



# **School Prospectus**

## **2024**



**St. Mary's Primary School**  
**Principal: Mrs U. McAlinden**  
**191 Derrytrasna Road**  
**028 3834 0295**

## Foreword

On behalf of the Governors, Staff and Children, I would like to warmly welcome you to St. Mary's Primary School. The purpose of this prospectus is to provide you with an insight into our school. We care about the welfare of your child and we value the support that you give us. If there is any information you wish to share about your child or if you have any queries, need help or information please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or myself. We very much look forward to working with you to help your child grow in their independence, knowledge, abilities and social skills. We look forward to working together to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

*Mrs U. McAlinden*

(Principal)

## Mission Statement

*In St. Marys our aim is to provide a Catholic education, which is person centred and which promotes the dignity, self-esteem, and full development of each child. We believe this will enable our children to maximise their individual potential for academic, spiritual, personal, emotional, and social development thus, preparing them for future learning and living.*



## About Our School



Our school is situated in well maintained grounds in Derrytrasna, beside Derrytrasna Playgroup and within proximity to St Mary's Church, Sarsfields GAA Club and Community Centre. The present building has 5 classrooms, a large assembly/dinner hall, kitchen, resource room, office spaces and outdoor play areas and eco garden.

The school also has dedicated teachers, classroom assistants and support staff. Together we promote a happy and secure learning environment in which all children can reach their full potential and have the opportunity to succeed.

At present the school enrolment is 98. It is the policy of the Board of Governors, that children are taught in composite classes. At present there are 5 classes within the school: - Primary 1, Primary 2/3, Primary 4, Primary 5, Primary 6/7

### **Contact Details:**

School Address:  
191 Derrytrasna Road  
Lurgan  
BT66 6NR

School Telephone Number:  
028 38340295

School Website: [www.stmarysderrytrasna.org](http://www.stmarysderrytrasna.org)  
School Facebook: St. Mary's Primary School, Derrytrasna

# Admissions

Prospective pupils and their parents are most welcome to visit the school at any time by appointment. Children who are admitted to Primary One in St. Mary's Primary School are invited to meet the Primary One teacher and classroom assistant in June. On these Open Days parents and children meet with the teacher and classroom assistant and are welcome to take part in activities and games in their new classroom.

New children who wish to transfer into Primary 2 – 7 will meet with the Principal and class teacher prior to their enrolment.

Our whole school community contribute to welcoming and supporting new arrivals and their families, and all staff work closely to identify needs of new pupils and track and monitor early progress. When a child enters our school, we liaise closely with parents to form supportive links for them and build firm foundations for their future learning.







## OUR STAFF

<b>Principal</b>	<b>Mrs U. McAlinden</b>
<b>Class Teachers</b>	<b>Mrs B. Chambers</b> <b>Mrs F. Coleman</b> <b>Mrs C. Dargan</b> <b>Miss S. Lennon</b> <b>Mr I. Lavery</b>
<b>School Administrator</b>	<b>Mrs T. Molloy</b>
<b>Classroom Assistants</b>	<b>Mrs M. Breen</b> <b>Mrs W. Boyce</b> <b>Mrs C. Campbell</b> <b>Miss J. Hepburn</b> <b>Mrs S. Nader</b> <b>Miss C. McCartan</b> <b>Mrs C. McAlinden</b> <b>Miss E. O'Carroll</b> <b>Mrs L. Scullion</b>
<b>Building Supervisors</b>	<b>Mrs J. Doyle/Mr P. Murphy</b>
<b>Catering Staff</b>	<b>Mrs L. Gardiner</b>

# The School Day



## **Staggered Arrival - 9.00 – 9.15am**

All children will enter the school through the Dining Hall entrance. For your child's safety he/she must be brought to school by a parent or adult. Staff are available to meet the children and take them to their classroom. The school cannot accept responsibility for children who arrive before 9.00am.

## **Registration - 9.15am**

Class begins with prayer and registration.

## **Break time - 10.45am – 11.00 am (P1 – P7)**

During break time all children eat a healthy snack and spend time outside. There is a selection of outdoor play equipment for the children to enjoy whilst being supervised by members of staff.

## **Lunch Time - 12.30pm – 1.15pm (P1 – P7)**

The children have their lunch/dinner together in the school canteen. They can bring a healthy packed lunch or take a hot school meal at a cost of £2.60 per day. The children then play outside supervised by our staff.

## **Home Time**

At home time Primary 1- Primary 3 finish their school day at 2:00pm. The children must be collected from inside the school grounds by a parent or adult. Please tell a member of staff if someone different is collecting your child. Try not to be late when collecting your child as this is a common source of distress. Primary 4 to Primary 7 children finish school at 3:00pm. Children can avail of the Service bus to travel home.

## **School Meals**

At St Mary's Primary School, we understand the importance of helping our pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle. One of the main aspects of this is healthy eating. Our pupils learn about a healthy diet and are encouraged to eat a well-balanced diet.

### **School Dinners**

Our school meals are cooked in St Francis school canteen and delivered daily to St Marys. The meals are of a high quality with numerous healthy options. The meals are provided in the school-dining hall. A monthly menu is provided in advance. Meals are provided at a cost of £2.60 per day, £13.00 per week which can be paid using the School Gateway Payment App. If you are in receipt of benefits, your child may be eligible for free dinners. Children may also bring a packed lunch if they prefer.

### **Healthy Break**

St Mary's operates a 'Healthy Break' policy. For our younger children in Primary 1 to Primary 3, a healthy mid-morning snack is provided. Children are provided with a range of locally sourced fresh fruit which is prepared on site. To cover the cost of this we ask for a contribution of £2.00 per week. Older children are asked to bring a healthy choice such as a piece of fruit, sandwich, or a yoghurt for their snack at break.

### **Milk**

Milk is also available to purchase and can be paid on a termly basis. The children are then provided with a carton each day. Children are permitted to drink only water or milk at school. If your child is bringing a drink of water to school, they should do so in a labelled bottle. For health and safety reasons, glass bottles are not permitted.

## The NI Curriculum

At St. Mary's we deliver the full breadth of the Northern Ireland Statutory Curriculum (CCEA, 2007) at each of the three developmental key stages.

### Foundation Stage – Primary 1 and Primary 2

“The Foundation Stage aims to build on these preschool learning experiences by providing children with an appropriate learning programme to develop their dispositions to learn and to provide them with the skills and competencies they will need to succeed in school and future life.”

- **Key Stage 1** – Primary 3 and Primary 4
- **Key Stage 2** – Primary 5, Primary 6 and Primary 7

Children at Key Stages 1 and 2 build and develop the experiences provided at the Foundation Stage. Continued emphasis is placed on personal, social and emotional development as well as an explicit emphasis on the development of skills in 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.





The Statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum identifies the major areas of learning as:

- **Language and Literacy** – Talking, Listening, Reading, and Writing
- **Mathematics and Numeracy** – developing knowledge of mathematical concepts and numeracy.
- **The Arts** – Art and Design, Drama and Music
- **The World Around Us** – Geography, History, Science and Technology
- **Physical Education** – Promoting knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activity.
- **Religious Education** is also central to our curriculum experience.

This curriculum aims to, “empower children to develop and grow to their own potential, equipped with the skills they will need for life, enabling them to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives” (CCEA, 2007, 5).



The Statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum also identifies these core skills and capabilities as being integral throughout all areas of learning.

- **Communication**
- **Using Mathematics**
- **Using Information and Communications Technology**



Along with the ‘Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities’

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



## Literacy

In St. Mary's learning is at the very core of our existence. We firmly believe in establishing and developing vital literacy skills which include talking and listening, reading, and writing. We believe that our fundamental task is to teach our children to speak clearly and articulately and to read and write effectively. Reading across all curriculum areas is a priority to extend and deepen pupils understanding and use of vocabulary. We want pupils to develop a love of reading during their time at St. Mary's and be exposed to a range of texts and genres.

English is taught using a cross- curricular approach, meaning that the skills children learn can be applied in writing right across the curriculum, giving them a clear purpose and scope for creativity. The children participate in daily phonics and shared reading and writing activities. Once children develop an understanding of letter combination and sound association they are taught spelling and grammar rules through investigation and direct teaching. We welcome and actively encourage the support that children receive at home. It is vital that parents give reading a high priority at home and continue to support children even after they have mastered the early stages of reading.

## Reading

The library van visits our school monthly. All children are members of NI Libraries and use this service to borrow books. They are also encouraged to use class libraries. We aim to promote reading for enjoyment and a love of books. Children from Primary 4 to Primary 7 currently participate in the Accelerated Reader program.



## Mathematics & Numeracy

We aim for our children to learn and explore through the use of practical materials. We encourage them to explain their thinking and use mathematical language. We like to challenge our children and help strengthen their understanding of mathematics and numeracy. To develop the skills which are vital to real life and living in our world today, our pupils are taught a range of mental maths and problem solving skills. The foundations for learning in numeracy are established in the early years and developed in Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2. Lessons involve counting, mental calculation strategies, written calculations, visualisation, reasoning and problem solving activities. ICT is used to enhance the teaching and learning of mathematics. Mathematical ideas are developed in the areas of number, shape and space, measures and data handling. A variety of approaches and methods of investigation are used to develop a sound understanding of these mathematical concepts. In every area of mathematics, including numeracy, practical activities support children to become confident and successful mathematicians who use thinking strategies and problem-solving skills.

## Religious Education

At St. Mary's we recognise that faith begins at home. Together with the parents and parish community we work together in partnership. As a Catholic school our ethos permeates all aspects of school life.

In our school, Religious Education is delivered through the programme "Grow in Love". Children learn faith values by living them out.



We are concerned not only with helping each child achieve academically, but to develop emotionally and spiritually.

Sacramental preparation is very important at St Mary's Primary School. Children in Primary 4 make their First Confession and Holy Communion. Our Primary 7 participate in the Ceremony of Light and make their Confirmation.

Our school Chaplin Rev.Fr Fitzpatrick supports the delivery of Religious Education within the school.



## ICT

In St Mary's we place great emphasis on using ICT as we equip our children with the skills to develop their confidence and ability to use various devices and hardware. In school we have desktops, laptops, iPads and Interactive Whiteboards. Pupils have safe access to the Internet in a controlled environment, which is monitored by C2K for schools. As well as developing and encouraging computer skills and knowledge, ICT enhances learning across the curriculum and promotes both teamwork and communication skills.

Our school is involved with the JDO Foundation. This is a global collaboration program that pairs classrooms from around the world through an innovative and creative use of technology. This year our Primary 6/7 children are working with children from 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary School, Lamia, Greece. Our children have the experience of working with c2K, Google Classroom, IXL and Accelerated Reader.





## The Arts



Art, Drama and Music are very important subjects in our school and the children are provided with many opportunities to develop their creative skills. All children from Primary 5 to Primary 7 participate in the Musical Pathways Project where they learn to play a musical instrument. All children from Primary 1 to Primary 7 have the opportunity to perform for audiences.



### Our Pupils have their say...

We have lots to play with during break and lunch time.

I like to see my friends at school.

We enjoy playing netball in school.

The teachers and Principal are kind, supportive and caring.

Our school is a very friendly school, and we love it.

We are given lots of opportunities to learn about the World Around Us through Eco Schools and interesting World Around Us topics.

We love to use our imaginations to create amazing pieces of work.

We are lucky to learn how to play the violin and viola.

We are super proud of our Green Flag.



## Extra-Curricular Provision

St Mary's Primary School provides an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities throughout the school year which children are encouraged to avail of. Appropriately qualified coaches, tutors and teachers facilitate them. These activities add a valuable dimension to the education of the children, and they include:

Gaelic Football

ICT Club

Musical Pathways

Cycling Proficiency

Healthy Kidz

Arts and Crafts

School Choir

Cricket



We also offer a number of extra-curricular opportunities through diverse activities such as drama, history workshops and the school choir.



## The World Around Us

Pupils will have a balance of experiences taught in a topic based approach that includes Geography, History, Science and STEM. Throughout the school year children are provided with opportunities to attend school trips, which enhance their learning.



## School Uniform

It is our wish that children should wear the uniform as we feel it gives the children a sense of identity and loyalty with the school. The uniform consists of:

### Boys

Blue shirt  
Blue jumper  
Grey trousers  
Grey and blue striped tie  
Black shoes

### Girls

White blouse  
Grey Skirt/Pinafore  
Blue jumper/cardigan  
Blue and grey striped tie  
Black shoes  
Grey or white socks

### P.E Kit

Blue shorts  
Plain Black Track bottoms  
White School Polo Shirt  
White socks  
Trainers

School uniform can be purchased from the uniform suppliers in Lurgan. All uniform items should be labelled.

# Pastoral Care and Child Protection

## Our Safeguarding Team



**Mr Lavery**  
**Designated Teacher**



**Mrs Chambers**  
**Deputy Designated Teacher**



**Mrs McAlinden**  
**Principal**

**Mrs K Doherty**  
**Designated Governor**

We in St. Mary's Primary school have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy.

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount; this overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.
- To have in place a structure within the school which will provide a swift effective response to any incident of suspected abuse.

A detailed Pastoral Care Policy and Child Protection Policy are available on request setting out guidance on the action required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures.

## Special Educational Needs

In St Mary's our staff are committed to providing equal access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. In the interests of these children we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to promote their individual needs.

Our SENCO oversees the provision of the school's SEN programme and liaises with external agencies such as; Literacy Support, RISE NI, Educational Psychologists, Speech therapy and many more. Children requiring support are placed on the Special Educational Needs Register. They are provided with an Education Plan which identifies targets for development, these are reviewed regularly in partnership with SENCO, teachers and parents.

## Medical Needs, Illnesses and Accidents

At St Mary's we ensure that children with medical needs or illness are supported in making a full contribution to the life of the school. When necessary, a care plan will be devised to ensure high quality care. If a child has asthma and needs an inhaler, it is advisable that one is to be kept at school.

In the event that your child may feel unwell or have an accident we will try to contact the parent or guardian. Our school First Aiders team will ensure that all children's injuries are assessed and looked after.



### Good Diabetes Care Award

We are proud to have been awarded the Good Diabetes Care in School Award from Diabetes UK. We were acknowledged for our whole school approach to good practise diabetes care and management. As described by Diabetes UK *"You are setting the standard for great diabetes care in school and making a difference to all students with diabetes."*



## **Home School Partnership**

At St Mary's we strive to work in partnership with parents and encourage parents to be involved in the education of their child. Parent meetings are arranged in the first term to discuss children's progress. Any parent who has a query or worry regarding their child should contact the school and arrange a meeting to speak with the class teacher.

If parents wish to remove their child from school for an essential appointment the child must have a note. If you are collecting your child early, please go to the reception and sign your child out. Similarly, if a child is absent please write a note to the class teacher.

For your child's safety please notify the teacher/secretary of any changes of address, telephone number or email address so that we have a direct form of contact.

## **Communication between Home and School**

We seek to provide parents with up to date and accurate information about what is happening in St Mary's. We regularly communicate with parents via newsletters, text, email, Class Dojo, website [www.stmarys.derrytrasna.org.uk](http://www.stmarys.derrytrasna.org.uk) or Facebook: St Mary's Primary School, Derrytrasna



## Before and After School Care

St Mary's Primary school has strong links with Derrytrasna Breakfast and Afterschool Clubs. They are located within the grounds of the school. The Derrytrasna Breakfast Club is open from 8am to 9am each morning and provides the children attending with a range of healthy breakfast options before school starts. The Derrytrasna Afterschool Club is open from 2pm to 5.30pm. At 2pm and again at 3pm an Afterschool staff member will collect the children from their school teacher and accompany them to the Afterschool Club.

For further information on the Derrytrasna Breakfast or Afterschool Clubs please contact the setting on telephone (028)38 340505 or email [derrytrasnaafterschool@gmail.com](mailto:derrytrasnaafterschool@gmail.com).

## The Friends of St Mary's

The Friends of St Mary's is a vital support, which raises funds to support the educational experiences of our pupils, and organise social events for the school community. Over the past number of years, the FOSM have helped secure grants and raised money that has provided the school with Chrome Books, new blinds for our Assembly Hall, Healthy Kidz, books, outdoor play equipment, treats and activities for pupils,

## Charity and Fundraising

At St Mary's we remain mindful of the importance of helping those in need. Pupils are encouraged to look for God in their daily lives and to share God's love and kindness. This is developed through charity in our community and world. We engage in a range of charitable events. These include; St Vincent de Paul and Trocaire. Our parents, families and community are also very supportive of our efforts.

## Bus

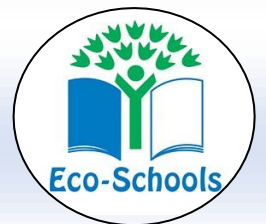
There is a service bus available at 3.00pm for use by the children. Application forms for transport are available through the EA website – Home to School Transport, should a parent be entitled.

## Homework

St Mary's recognises the value of engaging children in homework. Homework can be used to; revise both written and oral work, extend learning outside of school, involve parents in their children's studies and develop good work habits.

There must also be a balance with each child's need for recreation and the development of interests and hobbies. Homework this year will include the use of technology along with our traditional forms. The school is also using the Class Dojo app and 'Google Classroom.' It will not be set for completion at weekends, holidays, or special occasions.

## Eco Schools



We are proud to have been awarded the Green Flag by Eco- Schools in 2020 and in 2022. This continues our tradition of being awarded Eco-School status. Caring for the environment is at the heart of our ethos. Our school provides a platform to encourage children to care for creation and take responsibility by living more sustainably. Our school Eco Committee is responsible for leading the school's response to green issues.

This is a fabulous opportunity for the children to develop their awareness of the environment, be creative and show innovation.

## Conclusion

We hope that having read this Prospectus you will have some idea of the rich and varied life your child will have during his/her time here in St Mary's. You can be assured that his/her happiness and well-being will be always our concern during his/her years here. We will be happy to clarify information contained in the prospectus or answer any other queries. Please contact the school to arrange an appointment. We look forward to meeting you and your child.

