

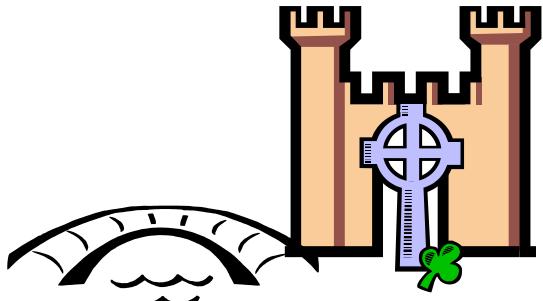
St. Patrick's P.S and Nursery Unit Castlederg



Primary School Prospectus 2026 -27

St Patrick's P.S.
and Nursery
Castlederg

73 Castlefin Rd
Castlederg
Co Tyrone BT81 7EE



Tel 028816 71458 email:info@stpatricks.castlederg.ni.sch.uk
Website: www.stpatrickspscastlederg.co.uk

January 2026

Dear Parent/s

Many thanks for the interest you have shown in applying for a P1 place for your child at our school.

Please find enclosed a Primary School Prospectus, Admission Arrangements – A Guide for Parents Booklet can be downloaded from www.eani.org.uk. If your child is due to start P1 in September i.e. born on or between 2nd July 2021 and 1st July 2022 please complete the online enrolment form carefully. The school office of St Patrick's PS/Nursery unit will also be able to assist you with an online application form.

Please note that proof of address of address may be required. The letterhead from this information will be copied and returned to you. One of the following can be included -

- A bank or building society statement
- A utilities bill i.e. electric, telephone, TV licence etc.
- Documentation regarding child benefit
- A child's medical card

When completing the application form please read the admissions criteria carefully and include any of the following information if this applies to your child –

- That your child resides in the Parish of Ardstraw West and Castlederg.
- That your child is transferring from St. Patrick's PS Nursery Unit.
- That your child has another member of the family attending the school or nursery unit.
- That your child is the oldest in the family

Late applications cannot be considered if the school is over subscribed. Children currently attending St Patrick's Nursery Unit will not need to forward a Birth Certificate.

All forms and documentation must be returned by 12 noon 21st January 2026

Yours sincerely

Brian McGurk Principal

Introduction

This Prospectus is intended to give you a brief overall view of the education provided in St Patrick's PS and Nursery Unit Castlederg. The Prospectus outlines the general structure and organisation of our school.

Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors is responsible for the management of the school and meets at least once a term. Governors are elected or appointed to represent different interests in the school. A new Board of Governors is presently being reconstituted.

Chairperson: Dr. O. Ramsey EA

Vice – Chairperson Mrs P Mc Anea

Secretary/Principal Mr. B. McGurk

Trustees: Fr. P Fraser PP

Mrs. Eithne Gallagher

Parent Representative: Mr. Tim Harney

Teacher Representative: Mrs. E Shelley

School Aims and Mission Statement

St Patrick's PS and Nursery Unit is a Catholic Maintained School which seeks to provide a safe and caring environment for the whole school community.

We seek to provide to educate all our pupils to be caring, tolerant and responsible members of their local community by establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

We believe in the importance of respect and positive discipline centred on the values of the gospel and Catholic values.

All pupils in our care are entitled to be taught using a variety of teaching styles a broad and balanced curriculum, in a variety of environments which develops their academic, intellectual, creative, social, emotional and physical abilities.

The school always strives for self-improvement and seeks to be a progressive, supportive and educative community.

Enrolment

Enrolment for the School is 259 and the Nursery school caters for 52 part time places. Currently there are 247 children enrolled in the Primary School and 32 enrolled in the Nursery School.

School Profile

St Patrick's Primary School is a Catholic Maintained Primary School. It is a co-educational primary school. The Primary caters for children aged 4 – 11. The nursery school caters for children aged 2 – 4. Currently there are 12 teachers at the school and nursery. There are 11 classroom teachers and a Principal. There are 8 straight year band classes and 2 composite classes. Children are normally grouped according to age. The school has a 94% overall attendance rate annually.

School Buildings

The Nursery School building was built in 1998. It is situated on the school grounds but has separate playgrounds and access.

The main school was built in 1973 and houses 7 classrooms, a multipurpose hall, Principal and Secretary Offices and a library.

The school extension was completed in November 2004. The extension houses a new staff room, special needs room and appropriate toilet provision.
The main school has 3 outdoor playgrounds and extensive gardens.
In the interests of child safety access to all three buildings is strictly controlled by access control.

Staffing Complement

Principal: Mr B. Mc Gurk

Vice Principal: Mr. A Doherty

Assistant Teachers:

Mrs. E Shelley (Nursery teacher)
Mrs. N McLaughlin
Miss. J Breslin
Miss. G Sludden
Mrs. G Gallagher
Mrs. N Smith
Mrs. B Norton
Mr. R Keenan
Miss. S McHugh
Mrs. S Sweeney

Classroom Assistants: Miss. M Mackey (Nursery Assistant)

Miss. R.O'Donnell
Mrs. S Keyes
Mrs. K Humphreys
Miss. A Shaughnessy
Mrs. C Dolan
Miss. J Lynch
Mrs. A Doherty
Mrs. S Mc Hugh
Mrs. M Russell
Mrs. R Loughlin
Mr. A Mc Ginn

Senior Clerical Officer: Mrs S Molloy

Caretaker: Mrs V Harvey

Cleaning Staff: Mrs B Mc Garvey

Mrs. B. Shields

Cook in Charge: Mrs Ruth Johnston

School Meals Staff: Bernie Peoples, Patricia Byrne, Joanne Campbell

Additional Lunchtime Supervisors: B Mc Garvey.

School Crossing Patrol: Bernie Mc Garvey, Patricia Byrne.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Parents considering sending their children to St Patrick's PS are invited to contact the school at any time during the school day and talk to the Principal and class teachers. An appointment can be made by contacting the school at the above number. The admissions arrangements as set out on the EA website will be applied. Information on how to apply is available on the EA website <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/admissions>

The present admissions criteria for P1 is included at the end of this prospectus.

Numbers of Applicants/ Admissions to St Patrick's PS

	2025	2024	2023
Number of Applicants	26	45	25
Number of Admissions	26	44	24

Parent Teacher Meetings

Parents are provided with at least one opportunity to meet with the class teachers to discuss their child's progress during the school year. A formal report is issued at the end of June.

Teachers are free to discuss any aspects of their child's education by appointment with the Principal.

Parents of children starting Nursery and Year 1 were invited to meet the teachers prior to commencing their education and again after settling in to Nursery and Year 1.

A number of parent information events for each year group are hosted in the school throughout the school year.

Staff and Curriculum

The school delivers a broad and balanced curriculum. This curriculum is based on the current NI curriculum and the revised curriculum. We believe that all children have an entitlement to all areas of the curriculum where possible. The main areas of the curriculum are:

- Literacy/Communication
- Numeracy/Mathematics
- The World around Us
- The Arts
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Physical Education
- Using ICT

We believe that the children should learn by experience and should be taught a range of skills to improve their ability to problem solve.

The staff work as a team in planning and delivering the curriculum. The school currently delivers the NI curriculum, and all of our teachers have received key training in the core elements of the curriculum and child protection.

Making a Complaint

Parents may request a copy of school policy on any curriculum area or aspect area. The school will supply such a policy within five working days and in the event of any complaint the Principal will guide them through the EA/CCMS Complaints Procedure. The complaints procedure is available on our school website www.stpatrickspscastleberg.co.uk

School Development Plan

A Development Plan has been devised to cover the current academic period - Priorities for the previous academic year/s 2025 - 2026 include –

1. To Enhance opportunities within the Creative and Expressive Area through planning and practice of Art in the classroom
2. To provide a complete programme for Physical Education/ Physical Movement for all pupils.
3. To undertake whole teaching staff training in solving mathematical word problems and implement practice within the classroom.
4. To target underattendance and punctuality among small cohort of pupils.

Homework.

The school operates a homework policy that relies on the parents to support the child in his/her learning at home. At no time should children feel pressured by homework and in the event of any serious difficulties the parent should always seek to speak to the class teacher. Homework is set for a weekly period via Google Classroom and there are a range of online activities and platforms used.

Initially it will be based towards Literacy and Numeracy but as pupils progress through the school it may reflect the various subjects across the curriculum. The types and amounts of homework given will vary according to the age and ability of the pupils. The teachers will endeavour to set realistic tasks which should not prove too difficult and yet challenge pupils at the same time.

The different forms of homework given are as follows –

English/Communication/Literacy

Written work
Songs/Rhymes/Phonics work
Reading/Spellings
Project Work
Drawing Pictures
Internet based learning
Accelerated Reading
IXL Learning on-line

Maths/Numeracy

Written Maths
Mental Maths Activities
Practical Activities/Board Games/Investigative Work
Tables/Number lists
Internet based learning
Mathletics
IXL Learning on-line

World Around Us/RE PDMU/ The Arts

Weekly /Monthly Tasks set via Google Classroom
Investigative Work

Topic/Project Work
Learning Prayers
Learning parts for dramatic arts
Internet based learning

As a previously stated homework should be a worthwhile experience and offered connected learning for pupils and allow for good home school links. From P.1 – P.7 its duration will build from a minimum of 60 minutes weekly to a maximum of 4 hours weekly.

- P1 15 minutes daily or 60 minutes weekly.
- P2/3 20 minutes daily or 80 minutes weekly
- P4 25 minutes daily or 100 minutes weekly
- P5 30 minutes daily or 120 minutes weekly
- P6/P7 45 minutes daily or 180 minutes weekly

If a child is seen to be taking longer than this, the teacher should be notified on the next school day and appropriate action would be taken in consultation with parents. Homework will be set for a week and can be completed on four nights each week from Monday – Thursday inclusive or built around the demands of family life. In the main, it will involve reading, spellings, tables and either some literacy or numeracy work. Homework will not be set over holiday periods or at weekends in year 1-5 apart from library work or reading group work.

Primary 6 and 7 children may receive weekend homework. This should not exceed 1 hour. Teachers can assist parents on strategies on how to help their child at home.

School Uniform

Children are expected to wear school uniform at all times during school. These items can be bought locally -
Girls – School Sweatshirt, Burgundy or Grey Jumper (or Cardigan), Burgundy or Grey Skirt or Trousers, White Blouse and Burgundy/ Grey tie. Burgundy/ White Checked Dress, White Polo Shirt (Summer)
Boys – School Sweatshirt, Burgundy or Grey Jumper, Grey Trousers, White Shirt and Burgundy/ Grey tie. White polo Shirt, Grey Shorts (Summer)
PE Wear – Children in P5 to P7 must change for PE. Suitable PE Gear consists of Tracksuits/ Shorts, T- Shirts, Sports Tops and Appropriate Footwear. The school has an optional PE uniform – this is available to buy online – further details can be obtained from the school office/school website.

Please mark all the children's clothing carefully.

In the interests of health and safety children are not encouraged to wear large amounts of jewellery. Girls and boys may wear stud earrings only.

Pastoral Care and Child Protection

The school has devised policies in accordance with DENI circulars 1999/10 and 2003/10
Pastoral Care in Schools: Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools DENI 2017/04
The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs. E Shelley Nursery Teacher, and the Deputy-Designated Teacher is Mr. A Doherty Vice-Principal.
Any concerns regarding any pupil can be made to the Principal or Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher/s at any time. Once reported, the school must follow the guidelines outlined in DENI Circular 1999/10 and 2003/10 and 2017/04. Members of staff are regularly briefed on Child Protection, Safety and Discipline issues.

The School Child Protection Procedures are available on our school website
www.stpatrickspscastleberg.co.uk

The School Day

School begins at 9.00am with registration. Parents may bring their children to school from 8.45am.

Breakfast Club opens at 8.30am until 9.00am

Primary 1 – 2 9.00am – 2.00pm

Primary 3 9.00am – 2.55pm (Term 1 2.15pm)

Primary 4 – 7 9.00am – 3.00pm

After schools Club P4 - 7 at present 3.00pm – 4.30pm Monday to Thursday.

Morning Break – 10.45am – 11.00 am P1 – P4

11.05am – 11.20am P5 – P7

The school offers a healthy eating policy at break-time. Children may bring fruit or sandwiches for break. Children are not encouraged to eat crisps, sweets or biscuits at break-time. Children may purchase a healthy break or milk from the canteen at break-time.

Please note that children should not bring nuts or foods containing nuts to school at any time.

Lunch-time P.1 – P.2 12.15pm – 1.05pm

P3/ P.4 - 12.40pm – 1.20pm

P.5 – P.7 12.50pm/1.00pm – 1.30pm/1.40pm

The canteen at present offers a system where children can select their meal from a series of choices. The recommended price of a school meal is £3.10

Special Educational Needs - SEN

The School has a number of children who have a particular special educational need. The SEN policy is kept under constant review by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. The school has a full-time SENCO, and children also receive peripatetic teaching support on – site.

The school seeks to

- Develop all children to their full potential
- To identify children with a SEN at an early stage and to provide suitable support where necessary
- To allow all children have full access to the NI Curriculum
- To maintain and update a SEN Register in accordance with the NI Code of Practice for SEN
- To liaise with parents, teachers and the appropriate agencies
- To provide adequate Education Plans to meet the child's Individual Need.

School Discipline

The school prides itself on the professionalism of its teachers and the high standards of behaviour of the children. The positive ethos of the discipline policy highlights the children's successes and requires the support of parents to achieve these high standards.

The ethos of the school creates an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. The staff strives at all times to raise the self-esteem of the pupils through its Pastoral care policy, Discipline Policy and Marking Policy.

Schools Cross Community Project/Shared Education

The school is partnered with Edwards School Castlederg for this project. This is a very worthwhile project, which teaches self-respect, encourages the recognition of differing cultural traditions and provides the children with stimulating educational experiences. The teachers and staff participate in this project enthusiastically.

The Programme begins in Primary 4 and continues until Year 7 and involves educational inter-school visits, local education sites and online learning projects.

Curricular/Extra-Curricular Provision

The school offers a wide range of extended schools provision which include

Music and Choir

A number of children in years 4 – 7 qualify to receive music tuition in brass and strings following lessons in P4 taught by peripatetic music services. The school also has a talented choir, which performs at school occasions.

The School Choir participates in concerts and local shows annually. Children regularly perform at Christmas shows or in School Productions. There is a popular music club with regular performances and opportunities to compete at local Feis and Scor.

Physical Education and Sport

The school has developed a strong sporting ethos with boys' and girls' teams in gaelic games, gaelic football and soccer. These teams compete in a wide range of sporting competitions. The boys and girls gaelic teams compete in their local leagues, blitzes and the County Championships. The boys and girls team have won a variety of tournaments, leagues and county championships.

All Primary age children have participated in programmes learning skills including dance, drama, fundamental movement and sports.

County Board Coaches provides GAA coaching to children in Year 5 to 7.

P.6 and P.7 children participate in a swimming programme and the school participates in a number of inter-school sporting activities including schools cross country events and Finn Valley Athletics Championships with a number of athletes presently holding county athletic titles.

The children from P4 – P7 are encouraged to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities through extended schools which include gaelic games, soccer, rounders, athletics, art and craft and music.

The school also participates in quizzes on an annual basis.

Charities/Fundraising

The school continued to participate in a number of fund-raising activities including for the Society of Saint Vincent De Paul, Trocaire, Gemma Mc Hale Foundation and for School Funds.

Religious Events

Fr P. Fraser P.P. visits the school in his capacity as school chaplain. The children participate in regular assemblies and monthly masses.

An important part of school life is preparation for the sacraments. Parents and the local community are fully involved in the preparations for Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Religion

The children receive daily instruction in religious education using the Grow in Love Programme Year 1 to 7. The children are taught about their faith in a child friendly manner. The Programme also teaches the concept of respect for oneself and others and deals with personal safety issues.

The parents have the right to withdraw their children from this daily instruction or any aspect of this programme.

THE SCHOOL'S CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY

Charging Policy

It is the policy of the School to charge for: -

- a) Board and lodgings on residential visits.
- b) Costs associated with the provision of individual tuition on a musical instrument whether inside or outside school hours unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for an approved public examination or to meet the requirements of Article 11 (1) (b) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989.
- c) Optional extra activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours and are additional to the education provided by the school for the purposes of preparing pupils for an approved public examination or for the purposes of meeting the statutory requirements imposed by the Article 11(a) and (b) of the 1989 Order.

Participation in such activities is to be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges are as made.

Remission Policy

The Board will remit charges according to the following policy: -

- a) The charge for board and lodging costs of a residential visit will be remitted in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of a recognised benefit as determined by the EA if the education provided on that visit must otherwise be provided free, that is, the activity takes place mainly or wholly in school hours and/or is provided as part of the syllabus for an approved public examination or is required in order to fulfil the statutory duties in relation to the Northern Ireland Curriculum or religious education.
- b) Charges for individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument will be remitted in accordance with the EA's scheme.
- c) Charges for tuition in the playing of a musical instrument other than in (b) above which is provided as an optional extra wholly or mainly outside of school hours will be remitted in accordance with the EA's scheme.

St Patrick's Primary School
73 Castlefin Road
Castlederg
BT81 7EE

Catholic Maintained
Co-Educational
Age Range 4-11

Tel No: 028 8167 1458
E-mail: info@stpatrickscastlederg.ni.sch.uk
Website: www.stpatrickscastlederg.ni.sch.uk

Enrolment No: 259
Admissions No: 37
Principal: Mr. B McGurk
Chair of Board of Governors: Dr. O Ramsey

Respective functions of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to admissions

The Board of Governors has delegated to an Admissions Sub-Committee the task of selecting pupils for admission to the Year 1 class in September. The selection so made will have no effect until approved by the Board of Governors. The Sub-Committee will consist of three voting members of the Board of Governors and the Principal.

The Board of Governors of St Patrick's Primary School has determined that the following criteria shall be applied, in the event of the number of pupils applying for places in Year 1 being greater than the admissions number, in the order set down below. Priority will firstly be given to pupils normally resident in Northern Ireland and then to those pupils regarded by the Board of Governors, on the basis of supporting documentary evidence provided by the parents and/or statutory agencies, as having special circumstances, e.g. medical or social factors.

Due to statutory regulations no class in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 – 4) can exceed 30 pupils.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 7 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 21 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 21 January 2026 and up to 4 pm on 26 January 2026 will be treated as a late application, this is also the last date and time for processing a change of preference in exceptional circumstances. After 4 pm on 26 January 2026 no applications will be processed until after the close of procedure on 23 March 2026.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

Any child who reaches their 4th Birthday on or before 1st July 2026 is of Compulsory School Age. Under the School Age (NI) Act which became law in Northern Ireland in April 2022, 'compulsory school age' also includes those children who deferred commencing Primary 1 in September 2025 as defined by the new School Age (NI) Act (both groups to be treated equally).

Priority will be given to children resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school before those who are not so resident.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA TO BE USED IN THE EVENT OF THE SCHOOL BEING OVERSUBSCRIBED. THE CRITERIA ARE LISTED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY.

1. Children who have a child of the family currently enrolled in St Patrick's Primary School/St Patrick's Nursery Unit, Castlederg.
2. Children who reside in the Parish of Ardstraw West and Castlederg and for whom St Patrick's Primary School is the nearest suitable school (map available from school).
3. Other pupils.

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

- (a) children transferring from St Patrick's Nursery Unit.
- (b) children who are first members of a family.
- (c) other children.

If over-subscribed in any one of the sub-criteria, taken in order, final selection will be on the basis of chronological order of age, established by date of birth on a Birth Certificate with the eldest having priority.

In the event of two or more children sharing the same date of birth, the final selection will be taken on the basis of the initial letter of the surname (as entered on a Birth Certificate) in the order set out below

Q K J G T R D B H P X O N F L V U E C S A Y W M I Z

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application.

Evidence to verify address if required:

A utility bill/bank statement, with current address on it, dated within the last 6 months.

If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline given this will result in the

withdrawal of any offer of a place. Similarly if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in

any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

YEAR 1 ADMISSIONS – AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Children who apply to enter the school during the academic year will be considered using the same criteria as for Year 1.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA – YEARS 2-7

Pupils will be considered for enrolment provided that:

- The school would not exceed its enrolment number as determined by the Department of Education.

- In the opinion of the Board of Governors their admission would not prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.
- If, at the time of the consideration of the application, there are more eligible applicants than places available then the Admissions Criteria for entry to Year 1 will be applied.
- In the event of over-subscription final selection will be based on:
 - (a) Order of application.
 - (b) Same criteria as for year 1.

APPLICATIONS & ADMISSIONS TO PRIMARY 1

Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2023/2024	25	24
2024/2025	45	44
*2025/2026	26	26

**The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all P1 children admitted to the school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS. (SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)*