



ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

B A N B R I D G E



Play, Learn and Grow...Together!
PROSPECTUS 2018 - 2019

From The Principal...

Welcome to St Mary's Primary School. The Board of Governors, Staff and children are very proud of our school community. The purpose of this prospectus is to help you, the parent or guardian, to make an informed and reliable decision, on the educational setting, you choose for your child.

St Mary's provides a welcoming, attractive and stimulating environment, which supports pupils' learning, and celebrates their academic and non-academic achievements. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which develops the skills, concepts and knowledge, necessary for future learning and living.

To assist us in our efforts, we work in close partnership with our parents. Our staff, through their enthusiasm, dedication and hard work, support the pupils, and provide effective education for **all** of them, in **all** aspects of their development. We enable our pupils to reach their full potential, irrespective of race, gender, age or ability.

We want our children to develop as confident, disciplined and enquiring learners, able to make informed choices and decisions. We promote a love of reading in the hope that children will develop a confidence with language, which will empower them to communicate effectively with others. We aim to develop the skills and knowledge of mathematics, to enable our pupils to cope confidently with everyday mathematical situations. We foster a knowledge and understanding of the world through scientific, historical, and geographical inquiry, and encourage each child to come to an

understanding of roles and responsibilities in caring for this world. We create daily opportunities for our pupils to develop their practical, creative, artistic and physical skills.

St Mary's Primary School is a Catholic school with strong links to the parish, church and local community. We aim to establish a community, centered on Christ, so that His values and gospel message permeate the whole life of our school. We are firmly committed to the aims of Catholic education and strive to establish close links with the home, our Church, and our Faith Community of Seapatrik Parish, and the wider community. As a school, we are committed to developing a positive and highly effective pastoral care system, where all of our staff, parents and pupils are supported, valued and respected.

Choosing the right school for your child, is regarded as one of the most important responsibilities any parent or guardian will undertake. We are very confident, that when you choose St Mary's Primary School, it will mark the beginning of a long and successful home-school partnership, which will enhance and enrich your child's social, emotional, spiritual and educational journey in the years ahead.



Contents

04 Mission Statement

06 General Information

07 Facilities

08 Staff

10 Admissions

11 Uniform

13 Safeguarding

17 Learning for Life

16 The Curriculum

18 Policies

20 Sporting Aims

21 Extra Curricular Activities

22 Wrap Around Services

22 Music

23 Parent Teacher Association



Mission Statement

“At St Mary’s the child is at the heart of the Catholic faith community. As a school, we aim to provide a high standard of child centred education, in a safe, supportive learning environment, where respect and Christian values are promoted...





...St Mary's prides itself on being a happy and welcoming school, where the work of all pupils and the support of parents is highly valued."



General Information

**Our School is
a Catholic
Maintained School
with an attached
Nursery Unit.**

Contact

St Mary's Primary School

Reilly Park

Banbridge

BT32 3DJ

Telephone: 028 406 62572

Fax: 028 406 26545

Email: info@stmarys.banbridge.ni.sch.uk

Website: www.stmarysbanbridge.com



Facilities

St Mary's Primary School is a maintained, co-educational school for children, aged 3 to 11 years old. In September 2017, the doors of our new school opened for the first time, offering state of the art facilities throughout, with improved classroom space, technology and improved parking facilities.

The school site encompasses a full time nursery and has two fully equipped Learning Support Classes, for children with moderate learning difficulties and a specialist Autism Specific Class.

Each classroom is very well resourced and equipped with the latest technology. Interactive panels, laptops, digital readers, iPads and digital cameras, are all used to bring education and learning alive in the classroom, and to our children's learning experiences. The school has recently invested, with the support of our PTA, in an outdoor classroom and gardening area.

The school's caring and learning ethos lends to strong parental, Parish and community links. Our highly popular Breakfast Club operates from 7.45am each morning, our After School Club is open daily until 5.55pm.*

Principal: Des O'Hagan

Vice-Principal: Mr Jim Martin

School Secretary: Mrs Jane Russell

Chairperson Board of Governors:
Mrs Anne Kerr

Nursery Admissions:
26

Primary 1 Admissions:
58



School Staff 2018/19

Members of staff employed
in the school for the
academic year 2018/19 are
indicated below:



Nursery

Mrs U White

Primary 1

Mrs M O'Hare

Ms N McVeigh

Primary 2

Mrs E Moore

Mrs D Quigley

Miss Downey

Primary 3

Mrs M Devlin

Mrs N Austin

Primary 4

Miss A Farrell

Mrs C Turley

Primary 5

Mrs M Kane

Mrs A Murphy

Primary 6

Miss J Kelly

Mr P McGrane

Mr Martin/Miss Byrne

Primary 7

Mrs M Morrow

Mr C Mackle

Junior LSC

Mrs F Downey

Senior LSC/ Safeguarding

Mrs L Flanagan

Autism Specific Class

Mrs C Quinn

Literacy Support

Teacher

Mrs K McArdle

Vice Principal/SENCO

Mr J Martin

Principal

Mr D O'Hagan

Support Staff

Nursery

Mrs K Smyth

Mrs L Magee

Primary 1

Mrs A Godfrey

Mrs T Wills

Miss C Von Cysewski

Primary 2

Mrs E Duggan

Miss N Hull

Mrs P Comiskey

Mrs U Florek

Mrs B Hillen

Primary 3

Mrs J Scappaticci

Miss C Doyle

Primary 4

Mrs K Scappaticci

Primary 5

Mr T Kearney

Primary 6

Mrs C McClements

Miss L McConville

Mrs G McConville

Primary 7

Mr J McCreedy

Mrs P Kearns

Mrs M Lennon

Junior LSC

Mrs L Chambers

Mrs D Rea

Senior LSC

Mrs M Craig





Autism Specific Class

Mrs P Dunleavy

Mrs P Penny

Non-Teaching Staff

Senior Clerical Officer-

Mrs J Russell

Clerical Officer-

Mrs T Mulvaney

Clerical Officer-

Mrs J Comiskey

Site Supervisor-

Mr S Devlin

Lunchtime Supervisors

Mrs K Scappaticci

Mrs M Carr

Mrs A Molloy

Mrs P Rooney

Mrs P Monaghan

Mrs B Tate

Afterschool Club

Leader – Miss N Hull

Playworkers

Miss McConville

Mrs L Magee

Miss C Von Cysewski

Mrs T Wills

Mrs B Hillen

Peripatetic Staff

Mr D Evans - **Literacy Support**

Mr D Rooney - **Brass**

Mrs L Logan - **Flute**

Mr M Brady - **Guitar**

Mr J Hagan - **Percussion**

The Board of Governors of St

Mary's is ultimately responsible for the overall management of the school. They are required to meet for a minimum of three times each year but in practice, meet more often than this.

Some of their duties include:

- The oversight of the curriculum.
- The control of the budget.
- The provision of information to parents.
- The selection of staff.
- The maintenance of the premises (shared responsibility with Education Authority Southern Region).
- The Admissions Policy.
- Fostering links with the local community and pursuing the objectives of mutual understanding.



Admissions

Admissions Information

The academic year runs from 1st September to 31st August of the following year. Normally children are admitted at the beginning of the Autumn Term of the academic year in which they are five. Application forms and admissions criteria are available from the school office, or to download from the school and Education Authority Southern Region website.



Arrangements for Admissions

Once your child has been offered a place in Primary 1, he/she will be invited into school for an induction visit in the Spring Term preceding your child's start at the school. An induction meeting for parents will take place towards the end of July when parents are given the opportunity to meet the Principal, school staff and members of our Parent Teacher Association.

Similar arrangements will be made during the summer term 2018 for children to be admitted in Nursery Class.



School Uniform

The school requires all its pupils to adhere to the uniform requirements of the school.



Grey Trousers

White shirt

Green pullover or jumper

Red, yellow and green tie

Black, flat shoes. Grey socks

Tracksuit for PE

Grey skirt, pinafore or trousers.

White blouse

Green pullover or jumper

Red, yellow and green tie

Black, flat shoes

Grey or green tights

Black, flat shoes. Grey socks

Summer Term: Green and white checked dress

Tracksuit for PE

Children in the nursery and early years may choose to wear the sweatshirt and jogging bottoms.

We would ask you to buy your child flat black shoes which he /she can open and close by himself/herself e.g. Velcro fastenings.

For P.E. children in P1 - P3 should bring soft-soled shoes or plimsolls. A tracksuit for PE can be purchased through the school.

The school uniform is available from all local suppliers.



Safeguarding & Child Protection

Safety

The safety and security of our children is of paramount importance to all at St Mary's.

Adults are requested to refrain from entering the school building. With this in mind, we ask anyone arriving in the school to report to the office first.

If a visit requires taking a child out of school for a medical or dental appointment, a signed slip will be given from the school office which can be presented to the teacher. No child will be allowed to leave school premises unless collected by a parent.

Children walking to and from school should come straight to school in the mornings and go straight home when school finishes. Children are reminded at various times throughout the year about keeping safe outside school and about 'Stranger Danger' procedures.

Watches and jewellery, particularly earrings, should not be worn during PE lessons or games lessons. The wearing of rings and earrings is a particular hazard in school, especially in the hall or playground. Children should wear only small stud earrings.

Please visit our website to download a copy of our Child Protection Policy. A printed version may also be obtained, on request, from the school office.



"Children are reminded at various times throughout the year about keeping safe outside school"



Dropping off and Collecting Children

In the interests of our children's safety and to avoid traffic congestion on the Scarva Road, parents are requested to use St Therese's car park. Full supervision is provided in St Mary's car park and in the bottom and top playgrounds from 8.50am until 9.00am each morning, to enable parents to use the drop off bays provided. If Parents wish to escort their child to the playground each morning prior to lining up they should use

St Therese's car park as there is no parking available in the school car park.

Pupils with mobility difficulties or pupils who require EA transport are not subject to the above. Parents are encouraged to take extra care while driving or parking at all times. Please note; the area to the right on entering the school grounds is designated for taxis and deliveries only. Parking is not allowed in this area.

Pastoral Care

St Mary's provides a comfortable and safe learning environment for all our children. We aim to maximize the potential of every child and recognise that without strong pastoral care academic success cannot be achieved.

At St Mary's we believe giving our children a voice is important and their participation in the school decision making process is vital. **Our School Council and ECO Council** have been established for a number of years. Both Councils are made up of pupil representatives from Key Stage 1 and 2 classes. The Councils meet on a regular basis to discuss issues raised at Class Councils and to agreed areas for

development within our school.

School Council members organise our Credit Union Saving Scheme each Wednesday while our ECO Council organise our Gardening Club and Greenhouse on daily basis as well as Fair-Trade events during the year.

Digital Leaders are established in P7. These children are trained in using and caring for iPads, laptops and other IT equipment and are tasked with ensuring that all equipment set up each morning and is stored safely and securely at the end of each day. They also lead Internet Social Media Safety Awareness sessions in the school. All our P7 children receive First Aid training. First Aid training is also made available to

parents annually.

P7 Playground Buddies are trained by our Pastoral Care coordinator each year to support our younger children throughout the school. Children from P5, P6 and P7 have recently formed an **Anti-Bullying Team** and have been trained accordingly.

St Mary's takes the welfare of our children very seriously and has engaged **Mindfulness** classes throughout the school. The school also has a **Barnardo's Counsellor** who attends the school one half day per week to work with children and parents. The school is also engaged with the I Can Centre to develop ways of looking after the mental health of our children, parents

and members of staff. A summary copy of the school's Pastoral Care arrangements is sent to parents at the beginning of each academic year.

A full copy of the school's Pastoral Care Policy is available, on request, from the school office or may be downloaded from the school website.



Learning for Life...

"Child participation in the school decision making process is vital."

Being Heard...

At St Mary's we believe giving our children a voice is important and their participation in the school decision making process is vital. Our School Council and ECO Council have been established for a number of years now. Both Councils are made up of pupil representatives from Key Stage 1 and 2 classes. Both Councils meet on a regular basis to discuss issues raised at Class Councils and to agreed areas for development within our school.

Shared Education Programme

St Mary's is involved in Shared Education projects with Abercorn Primary School, Donard Special School and Edenderry Primary School.

School Council...

School Council members organise our Credit Union Saving Scheme each Wednesday while our ECO Council organise our Gardening Club and Greenhouse on daily basis as well as Fair-Trade events during the year.

Life Skills...

As a registered Heartstart School we aim to equip all our children with emergency life support skills.

Children are taught to recognise The Chain and to act appropriately. Children are taught skills from how to dial 999 in an emergency providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

The Curriculum

St Mary's offers a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of all our children. The curriculum seeks to prepare children for second level education as well as for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adulthood.

We encourage every child to fulfil their potential, to develop self-confidence and promote a spirit of tolerance and respect for others. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is vital for every child's development and this is placed in the context of positive attitudes to learning and the development of sound moral values based on the Catholic religion.

St Mary's will:

- Provide each child with a broad, balanced curriculum suited to his/her needs.
- Promote a caring nurturing environment in which all parents and other community members are welcome.
- Develop respect for the beliefs, culture and opinions of others.

The Education Authority provides us with specialist support for children with literacy difficulties. While the school employs additional members of staff to work directly with children who encounter difficulties with literacy or maths.



The areas of the curriculum include:

Language & Literacy

Mathematics and Numeracy

The Arts

The World Around Us

Physical Education

PDMU

Children with Special Educational Needs

The school's Special Educational Needs Policy conforms to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Arrangements for pupils with Special Educational Needs are made through consultation with parents, the appropriate staff in school, the Education Authority Southern Region and the pupil, if deemed appropriate.

A copy of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy is available on request from the school office or to download from the school's website.

The school caters for children with Moderate Learning Difficulties within the Junior and Senior Learning Support Classes. The school has also an Autism Specific Class on site. For further information please contact the school principal.



Religious Education

Religious education at St Mary's is based on the Alive O programme.

It prepares our children for participation in the liturgy and sacraments and pervades the whole life of our school. Our Chaplain visits the school regularly and supports our children in their preparation for the Sacraments.

Our School Policies...

Parental Concerns

If a parent has an issue relating to his/her child, the class or as a wider school issue in general please follow the steps below:

Contact the class teacher who is available at the beginning and end of the school day or by prior arrangement. Simply telephone the school office and an appointment will be arranged.

Contact the Foundation Stage Coordinator (P1 - P2), Key Stage 1 Coordinator (P3 - P4), or Key Stage 2 Coordinator (P5-P7), the Head of Nursery or the Playgroup Leader.

Contact the Principal or the Vice-Principal.

Contact the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Canon Stevenson, through St Mary's School.

All matters will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

School Attendance

Full attendance is expected from all children at St Mary's. Only in cases of medical or other exceptional circumstances can pupils be absent. A Certificate of Attendance is awarded to any child with 100 percent attendance in the academic year.

The overall attendance rate for St Mary's from September 2017 to June 2018 was 95.4%

The school's target for attendance is 95%.

Healthy Eating

Our school is a health promoting school and operates a Healthy Eating Policy as habits formed in the early years stay with us through life. We actively promote

a healthy lifestyle and encourage our children to avoid eating chocolate, sweets, sweet drinks during school hours.

P1 and P2 class Snacktime operates at a cost of £3 per child per week. Children have opportunities to eat from a selection of healthy food options supplied by the school. At break times P5 to P7 children pupils are encouraged to eat foods from the following list: fruit, milk, sandwiches, yoghurt, vegetables and bread (especially wholemeal). If a child does not have a healthy snack, a piece of fruit or snack will be provided. Milk is available at break times. On occasion the School Council organises Free Fruit Fridays to encourage all children to taste and eat new fruits.

It is important to note that poor eating habits will not only cause tooth decay among children but could lead to obesity and even coronary disease in later life. Healthy foods such as milk and fruit provide children with essential nutrients and vitamins for growth whereas high sugar foods do not. Our school dinners provide an excellent balanced meal for your child.

Packed Lunches

We encourage parents to provide a packed lunch that is healthy and sensible. Children are asked to take home any uneaten food so that parents will know if their child is eating their lunch. Any food containing nuts is not allowed as we have a growing number of children with nut allergies.

A copy of the school's Healthy Eating Policy and Lifestyle Policy is available on request from the school

office or to download from the school's website. **Please note St Mary's is a Nut Free School**

Positive Behaviour

In common with many other schools, St Mary's maintains a written policy on Positive Behaviour and Discipline in School as part of the school's pastoral care arrangements.

A copy of the school's Positive Behaviour and Discipline in School Policy is available on request from the school office or to download from the school's website.

The school's policy on positive behaviour and discipline reflects the basic Christian ethos of the school which, as a Catholic Maintained School, seeks to foster the genuine Christian values of respect for, and tolerance towards, others, the ability to forgive, gentleness, honesty and politeness. In creating and developing these attitudes and values, the major influences are undoubtedly the home background and wider parish community. Good manners and courtesy are taught in every home and we expect the children to practise these same qualities whilst in school and on the way to and from school. We also expect that parents, in the best interest of the child, will support sanctions imposed in school.

The school builds on the foundation of good manners, politeness, respect and care for others which is cultivated and nourished in the home.

School Buddy System

Our School Buddy System has been in place for a number of years. Playground Buddies from P7 are on duty each day and help set-up and put away play

equipment in our three playgrounds. They have also been trained to interact with other children, particularly our younger children to support them with their play activities and help resolve any problems fairly.

Homework

Homework is seen as an important part of the learning process. Children are encouraged to extend their school work into their homes, to expand on and organise their own work, to search for information and to solve problems. As the children become older, their work should be viewed as a form of preparation for secondary education. We would not expect a child to spend much more than forty minutes uninterrupted working time at home. We would stress at the outset that homework does not always involve written work. In Primary 1 and 2 Reading forms the basis of homework.

In all other classes Reading, Spelling and the learning of tables will form the basis of homework most evenings. Reading, particularly leisure reading, reading for pleasure and for information as well as the reading of popular children's books, annuals and newspapers are all excellent forms of non-written homework which deserve and indeed require your encouragement.

Indeed we would hope that our pupils would make increased use of the local libraries. Many of our pupils have access to computers in the home and the use of these should be encouraged where appropriate.

Transition

As part of the school's Transition Policy we may decide to mix classes within a year group to develop friendships throughout the year group as well as ensuring appropriate balances of gender and need.

Sporting Aims

St Mary's places a very strong emphasis on the value of sport and the contribution it can make to the education of pupils at St Mary's.

St Mary's Primary School provides an extensive range of sporting activities for all children. All pupils are required to participate in Physical Education each week and be full participants in the school's swimming program. In recent years St Mary's reached the Northern Ireland finals of the schools 7 a-side soccer competition while the girls reached the Ulster Finals in Netball.

The aims of sport in St Mary's are:

1. to promote physical, social and emotional development of pupils through directed extracurricular sporting activities;
2. to enable pupils to experience a wide range of games and physical activities;
3. to create an awareness of and the benefits of team participation;
4. to experience the enjoyment of physical activity;
5. to develop a foundation for continued participation in physical activities in later life;
6. to enjoy healthy competition.

Sports Facilities

St Mary's has a large assembly hall and three large playgrounds with a variety of physical education equipment. The school regularly uses Banbridge Leisure Centre for swimming, football and netball as well as the facilities at Clann Na Banna and Cheney Park.

The sports available at St Mary's include:

- Athletics/Cross Country
- Netball
- Gaelic Football
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Girls' soccer



Extra Curricular Activities

At St Mary's we believe it is important for all pupils to stay active. The school offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities considers which provide a valuable dimension to the education of children.

Irish Dancing

Coding Club

Swimming

School Choir

Cycling Proficiency

Netball

Music Tuition - (Guitar,
woodwind, African
Drums, brass)

Football

Gaelic Football

Girls football

Athletics

ECO Council

Gardening Club

Astronomy Club

Speech and Drama

Indoor Bowls

Table Tennis

School Council

Fun Fit

Ukulele

First Aid - P7 children

Mindfulness.



Wrap Around Services

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club operates each morning from 7.45am serving a nutritious breakfast at a cost of only £1.50 per day. Discounts are available for families. Afterschool Club details are available from the school office

The After School Club and Breakfast Club are registered to accept childcare vouchers.

Our established Summer Scheme operates during the summer holiday and is organised by

staff from our Afterschool Club and school. Children have opportunities to participate in various sporting activities including; swimming, tennis, football, basketball, volleyball, archery and water sports at Craigavon Water Sports Centre. To take part in trips to the library, farm and zoo; as well as take part in art and craft, ICT and various learning activities.

Details of the financial benefits to parents, how the scheme works and how parents can apply to the scheme are available at:

www.employersforchildcare.org



Music

St Mary's has a strong tradition of extra-curricular musical activities.

All children from P5 have an opportunity to audition for the School Choir. All children from P5 up have an opportunity learn to play the guitar, the recorder, receive violin tuition, brass tuition, flute tuition or learn to play percussion instruments such as the African drum. Over previous years the Pathways project in has greatly enhanced music participation and experience in P5. If your child is interested please contact Mrs O'Hare or Mr O'Hagan for information.



Parent Teacher Association



St Mary's has a very strong and active Parent Teacher Association. Our Parent Teacher Association generally meets twice per term and produces an annual Newsletter to inform parents of fundraising events and parental activities.



Over the past number of years our PTA organised school discos for all our children, Quiz Nights for parents and staff, a Parent

Teacher Football Match, a Car Wash fundraiser, Family Bingo, a number of school Coin Drives, Coffee mornings for charities, Movie Nights and a fundraising Tesco Bag Pack to name but a few. Our PTA also supports the school with Sports Day, First Communion, Confirmation and providing refreshments at various meetings and Parent Workshops throughout the year. This year our PTA kindly sponsored our Happy Puzzle Challenge evening for families and our class workshops for all children. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's school.

**This year our PTA
donated over £12,000 to
our school and provided
£6,000 in successful
grant applications.**





www.stmarysbanbridge.com



Telephone: 028 406 62572

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Email: info@stmarys.banbridge.ni.sch.uk



PROSPECTUS DESIGN: WWW.SCHOOLWEBDESIGN.NET