St. Patrick's Primary School

GENERAL INFORMATION

Including the Complaints Procedure
&
Summary of Policies dealing with Child Protection

Pastoral Care
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Discipline/Positive Behaviour
Anti-Bullying
Code of Conduct
Intimate Care
Drugs
Medicines
e-safety/Use of Internet
Handling Complaints
Use of Images

2026-2027

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Address:	St Patrick's Primary School 10 Ballygalget Road Portaferry Co Down BT22 1NE
Telephone:	028427 71832
Website:	www.stpatrickspsballygalget.co.uk
X:	@stpatricksbg
Email	info@stpatrickpsballygalget.newtownardsni.sch.uk
Principal:	Mrs Angela O'Prey
Chairman of the Board of Governors	Mr Michael Pucci

STAFF OF OUR SCHOOL

The teaching staff of St Patrick's Primary School is employed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

TEACHING STAFF

Mrs Leanne Dunlop/Mrs Angela O'Prey	Reception/Primary 1/Primary 2
Mrs Jane McDermott	Primary 3
Miss Emma Keith	Primary 4/Primary 5
Mrs Niamh Birt/Mrs Gayle Quinn	Primary 6/Primary 7

THE SCHOOL DAY

MORNING SESSION:

Reception Class to Primary 7 - 8.50am – 10.35am

BREAK - 10.35am to 10.45am

MID MORNING SESSION

Primary 1 - Primary 7 - 10.45am to 12.00 noon
Reception children's school day ends at 11.30 am

LUNCH - 12.00 noon to 12.40pm

AFTERNOON SESSION

Primary 1 - 3 - 12.40pm to 1.40pm
Primary 4 - 7 - 12.40pm to 2.40pm

LINKS WITH PARENTS

Our dedicated app is our main way of keeping parents informed about the life of the school and their children's education. The App is an extremely effective way of communicating with parents, distributing letters, newsletters, leaflets, useful links, messages and sharing school information. It also fully supports our aim of becoming eco-friendlier and reducing the amount of paper we use. **Parents are encouraged to download the App through the App Store or Google Play Store onto your smartphone or tablet.**

Seesaw is also used in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to share class information, pupils' work and celebrate success. **Parents are encouraged to sign up to the Seesaw App.**

Our school's 'X' page and website regularly informs the wider school community of the many events that take place throughout the year and celebrate our many successes.

As well as the annual parent/teaching meetings, teachers are actively encouraged to play their part in the 'Open Door' approach of our school. If you need to speak with a teacher to discuss any issue concerning your child, please do not hesitate to arrange a suitable appointment outside of class contact time.

All meetings and discussions with teachers and members of staff are in confidence. **Parents are not permitted to make audio or video recordings at any time.**

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Our Special Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs McDermott.

Additional teacher support will be provided to some children following consultation with class teachers and analysis of all evidence. This support may take the form of withdrawal or team teaching.

Reading Partnership will also be available through our classroom assistants if required.

There may also be some additional teaching support provided to children who have specific difficulties, e.g. Literacy Support Service. This is funded directly by EA, SE Region.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

EARRINGS/JEWELLERY

In the interest of safety, no jewellery other than a small stud earring may be worn by children in school. No jewellery may be worn during PE lessons or other related activities.

BOTTLES AND HOT DRINKS

Drinks should not be brought to school in glass bottles because of the obvious dangers of broken glass. Flasks containing hot drinks should also be avoided as there is a risk of burns. Under no circumstances can any member of staff provide boiling water for food e.g., Pot Noodles etc.

CONCUSSION

If your child suffers a concussion in school or outside school, it is vitally important that you keep us informed so that we are aware of the potential dangers and any restriction that may apply to the activities your child is permitted to do.

The 'Recognise and Remove' leaflet produced by the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is available on the Department of Education's website http://www.deni.gov.uk and provides guidance on the signs to look out for.

ARRIVAL/COLLECTION

Class	Arrival time	Entrance Door	End of Day	Car park to be used at drop off/Collection times
P6/P7 Mrs Birt/Mrs Quinn	8.30am – 8:50am	Main School Door	2.40pm P6/P7 classroom	Top car park
P4/P5 Miss Keith	8.30am – 8:50am	Main School Door	2.40pm Car park at the front of the school	Playground car park at the front of the school
P3 Mrs McDermott	8.30am – 8:50am	Main School Door	1:40pm Car park at the front of the school	Playground car park at the front of the school
Rec/P1/P2 Mrs Dunlop/Mrs O'Prey	8.30am – 8:50am	Main School Door	Rec: 11:30 P1: 12 noon (Sept) P1: 1:40pm (Oct-June) P2: 1:40pm Main Door	Top car park

Please note that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that children gain access to the secure environment of the school building each morning.

At the end of the school day children travelling by school bus will be escorted to the bus by a member of staff. Parents collecting children from school should come to the assigned collection points where their child will be waiting.

To ensure that every child gets home safely we need to know the persons who are permitted by parents to collect their children. We would therefore ask that you complete the appropriate sheet and inform us in writing should there be any changes to routine. **Parents should be reminded that no person under the age of 16 is permitted to collect a child.**

Anyone collecting children or waiting for older pupils to come out should keep young children under supervision at all times and prevent them from running around the playground, up the steps or on the grass banks beside the Primary 6/Primary 7 mobile. Children are also not allowed to climb on the rails outside the Primary 6/Primary 7 mobile.

Our plan is to keep the school grounds a safe place for all users. **For the drop-off points to work it is vital that they are used for this purpose only. Parents should not park in designated areas for any reason.** This should also be made clear to others with whom you have made arrangements for the collection of your child e.g. other family members.

Please be patient and be vigilant when entering and leaving our car parks during both drop-off and collection times as there will be children walking to/from cars.

SECURITY OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING

If a child is being collected during the school day, parents are asked to go to reception and wait for him/her to be escorted to the reception area.

If for any reason a parent or visitor to the school has had access to the school building approved, they will be issued with a visitor's badge which must be worn at all times.

Under no circumstances should any parent enter the school without permission. Access to the school building by parents should only be through the main door.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents are asked to inform the School Secretary should there be any change to emergency contact numbers. It is important to keep mobile numbers current.

MOBILE PHONES/SMART WATCHES

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school. **Smart watches are also not permitted.**

ALLERGIES

We are aware that there are children attending our school who suffer from anaphylaxis (severe nut allergies). This means that the children's health will deteriorate seriously should they eat or even be in the same room as nuts and nuts products. In an effort to reduce the risk of anaphylaxis the school will continue to be 'NUT FREE'. Therefore, I would ask parents to be vigilant with what is provided for their child's lunch.

ATTENDANCE

School starts at 8.50am each day and parents are asked to ensure that their child is in school at this time.

Good attendance and punctuality are crucial to a child's education and parents should make sure that their child has the highest possible school attendance.

Attendance will be recorded for the morning and afternoon session of each day. At the end of the school year attendance levels will be provided based on these figures and children will receive full attendance certificates if they have been present for every morning and afternoon registration. For example, if a child comes to school but is sick and needs to go home before lunchtime then they will be marked present for the morning session but absent due to illness for the afternoon session.

I would ask that, if you feel your child is ill and unfit to complete the full school day, then he/she remains at home to recover. This will also mean that illnesses are not passed on to other children.

I wish to remind you that the reason for a child's absence from school must be provided to the school for recording purposes. Therefore, I would ask parents to inform the class teacher, in writing, as to the reason for your child's absence.

Every effort should be made to ensure that there is a regular and consistent attendance. Permission will not be granted for children to take a holiday during term time.

Please do not ask teachers to give your child work if you do take them on holiday during term time.

Punctuality
It is also very important that your child arrives to school on time for the start of the school day. It gives them a familiar routine, ensures that they do not miss any of their lessons and avoids disruption to other children in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to make every effort to ensure that their child is not late for school.

Should there be an occasion when your child is late, the main entrance of the school should be used. Please wait with your child to ensure they have safely gained access.

HOMEWORK

To ensure that homework is done to a satisfactory standard, and to keep you informed of your child's progress, it is important that homework is supervised.

It is the school policy that a parent/guardian sign their child's completed homework.

SCHOOL MILK AND SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are available at a cost of **£3.10 per day**. **Meals can be booked via the School Money app.**

Parents on benefits may be entitled to free school meals. Applications are available on https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants

Additional funding is available to school based on levels of free school meals. Parents entitled to access free school meals are strongly encouraged to submit an application, even if it is not the intention for their child to have school meals; it will assist our school to access much needed funds.

Reception/Primary 1/Primary 2 children will be offered milk as part of their morning Snack. Snack for Reception/Primary 1/Primary 2 will be available at a cost of £10 per month.

We continue to be a 'healthy eating at break-time' school; to this end, all children are encouraged to eat fruit at break-time. Parents are asked to support this approach.

MONEY

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve efficiency and convenience for families, we have now moved to **School Money** and become a **cashless school**. All payments, including school meals, trips, activities and other school-related charges, will now be made securely online through the School Money system. This change will help streamline administration, reduce the need for cash in school and provide parents with a simple and convenient way to manage payments at any time.

TRANSPORT

Parents may apply to the Education Authority for a school bus pass if their child lives two miles or more from the school, they live along the school bus route, and if St Patrick's is their nearest primary school. Guidance on eligibility and applications are available on:
https://www.eani.org.uk/checkTransport

Should you not reside along the school bus route but meet the other criteria you may apply for financial assistance to the Transport Department.

Parents are asked to stress to their child the importance of sitting properly and travelling safely when on the school bus.

UNIFORM

Core School Uniform

The Reception-Primary 2 uniform is:

- Green polo shirt with school logo
- School jumper with logo
- Navy tracksuit bottoms with the school embroidered logo or plain navy tracksuit bottoms. **In the interests of affordability only unbranded logo free items should be worn.**
- **Plain black trainers or plain navy trainers**

The Primary 3 – Primary 7 uniform is:
On days other than PE days, children are expected to wear the core school uniform.
Required: Branded jumper, branded green polo shirt, grey trousers or skirt, grey or white socks (should a skirt be worn) and black shoes or black trainers suitable for an active school day.

Optional: Summer dress (green and white) and dress shorts (grey).
*** Skirts should be of an appropriate length to ensure that children can sit comfortably.**

PE Uniform

On PE days children are expected to wear PE uniform to school.

Option 1: Playrfit branded PE kit. (See Playrfit website).

Option 2: Non-branded alternative consisting of plain white polo shirt, plain navy shorts or plain navy bottoms. **In the interests of affordability only unbranded logo free items should be worn.**
Pupils wearing either option will be treated equally.
Footwear appropriate for PE should be worn.
Children will not be able to participate in these lessons should the appropriate clothing and footwear not be worn.

Suppliers
Uniform can be purchased from multiple suppliers including Little Treasures or David Crawford School Supplies. Supermarket alternatives are acceptable for unbranded items.
Playrfit PE kit can be purchased from the Playrfit website. Unbranded alternatives can be purchased from the above suppliers or from any supplier.

Earrings/Jewellery
In the interest of safety, no jewellery other than a small stud earring may be worn by children in school. No jewellery may be worn during PE lessons or other related activities.

***To avoid unnecessary distress for children, all items of uniform should be clearly marked for easy identification.**

SACRAMENTS

As a Catholic school, we work in partnership with parents/guardians to prepare our children for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation. It is important that we have a record of your child's baptismal information and would ask that you provide a copy of his/her baptismal certificate on starting school for our records. If your child was baptised in Ballygalget or Portaferry, it is not necessary to bring the certificate to school.

We work hard to create an ethos where children care and support each other. Sacramental celebrations are an important part of our school and children will be asked on occasions to attend to sing as part of the choir. We would ask that parents make every effort for their child to attend these celebrations. If everyone works together then every child will benefit when the time comes for them to receive their various sacraments.

PROVISION OF PUPILS NAMES AND BIRTHDAY INVITES

From time to time a parent may ask for a list of names of the children in their son or daughter's class. Under GDPR we are not permitted to provide this information to parents.

To avoid any child from feeling left out, party invitations should not be brought into school to be distributed.

PASTORAL CARE

A summary for Parents

Mission Statement

St Patrick's Primary School strives to develop the skills, values and self esteem of all children so that they can play a valued and valuable role in society whilst living daily the Catholic faith.

We aim to promote a caring school which values all who are part of it, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in which children feel secure and happy and all staff work together as a team, supportive of one another and sensitive to each other's needs.

At St Patrick's Primary School, we have a responsibility for the care, welfare, safety, security and learning environment of all our pupils. The school's ethos provides the basis for this policy. The promotion of our agreed values and beliefs means a pupil centred approach.

The pastoral care policy of St. Patrick's includes all pupils, parents and staff involved in the life of the school.

Pastoral Care is composed of different policies, programmes and procedures which encourage each individual child to develop to their full potential.

These Policies include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Discipline/Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Code of Conduct
- Special Educational Needs
- Intimate Care
- Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (PD & MU)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- ICT and Online Safety Policy
- Administration of Medication
- Drugs
- Security
- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Attendance
- Confidentiality
- Data Protection
- Freedom of Information

Aims

Through our pastoral care policy we aim:

- To create and maintain an atmosphere where pupils feel they are well known, safe, valued, respected and happy
- To promote the aims of our school
- To implement positive behaviour policy
- To maintain the highest standards of teaching and learning
- To respond in a sympathetic way to the concerns, fears and worries of our pupils
- To build an atmosphere of trust
- To make children aware of potential dangers through the teaching of Health Education and other subjects e.g. road and water safety - care in the sun
- To develop a well-educated child, interested in learning and with a keen sense of personal worth.
- To develop a child who is confident in relationships with peers, parents, teachers and other adults.
- To develop a child with a responsible attitude towards self and others.
- To develop a child with a fundamental understanding of social skills necessary for adult life.

Through our positive relationships in school with parents and the wider community, we aim to foster self-respect, self-discipline, tolerance, equality and fairness to ensure that each individual feels valued and cared for at all times.

Through the daily experiences, in addition to curriculum activities, all staff aim to communicate positive values and beliefs. These values include for example, sharing, taking your turn, listening, being grateful, good manners, honesty, forgiveness, reconciliation and healing.

To promote our children's positive self-esteem, we will encourage our children to think positively about themselves and to accept their own uniqueness. Our school will provide opportunities for the children to feel valued and important by creating an awareness of the positive contribution they can make towards school and the community.

Through our pastoral care policy we aim to develop our children's responsibility for his/her safety in a variety of situations within and outside the school environment. We will develop this through the curriculum and highlight in appropriate policies, i.e. Child Protection, Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Drugs, First Aid, Road Safety and e-Safety.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

A summary for Parents

In St. Patrick's Primary School, the care, welfare and safety of the children in our care is paramount. We recognise that we have pastoral responsibility towards our pupils who have a fundamental right to be protected from harm i.e. all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved.

The designated teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection is Mrs McDermott and Mrs O'Prey is the Deputy Designated Teacher. The Designated person for Child Protection on the Board of Governors is Mrs Eleanor Coulter.

In St. Patrick's Primary School:

- **We will alert staff to the signs of possible abuse.**
- **When child abuse is suspected, it is the responsibility of the member of staff who is aware of the circumstances or suspected circumstances, to notify the designated teacher.**
- **The designated teacher will ensure that the appropriate reporting and recording procedures are set in motion as quickly as possible.**
- **Any clarification should be done carefully and sensitively – it is not the responsibility of the staff to undertake any investigations or to make extensive enquiries of family or carers.**
- **Ancillary staff should report any suspicions or concerns to the designated teacher.**
- **Parents will be notified about procedures on a regular basis.**
- **Children will be advised what to do in school if they have any concerns about such matters.**
- **At all times we will strive to protect children, while respecting the rights of parents, families, carers and members of staff.**

IDENTIFYING ABUSE

All school staff, teaching and non- teaching, are aware of their legal responsibility to inform the designated teacher of any suspicion that they may have regarding abuse of a child. The five categories of abuse are: physical, neglect, emotional, sexual and exploitation.

Domestic Violence

There will be automatic referral on Child Protection grounds to Social Services if our school becomes aware of domestic violence taking place in the home of any child.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IF A COMPLAINT IS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF.

If a complaint is made about possible abuse against a member of staff, the person to whom it was made should refer it directly to the Principal.

The Principal may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving information or from others who may have relevant information.

If a complaint has definitely been made, the principal will:

- Inform the designated teacher who will initiate the record of complaint.
- Consult CCMS to form an initial assessment as to whether or not there is sufficient substance in the allegation to warrant further action.
- Consult with the chairperson of the Board of Governors and decide on one of the following:

(a) The allegation is apparently without substance and no further action is necessary.
(b) The immediate referral to Social Services or the Police is warranted.
(c) The allegation concerns inappropriate behaviour, which needs to be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

Complaint against the Principal

Where a member of staff receives a complaint concerning the Principal, the above procedures will be followed. The role set out for the Principal will be exercised by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. The Employing Authority will be consulted immediately in such a case.

Every allegation of misconduct will be treated seriously and the above procedures followed.

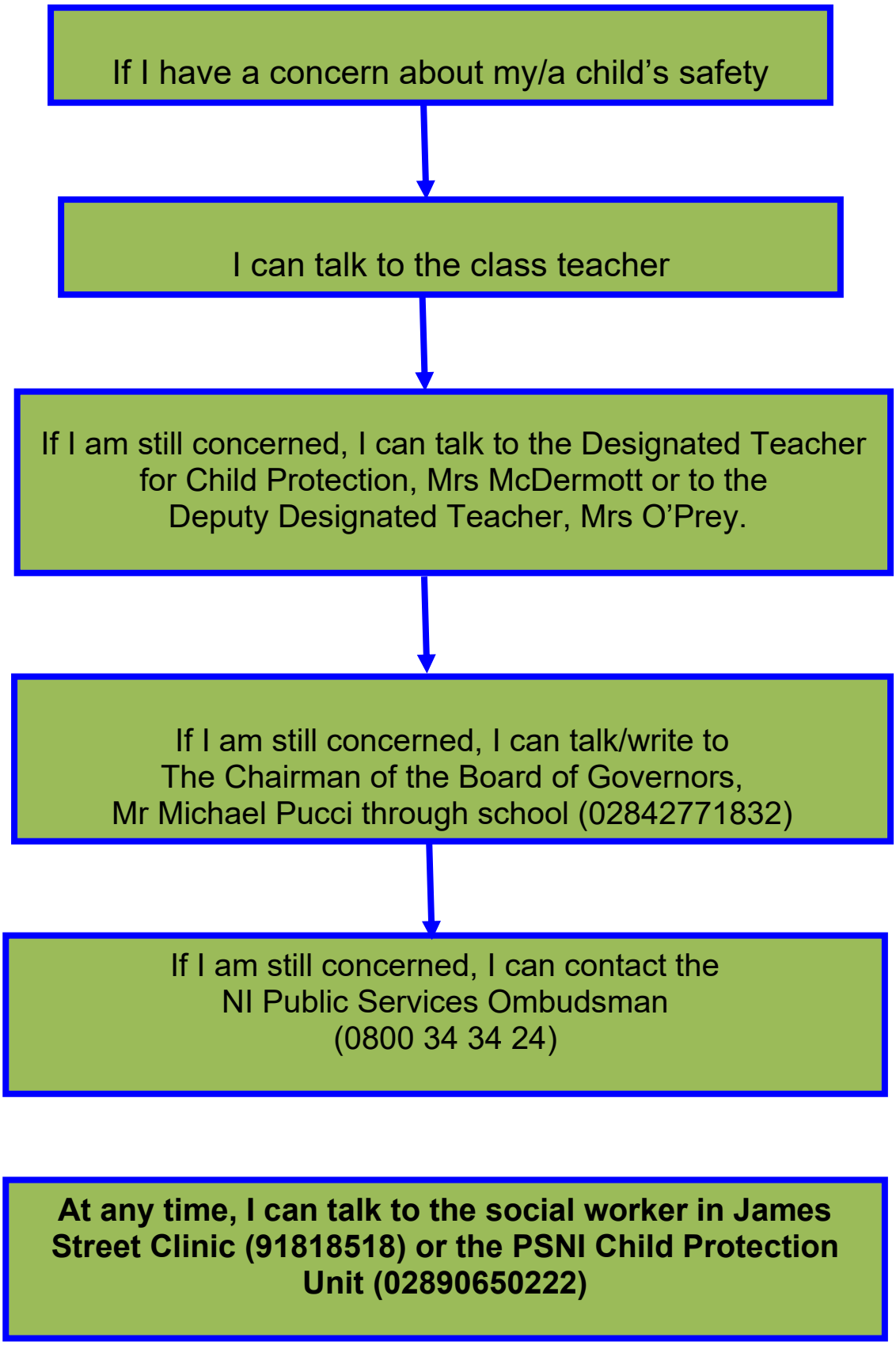
Voluntary action within the school

All parents coming into the school to help out in a voluntary capacity will be required to complete an application form, consenting to a criminal records check to be carried out.

Access NI will be forwarded completed forms and will request criminal record checks on our behalf.

Information on how to raise a concern about possible child abuse

If you wish to make known to staff any concerns you may have concerning the safety of your (or another) child you should do the following:



POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

A summary for Parents

Our school is a community of children, governors, teachers, classroom assistants, mealtime assistants, parents and other adults. A community functions best if there is a mutual respect between all members and an agreed code of conduct which provides the background against which all activities take place. We aim to provide a happy, safe environment in which our pupils will thrive and make good progress academically, creatively, physically, socially and morally.

We focus on recognising and rewarding those pupils who behave well. Although sanctions will be used when necessary, our policy will concentrate on achieving the right framework for discipline and the right ethos in the school so that sanctions become increasingly unnecessary.

We have a duty therefore to promote good behaviour and have a disciplined, caring and happy environment conducive to learning.

Children, staff, parents and governors must understand and be fully aware of the defined codes of behaviour (rules), sanctions and rewards structure.
Parents should have the opportunity to voice any concerns to staff.

Good discipline is essential for effective learning to take place. In order that this goal is achieved we try to implement the following strategies:

1. Ensure that pupils of different abilities are given appropriate tasks where they can achieve success.
2. Make lessons enjoyable and challenging where children feel able to concentrate.
3. Use positive rather than negative language to communicate expectations and feedback to pupils.
4. Give regular praise and encouragement to pupils.
5. Praise disruptive children when their behaviour becomes acceptable.
6. Encourage pupils to take pride in their work.
7. Provide a range of varied 'Circle Time' activities.
8. Have clear expectations for behaviour and ensure that these are clearly communicated to the children.
9. Develop and establish clear routines in the classroom. Have a behaviour management plan with clear rewards and consequences.
10. Don't engage in confrontation with a child. Simply repeat the directions. Use a phrase such as 'I need you to …….'
11. Keep the tone of voice assertive and non-aggressive.

This policy is based on consensus, incorporating an agreed rewards and sanctions regime, which is understood, owned and consistently applied throughout the school by everyone acting in a supervisory role. All staff are aware of the need to create a climate in which positive behaviour is encouraged and commended, and in which the pupils feel secure and equally valued.

Rights and Responsibilities

We aim to promote a caring school which values all who are part of it, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in which children feel secure and happy and all staff work together as a team, supportive of one another and sensitive to each other's needs.

*These rights fully reflect Article 13, 19, 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 and 36 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child***.**

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Pupils have the right to: • Be educated in a safe and stimulating environment. • Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect. • Work and play within clearly defined and fairly administered codes of conduct. • Be consulted about matters that affect them, have their views listened to, and, as far as possible, acted upon.	**To enjoy these rights pupils must:** • Respect the rights of others and therefore not engage in bullying. • Ensure they do not keep other pupils from being taught or from learning. • Cooperate with teachers, assistants and with their peers, showing respect at all times. • Abide by the school rules on discipline and acceptable behaviour. • Accept ownership for their behaviour and learning.
Parents have the right to: • Have their children educated to the best possible standard. • Have reasonable access to the school, and have their enquiries and concerns dealt with sympathetically and efficiently • Be informed of their child's progress. • Be informed about school rules and procedures • A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for their children. • Be informed promptly if their child is ill or has an accident, or if the school has concerns about the child. • Have their children protected while in the school environment. • Be treated with courtesy and respect.	**To enjoy these rights parents must:** • Ensure their child attends school regularly, is equipped with the right books and equipment and support the school to the best of their ability. • Be aware of school rules and adhere to them at all times. • Attend planned meetings with teachers. • Provide the school with all background information about the child, including telling the school about any concerns they have about their child or any significant changes in their child's medical needs or home circumstances. • Ensure children are well enough to attend school. • Be committed to the education of their children. • Show respect to all within the school environment.
Staff have the right to: • Enjoy a stress-free and productive working environment. • Work in an environment where common courtesies and social conventions are respected. • Express their views and contribute to policies, which they are required to reflect in their work.	**To enjoy these rights staff must:** • Seek to create a positive stress-free learning environment for their pupils in which pupils get rewarded for positive behaviour and achievement. • Behave in a professional manner at all times. • Show interest and enthusiasm for the work in hand and in their pupils' learning • Seek advice and/or help from colleague.

• Support and advice from senior colleagues and external bodies. • Adequate and appropriate resources and accommodation. • Be treated with respect by all with whom they come into contact e.g. pupils, parents, visitors	• Identify and seek to meet the needs of their pupils and parents. • Expect high standards and acknowledge effort and achievement in all areas of work. • Treat pupils, parents and colleagues with respect.

RULES

Rules are intended to enhance the learning and teaching in all classes. If pupils follow the rules they will receive a range of rewards.

REWARDS

In St. Patrick's we apply a system of rewards, which are intended to be fair and effective for all our pupils. These rewards are intended to contribute to the ethos of the school and involve all teaching and non-teaching staff. They are aimed at promoting and reinforcing good behaviour and promoting self- esteem. They encourage each pupil to take responsibility for his/her actions and to have their efforts recognised and rewarded.

Praise can be given in many ways:

1. An encouraging smile or handshake.
2. Words of praise from staff to pupil and older pupil to younger pupil.
3. A written comment on pupils' workbooks.
4. Acknowledgement of good behaviour in notes sent home to parents.
5. Use of reports to comment favourably.
6. A visit to a senior member of staff or principal for commendation and a small material award may be given e.g. pencil/book mark.
7. A public word of praise in front of a class by class teacher.
8. Public acknowledgement by principal at an assembly.
9. 'Head teacher's award' presented at assembly.
10. A public acknowledgement by principal when meeting with parents.
11. Extra play at break or lunchtime.
12. 'Certificates' given out once a week. Photographs of Workers of the Week are displayed on the school website/X.
13. Good work display shared with the rest of the class.
14. Pom Poms in a Jar (P3-P7).

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are intended to encourage appropriate and acceptable behaviour to our pupils and as such we see the need for them to be both immediate and appropriate. They will be applied consistently and fairly to all pupils, ensuring the self-esteem of the pupil is kept intact. Sanctions will, as necessary, take into account the age and degree of maturity of the pupil, any special needs he/she may have and any other relevant information concerning the pupil.

The following sanctions will be used in St. Patrick's:

1. Rule reminder.
2. Verbal warning
3. Rearranging seating, move places.
4. Related sanctions. (Could include being sent to another class teacher or having supervised withdrawal during part of the lunch break playtime)

By this stage there will have been continual discussions with the child regarding his/her behaviour.

5. Removal of normal privileges.
6. Discussion with child regarding behaviour- cause of the problem etc, targets set to encourage positive behaviour.
7. Class booklet kept by teacher and shown to parent at a later stage if there is no improvement in the behaviour.
8. Concerns conveyed to Principal.
9. Communications set up between home and school.
10. IEP is drawn up and child is placed on Special Needs Register and parents informed of targets.
11. Referral to Educational Psychologist and advice sought from EA Behavioural Support Team/other external agencies.
12. Board of Governors informed.
13. Invoke suspension
14. Expulsion.

During break and lunch time:

1. Time out for unacceptable behaviour.
2. If unacceptable behaviour is serious or persistent the pupil will have loss of playtime (during the lunch break (10 minutes)) and will have supervised withdrawal in school premises. The child will be given suitable activities.

<u>Persistent inappropriate behaviour</u>

Should any child continually choose not to follow the rules, not respond to the consequences and display continuous inappropriate behaviour the following steps will be taken.

- Letter to parent inviting them to meet with the Principal and class teacher.
- Use of a behaviour book – specific behaviour targets will be agreed with parent, class teacher and the principal. Parents will be regularly kept informed of progress.
- Should it be felt that the child has behavioural problems which would benefit from external support an IEP will be drawn up, the child will be placed on Special Needs Register and parents informed of targets. This may result in referral to EA, Educational Psychologist and advice sought from the EA Behaviour Support Team.
- The Principal may withdraw the child's privileges such as membership of clubs, the right to go on certain visits, exclusion from school teams etc.

Behaviour during After School Activities

All children must be appropriately dressed/equipped for the activity they are involved in. Children are expected to follow the same rules with coaches as with the rest of the staff.

Where behaviour falls below an acceptable standard, the following sanctions will apply:

1. Warning from coach/facilitator.
2. Time out from after school activity (10 minutes).
3. Referral to Principal. If a child is referred to the Principal, they will be asked to miss the following week's after school activity.
4. If there is a second occurrence, the child will miss the rest of the after school activity for that term.

Involvement in more serious incidents

In the case of serious misbehaviour a child will lose the right to proceed through the hierarchy of consequences and will be removed from the classroom situation and sent straight to the Principal. In such cases the Principal should be sent for. The decision will be taken when a child's behaviour:

- Is not compatible with the provision for the efficient education of other children with whom the child in question is being educated.
- Involves serious, actual or threatened violence against another pupil or member of staff.
- Puts himself/herself, other pupils, members of staff or the wider community at risk of harm or injury.

In such cases the parents will be informed and the child will be sent home with the parents.

In the unlikely event of no satisfactory resolution of the problem or a total lack of co-operation from the parents the school will exercise the right to suspend a pupil for a definite period under the scheme prepared by the C.C.M.S. It is envisaged that the extreme action of permanent exclusion (expulsion) of a child from the school would rarely be necessary but this power does reside with the Board of Governors under the C.C.M.S. Scheme.

Staff will always be aware that behaviour can be influenced by factors outside school and will be sensitive to this when dealing with individual children.

Clearly, for our positive behaviour policy to be successful it must be fully accepted and understood by parents and children and consistently and fairly applied by the teachers. It must also be seen as reasonable, sensitive and effective and must be based upon mutual respect for the needs and aspirations of all in the school.

The full support of parents and the close co-operation between parents and the teachers is vital in the whole process. We trust that parents will co-operate with us for the benefit of all our children.

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

A summary for Parents

In St Patrick's, we believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment.

We believe in a society where bullying of any kind to any member of the school community is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying.

We believe that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Introduction

Bullying affects

- The safety and happiness of the pupil.
- Pupil's academic achievement.
- Our reputation as a caring school.

If pupils observe bullying going unchallenged they may learn that it is a quick and easy way of getting what they want. Those pupils being bullied may feel that the school has condoned unacceptable behaviour and may feel let down by adults in authority.

Consequently, all our staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the child experiencing the bullying behaviour and to support the child displaying bullying behaviour.

Where individuals or groups bully different people, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and treated as such.

Our school will therefore strive to reduce bullying to a minimum and be able to deal with any instances of bullying

- Effectively
- Consistently
- Positively

To do this all staff, teaching and non-teaching will agree on what bullying is, and follow the same procedures when bullying takes place and will also take an active role in the prevention of bullying.

Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

In considering the above legislation and guidance, the Governors will:

- Secure a preventative, responsive and anti-bullying ethos, in association with other relevant policies, to ensure a safe, inclusive, happy, organised and engaging school environment.
- Have overall responsibility for ensuring the Anti-Bullying Policy is in place and updated every four years.
- Keep a 'Record of Incidents' of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil/s at the school.
- Support the principal in following the guidelines and practices agreed in the policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies promoted in the policy.
- Support the principal in following the guidelines and practices agreed in the policy.
- Consult with the school community on the general principles and practices reflected in the policy.

To ensure the above are carried out effectively the Board of Governors will ensure:

- Anti-bullying will be a standing item on the termly meetings.
  Consideration will be taken of the views/feedback of the school community in relation to anti bullying to inform and guide whole school development planning with regards to targets, success criteria and outcomes.

The Principal will:

- Ensure this policy and associated policies are implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Facilitate any necessary staff development in relation to behaviour management and anti-bullying.

Bullying Behaviour Defined

"Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016" - Definition of "bullying":

(1) In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—
(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,
(b) any other act, or
(c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.
(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF):
'Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm, or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.'

In St. Patrick's we recognise that there is a continuum of inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours which can impact on everyone's right to be safe and happy. These inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours **(which are not considered as bullying)** will be dealt with in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

However, on occasions we will be challenged to differentiate between inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours and those which do constitute bullying. Bullying is a behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

We will consider if the inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours **BECOME BULLYING BEHAVIOURS** when the information gathered from investigation clearly demonstrates that the inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours meet the criteria below:

- intentional
- targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils
- repeated*
- causing physical or emotional harm
- omission

*While bullying is usually a repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that we will consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, we shall consider the following criteria:

- severity and significance of the incident
- evidence of pre-meditation
- impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
- impact of the incidents on wider school community
- previous relationships between those involved
- any previous incidents involving the individuals

The following inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:

- ***Verbal or written acts***
  - *saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others*
  - *making fun of others*
  - *calling another pupil mean and hurtful names*
  - *telling lies or spread false rumours about others*
  - *try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s*
- ***Physical acts***
  - *Hitting*
  - *kicking*
  - *pushing*
  - *shoving*
  - *material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions*

- ***Omission (Exclusion)***
  - *Leaving someone out of a game*
  - *Refusing to include someone in group work*
- ***Electronic Acts***
  - *Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above*
  - *Impersonating someone online to cause hurt*
  - *Sharing images (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

This is not an exhaustive list and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Definition of emotional and physical harm which are set out in the DE Guidance.

In determining 'harm' we define:

- Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.
- Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Motivations

The various motivations behind bullying include but are not limited to:

- Age
- Appearance
- Breakdown in peer relationships
- Community background
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion
- Disability / SEN
- Ability
- Looked After Child status
- Young Carer status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, in St Patrick's we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'. Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

- **A child displaying bullying behaviours**
- **A child experiencing bullying behaviours**

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

Preventative Measures

In St Patrick's preventative measures are in place to prevent bullying among pupils. Examples of these are listed in the full anti-bullying policy.

The **'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016'** gives the school the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. As a result, we will continue to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This may include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use and e-Safety Policy).

Responsibilities

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.
Everyone has the responsibility to work together.
Teaching staff will:

- Foster in our pupils, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect in our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes so that every pupil learns about the hurt it causes to both the child who experiences bullying behaviour and to the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.
- Continually reinforce the importance of telling a trusted member of staff about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who report that they have experienced bullying behaviour, take what they say seriously and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken.

- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Follow up any concern by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully on the action that has been taken.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to a member of the Safeguarding Team who will record and take appropriate action.
- Fully engage in activities and competitions organised during Anti-Bullying Week.
- Use circle time, PDMU lessons, RE lessons, school assemblies etc. to promote opportunities to discuss the subject.

Responsibilities of our Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Tell an adult if they are experiencing bullying behaviour.
- Refrain from becoming involved in any form of bullying.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying.
- Intervene to protect any pupil who is experiencing bullying behaviour by reporting the incident to an adult.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

Responsibilities of our Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their child/ren which might be evidence of bullying
- Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if their child/ren is/are not involved
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Advising their child/ren to report any bullying any bullying to Mrs O'Prey, Principal, Mrs McDermott Designated Teacher for Child Protection or to the class teacher, and to explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- Co-operating with the school, if their child/ren is/are accused of displaying bullying behaviour, trying to ascertain the truth.
- Being respectful of staff in any communications.
- Supporting the school in implementing plans to support the child displaying bullying behaviours or the child experiencing bullying behaviours
- Not approaching another child about a behaviour matter or an incident of suspected bullying. All concerns must be brought directly to school staff in line with school policy.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Parents should be aware that the following are possible signs of bullying. This may be where a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Becomes withdrawn
- Regularly has books or clothes destroyed
- Stops eating
- Cries easily
- Becomes disruptive or aggressive
- Has possessions go 'missing'
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'

Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

In St Patrick's Primary School, through our pastoral/preventative work, we continually encourage pupils to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. We also reinforce that ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing the behaviour. Through our preventative work the key message focuses on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'.

Ways of reporting a bullying concern may involve:

- Verbally - talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
- By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents/Carers should raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Also, in St Patrick's Primary School we stress the need for parents/carers to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

The processes for reporting a bullying concern are:

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- Where the parent/carer is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal.
- Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

In St Patrick's, while the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school will be open to receiving such reports from others not directly involved with the school.

The policy should also state that all reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified. In St Patrick's Primary School, staff are expected to respond to bullying concerns promptly and effectively therefore the processes outlined will ensure that when a bullying concern has been reported, everyone involved in the management of the incident, knows what the procedures are and will implement then immediately.

Using the *'NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour'* resource, the member of staff responsible shall…

- Gather information, clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS) for previous incidents and identify behavioural patterns
- Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour and on this basis determine whether bullying behaviour has taken place.
- Keep a record of the information gathered

If, on the basis of the information gathered the criteria for bullying behaviour has not been met the inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with under the school's 'Positive Behaviour Policy'.

If on the basis of the information gathered the criteria for bullying behaviour has been met the following processes will be followed:

- Identify any themes or motivating factors
- Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- Identify intervention level – level 1-4
- Select and implement appropriate interventions (level 1-4) for the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. These pupils will be actively involved in identifying and agreeing strategies and expected outcomes and in assessing their ongoing progress.
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- Review outcome of interventions

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions recorded on the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

Parents/carers should understand that in St Patrick's information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Recording

The legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, is for schools to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

St Patrick's Primary school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
- the motivation for the behaviour
- how each incident was addressed by the school
- the outcome of the interventions employed.

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.
All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.
Records of the bullying and the follow-ups will be kept by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before the June 2024.

Links to Other Policies

In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Acceptable Use of Internet/E-safety Policy
- Educational Visits
- Complaints Policy
- Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers, Visitors

We want to build good relationships within the whole of our school community – that includes parents, staff and pupils. The key to a happy school is one where everyone feels respected and valued. To this end we have an agreed Code of Conduct for parents, carers and visitors.

- Follow the school procedures for visitors;
- Treat school staff with courtesy and respect at all times, supporting them in the things they do to help children learn;
- Set a good example by behaving appropriately and not using inappropriate language;
- Ask the school about their view on incidents so that you can determine if it is the same as your child's view before taking things further;
- Ensure that your child knows how to behave in school and towards others and support our Positive Behaviour Policies and Procedures;
- Ask the school for help if you need more information about something or do not understand something the school is doing;
- Follow the Complaints Policy if you have an issue or concern.

In order to have a peaceful and happy school environment – parents, carers and visitors should not:

- Disrupt classes or any area of the school;
- Question decisions made by the school in front of the children;
- Use loud or rude language; swear or show temper;
- Threaten, hit or push staff, other parents or carers;
- Deliberately damage or destroy school property;
- Criticise school staff, pupil or other parents and carers – on school premises or on social media sites;
- Send abusive or threatening emails or make abusive or threatening phone calls to the school;
- Physically chastise your child on school premises;
- Go to another child and ask them or tell them off for something that has happened to your child;
- Smoke or consume alcohol at school events or on school premises;
- Spit on school premises or discard chewing gum on school premises;
- Enter the enclosed playground areas whilst children are playing;
- Park in the bus drop-off point.

INTIMATE CARE - TOILETING POLICY

A summary for Parents

As part of our Child Protection Procedures in St. Patrick's Primary School, Foundation Stage and Reception classes exercise good practice in the intimate care/toileting of children. At St. Patrick's, we are fully committed to the following fundamental principles upon which the policy is based:

- Every child has the right to be safe
- Every child has the right to personal privacy
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

All staff will respect your child's privacy at all times and will encourage independence and good hygiene.

All staff will be instructed and trained on the implementation of this policy.

In the event of your child being sick or his/her clothes becoming accidentally wet or soiled, he/she will be assisted by a member of staff should he/she need help.

If at all possible, another member of staff will be present.

You will be provided with an accident slip specifying the reason why your child has been changed and by whom.

If your child is distressed and does not want a member of staff to change him/her, we will try to contact you as soon as possible.

The Foundation Stage has a small selection of spare clothing, which will be used in the event of an accident and we ask that you return these promptly.

However, as most children feel more comfortable in their own clothes, you may prefer to leave a set of labelled clothing in a bag on your child's hanger.

Please tell us if your child has a diagnosed urinary or digestive condition.

DRUGS POLICY

A summary for Parents

In St. Patrick's we believe that the misuse of drugs endangers not only our pupils but also affects the wider community in which we live. It is the school's responsibility to ensure the child's health and safety while in our care and we strive to promote their personal and social well being. Drugs misuse undermines this and hinders the development of our pupils. This policy forms an integral part of our existing health education and pastoral care policies and complements these policies.

Rationale

The school wishes to promote the development of the `whole person' which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental health; by equipping pupils with the knowledge skills. attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood.

The school's drugs education programme is grounded in Personal Development and the enhancement of protective factors.

AIMS

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health.
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
- To build pupils' self esteem.
- To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation.
- To inform pupils of the effects of drug abuse, and the risks involved. To help pupils to understand how they can influence their peers.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals

DRUGS EDUCATION IN CONTEXT

"The purpose of a Drugs Education Programme is to provide opportunities for young people to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills which enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances on themselves and others. It enables them to make informed and responsible decisions about the use of such substances within the context of a healthy lifestyle" (DENI Misuse of Drugs- 1996)

St. Patrick`s Primary School ensures that staff are regularly updated with changes in the curriculum and changes to the policy, which have an effect on their delivery of the curriculum. Where possible staff receive in-service training on drug issues.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs will work in conjunction with the PDMU Co-ordinator to ensure that the appropriate themes are covered under Personal Development for each year group. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to include drugs education in other subject areas if it forms part of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, and to spend an adequate amount of time delivering drugs education.

THE RANGE OF SUBSTANCES

"A drug is any substance, which when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels or thinks", e.g. Alcohol and tobacco, over the counter medicines, Prescribed drugs (antibiotics and tranquillizers), Volatile substances (glues and aerosols) and Illegal drugs (cannabis and ecstasy)

PRODEDURES FOR HANDLING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

A suspected drug related incident is described as,

- Finding a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia on or close to the school premises
- Pupil suspected of having taken drugs/alcohol on school premises
- Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance
- Pupil in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on the school premises
- A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance .

When an incident occurs the staff will:

- Make the situation safe
- Send for support Administer first aid if necessary
- If an illegal drug is found it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police
- Report the incident

.

Staff are not permitted to search pupils` clothing or possessions. However, it is acceptable to ask pupils to empty their pockets and schoolbags. Staff may search school property such as desks.

When an incident is suspected the following steps will be taken:

- Incident reported to the designated teacher.
- Incident then reported to the Principal.
- Police contacted.
- Parents contacted and made aware of the incident.
- Incident recorded by member of staff and the designated teacher.
- Record of Action form filled out. – to EA/CCMS designated officers for Drug Education -and a copy will be retained for the school's confidential file. The Board of Governors will also be informed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

When a pupil discloses to a teacher that he/she is taking drugs the teacher should make it clear that he/she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. However, the teacher may advise the pupil of other sources of confidential information or advice.

The spirit of confidentiality is of primary importance to those who work professionally with young people. However, the legal requirements of drugs legislation will mean that in certain circumstances there will be a change in the convention of confidentiality. The Children's Order (N.I. 1995) makes it clear that the welfare of the young person is paramount and therefore confidentiality must be included.

DRUGS EDUCATION IS A WHOLE STAFF ISSUE.

In St. Patrick's the staff are regularly updated on changes in the curriculum and changes to policy, which have an effect on the delivery of the curriculum. Where possible, staff will receive in service training on drugs issues. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to include drug education in other subject areas if it forms part of the N.I. Curriculum and to spend an adequate amount of time delivering drugs education.

The school endeavours to work closely with the local community to help reduce the number of drug related incidents.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALCOHOL MISUSE

Pupils are not permitted to bring alcohol onto the premises. Anyone breaking this rule will be referred to the principal directly.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING TOBACCO MISUSE

The school is a restricted environment with no one being permitted to smoke on the school premises. Adults breaking this rule will be advised by other members of staff. Pupils breaking this rule will be referred to the principal directly.

A copy of our Drugs Policy is available on request.

POLICY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

A summary for Parents

From time to time, parents request that the school should dispense medicines, which need to be administered at regular intervals to children.

These requests fall into two categories:

- Children who require emergency medication on a long-term basis because of the chronic nature of their illness (e.g. acute asthma, anaphylaxis and epilepsy.) These drugs may be lifesaving.
- Children who are suffering from minor ailments (coughs, colds etc,)

The Board of Governors and staff of St Patrick's Primary School wish to ensure that pupils with medication needs receive appropriate care and support at school. The Principal will accept responsibility, in principle, for members of the school staff giving or supervising pupils taking prescribed medication during the school day **where those members of staff have volunteered to do so.**

Please note that parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious. Parents should try where possible to administer medicine to their children at home rather than sending medicine into school. For casual ailments it is often possible for doses of medication to be given outside school hours. Please note that staff are not required to administer medicine as part of their contracts and any involvement would be purely on a voluntary basis.

- Parents are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regarding the pupil's condition and medication.

- Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent.

- Staff will not give a non-prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents.

- School staff will not dispose of medicines. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent at the end of each term. Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment should be collected by the parent for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.

- For each pupil with long term or complex medication needs, the Principal or Designated Person, will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals.

- All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

A copy of the complete school policy is available upon request.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET

An Acceptable Use of the Internet
There is the need to provide pupils with as safe an Internet environment as possible and a need to teach them to be aware of and respond responsibly to the risks.

This policy outlines our purpose in providing e-mail facilities and access to the Internet and explains how St Patrick's is seeking to avoid the potential problems that unrestricted internet access could give rise to.

It is essential that teachers, parents, Board of Governors and pupils are all aware of Internet safety – eSafety.

A copy of our e-safety/Internet Access Policy is available on request or on our school website.

USE OF CHILDREN'S PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES

In line with Child Protection policy, it is important that parents' permission is sought with regard to the use of children's photographs/images in connection with the school.

Children's photographs/images have been used in the past, in a number of ways;

- **School trips, sports events or special occasions e.g. sacraments. Many of these photographs are used in school publications and displayed within the school.**
- **Local newspaper publications, e.g. a photograph of children making a charity presentation or at a special occasion. Children's names usually accompany photographs in newspapers.**
- **Facebook pages – Our Parish Facebook or Visiting Organisations' Facebook pages, e.g. Ten Foundations**
- **At school productions e.g. Christmas concerts.**
- **On school website/X/School App/SeeSaw**

Schools need to respect children's and parents' rights of privacy and be aware of potential child protection issues. Parents permission is always sought for their child's photograph/image to be used in the above ways.

General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Photographs and video images of pupils and staff are classed as personal data under the terms of GDPR 2018. Therefore, using such images for school publicity purposes requires the consent of either the individual concerned or in the case of pupils, their legal guardians. If you require clarification on any of the above issues, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

If children or parents have any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography, they should report them to the Principal who would report them in the same manner as any other child protection concern.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

St Patrick's Primary School are fully inclusive communities where we work together to nurture positive attitudes and respectful behaviour in all our pupils. We recognise the vital importance of our pastoral role in supporting the wellbeing of every child, and through our Mission Statement and ethos, we encourage each pupil to achieve their personal best. The needs and best interests of our pupils and their families are at the heart of everything we do.

As part of this commitment, we take all complaints seriously and strive to work in partnership with parents to address any concerns in a professional, thoughtful and sensitive manner. We encourage anyone with a worry or concern to speak to us at the earliest opportunity, as early communication helps prevent issues from escalating and allows for timely, satisfactory resolutions.

We are committed to working together to restore and repair relationships when difficulties arise, and we ask parents and carers to support staff in helping children achieve this. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that pupils learn from challenges and continue to grow socially and emotionally.

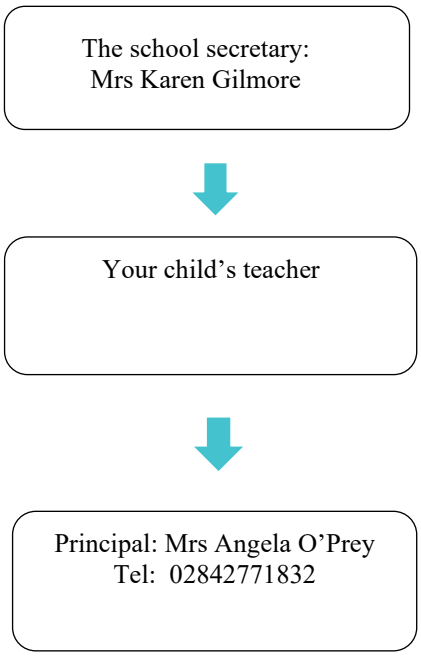
Many matters can be resolved simply by speaking with the relevant member of staff. Open communication and regular engagement between the school, parents/carers and our wider stakeholders are essential to nurturing strong, positive relationships across the whole school community.

We welcome communication with our staff. Parents / carers can do this by contacting staff **the main office in the school where the school secretary will direct your call to the relevant member of staff. Concerns should not be raised via Seesaw.**

We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

A copy of this Procedure is available on the school's App or is available from the school on request. If you wish to make a complaint, please follow the **School Complaints Procedure** which follows.

1.1. Communication Chart



If you wish to make a complaint, please follow the School Complaints Procedure attached.

2. Scope of the Complaints Procedure

A complaint is described as an expression of dissatisfaction with our work.

2.1 Complaints with Established Procedures

Our school Complaints Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking complaints seriously at the earliest possible stage, it is hoped that they can be resolved quickly and effectively.

Some examples of complaints dealt with:

- Not following school policy
- Communication delays/lack of communication
- Difficulties in staff/pupil relationships

This procedure should not be used for complaints with separate established procedures, however if your complaint relates to the school's failure to correctly administer any of these procedures, then you may complain by means of this procedure.

Some examples of statutory procedures and appeal mechanisms, which are not part of the schools complaints procedure, are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. The principal/ chair of governors will advise on the appropriate procedure to use when a complaint is raised.

Exceptions
• Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN) • School Development Proposals • Child Protection / Safeguarding

2.2 Anonymous Complaints

The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the chairperson of the board of governors to be of a very serious nature. The decision of dealing with such complaints will be at the discretion of the chairperson of the board of governors.

3. Aims of the Complaints Procedure

3.1. When dealing with Complaints

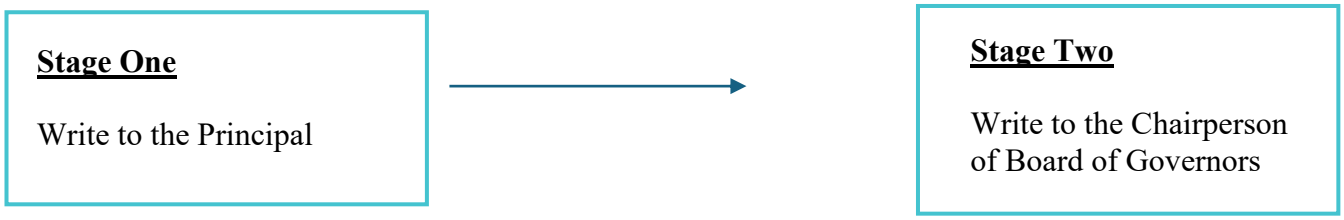
Our school aims to:

- Encourage resolution as quickly as possible;
- Provide timely responses;
- Keep complainants informed of progress;
- Ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint;
- Have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Fully address complaints and provide an effective response;
- Take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again;
- Be responsive to learning from outcomes that will inform and improve practice within the school.
- Provide a process that is simple to understand and use;
- be impartial;
- be non-adversarial.

3.2. Availability of Procedure

A copy of this Procedure is available on our school's website or is available from the school on request.

4. Complaints Procedure – At a Glance



4.1. Time Limit

To enable complaints to be resolved, please contact the school as soon as possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only be considered within 6 months of the date of the incident(s) about which you are complaining.

4.2. Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. **If the complaint is about the principal, proceed to Stage Two.** The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process.

When writing your complaint, please provide clear information and include the following:

- Your name and contact details
- What your complaint is about – please try to be specific
- What you have already done to try to resolve it and
- What you would like the school to do to resolve your complaint

The principal will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but within 10 school working days. This will be a short response and you will be sent a copy of, (or a link to) the school's complaints procedure. A final response will normally be made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld. ***If, for any reason, the consideration of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.***

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage One, the complaint may be progressed to Stage Two which is overseen by the board of governors.

4.3. Stage Two

If your complaint is about the principal or if the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the chairperson of the board of governors. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process. The letter can be left at the school office and marked *'private and confidential'*. The chairperson will convene a committee to consider the complaint.

In the case of the complaint being about the principal, this committee will investigate the complaint.

Please provide clear information and include the following:

- Reason(s) why you disagree with the stage one findings
- Any aspect in which you think that the school's complaints procedure was not fully followed

The chairperson of the committee will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but at least within 10 school working days. A final response will normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the second letter. The response will be issued by the chairperson of the committee and will indicate, with reasons, whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

If, for any reason, the review of a complaint takes longer to complete, complainants will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

4.4. Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) www.nipso.org.uk

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the school. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.
Contact details for NIPSO are provided below.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN

Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO
Telephone: 02890 233821
Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk
Web: www.nipso.org.uk

5. What To Expect Under This Procedure

5.1. Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with complaints, we will ensure:

- Fair treatment;
- Courtesy;
- A timely response;
- Accurate advice;
- Respect for privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility of consultation with other appropriate parties about the complaint; and
- Clear reasons for decisions.

5.2. Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

When making a complaint it is important that you:

- Raise issues in a timely manner
- Treat our staff with respect and courtesy
- Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised
- Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels

5.3. Rights of parties involved during the investigation

Where a meeting is arranged parties may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

Complainant: - should be informed that they may be accompanied but not represented by another person during the process e.g. spouse, friend, family member or interpreter, provided this person is not offering legal representation or acting in an official capacity.
If the complainant feels unable to speak on their own behalf, they may avail of support from outside agencies as agreed with the school. (*Local MLAs / Councillors / Citizens' Advice Bureau / Parenting NI / Children's commissioner)*

Staff Members: - should be informed that they may be accompanied or represented by another person during the process e.g. union representative, colleague[1]

[1] For information on workers' statutory rights to be accompanied, this should be read in accordance with Section 3 of the LRA's Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (Paras 110-116).

Pupils: permission should be sought from parents / guardians and parent, guardian or other nominated adult should accompany pupils.

It may be appropriate to seek a written statement if a person is unable to meet for any reason.

Parties should normally be informed when a complaint is made against them and be able to see relevant correspondence.

This Procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

5.4. Timeframes

Stage One – Normally acknowledge as soon as possible but at least within 10 school working days, with final response normally provided within 20 school working days

Stage Two – Normally acknowledge as soon as possible but at least within 10 school working days, with final response normally provided within 20 school working days

If, for any reason, the consideration/review of a complaint takes longer to complete, complainants will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

5.5. Equality

The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process.

5.6. Unreasonable Complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint has been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. The school must balance the rights of an individual to make a complaint and have it fairly investigated with the rights of staff not to be subjected to unacceptable actions or behaviour.

Any decision to treat a complainant as unreasonable must take into account the need to ensure that the complaints procedure is being fairly applied, and every attempt has been made to communicate and address concerns about behaviour/conduct with the complainant. In the event that such a decision has been taken, the complainant will be advised accordingly.

5.7 Frivolous Or Vexatious Complaints

Where the Board of Governors considers the actions of a parent/group of parents to constitute a frivolous or vexatious complaint, it will seek advice from the relevant employing authority in order to protect staff from further such actions.

If you believe that your complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner, or in a case where you decide to raise an issue at this level, you can contact the office of the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman. In most instances, the Ombudsman will only investigate a complaint after all the organisation's internal processes have been exhausted.

Office of the Northern Ireland Services Ombudsman
Progressive House,
33 Wellington Place,
Belfast BT1 6HN
Tel No 0800 34 34 24
Email: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I am sure you can appreciate that when an emergency arises, we must be in a position to respond to individual child needs. A copy of 'a child personal data sheet' will be sent home in which we will ask you to detail contact names and telephone numbers for our use. The information you provide on this data sheet will be held in confidence but will guide us in relation to those we may need to contact regarding any concerns about your child.

Due to current Human Rights legislation and the Children (NI) Order 1995 as well as child protection requirements, it is essential that the school keep up to date information on file. I am placing the obligation upon you to provide us with whatever information is necessary to meet these expectations. I would therefore request that you advise the Principal/Teacher if there are any Court Orders or parental responsibility issues relating to your child- e.g. Parental Responsibility Order, Residence Order, Non-Molestation Order, etc.

I must emphasise that it is essential that you make us aware of any changes in contact telephone numbers, circumstances, parental access or court orders as they occur during the school year. All such information will be treated with utmost confidence and will only be disclosed to those staff who need to know to ensure your child's safety and well-being at all times.

As the Non-Molestation Order gives legal directions regarding exclusion of a certain individual, it is useful for the school to have a copy of this order to keep on your child's file. This enables us to act quickly should such a situation arise.

CONSENT FORMS

I would ask you to complete the accompanying form and return it as soon as possible. (This applies to parents of children enrolling at the school in the 2026/2027 school year and to parents who wish to change their levels of consent).

If you require clarification on any of the above issues, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

The following forms accompany this booklet:

- Child's Personal Data Collection Form
- Use of Photographs/Images/Digital Media/Internet and Trips
- Collection of children from school
- Intimate Care
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- Reply slip for Policies

Holiday List 2026-2027
(dates are subject to change)

TERM 1	
Friday, 28th August	Term 1 Commences – Primary 1 children only to attend
Monday, 31st August	Summer Bank Holiday
Tuesday, 1st September	School reopens for all children
Friday, 25th September	School Development Day – Children off school
Monday, 26th October – Friday, 30th October	Halloween Break
Tuesday, 22nd December	School closes at 11.30am for Christmas Holidays
Wednesday, 23rd December – Tuesday, 5th January	Christmas Holidays
TERM 2	
Wednesday, 6th January	Term 2 Commences
Friday, 22nd January	School Development Day - Children off school
Monday, 25th January	School Development Day - Children off school
Monday, 8th February – Friday, 12th February	Mid Term Break
Wednesday 17th March	St Patrick's Day Holiday
Thursday, 25th March	School closes at 11.30am for Easter Holidays
Friday, 26th March – Friday, 2nd April	Easter Break
TERM 3	
Monday, 5th April	Term 3 Commences
Friday, 30th April	School Development Day
Monday, 3rd May	May Day Holiday
Tuesday, 4th May	School Development Day – Children off school
Friday, 28th May	School Development Day – Children off school
Monday, 31st May	Spring Bank Holiday
Monday, 14th June	School Development Day - Children off school
Wednesday, 30th June	School closes at 11.30am for Summer Holidays

N.B. All of the above dates are inclusive.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES/DIGITAL MEDIA/INTERNET/TRIPS

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Please tick any categories which apply:

I consent to my child's photograph being displayed in the school.	
I consent to my child's photograph appearing in any school publication.	
I grant permission to use any still and/or moving image being video footage, photographs and/or frames and/or audio footage depicting my child taken by:	
School	
Outside agency	
Newspaper	
Other	
on behalf of the school for the school website.	
I consent to my child's photograph being published on:	
School website	
X	
School App	
Parish Facebook	
I consent to my child's photograph being published on social media pages by visiting organisations, e.g. Ten Foundations	
I consent to my child's photograph being published in any newspaper.	
I consent to my child's image being taken by **parents** or videoing a:	
School Performance	
Religious Service	
I consent to my child's image being taken by **professionals** videoing a:	
School Performance	
Religious Service	
I consent to my child accessing the internet through the secure network of the school.	

I consent to my child leaving the school premises for school trips or visits to the church.	
I consent to my child being transported by car, when necessary, by a teacher or member of the school's ancillary staff.	
I am interested in voluntary work within the school and consent to being vetted as required for Child Protection.	

I understand the above requests will be honoured throughout my child's school life at St Patrick's Primary School unless I otherwise inform the school in writing.

Child's Name_____

Parent/Guardian signature:_____

Date:_____

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYGALGET

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL

Child's Name_____

If your child is normally collected from school, complete below.

Should there be any change to this routine and my child needs to be collected from school, the following persons are authorised to do so:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

I agree to notify the school in writing should there be any changes to normal routine or should a person other than those listed above be collecting my child.

Signed:_____Date:_____

If your child normally travels by school bus , complete below.

Should there be any change to this routine and my child needs to be collected from school, the following persons are authorised to do so:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Signed:_____Date:_____

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYGALGET

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET

I have been informed about the school's policy on Acceptable Use of the Internet.

I have read the Rules for Responsible Internet with my child/children

Signed:_____

Parent/Guardian of _____Class:_____

Date:_____

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYGALGET

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

I have been informed about the school's Intimate Care Policy.

I _____ give/do not give permission for a member of the School Staff to attend to /assist my child _____ should he/she ask for or need assistance whilst changing clothes after an accident of a toileting nature.

Signed:_____

Parent/Guardian of _____Class:_____

Date:_____



ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYGALGET

SCHOOL POLICIES

I have been informed about the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Discipline and Positive Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Code of Conduct
- Intimate Care Policy
- Drugs
- Administration of medicine
- Acceptable use of the Internet
- Use of Photographs/Images etc.
- Handling Complaints

Signed:_____

Parent/Guardian of _____Class:_____

Date:_____