

BALLYHACKETT PRIMARY SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS



WELCOME

I am delighted to introduce you to Ballyhackett Primary School, which is nestled in beautiful, countryside not far from Castlerock.

We are a small, Catholic, family orientated, child - centred school and unique in that since our opening in 1870 we have a long tradition of educating children of all faiths from our local and wider community. The majority of our children come from the local area and the nearby villages of Articlave and Castlerock and travel to school by bus provided free of charge by Education Authority. (EA)

Our class sizes are small so all our children have a great start to their education. Our learning environments are bright and stimulating; our children are happy, motivated and challenged in their learning. Our parents, staff and whole school community work in close partnership.

We are very fortunate to have extensive grounds which include a large tarmac playground, a purpose-built play and learning area, specifically designed for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One curriculum. We also have a grass football pitch, a wildlife area with an enclosed pond and a beautiful willow structure.

The aim of our prospectus is to provide you with information about life in Ballyhackett Primary School but, no prospectus can convey the real ethos, warmth and culture of a school, so I strongly encourage you to make an appointment to visit our school, sample the atmosphere and see for yourself how we aim:

“To promote the highest possible educational standards in all areas of school life and to cherish and nurture each and every child.”

With sincere good wishes,

Grainne Mcllvar, Principal



SCHOOL INFORMATION

It is our vision that Ballyhackett Primary School is a place where everyone experiences a sense of belonging to the school family. We are committed to providing a safe, child-centred, high quality learning environment in which pupils are motivated, challenged and supported so that they can become lifelong learners.

We aim to establish self-confidence, self-respect and promote consideration for others.

We encourage each child to fulfil their intellectual, spiritual, physical, social and emotional potential.

Central to the creation of this environment is a commitment to Christian values and the recognition of the worth and value of each child.

We believe that staff, parents, governors and members of the wider community have an important role to play.

We believe that we should work together and co-operate with each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support, for the benefit of all.

Our School motto promotes this:

“TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE”



HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. Parents' support is essential in working with the school for your child's benefit. We encourage parental participation in various ways.

Parents may contact the Principal with any queries or concerns. We will do all we can to keep all our parents well informed about what and how their children learn and about life in school.

We do this in a variety of ways:

- **PRIMARY ONE INDUCTION MORNINGS**
- **PARENT/ TEACHER MEETINGS**
- **PARENT INFORMATION EVENINGS**
- **PARENT WORKSHOPS**
- **ANNUAL REPORTS**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Religious Education programme is the Grow in Love Programme which is incorporated into our daily activities. Strong links are developed between home, school and parish.

As some of our children progress through the school they are prepared for the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist in P4 and the Sacrament of Confirmation in P7.



PASTORAL CARE/CHILD PROTECTION

We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of all the children in our care. We aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment where individuals are valued for their unique talents and abilities, an environment in which all our children can learn and develop to their full potential.

All our staff, students and volunteers are subject to appropriate background checks. We request criminal record checks on all our temporary and permanent staff i.e. professional, ancillary, administrative, clerical, all parents who help in any way, volunteers, sports coaches and students pursuing child care qualifications. The staff is very aware of how they should behave towards pupils. We have a Child Protection Policy with clearly defined guidelines and procedures and everyone is given a copy of this policy. The purpose of having a policy with clearly defined guidelines and procedures is to protect our children by ensuring that everyone who works in our school, teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers, has a clear understanding on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The major concern of all the caring adults in our school must be the care, welfare and safety of the child and the welfare of the child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs K. Mc Ginley and the Deputy Designated Teacher is Mrs G Mclvar.

DRUGS EDUCATION: It is the school's policy to promote healthy and positive attitudes. Drugs Education forms part of a comprehensive Health Education Programme, which contributes to equipping pupils with the skills to manage their lives effectively and make responsible health decisions.





CURRICULUM

“THE NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM AIMS TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL AND TO MAKE INFORMED AND RESPONSIBLE DECISION THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.”

It has three objectives. These are:

1. To develop the young person as an individual.
2. To develop the young person as a contributor to Society.
3. To develop the young person as a contributor to the Economy and Environment.

Ballyhackett Primary School is aware of its statutory obligation to deliver the Northern Ireland Primary curriculum to all pupils. The Curriculum is made up of a range of Learning Areas which foster attitudes and dispositions.

These incorporate Assessment For Learning which aims to promote and encourage learning experiences.

WHOLE CURRICULUM SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Managing Information
Being Creative
Thinking Skills & Decision Making
Working with Others
Self-Management

Formally Assessed Skills

Communication
Using Mathematics
Using ICT

LEARNING AREAS

Religious Education
Language and Literacy
Numeracy
Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
The World Around Us
Physical Education
The Arts

The pupils of Ballyhackett Primary School have many opportunities to enjoy practical and challenging lessons. Children learn best when engaged in active lessons.

We are very fortunate to have small class sizes and this not only promotes secure relationships among our children, class teachers and classroom assistants, but also encourages our children to become independent learners.



OUTDOOR LEARNING

Ballyhackett Primary School has wonderful outdoor facilities that include an outdoor play area, wildlife area and an enclosed pond.

This along with our bright, well-resourced and stimulating classrooms create a rich and varied learning environment.

SPANISH

All children from P1 to P7 have weekly Spanish lessons which are taught by an experienced Spanish teacher.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

We currently offer a variety of after school activities.

They include:

SOCCER

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

ART

CYCLING PROFICIENCY

MULTI SPORTS CLUB

CAMOGIE

**SHARED EDUCATION
PROJECTS WITH CASTLEROE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
P7 NUMERACY AND LITERACY
CLUB**

KNITTING

YOGA

SIGNATURE SHARED EDUCATION PROJECT

We are currently involved in the Signature Shared Education Project. Our partner school is Castleroe Primary School. This partnership provides our children with opportunities to learn alongside children from another school.



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We have a Special Educational Needs Policy which acknowledges that the needs of all our children who have special educational needs, either throughout or at any time during their school life, must be addressed; and their rights to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including maximum possible access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum must be recognised. We will seek to ensure that our children with special needs will be fully integrated into all the activities of our school and ensure that a caring, supportive environment is created.

For children who have been identified as having special educational needs, EA provides a range of specialist facilities and support services. For the majority of children with special educational needs, the identification will occur after they have started school and a full assessment involving all the agencies concerned may be recommended.

The special educational needs of most children are met in the classroom, through arrangements made by the school itself, often in consultation with the specialist services of the Board's Special Needs Section.





ASSESSMENT

All children are continually assessed to enable appropriate planning and in order to provide appropriate “feed back” to children and parents.

This assessment can take many forms:

- **WORK IS REGULARLY MARKED AND WHERE POSSIBLE POSITIVE COMMENTS ARE WRITTEN**
- **DISCUSSION CONTINUALLY TAKES PLACE BETWEEN TEACHER AND CHILD**
- **CHILDREN’S SELF-EVALUATION**
- **STANDARDISED TESTS**
- **END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENT (PRIMARY 4 AND PRIMARY 7)**

TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

At the end of P7 Key Stage 2 when pupils are transferring to Post Primary Schools the school will follow the arrangements as stipulated by the Education Authority. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with the Principal for advice and discussion.

Ballyhackett P.S. is a Feeder School is a for Loreto College, Coleraine.

PUPIL PERFORMANCE

The aim of Ballyhackett Primary School is to ensure that every child reaches their full potential. We work closely with the parents to achieve this aim.

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS AND REPORTS

Parents receive an annual written report. Parents are invited to progress interviews. If parents have any concerns about their child/ren they are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher or Principal.

SCHOOL INSPECTION

In the 2014 Inspection, responses to questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the life and work of the school.

Parents highlighted their appreciation of their children's good progress in learning, the caring, welcoming ethos where each child is treated as an individual, and the very strong sense of community within the school.

Pupils talked about the friendly atmosphere and their enjoyment of school activities such as sport and art. They reported that they felt happy and safe in school and know who to approach if they have any concerns; they enjoy taking on responsibilities through the Eco Council and being playground buddies.

The children use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) confidently and with independence to consolidate aspects of their learning, for example, to redraft written work and manage information.

Practical materials and active approaches are used to good effect to involve the children in their learning and to apply their knowledge in a variety of settings. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. There is an inclusive and respectful ethos where children and families from a diverse range of backgrounds are welcomed and valued. There are excellent working relationships at all levels and a clear commitment by the staff, governors, parents and volunteers to work collaboratively in the best interests of the school.

There are good opportunities for the children to learn about healthy eating and a range of physical activities provided which the children clearly enjoy.



HOMEWORK

Homework provides an important link between home and school. It gives parents an opportunity to see what is happening in school and to share in their children's learning experiences. It also provides an opportunity for children to develop further independence in their own work.

We encourage parents to become involved in their children's homework and ensure it is completed each night. We also encourage children to take responsibility for their own homework and learning. Parents should contact the school if there are any difficulties concerning homework.



Homework for the Foundation Stage

Homework for the younger children will consist of Literacy and Numeracy.

Homework for Key Stages One and Two

Homework for the older children will also consist of Literacy, including Spellings as well as Numeracy.

All children are encouraged to read every weeknight. Listening to your children read aloud is important right through to P7. Remember children are never too old to enjoy a book.



BEHAVIOUR

We operate a Positive Behaviour Policy within school. All our parents are given a copy of our Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. We will not tolerate bullying of any kind. We positively encourage all our children to treat others as they would expect to be treated themselves with courtesy, good manners and respect for themselves and others.

The children are reminded regularly of our high expectations of them and positive behaviour is rewarded.

CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Adhere to school rules
- Listen to and co-operate with all members of staff who have responsibility for them and address them in an appropriate manner
- Use common sense and act in a responsible manner, which is safe to themselves and others
- Walk in school i.e. in the corridors or anywhere in the school building
- Each child is actively encouraged to show respect for the environment, property and equipment
- Leave mobile phones, digital cameras and all other electrical devices at home.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

Ballyhackett Primary School has a uniform and it is expected that it be worn daily.

The uniform for Ballyhackett Primary School can be purchased at, "Heart and Home," Coleraire.

BOYS:

Dark grey trousers

White polo shirt

Burgundy school sweatshirt

Black shoes or trainers

Grey / black socks

Waterproof maroon fleece with school logo

GIRLS:

Grey skirt/pinafore or grey trousers

White polo shirt

Burgundy school sweatshirt

Black flat shoes or trainers

Grey socks/grey tights

Waterproof maroon fleece with school logo

SUMMER:

Girls may wear red/maroon and white checked dresses

Boys may wear grey shorts

White ankle or knee socks

Shoes/trainers without laces are encouraged for the younger children.

Trainers and track suit bottoms must be worn during P.E. lessons.

No rings or large earrings are allowed. If children have their ears pierced they may wear stud earrings.

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Education in Ballyhackett Primary School is provided free of charge for all lessons and activities connected with the child's entitlement under the Education Reform Order.

However, from time to time Ballyhackett Primary School will require a voluntary donation towards costing in relation to educational visits, trips and other activities. Written parental consent will be required before a child participates in these activities.







PFTA

In Ballyhackett Primary School there is a very strong Parents, Friends and Teachers Association. The PFTA organise many very successful events such as the Christmas Extravaganza and Easter Coffee Morning. These events raise much needed funds which enhance the educational experiences of our pupils.

The committee is a voluntary group of parents who are willing to work on behalf of all the parents, planning social activities and fund-raising events throughout the school year.



DEALING WITH YOUR CONCERNS

At Ballyhackett we value parents as partners in the education of our children. The views of parents are significant and we actively encourage positive contributions which parents make to the life of the school. We want your child's experience at Ballyhackett to be very positive and we want your child to feel happy, nurtured and cherished at our school. Please contact us if you have any concerns.





COMMUNITY LINKS

Ballyhackett Primary School has a long history of well established links with the wider community.

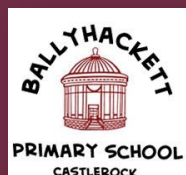
Many local people such as the Emergency Services and Business owners come into the school to help the children learn.

SCHOOL HOURS

Reception:	8:45am-12:00pm
PI-P3:	8:45am-1:40pm
P4-P7:	8:45am-2:45pm

Stay and Play Club for PI-3:
1.40pm-2.45pm

Morning Breakfast Club is
available from 8.15am to
8.45am.



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