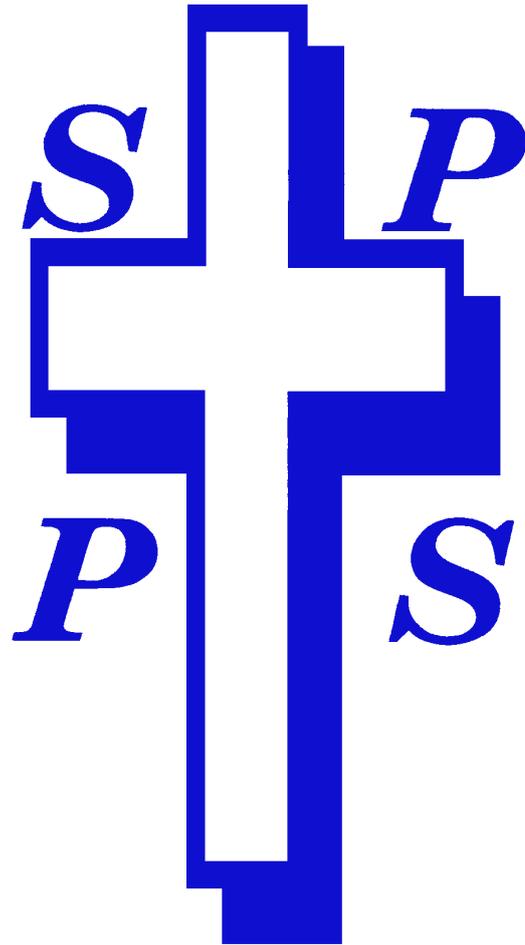


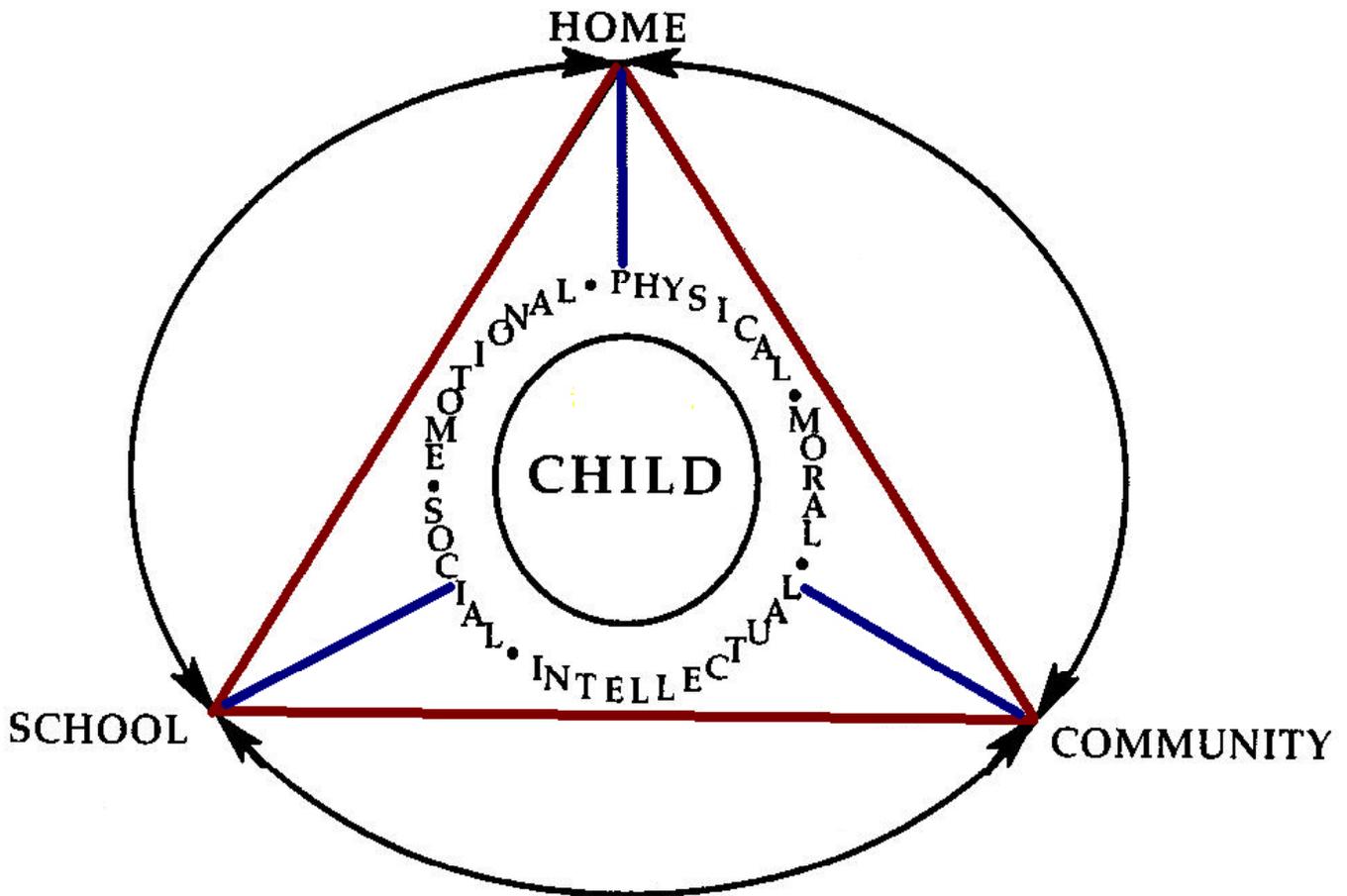
**St Patrick's Primary School/**

**Newtownstewart**



**SCHOOL**

**PROSPECTUS**



St Patrick's has been greatly enhanced through its relationship with our Parent Association. Our parents' group runs events and functions to raise money for our school and has raised many hundreds of pounds, enabling the school to employ tutors, to pay for school trips, to purchase equipment and to take part in competitions.

**Sincere thanks to all members of the Parent Association and to parents who have given so generously over the years. Please continue to support our Parent Association.**

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors of St Patrick's Primary School, Newtownstewart believes the school to be an integral part of the Catholic community of Newtownstewart and the parish of Ardstraw East. Governors are firmly committed to:



- a. the aims of Catholic education, with the child experiencing religious worship and teaching each day
- b. providing the best possible education for all our children, ensuring that expectations and learning outcomes are high
- c. maintaining strong links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

### **Our Mission Statement**

St. Patrick's Primary School, Newtownstewart treasures each pupil as a unique member of the school community, regardless of gender, colour, nationality or creed. Every child is special. We strive to create a positive learning environment where children are encouraged and enabled to develop to their full potential in all areas of school life. We will do our utmost to ensure all our children are literate and numerate before moving to post primary school.

We regularly provide opportunities for worship through prayer and the celebration of liturgy and the sacraments and we work in partnership with parents to keep the light of faith received at baptism burning brightly.

We treat all our pupils fairly and with respect and in return we expect children to follow school rules, co-operate with all adults and other children, and to actively participate in all strands of school life.

Our long-term aim is to encourage our children to become confident, independent and responsible citizens leading healthy, fulfilled lives. We seek to form people who will work unselfishly for the common good and are committed to a just and caring society.

## ADMISSIONS

In selecting children for admission to the school, either to Year 1 or Years 2 - 7, the Board of Governors applies the criteria as set out in the EA website.

Subject to our Admissions and Enrolment Numbers set by DENI, children of compulsory school age are admitted in the following order:

1. children who normally reside in the Parish of Ardstraw East
2. children from other areas.

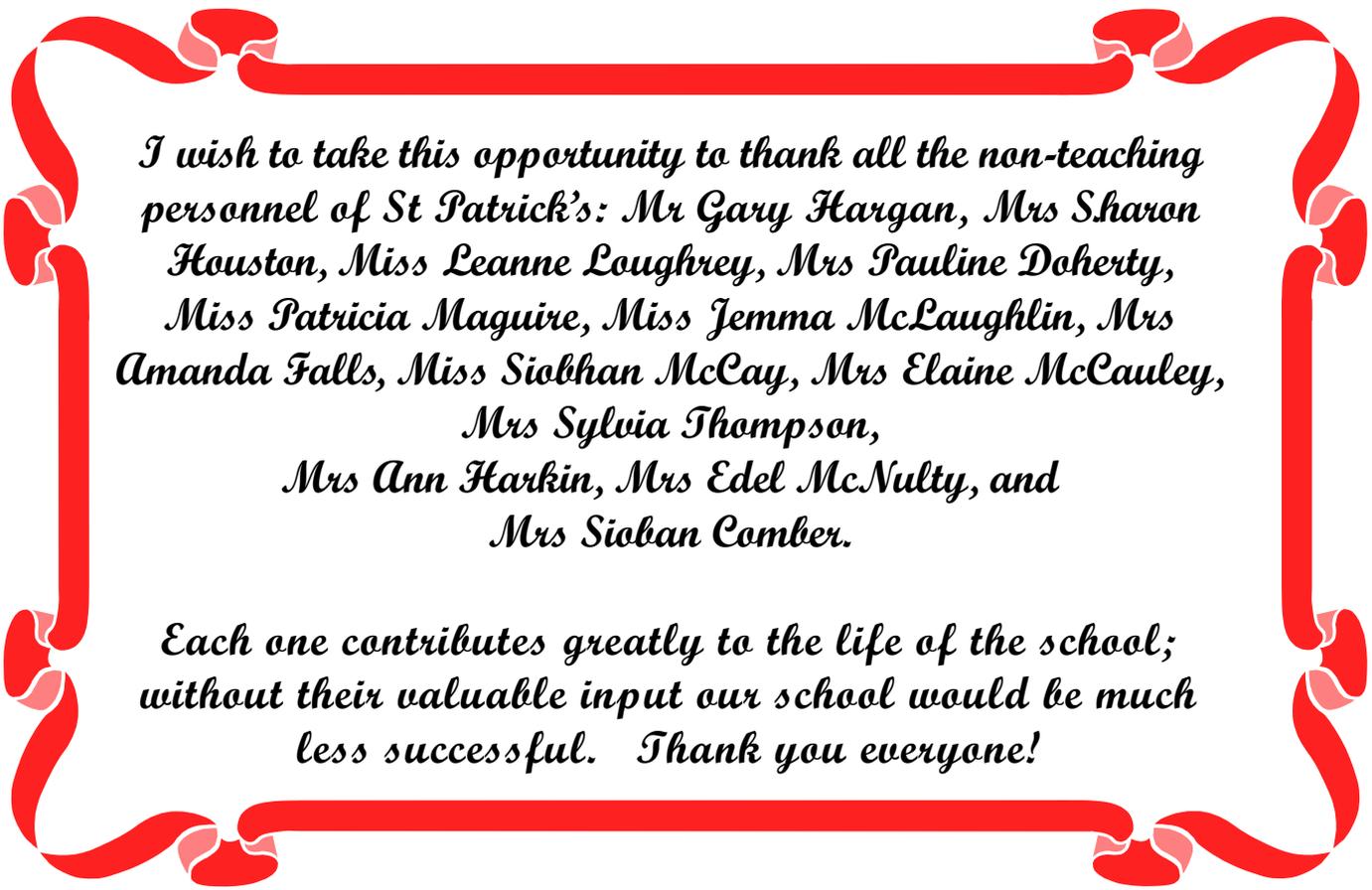
If there is over-subscription, priority will be given to:

- (a) Children who have a brother/sister presently enrolled in the school.
- (b) Children whose parent/guardian or sibling were pupils at the school.
- (c) Children whose parent/guardian is a member of the school staff.

St Patrick's PS does not accept non-compulsory age (Reception) children.

Pupils will be considered for enrolment provided that:

The school does not exceed its enrolment number as determined by Department of Education; and In the opinion of the Board of Governors, their admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.



*I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the non-teaching personnel of St Patrick's: Mr Gary Hargan, Mrs Sharon Houston, Miss Leanne Loughrey, Mrs Pauline Doherty, Miss Patricia Maguire, Miss Jemma McLaughlin, Mrs Amanda Falls, Miss Siobhan McCay, Mrs Elaine McCauley, Mrs Sylvia Thompson, Mrs Ann Harkin, Mrs Edel McNulty, and Mrs Sioban Comber.*

*Each one contributes greatly to the life of the school; without their valuable input our school would be much less successful. Thank you everyone!*

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

It is important that all children come to school neat and tidy each day. Wearing school uniform promotes our school's identity and encourages high standards. It provides a sense of belonging for our pupils.

Our schoolwear supplier is J Kemp & Sons, Newtownstewart. *(Parents may, of course, buy appropriate navy clothing from other retailers.)*

**Uniform:** Navy trousers or track suit bottoms / skirt / pinafore  
Navy sweatshirt / sweater / cardigan  
Blue shirt / blouse  
Navy tie

*[Please ensure that all items, including footwear, are clearly marked with your child's name or other identifying mark; **especially sweatshirts** .]*

Children are required to change from outdoor footwear to soft plimsolls / slippers before entering the classroom.

**In the interests of Health & Safety & Safeguarding, the Board of Governors asks that Mobile phones are not to be taken into school.**

I would also discourage parents from allowing children to have extreme hairstyles as this can often lead to teasing or bullying.

*When buying school shoes please consider that P1 and P2 children will find velcro fastenings much easier than laces or buckles.*



## THE SCHOOL DAY

Daily Timetable	
Class Begins	9.15 am
Morning Break	10.45—11.00 am
Lunch Break	12.15—1.15 pm (2 Sittings)
Class Ends	P1 & P2 2.15 pm
	P3—P7 3.15 pm

Children should arrive in school between 9.00 and 9.15 each morning. Please be punctual!

Pupils may not leave the school grounds during the day without prior permission.

All absences require a note of explanation or a phone call from Mum or Dad. The register is marked each morning and

afternoon and includes information about lateness, sickness, unauthorised absence and such like.

In recent years, the school has initiated a highly successful after school club for P1 & P2 which runs from 2.15-3.10pm. Because of the additional staffing required, a cost of £1.50 per day is applied to this club.

If a child is being taken out of class during the school day, a reason must be given to the teacher or principal so that it can be recorded in the register. Children should not be taken away from class unless absolutely necessary. Family holidays **should not** be taken during term time.

**Please note** that Education Welfare Officers regularly check our attendance registers and will visit the homes of persistent absentees.

A Controlled Door Opening System is installed in St Patrick's PS and visitors to school must use the front entrance only. Visitors press the buzzer at the front door to gain entry. Exceptional visitors to school are required to write their names in our Visitors' Book and to wear a Visitor's Badge. All visitors must call at the Office upon entering the school.



*Please note: Pupils may buy water bottles, pencils, rulers, erasers, etc. from the Secretary's office before class begins each morning and at Breaktime only.*

# THE CURRICULUM

## The Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC)

The Northern Ireland Curriculum is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the needs of individual children. The NIC seeks to give greater emphasis to elements such as Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and the explicit development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

The NIC sets out the minimum requirement that should be taught at each key stage. Within these requirements, schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and St Patrick's PS will give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

Teachers devise long, medium and short term planners for their classes. We use School Development Days to share and coordinate curriculum training. Teachers attend courses provided by EA, RTU and CCEA to further their professional development.

### NIC Stages

*The Foundation Stage:* Years 1 and 2

*Key Stage 1:* Years 3 and 4

*Key Stage 2:* Years 5, 6 and 7



### Structure of the NIC

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in six Areas of Learning. Although the Areas of Learning are set out separately teachers will, where appropriate, integrate learning across the six areas to make relevant connections for children.

Teachers select from within the learning areas those aspects they consider appropriate to the ability and interests of their pupils.

The Areas are:

1. **Language and Literacy** including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Schools are encouraged to teach additional languages and St Patrick's offers Irish and Spanish lessons.
  2. **Mathematics and Numeracy**, focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum.
  3. **The Arts**, including Art and Design, Drama and Music.
  4. **The World Around Us**, focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology.
  5. **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**, focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community.
  6. **Physical Education**, focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities.
- ✧ School Assembly, led by KS2 classes, is held at least once each month. After the sacred ceremony and hymns we celebrate pupil achievement with certificates, awards and, occasionally, prizes. Photographs are taken for our website and plasma screen.
  - ✧ St Patrick's ICT Suite is used by all classes. Interactive Whiteboards have been installed in all classrooms. We also have a mobile laptop unit which teachers can bring to their classroom. All classrooms have at least one PC and all computers are internet ready.
  - ✧ Our Library is regularly replenished and is situated in the P2 classroom. We currently use the "Librarian" Computerized Library System and have recently introduced the children to the 'Accelerated Reader' programme.
  - ✧ St Patrick's has a range of playthings for children to enjoy at lunchtime. This encourages happy, active pupils.

## THE R.E. PROGRAMME

Our religious education programme throughout the school is based on the “Grow in Love” series. This series, largely based on the life and family and parish, assists the teacher in preparing children for participation in the liturgy and sacraments of our Catholic faith.



Meetings prior to First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation take place each year. School Masses are held in St Mary’s Oratory and our school hall and the school Chaplin is a regular and welcome visitor to all classes.

Confirmation and First Holy Communion children attend Mass regularly in preparation for the Sacraments. The school is indebted to Fr Colhoun for his help in preparing for the sacraments.

## DRUGS EDUCATION

St Patrick’s Primary School is committed to tackling drug misuse among young people and any instances of possession, use or supply of illegal drugs will be regarded with the utmost seriousness.

As part of our Health Education programme, the school emphasises the dangers of drugs, including tobacco and alcohol. The school has procedures for dealing with drug-related issues and relevant agencies will be consulted if necessary.

P6 and P7 classes are enrolled in the ‘Smoke Busters’ campaign and the school has implemented a non-smoking policy inside school grounds for both tobacco products & e-cigarettes.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION / SPORT

Physical Education is an integral and compulsory part of the curriculum and **all** children take part. It is an essential strand of a broad and balanced education in which children are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and to inculcate the benefits of teamwork.



Each year group has at least two P.E. lessons per week with a range of activities and lessons - including many team sports. Our thriving after school clubs encourage all children to stay on for a wide range of activities.

We welcome trained coaches for Gaelic football coaching. Football and netball teams are formed each year and participate in inter-school and cross-community competitions. We enjoy close ties with St Eugene's Gaelic Football Club.



St Patrick's Gaelic Football and Soccer teams have been successful on many occasions and children have enjoyed athletics with events being held as far away as Belfast and Derry. Football and netball leagues lead up to Sports Day in June - the highlight of our sporting calendar.

***My thanks again to all teaching and ancillary staff who work so hard to ensure that Sports Day is a success. It is very rewarding (and tiring!) for all concerned.***

## SCHOOL SAVINGS

St Patrick's operates an optional Credit Union School Savings scheme for the pupils, administered by Mr. Torney and Mrs. Comber. Money is collected on Fridays and savings may be withdrawn in June. The children's savings do not accrue interest; any interest goes to School Funds and is used for the purchase of medals, prizes and suchlike. This scheme has been very successful for many years and I commend it to parents.



## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Additions to the daily curriculum have included Pathways to Music, Violin, Tin Whistle, Singing, Irish and Mandarin Chinese lessons. All children take part in Art, Handwriting, and Book Fair competitions with one highlight of the year being our School Féis at Easter. Older children are taught Cycling Proficiency in the summer term. A recent addition has been the P3-P7 Spelling Bee competition. We are indebted to all teachers and classroom assistants for the wonderful 'added value' they give to our pupils.

The school now operates a successful 'Breakfast Club' from 8.15-8.55am each day. Children are served juice, cereals and a choice of toasted breads for a daily charge of £1.00 or £4.00 per week if paid on Monday.



As mentioned previously, P1 & P2 children are offered an after-school club throughout the year from Mon-Fri. Key Stage 2 children are offered After-School Clubs on Tues, Wed, Thurs & Friday with Soccer, Basketball, Uni-Hoc, Golf, ICT, Homework, Library, Board Games, Hip-Hop, Badminton, Transfer help and Guitar Lessons. Many of our extra-curricular activities are funded through the Extended Schools initiative and we welcome coaches from Strabane District Council who assisted us so well this year.

Clubs are staffed by Mr. Torney, Mr. McGlone, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Neill and run during the Autumn and Spring terms. A hugely popular Summer Scheme for older children is also run each year.

## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

St Patrick's Charging and Remissions policy includes:

- Maintaining the right to free education for all pupils.
- Requiring parents to pay charges for board and lodgings for their children on residential trips.
- Confirming the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or school activities.
- Making charges in respect of optional extras, as determined by the Board of Governors.

## BREAK AND DINNER ARRANGEMENTS



St Patrick's operates a "Healthy Breaks" policy at midmorning break. Children take **only milk or water and fruit or raw vegetables** at Breaktime. This has proved successful in encouraging our children to eat 'healthy' foods. All children are offered fruit and milk each day at a nominal cost.

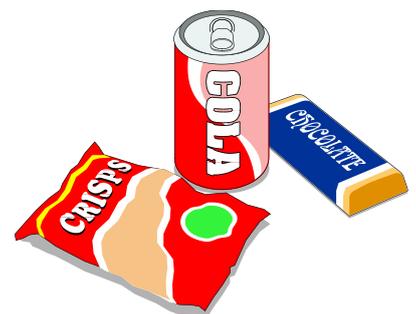
Children are encouraged to bring bottled water to school, which they may drink at any time. Two water dispensers have been installed for children to use.

Lunchtime is from 12.15 to 1.15 pm and is divided into 2 sittings. The canteen produces a 'rolling' 4-week menu at the start of each school year. It is displayed on the notice board in the dinner hall and also sent home with each child. I strongly recommend that children take school dinners as they are both nutritious and good value for money.

***I thank Sylvia, Ann & Edel for the high quality dinners they provide and the friendly relationship they foster with the children.***

The Board of Governors is alarmed that a lot of children's lunch items contain high levels of salt, sugar and additives - which are positively harmful to their health! Children can be seen "binning" sandwiches and fruit, and eating only crisps, yoghurt and juice. Others leave their dinner uneaten and eat crisps in the playground! We must all reinforce the message that certain foods are not good for you and encourage our children to eat more fruit and vegetables.

**Children are not to bring sweets to school and are asked not to bring crisps or fizzy drinks for lunch. School dental examinations each year reveal a high incidence of tooth decay in all classes. The school dental branch also provides foundation children with toothpaste and brushes each year.**



## ASSESSMENT, REPORTING & RECORD-KEEPING

Assessment of children's work is an integral part of our school curriculum and is used to:

1. Establish each child's level of achievement
2. Assist the teacher to plan and meet the needs of each child

St Patrick's has a Continuous Monitoring system throughout the school as part of the formative record of progress of each child and we use SIMS Assessment Manager to track and evaluate progress. A considerable amount of time is spent in gathering and evaluating data on our pupils, and results from end-of-year tests are kept by teachers and coordinators.

Regular staff meetings are convened to look at class and school trends and to focus on any problem areas. Teachers maintain a "working" file of assessment data for each child in their class. This can be monitored and updated every day with short, medium and long term targets being set. Subject coordinators work with colleagues to bench mark and set targets for all children.

**Teachers are happy to meet parents at any time during the year (by appointment) and will elaborate on any targets or concerns.**

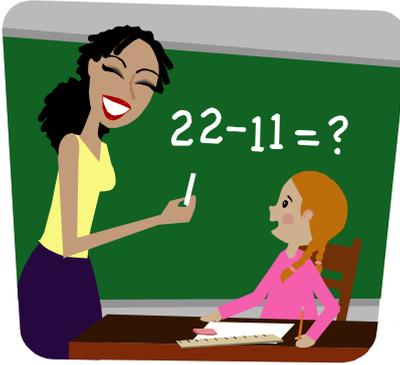
In the summer term **two copies** of a comprehensive school report on each child are sent home. One copy is to keep and one to sign and return to school. Parents may make a written response to the annual report and are also given the opportunity to discuss the report with the teacher.

Pupils take part in the statutory Assessment Procedures at the end of Key Stage One (P4) and Key Stage Two (P7). Parents are informed of the outcome of all such procedures and the statistics are published annually in this Prospectus (see *coloured inset pages*).

(Please note that industrial action by teaching unions currently prevents St Patrick's from taking part)



## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS



The educational requirements of all children are met by the class teacher and, if necessary, with help in the form of withdrawal groups or in-class support. Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is Mrs Caterson. She maintains and regularly updates our SEN register.

Children scoring less than a quotient of 90 in English or Maths are considered to be working significantly below average. We are especially vigilant to ensure underachieving children get the extra attention they need as soon as possible.

***I thank Mrs Caterson for her dedication and diligence.***

Children identified as underachieving are given extra lessons in English and/or Mathematics. We focus significant resources on these children. Tutors supplement and extend work going on in the pupil's class. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are drawn up for children with Special Needs and are shared with parents and children; success criteria are evaluated at the end of the IEP.

Underachieving children may receive extra lessons from:

SEN peripatetic tutors (2)

Mrs Harris - Lexia/*Phonographix* tutors

Mrs Torney— *Engage Programme ( Numeracy/Literacy withdrawal)*

If it is deemed necessary, relevant outside agencies such as the EA Educational Psychology Department are approached to assist identification and remediation of under-achieving children.

Gifted and talented children are given every opportunity to achieve their potential through a range of teacher-created resources in class, a withdrawal group in the Spring term and via ICT programmes.



## HOMEWORK



Homework is an integral part of every pupil's education. Homework extends the work going on in school and makes children aware that they have a responsibility for their own learning. Each class will have homework on **most** days (Mon-Thurs) and it is essential that parents monitor, encourage, and assist children to complete any homework given. St Patrick's Homework Policy is revised regularly.

The amount of homework will increase in volume and complexity as your child moves from year to year. All homework must be given due care and attention. Sloppy or careless homework will not be tolerated. Homeworks will be marked in accordance with our Marking Policy.

***[Try to encourage your child to do some personal reading each day and set an example by reading yourself. Each child should have a "Little Book".]***



If you find your child cannot cope with the homework, **or** that she finds the homework much too easy, contact the school and discuss the problem with her teacher.

Parents frequently ask, "How can I help my child?" The simple answer is: spend more time with her and become involved in her education. Encourage the child as much as possible - don't be too critical! However, please don't accept sub-standard work.

Read to him/her and talk about schoolwork every day. Is Daddy involved, or is it just left to Mum? One of the reasons many boys are under-achieving is that reading and school work is often left up to Mum. Dad must play an active role!



## CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

Your child is the reason this school exists and, whilst we expect **all** members of our school community to act in a caring way towards each other, we have rules which protect the child's rights but also define the child's responsibilities. All children in our school must obey these rules in order for the school to function effectively and to keep our children safe.

Our Pastoral Care / Child Protection Team consists of Ms Neill, Designated Teacher , Mr McGlone, Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection . The Governor responsible for Child Protection matters is Mrs Ann Bradley. The Procedure for parents who wish to raise a concern can be seen below.

In addition to existing safeguarding strategies, this year will see the introduction of PATHS as a method of helping children deal with their emotional well-being.

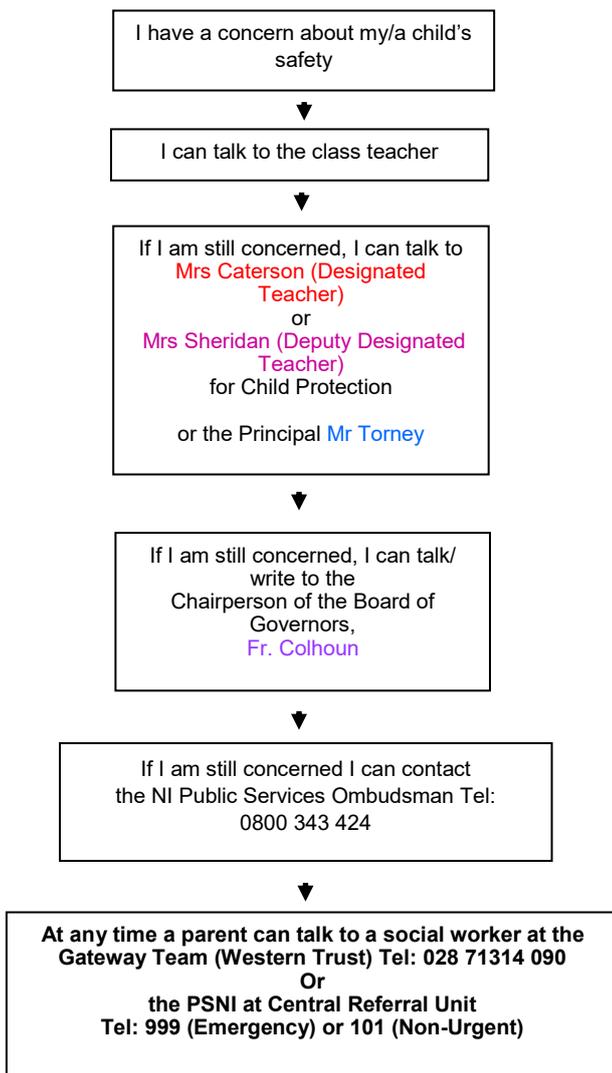
## BEHAVIOUR / DISCIPLINE

**Let the school know immediately if your child is being bullied.**

What is Bullying?

- It is **repeated** behaviour that happens over a period of time
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It is intentionally hurtful behaviour

The message that bullying is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated is constantly reinforced. Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse which is always responded to sensitively in our school and our Anti-Bullying



Policy contains measures to prevent bullying taking place and deal with it if it occurs.

All staff are vigilant at all times and we aim to prevent bullying by raising awareness with pupils and parents about bullying, its forms and consequences. All staff at St Patrick's ensure that children are aware of who they can talk to if they are sad, worried, being bullied or have other concerns. We **never** ignore a complaint from a child or parent.

A number of initiatives are in place to promote good behaviour. These include Circle Time, a 'Worry Box' postbox for children, Pupil of the Month certificates, cinema passes, Time-Out and Buddy Benches for the school yards and Class & School Council meetings. Praise cards, certificates, stickers and rewards are used for commending good behaviour and as incentives.

We have a vibrant students' School Council through which our young people can make their views known. They meet regularly and have an important voice in school affairs.

SIMS.net is used to register incidents and concerns and is accessible to all teachers. This can be used to record serious breaches of discipline or other such incidents and to include pupils' versions of events.

**Please remember:** When a parent complains to the school that their child is being bullied it is **always** acted upon. Sometimes this is done quietly and without fuss, and sometimes stronger action is necessary.



## VISITING & KEEPING IN TOUCH

Children entering P1 in the coming school year, and their parents, are warmly welcomed to an 'open' afternoon in December to see and experience a taste of school life. This is an important and enjoyable exercise which is used to familiarise the children with their new environment. It is essential that each child gets a positive and non-threatening image of the school on this day.

Parents are welcome to visit the school to speak to the teacher or Principal. However, it is important to make an appointment as teachers cannot leave the class unsupervised. Parents are invited to a Parent/Teacher meeting in the autumn term. Your attendance is required but if the time isn't suitable we will do our best to arrange an alternative. Again, we welcome the chance to talk to parents at any time throughout the year.

There are many occasions during the year when parents are asked to the school. These include the Christmas Concert, Paired Reading, Class Meetings, Transfer Procedure, Book Fair, School Masses, First Communion and Confirmation meetings, Information evenings, etc. We hope that parents continue to attend on these occasions to show their support and encouragement for their children and the school.

Annual School Reports on your child are sent home in June. Parents can meet with teachers to discuss the report and to voice any concerns.

At the beginning of each term and (usually) each month a Newsletter is sent home. Often important notes or letters are sent home in your child's schoolbag. Don't forget to check each night for these. A plasma infoscreen in the school foyer keeps pupils, parents and visitors abreast of school news. It is updated each day.

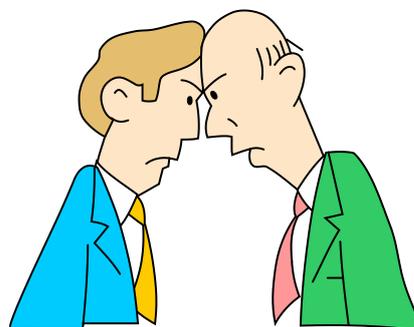
Our new text-messaging service has proved to be a big hit with everyone, as has the 'See-saw' app which is being rolled out throughout the school. The school website ([www.stpatricksnts.com](http://www.stpatricksnts.com)) also contains a wealth of school information.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

As mentioned earlier, St Patrick's Complaints Procedure is available to all parents on request.

Parents may express their concerns to the school through:

1. The class teacher
2. The Headteacher
3. The Board of Governors
4. EA/CCMS Complaints Commission.



If a problem arises, the most effective way of solving it is to telephone and make an appointment to see the class teacher and/or headteacher. You will be able to speak in confidence and be assured of the teacher's full attention.

ALL complaints are investigated. A word of advice though: try not to react immediately - sleep on it! Quite often the problem may not seem so threatening the next day.

### AND FINALLY . . .

In the event of an emergency closure or, especially, an accident to a child, every attempt will be made to contact parents. Therefore it is **essential** that the school has your address and **at least** one mobile phone number where a responsible adult may be reached. We can now text straight away if there is a major problem.

A Pupil Information Form must be completed for **each** child at the start of **each** school year.

**Remember, if you change address, telephone number or mobile phone number, please inform the school immediately. Also, if family circumstances change it is important that we know.**

