



St Jarlath's PS Blackwatertown

School Prospectus



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for taking the time to read through our prospectus. We hope it enables you to gain insight into the life of our vibrant school. The prospectus has been designed to give you the basic information that we think you will need to ensure your children's happiness during their time at the school.

Education is our core business. We aim to provide a safe and happy family environment for each child under our care whilst sustaining high standards. As a Catholic School we strive to ensure that our faith permeates school life. Our Catholic ethos is reflected in our work ethic, in how we treat each child and in how we contribute to the life of our parish.

You can be confident that your child will receive the highest standard of teaching from our team of very committed teachers and classroom assistants in a happy, friendly and professional atmosphere. Be assured also that your child's happiness and well-being will be our first concern at all times during his or her years at our school.

If you find you require more information about any particular aspect, please come to see myself or a member of the staff. It is through easy communication between home and school that we can build the close relationship which will both support and be an encouragement to your children while they are at St Jarlath's.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jacqueline S Loughran

Principal

School Profile



St Jarlath's is a co-educational primary school. It was opened in 1974, to serve the educational needs of children in the 4 to 11 years age group in the Southern area of Clonfeacle Parish, to include the villages of Blackwatertown and Benburb together with their rural surroundings.

Accommodation is in seven classrooms, four of which form the Key Stage One section of the school. Classrooms are grouped around a common open area which is used as additional teaching space or for communal gatherings as required. A spacious multi-purpose hall facilitates a variety of indoor activities including PE, concerts etc and also serves as a dining hall.

In 2021 an outdoor classroom was erected and this serves to promote a love of Outdoor Learning and exploration. 2022 saw the addition of a sensory room to promote emotional and social well being.

Each class has access to its own quiet reading area and P4 to P7 pupils benefit from a well stocked Accelerated Reading library space. Our school is adequately resourced in all respects, each class having access to the full range of computer and audio-visual equipment including state of the art Interactive Panels and access to over 30+ ipads.

Of modern design, St Jarlath's is set in spacious rural surroundings providing excellent play areas with an abundance of greenery and trees to facilitate much of the environmental needs of the primary school.





Philosophy



In St. Jarlath's P.S. we are committed to the aims of Catholic Education and are concerned first and always with trying to ensure that every child feels happy and secure as a valued member of our school community. We also welcome children of other faiths/no faith and value the contributions they bring to our school.

All members of staff are fully committed to providing for your child's intellectual development at all times. We also place equal emphasis on providing an environment within which he/she can grow and develop as a person – spiritually, morally, emotionally and physically.

If at any time you feel that your child has a worry or problem – real or imaginary – please do not hesitate to bring

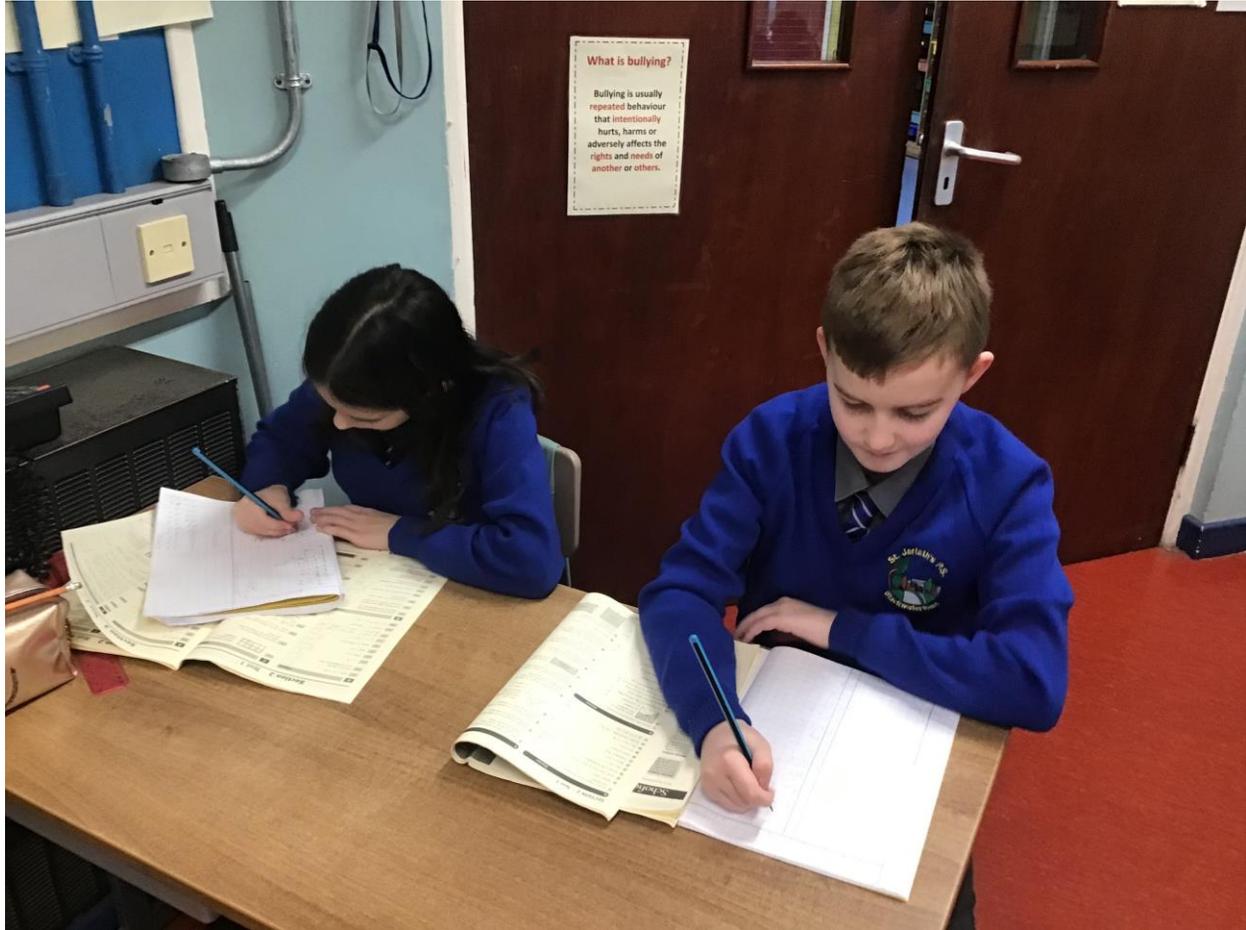
it to our attention. Very often his/her little "problem" can be easily resolved but we rely on you to tell us

about it as soon as it becomes apparent. In fact at all times we urge you:

"Please talk to us – not about us."

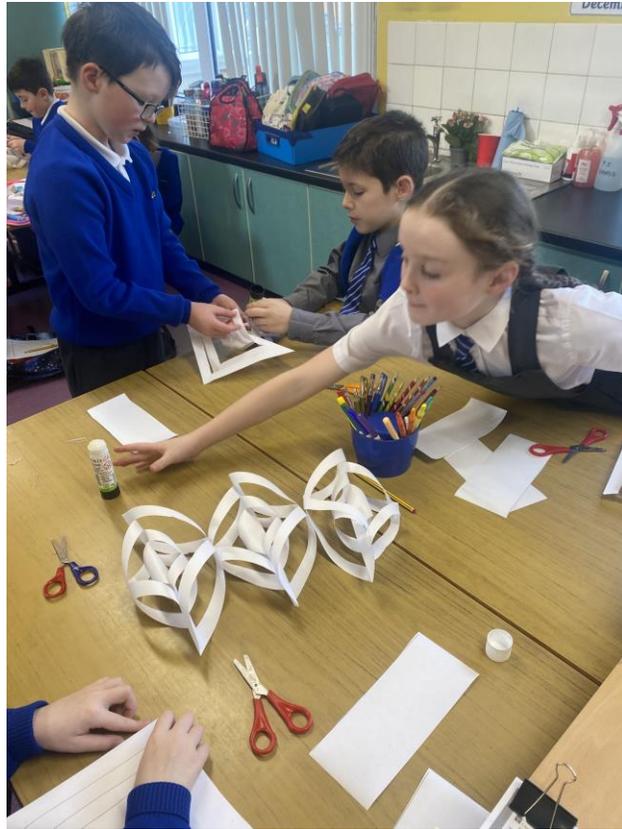


Curriculum



POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Governors of St. Jarlath's Primary School that all the pupils receive their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum and that the school go beyond that entitlement in areas where there are particular abilities among the staff. The School provides a balanced and broadly based curriculum promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, physical and social development of the pupils. This curriculum will seek to prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It is also the aim of the school to maximise the potential of each pupil, to develop selfconfidence in the pupils and to promote a spirit of tolerance towards others. The curriculum promotes children's self-esteem by concentrating on activities and learning experiences which encourage confidence, curiosity and creativity. It encourages children to take an active responsibility for their own learning. The Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.





Curriculum Delivery



In our teaching we use a variety of methods – whole class, groups, individuals – and pupils frequently explore subject areas through a thematic or topic approach. In their planning and delivering of lessons, teachers take great care to provide for differentiation, i.e. to ensure that materials are presented at a variety of levels to cater for the wide range of abilities (or difficulties) normally found among children in all mixed ability classes.

Children are introduced to the use of computers as early as possible, with every classroom being equipped with at least two computers. In addition, we have a set of 30 class ipads. The school has a separate policy for the Acceptable use of the Internet, which is available for inspection on request.

We are also deeply committed to promoting a positive attitude to books and the ownership of books, with children from their earliest years being provided with many opportunities to hear and read stories, to avail of the well-stocked class libraries, the central library and the Annual Book Fair.

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's reading by becoming involved in our Paired Reading Programme.

Teachers will review programmes of study and topic themes to ensure progression, non-repetitiveness and continuous stimulation of pupils. Evaluation and revision will be carried out at the end of each year in order to take account of educational changes and developments.



Broad aims of our school

Our school will seek to prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We will aim to maximise the potential of each pupil, to develop self confidence and the capacity to live as independent self-motivated adults.

ACCESS

The curriculum is accessible to all pupils irrespective of sex, nationality, religion, ability or physical handicap.





Areas of study

St Jarlath's offers a curriculum that is balanced and broadly based, covering the six major areas of study namely:

- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The World Around US
- Physical Development and Movement
- The Arts
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

In addition the Cross Curricular skills of:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using ICT alongside

- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are delivered.







Mission Statement



"Finding success in every child"



Music Provision

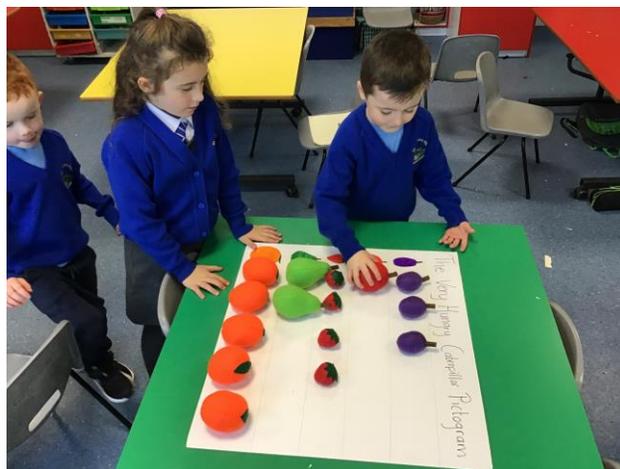


St Jarlath's has a proud music tradition and is fortunate to have the services of EA music tutors on a weekly basis. Children in P5-7 receive EA music tuition, with the choice of instruments provided. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play the tin whistle and sing in the school choir, which performs at both school and community events

Homework



The school recognises the importance of parental support in the education of our children. Homework is an integral part of every pupils learning and an opportunity for parents to become involved in their children's learning and progress. It reinforces the learning done in school and is an excellent home/school link. Children also need time for recreation and the development of their own interests so homework is assigned Monday to Thursday.



The recommended time spent on homework should be within the following ranges.

P1: 10-15 minutes

P2: 15-20 minutes

P3: 20-30 minutes

P4-5: 30-45 minutes

P6-7: 45-60 minutes



Physical Education



In our school we place a great emphasis on the teaching of PE and Sport, both within the normal curriculum and as an extra-curricular activity. Through the range of activities, we make available to our pupils we aim to give them opportunities to develop:

- The skills associated with these activities

- Enjoyment in participating

- An awareness that taking an active part in sport could lead to a healthier lifestyle.

Within our curriculum each class is timetabled for PE taught by their class teacher or a specialist coach. In the summer term, all of the classes participate in our annual Sports Day.

We have a great relationship with our local GAA club and regularly use their facilities and coaches to help deliver this aspect of the curriculum.





Assessment and Reporting



Detailed monitoring of pupils' progress takes place throughout the school year, both formally and informally. This information is discussed with parents at parent/ teacher meetings midway through the autumn term. An end of year written report is issued in June. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's education and appointments can be made to discuss progress with the class teacher at any mutually agreed time.



Religious Education



Religious Education will be available to all children at St. Jarlath's Primary School. The Religious Education of pupils will be accomplished in two equally important and complementary ways.

- Through the totality of experiences in the school
- Through the religious education programme.

Staff are aware of the spiritual needs of the children and the important part Religious Education plays in a child's upbringing. The school day begins with each class making its own act of collective worship. The Grow in Love programme is the core resource for the teaching of RE, linking the home and school in the task of handing on the faith to the children. The school chaplain is a regular guest in the school, visiting all classes and assisting the respective class teachers in the preparation of children for First Communion and Confirmation



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Children with Special Education Needs



"The school has a very inclusive approach to special education needs and the provision is outstanding. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early and benefit from very effective intervention strategies. Additional provision is matched very well to the children's needs. The support is of a very high quality and has a positive impact on the children's learning, self-esteem and the standards they achieve." ETI 2015

In order to ensure that every child realises his/her true potential at school the teachers will ensure that the content of lessons are carefully matched to individual needs. Every effort will be made to provide maximum access to the curriculum for children with Special Educational Needs. Children with additional needs will be identified through teacher observation, assessment and performance in standardised tests. Parents will be made aware of any concerns as soon as possible. In accordance with the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, the identified needs of each child will be catered for by his/her class teacher, who will be supported by relevant outside agencies such as the peripatetic service provided by EA, and support within school where appropriate. The Special Needs Co-ordinator is responsible for SEN provision, ensuring relevant plans are drawn up for every child who has been identified as SEN. The Special Education Needs Policy is available on request.





Pastoral Care and Child Protection



At St Jarlath's , 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 the school community-children, parents, teachers and all other adults who contribute to the overall well-being of each child. Each teacher works very hard to create and maintain a caring and supportive environment in which all pupils can develop as person, as well as a learner.

"The quality of pastoral care in the school is outstanding. There is an inclusive supportive ethos throughout the school and high quality working relationships at all levels. A strong sense of community pervades the life and work of the school. The children in year 6, talked enthusiastically about their experiences in school; in particular they highlighted their enjoyment of learning and the support they receive from all members of staff. " ETI 2015

All Primary 1 children are assigned a P6 'Buddy' to be their friend and mentor throughout their first year at St Jarlath's . This reinforces the ideas of friendship and responsibility and helps the younger children to become more comfortable at school.

Child Protection

The school follows the Education Authority's recommended procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection. Copies of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Anti-Bullying policy are available on the school website. **"In discussions with the inspectors, the year 6 children reported that they felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being."**
ETI 2015

Behaviour

The school adopts a positive attitude to discipline, based on respect for self, respect for other pupils and respect for adults. A copy of the school Positive Behaviour Policy outlining the school rules, rewards and consequences of undesirable behaviour, is available to parents. It is based on a sense of community within the school and values which all of its members share. The support and co-operation of parents is a very important element in achieving the aims in our Positive Behaviour Policy







Child Protection and Safeguarding

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Positive Behaviour



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Extra Curricular Activities



St Jarlath's PS is aware of the importance of visits and other enrichment activities in the development of our children. These form a key part of the children's education and are usually closely linked with class topics. Extra-Curricular activities add a valuable dimension to the education of children.

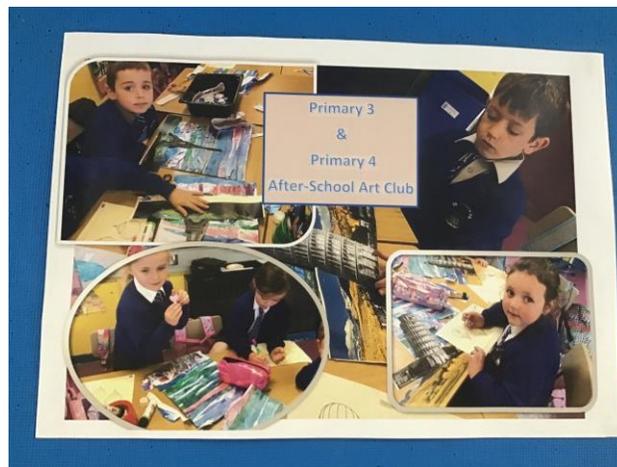
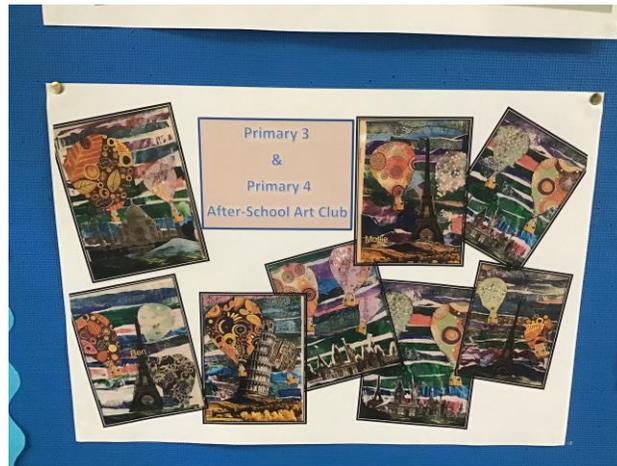
We join with quality external agencies to provide a wide range of sporting and creative activities. At different times this will include:

- Inter-schools Gaelic Football League
- Soccer coaching
- Hurling & camogie coaching
- Schools swimming gala
- Athletics - Cross Country and Road Running
- Basketball
- Choir
 - Art

- Stem KNEX/Science club
- Netball
- Cookery

The school offers an early morning supervision service , available from 8am - 8:30am daily for parents who need to get to work at this time.

Alongside the clubs listed above, an After School Minding Club , supervised by qualified staff, is available from 1:30pm to 2.30pm daily, where children can play and remain in school until all other classes depart.





After School Cookery



After School Cookery



Shared Education



We are engaged in a Shared Education Project with Cope PS, Loughgall in primaries 1,2, 6 and 7. The pupils and teachers work collaboratively on a given topic throughout the year, developing friendships as well as skills.

Parental Involvement



It is our aim to involve parents in the education of their child and to keep them as fully informed as possible. We host a range of workshops to inform and support parents including Mathematics and E - Safety. Parents are kept up-to-date through the school website, the school App and monthly newsletter. The school has a strong, enthusiastic and hard-working team of parents who sit on the Parent-Teacher Association. They organise various fundraising and social events through the school year, which raise much appreciated funds for the school.



Pupil Voice



Pupils are given a voice through the School Council that is elected annually with representatives from P4-7. The Eco Council is also made up of representatives from P3-P7. In 2016, the school was awarded the coveted 'Green Flag' by the NI Eco-Council. This recognizes the schools endeavour to extend the pupils learning beyond the classroom, developing responsible attitudes and commitment to environmental issues both at home and in the wider community.

Admissions Information



Application for a place in P1 can be sought in January of the year in which admission is required. The admissions criteria will be available to parents in advance of the application process. Requests for places in P2–P7 classes will be considered, provided that the maximum enrolment number has not been reached and that additional enrolments will not significantly increase individual class numbers or exceed a maximum of 30 pupils in any Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 class.

Visiting the School



It is the aim of St. Jarlath's Primary School to involve parents in the education of their children and to inform them as fully as possible about their children's progress. The arrangements for consultation are:

Before Enrolment

An Open Day takes place in January when parents have the opportunity to visit the school to experience the richness of St Jarlath's and the talents that the children have to offer.

Entrants to P1

In June the Primary 1 teacher visits Nursery Schools to meet the children to be admitted in September and to gather any necessary information to make the transition as smooth as possible. At the end of this term, the children are then invited to school to see their classroom, meet their teacher and peers as they sample some of the activities available to them.

Entrants who have previously attended another school

- An interview will be arranged with the Principal.
- Parents will be welcome to view the school premises.
- A meeting can be arranged with the prospective teacher/s of the child/children.

After Enrolment

An Information Booklet outlining the curriculum content for P2-7 is provided to parents at the end of September. In P1, this is delivered through a class meeting.

All parents are invited to come to school on a selected day in the Autumn term to receive a verbal report on their child's progress to date followed by a written report in June. Parents are welcome to discuss their child with the class teacher at any time throughout the year that is mutually convenient.

The School Day



School opens: 8:30am

School begins: 8:45am

Break: 10:30-10:45am

Lunch: 11:45 -12:30pm (P1 – P4) 12:30-1:15m (P5 – P7)

School ends: 1:30 pm (P1 – P2) 2:30pm (P3 – P7)

In addition an **Early Drop Off** service is available from 8am - 8:30am for all pupils.

An **After School Minding Club** operates from 1:30pm - 2:30pm for P1 and P2 pupils.



School Uniform Policy



The school appreciates your help in ensuring that pupils come to school each day in the correct uniform:

There is a school uniform as agreed upon at a meeting of parents. It consists of a royal blue pullover or cardigan bearing the school crest with grey trousers, pinafore or skirt. Boys wear a grey shirt and the girls a white blouse. The uniforms are available in Dessies, Armagh with the tie available in the school office. All pupils must wear plain black shoes.

A PE uniform was introduced in 2021 consisting of PLAIN navy tracksuit bottoms/leggings, white polo t-shirt, school jumper and plain black runners.



Contact details



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