



Prospectus



## Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to both you and your child to St Colmcille's Primary School, Downpatrick. We understand that this is a very important time for you as parents/ guardians in choosing the right primary school for your child.

As a Catholic Primary School, our ultimate aim is to establish and foster Christian values for life and to deliver the very highest standards of education for all children. To succeed it is essential that we work in partnership with you as parents and the local community as a whole. Indeed the success of our school depends on the cooperation and close working relationship between staff, pupils, parents and all outside agencies.



The school was last inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in February 2019 when we were judged to be 'very good' in all the key areas of inspection and in our overall effectiveness of provision. This very positive inspection feedback is a source of pride to the whole school community. We are continuously evaluating and striving to improve all aspects of school performance.

This prospectus has been created to give you an insight into the life of St Colmcille's Primary School which has been serving the Parish of Downpatrick since 1975. We hope it helps you gain an understanding of how our school is organised and to appreciate the exciting opportunities on offer to children within our care.

If you require any further information or clarification of any item mentioned in this year's prospectus, do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to welcoming you to our school, and to a happy and successful partnership with all our new children and families.

Yours faithfully,

**Stephen Austin**  
*Principal*



## School Ethos and Mission Statement

In St Colmcille's Primary School we aim to give all the children in our care wide experiences appropriate to their age and ability. We try to develop in our pupils a pride in their own self-worth and recognition of the value of other people, regardless of social or cultural background. We celebrate the diversity of the wider community and are committed to the principles of inclusion and equality of opportunity. We expect our pupils to work hard to achieve our aims and for parents to assist us in carrying out our responsibilities in a mutually supportive, caring environment.

We are firmly committed to:

- The aims of Catholic Education.
- Providing effective education for all our children.
- Developing positive pastoral care systems in our school.
- Establishing close links with the home, parish and the wider community.



## School Motto

# LEARN

Live, Endeavour, Achieve, Respect and Nurture.

Our motto reflects our commitment as a school community to work purposefully together to provide pupils with the best possible opportunities to learn and develop in order to help them fulfill their potential and contribute to society in a meaningful way.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

St Colmcille's Primary School  
68A Glebetown Drive,  
Downpatrick,  
Down,  
BT30 6PZ

**Phone:** 028 4461 4177

**Email:** saustin015@c2ken.net

**Web:** stcolmcillesps.co.uk

**Principal:** Mr Stephen Austin

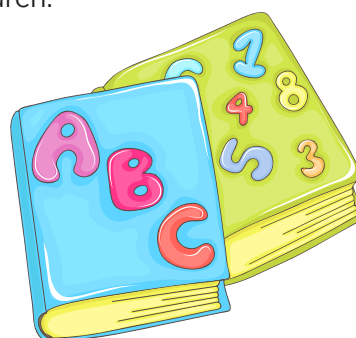
**Vice Principal:** Ms Marianne Dempsey

**Chairperson of Governors:** Ms Noreen Meehan

### About

St Colmcille's is a Catholic Maintained Primary School which caters for children of all faiths or none. It is co-educational for both girls and boys and is under the control of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

The present building was opened in 1975 and is situated on an elevated site beside St Colmcille's Church.



## Aims of the School

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We increasingly aim to develop the skills, abilities and aptitudes to experience success in learning and the desire to achieve. We aim to provide learning opportunities through which our pupils will develop as individuals, contributors to society and contributors to the economy and environment.

### Our aims are thus:

- To be complementary to the Christian home and values
- To support parents/ guardians in handing on the faith
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum
- To develop the full potential of each child
- To promote and enhance ICT skills ready for a technological world
- Encourage inclusion
- To be self-evaluating and self-improving: using data and judgements to inform and improve practice
- As a school to be ambitious, visionary, progressive and articulate
- To inspire confidence and ambition within every child
- To develop a caring and secure environment where children and staff feel valued and secure
- To support and train staff appropriate to needs
- To develop values
- To promote respect and tolerance of self and others
- To encourage parental involvement in their child's education
- To promote the profile of the school in the community
- Promote staff development opportunities - both teaching and non-teaching staff
- Seek opportunities to utilise local educational opportunities/ resources





## ADMISSION CRITERIA

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. For the latest information on this year's application windows and deadlines, please see the EA Admissions Website: [eani.org.uk/parents/admissions](http://eani.org.uk/parents/admissions) or contact the School Office. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The following criteria listed below will be applied in numerical order after the statutory criteria (a) & (b) has been applied as agreed by the Board of Governors of St Colmcille's Maintained Primary School, Downpatrick in selecting children for admission to Year 1 in the forthcoming September.

- (a) Children of compulsory school age (further information on 'compulsory school age' can be found on the EA Admissions Website: [eani.org.uk/parents/admissions](http://eani.org.uk/parents/admissions) or by contacting the School Office).
- (b) Children who reside in the Parish of Downpatrick at the time of application.

1. Children with a brother/sister, half-brother/sister who has attended St Colmcille's Primary School or who currently attends St Colmcille's Primary School.
2. Children regarded by the Board of Governors, on the basis of supporting evidence by parents and statutory agencies, as having special circumstances.
3. All other children from outside the Parish of Downpatrick.

In the event of being over-subscribed, in any one of the above criteria, taken in order, the following sub criterion will be applied:

- (a) the proximity of the home to the school as measured by the shortest walking distance by road using Google Maps Distance Tool.

Applications for admission to Primary One after the beginning of the school year will be subject to the same criteria.

Applications for admission to any other year will also follow the same criteria. The Admissions Criteria is updated each year.

## Enrolment

It is the aim of St Colmcille's Primary School to involve all parents in the education of their children and to inform them of their child's progress.

The arrangements are as follows:

### Before enrolment:

#### 1. Entrants to Primary 1;

- Prospective parents will be invited to the annual Open Night (held in December/January) to meet with the Principal and teachers and to view the school and the Primary 1 Area.
- During the Summer Term there will be an Induction Morning for all new P1 pupils. The Principal will meet all new parents and pupils and deliver a presentation on important school information and procedures. The P1 teachers will be on hand to address any parental queries and to meet all new pupils.

#### 2. Entrants who have previously attended another school;

- A meeting will be arranged with the Principal,
- Parents are welcome to view the school premises (by appointment),
- A meeting can be arranged with the prospective class teacher of the child.

### After Enrolment:

- In September of the new academic year, parents will be invited into school for a curriculum meeting with their child's teacher.
- Parents will be invited to meet with their child's class teacher on a one-to-one basis to discuss their child's progress.
- During Term 3, parents will receive their child's Annual Report.
- Parents will be invited to attend a host of other activities during the school year e.g. Assemblies, Masses, meetings for First Confession, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, School Productions, Sports Days etc.

Parents are very welcome to visit the school at any time to discuss their child's progress but to avoid any disruption of class work, an appointment must be made through the School Office. Phone calls are necessary, but during the school day a teacher's responsibility is with the children. Teachers may take brief and urgent phone calls, otherwise, it is more convenient to telephone after school hours.





## Organisation and Management of the School

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective management of the School. As well as nominees of the Trustees, the Education Authority and the Department of Education also has membership to the Governors. Completing this membership are one elected representative from the teaching staff and one elected member to represent the views of the parents. The Principal completes this team which represents all the main interests concerned with St Colmcille's Primary School.

The present Board of Governors is led by the Chairperson Ms Noreen Meehan and Vice-Chairperson Ms Yvonne Maguire.

### Duties of school governors include:

- Maintaining and developing the Catholic Ethos of the school
- Ensuring that the statutory curriculum is delivered effectively and efficiently
- Reviewing and benchmarking outcomes, identifying any areas where improvement could be made
- Participation in school development planning
- Review and ratification of school policies
- Staff recruitment and staffing matters
- Determination of admission and enrolment criteria
- Ensuring the school remains within budget
- Ensuring school premises are well maintained
- Fostering links with the local community

The positions are voluntary and unpaid. The Board of Governors is required to meet three times per year but in practice meet more often. Governors also participate in the regional governor training programme.

We would encourage you to read the Annual Governors' Report which we would hope you would find interesting and informative. The report evidences the accountability of governors to you, the parents. The report also highlights the contribution made to the school by staff, parents, governors and the wider community.

A senior management team (SMT) consisting of the Principal, Vice Principal and Senior Teachers provide a framework for the management of the school. Subject and Key Stage Coordinators have specific responsibilities relating to curricular areas and ensure that the curriculum is delivered in a meaningful context whilst at the same time attending to pastoral, administrative and managerial duties. These responsibilities are continually reviewed in light of changing circumstances and the needs of the school.





### Accommodation

The school consists of 18 classrooms including a large assembly/PE Hall, a Library, Four Learning Support Centres, a Nurture Classroom and designated Nurture Areas, a Speech and Language Therapy Room, Sensory Room and Offices. The school will shortly benefit from a new state of the art LSC building. It will include two new classrooms, Sensory Room, Resource Rooms, Toilets and Offices. All classrooms have the latest Vivitek NovoTouch Interactive Panel, with a range of educational apps and digital resources, including AirPlay screen casting. Each Key Stage have their own set of iPads and pupils across the school have access to laptops and Chromebooks to enhance and support their learning. The children in the Learning Support Centres and the Nurture Class have their own iPads which they use on a daily basis.

The Primary One and Two classrooms are located in a newly built/refurbished self-contained wing of the school. This is a spacious building which facilitates the children's play-based learning. Primary 1 & 2 have their own safe play areas with a newly built playground to engage with their outside learning. The children in P3-P7 have their own playgrounds with fitness/ gym trails, playground games and a successful 'Playground Buddy' initiative. The Eco Gardens and Outdoor Classrooms provide education for all. Our school site has recently benefited from a new Trampoline Park, which is a very popular addition to our impressive existing facilities.

## The Learning Support Centres

There are four Learning Support Centres (LSCs) in St Colmcille's Primary School.

**LSC 1:** Years 1-2

**LSC 2:** Years 3-4

**LSC 3:** Years 3-5

**LSC 4:** Years 6-7

Children attending the Learning Support Centres have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which will include moderate to severe learning difficulties and may also have accompanying additional special needs such as speech and language difficulties or Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

A considerable amount of experience and expertise in working with children with additional needs has been developed in the school and this is supported by on-going professional training.

The LSC Team is led by Ms Rooney. The LSCs are well resourced to meet the educational needs of the children. The pupil/ teacher ratio is small, allowing the children to develop their skills, knowledge and social skills.



Children in the LSCs follow the primary school curriculum, receiving individually targeted teaching for both Literacy and Numeracy. Support from outside agencies is important. Speech and Language Therapists are based in the school and other health professionals, such as Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists may also work with the children. This is a very effective approach as it connects and promotes the development of the whole child.

Our LSC children enjoy numerous opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers. Children from the LSCs join all of the other pupils at break and lunchtime.

If you have a child with Special Educational Needs and would like to view our facilities and speak with the staff please contact the school to arrange a visit. Please note demand for places in the LSCs is very high.



## The Nurture Classroom- The Sunflower Suite

The Nurture Class at St Colmcille's Primary School is a small class consisting of 6-12 children with identified social, emotional, behaviour and/or welfare needs. They may be children who feel insecure in school or who are in need of more adult support than can be provided in their class.

Children have the opportunity to develop one-to-one relationships with staff and other children in a consistent and predictable environment, building self-esteem, confidence and independence.

The main aim of the Nurture Group is to give children the skills needed to be able to effectively return to their mainstream class after 4 terms.

Nurture Group staff work and plan activities in close partnership with the children's base class teacher ensuring that the same skills and objectives are taught as their peers. Whilst there is a focus on social skills within the Nurture Class, children still have full access to all areas of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

The Nurture Team plan for a child-centred timetable ensuring that different learning styles are catered for, that learning is purposeful and practical and most importantly fun for the children to engage in.

In order to help children access the curriculum, lessons are shorter but more structured than in a mainstream class, the tempo is often slower and the constraints more immediate and evident. Children work one to one with an adult, in pairs and in small groups and their levels of achievement are raised by carefully targeted teaching/learning opportunities.

In order to teach various social skills such as turn taking and sharing, the children prepare and eat break together every morning. During this time, staff model positive relationships and there is also an emphasis on the development of language and communication skills.

The children focus on two specific social targets each term. The targets are displayed in the classroom and the children are encouraged to self-assess them at the end of every day thus giving them some responsibility for their own learning. Through carefully planned lessons and evaluations, academic progress is continually assessed and is in accordance with normal school guidelines.

The children's placement in the Nurture Class is reviewed every term when a Boxall Profile is completed to assess progress. All assessments and targets are shared with class teachers and parents/guardians regularly ensuring a productive partnership to ensure every child reaches their full potential both socially and academically.

We believe that in order for a child to succeed there should be a strong partnership between parents/guardians, nurture staff, class teacher and the children themselves. In order to help achieve this we feel that close communication is vital and therefore we use our Seesaw for Schools system, which is an opportunity for both teacher and parents/guardians to write any comments, share news or ask questions.

Once it is agreed by parents/guardians and teachers that a child is ready to return back to their mainstream class then a gradual re-integration programme is carefully planned to take account of the individual child's needs.



## THE CURRICULUM

The School Curriculum includes the entire planned learning experiences for children. The whole curriculum develops learners' knowledge, understanding, skills and personal qualities in order that they become successful learners, confident individuals and respectful/responsible citizens.

Our teachers are fully committed to the Northern Ireland Curriculum and embrace the importance of the Early Years. We work hard to ensure children experience a smooth transition from pre-school to Primary 1. Children benefit from challenging Play Based Learning that encourages important social, emotional and physical skills as well as promoting their early Literacy and Numeracy development. Our children learn to think, problem solve, share, cooperate and develop self-esteem and confidence.

St Colmcille's Primary School has a positive commitment to quality and excellence for all and constantly seeks to ensure that the equal opportunities for learning are available for all pupils.



## Six Key Areas of Learning

The Primary Curriculum is set out in Six Areas of Learning:

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

At the heart of the curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and operating effectively in society. Through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum children will progressively develop:

### Cross Curricular Skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using Information and Communications Technology

### Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

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

### Personalised Learning

At St Colmcille's Primary School we strive to establish good relationships with all families, identify young people's individual barriers to learning early on and refer swiftly those who need more specialised support. The SENCo, Ms Dempsey is in position to address identified barriers to learning, working with the full range of extended services already on offer to children and families. Where a more formal assessment is required to identify the barriers, or where multi-agency services are likely to be required, we are able to complete a wider assessment.



### Learning Support Programme

St Colmcille's Primary School has a positive commitment to quality and excellence for all and constantly seeks to ensure that the equal opportunities for learning are available for all pupils. Our Learning Support Programme ensures all pupils, regardless of academic ability, have full access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

At St Colmcille's Primary School we can offer:

- Maths Support Sessions
- Maths Recovery
- Literacy Support Sessions
- Reading Partnership
- SENCo Support
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Barnardo's Counselling
- Sensory Room Support
- Sensory Circuits
- Equine Assisted Learning
- Lego Therapy
- Attention Autism

Children are supported in class and withdrawn on an on-going basis by fully trained staff to ensure they receive the support they require to reach their fullest potential.

ASD Team, School Medical Team, Education Psychology, Behaviour Support, EA Literacy Support and Speech and Language Therapy liaise with our Learning Support Programme when necessary.

These agencies liaise with teaching professionals and also provide training when required. In partnership with professional bodies, we can support your child with their learning needs.

### Religious Education

Our Catholic Ethos is an inclusive one, accommodating children from other faith backgrounds and none within one school community. St Colmcille's Primary School promotes a set of values and an ethos which are universally accepted by all. The 'Grow in Love' programme is the foundation on which Religious Education is delivered within the school. The children reverently prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Dedicated staff work closely with local Parish Priest Father Toland.



## Assessment and Reporting Procedures

Assessment of children's work is an integral part of our school curriculum and is used to establish each child's level of achievement and to assist the teacher to plan and meet the needs of each individual child.

### Assessment in the Foundation Stage

Assessment in Primary 1 is observation based and diagnostic in nature. In Primary 2 children are tested using the GL Progress Test in Maths, GL Mental Maths Test and the Salford Reading Test. Adult observations are carried out throughout Foundation Stage with the children in an unobtrusive way and inform future planning. Children are made aware of their progress by receiving positive feedback and work together with their teacher to suggest ways to improve. Teachers assess pupils' cross curricular skills, thinking skills and personal capabilities, levels of concentration and involvement and emotional development.

### Assessment in KS1/KS2

Assessment in St Colmcille's happens on a daily basis. Teachers plan meticulously to meet the needs of all children and evaluate their learning each week, setting new targets for further development. More formal assessments take place during the year using GL Progress Test in Maths, GL Progress Test in English, GL Mental Maths, Group Reading Test & Spelling Test and are measured against results obtained in the Cognitive Ability Tests & Non Reading Intelligence Tests. Test results are analysed at individual, class and whole school level.



### Reporting to Parents

St Colmcille's Primary School shares information on pupil progress on an annual basis. Comments and information reported reflect the learning experiences the pupil has had over the course of the year.

### Further Reporting Procedures

- Parent/Teacher Interviews in November
- Annual Report to parents/guardians in June
- Reporting on Individual Educational Plans
- Comments on written work including homework
- Meetings at the request of a teacher/parent



## PASTORAL CARE

All staff have the responsibility of the day to day care of all children in the school. Each child is treated as an individual and the interests of each child are foremost in the minds of those who are working in school. If you have any worries or concerns about your child in school or at home please speak to their class teacher. It is important that your child is happy and confident in school and that can be achieved if parents and teachers work together.

Ms Wilson is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Ms Dempsey & Mr Austin are the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection. Ms Flanagan is the teacher who oversees Pastoral Care. These staff members have responsibility for the school's Child Protection & Pastoral Care Policies. All statutory requirements regarding Pastoral Care and Child Protection are outlined in these policies and are fully implemented in this school. All staff follow these procedures closely. When a child is sick or injured the school will endeavour to contact the parent. If this is not possible the child will be brought to hospital. Parents/Guardians should always leave an Emergency Contact Number with the School Office.



## Positive Behaviour

All matters of discipline are set in the context of the school's Pastoral Care Programme, the approach being positive, constructive and encouraging. It is the policy of the school to create a secure and happy environment, conducive to effective learning and personal development. Our ultimate goal is that our pupils develop responsible attitudes and values, enabling them to become mature and caring adults with a respect for and tolerance of others in society.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Discipline Policy and to ensure adherence by their children to the agreed Code of Conduct. Parents with concerns have a responsibility to first approach the class teacher through the normal channels.

### Children are expected to:

Arrive at school on time.

Walk in a quiet and orderly manner throughout the school and use the corridors as directed.

Show courtesy and respect to each other and to persons they meet inside and around the school.

Be obedient at all times, avoid using any form of vulgar or obscene language and refrain from bullying (any instance of bullying should be reported immediately).

Wear the full school uniform. This includes the wearing of PE Uniform by all classes on the days on which they have PE, an essential part of the curriculum. Footwear should be black shoes. No excessively high platforms or heels.

Hairbands etc. must be in the school's colours. Children's hair should be their natural colour. Pupils are not permitted to have dyed, bleached or any other hair colouring other than their own. Shaved hair lower than a Grade 2 is not permitted.

Be responsible for their own property and money. They must treat school property with respect and care at all times, refraining from defacing and/or damaging resources, property or equipment.

These are the general school rules. More specific rules apply to the classroom and the playground. Praise, motivation, rewards and privileges figure highly in maintaining good discipline.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the discipline within the school. Each teacher is responsible for the discipline within her/his classroom. Teachers have a shared responsibility for the general discipline of the children in the school e.g. on corridors, in the playground, lining up times.

Ancillary/Auxiliary Staff have a responsibility to safeguard the children's welfare over the break and lunch periods, maintaining order and directing any serious incidents/ queries to the Class Teacher, who will be responsible for any follow up action. Ancillary/Auxiliary Staff have a responsibility to maintain confidence at all times. Falls and injuries will be reported to the class teacher and the child will then be escorted to the office with another child/ member of staff as appropriate.

### Health and Safety of Children at St Colmcille's Primary School

The Health and Safety of your child is of paramount importance to us and our school policies are continually reviewed on a regular basis to keep all of our children safe, happy and adequately protected.



### School Timetable

8:15am	School Opens for Breakfast Club
9:00am	Class Begins
10:30am-10:45am	Break Time
12:15pm-1:00pm	Lunch Time
<b>School Finishes:</b>	
2:00pm	for P1-2 Mon-Fri for P3 Thurs-Fri
3:00pm	for P3 Mon-Wed for P4-7 Mon-Thurs

*All children finish school at 2.00pm on Friday.*

Punctuality and attendance are very important. In the interests of Child Protection, children will not be permitted to leave school without parental permission. Full attendance is encouraged at all times

Parents should endeavour to collect their children punctually.

Children should have vacated the school premises by 3.10pm unless they are staying for extra-curricular activities.

A note of explanation must follow a child's absence from school. Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours if at all possible.

### HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

The school will be closed for the months of July and August.

Pupils will be able to avail of a fortnightly Summer Scheme.

Information about other holidays i.e. Christmas, Easter, Holy Days of Obligation and Mid-Term Breaks will be sent to parents at the beginning of each new academic year.

In the event of an emergency closure, every attempt will be made to notify parents to enable them to make alternative arrangements.

## School Uniform

Your child is expected to wear full school uniform at all times. The wearing of earrings is restricted to studs only. Rings are prohibited at all times. Earrings are prohibited on PE days as they are contrary to Health & Safety Regulations. Long hair must be kept tidy at all times. Boys' hair must be no less than a grade 2 with no shaved patterns or designs permitted.

### GIRLS

Grey pinafore, skirt or trousers  
Navy cardigan or sweatshirt with school crest  
Blue polo shirt  
Navy socks or navy tights (leggings are not permitted)  
Blue checked dresses may be worn in the Summer Term.

### BOYS

Charcoal grey trousers  
Navy sweatshirt with school crest  
Blue polo shirt.

### SHOES

All children must wear regular black school shoes  
NB. No high heels or trainers  
Black trainers may be worn in the Summer Term.

### PE UNIFORM

Navy school sweatshirt/ jacket, white polo shirt, plain navy tracksuit bottoms and black trainers should be worn for PE lessons.



## HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of every pupil's learning. It is an enjoyable way in which children can consolidate and build upon the learning which has taken place during the school day. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's homework. Homework set by the school should be checked and signed regularly. Our Homework Policy seeks to accommodate the age, learning needs and abilities of all children through the differentiation of tasks and outcomes.

The success of home learning depends on the supervision and interest of parents/guardians in their child's work. The tasks and teacher comments help parents/guardians monitor their child's progress. If you have any concerns regarding homework please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher. We try to vary homework activities and encourage the children to use a variety of learning styles and strategies.

### School Council and Eco-Committee

We have an established strong School Council and Eco-Committee. Children are elected by their peers to represent their class and work with staff on school improvement to ensure pupil voice is included in all aspects of school improvement. These Councils give the children a voice that can impact change at school in a highly positive manner. The work and progress of the School Council and Eco-Committee is available to view on the school website.



## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

St Colmcille's Primary School operates daily extended school clubs from 2.00 - 4.30pm. The children can participate in activities, sports and art and crafts. Pupils are encouraged to participate in various extra curricular activities throughout the school year. These include Music (Guitar, Violin, Keyboard & Tin Whistle) Languages, Multi-Sports, Netball, Tennis, Cricket, Gaelic Football, Dodge Ball, Boxercise, Art and Design, Eco/Gardening Club, Cookery, Literacy Club, Numeracy Club, Cycling Proficiency and ICT, Coding & Gaming Club.

### Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club begins at 8.15am each morning to facilitate working parents. Children can have a great start to the day with a healthy breakfast in a fully supervised environment. There is a daily charge of £1 for this service.

### School Meals

A variety of nutritious meals are prepared and served daily in the school canteen. Children can avail of these for a daily cost of £2.60 payable via our SchoolMoney Cashless System. For those pupils entitled to free school meals, forms are available from the Secretary. Children who bring a packed lunch to school will also be supervised in the canteen during this time.



### Charging and Remissions Policy

It is the policy of the school to:

- Require parents/guardians to pay charges for board and lodgings for their children on residential trips, taking account of any relevant remission arrangements.
- Confirm its right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support for activities organised by the school.
- Make charges in respect of optional extras, as determined by the Principal and/or Governors.

### Health Promoting School

St Colmcille's Primary School is fully committed to the health promotion of its children. Healthy lifestyles and habits develop from a very young age and can have a lifetime effect. Each child is encouraged to bring water for consumption during lessons. The school provides a daily milk option for pupils in all year groups for a small cost. Children in all year groups should bring a healthy snack to school each day. We encourage all of our children to get active and we arrange workshops and talks for the children to witness and learn about this at first hand.

### Drugs Education

Our policy states that the children at St Colmcille's Primary School will be encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards drugs' education. They will be taught about staying safe and will be encouraged to know how to react in certain situations in which they feel at risk. They will also understand the importance of looking after themselves and having a healthy lifestyle.



## CROSS COMMUNITY LINKS

In St Colmille's Primary School we strive to create an atmosphere that is one of understanding and tolerance both within the school and in the wider community. We continuously search for opportunities to engage in shared education with schools of various faiths and differing educational contexts.

## LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

We see the school as a vital part of the Downpatrick Parish and take every opportunity to contribute to the life of that parish. In order to do this we liaise closely with our Parish Priest Fr Toland who visits the school regularly and has an excellent relationship with the staff and the children.

We have established close links with our neighbours RGU Downpatrick, St. Colmille's Nursery School, other local nursery schools and playgroups, Knockevin Special School and Ballymote Sport & Wellbeing Centre. We actively seek opportunities to participate in shared initiatives. St Colmille's Primary School also has excellent partnerships with our local secondary schools in order to ease each child's transition from primary to second level education. Primary Seven children visit their new school in the third term and pupils in Primary Six and Primary Seven have opportunities to visit local secondary schools to participate in partnership programmes.

We co-operate with and fully support the work carried out by the EA, the local Health Trust personnel and, when necessary, we seek the help and advice of other statutory agencies. Visitors such as the school nurse, doctor, dentist and educational psychologist regularly assist the school in order to cater for the needs of your child.

### Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA)

Our PTFA are a vibrant group of parents, staff and friends of the school, who assist with many of the social and fundraising activities that take place during the course

of the school year. To look at previous fundraising events please visit the PTFA page on the school website or view their Facebook Page. Our PTFA welcomes new members to join their fantastic organisation.

### School Trips

We provide our children with a wide range of educational experiences throughout their educational journey. Each class enjoys a Christmas trip to a Pantomime or Film Theatre and an annual school trip. We incorporate many educational trips to compliment curriculum topics to locations such as W5, Titanic Quarter, The Fairy Glenn, Exploris Aquarium, Armagh Planetarium, Emerald Park, Tollymore Forest Park etc.

When booking trips teachers will always inform parents of:

1. Destination
2. Time of departure
3. Time of return
4. Place(s) to collect children
5. What children must bring with them



### Communication

We are extremely proud of our website [stcolmillesps.co.uk](http://stcolmillesps.co.uk) and it is the perfect way for all school stakeholders to stay updated with the daily life of the school and its pupils. St Colmille's Primary School also sends home monthly newsletters to parents/guardians. All newsletters are available to download from the school website under the 'Parent Section'. We have a Facebook Page and also use Seesaw for Schools to automatically send out latest news directly to parents/guardians. Text messages are also sent to occasionally update parents/ guardians of important school news and events.



St Colmcille's Primary School

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