



We Care, We Share, We Learn Together



NI school of the Year



PROSPECTUS 2023/24





Welcome



Dear Parent and Carers,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you St. Columba's Primary School's prospectus.

Our primary school is in the pleasant, rural environment of Straw, in the Parish of Ballinascreen. We pride ourselves in having an extremely warm, caring family atmosphere, where all are made feel welcome. This reflects our Catholic ethos where everyone is valued, respected and are encouraged to form positive relationships.

I hope this prospectus gives you a glimpse into the wonderful life in St. Columba's where we strive to help our pupils become the best that they can be. We aim to help our pupils reach their full potential academically through the learning experiences provided by our excellent teaching staff and highly-experienced classroom assistants. We also strive for the holistic development of our children by providing a wide range of enriching experiences. We have an extensive After-Schools Programme which provides opportunities for children to develop their sporting, artistic, dramatic, musical and technological skills. Enjoy the journey!

Mrs McAlister

Acting Principal

THE CHIEF INSPECTORS REPORT 2016- 2018

St. Columba's Primary school was chosen from 817 primary school in Northern Ireland to feature as the **one** Case Study School for Education in the Primary Sector in Northern Ireland. This was a great commendation and recognition for the school. We are very privileged and happy to have been chosen as an example of outstanding practice. The whole school community can be very proud of themselves; governors, our families and extended families, children, the community and all members of the extremely dedicated staff of TEAM STRAW!!

This is what they said about us!!



In a medium-sized, primary school, the staff present the primary curriculum in a holistic way to help the children apply their knowledge and skills and prepare them for the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world. The teachers combine complementary active learning experiences, including the use of ICT, alongside developing the children's knowledge of and relationship with, the local community, the natural environment and a wider global perspective.

Using the staff's various talents and skills effectively, the school prioritised training and time for co-ordinators to improve the planning. The teachers map out World Around Us (WAU) topics and the progression of skills alongside opportunities in other learning areas where connected learning is planned explicitly. Literacy and numeracy resources are aligned with the various WAU topics across the school.

There is a conscious effort to develop the children's 'thinking skills and personal capabilities', in particular their personal independence and life skills. The highly effective link between the school and the environment is a real driver in connecting the children's learning; the staff take a multi-sensory approach to delivering the curriculum through outdoor learning and the Eco-Schools work from years 1-7. Alongside this, the global learning work builds the children's understanding of their place in the world.

In addition to this great commendation St Columba's Primary School was also chosen as one of three Primary schools to deliver a presentation on the outstanding connected learning and teaching in St Columba's at 2018's ETI principals conference.



About Our School



School Details

SCHOOL NAME: ST. COLUMBA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, STRAW

ADDRESS:	84 Sixtowns Road Straw Draperstown Co. Derry BT45 7BB
TELEPHONE:	028 796 28685
E-MAIL:	info@stcolumbasps.magherafelt.ni.sch
PRINCIPAL:	Mrs Patricia McAlister
VICE-PRINCIPAL:	Mrs Donna McElhatton
CHAIRPERSON BOARD OF GOVERNORS:	Mr Laurence O'Kane
TYPE OF SCHOOL:	Catholic Maintained School Boys and Girls 3 -11



Our Mission Statement

“We Care, We Share, We Learn Together”

At St. Columba's our mission is to work as a team to provide the highest quality learning and teaching in a happy, safe and secure environment in which our pupils are at the heart of all we do.

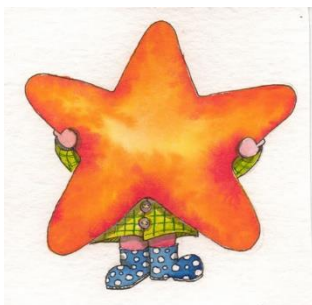
We believe that every child entrusted in our care is a unique individual. We strive to promote an inclusive and loving ethos in which our pupils are cherished and respected. We create an atmosphere which is conducive to learning and which seeks to promote the values, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith. We hope that our children in turn become ambassadors for their community and understand the very positive impact that they can have globally.

Through their learning experiences in St. Columba's our children are prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges that they may face in a rapidly changing world. We encourage our children to develop a love of learning and experience enjoyment in their journey of holistic development as they strive to fulfil their potential and to become the best that they can be.



Our Vision

“Dream, Believe, Strive, Succeed”



Dream

We aim to inspire our pupils to dream big and aspire to make their dreams a reality. We will provide our pupils with many opportunities to experience extraordinary things, find positive role models and discover what they want to achieve in their lives now, and in the future.

Believe

At St. Columba's, we believe in ourselves and each other. Through strong relationships and trust, we support our pupils in believing they can achieve their goals. A Catholic faith underpins our school values and pupils are reminded that God believes in them and gives them strength.

Strive

We aim to teach pupils that success requires hard work and dedication. We support our pupils in making progress by helping them to take the steps they need to take. We believe that everyone can succeed at something, at some level and we value personal differences.

Succeed

As an inclusive school, we value everyone's achievements. We celebrate and reward the hard work and success of others. We are clear about what success means and how it can be realised. Everyone strives to be the best they can be and supports each other to achieve this.



School Ethos

St Columba's School Ethos can best be encapsulated within our mission statement:

"We care, we share, we learn together."

Our educational philosophy is based on a clear intention to work together as a community to provide a happy and secure atmosphere within our school.

We believe that every child in our school is an important person created by God, entrusted to us by their parents and we endeavour by word and example to help our children experience the Christian way of life.

We are a caring school and our children are valued highly by everyone within our school community. We are aware of the important contribution each individual has to make to ensure the continued success of the school, in which each child can fulfil their potential.

To facilitate the whole development of our pupils we have a number of aims, which underpin what we do to develop the whole child.

School Aims

- ✓ To provide a school environment that is an extension of Catholic family life – a secure, warm, happy atmosphere in which children feel confident and relaxed and can learn effectively.
- ✓ To ensure that every child has the opportunity to participate in the full breadth of educational experience as laid down in the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum
- ✓ To bring each child to their full potential by developing an enquiring mind within a broad and balanced, stimulating experience, in accordance with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum for Northern Ireland
- ✓ To develop children's creative and expressive talents in all areas including movement, music, drama, art, ICT and sport.
- ✓ To help children acquire knowledge, thinking skills, practical abilities and the will, as well as the opportunity to use them

- ✓ To ensure that children gain the highest possible standards, relevant to the individual child in literacy, numeracy and ICT, which will adequately prepare them for their future role in society
- ✓ To instil in our children a good general knowledge of, and respect for the environment and culture, both in their own community and the wider world and to encourage them to be actively involved in caring for the environment
- ✓ To encourage children to be responsible, caring, confident and independent and thus prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- ✓ To ensure that every child has the opportunity to achieve the highest level of success appropriate to his/her ability.
- ✓ To develop their awareness and sensitivity;
 - To develop confidence in themselves and with others
 - To develop the ability to make reasoned value judgements
 - To develop an awareness of the needs of others and themselves.
- ✓ To provide children with a wide range of physical activities both individually and at group or team level.
- ✓ To treat the children as individuals and make them feel that as individuals each one has a contribution to make.
- ✓ To ensure that children have a good knowledge and understanding of their religion and a respect for other religions.
- ✓ To develop the capacity to become a contributing and caring member of society and to teach children to appreciate their environment both local and worldwide.
- ✓ To enjoy and build on help from the home, the parish and priests and the wider community in developing all our aims.

Awards and Achievement

In St Columba's our dedicated staff really do go above and beyond to provide your children with the best possible academic, emotional and social opportunities,

“to be the best the best they can be”,

and we are very proud to have received the following achievement and awards.

The Eco-Schools Awards

The Eco-Schools Green Flag is an internationally recognised award for excellence in environmental action and learning.

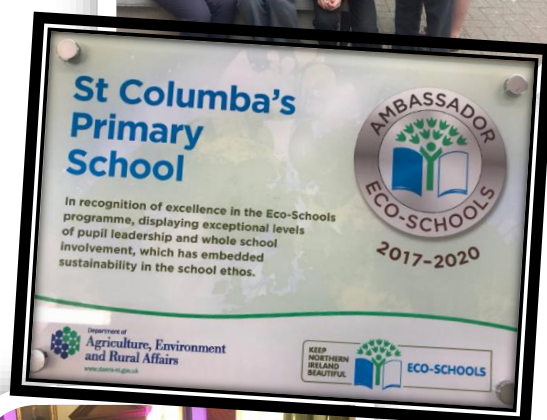
In 2015 St Columba's were awarded our Green Flag Eco school Status. This has gone from strength to strength, as we were highly commended for our leadership in environmental action and learning and were once again awarded our Green Flag Status in 2017!!

Eco- School Ambassadors 2018

An Eco-School Ambassador is an inspirational flagship Eco-School. Ambassadors are leading schools, who extend the ethos of Eco-Schools far beyond the school gates. In 2018 St. Columba's were delighted and honoured to be awarded Eco-School Ambassador Status. In recognition of the exceptional levels of pupil leadership and whole school support, working to ensure sustainability has been embedded into the curriculum, and successfully deliver change in the culture of the school.

Live Here Love Here Community Award

This award celebrates the tremendous efforts of groups and individuals across the province who embody the values of Live Here Love Here, making Northern Ireland a cleaner, greener and safer place to live. Mr Bruton and our Eco-Council were awarded this fantastic award for improving the quality of their local environment, and in recognition of their dedication to ways of reducing litter, and encouraging others to have pride within their local community through practical environmental action.





Action Cancer GOLD Health Award

Action Cancer and independent retail group Centra have hosted their annual Health Action Awards, recognising schools with the best health education programmes in Northern Ireland.

Since 2003 the Health Action Awards have acknowledged the best health promotion projects in nursery, primary and secondary schools/colleges in Northern Ireland.

In 2017 St Columba's won Gold in the Health Action Awards.

St Columba's impressed the judges with our "outstanding commitment to promoting healthy activities for pupils and impressed with our determination to improve lifestyles."



Active School Travel Programme

In St Columba's we believe in, encourage and promote healthy habits in our pupils from a young age and in 2018 we teamed up with the country's leading sustainable transport charity, Sustrans, to encourage more journeys to school by foot or wheels.

Throughout the years Mrs Bradley, Mrs Kelly have worked closely with Ronan Mc Laughlin, our Sustrans Active Travel Officer, and together promote active travel throughout the year:

- organising **activities and events** to encourage pupils to cycle, scoot and walk to school;
- offering **cycling training** to help pupils ride safely and feel more confident on their bikes;
- working to get **better facilities**, including bike and scooter parking;
- **working with parents and carers** so that they can help support the programme.

Increasing the number of our children who regularly walk, cycle or scoot to school has numerous benefits including:

- increased physical activity levels resulting in improved health and wellbeing
- reduced congestion and pollution around schools
- improved academic performance and attendance rates
- increased road safety awareness
- increased confidence, self-esteem, and independence for young people.

In recognition of the exceptional work in the promotion of Active Travel, Road Safety and increase in the levels of the number of our pupils walking scooting and cycling to school. St Columba's was awarded [Sustran's Bronze Level Award](#) in the first year of this programme and then in our second year the [Sustran's Silver Level Award](#)!



Mindfulness Certificate

In recognition of the excellent work and development of Mindfulness in St Columba's we were honored and privileged to have received our certificate in completing and developing AWARE's Mindfulness in the Primary Schools Programme.

Furthermore, our school was recently invited by the charity 'Aware' to speak at a mindfulness in schools conference. We were delighted to have this wonderful programme in our school and learned a lot from Frank Liddy.



Level 2 Global Learning School

In recognition of the fantastic progress on developing global learning across the curriculum, ensuring each year group covers global themes in the classroom. We are proud to receive our level 2 Global Learning School status which is the highest attainable level possible.



TRÓCAIRE ROMERO AWARD

We were recently shortlisted from schools across Ireland in the Trocaire Romero Awards for our Refugees project and travelled to Maynooth to receive our certificates.

Northern Ireland STEM Primary School of The Year Award

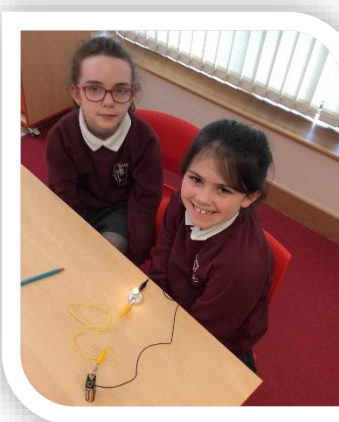
The development of STEM (science, technology, engineering & maths) is an integral part of our three-year school development plan. Over the past couple of years, we have enhanced the teaching of STEM subjects throughout the school and our children have thoroughly enjoyed it. They have embraced investigating, experimenting, questioning, building, creating, designing and above all, being curious about the world around them. Supporting us on this journey has been 'Project Enthuse' which provides high quality training and inspiration to our enthusiastic teachers. Our hard work and dedication to provide our pupils with incredible and valuable opportunities was recently rewarded when we won the **STEM Primary School of the Year for Northern Ireland 2018**. We represented the North at the National finals in London.



We have recently been appointed as the lead school in an ENTHUSE Partnership for STEM, the first time ever a Primary school has been asked to lead. We are working with other primary schools to enhance and develop the pupils teaching and learning experiences in STEM while also gaining access to highly sought resources.



**ENTHUSE
AWARD**



St Columba's were also awarded PSQM status in June 2019 and is the **ONLY** school to achieve **GILT** level in all of Northern Ireland.

Primary Science Quality Mark is not like other quality marks: it is a year-long CPD programme that helps schools to achieve a quality mark in science excellence. It focuses on developing effective, confident science leadership for whole school impact on science teaching and learning. The process of achieving a PSQM raises the profile and quality of science across the whole school. Supports subject leaders to effectively **implement** a curriculum for science that is informed by research evidence and best practice data. Working with an expert hub leader subject leaders evaluate current provision for science and put in place a development cycle that leads to sustained progress in science across the school



We are the lead school in a ground breaking PSTT cluster involving eight local schools working to develop STEM across the key stages, while also developing an in-depth framework for continued excellence in the area. The profile and expectations of STEM within our school are being significantly raised as a result. Our pupils are being developed for tomorrow's working world.

Staff highly skilled in STEM teaching with all teachers having received specialist STEM training.

★ 2022 We did it again excellence in STEM recognition!

Straw school attended Stormont for the Northern Ireland STEM Learning Awards to accept 'The Enthuse Partnership of the Year Award for collaboration' with St Columba's, Kilrea, St John's, Swatragh and Millquarter PS. Massive thanks to our very talented Miss Glass for leading the collaboration. We are invested in preparing our young pupils for the jobs of the future.



Meet Our Staff



Mrs Bradley
P1 & P2 Teacher



Mrs Reid
P1. Teaching Assistant



Mrs McNicholl
P2. Teaching Assistant



Mrs Kelly
P3 Teacher



Mr Henry
P4 Teacher



Mr Brunton
P5 Teacher



Mr Gervin
P6 Teacher



Mrs McElhatton
P7 Teacher



Mrs McAlister
Acting Principal



Miss Conway
Teaching Assistant



Mrs C Murray
Teaching Assistant



Mrs J Murray
Teaching Assistant



Mr Scullion
Piano & Choir Teacher



Mrs Ann Hegarty
School Secretary



Mrs Una Hegarty
School Secretary



Mrs Conway
Head Chief



Stephanie
Dinner Lady



Ernesta
Dinner Lady



School Management Teams

Mrs McAlister - Acting Principal

Whole School Leadership and Management, Monitoring and Evaluating, Self-Evaluation and Improvement, Positive Discipline, Health and Safety, Connected learning and Assessment Co-ordinator, Staff Development Co-ordinator, SENCO, After Schools Co-ordinator

Mrs McElhatton – Acting Vice Principal

Senior Leadership and Management Team, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mathematics and Numeracy Co-ordinator, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Head of Key Stage 2

Mr Henry

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Head of Key Stage 1

Physical Education and Movement Co-ordinator,
ICT, & Twitter Co-ordinator, Boys Gaelic Games Team

Mrs Bradley

Literacy and Language Co-ordinator,

The Arts Co-Ordinator, Choir Co-Ordinator, School Prospectus Co-Ordinator

Head of Foundation Stage, Out Door & Play Based Learning Co-Ordinator

Mr Brunton

World Around Us Co-ordinator, Forest Schools Co-ordinator, Eco-Schools Co-ordinator, Sustran Champion 2020, Boys Gaelic Games Team

Mrs Nicole Kelly

Personal Development & Mutual Understanding Co-ordinator, Religious Education Co-Ordinator,

Community links & Charities Co-ordinator, School Council Co-Ordinator, Roots of Empathy

Teacher, Sustrans Co-ordinator and Champion, PTA liaison Officer

Mr Gervin

Girls Gaelic Games Co-ordinator

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care at St Columba's is based on the philosophy of developing a warm, safe and caring community built on our Christian values of Respect, Love, Justice, Care and Compassion, Service, Forgiveness, Peace, Faithfulness, Honesty and Integrity.

We at all times aim to create:

"an atmosphere in which young people feel secure, know that they are valued as individuals, and are encouraged in their learning, growth and social development in a healthy and safe environment."

It involves all members of our school community - children, parents, teaching and ancillary staff and all other adults who contribute to the well-being of each child.

Our children and families are very much at the heart of our school community and we as a school will endeavour to provide a warm, caring, loving environment which permeates all aspects of school life, and reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith, strengthened and supported by the teaching of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding. (PDMU)

Within our school, fostering a nurturing atmosphere based on positive relationships between teachers and their pupils, and teachers and parents is paramount. Facilitating an atmosphere of care and mutual respect is essential in creating a climate conducive to learning. All staff members are very dedicated, keen and enthusiastic about their work. Teachers at all times adopt a caring attitude towards our pupils valuing their opinions and views this was acknowledged in our last inspection:

"The provision for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. From an early stage, the children take on responsibilities, developing resilience and a "have-a-go" attitude. Thorough the school- and Eco-councils, the children develop leadership and decision-making skills and are consulted regularly as valued contributors to school improvement."





Joining Our School

St Columba's welcomes applications from all children of compulsory school age.

Enrolment Criteria

Enrolment No: 168

Admission No: 25

Admissions criteria to be used only in the event of the school being oversubscribed. The criteria are listed in order of priority.

1. Children of compulsory school age at the time of application.

In the event of over subscription in the above criterion, the following sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down.

2. Children who have brothers/or sisters (half-brother/sister) enrolled in the school
3. Children who are the first child of the family eligible to apply for a mainstream school
4. Children whose parent/guardian/brother/sister (half-brother/sister) are prior pupils of the school
5. Children who have a parent/guardian working as a permanent member of school staff
6. Children for whom St Columba's is the nearest maintained school as measured by RAC route finder
7. Children from other areas of the parish of Ballinascreen
8. Children from outside the parish
9. In the event of a tie chronological age beginning with the eldest will be applied established by date of birth as entered on the child's Birth Certificate.

RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PRINCIPAL IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS

If the number of applicants to St Columba's Primary School is equal to or below the admissions number, the principal will be responsible for administering the Admissions Policy. In the event of the number of applicants exceeding the admissions entitlement as laid down by the Department of Education, the Board of Governors will decide on the pupils to be admitted using the criteria outlined below (in the order below 1-8, starting at number one and going down to number 8). We will use criteria no 9 only in the event of a tie.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on the application or provided directly to the school. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application or provided directly to the school.



DUTY TO VERIFY

Applicants should note that they may be required to produce documents verifying their address or other information pertinent to the school's admissions criteria. Documentation submitted in support of your application should be provided directly to the school of first preference.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide verifying documents according to the required deadline may result in the withdrawal of a place or the inability of the school to offer a place.

WAITING LIST POLICY

Should a vacancy arise after the placement letters have been issued, all applications to P1 that were initially refused, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria will be applied. This waiting list will be in place until 30 June 2022. The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the school by this method. Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish your child's name to be removed from the list.

ADMISSION TO P2 – P7

St Columba's Primary School currently exceeds its enrolment number. Pupils will be admitted to P2-P7 with the approval of the Board of Governors and the Department of Education using the criteria for P1 admissions.

Applications and Admissions to Primary 1		
Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2016/2017	25	25
2017/2018	37	29
2018/2019	31	29
2019/2020	16	16
2020/2021	25	22
2021/2022	9	9
2022/2023	22	22

Starting School

Transition from Pre-School to Year 1

Starting school is a very important time for you, your child and the school. Our aim is to ensure that the children experience a smooth transition from Pre-School to the Foundation Stage and then on to Key Stage One. The Year 1 curriculum builds upon and extends the experiences that children have had in Pre-School. Learning through play will continue to be an important part of the school day, and the children will gradually be eased into more formal learning as the year goes on so that they remain motivated, enthusiastic and eager learners.



We believe that in order to ensure the best possible progress for each pupil, A PARTNERSHIP IN WHICH THE SCHOOL, THE PUPIL AND THE PARENTS WORK TOGETHER IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS. Each has a vital role to play and working together we will endeavour to help each child reach his/her potential.

Our Primary One teacher Mrs Bradley, P1. Classroom Assistants Mrs Reid, SENCO and Principal work closely with your child's nursery teachers to make the transition smooth and rewarding. In the third school term prior to their entry, our Principal, Primary 1 teacher and classroom assistants meet our new Primary One pupils in the nursery settings. They are then invited into school for induction visits. This helps the children become familiar with their new surroundings, staff and routines of St. Columba's. During this period, there are meetings for the parents to discuss our partnership with you.



Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and five have a major impact on their future life chances. A nurturing, secure, safe and happy child hood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow.

Mo Chara

"Mo Chara" is the Irish for "My friend"

As part of our pastoral care and PDMU programme to help to continue the smooth transition into Primary 1, each primary 1 child is paired with a Primary 7 "Cara" (friend). These Primary 7 'Cara's' will meet with your child as part of their induction day and throughout the school year for a variety of fun learning experiences and activities. This also continues when they transition into Primary 2 in which they will be paired with a Primary 6 pupil. They will be a source of information for your child and a familiar friendly face in the playground and dinner room.

Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy lots of exciting experiences with their Buddies in KS2!





Joining Our School Later On

Sometimes children join the school later on in their school life. We provide pupils with Induction Booklets when they join our school. We invite new pupils and parents to tour the school to meet with their peers and staff before they begin so that they are familiar with their surroundings. We make every effort to ensure they are welcomed, looked after, and monitored so that they quickly make friends and can find their way around the school. They will also be given a "Cara" and buddies who will look after them.

Teachers give children time to settle in before making an assessment of their academic abilities. This assessment, together with records from their previous school, enables children to have the best start in our school. Parents and carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to help their child settle.

"The provision for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. From an early stage, the children take on responsibilities, developing resilience and a 'have-a-go' attitude."

ETI 2016



School Day

	Foundation Stage (P1 & P2)	Key stage 1 (P3 & P4)	Key Stage 2 (P5, 6 & 7)
Morning	9.10 am-10.45am	9.10am- 10.45am	9.10am- 10.45am
Break time	10.45 – 11.00am	10.45 – 11.00am	10.45 – 11.00am
Lunch time	12.15 – 1.00pm	12.20- 1.00pm	12.20- 1.00pm
Afternoon	1.00 – 2.00pm	1.00- 2.50pm	1.00- 3.00 pm

Morning time

Children may arrive in school at 9.00 am and we very much appreciate children being punctual at all times. Children must be in school in time for assembly and prayers at 9.10 am. Your child should not arrive late in school as this means he/she is missing the beginning of the lesson or morning assembly and this may also make them feel out of sorts or anxious. Pupils are often very embarrassed and can cause distraction to the other pupils in the classroom or assembly hall by their late arrival. As morning lessons begin promptly, your child arriving late can often mean that crucial learning and teaching is missed.

Home time

Please refer to our website www.stcolumbaspsstraw.com for our collection of children from school policy.

Adherence to simple rules are vital. Park your car in a designated spot. Walk to the edge of the grass and wait until your child is released to you. Please, show consideration for all our school community when driving/parking. The Health and Safety of all our stakeholders is vital to us!!!



Healthy Break

Childhood is a time of rapid growth and development. Good nutrition during this time is important, as it impacts on children's general and dental health now and in the future. Children usually need to eat more frequently than adults to meet their nutritional requirements, so it is also important that snacks should be beneficial to their health.

At St. Columba's we encourage children to adopt and sustain healthy eating patterns from an early age. As part of our Healthy Break policy the children will be encouraged to have only healthy foods and drink at break time.

Children may order breaks from the school kitchen. Breaks available are freshly baked scone, pancake, toast or fresh fruit. Drinks available are milk or water. Milk is available in the school – and pupils can order it at the start of each term. Fizzy drinks are not allowed in school at any time.

Children may bring in their own healthy snack from home if they do not wish to purchase a break in school. Children may bring in fruit or dried fruit, any bread product such as wholemeal, granary or white bread.

Our school environment is well placed to promote the ideals of healthy eating. The effect of diet on health is taught to children at various stages throughout the curriculum and having healthy food to eat within the school environment supports this teaching. Our pupils should have no more than 1 treat item per day as part of our Healthy Lunch Policy.

Lunch Time

During lunch time our pupils have the option of enjoying a delicious cooked dinner from our school kitchen or they may bring their own packed lunch.

Monthly dinner menus are sent home with the eldest family member to show what is available at our school canteen and this menu can also be accessed on our school website.



School Uniform

What a child wears to school reflects his/her learning. It also portrays the school's ethos and shared positive values. We have a smart but simple uniform that we encourage all pupils to wear.

Our school uniform consists of:

- Maroon jumper with school logo
- White polo shirt
- Grey skirt/pinafore/trousers
- Grey trousers/shorts for boys

Summer term:

- Girls may wear a maroon/red gingham dress
- Boys may wear grey shorts

It is important for pupils to wear correct clothing for physical activities.

For PE children require:

- a white t-shirt
- maroon school jumper
- plimsolls or trainers with white soles
- black tracksuit bottoms, leggings or shorts. (no logos)



Jewellery must not be worn for sporting activities and long hair should be tied back.

It is important to have all items of clothing and footwear are **LABELLED** clearly with your child's name.

School uniforms can be purchased at Burns & Co, Draperstown.

Jewellery, other than watches, is not permitted and studs or sleepers only are to be worn in pierced ears.



Breakfast Club and Stay and Play Club.

As a school we understand the demands of a modern busy lifestyle and do our best to support our families we offer our family the opportunity to avail of breakfast and Stay and Play Club daily.

Breakfast Club: Open 8.20 am- 8:50am, Monday to Friday

Our pupils enjoy a great start to the day with a light breakfast of either cereal or toast and fruit juice.

Followed by...

- ★ sharing play time with lots of fun and games
- ★ socialising with classmates and school friends

This is Supervised by a member of school staff and costs £1.30 per day and can be booked via the school office.

P1 & 2 Stay and Play: Open 2.00 pm- 2:50pm, Monday to Friday

At Stay and Play our pupils enjoy that all important indoor and outdoor free play experience with their peers.

This is Supervised by a member of school staff and costs £2.50 per day per child and can be booked via the school office or class teacher.



The Curriculum

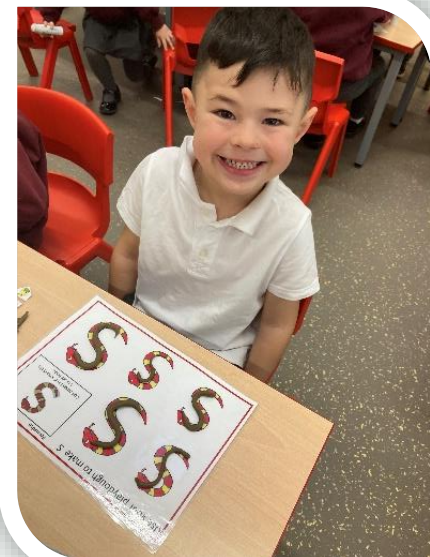
Our aim is to provide a rich and well-balanced curriculum which develops the whole child. Staff ensure each year follows a programme which has continuity and progression in line with the NI Curriculum.

The primary stage of the curriculum comprises:

Foundation Stage	Years 1 and 2
Key Stage 1	Years 3 and 4
Key Stage 2	Years 5, 6 and 7

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in seven Areas of Learning. These include:

1. Language and Literacy
2. Mathematics and Numeracy
3. The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music)
4. The World Around Us (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology)
5. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community)
6. Physical Education (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities)
7. Religious Education
8. Irish language



Language & Literacy

Reading

In our school we love and celebrate reading. From the first days in P1 we aim to foster a love of books. Reading/library packs are sent home with P1 pupils so that they can share stories with family members.

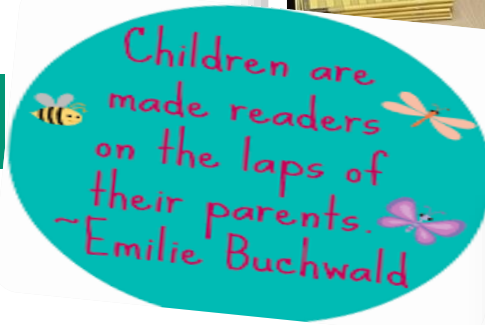
We facilitate a very popular Paired Reading Programme whereby P7 pupils read to P1 pupils and P6 pupils read to P2 pupils.

We believe that parents play a vital role in the education process.

Parents Literacy and Language

We offer an informative Induction programme for new parents. This includes workshops on Phonics, Reading, Writing and Talking and Listening.

Teachers plan lessons based around a fantastic range of popular Big Books in P1-P3 classes. This extends into Novel Based Learning in P4-P7 alongside Big Books when appropriate. To ensure connected learning, we make strong cross curricular links throughout literacy. This proves to be a great motivator and enhances pupil's interests.



Accelerated Reading

We are an Accelerated Reading School.

Over the past few years we have heavily invested in the introduction of Accelerated Reading and our pupils are reaping the rewards. We have:

- Two bespoke libraries
- A huge range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils from P1-P7
- 40 ipads, 10 PC's and 10 laptops on which pupils can take quizzes and Star tests. This means that parents, pupils and teachers can keep track of progress in reading.
- 20-30 minutes every day dedicated to reading.
- Amazing reward systems and celebrations for success and effort

We have established strong links with our local library in Draperstown. Our pupils regularly visit the library for workshops, talks and simply for enjoyment and can continue the Accelerated Reading programme throughout the summer months.

The NEELB Mobile Library van visits our school each term to enhance our range of fiction, non-fiction and audio-visual resources relating to our topics.

The Scholastic book fair visit is a highlight of the year for our little book lovers plus our school benefits from any sales made during the fair.

World Book Day

Every year we celebrate World Book Day. Pupils and staff dress up as favourite book characters, we have story-telling sessions and lots of fun activities. The Gruffalo even came to visit!



Jolly Phonics

In our school we use the Jolly Phonics Programme to teach Spelling, Grammar and Vocabulary from P1 right through to P7. We have found that pupils learn best through this multisensory, cumulative and structured phonics programme.

Writing

Right from the emerging scribbles of our P1's through to the more elaborate prose of our P7's, our pupils are guided, supported and commended for their writing.

Our pupils are taught how to read and write in a wide range of genres such as letter writing, report writing, persuasive writing etc. In teaching these styles of writing we are giving our pupils real 'life skills'.



We undertake projects associated with the Belfast Telegraph and Irish News newspapers every year to develop critical literacy skills and give our pupils an opportunity to develop media awareness.

We believe that encouraging children to write stories of their own can give them an enormous confidence boost, as well as helping them to consolidate their literacy learning by putting their phonics, grammar and reading skills into practice.

Talking and Listening

Research has shown the importance of the link between spoken language, learning and cognitive development. Through using language and hearing how others use it, children become able to describe the world, make sense of life's experiences and get things done.

We aim to foster and promote good talking and listening skills right from P1.

So here's my special handprints,
just so you can say,
this is how our fingers looked
when I placed them here.

Numeracy and Mathematics

Numeracy and mathematics is an essential element of everyday life. In St Columba's, we aim to give all children a positive and fun experience of Mathematics based firmly around the aims of the Revised Northern Ireland curriculum. Mathematics is taught through the 5 key areas of the Northern Ireland curriculum – Number, Shape and Space, Measures, Data Handling and Processes. All key areas of numeracy interrelate, with processes in mathematics pervading all key areas.

Mathematics across the curriculum

During play based learning in the foundation stage, activity based learning in Key stage 1 and topic based teaching in Key stage 2, children in St Columba's have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of purposeful activities which involves them in different modes of mathematical learning including playing, exploring and investigating, doing and observing, talking and listening, asking questions, reflecting, drafting, reading and recording. These activities also encourage the development of thinking skills and personal capabilities as well as mathematical skills and mental strategies.



Mental Maths

Mental maths is essential because it lays the foundation for more complex maths. In St Columba's, mental maths activities occur on a daily basis. During mental maths sessions, children are given the opportunity to develop mental maths strategies. These range from counting on and back, re-ordering, inverse-operations, rounding and adjusting, partitioning, using known facts, factors and equivalence. These mental maths sessions aim to provide children with practical opportunities to learn Maths facts along with a deep understanding of number and the way they relate to each other. A different mental maths strategy is focused on weekly.

"Throughout the school, the children engage with enthusiasm in mental mathematics activities"

ETI 2016

Numeracy Resources

We use a range of different practical resources eg Numicon, diennes and Cuisenaire to help children develop a solid understanding of number. Recently £2500 was spent on the numicon resource and over £8000 was spent on math's resources to help facilitate the teaching of numeracy in the school. Our maths co-coordinator attended training in Belfast on the Numicon resource. She then delivered training to all staff members so that the resource is being used effectively to enhance pupils understanding of numeracy. This practice of Numicon and practical resources is not firmly embedded in our teaching and learning.

Numeracy lessons are differentiated to meet the needs of all our children. Time has been dedicated to the development of Numeracy planning to ensure all planning was up to date with curricular developments and that all learning styles and needs were being catered for.

Numeracy progress is monitored and tracked carefully across the school. Parents are kept informed of progress in parent teaching meetings in November and though end of year reports. We also offer 'booster group' sessions for any children who would benefit from additional help in maths.

"The Children benefit from a wide range of well-conceived and well-resourced mathematical experiences across the curriculum, which develops their confidence and aptitude in maths. A particular strength is the provision for learning experiences set in a meaningful context, which supports the children in developing their understanding of the relevance and application of mathematics in real life situations."

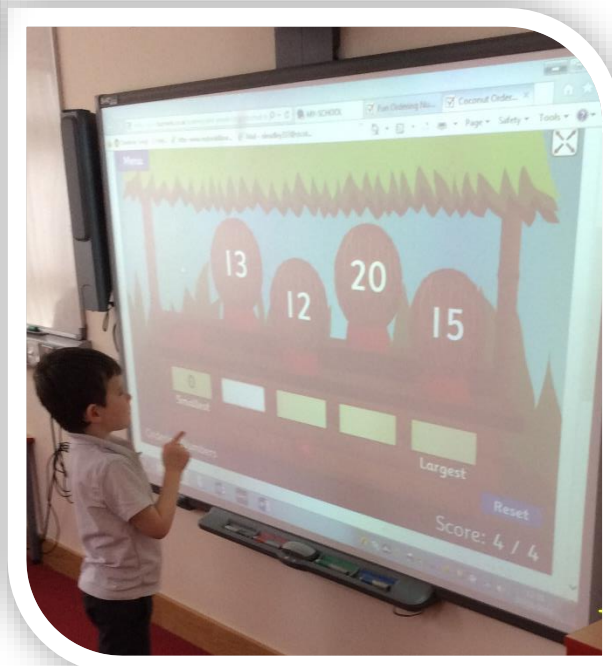
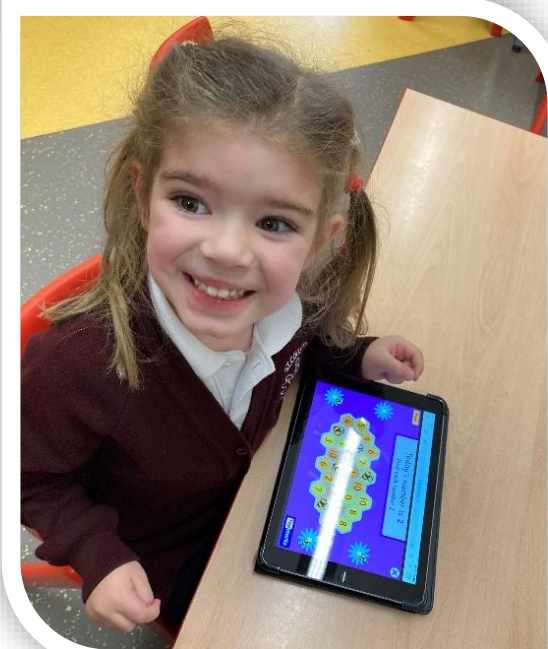
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Numeracy and ICT

ICT plays a significant role in Numeracy. Using the Interactive Whiteboards, class PCs, laptops and the school iPads, we are confident that these latest technologies are enhancing the teaching and learning of Mathematics for all our pupils. We use many websites, programs and apps to facilitate and enhance the teaching of numeracy for our children.

“In all key stages, the children use ICT with confidence and ease to support, extend and exhibit their mathematical learning”

ETI 2016



Celebrating Maths

When opportunities arise, we like to celebrate all things numeracy in St Columba's. Every year we have a 'Mad Maths Week'. During this week each class take part in lots of fun, practical maths activities e.g., going to see 'Danny Carmo's mathematical Mysteries.' The children are amazed and dazzled by this mind-blowing production which shows that understanding maths can be fun!

"The taught curriculum is enhanced by a calendar of event and competitions which promote further the children's enjoyment of motivation to learn mathematics"

ETI 2016



The Arts

This area of learning comprises the subjects of Art and Design, Drama and Music. It provides rich opportunities for developing creativity, allowing children to express their ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world through pictures, sound, drama and dance.

Music

“Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity.”

Music plays an essential role in the celebration of culture and life at St. Columba's and has a very high profile in both classical and traditional.

We believe in and deliver a high- quality music lesson from Primary 1 through to Primary 7 and aim that our music programme engages and inspires our pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement in addition it improves children's health and wellbeing.

Alongside our enriching classroom music lessons P1 and P2 pupils also enjoy weekly Primary Movement lessons taught through the medium of music and rhyme. Research indicates that this excellent Primary Movement programme had a significant effect on the development of fine motor control and leads to improved academic attainments in reading, spelling and mathematics.

Our pupils also have the opportunities to experience music through Nativity plays, Musical Productions and Class and school Assemblies.

As our pupils progress through the school they also have the opportunity to avail of weekly piano and tin whistle lessons in key stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 the opportunity to avail of weekly guitar and bodhran lessons.





We also have 2 peripatetic tutors and our key stage 2 children may avail of weekly tuition for classical music lesson for the violin, flute, clarinet, trumpet or French horn.

Children have the opportunity to enter public exams/grades.

We also have a well-established and very talented School Choir. Our children benefit from the amazing musical talents and expertise of our wonderful Music Team, Mrs Bradley, Mrs Kelly, Mr Scullion and Mr Gribbin. Under their tutelage our very talented and successful school choir always create a magical atmosphere during the celebration of school events and church events.

In addition, our Choir also has exciting opportunities to represent the school, through the Peace Proms at the Odyssey Arena in Belfast and through local community celebrations.

We believe in developing out pupils interests and talents to the highest standard and offer enriching after school music clubs throughout the year which include Sing Club, Samba and African Drumming provided by our teaching staff and tutors from Glasgowbury.

“Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.”

- Plato



Art and Design



Displays of pupils' art work can be viewed throughout the school. We promote creativity and invite pupils to express themselves through the use of different media. We have invested a lot of money into ensuring all of our classrooms are well-resourced with a wide range of art supplies so that our children can experience the full spectrum of artistic techniques and media.

We collaborate with a local company called Glasgowbury to enhance the pupils' artistic experiences. Glasgowbury send artists into our school to give the children experiences such as pottery making and clay modelling and animation.

We invite local artists into our school to share their knowledge and experience of art and design and to run workshops for our pu

We are also lucky to be part of a strong community where volunteers come in to share their talents.

Our pupils love to avail of the After-Schools arts and craft classes and entering competitions. We have been able to celebrate many successes over the years as a result of the talent and hard work of our pupils and teachers.

As a school we appreciate and understand the importance of drama within our curriculum. Research reveals that drama had a positive impact on children's physical, emotional, social and cognitive development. Drama is developed across the whole school in a variety of ways.

Dramatic activity is already a natural part of most children's lives before they start school in the form of make-believe play. We aim to utilise this innate activity at school through using structured play and drama to encourage pupils to learn actively and interactively throughout their time at St. Columba's and across the curriculum.

EVERY
CHILD
IS AN
ARTIST
-PICASSO



Children love to move and to interact with others. In drama we ask them to do exactly this. In doing so they are developing such skills as critical thinking, problem-solving, decision making, self-awareness, creativity, enquiry, communication, empathy, self-confidence, cooperation, leadership and negotiation.

Most importantly, drama activities are fun- making learning both enjoyable and memorable.

Drama is ideal for cross-curricular learning and is a valuable tool for use in many subject areas. In particular, drama develops literacy skills, supports speaking and listening, extending vocabulary and encouraging pupils to understand and express different points of view. Dramatic activity motivates children to write for a range of purposes.

Teachers can take a more open-ended approach, concentrating on the process of learning at least as much, if not more, than the product.

Each year our children have opportunity to apply and develop their skills through rehearsal and then showcase their dramatic flair and musical ability in our Christmas Concert production for the local community. This continues to be a huge part of St. Columba's culture, which our children, parents and wider family and community circle thoroughly enjoy each year.



The World Around Us

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. The purpose of The World Around Us is to provide children with the opportunities to:

- express and share their thoughts and ideas about the world;
- become aware of themselves and their place in the world, as well as other places, cultures and the environment;

The World Around Us (WAU) consists of three contributory elements: Geography, History, and Science and Technology.

It is organised into four interrelated strands:

- Interdependence,
- Place
- Movement and Energy
- Change Over Time

The purpose of these four strands is to facilitate connections in the learning between Geography, History and Science and Technology.

In St. Columba's we realise the value of connecting learning for our pupils. We have therefore developed a topic-based approach to the World Around Us. We choose topics that enthuse, inspire and motivate children to learn. Foundation stage pupils have the opportunity to learn about the world around them through topics such as The Farm, The Jungle, Spider & Bats, The Woodlands, Fairy Tales and Toys.



Our KS1 pupils have thoroughly enjoyed exploring topics such as Pirates, Dinosaurs, Castles and Minibeasts whilst our KS2 pupils have chosen to study The Famine, Water, Farm to Fork, The Vikings and the Titanic to name but a few.

As always, we aim to enhance learning with enrichment activities such as trips and expert talks/ visits. Our pupils have been on a recent trip to Ranfurly House as part of the Famine topic. They visited Moy Park and Tesco's as part of the Eat Happy project to increase their understanding and appreciation of the Farm to Fork topic. Our KS1 pupils enjoy visiting Carrickfergus Castle and Armagh Planetarium to enhance their understanding of the Castles and Space topics. We are lucky to have Derrynoid Forest on our doorstep and we avail of all the teaching opportunities that this presents. Our P1 and P2 pupils love going on a Teddy Bears' Picnic to the forest as part of the Woodland topic.

Through the World Around Us as with all curricular areas, we aim to teach Thinking Skills and Personal capabilities. The curriculum emphasises the development of pupils' skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and participating in society. By engaging pupils in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum, teachers can develop pupils':

- personal and interpersonal skills;
- capabilities and dispositions; and
- ability to think both creatively and critically.



“And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places”

Roald Dahl

“The Teachers connect creatively the children's learning with other aspects of the curriculum and build new concepts meaningfully through active learning tasks.”

ETI 2016

STEM



Northern Ireland STEM School of the Year!!

Our KS2 pupils also have the fantastic opportunity to participate in the STEM project in collaboration with St. Mary's University College Belfast. STEM is for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths. Education is always changing but one thing is certain, STEM education will continue to expand and grow. We are in a new era of time and all students need to be proficient in STEM fields, with early education providing the building blocks of understanding.

All of our teachers have completed intense STEM courses and we have had a busy year integrating and elevating science, technology and problem-solving and investigative maths right across our curriculum. We also have been inspiring all our classes with fantastic educational STEM days in various locations throughout the academic year.



Ambassador Eco School

In St. Columba's we encourage our pupils to care for and be responsible for looking after our environment through outdoor learning.

Most young people care deeply about environmental issues and wish to make a positive change in the environment around them. The Eco-Schools programme provides an ideal way for fostering environmental awareness in the entire school in a way that links to many curriculum subjects. Our primary aim regarding the Eco-Schools scheme is to combine learning and action for the improvement of the environmental performance of Eco-Schools. (www.eco-schoolsni.org)

Our Eco Schools Council together with their peers have initiated and maintain some fantastic environmentally friendly projects in St. Columba's. Each year as part of the Foundation Stage topic The Farm and Key Stage 2 topic Fork to Farm our Primary 1 and 2 pupils alongside their primary 6 and 7 pupils love having the opportunity to plant and grow vegetables in the garden. Our Primary 7 pupils then harvest the crops and then cook potato and leek soup and other wholesome dishes for the whole school to eat!

Primary 3 and 4 love learning about Minibeasts and as part of their learning experiences enjoy creating flora rich environments to attract a variety of environmentally friendly critters.



In 2015 we were first awarded our first Green Flag status. This had gone from strength to strength and to this day we are very proud to maintain our Green Flag Status as an Eco-School!



Our Sensory Garden and Outdoor Learning

At St. Columba's we strongly believe that every individual deserves the right to a safe and enriching outdoor space to experience the beauty, wonder and heightened sense of health that interacting with the natural world can bring. Our pupils and teachers are always planning and seeking the best ways to develop outdoor eco-friendly environments and so in 2017 after a year of planning, funding and hard work by all we officially opened our sensory garden. This fantastic environment provides and inspiring outdoor learning are for our children across all curriculum areas. It is a clam and quiet space can that help to enhance the lives of the pupils in St. Columba's both socially and academically for generations to come.

We would like to give a special word of thanks to a marvellous group called the 'Conservation Volunteers' who give up their time freely to improve environments in our communities.



Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

PDMU is an integral area of learning in St Columba's focusing on developing children's emotional development, health and safety, relationships with others and development of moral thinking, values and actions.

In St. Columba's our PDMU programme is aimed at encouraging children to:

- Develop personally, emotionally, socially and physically.
- Lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.
- Develop the skills, attitudes and values to enable them to become more independent, making informed decisions and taking increasing responsibility for their own lives.
- Gain an understanding of their contributing role in society.

Within St. Columba's PDMU is infused throughout the school day and every teacher allocates a slot in their timetable where PDMU is taught as a discrete subject once a week.

Through the PDMU programme teachers provide opportunities for active learning and clear links are made to thinking skills and personal capabilities.



The delivery of PDMU is carefully linked to the needs and interests of all children and gives each child an opportunity to explore;

1. Self-awareness
2. Feelings and Emotions
3. Learning to Learn
4. Health, Growth and Change
5. Safety
6. Relationships
7. Rules, Rights and Responsibilities
8. Managing Conflict
9. Similarities and Differences
10. Learning to live as members of the community.



Teachers use and adapt a variety of teaching styles such as individual, paired and group activities to help in the delivery of this subject area, looking at effective ways to link PDMU into the whole curriculum, via class discussion, topic work, circle time, cooperative games, and an agreed class charter.

It is also linked to initiatives that run in the whole school such as Healthy Breaks, playground programmes, School Council, Mindfulness and extracurricular activities.

Parents and people from the local community are often invited into the school to share their expertise and views with the children as well as to celebrate school assemblies, and concerts with the children.

In addition, we also have excellent links and work closely with a variety of external agencies, professions, voluntary bodies and charities who throughout the academic year will visit our children to share their knowledge and expertise. This close partnership is fundamental in promoting and supporting the learning and teaching of PDMU in St Columba's as children are greatly influenced by society's values, the values communicated in school and also the values held at home and within our Catholic Faith.



Our School Council

Within St Columba's we value our pupil's views and opinions in the development of our school community. Children are highly encouraging to share their views and feelings in school decisions that will affect them through the introduction of our school council.

Member of the school council are responsibilities include:

- Representing the student body at St Columba's
- Talking to other pupils and ask them what they would like to see happening in school.
- Listening to ideas, suggestions and concerns.
- Attending regular meetings to discuss ideas, suggestions and concerns.
- Contributing to decisions on how to improve life in St Columba's.

School Council Elections

Pupils who wish to hold a seat on our council prepare and deliver speeches to their peers. An election is held whereby each pupil votes for their class representative on the council. Our School council representatives elected from different classes and year groups then act like a link between their class and the council. This provides a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to represent the student body's opinions and raise issues with our Teachers and Principal in the school. The school council can also take forward projects on behalf of the pupils.

There is great excitement each year when St Columba's Pupils School Council is elected by their fellow pupils.



"Through the school and Eco-councils, the children develop leadership and decision-making skills and are consulted regularly as valued contributors to

Roots of Empathy

This amazing programme is delivered each year to our primary 7 pupils. This programme builds emotional resilience in children, and has been proven to help Childrens' own mental health and wellbeing.

Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based classroom programme that has been shown to reduce the levels of aggression among school children, while also improving social and emotional competence and increasing empathy. Significantly, it provides an effective approach to reducing the risk factors that cause violence.

At the heart of the programme are a baby and parent from the local community, who visit the classroom on a monthly basis throughout the year. Mrs Kelly the trained instructor coaches' students to observe the baby's development and label the baby's feelings. This 'emotional literacy' lays the foundation for ore safe and caring classrooms. Children become more competent in understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others (empathy) and are therefore less likely to physically, psychologically and emotionally hurt each other through bullying.



Religious Education

In St. Columba's we aim to develop children's awareness and understanding of religion. We follow the Northern Ireland Syllabus for Religious Education and The Grow in Love Programme.

It focuses on encouraging each child to become informed and inquisitive about their own religious beliefs and practices and those of others. This is so that, over time, they will grow as citizens of a religiously and culturally diverse local and global society, aware of similarities and respectful of differences.

"An awareness and understanding of religion should help children to:

- make sense of the world around them;
- think about universal human questions;
- begin to shape their own attitudes and values;
- be aware of and respect the different views of others;
- understand the important routines of life for many people, such as worship or prayer, or seasonal festivals;
- be aware of how people mark important stages of life such as birth, growing up into adulthood and death; and
- develop an understanding of how moral choices are made."

(www.nicurriculum.org.uk)

Sacramental preparation is a very important part of the religious education in St. Columba's. Our P4 pupils prepare faithfully for First Confession in Term 2 and First Holy Communion in Term 3. Members of our parish committee have set up a 'Do this in Memory' programme for all P4 pupils to help to prepare them for this special sacrament.



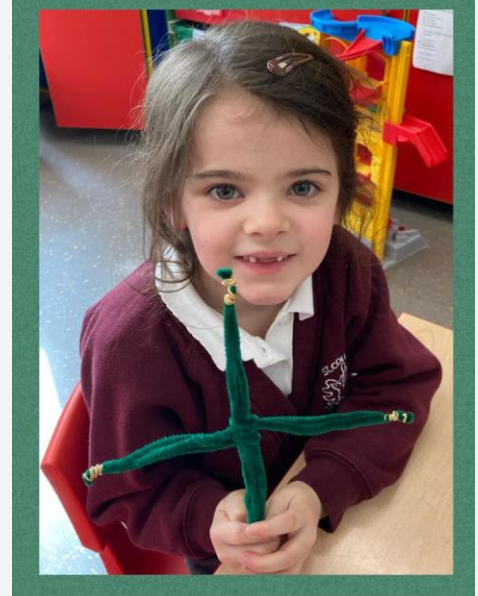
Our P7 pupils prepare for and celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation in Term 2. They also attend the 'Fan the Flame' Mass which is held in Derry every Holy Thursday. This is a lovely occasion for our pupils every year as the Bishop says mass.

As a school community we celebrate liturgical events throughout the year. Our School Chaplin blesses us as we begin the academic year with our Beginning of Year Mass. Our Christingle Mass is a very popular event for our children and their families. We give thanks for our Grandparents on a special service on Grandparents' Day during 'Catholic Schools Week'. We finish the school year with a beautifully poignant leavers' Mass for our P7 pupils and their families.

Our school is named after Saint Columba. St Columba was an Irish Abbot and Missionary and is one of the three chief saints of Ireland, after St. Patrick and St. Brigid. We celebrate these Saint's days as we feel it is an important part of our children's faith and culture.

Right from the first days in primary one until our pupils leave us in P7 we teach them about the power of prayer and lead them in daily prayers. Our pupils have a morning prayer, a lunchtime prayer and a home time prayer. We also teach the prayers that children will say during Mass.

Our Religious education "Grow in Love" curriculum is closely linked to our Personal Development and Mutual Understanding curriculum in that we are always teaching children to be aware of and respect the views and opinions of others and also to shape their own personal development, attitudes and values.



Charity

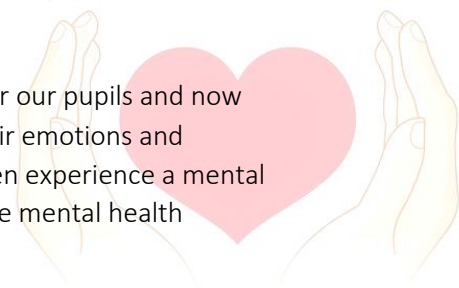
In St. Columba's we aim to instil the importance of charity at a young age. As part of our Catholic faith our pupils learn that God is present and active in their lives and in the world. They learn to recognize the "footprints of God" in their daily experiences. They see the signs of God's love around them, and are encouraged to experience the joy of sharing God's love through acts of kindness, compassion and charity in their own communities, and the world.

St. Columba's P.S pupils, parents and teachers are extremely generous and work very hard in supporting our various school charities. These include St. Vincent De Paul, Operation Christmas child, Trocaire, Ndi Moya and Action MS to name but a few.



Catholic Meditation and Mindfulness

We at St. Columba's recognise all the pressures of living in 2018 can bring for our pupils and now more than ever, it is vitally important our pupils learn new ways to manage their emotions and develop coping strategies to deal with stress. We now know that 1 in 10 children experience a mental health difficulty by age 11 and 70% of children and adolescents who experience mental health problems have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age.



In St. Columba's the well-being and mental health of our children is our number one focus and through our Mindfulness programme we aim to provide our pupils with the skills and strategies to cope and manage any areas of stress in their lives. Mindfulness can help reduce the pace of life to a manageable level, helping children make the most of time and enjoy a calmer lifestyle.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness and meditation helps you develop skills and techniques to cope with the daily challenges a busy life can bring such as stress and anxiety. It involves making a special effort to give your full attention to what is happening in the present moment –and to what's happening in your body, your mind and or your surroundings.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS?

ATTENTION: Strengthens our “mental muscle” for bringing focus back where we want it, when we want it.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION: Observing our emotions helps us recognise when they occur, to see their transient nature, and to change how we respond to them.

ADAPTABILITY: becoming aware of our patterns enables us to gradually change habitual behaviours wisely.

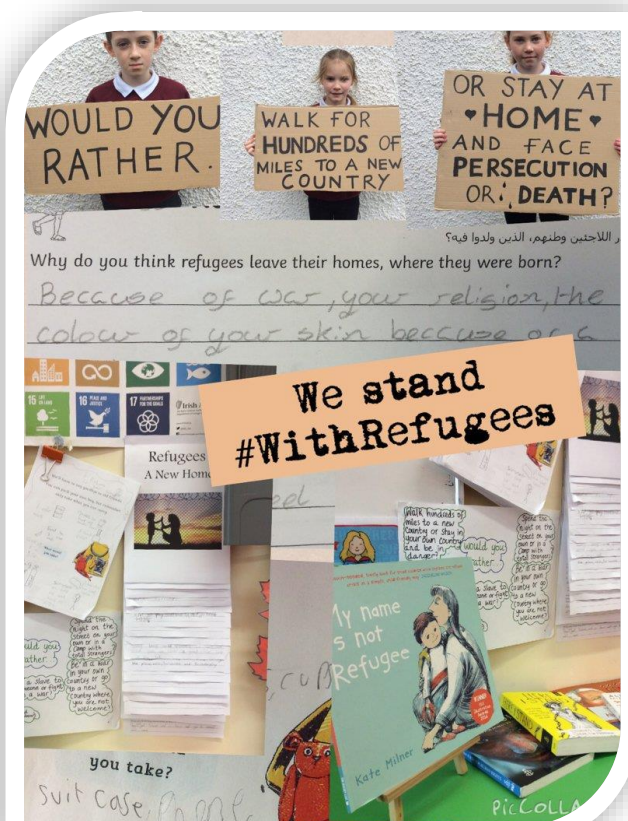
COMPASSION: Awareness of our own thoughts, emotions, and senses grows our understanding of what other people are experiencing.

CALMING: breathing and other mindfulness practice relax the body and mind, giving access to peace independent of external circumstances.

RESILIENCE: seeing things objectively reduces the amount of narrative we add to the world's natural ups and downs, giving us greater balance.

Global Learning

Global Learning can be defined as *education for a fair and sustainable world*. It helps pupils make sense of the increasingly globalised, complex and rapidly changing world in which they live. It enables pupils to think critically about world issues and to develop an awareness of the impact our actions can have on others. Global learning within St. Columba's is becoming embedded in everything we do. Our empathy for others is developed through our PDMU whilst we take action through our fundraising efforts for example Trocaire and Ndi Moyo. Our pupils are developing critical thinking skills through Literacy and all about sustainable development and global interdependence through WAU. In addition to this, pupils explore key issues such as poverty, global inequality and social justice. We participate in The World's largest Lesson, Fairtrade Fortnight, World Water Day and International Day of Forests. We were recently shortlisted from schools across Ireland in the Trocaire Romero Awards for our Refugees project and travelled to Maynooth to receive our certificates. We are proud to be a level 2 Global Learning School which is the highest possible level.



Physical Education and

Movement

In St. Columba's we strongly believe that Physical Education and Movement (PE) has a fundamental role to play in the development of the whole child. It provides the foundation for a healthy life style, promotes self- esteem, reduces stress, improves concentration, fosters good behaviour and allows children to develop their understanding of co-operation, fairness and respect for others through active participation.

By employing a wide range of teaching strategies to deliver a broad and balanced programme of physical education we strive to provide all our children; with activities designed to be enjoyable, dynamic, purposeful and regular.

The range of physical activities is wide and includes athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, swimming and outdoor education. A high-quality programme is designed to ensure the needs, abilities and interests of all individual children.

We believe it is important that children are given opportunities to participate in a range of enjoyable physical activities and good nutrition habits at an early age so they will be more likely to continue being physically active throughout the rest of their lives.

The early years are essential in laying the foundations of physical competency and positive attitudes towards physical activity. The Foundation Stage builds upon the child's own experiences and understanding from home, pre-school and community. The activities in the Foundation Stage aim to enhance the physical development of children, their understanding of themselves and their relationships with others.



This will continue throughout Key Stage one and two and careful planning helps to ensure continuity, progression and achievement through a board and balanced Physical Education programme. In St Columba's pupils are provided with a wide variety of opportunities to progress from;

- simple movement explorations and performances to developing increasing competence, control, co-ordination and spatial awareness in a range of physical movement skills and being able to refine, extend and perform the skills with improved accuracy and consistency;
- exploring and using a wide range of large and small equipment to using equipment appropriately and with increasing confidence and control;
- sharing and playing co-operatively in small groups to working co-operatively and in playing competitively in a variety of physical activity situations;
- recognising and following rules and safety procedures to being able to apply the rules and safety procedures in the appropriate context;
- responding to a range of stimuli to developing their responses in movement by exploring, creating and performing movement phrases in response to different stimuli;
- being able to talk about movements of themselves and others to being able to make decisions, observe, appreciate, discuss and evaluate the movements of themselves and others and recognise what makes a good performance;
- understanding the reasons for changing for Physical Education to understanding the need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for different activities;
- experiencing a variety of warm up and cool down activities to understanding the reasons for warming up and cooling down;
- being aware of the effects of exercise on the body to developing an understanding of the relationship between physical activity, good health and well-being



Sporting Enrichment

In addition to our wonderful Physical Education Programme, we also have excellent opportunities for our children participate in additional enriching PE experiences. In St Columba's we are very proud of our Irish culture, community and heritage our pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge of ceil dancing and the Gaelic Games.

Our very skilled teaching staff who organise and plan our Gaelic games after school clubs, have played in their GAA codes at the highest standard and hold qualifications for "Caman Get a grip Camogie Foundation Course," "Foundation, Level One and Two Youth and Adult Hurling and Football Courses", We have strong links with Ballinascreen GAC and promote participation at club level. Furthermore, our school also funds the Derry Council Coaching officer, who coaches P1-P7 Gaelic Games.

Our extensive extra-curricular programme also provides opportunities for all our children to extend and develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and interests acquired during and enjoyment of the Physical Education programme.

Part of the provision involves our pupils participating in non-competitive and competitive fixtures against other schools. We welcome and value such opportunities as it helps our children to develop and learn lifelong lessons about sportsmanship and enjoy the excitement of competition and in achieving success. ***Our children understand the value of hard work, dedication, teamwork and the drive to continually improve and at the same time understanding it isn't always about winning, but about participating, enjoyment, development and giving your best effort.***

Throughout the years St Columba's has enjoyed a variety of individual success and team success, in the cross country, hurling, camogie and Gaelic football competitions. This success is testament to the hard work that the pupils and coaches have put into developing their skills and talents.

It is our aim that by providing positive and enriching experiences, a lifelong interest in physical activity is encouraged.



Outstanding Play and Activity Based Learning

In St Columba's we recognise that play is an extremely powerful learning medium, in which our children flourish as learners and therefore place much importance on Play Based Learning and Activity Based Learning as a fundamental part of the learning process in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

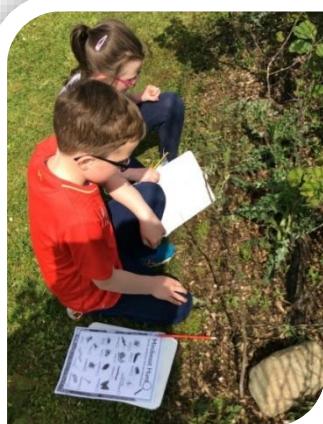
Through play and activity-based learning children experience learning in a meaningful and purposeful way children can develop the skills and capabilities to be effective learners and provides a context for all children to access the different areas of the curriculum.

Play Based Learning

In the Foundation Stage, it is through play based learning our children explore and develop learning experiences across the curriculum areas, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn about self-control and the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Activity Based Learning

Activity Based Learning at Key Stage One builds on the active, hands-on learning that has taken place in the Foundation Stage. It is linked to topic/theme and allows children to engage in a variety of focused play activities and independent child-initiated games and activities.



Outdoor Learning

In St Columba's we believe the great outdoors provides our children with one of the best possible environments in which to learn. We are consistently developing our outdoor areas and learning opportunities. The response from our pupils to this style of learning have been overwhelmingly positive and effective. Our pupils are nurtured by nature!



"The best classroom and richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky"

Margaret McMillan

ICT

Using ICT (Information and Communications Technology) describes the ability to handle and communicate information, solve problems, pose questions and be creative through the use of technology.

Using ICT is not a stand-alone subject but rather encompasses all areas of learning and as such is known as a Cross Curricular Skill.

At St. Columba's our pupils are fortunate to have access to 40 I-pads, 10 PCs, 10 laptops and an interactive whiteboard in every classroom. We are currently developing an ICT suite which will be ready by March 2020.

Our teachers carefully plan for the use of this technology in lessons in order for our pupils to Experience the 5 Es of ICT;



Whilst we embrace the benefit of technology as a tool for learning, we are also acutely aware of the importance of E-safety and aim to empower our pupils to; safely navigate the internet, be aware of the dangers of being online, be responsible internet users and adopt limited screen time which is taught through our PDMU programme.

'In all key stages, the children use information and communication technology (ICT) with confidence and ease to support, extend and exhibit their mathematical learning.'

ETI 2016

Thinking Skills

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPCs) are an integral part of our new revised curriculum. TSPCs are divided into 5 areas:

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

(www.nicurriculum.org.uk)

These skills and capabilities do not stand alone but rather, are infused into all aspects of what we do in school.

- Promote active learning
- Shift focus from teaching to learning
- Create positive habits and dispositions
- Promote independence
- Make us think about thinking
- Promote deeper understanding



The curriculum emphasises the development of pupils' skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and participating in society.

In St Columba's we aim to create "A Thinking Classroom" in which we provide pupils with the opportunity to practice their skills, reflect on their achievements and learning, and to recognise strengths and weaknesses, **we aim to teach children how to think, not what to think.**

Junior Entrepreneur

In St Columba's our Primary 7 pupils participate The Junior Entrepreneur Programme. Through this enriching programme our pupils get a clear picture of what creating a business is all about. Every step mirrors strands in the primary school curriculum.

Thinking like an entrepreneur

The learning that takes place during JEP will give children a greater understanding of many things that happen in the real world. They will get to understand how the value of goods and services is created and how skill, talent and creativity can create more than the sum of their parts in an entrepreneurial enterprise. Whether they ever become an entrepreneur or not is irrelevant. They will have a better understanding of what happens in their lives and will have their first opportunity to think in an entrepreneurial fashion. That's something that will stand to them in their further education and throughout their working lives.

Working with a local entrepreneur

The programme works closely with the local community – involving local entrepreneurs who share their story and that of their business with the pupils. This puts entrepreneurship in a local and meaningful context. Every pupil gets a chance to uncover their own strengths and play a key role in one of five distinct teams – Finance, Marketing, Design & Production, Sales and Storytelling.





Special Education Needs

In St Columba's PS we believe that all children learn at different rates and have different learning styles and require a variety of opportunities to develop their intelligences. As a staff we are committed to meeting the needs of all our pupils and aim to ensure that those pupils with Special Educational Needs are supported appropriately. We believe that special needs may be emotional, physical, behavioural, social or of an educational nature. We aim to make relevant provision for the individual needs of the pupils during their education in St Columba's.

Our SENCO has an excellent understanding of the requirements of the Code of Practice. In keeping with the Code of Practice for SEN the class teachers and SENCO work together to provide a suitable planned programme designed to meet a child's identified, specific need. IEPs are effective in that each pupil can be seen to be progressing against prior performance. Records are kept and are readily available to those who contribute to the education of the SEN pupils. Regular reviews take place to ensure that pupils are benefiting and progressing from their educational experiences. Where appropriate these reviews involve the pupils themselves. SEN pupils benefit from high standards of teaching both in class and in withdrawal situations and parents are encouraged to discuss their children's progress in both formal and informal situations.

In St Columba's strategies are employed to support children with learning difficulties:

- Early identification of learning difficulty
- Differentiated programme
- Setting attainable individual targets with IEPs where necessary
- Regular meetings with relevant personnel to monitor progress and make further plans
- Effective use of classroom assistants
- Effective use of outside agencies such as MAST Services and School Psychologist.
- Close communication with parents
- Raising self-esteem of the child by praising effort, celebrating success and encouraging perseverance



Staff Expertise

Two teachers in our school are qualified AMBDA tutors. (Associate Members of British Dyslexia Association). These teachers are qualified to the highest standard and are accredited to train other teachers in how to identify, assess and diagnose dyslexia. These teachers are able to put in place individualised intervention programmes specifically tailored to the needs of the pupil. Having these teachers on our staff is an invaluable asset to all of the pupils in our school and in particular those with Dyslexic tendencies.

We also have a trained Reading Recovery teacher in our school who provides training, guidance and support to all staff.

Four members of our staff have ELKLAN training. ELKLAN deliver courses for staff working with pupils with Speech, language and Communication needs.

In St. Columba's we differentiate all of our lessons to meet the needs of all our learners. We track pupil progress very closely and offer Booster Groups for any children who would benefit from additional support or revision. We use an online programme called Lexia to support pupils who need support with phonics and reading.

We always stay up to date with new developments and initiatives to support our learners. We are passionate about helping each child to reach their potential.

External Agencies

We have good links with the many relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. Some of these are listed below:

- School Psychology Services - Our SENCO and Principal communicate regularly with the school psychologist and seek and use his/her advice appropriately.
- MAST - MAST staff actively supports our children and staff from P1 – P4 through the provision of speech therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and behaviour therapists as necessary.
- School Nurse and Medical staff - Advice and support from the School Nurse and School Doctor are sought as and when necessary. Staff attend training provided by the school nurse on the use of epi-pens.

- Autism Advisory Intervention Service / Behaviour Support / EWO - Support and advice is sought from such external agencies as and when necessary. Representatives from various relevant external agencies are welcome in our school and they liaise with Principal / SENCO / class teacher as and when necessary.
- Child Protection / Social Services- Our Designated Teacher seek advice as and when necessary from NEELB Child Protection Support Staff. If we have a child on the CP Register the Designated Teacher or Principal attends necessary meetings and liaise with external agencies involved.





Safeguarding

At St Columba's Safeguarding pupils is of the highest priority.

We have an excellent record in this role which has been affirmed by ETI.

"On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, the children in years 5, 6 and 7 reported that they feel safe and secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being."

— ETI Oct 2016

Pupils are regularly reminded who the safeguarding team are and what to do if they have any concerns.

Safe Guarding Team

Designated Teacher

Mrs McElhatton



Deputy Teacher

Mr Henry



Progress and Assessment

In St. Columba's Primary School, we believe that assessment is at the heart of outstanding teaching and learning. It plays a key role in helping our pupils reach their full potential and in turn improve overall school outcomes. Knowing how each pupil is performing allows teachers to implement strategies to help individuals improve. This in turn promotes improvement at class level, then at school level, allowing the school to set meaningful and challenging targets in our School Development Plan.

Assessment is an integral part to the processes of planning for each stage of teaching and learning. Each pupil will be assessed and their progress will be tracked throughout their time at St. Columba's. The information gathered will inform teachers, parents and children of their acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

The Assessment, Recording and Reporting arrangements in use in St. Columba's Primary school meets the statutory requirements as prescribed by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland. The statutory summative assessment arrangements focus on pupil progression in the literacy and numeracy skills needed for life and the world of work. These skills are described in the *Levels of Progression for the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication and Using Mathematics*.

Assessment for Learning is one of the most important purposes of assessment. It involves the on-going use of assessment in the classroom to raise pupils' achievement. Assessment for Learning is based on the idea that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can best achieve the aim (or close the gap in their knowledge). Assessment for Learning is central to classroom practice and involves the following principles:

- Sharing learning intentions with pupils
- Sharing and negotiating success criteria
- Helping pupils know and recognise the standards to aim for
- Providing feedback that helps pupils to identify how to improve
- Believing that every pupil can improve in comparison with previous achievements
- Both the teacher and pupils reviewing and reflecting on performance and progress
- Pupils use self-assessment and peer-assessment techniques to discover areas where they need to improve
- Recognising that both motivation and self-esteem are crucial for effective learning.

Reports of progress and achievement form an integral part of the assessment policy and practice within St. Columba's. The main purpose of the reporting process is to support and enhance pupils' learning. The progress of each child is carefully monitored by the class teacher and both verbal and written reports are given to parents each year which fosters an effective partnership between school and home.



Straw Parents are invited to a parent/teacher evening in Term 1 which are held for all year groups and children's progress is discussed. There is an additional Annual Review meeting for pupils who are at Stage 5. In June parents receive a written report of their child's achievements. Parents wishing to consult with teachers at any other time, should they feel their child's progress is of concern, should contact the school for an appointment with the teacher.



Extra-Curricular

After Schools Programme

At St. Columba's we offer an extensive range of after school's extra-curricular activities for all our pupils from Primary 1 through to primary 7 throughout the year. We believe in holistic education and feel the benefits of an enriching after-school programme is endless.

Some of our After-school activities teach specific skills, but are also an opportunity for our pupils to develop social skills like cooperation, negotiation and conflict resolution. Participation in these activities can subtly show them how to appropriately interact with others. They learn how to think on their feet and develop better communication skills while discovering new things they enjoy and can excel at.

Mastering new skills can help build confidence. By participating in after-school activities, pupils can build their self-esteem in a relaxed setting as their activities provide the opportunity to be successful in something that they are passionate about.

Our pupils can explore their individual talents and feel proud of themselves as they discover their abilities. We believe it is good for our children to explore new possibilities and allow themselves to discover new strengths and interests.

Throughout our lives we need to understand and employ teamwork. Team sports help children with the concept of working together to achieve a common goal. In these activities, kids come to realize the importance of removing the focus from the individual and embracing the camaraderie of the team. They learn lifelong lessons about sportsmanship and can enjoy the excitement of competition while understanding it isn't always about winning, but about participating and giving your best effort.

Many of our additional experiences and activities are provided by our very talented team at St. Columba's, our local fitness expert Roisin Kelly and we also collaborate closely with local company Glasgowbury Cornstore Creative Hub in which a variety of tutors to enhance the pupils' artistic and technological experiences.

Our extensive after schools programme has included the following:

Boys Gaelic	Art Club	Guitar	Heart Start
Hurling	Water colours	Pop Dance	French club
Camogie	Irish	Little fit Club	Athletics
Animation	Tin whistle	Fundamentals	Sing Club
African and Samba	Clay-Model Building	I - Movie	Scratch Junior
Drumming	and Animation	Computer Club	Coding with iPads

After Schools Pottery Club



Shared Education

Shared Education provides opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together. In St. Columba's we have many excellent practical opportunities for our children in partnership with Tobermore PS to work together in engaging fun learning experiences together promoting a strong sense of community.





At St. Columba's Primary School, Straw we value and respect all our pupils equally and we believe that an orderly working environment is necessary to ensure effective teaching and learning.

To achieve this, we aim to establish a positive, Catholic, caring ethos, which is conducive to learning and in which each individual pupil is respected. We recognise that each child is unique and gifted differently. Through the provision of a caring and effective Catholic education in St Columba's Straw all pupils are encouraged and enabled to make the most of their potential for academic, religious, physical and social development.

We believe that each pupil can be helped to develop further and learn more, provided each plays his/her part. Reflecting this ethos, we expect our pupils to work hard, to keep the school rules and to co-operate fully with all staff. We expect our pupils to share responsibility within the school and to participate in its life and work, using and developing all their talents to their full potential in a happy and supportive environment where pupils can learn effectively.

Our Positive Behaviour Policy is closely linked with and supportive of our general school ethos which is based on Catholic values and beliefs. It seeks to set guidelines that support our pupils within a caring framework and lead them to a position of self-discipline and personal responsibility.

Our parents/careers are active partners in the education of their children, and their support in reinforcing positive behavior is key to ensuring all pupils are able to work to the best of their ability in a positive environment. Rewarding good work and good behaviour engenders a positive attitude to study and school.



Our Policies

In St. Columba's we have the following policies in place. If you wish to gain further information on any of the following policies, you may get copies of the whole policies from the school. If there is any aspect of any policy on which you would like clarification or further discussion, please contact the principal.

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Zero Tolerance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Medicine Administration Policy
- Literacy and Numeracy Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Reasonable Force Policy
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Policy
- Road Safety Policy
- Care in the Sun Policy
- Smoking Policy
- ICT and Internet Usage Policy
- Critical Incidences Policy
- Attendance Policy
- The Arts Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Healthy Break Policy
- Homework Policy
- Team Selection Policy
- Home collection Policy

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Education in St. Columba's is provided free of charge for all lessons and activities connected with the child's entitlement under the Education Reform Order. Parents are asked to contribute towards the following costs:

- School Trips/Educational Visits
- Christmas Pantomime
- Youth Sport Programme and/or other After-School Clubs and activities
- Entry for swimming lessons
- Instrument tuition



Parents in Partnership

We welcome parents and carers into St. Columba's Primary School believing we are partners in the education of your children. There are many opportunities for parents to become involved in the life of the school and to gain a greater understanding of its work. Parents' support and expertise can be used in many ways and is greatly valued.

Communication with Parents.

We communicate with parents and carers in various ways, for example;

- Seesaw – is a school communication and learning app
- News Letter - through our newsletters parents are informed of the on-going curricular and organisational developments, in the school, the celebration of the children's achievements and important parental information and dates.
- Text system- our school text system reminds parents of upcoming events, holidays, afterschool clubs and important unexpected cancellations, closures, or information.
- Questionnaires- questionnaires are often sent home to gain parents views and opinions on curricular developments and new initiatives.
- Workshops - curriculum workshops are organized, to inform parents of curriculum developments, new initiatives and ways to support their child's learning.
- Social Media, facebook-@StrawPS, Twitter – @strawPS and @strawglobal twitter accounts informed of the on-going curricular and organisational developments, in the school, the celebration of the children's achievements and important parental information

The school's website www.stcolumbasstraw.com has a wealth of information including, class pages, copies of key policies and curriculum information.

HOMEWORK

It is school policy to set homework as it is important that homework is seen and valued as an integral part of your child's school work. It informs parents about their child's work in the classroom and extends learning opportunities and helps your child get used to the discipline of home study. Homework allows teachers to assess the effectiveness of their teaching by providing evidence of the child's level of understanding of work. You are asked to find time in order to provide active support and a suitable environment to ensure the required work is done. The homework activities given may involve oral preparation, written exercises, revision and practical work. Homework is most beneficial when it is given adequate time and done with care and attention. It is important that written work is well presented. Learning homework should also be seen as equally important.

Friends of Straw Parent Teacher Association



The PTA (Parent Teachers Association) is a wonderful partnership between mums and dads, carers, and teachers at St Columba's. The PTA provides a unique opportunity to strengthen the home school links as it brings staff, parents and teachers together socially in support of the school, working towards a common goal.

The PTA is a registered charity and one of its main functions is to raise money which is used to enhance our children's education and facilities in school. As well as raising money, our PTA also like to run activities and events that encourage community entertainment and fun and enriching the children's (and parents') experience of life at St Columba's. Keep updated via the PTA



Facebook Page @ Straw PTA

All parents and members of the school community are encouraged to get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time available. All families are automatically members of the PTA at St Columba's when their child joins our school. There are AGM's annually where you can be elected to become a committee member of the PTA.

Offering to help before events or at other times during the year is so valuable, it really is the case of "many hands make light work." IT doesn't matter if you can't help on a regular basis, or even if you can't come into school. There are always little jobs that can be done at home. We really couldn't achieve what we want to do without the unseen volunteers that exists in school.

You can of course, if you feel able, volunteer to become a committee member. Or you can simply support the PTA by coming along to our Annual General Meeting and give us your ideas for fundraising events. You can also let us know if you have any contacts or skills, everything is potentially valuable to us.

The PTA is a wonderful asset to St. Columba's and on behalf of the children and staff we would like to thank all the members and volunteers for their very valuable support which enriches our children's learning experiences and helps makes your children's time in school so enjoyable.

"There is helpful and regular communication with parents and the PTA support generously the work of the school"

ETI 2016



The Board of Governors

Mr Laurence O’Kane

Mr Damien Trolan

Mrs Bernie Clerkin

Mrs Noeleen Crozier

Mrs Ashelene Boyle

Trustee & Chairperson

Trustee & Vice-Chairperson

Trustee

Trustee

Education Authority

Mrs Donna McElhatton

Mr Kevin O’Neill

Teacher Rep

Parent Rep

Mrs Patricia McAlister

Acting Principal



Closing Comments

I hope this prospectus has provided you with a glimpse into the wonderful life at St. Columba's, where we strive to help our pupils become the best that they can be. Selecting a school is a very important decision and we fully appreciate the trust you place in us. By working in close partnership with you, we will ensure that your child thrives at St. Columba's in all areas. We are committed to providing the greatest of opportunities for all pupils and we aim to allow everyone to develop their full potential in a secure and safe environment. You are very welcome to visit our school. We will happily show you around and answer any questions you may have.

Mrs McAlister

