



# PROSPECTUS

**St. Mary's Primary School**

*'Caring, Sharing, Learning Together'*

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



Our school... a safe, secure, happy, caring and stimulating environment.



Children are the first priority of the school.



We promote a sense of community



Tea Party



Tractor Run

# Welcome

Dear Parents,

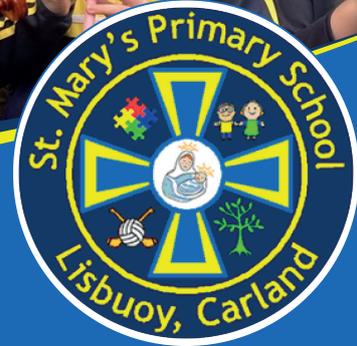
I extend a warm welcome to you and your child. Here at St. Mary's Primary School in Carland, we aim to serve the families in Carland and the wider community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of shared values such as honesty, respect, openness, commitment and co-operation. The school strives to promote these values through the experiences it offers its pupils, delivering a curriculum for the development of the whole child in a safe, secure, happy, caring and stimulating environment.

Moving from the secure environment of home to primary school is a big step for any child but be assured that all the teachers and staff will do everything to make school a happy place for your child to be. As teachers we very much appreciate that you trust us to provide the best education possible for your children. We can assure you that we will do everything that we can to make these seven years at primary school the best years for your child. We would like to think that when children leave St. Mary's, they will leave enriched from all the opportunities provided across the curriculum and from the friendships they have made.

The quality of education is greatly enhanced when teachers, parents and pupils work together towards the same goal. Your interest and continued support is necessary to us as teachers, as your child moves through the school from Primary 1 to Primary 7. You can show interest by listening and talking to your son/daughter about his/her school day, by supporting your child with any work at home and by attending the parent teacher meetings which relate to your child's education.

I hope this prospectus gives you an idea of what we are about. A visit to our school will give you an even better appreciation of our ethos. Inside this booklet you will find information about the school and the curriculum. I hope you will find this useful. Should you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. You are most welcome to our Open Day and I look forward to meeting and getting to know you and your child. I trust they will have much happiness in our school.

Martina Martin  
PRINCIPAL



## Our School

Within the context of our distinctive Catholic ethos, we aim to create a happy, caring and stimulating environment in which all children will achieve their potential and experience success in their learning and development.

St. Mary's PS is based on the principles of child-centred education. While striving for academic excellence, we also recognise each child as a unique individual with not only academic but also spiritual, moral, physical,

and social and emotional needs. We aim to develop each child's full potential as a member of society and believe that children learn best when they are happy.

We aim to reach into our community and to educate our children in a spirit of understanding and respect. We fully recognise that an active and meaningful partnership between school, parents and parish is essential to our school's success as well as your child's development.

## Delivering the Curriculum



Our school aims to provide high quality teaching and learning, delivering a curriculum for the development of the whole child in a safe, secure, happy, caring and stimulating environment. In keeping with the aims of the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum we aim to empower our children to develop their potential and make informed and responsible choices throughout their lives.

The curriculum in St. Mary's PS is provided in a way that encourages each child to develop. Learning is interactive, practical and enjoyable. There is a wide use of teaching methods, balancing whole-class, group and individual activities, to engage children in effective learning.

## Our Curriculum Objectives

To develop your child as an individual, we focus on:

- Personal Understanding
- Mutual understanding
- Personal health
- Moral character
- Spiritual awareness

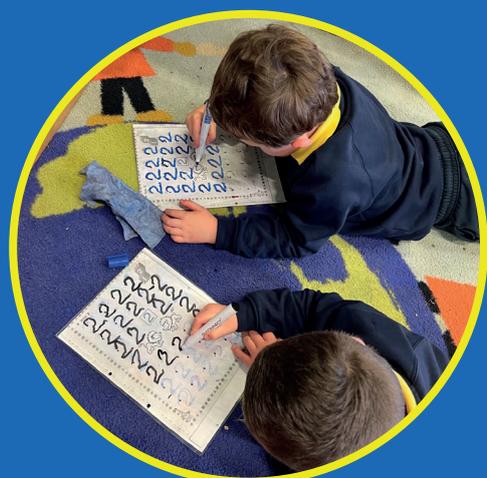
To develop your child as a contributor to society, we focus on:

- Citizenship
- Cultural understanding
- Media awareness
- Ethical awareness





**Foundation Stage -  
Primary 1 & 2**



**Key Stage 1 -  
Primary 3 & 4**



**Key Stage 2 -  
Primary 5, 6 & 7**

## Starting School in the Foundation Stage

Primary 1 & 2, known as 'The Foundation Stage', aims to build on children's pre-school learning experiences. It provides each child with an appropriate learning programme to develop their disposition to learn. It also aims to provide them with the skills and competencies they will need to succeed in school and future life.

The Foundation Stage endorses good early years practice where teachers have more flexibility in terms of the topics they teach. This flexibility allows teachers to follow the interests of the children, encouraging them to see links in their learning and to appreciate that the skills they learn in one area can be applied elsewhere in their learning.

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## Key Stages 1 & 2

Children at Key Stages 1 and 2 build on and develop the experiences provided at the Foundation Stage. Emphasis continues to be placed on your child's personal, social & emotional development as well as an emphasis on the development of the skills of 'Communication', 'Using Mathematics', 'Using ICT' and 'Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities'.

Children are provided with opportunities to develop these skills through a range of worthwhile, challenging, relevant and enjoyable learning experiences across the curriculum.

# Your Child's Areas of Learning

- **Language and Literacy**
- **Mathematics and Numeracy**
- **The Arts - comprising Art & Design, Music and Drama**
- **The World Around Us - combining Science & Technology, History & Geography**
- **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**
- **Physical Education**
- **Religious Education**

## Language and Literacy

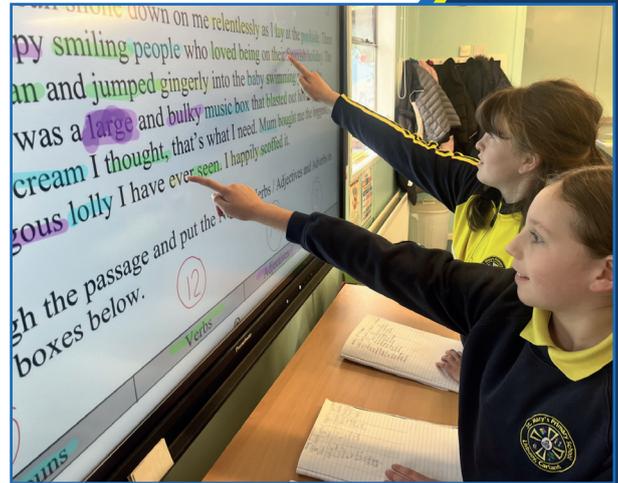
Literacy is a key to learning. In St. Mary's Primary School, we will focus on developing your child's ability to understand and use language as an integral part of learning.

'Language and Literacy' is taught through the three main areas of talking and listening, reading and writing. Your child's knowledge, skills and understanding are developed within an integrated programme that connects language and literacy work to the broader curriculum. We strive to ensure that each child can express themselves creatively, communicate confidently and interact effectively with the world around them.

## Mathematics and Numeracy

Numeracy is a life skill necessary in making everyday decisions and of use in virtually every work context. Skills in numeracy should help your child make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives. Here in St. Mary's Primary School, mathematical ideas are developed by making use of practical materials and electronic resources and by exploring various mathematical processes.

Activities are provided for your child in the areas of 'Number', 'Measures', 'Shape and Space' and 'Handling Data'. Our children engage in a wide range of purposeful activities which involve them in different modes of mathematical learning, including playing, exploring and investigating, doing and observing, talking and listening, asking questions, reflecting, drafting, reading and recording.





## The World Around Us

We believe that children are innately imaginative and creative so these dispositions are valued and nurtured in the school by providing your child with exciting and relevant contexts for their learning.

At St. Mary's Primary School we provide our children with opportunities to ask questions about themselves and the nature of the world around them. Children learn about how things work and about the characteristics of the natural world, through investigation and discovery.



## The Arts

In St. Mary's PS the children's creativity is developed through every area of the curriculum and closely linked with all aspects of their learning.

Art and Design, Drama and Music, known as 'The Arts', provide many opportunities for developing this creativity. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings in a variety of ways with the aim that their individuality, imagination and creativity will develop during their years in primary school.



## Physical Education

The purpose of Physical Education is to provide the opportunity for specific attention to be given to the physical development, health and well-being of your child.

Children experience a sense of fun, enjoyment and achievement through a variety of progressively challenging activities in P.E. Children develop a variety of physical skills and are encouraged to participate in many individual and team sports including Dance, Gymnastics, Athletics, Games and Swimming.

## Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

The development of high self-esteem and self-confidence among children and staff is very important at St. Mary's Primary School. 'Personal Development and Mutual Understanding', as a distinct Area of Learning, focuses on encouraging your child to become personally, emotionally and socially effective, to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives and to become confident, independent and responsible citizens. Through a variety of learning experiences, pupils are encouraged to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem, to think about moral values and to develop their personal and interpersonal skills.



## Religious Education

We aim to develop the distinctive Catholic ethos of our school, to enrich the spiritual and moral development of your child and to foster links with the Parish of Donaghmore. We assist parents in preparing children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation, recognising that parents are key educators of their children particularly in the areas of faith and religion. We endeavour to develop each child's sense of confidence in his/her own identity and an understanding and respect for traditions other than his/her own.



## Assessing Your Child's Progress

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. The school will monitor your child's progress carefully through a range of assessment techniques and strategies. For children with special needs, a comprehensive programme of class-based teacher support is available, with termly Education Plan meetings.



As parents, you will be kept fully informed of your child's progress. The school will assess and report annually on your child's progress in:

- **Areas of Learning;**
- **Cross-Curricular Skills; and**
- **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.**

This will be done through Parent/Teacher meetings in term 1 and a written report in term 3.



# General Information

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

There is a school uniform, to be worn everyday. It consists of:

### GIRLS

- Navy skirt, pinafore or trousers/plain tracksuit bottoms
- Yellow polo shirt with school crest
- Navy school sweatshirt or quarter zip with school crest
- Navy school coat with crest (optional)

### PE Uniform

- Official School Sports Kit (available to purchase through school) OR
- Navy shorts or navy jogging bottoms
- White, round neck T-shirt
- Trainers

### BOYS

- Navy trousers/ plain tracksuit bottoms
- Yellow polo shirt with school crest
- Navy school sweatshirt or quarter zip with school crest
- Navy school coat with crest (optional)

A new school uniform is being phased in over the next two years. This is available to purchase twice a year through the O'Neill's website.

### HEALTHY BREAKS & LUNCHES

The school promotes a healthy break & lunch. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy. Children may have water or milk and/or crackers/toast & cheese daily, which we ask parents to pay for on a monthly basis. Prices are communicated to parents at the start of each school year/term and updated when needed.

### SCHOOL TRIPS

During the course of the school year, children have the opportunity to participate in events outside of school. For any such external trip or visit, the school must seek written consent from parents. These permission slips are then retained in school for record-keeping purposes.

### SCHOOL MEALS

Menus are posted on the school website at the start of each term. It is a 'rolling' menu issued by EA. Parents are requested to send in dinner money on a Mon morning if possible. Again, prices are communicated to parents at the start of each school year and updated when needed.

### FIRST AID

Mrs Simone Hughes, Mrs Majella McCann, Mrs Paula McStravog and Mrs Cathy Morgan are trained to deliver First Aid in the event of any emergency.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD FEELS UNWELL IN SCHOOL

Should your child feel unwell in school, the school will contact you to let you know and, if necessary, arrange for collection. It is therefore vitally important that the school has up-to-date contact details for all parents - as well as a contact number in case of Emergency. It is the policy of our school to make contact with parents should your child receive a bump to the head. It is then left to parents' own discretion whether the child stays in school or is taken home.

## **School Hours and Collection Arrangements**

School begins at 8.45 am. As pupils are not insured to be on the school premises before 8.30am in the morning, parents should be aware that supervision is not in place before this time. Therefore, parents are asked to assist us with this matter by making necessary arrangements.

School finishes at 2.00pm for children in P1-P2 and at 3.00pm for children in P3-P7. All pupils finish school at 2.00pm on Fris. We operate a 'drive by' system at the school gate at hometime. Parents are asked to approach school from Carland Hill and remain in the queue of traffic until their child is put into the car by a member of staff. This is for safety reasons. For those parents who wish their child/children to walk home, this must be made known to the school in writing at the start of each term. Prompt collection of pupils at 2.00pm and 3.00pm is also very much appreciated as this allows staff to continue with planned school development work/meetings promptly.

## **Visitors to the school**

All visitors to the school – including parents - are kindly asked to report to reception if needing to pass on a message or to see a child or teacher during the school day. This monitoring helps the school maintain Safeguarding & Child Protection requirements by knowing who is on the premises at any given time. All who work in school appreciate your co-operation with this important matter.

## **School newsletters & text messaging service**

Each month, the school sends a Newsletter home to keep parents up-to-date with all that is happening in school. This is also a nice way of celebrating achievements in school. The school will also keep parents informed using the school's text messaging service.

## **School website & facebook**

Stay informed about all matters relating to school through the school website: [www.stmaryslisbuoy.com](http://www.stmaryslisbuoy.com) and Facebook page. Parents should download the 'Schools NI' app and search for our school to receive alerts when letters and messages are added to the website.

## **Attendance**

Where pupils are absent from school for one day or more, parents are asked to send in a short note to the Class Teacher to explain the absence. The date and reason for the absence must be recorded by the Teacher on the attendance sheet and this is also recorded centrally on the school's information management system (SIMS). Assistance in this matter is appreciated as attendance patterns are closely monitored by the Education Authority's Education Welfare Officer.

If children are late to school or need to be taken out of school to attend appointments, parents are asked to sign their child in and out, in the secretary's office, for Safeguarding & Child Protection requirements.

## **School Policies**

The Principal, Teaching Staff and Board of Governors of St. Mary's Primary School will determine school policies in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education. We have a range of policies and procedures followed by all members of staff to ensure the safety and well-being of all our pupils. Copies are made available to parents routinely and on request.



## Parental & Community Involvement

While our school recognises parents as the prime educators of their child, we encourage a partnership approach between home, school and parish for the benefit of our pupils.

The school benefits from an extremely pro-active Board of Governors and an enthusiastic, supportive Parents' Support Group which organises fundraising events during each school year. It is important to us that the school is an integral and dynamic part of the community. In order to achieve this, we continue to reach out into the community, inviting individuals and groups to support the life and work of the school.

## Staff at St. Mary's PS

### TEACHING STAFF

- Mrs Martina Martin (Principal)
- Mrs Simone Hughes
- Miss Aimee Mullin
- Mrs Cathryn Girvan
- Miss Alice Mackle (Principal Release)

### NON- TEACHING STAFF

- Mrs Majella McCann (Secretary & Lunchtime Supervisor)
- Mrs Dolores Stevenson (Classroom Assistant & Catering Assistant)
- Mrs Nicola Connolly (Classroom Assistant)
- Mrs Cathy Morgan (Classroom Assistant for FS )
- Miss Cara Kerr (Classroom Assistant)
- Mrs Paula McStravog (Classroom Assistant for Special Needs & Lunchtime Supervisor)
- Mrs Tracey Loughran (Classroom Assistant for Special Needs)

## The Board of Governors

New reconstituted Board of Governors will be in place by the end of Term 1 2024/25.

Rev. Fr G. McAleer  
 Mr Raymond Stewart (Chairman)  
 Mrs Marie McQuaid  
 Mrs Frances Lyttle

Trustee Representative  
 Trustee Representative  
 Trustee Representative  
 Trustee Representative

Mr John Mooney (Vice Chairman)  
 Vacant Post  
 Mr Raymond McCluskey  
 Vacant Post  
 Mrs Cathryn Girvan  
 Mrs Martina Martin

DE Representative  
 EA Representative  
 EA Representative  
 Parent Representative  
 Teacher Representative  
 Principal & Secretary to the Board

# What can St. Mary's PS offer your child?

## Strong Pastoral Care

We recognise that good relationships between all the members of the school community are vital in fostering a caring school. We provide a safe, caring and supportive environment in which all children at St. Mary's Primary School can flourish.

The behaviour of our children is excellent - a perfect environment in which to learn. Reflecting the ethos of our school, we place emphasis on positive behaviour and so help children to develop:

- responsibility and self-discipline through our positive discipline policy;
- respect for themselves, others and property of others;
- a work ethic and ability to co-operate with others;
- a caring, polite and friendly approach to others.

## Meeting Individual Needs

We believe that every child should have the opportunity to succeed. Teachers, therefore, provide a programme of work for all children which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. We aim to identify specific learning difficulties or special talents as early as possible and cater for them. Annual screening takes place to ensure children are performing according to their ability. The school liaises closely with external agencies to support each child's individual needs and involves parents at all stages.

## Enriched Provision

Our pupils have the opportunity to experience a range of extra-curricular activities. We offer children the chance to learn other languages; Irish (P3-7) and Mandarin Chinese (P5-7). P3-7 children learn tin whistle. We maximise the expertise and skills of individual teachers to extend children's experiences in using technology, STEM, Sport, Dance and Drama (Mrs Stephanie Gormley) and Mindfulness (Sarah Logan). An EA music tutor delivers weekly violin lessons.

## After School Clubs

With the introduction of After School Clubs, pupils from P1-P7 may now avail of a range of clubs from Mon to Thur in each term of the year. Visiting tutors - alongside existing staff - deliver and support activities such as Music, Basketball, Arts & Crafts, Cookery, Drama and Song & Dance. Strong links have been made with local artists, tutors, sports groups and the football club. All those who work with our pupils are vetted in line with Department of Education guidelines.

## What makes St. Mary's PS unique?

Being a small, rural school, all members of staff get to know each and every child on an individual basis. There is a 'family' feel to all we do. A particular strength of our school is the small class size. With an extremely favourable teacher: pupil ratio of one teacher to every eighteen pupils on average, more time and attention is available to support each child's learning and individual needs. Our highly trained classroom assistants, support this level of attention even further.

In our school, children are grouped according to their ability and needs within each class. Our composite classes support this differentiation even further. Within our mixed age classes, children are grouped in such a way to ensure they have an appropriate amount of challenge or support. For example, if a child needs to be stretched, he/she can work with children from a different year/higher ability group. Alternatively, children who need further reinforcement can work with children from a medium or lower ability group or even children from the previous year group. In this way, all the needs of our children are catered for fully.





# St. Mary's PS Admissions Criteria

PRINCIPAL: Mrs M. Martin

CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS: Mr R. Stewart

Expected enrolment in September 2025: 77 pupils

School Management Type: Maintained

## ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The applications procedure opens on 10th January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 24th January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 24th January 2025 and up to 4pm on 29th January 2025 will be treated as a late application, this is also the last date and time for processing a change of preference in exceptional circumstances. After 4pm on 29th of January 2025 no applications will be processed until after the close of procedure on 9th of April 2025.

The Principal on behalf of the Board of Governors, will apply the following criteria to identify which children should be admitted, either at initial admission to education or on transfer from another school.

Priority will be given to children who will have attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission.

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

- (i) Children of school age
- (ii) Children who, at the date of their application, have a child of the family currently enrolled at the school.

- (iii) Children whose parent/guardian or a child of the family are prior pupils of the school.
- (iv) Children who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child\* of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school.
- (v) The remaining places will be allocated on the basis of the proximity of the child's home to school, (i.e. google maps) priority being given to those living nearest to the school. (This criterion will be used to discriminate within any oversubscribed criterion (except Criterion 1).

\*Letter of verification may be required.  
This may incur a cost to parents.

## DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application.

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

## WAITING LIST POLICY

The school does not operate a waiting list.

## ADMISSION TO P2 – P7

Admission to P2 to P7 is subject to the enrolment number not being exceeded and to any admission not being prejudicial to the efficient use of resources.