



STRANMILLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prospectus 2024 - 25



‘Nurturing & inspiring kind, creative & inquisitive children.’

Thank you for considering sending your child to our school. Stranmillis is a co-educational, controlled primary school, which has been serving South Belfast for over one hundred years. We pride ourselves in providing a caring, family atmosphere in which children are comfortable and happy. In this caring environment, our pupils are equipped with the skills, knowledge and disposition to be happy members of their community who contribute in a positive and creative way. We have high expectations for ourselves and our pupils and a determination that each child will achieve his or her full potential. The school is continually responding and changing, to offer the highest quality of education for our children. We have a very dedicated, enthusiastic and highly qualified group of staff, who see their role very much as a partnership with you and your child. Presently there are 467 children from just over three hundred families attending our school. We have fourteen classes in P1–P7 and a morning and afternoon Nursery class. The average class size is 30.



Linda Wilson
(School Principal)



Our Vision

We believe that all the members of our school community are unique and special individuals. Our school will nurture all these individuals in their life-long journey to achieve their full and unique potential. The members of our school community will be empowered to take ownership of their role as citizens of the local and global communities. We will celebrate our self-worth, appreciate our individual talents and achievements and strive to understand and empathise with others. We will embrace diversity and individual difference and demonstrate, through our daily practice and procedures, respect for all. We will accept our responsibility to ensure that our vision is transparent in all that we do.

Curriculum Policy

All children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education that provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. Work in school should be designed to meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.



At Stranmillis Primary School we will:

- cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties or physical disabilities;
- facilitate children's acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically, so that they may become independent, responsible, useful, thinking, confident and considerate members of the community;
- create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment;
- ensure that each child's education has continuity and progression;
- ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks he/she is asked to perform;
- provide an appropriate curricular balance amongst the competing and sometimes conflicting aims of education;

- recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process; and
- treat children in a dignified way.

Children should:

- learn to be adaptable, solve problems in a variety of situations, and work independently and as members of a team;
- be developing the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources;
- be happy, cheerful and well balanced;
- be enthusiastic and eager to put their best into all activities;
- begin acquiring a set of moral values, e.g. honesty, sincerity and personal responsibility, on which to base their own behaviour;
- be expected to behave in a dignified and acceptable way and learn to become responsible for their actions;
- care for and take pride in their school;
- be developing tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way;
- be developing non-sexist and non-racist attitudes;
- know how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, measurement, shape and space, and handling data;
- be able to listen and read for a variety of purposes and be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes;
- be developing an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems;

- have an opportunity to solve problems using technological skills;
- be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms, including art and design, music and drama;
- be acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity;



- know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and the national heritage; be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events;
- have some knowledge of the beliefs of the major world religions;
- be developing agility, physical co-ordination and confidence in and through movement; and
- know how to apply the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety.

N.B

Assemblies/RE

At Stranmillis Primary, we value the importance of our pupils gathering each week to: promote and learn about our core school values; celebrate successes; share important information; sing together; and to cover elements of the statutory RE curriculum. To that end, P1-P3 and P4-P7, assemble twice a week for twenty minutes. P1-P3 meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and P4-P7 on Mondays and Fridays. On Wednesdays, we have a P5-P7 choir practice.

The first assembly of every month is our 'values' assembly when the focus is on our 'value of the month'. We then have two singing assemblies a month when the children learn Christian songs, and two singing assemblies when the children learn other songs. On occasions, P4-P7 have visitors from local churches, during which the visitor shares with the children a moral or value based on a Bible story. P1-P3 assemblies don't have visitors from local churches, but teachers lead assemblies along the same lines as described for P4-P7. In the run up to Christmas, several assemblies are set aside to practise for the P1-P3 nativity plays and for the P4-P7 Christmas concert in Fisherwick.

In addition, we have many other assemblies throughout the year to teach the children other aspects of PDMU, WAU, and literacy etc. These include safeguarding, e-safety, World Book Day, Sports Day, visits from charities and organisations such as RNLI and the Red Cross, Earth Day, Chinese New Year celebrations, and three end of term celebration assemblies.

As detailed in the Northern Ireland RE curriculum, parents can withdraw their children from part or all of Religious Education or collective worship. If you

would like to withdraw your child from Religious Education and/or assemblies with religious content, please inform the class teacher by email or through Seesaw. They will then participate in meaningful learning activities elsewhere in school.

Complaints Procedure (summary)

If you are worried about your child's learning or welfare at school, your child's class teacher is the best person to approach first. Teachers will usually be in the classroom during the day, but you can leave messages with the school office asking the teacher to get back to you.

If the teacher can't help, or you are not satisfied with their response, you can talk to the Principal. You should be able to arrange a meeting or a telephone conversation with the Principal through the school office. If this isn't practical, you may wish to make a written complaint.

If your complaint is not resolved, the next stage is to approach the Board of Governors (BoG). All complaints to the governing body must be in writing. Governors will reply in writing within 10 days

A copy of our full complaints procedure can be obtained from the school office.

Special Educational Needs

Stranmillis Primary School has a whole school approach to provision for children with additional needs. We aim to identify as early as possible where children need additional support and put in place the appropriate strand of the SEND Code of Practice. Identification is based on standardised and diagnostic assessments, teacher observations and parental concerns. We work closely with educational psychologists to provide support and development programmes for children with special educational needs. Pupils may be placed on the Special Educational Needs register for a short or long term period. Reviews are held with parents to keep them informed of the progress their child is making. Support is provided by the classroom teachers, the Learning Support Co-ordinator, our classroom assistants and specialised teachers from a range of external agencies.

Homework

Homework will become an increasingly important feature of school life as your child progresses through school. It is set for several reasons: to consolidate work done during the day; to allow the children the opportunity to carry out research; to keep parents informed about what their children are doing in school; and to establish the habit and discipline of independent work and study which will be so important throughout your child's education. We hope that you will encourage your child and take an active interest in their homework.



Pastoral Care

In our school every day there are over four hundred young people and approximately Forty adults, all of whom bring their various experiences, expectations and needs. Each member of our school community shares a responsibility for the care and well-being of everyone here. Members of staff have a responsibility to our children and to each other. Each child has a responsibility to their peers and adults to behave in a way which is supportive and positive. Each child can expect a secure, structured and happy learning environment to be maintained so that they might flourish.

Looking after the well-being and safety of our pupils is a prime responsibility; the procedures for dealing with the supervision of children and with children who are ill or injured are outlined in our Health and Safety Policy.

At all times we strive to help our children develop a strong sense of self-worth, a positive self-image and high self-esteem. If children develop in these ways we hope that they will become happy and fulfilled now and later as adults. We will try to ensure that all our children:

- see themselves as valued members of our school community, possessing unique talents and qualities,
- feel comfortable and confident in expressing themselves with others, and
- learn the skills which will enable them to maintain a sense of control over their lives.

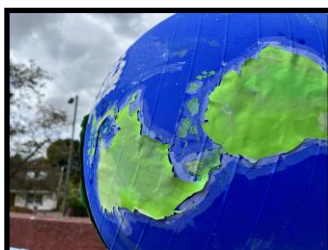
The Safeguarding Team at Stranmillis Primary School

(Chair) Principal & Deputy Designated Teacher:	Mrs Linda Wilson
Designated Teacher for Child Protection:	Mr Peter McKane
Deputy Designated Teacher:	Mrs Linda Wilson
Chair of Governors:	Dr Maureen Thatcher
Designated Governor for Child Protection:	Mrs Jane Moriarty



Inclusion and Diversity

Stranmillis is a unique school community, drawing our children from home backgrounds that are rich and diverse in their cultural, ethnic, social and religious origins. Such diversity adds enormously to our school and helps provide our children with a stimulating and challenging environment in which to develop and flourish. There are, for example, some twenty different 'home' languages spoken, representing twenty-four different ethnic groups and a wide variety of religions. As well as the normal day to day integration of all our pupils, several special events are held each year; these have included visits from the Chinese Welfare Community Dragon Dancers, parents who have shared their traditions and culture, and our annual Culture Day when we celebrate food, traditions, stories and much more from across the world. We also have a tradition of hosting international visitors associated with the school and Stranmillis College. As a learning community we place great importance upon the uniqueness of each person and the contribution which we can all make.



Extra-Curricular Activities

At Stranmillis we aim to develop the whole child. As well as ensuring the highest possible standards across the six areas of learning, our programme of extra curricular activities provides wide and varied opportunities for the children to develop interests outside the classroom. We are very grateful to our teaching staff, PTA committee and external tutors whose commitment makes this possible. The following clubs are normally offered to the children; some of these operate within the school day but most begin after the normal day has ended:

- Breakfast Club from 8:00 a.m.
- Judo (P4-P7)
- Cross Country (P5-P7)
- Basketball (P5-P7)
- Rugby (P6-P7)
- Netball (P7)
- Art Club (P1-P5)
- Cycling Proficiency (P7)
- Short Tennis Club (P3-P5)
- GolfTastic (P2-P6)
- Hockey (P6 & P7)
- Football (P4-P7)
- Swimming (Nursery-P7)
- Cricket (P2/P3 & P5/P6)
- Kidz Time: (an after school club, operating in our premises, 2.00p.m. to 6.00p.m. each week day.)
- Miniversity (P4-P7)
- Eco Club (P4-P5)
- School Choir
- The Band
- The Orchestra
- Chess (P4-P7)
- Gardening Club (P4)
- Lingotots- Spanish (P2-P7)
- Film Club
- Cookery



The School Council

Our school council is made up of a boy and a girl from each class, P4 – P7. The council provides opportunities for the children to contribute their ideas regarding how school life can be further enhanced. In recent years the council has provided new toys and balls for use in the playground, organised theme days such as ‘Stranmillis Got Talent’ and raised money for several charities The Royal Victoria Hospital MRI Scanner Appeal, The British Deaf Society, The Woodland Trust and The Northern Ireland Children’s Hospice.

Parent Teacher Association

Stranmillis has a very strong Parent Teacher Association that adds enormously to the life of the school. All parents are automatically members of the PTA and are encouraged to play an active part in it. The PTA makes a much valued and needed financial contribution to the school, enabling us to provide opportunities and resources for our children which, given the on-going financial constraints under which schools are forced to operate, may not otherwise be available. The PTA has traditionally and very successfully combined two equally important functions: fund-raising and promoting good relations between all members of our school community. In recent years, events have included: the school formal, quiz nights, Hallowe’en events, Christmas Fair, the Christmas tree sale and Culture Day. In addition to parents’ events, the PTA also organises several family events during the year: at Hallowe’en, Christmas and during the summer term. It really is a vibrant organisation and welcomes all enthusiastic volunteers, as well as any new and exciting ideas for events.

School Uniform

Main Uniform

- Grey trousers / grey skirts or pinafores; girls may wear trousers and grey shorts may be worn if preferred.
- Black shoes only – (black trainers may be worn provided they are totally black.) Girls’ shoes must be flat with either laces or an ankle strap;
- Grey socks or tights
- Gym shoes without laces, for PE

- School Sweatshirt or Maroon jumper / cardigan
- Pale blue polo shirt
- No jewellery, except for watches and small studs if children have had their ears pierced.

Summer Uniform

- Girls may wear blue summer dresses with white socks. Plain, enclosed, black or white sandals or shoes may be worn.
- Boys may wear tailored grey shorts with grey socks and black shoes.

All items of school uniform can be purchased from GOTTO Sports, Stranmillis Road (www.gottosports.com)

PE Uniform

- **Plain** navy/black shorts, tracksuit bottoms or leggings
- School polo shirt or plain white t shirt
- trainers



Assessment Outcomes

In Northern Ireland the seven years of primary education are divided into three Key Stages:

- The Foundation Stage: P1 and P2
- Key Stage 1: P3 and P4
- Key Stage 2: P5 – P7

At the end of P7 over 90% of children normally transfer to their first-choice school.

Term Dates 2024 – 2025

Autumn Term

27 August	School re-opens*
25 October	School Development Day (Parental Consultations)
28 October – 1 November	Half-term holiday (incl.)
20 December	Term ends at 12 noon

Spring Term

3 January	School re-opens*
10 - 14 February	Half-term holiday (incl.)
14 March	School Development Day (Parental Consultations)
17 March	St Patrick's Day Closure
11 April	Term ends at 12 noon

Summer Term

28 April	School re-opens*
5 May	May Day Closure
26 May	Bank Holiday
27 May	School Development Day
27 June	Term ends at 12 noon

* Indicates a normal school day

School Development Day – staff only in attendance

Miscellaneous

School policies

A copy of the Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying Policies can be accessed on our school website, should you be unable to view these please contact the school office and paper copies can be sent home. The most pertinent policies can be viewed or downloaded from the school website. Copies of these or any other policies will be sent home free of charge upon request.

Attendance:

Excellent pupil attendance is strongly promoted at Stranmillis to ensure that all pupils are able to maximise the learning opportunities given and therefore their potential.

Admissions:

Stranmillis is normally over-subscribed both in the Nursery and P1. Parents may obtain copies of the admissions policies for all schools in Belfast from the Belfast Education and Library Board Headquarters, or from the school, in late December each year. The school has intake figures of 52 for Nursery and 58 for Primary 1, set by the Department of Education. Any parent considering making an application to Stranmillis may contact the school to arrange an individual visit to see around and to meet the Principal. Such visits are encouraged and welcome. Children are also welcomed on these visits.



Nursery admissions for the past three years

	1 st preference applications	Number of pupils admitted
2020	50	52
2021	46	52
2022	62	52
2023	63	52
2024	70	52

P1 admissions for the past three years

	1 st preference applications	Number of pupils admitted
2021	69	60
2022	66	60
2023	73	60
2024	72	60

Charities:

Charity work is an important feature of our school and each year we try to support a local, a national and an international charity, raising between £5,000 and £10,000.

Home School Liaison:

At Stranmillis we believe that good communication between home and school is vital to the progress and happiness of our children. Contact with teachers can be via the Seesaw platform, email, telephone, or face to face meetings. The school website is also used to provide up-to-date information on all aspects of school life. If there are concerns, both parents and teachers need to know about them. Meetings can be arranged at any point in the school year by mutual agreement. The school reports to parents three times a year: in October, March and June. In October and March, the report is by way of a parent-teacher consultation; in June it is by way of a written report in keeping with the requirements of the Primary Curriculum (2007).

.. and finally:

Our school is a vibrant place of learning, for adults and children, and very much at the heart of its community. Providing a safe and secure environment is always our major task and we do our best to ensure that all the children enjoy a rich, rewarding and challenging experience throughout the time they are in our care. The whole school staff wants the very best for all the children and promise to treat them fairly and with respect. We will do all that we can, working in partnership with you, to ensure that your children will thrive and reach their full potential; in short, that we provide:

‘Nurturing & inspiring kind, creative & inquisitive children.’

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All other school policy documents, including pastoral care, drugs education, anti-bullying, discipline, special educational needs and charges and remissions, are available for inspection and information on request.

STRANMILLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Chair of Governors: Dr Maureen Thatcher
Principal: Linda Wilson
