

# St Bride's Primary School & Nursery Unit



## Prospectus

# Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Céad Mile Fáilte!**

A very warm welcome to St Bride's Primary School & Nursery Unit, Belfast.

This Prospectus aims to give you a little taste of the high standards and extraordinary menu of opportunity and achievement our school community enjoy and experience daily.

St. Bride's is a loving, caring, diverse, inclusive, welcoming family-oriented school where the whole school community shares a common goal - to do the very best by every child. The Staff and I are thrilled at the interest you've shown in our school and are conscious of the trust you place in us when you enrol your child to our care.

We firmly believe that children's education should be engaging, life enhancing and should foster in them a strong sense of self-confidence. We recognise that it is only when School and Home are working in close partnership that a child's best interests are served. This is enhanced further by the great support we receive from, as well as our involvement in, our local Parish Community.

Every child in St Bride's is treated as a precious gift from God and we work hard to support the development of each child's whole personality and talents, sharing with the home a connection in faith through shared family values, prayer, deed, and example.

Whilst no prospectus could capture the true St Bride's experience, this booklet is intended to help you learn more about the life and work of our school, our values and curriculum, our policies and ethos and to share with you a taster of the magic and belonging that comes with being a member of this truly special, child-centred, vibrant school.

In choosing St Bride's for your family, my wish for you is that this coming, and every future year will be a healthy, happy, and successful one.

Kind regards,

*Ms Cathy Hunter*

**Ms Cathy Hunter**  
Principal



# Introduction

## St Bride's Primary School & Nursery Unit

St Bride's Primary School has a long and proud history of serving the educational needs of children in south Belfast. The original school was opened in 1902, before moving to our present site in 1974. The school population continued to grow and now occupies and operates across two sites on Derryvolgie Avenue and the adjacent, Windsor Avenue.



The main building on Derryvolgie Avenue accommodates the children in our double, full-time nursery unit alongside four classes in each of years one to four. It has access to a purpose-built nursery outdoor playground in addition to our outdoor classroom, garden and learning areas.

The Ashleigh building on Windsor Avenue accommodates four classes in each of years five to seven and houses our dedicated ICT suite, large sports hall, library, and support rooms. The current enrolment is 52 children in the nursery unit and 809 children in the primary school.

Admission numbers to the nursery unit are capped at 52 and 116 for primary one. St. Bride's primary school places the development of its children at the forefront. Children are respected as individuals and encouraged to develop to their full potential. St. Bride's primary school has good links with other local schools as well as with community groups, charities, and external agencies. While respecting the traditions and cultures of all in the school, a particular feature of school life is the strong bond with St. Brigid's Parish. Liturgical events in the life of the school are frequently celebrated in the parish church, located on the neighbouring site.

We aim to provide an education that gives each child the opportunity of achieving the highest possible standards, with a staff that has developed the best professional methods to enable each child to reach his/her full potential. Our staff works as a team to meet the challenges of the curriculum and to prepare children to become lifelong learners, confident and flexible in thought.



# Introduction

A holistic approach to the children's full development ensures that a broad and balanced curriculum is only further enhanced by a dynamic range of extra-curricular learning opportunities, sport, music and drama are highly valued in the school, with choir and orchestra tuition taught by talented staff both within our own school and from the belfast school of music.

Musical productions are performed by all nursery, Key Stage One, and Key Stage Two children with the end of year show performed by year seven children. Our sporting achievements include successes in Gaelic Games and Cross Country.



# Vision and Values

'Attainment for all within a happy, safe, caring Catholic environment.'

**St. Bride's Primary School promotes the highest possible achievement and learning for life so that each child may:**

- acquire fundamental Catholic values and beliefs
- gain a reasoned set of moral values
- achieve academic knowledge and skills appropriate to their age and ability
- have high self-esteem, respecting themselves, others, property, and the environment
- obtain appropriate technological skills
- be able to work independently and collaboratively
- gain aesthetic skills and an appreciation of the work of others in the expressive arts
- be flexible and adaptable for the demands of the modern world
- acquire social skills and attitudes such as tolerance, co-operation, and independence
- reach an understanding of how their choices affect their health and lifestyle
- appreciate their own culture and gain a respect and understanding of other cultures, religions, and traditions.



# Vision and Values

We believe that each child will succeed as we aim to:

- provide a caring environment in which the children have an opportunity to develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, morally, socially, and emotionally through the promotion of individual self-worth
- promote fundamental Catholic values and beliefs
- create a happy, secure, and stimulating learning environment where, through achieving personal success and establishing positive relationships, children can develop self-confidence and growing independence
- equip children with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop to their full potential
- establish positive home-school relationships which promote the involvement of parents in their child's education
- promote positive attitudes of self-respect and respect for others, their property, and the environment
- create a pastoral care system which caters for the well-being of all the children and staff
- establish a positive educational partnership between the school and the wider community, providing an enriching programme of educational experience.





# Nurturing Pupil Achievement

St. Bride's P.S. ensures that all our children receive their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We ensure that the curriculum caters for the individual needs and various talents of each child. Our aim is to offer each child a broadly based and appropriately balanced curriculum.

## **We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways.**

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to reflect on how they learn. Self-review and peer-review strategies are integral to each lesson. The teachers use plenary sessions at the end of lessons to review the key learning objectives and to assess the level of understanding.

## **Learning and Teaching**

We believe children learn effectively when:

- shared learning objectives are understood by the children
- clear expectations are communicated to guide children on what they are to achieve by the end of the lesson
- given opportunity to ask and answer open-ended, thought provoking, challenging questions
- enjoying innovative teaching
- lessons link to and build upon the children's prior knowledge and interests in simulated and real-life experiences and contexts
- lessons are active, practical, and involving individual and collaborative discussions, exploration, questioning, prediction, and investigation
- given effective feedback, praise, and suggestions for improvement
- supported and catered for at an appropriate level, catering for children with differing abilities
- differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds are acknowledged and barriers to learning are addressed.



# The Curriculum

When we speak of the curriculum in our school, we mean the learning experiences that are present for each child, those planned by the staff and the approaches and programmes which are professionally implemented and used to bring the best out in pupils in terms of their personal development. When planning the curriculum, we take into account the uniqueness of each child and their individual needs. Our aim is to offer each child a broadly based and suitably balanced curriculum in line with the statutory requirements as laid out to schools.

## The NI Curriculum has six main Areas of Learning:

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- The World Around Us
- The Arts
- Physical Education
- Religion

## In addition, there are three Cross-Curricular Skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using ICT

The NI Curriculum is a skills-based curriculum. It has empowered our children to see themselves as independent learners, involved in making choices, setting challenges, and evaluating their learning. Through a stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, our children are being given the opportunity to investigate, problem-solve and experience success. We are so lucky that the enthusiasm and creativity of our staff generates a lively and invigorating learning environment for our children.





# Religious Education



As a Catholic school we actively promote and foster the development of the Catholic faith.

However, Catholicism by nature is inclusive, welcoming and all are taught to have and offer respect for all. We welcome and embrace children of all faiths and of none.

Permeating all our work and contact at St Bride's is our faith and ethos. We believe Religious Education is not a subject to be taught but rather a way of living out our faith. Religion is not confined to the timetabled programme within the school, it is an integral part of daily life in our school.

We use the 'Grow in Love' Programme as a class-based and homework activity and in addition seek to prepare the children for their role in our Parish and wider community.

Our Parish Priest works closely with school staff to help prepare the children to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.

School Assemblies, Family Prayer Services, Class Masses, special performances, charitable works, environmental works, and community outreach all contribute to developing positive young citizens with an awareness of the teachings of the Church and their role in society.

At St Bride's we aim to communicate more than mere facts. We promote the application of human dignity and the acquisition of values such as truth, beauty, justice, and love.

In St Bride's, we are constantly vigilant to and closely monitoring pupil progress. The assessment of work is constructive and designed to support and engage pupils to make improvement and at the same time, inform and facilitate future planning.

Assessment is integral to learning and teaching. The main purpose of assessment is to:

- establish, through a variety of means, what each child can do;
- assist the teacher in planning appropriate tasks suitable for each child;
- provide summative information in respect of each child's progress.

As part of formal assessment procedures, standardised tests are completed each year from P3-7 in Literacy and Numeracy with results formally recorded and reported to parents.

The children's learning is continually monitored throughout the year to ensure teachers can effectively plan for learning in the classroom and beyond.

## School Compliments and Complaints – Raising a Concern

At St Bride's we will always be happy to hear from you.

Quite often, parents kindly get in touch to let us know when we do something well or they have been impressed by our staff or children, however, in the unfortunate circumstance that a parent should wish to complain, a Complaints Procedure is in place.

In most cases, all concerns are dealt with at Stages One or Two but in the case of a complaint remaining unresolved, the complaint should be progressed to Stage Three or Four.

### The stages to address concerns are:

- STAGE 1** Contact the Class Teacher
- STAGE 2** Contact the Head of Key Stage, Vice-Principals, Principal (in order)
- STAGE 3** Contact the Board of Governors by writing a letter to them via the School Principal
- STAGE 4** Contact the Education Authority

Copies of all school policies are made available for download from the school website [www.stbridesps.org.uk](http://www.stbridesps.org.uk)

# Learning Support Provision

Every child is unique and whilst high expectations and aspirations exist for all, we endeavour to meet each child's needs at their individual levels and have a supportive early intervention and additional learning support programme in place.

Children with special or additional needs are identified through teacher observation and assessment, medical or psychology assessment or via parental concern. In accordance with the Code of Practice, the identified educational needs of each child are primarily catered for by his/her class teacher, guided by our Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and where appropriate through the support of our additional Learning Support

Team. Children requiring additional support may be withdrawn on a 1:1 basis, in groups or provided with in-class support. We also consult with the specialist services provided by the EA, the Educational Psychology Service, and the School's Medical Service, to source and provide peripatetic support for children with specific learning difficulties. The school is fully committed to the inclusion of those with additional needs and to meeting the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Disability Order (SENDO)



## **Newcomer Children (Children with English as a Second Language)**

St Bride's is a culturally diverse, welcoming inclusive school. We work closely with the Inclusion and Diversity Service to provide learning and language support for children with English as a second language. We also provide advice on their educational needs. Each child's needs are catered for by the class teacher and, where necessary, supported by our additional learning support staff.



# Homework & Parental Partnership

In St. Bride's we feel homework should be a rewarding experience for children and should reflect the work in the classroom.



## Purpose of Homework

- To provide children with further opportunities to consolidate, and reinforce skills, strategies, and concepts.
- To help establish self-confidence and self-discipline and encourage the development of independent learning skills.
- To prepare for the child's future education and to establish a pattern of learning beyond the school environment.
- To develop an effective partnership between the school and home in achieving the aims of the school.



## Parental Partnership

Class teachers maintain ongoing close links with parents to ensure a successful Home/School partnership. At the beginning of each academic year, parents are provided with an outline of the curriculum for that year. Parent/Teacher meetings are arranged in Term One (Sept-Dec) to discuss how your child has settled into school and the progress made. Other interviews may be arranged by the teacher or the parent if there are any concerns. All parents receive an annual written report about their child's performance and progress across the academic year in June.

## Parents can also avail of:

- School newsletters detailing up-coming events and achievements
- School website [www.stbridesps.org.uk](http://www.stbridesps.org.uk) to keep up to date with school events and children's work
- Curriculum Newsletters for Years 1-7
- Social Media links: Twitter @StBridesPS1 or Instagram @stbridesps
- Schoolcomms Gateway App

# Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

A dynamic and committed PTA play an important role in fostering close relations between home and school. Members are supportive in attending school functions and in organising fundraising events. They are generous in donating to school-supported charities and in contributing to the funding of school trips, purchase of additional classroom resources, technology, sporting equipment and rewards. We extend our thanks for their tireless efforts and generosity and strongly encourage new parents to join the PTA and become involved in its work.

## School Discipline

St Bride's Primary School adopts a positive approach to discipline, expecting pupils to behave in a responsible manner by showing consideration, courtesy, kindness, and respect for others always.

The school aims to create an atmosphere of 'Love of God and Love of Neighbour.'

We seek the co-operation of parents in promoting high standards of behaviour, attainment, pupil attendance, punctuality, personal appearance, and the wearing of school uniform.

In the unlikely event that the need for pupil suspension or expulsion should arise, we will follow the procedure laid down by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

### Our Five School Rules are:

- We listen carefully and take turns to speak.
- We always try our best.
- We always show respect.
- We walk safely and quietly.
- We play safely and include others.



# Pastoral Care and Safeguarding

The health, safety, and wellbeing of every child- physically, emotionally, academically, socially, and spiritually is central to school life and permeates all areas of the curriculum.

The Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Procedures, alongside our Preventative and PDMU Curriculum at St Bride's aims to foster within the children the values, attitudes, knowledge, and life skills necessary to ensure their future success, health, and happiness.

## We aim:

- to provide a safe, supportive, and positive environment which will foster the growth and development of caring, responsible children
- to create a well-ordered school in which children can learn effectively
- to develop high levels of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-control in our children

Our Designated Teacher (DT) for Child Protection is Miss Otteran Joyce (VP).

Her Deputy Designated Teachers (DDT) are Mrs Mairead Granleese (VP) and Mrs Maureen O'Prey (Senior Teacher).

In the Nursery Unit, the Designated Teacher is Ms Catherine Ward.

The Safeguarding Team are supported by the Principal, Ms Cathy Hunter & Link Safeguarding Governor.





# Visiting Arrangements and Making Contact

## ★ Parents and carers are always welcome at our school.

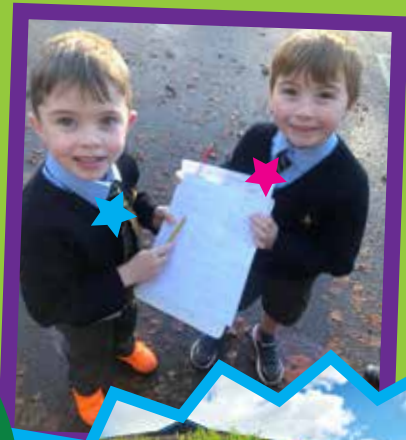
There will be many opportunities to visit and participate in the life of our school throughout your time with us. However, in a complicated and fast-changing world, we must always prioritise the safety of our children. In order to protect you from allegation or suspicion, and to safeguard all of our pupils, all parents and visitors to school are kindly asked to firstly register their visit by signing in with the school secretary at the office.

Parents should never find themselves in the position of being alone with or near to an individual or group of pupils without the accompaniment/supervision of staff or on a recorded, purposeful visit

Parents should not enter and walk through the school building unaccompanied.

★ The same rules apply on our wider school premises. Parents and carers are asked to leave the school grounds once their child's school day has ended to allow other classes and groups of children to avail of our outdoor spaces.

Parents and visitors must never have their mobile telephones or other photographic equipment in the vicinity of our pupils and must never capture or record images of children.



# St. Bride's Nursery Unit



St. Bride's Nursery Unit consists of two large, fully equipped, full-time classrooms, each with a teacher and classroom assistant, coupled with a spacious outdoor learning environment and play area, providing great scope for outdoor large gross motor and physical play opportunities.

Our nursery children are educated from 9am to 1.30pm daily in an environment conducive to promoting the development of their social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth.

Our dedicated nursery team place great emphasis on building upon each individual child's needs and providing 'scaffolded' learning experiences to extend children's knowledge, understanding and skills base.

St. Bride's Nursery Unit recognises the importance of nursery education as a fundamental stage, and places great importance on ensuring a smooth and enjoyable transition for the young child, from home to Nursery, to the primary school and the local and wider community.

St Bride's Nursery Uniform consists of a red polo t-shirt, green branded sweatshirt or cardigan and track bottoms. Whilst nursery education is free, parents are required to cover the cost of children's daily snack and school meal as part of our compulsory Healthy Eating scheme. All diets and allergies are catered for.

# School Uniform



All children attending St. Bride's P.S. are required to wear our school uniform. It must also be worn at school functions and by individuals/groups of children who are representing the school at special events, festivals, etc. Every article of uniform should be clearly marked with the child's name.

GIRLS	BOYS
Grey pinafore/skirt	Grey trousers
Blue blouse	Blue shirt
Navy V-neck pullover/cardigan	Navy V-neck pullover
Navy and gold tie	Navy and gold tie
Navy or grey tights	Black leather shoes
White socks	Black gym shoes/trainers
Black leather shoes	Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
Black gym shoes/trainers	
Girls may wear stud earrings only.	
Girls with long hair should have it tied back.	



PE Uniform (Years 3 – 7)
Navy shorts / track bottoms
White polo shirt
Navy School Branded Hoodie
Navy track suit (optional)



# The School Day

Arrival to school for P1-7 pupils is from 8.40am onwards.

Supervision is available from 8.45am, School Begins at 9am.

Breakfast Club - run by Early Learners - operates on site from 8am-9am, booked and paid directly with Early Learners.

(Nursery children can avail of this service after Hallowe'en once fully settled.)

## SCHOOL DAY TIMINGS:

Nursery Classes	9am – 1.30pm
Years 1 – 3 Classes	9am - 2.00pm
Years 4 – 7 Classes	9am - 3.00pm



## After School Childcare

Is provided by external providers but available on site from 2.00pm-3.00pm/4.00pm & 3.00pm-4.00pm as required.

Email: [info@earlylearnersdaynursery.com](mailto:info@earlylearnersdaynursery.com)

A wide range of **AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES** catering for all interests and talents are also available across our school estate for children between 2pm-3pm (P1-3) and 3pm-4pm (P4-7) daily. *\*Please note there is a cost to attendance at each of these.*



## Lunch Time Arrangements

School meals are served in the dining hall. St Bride's Primary School uses the School Gateway app for all payments and communication to parents.

All school meals are booked, ordered, and paid for using the Gateway App.

Children may bring a packed lunch to school which is eaten in the classrooms. Children are supervised at lunch and at play by ancillary staff and remain on the school site during the lunch break.

No child may leave the school unless he/she has the principal's permission and is collected by a parent or other known adult.

# Welcome To Our Family

**Dear Families,**

No prospectus could truly convey the real atmosphere, warmth and belonging that comes from being a part of St Bride's Primary School.

We are very proud of our children and the relationships we have with all who are associated to us.

Choosing a school for your child is a serious business. It is a commitment to securing the highest possible standards for their future.

Please know that in trusting your child to our care, we will work in close partnership with you at home and with our wider community partners, to give your child the best possible start to their educational career.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our fantastic office staff who will be only too pleased to assist you.

On behalf of the Governors, Staff and Pupils of St Bride's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Belfast - I very much look forward to welcoming you into our school family.

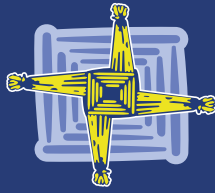
With every best wish for the future,

*C Hunter*

**Ms Cathy Hunter**

Principal





# **St Bride's Primary School & Nursery Unit**

Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast BT9 6FP

Principal: Ms Cathy Hunter  
E: [info@stbridesps.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stbridesps.belfast.ni.sch.uk)  
T: 028 9038 1700

