationships between staff/pupils/parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other's roles and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the needs and well being of each child and with the approaches and programmes we implement in order to aid their personal development. As a caring school we are concerned for the needs of each child, we embed a preventative curriculum and take all steps necessary, through Circle Time and our Anti-Bullying Policy, to eliminate bullying from our school. We promote safe use of the internet and mobile devices. All pupils sign an acceptable use agreement. Staff are trained in promoting Internet Safety and we educate our pupils on how to make safe and responsible choices on the internet. Parents are offered annual training through workshops, on Internet Safety in the home.

We recognise and value the important role which parents play in their child's education. Every effort is made to ensure that parents feel welcome, that they are made aware of the school's aims, objectives and policies and of their child's individual needs, progress and achievements. We expect you the parents to co-operate fully with us in achieving these goals.

As well as maintaining close links with parents at all stages, it is also our policy to co-operate with and fully support the work carried out by our local Health Authority and other outside agencies associated with the school.

As Catholic educators we realise the importance of co-operation between Home – Parish – School. Therefore, we take every opportunity to contribute to the life of the parish and liaise closely with our priests, the other parish schools and organisations.

In order to ease each child's transfer to post primary school, we have established close links with our post primary schools and follow the progress of our children through second and third level education. At all stages we welcome visits from our past pupils and try to facilitate them by providing work experience and teaching practice.



POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR | Iompar Dearfach

We aim to cultivate in our children a responsibility for their own decisions and behaviour. We attempt to reward good work and those who respect their teachers and fellow pupils rather than punish those who do not conform. We prepare our children to be good citizens and members of the church.

Through our pastoral care programme the children will realise that there is a need for a code of behaviour which –

1. Encourages self-discipline in pupils - making them accept responsibility for their own decisions, actions and personal behaviour.
2. Helps create a well ordered school in which effective learning can take place and in which there is respect for the rights of everyone.

The rules are few and simple and are clearly explained to the children and to parents.

Children should show respect and obedience to all adults in the school – staff and visitors.



- **Children are to be polite and well mannered at all times.**
- **Children are to respect other children and their property.**
- **Children are to show respect for school buildings and property.**
- **Children are to show care for the environment by refraining from throwing litter both inside and outside.**
- **To play fairly and for enjoyment.**
- **Walk through the school quietly and in order – keeping to the left.**
- **To be punctual for all school activities.**
- **All children are requested to wear school uniform.**
- **Permission must be obtained before leaving the school.**

We hope that disciplinary problems will be few but should the occasion arise, unacceptable behaviour will be drawn to the attention of the parents and their support elicited by -

1. Class teacher
2. Key Stage Co-ordinator
3. Vice Principal
4. Principal

Acceptance of admission to the school implies the parents' acceptance of the school's Positive Behaviour policy.

We have an active School Council in order for pupils to have a voice and a meaningful say in their education. We operate a Buddy System to promote friendships, respect and responsibility.

CHILD PROTECTION | Cosaint an Pháiste

Our Lady and St Patrick School is fully committed to the care and protection of the children in its care. The purpose of following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – have a clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

The school's Child Protection Policy states that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration and it is this essential principle, which underpins the policy. (Pastoral Care in Schools Child Protection DENI 1999).

Child abuse may take a number of forms including; neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection in Our Lady & St Patrick Primary School/Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig is Mrs K. Madine who has received appropriate Child Protection training. In her absence, Mr M. Robinson, Deputy Designated Teacher will assume the responsibility.

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she is being abused, the member of staff is instructed to report the matter to the Principal and the designated teacher who in turn is legally bound to inform Social Services. In cases of suspected or alleged child abuse, relevant information and the action taken are recorded and the school doctor/Social Services contacted.

Staff are reminded from time to time of the signs/symptoms of child abuse and all members of staff are encouraged to report to the Principal or Mrs K. Madine any problems/concerns they may have about the welfare of a child.

The Principal may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority's/CCMS's designated officer or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.

THE SAFETY OF THE CHILD IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.



DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY | Polasaí ar Oideachas Drugaí

'A drug is a substance which when taken has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels or thinks'. Guidelines to Primary Schools - Misuse of Drugs

The school's policy on drugs is designed to outline the school's attitude to the misuse of 'illicit' drugs, together with those which are considered to be 'legal' such as solvents, alcohol and cigarettes.

The use of illicit drugs i.e. those substances listed as controlled drugs will not be tolerated in Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School, nor will the misuse of substances such as glues, solvents and nitrates, the deliberate inhaling of which is deemed both socially unacceptable and harmful.

We do recognise, however, that within the school there are children who use prescribed drugs on a regular basis to maintain and develop body functions.

The overriding aim of our Health Education Programme is to prevent the misuse of drugs and to provide an environment where our pupils benefit from a drug free environment.

Copies of all policies relating to Pastoral Care, Behaviour, Anti-bullying and Child Protection, E-Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet are available to parents in the school.

I have a concern about my child's/other child's safety | Tá cúis buaraimh agam faoi shábháilteacht mo pháiste/páiste eile

I can talk to the
CLASS TEACHER

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the designated teacher for Child Protection
Mrs K. Madine

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal
Mr M. Robinson

If I am still concerned, I can write to the Chair of the Board of Governors
Mr M. Higgins

At any time I can talk to the Social Workers at their local Health and Social Services Trust
Tel: 028 4461 3511 or the Police Welfare Officer, Tel: 028 9751 1295

ASSESSMENTS
Meaúnaithe agus

Assessment of children's work is an integral part of our school. The main purposes of assessment are to:

1. Establish, through a variety of means, what each child is able to do.
2. Assist the teacher in planning appropriate tasks for each child.

There is continuous teacher assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress throughout the school. Standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy and twice yearly class tests all contribute to the compilation of each pupils' profile and report to parents. The records of each child's attainment and work samples are passed on to each successive teacher.

Parents will be fully informed of the results of assessment. P.7 pupils are presented with their Records of Achievement, containing both academic and non-academic evidence of their progress, before transferring to second level schools.

Parent / Teacher consultations are arranged in term 1 to discuss the child's progress. An annual written report is issued in June.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA | Critéar Iontrála

P1 Intake

The governors will admit children, up to a maximum of 60 in accordance with the published criteria.

The following criteria will be applied by the Board of Governors of Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School in selecting pupils for admission to Y1 in September 2026.

1. Children of compulsory school age who reside in the parish of Downpatrick.
2. Children of compulsory school age who have brother/sister/half-brother/half-sister enrolled at the school on the date of their own enrolment.
3. Preference will be given to children with exceptional circumstances (medical, social or other problems) that necessitate admission to Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School rather than any other primary school. The circumstances should be personal to the child and must be supported by independent and appropriate documentation, providing evidence of the circumstances being described as being exceptional.
4. Other children.

In the event of over-subscription in any one of the above criteria, taken in order, the following sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down (a) to (b). If oversubscribed in any one of the sub-criteria, taken in order, final selection will be on the basis of the closeness of the home to the school as measured by NI Direct Ace Map Plot. In the event of more than one child living exactly the same distance from the school the children's dates of birth as entered on their birth certificates will become the tie breaker with eldest child being given priority.

& ADMISSIONS
s Critéar Iontrála

(a) Eldest/only child in a family

(b) Children on the basis of the initial letter of the surname in the order set out below. The surname used will be as registered on the birth certificate or as subsequently legally changed and documented.

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

Random selection carried out on 3rd November 2025 – using randomwordgenerator.com

In the event of surnames beginning 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 | Dualgas le cinntiú

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.

Applications for admission to Year One after the beginning of the school year.

As above (provided no class exceeds 30 pupils).

P2 – P7 Intake

Children will be admitted using the criteria above up to the maximum of 460.

NB: Applicants should note that they may be required to provide documentation verifying address.

IRISH MEDIUM UNIT
An t-Aonad Gaeilge

Admissions Criteria / Critéar Iontrála

Rang 1 Intake

The governors will admit children, up to a maximum of 15, in accordance with the published criteria. If fewer than 60 places are taken in the mainstream, extra places may be taken up by applicants to the Irish Unit up to the admissions number.

Our Lady and St Patrick particularly welcomes applications from pupils who already have a strong background in the medium of Irish, for instance from pupils who already speak Irish at home.

The following criteria will be applied by the Board of Governors of Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School/ Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig in selecting pupils for admissions to Rang 1 in September 2026.

1. Children of compulsory school age who have attended the Naíscoil in Downpatrick.

2. Children of compulsory school age who are the first child or who have a brother/sister/half-brother/ half-sister enrolled at the school on the date of their own enrolment and who have complied with criterion 1 above.
3. Children of compulsory school age who have attended a Naíscoil outside the Downpatrick area and who live within the parish of Downpatrick.
4. Children of compulsory school age who have attended a Naíscoil outside the Downpatrick area.
5. Other children of compulsory school age.

In the event of over-subscription in any one of the above criteria, taken in order, be applied in the order set down (a) to (b). If oversubscribed in any one of the sub-criteria, taken in order, final selection will be on the basis of the closeness of the home to the school as measured by NI Direct Ace Map Plot. In the event of more than one child living exactly the same distance from the school the children's dates of birth as entered on their birth certificates will become the tie breaker with eldest child being given priority.

(a) Eldest/only child in a family

(b) Children on the basis of the initial letter of the surname in the order set out below. The surname used will be as registered on the birth certificate or as subsequently legally changed and documented.

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

Random selection carried out on 3rd November 2025 – using randomwordgenerator.com

In the event of surnames beginning 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.

Rang 2 - Rang 7 Intake

Children will be admitted using the above criteria.

In the event of the school being over-subscribed, a waiting list will be maintained.

Waiting List Policy for Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School |

Liosta Feithimh do Bhunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig

This policy has been put in place to ensure clarity and transparency on the admission of pupils to Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School and Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig. It applies to all pupils who do not gain admission to the school through the normal procedure.

Should a vacancy arise after the issue of initial letters of offer, all applications for admission to Year 1 which 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 remain in place until 30th June 2027.

The school will contact you if your child is offered a place by this method. Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish your child's name to be removed from the list.

If after the 30th June 2027, parents still wish their child to gain a place in Our Lady and St Patrick Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig and there are no vacancies, they may apply to the school to have their child's name entered on a further waiting list. Should a vacancy then arise the admissions criteria shall be applied. This further waiting list shall be maintained until the commencement of the official enrolment process for the following year.

DE Circular 2012/10 provides Guidance.



SCHOOL UNIFO

It is important that each child comes to school neat and tidy. We are proud of our school uniform which reflects the individuality of our school and offers to all children a common form of dress. In the interest of Health and Safety we request that jewellery is not worn to school. If ears are pierced – one pair of small studs only is permitted.



Boys | Gasúir

- Navy Trousers
- White Polo Shirt
- Green Sweatshirt
- Black school shoes – with soft soles

Girls | Cailíní

- Navy Skirt / Pinafore
- White Polo Shirt
- Green Sweatshirt / Cardigan
- White or navy knee socks
  or navy tights
- Black school shoes – with soft soles no heels

School uniform may be bought at any shop of your choice.

ORM | Éide Scoile



P.E. Uniform | Éide Chorpoideachais



Navy Shorts / Navy track bottoms, T-shirt and trainers should be worn.

In addition parents/guardians can purchase a P.E. kit through MFC Sports. Please note, it is not compulsory to buy items from MFC, this is entirely up to each individual family.

Due to health and Safety regulations all children should remove jewellery prior to taking part in P.E. lessons

Please mark all your child's belongings clearly with his/her name. We regret we cannot accept responsibility for belongings that are not clearly marked.



FRIENDS OF OUR LADY AND ST PATRICK PS PTA | Cairde na Scoile

Our Association welcomes most warmly all families whose children attend Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School Bunscoil Mhuire Agus Phadraig. The Association is very active and has a varied programme of events throughout the year. The Association has raised substantial funds, which have been used to purchase much needed equipment for the School. Through the Association, a close bond has been formed between parents and teachers, which helps co-operation and respect to flourish.

CONCLUSION | Conclúid

Now that you have read our school prospectus, I hope you will have an idea of the rich and varied life your child will have whilst attending Our Lady & St Patrick's/ Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig.

Best Wishes

Mr M. Robinson
Principal/Príomhoide



WHAT THE INSPECTORS SAID

"The very good provision for pastoral care is characterised by the caring and welcoming ethos and the highly effective working relationships at all levels. The children's behaviour is exemplary; they work very well together and respect the views and opinions of others."

"The children have very good opportunities to contribute to decision-making, notably through the active school council and eco council."

...the children are well motivated and have positive dispositions to learn; they settle quickly to work and engage actively in their lessons."



Mr. Robinson and Mrs. Madine receiving the AWARE Investors In Mental Health Gold Standard Award 2024



Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School
Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig

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