



***ST FINIAN'S PRIMARY  
SCHOOL  
PROSPECTUS***



# Contents



## **Table of Contents**

1. *Table of Contents*
2. *Principal's Welcome*
3. *Mission Statement*
4. *Vision Statement*
5. *Staff and Organisation*
6. *Background & Ethos*
7. *Accommodation & Resources*
8. *Admissions*
9. *Pastoral Care & School Discipline*
10. *Child Protection*
11. *Uniform*
12. *Break & Lunch*
13. *Charging and Remission Policy*
14. *Our Curriculum*
15. *Homework*
16. *Religion*
17. *Special Educational Needs*
18. *Parents*
19. *Sports & Extra Curricular Activities*
20. *The School Day*
21. *Quotes*
22. *Photo Gallery*



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.

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**

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

### **Aims:**

We strive to provide an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeates all relationships within the school community.

As a Catholic Maintained Primary School, we are committed to the Statement of Aims of Catholic Schools and to the promotion of an ethos throughout the school which reflects the Christian teaching and values of the Church and places the child at the centre of our daily work and decision making.

High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals.

Teachers are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils and with other school-based staff and are dedicated to improving learning.

The safety, welfare and personal development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance.

## **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.

### **Board of Governors:**

<i>Fr Martin O'Hagan (Chair)</i>	<i>Trustee Representative</i>
<i>Mr McClean</i>	<i>Trustee Representative</i>
<i>Mrs McMullan</i>	<i>Trustee Representative</i>
<i>Mr Higginson</i>	<i>Trustee Representative</i>
<i>Mr Murray</i>	<i>DENI Representative</i>
<i>Mrs Walker</i>	<i>BELB Representative</i>
<i>Mrs McCarthy</i>	<i>BELB Representative</i>
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Parent Representative</i>
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Teacher Representative</i>
<i>Mr Coulter</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Mrs McGrattan</i>	<i>In attendance</i>

*Parents can address the Board of Governors via the parent representative.*

## **Staff**

*Principal: Mr Coulter*

### **Teaching staff:**

*Primary One: Miss Gordon  
Primary Two: Mrs McKinney  
Primary Three: Mrs McGrattan  
Primary Four: Mrs O'Neill  
Primary Five: Mr Barnes  
Primary Six: Mrs Dalzell  
Primary Seven: Mrs Reid*



### **Non-teaching staff:**

*Classroom Assistants Miss Johnston  
Mrs Dunleavy  
Mrs Russell  
Ms Adams  
Mrs Somers*

*Secretary: Mrs Moag*

*Building Supervisor: Mr Nolan*

*School Crossing Patrol: Mrs McCormick and Mr Rolt*

## **Background**

Initially the school was opened in 1910 as separate boys' and girls' school but was extended and amalgamated as a co-educational school for boys and girls in 1965.

Almost all the pupils are from the Newtownards Parish area. Current enrolment is 155 pupils with seven permanent, full-time teachers plus the principal and no composite classes. The enrolment of the school has risen consistently in the last number of years. Children of all backgrounds and religions are welcome at Saint Finian's.

## **Accommodation & Resources**

The well maintained accommodation comprises 8 bright spacious classrooms, an assembly/PE/dining hall, a meals kitchen, staff room, and office and ICT resource room. Within the last few years every class has been refurbished with new furniture and each classroom has an interactive white board installed. Significant renovations have occurred onsite and to the School hall also. There are three spacious playgrounds, including an adventure playground and large grass playing areas in the school grounds. The school has recently purchased new reading and maths schemes and new play equipment for break and lunch.



## **Admissions**

The following criteria will be 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.

*A) For the Admission of pupils to Year 1 in September 2015 and the Admission of Pupils to Year 1 after the beginning of the school year.*

- 1 Children who have reached compulsory school age.
- 2 Children whose parent/guardian is presently a permanent member of the school teaching/ancillary/auxiliary staff.
- 3 Children who have brothers/sisters, half brothers/sisters presently enrolled in the school.
- 4 Children who are the eldest/only child in their family.
- 5 Children whose older brother/sister, half brother/sister, are former pupils of the school.
- 6 Children whose parent/guardian is a former pupil of the school.
- 7 Children who have not met any of the aforementioned admissions criteria.

Application forms may be obtained from the school and you can sample a flavour of the school at: [www.stfinians.co.uk](http://www.stfinians.co.uk). The full Board of Governors will be involved in the application of the admissions criteria.



## **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 the development of a positive and caring climate, which is based on mutual respect for all people and for 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, with emphasis on 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 Mrs McGrattan. In her absence Mrs Dalzell 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 obtain a form from Mrs Moag. School dinners adhere to nutritional standards and are available from the canteen at a cost of £2.40 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 7:45am 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.



## **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. The school may make a charge for any damage to schoolbooks & equipment, or to the school structure.*



## **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 Alive-O Programme is followed throughout the school. Children of other faiths are 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.



## **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 will 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.

## **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.

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.

## **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, Gaelic football, camogie, hurling, netball, tennis, 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 after school Cycling Proficiency, 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.



## **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](mailto:info@stfiniansps.newtownards.ni.sch.uk)

Website: [www.stfinians.co.uk](http://www.stfinians.co.uk)



## 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.”*

*“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.”*

*“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.”*

*“ My son has made a great start to his school life and is unfazed by ‘big school’ he feels comfortable and happy in P1.”*

*“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.”*



