



**St James's  
Primary School  
and Nursery Unit**

**School Information**

## WELCOME

On behalf of the Governors, staff, parents and children, I would like to welcome you to St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit.

St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit is a vibrant, forward thinking, inclusive school in Whiteabbey. We welcome children from lots of different backgrounds and cultures and we value and cherish everyone as a unique individual. We have a hard working, dedicated staff who work tirelessly to develop our children socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically and academically and ensure that each child is happy in our school. We enjoy the support of our parents and work in partnership with them to ensure their children flourish in our care. We have high expectations of all our children and we are always aiming to raise standards in all that we do.

Over the last number of years, we have invested in developing our learning environment and our school has undergone a programme of improvements which is still continuing. We are all very proud of our new learning environment and feel that it is now better suited to meeting the needs of our children and in helping all our children achieve their potential.

Last year, we were delighted to receive an award for promoting equality, tolerance and respect. This award is recognition of all that our whole school community achieves on a daily basis.

This year we have been able to provide Wraparound Care in our school. Ruby Roo's provides high quality after school care from 2.00pm until 6.00pm daily as well as day care during the holidays. This fantastic addition to our school provides affordable, convenient, child centred childcare for our parents.

I hope that, as you read our Prospectus, you will get a flavour of our child centred approach and an idea of the variety of learning experiences and opportunities available to our children. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Paula Cunningham

Principal

## OUR VISION

At St James's we aspire to provide high quality learning and teaching which is child centred and values the uniqueness of each child. Our Catholic values are at the heart of all that we do and they are reflected in all relationships within our diverse whole school community. We provide opportunities so that each child can achieve success, fulfil their potential and develop their thinking, creativity, enthusiasm and independence. We promote children's rights in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We aim to provide a safe, stimulating, happy and healthy environment where everyone is valued, listened to, cared for and respected. We strive to inspire and ignite a passion for lifelong learning and to develop responsible, confident children who can provide a valuable contribution to society.



*"The children are welcoming and respectful towards visitors and take pride in their school." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*

## OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL DAY

8.00am – 8.50am	Breakfast Club
8.50am	We welcome the children
9.00am	School day begins
10.25am – 10.40am	Year 1, 2, 3 and 7 Break time
10.45am – 11.00am	Year 4, 5 and 6 Break time
12.00pm – 12.45pm	Year 1, 2 and 3 Lunch time
12.15pm – 1.00pm	Year 7 Lunch time
12.30pm – 1.15pm	Year 4, 5 and 6 Lunch time
2.00pm	Year 1 and 2 Finishing time Year 3 Finishing time until Hallowe'en
3.00pm	Year 4, 5, 6 and 7 Finishing Time Year 3 Finishing time after Hallowe'en

On a Friday our Primary School children finish at 2.00pm.

## BREAKFAST CLUB

We offer a Breakfast Club every morning from 8.00am which is supervised by staff. The current cost is £1.50 per day and the children receive cereal, toast and juice. Alternatively, children can attend Breakfast Club for supervision only at a current cost of £1 per day. During Breakfast Club, the children are able to participate in various play based activities. We are grateful to St Vincent de Paul Society who subsidise our Breakfast Club.



## PASTORAL CARE IN OUR SCHOOL

In St James's we place a great deal of importance in Pastoral Care and see it as having a central role in everything we do. We see our children as individuals who grow and develop in a stimulating environment where they are given opportunities to develop their abilities and talents. We aim to ensure a happy, caring, safe and appropriate learning environment in which the potential of every child is fully realised. We emphasise that:

- Every child is an important individual entrusted to us by their parents/guardians and society, worthy of unconditional respect, with individual needs which must be understood.
- Every teacher and staff member is a professional entrusted with the education and care of our children and requires the support and respect of parents/guardians, school leadership and society.
- Every parent/guardian is a vital partner working together with the school community to model, promote, teach and maintain positive behaviour.

*"The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school and the Nursery Unit is very good. The supportive and inclusive ethos contributes to a positive learning environment for the children..." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*

A key feature of our Pastoral Care is Safeguarding and Child Protection. In St James's we all have a responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of all our pupils. We have clear procedures in place for dealing with any issues or concerns that may arise. All school staff are trained annually in Safeguarding and any volunteers in our school, who have unsupervised access to children, are vetted. Photographs of our Safeguarding Team are displayed throughout the school.

Our current Safeguarding Team includes Mrs Hinds (Designated Teacher), Mrs Kelly (Deputy Designated Teacher), Mrs Higgins (Deputy Designated Teacher) and Mrs Cunningham (Principal).

Mrs Samantha Sayers is our Designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection.



## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

In St James's we value our relationship with parents and guardians. We believe that involving parents in their child's learning is central to the success of all pupils. Our 'Parents as Partners' Programme provides opportunities for parents to participate in workshops to help them support their child's learning, for example Phonics, Numicon, Accelerated Reader. Parents/Guardians will have the opportunity to meet their child's teacher throughout the year and receive an annual written report.

We pride ourselves in our effective communication with parents. We have a very informative website ([www.stjamesps.co.uk](http://www.stjamesps.co.uk)) and Facebook page, we use ParentMail to email and text and we display messages on television screens in our school. Parents can link to Class Dojo (a communication app used to promote development of certain skills and values), See Saw (an online portfolio of children's work where parents can see what their child is doing in school) and Accelerated Reader Home Connect. We appreciate feedback from parents and encourage parents to share their opinions and views with us.

We have a highly motivated and dedicated Parent Teacher Association and encourage all parents to become involved. Our PTA work tirelessly to raise funds for our school. All monies raised go towards resources to enhance the learning experiences of all our children.

*"The parents are welcomed and encouraged to be involved in the life of the school...The staff are building good partnerships with the parents to keep them informed and involved in their children's learning." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*



## YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING IN OUR NURSERY UNIT

St James's Nursery Unit offers pre-school provision for children on a full time and part time basis. Our Nursery Unit provides a happy, welcoming and stimulating environment. Each child is valued and respected as an individual, encouraged to grow in confidence and self esteem and develop to their full potential.

Our Nursery Unit is a spacious and attractive environment located in a separate building within the school grounds. It is teacher led and staffed by a dedicated and highly motivated Nursery team.

During your child's Nursery year they will experience a range of structured and stimulating activities to develop their knowledge and skills through the six areas of the Nursery curriculum. These six areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Language Development

Physical Development

Early Mathematical Development

The Arts

The World Around Us



## OUR NURSERY DAY

- 8.50am We welcome the children
- 9.00am Nursery day begins for full time and part time morning classes
- 11.30am Morning class Finishing time
- 12.00pm Full time class lunch time
- 12.30pm Nursery day begins for Afternoon Class
- 1.30pm Full time class Finishing time
- 3.00pm Afternoon class Finishing time



*"The children in the Nursery Unit are well settled and respectful to one another and the staff... In the Nursery Unit, the children's educational programme is well balanced providing good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*

## YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING IN OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL

In St James's we follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Your child will experience a broad and balanced curriculum which provides for their academic, moral, physical, creative and social development. The six Areas of Learning in the curriculum are:

Language and Literacy

Mathematics and Numeracy

The World Around Us (Science and Technology, History, Geography)

The Arts (Art and Design, Music, Drama)

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

Physical Education



*"...the teachers had appropriately high expectations; built effectively on the children's prior learning; demonstrated good classroom management techniques to promote positive behaviour and well structured group work; and, used good quality resources and effective questioning to stimulate children's language and thinking." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*

At the heart of the curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and contributing effectively to society. Through opportunities to engage in play based and active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum, children will develop the Cross Curricular Skills of:

Communication

Using Mathematics

Using ICT

and the following Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

Self Management

Working with Others

Managing Information

Being Creative

Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making



## Religious Education and Assemblies

As a Catholic school our faith and values permeate all aspects of school life. We pride ourselves on welcoming many different religions within our school and foster respect, tolerance and understanding for all. We follow the Grow in Love programme from Year 1 to Year 7 and prepare children for their Sacraments.

We value regularly coming together as a school community to pray, sing hymns and celebrate achievements. At our Assemblies we often have visitors from within and beyond our community as well as teachers and children leading. When children present Assembly, parents are invited to attend.

## Information and Communications Technology

We are proud to have an excellent range of ICT resources. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard or a new Promethean Active Panel and the children have access to iPads which enrich every area of the curriculum and add to the children's learning experiences. Our ICT suite has over 30 computers where children can perfect their ICT skills. The children benefit from using the ICT suite to research new themes and use applications to practise their cross-curricular skills.



## Physical Development

Sport in St James's is promoted and developed through our Physical Education programme and every year our children take part in a range of sporting events along with other schools in the area. In recent times this has included athletics competitions, football tournaments and cricket matches. Our Year Five to Year Seven children visit the local leisure centre every year to learn to swim. Our Sports' Day each year is a highlight and is thoroughly enjoyed by all children.



## Music and Drama

Music and Musical Theatre are promoted and developed in St James's throughout the school. Currently our children have the opportunity to learn to play instruments such as guitar, violin, flute, clarinet and drums. Our school choir perform regularly at school functions and religious events and proudly take part in the Peace Proms every year along with many other schools from all over Northern Ireland. Our Year Seven children perform a Musical Drama every year and our younger children delight their audiences with their singing and acting at Christmas time.



## Educational Visits

Throughout their time in St James's, our children experience a variety of educational visits which enhance their learning and bring new themes to life. Recent visits have included to the Planetarium, the Ulster Museum, the Navan Centre, the Titanic Museum, Greenmount, W5, Belfast Zoo and The MAC. We also enjoy educational visits from our community partners and other educational facilitators for example, the NSPCC, the Dairy Council, Women's Aid, the Woodland Trust and Cancer Focus NI.



## A Health Promoting School

We in St James's are proud to call ourselves a 'Healthy School'. We actively promote a healthy lifestyle through our 'Healthy Break' initiative and the children go outside for fifteen minutes of exercise every day as part of our 'Fit in Fifteen' programme. Our school is also very proud of our 'Garden Area' where children experience growing their own fruit and vegetables and discuss the benefits of healthy eating.

## After School Provision

We pride ourselves in being able to offer our children a range of after school clubs from Year 1 to Year 7. Our programme currently includes, Art and Craft, Judo, Soccer, Multisports, Dodgeball, Basketball, Soccer, Golf, Drums and Drama. The children enrol for a Club for a specific length of time and then have the option to try a different Club.

Child-centred, affordable wraparound care is available from Ruby Roo's on our school site from 2pm-6pm daily and during holiday times.



## ACCOMMODATION

St James's is made up of two buildings with the Nursery Unit and SureStart being housed in a separate building on the same site as our Primary School. We are fortunate to have a school meals kitchen which makes the meals for our school and a number of neighbouring schools. We have a large canteen and a multi purpose hall. We have a Sensory Room and an ICT Suite along with a Library which houses the books for our Accelerated Reader programme. Our play area for Foundation Stage and Key Stage One is a valuable resource for play based learning. We have a state of the art hygiene room for children with specific needs and a recent programme of refurbishment included the installation of lifts for those with mobility difficulties. Outside, our large playground is complemented by our school garden and our Forest School area.



## COMMUNITY LINKS

In St James's the learning experiences of our children are enhanced by our links with the wider community.

### Shared Education

We have a long standing relationship with Whitehouse Primary School and Nursery Unit extending over 20 years and over this time we have engaged in numerous projects together impacting positively on our pupils and parents. Our Shared Education Project 'Catalyst of Change' involves STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) workshops in both schools, Forest Schools and Outdoor Learning, shared music lessons, joint Peace Proms choir, PDMU activities, Easter Church visits, Family STEM nights and a Family Fun Day. We also try to offer a Family Residential although this is dependent on additional funding.



### Erasmus+

We value our European links and are privileged to work with a number of European partner schools in the Erasmus+ project funded by the British Council. Our current links are with schools in Northern Ireland, Ireland and Turkey in our 3R project—Respect for Self, respect for Others, respect for the Environment. This project follows on from our successful 'M<sup>3</sup>' project and 'da Vinci 2019' which involved collaboration to stimulate creativity and invention through Art and Science with schools in Northern Ireland, Ireland, Spain, Italy and Finland.



## Sustrans

We work closely with Sustrans to promote active ways to travel to school safely. Our children have taken part in various activities such as 'Ditch the Stabilisers', 'Feet First Families' and a cycling proficiency course. We are delighted to have been awarded our Sustrans Bronze Award.



## Northern Ireland Forest School Association



A number of our teachers have worked with NIFSA and deliver high quality outdoor learning opportunities for our children. We have a dedicated Forest School Area in our school grounds and are proud to be a Forest School.

## British Heart Foundation

We are proud to be a British Heart Foundation Heart Start school. We have a number of members of staff who have trained as Heart Start instructors and they are qualified to train adults and children in life saving CPR.



## Young Enterprise Northern Ireland

Every year children work with Young Enterprise Northern Ireland to develop their entrepreneurial skills. We also attend the Business Masterclass hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

## THRIVE



We are delighted to be working with other local schools in the THRIVE programme. THRIVE works with schools, community groups and local Parent Champions to ensure parents are better supported and connected to give children and young people the best chance to THRIVE and do well.



## Charities

Our school community works to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Our children take part in our Christmas Shoebox Appeal, St Vincent de Paul Christmas hampers and the Trocaire Lenten campaign. We also choose other charities to donate to and these have included Autism NI, Children in Need, the MS Society and The Children's Hospice.

## Virtually There

Our school is only one of a few schools in Northern Ireland to take part in the Virtually There project. This Art project, funded by Kid's Own Publishing, involved our children working with an artist through video conferencing and also direct visits. We have been delighted with the participation of our children in this project in particular in developing their creative thinking and their communication skills.



## Peace Proms

Over the last number of years, our school choir has performed in the Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland's Peace Proms in the SSE Arena. As well as our school choir taking part, we have also had children taking part as part of our Shared Education choir.

*Links with the wider community...provide a range of opportunities beyond the classroom which benefit the children's learning and personal development." (ETI Inspection Report, April 2016)*

Award Winning  
School

Specialist  
Resource Class

Ruby Roo's  
Wraparound  
Care

After School  
Clubs

Breakfast Club  
from 8am

Sensory Room

State of the art  
Hygiene Room

School Garden  
and Forest  
School Area

Sustrans Silver  
Award

New  
Promethean  
Active Panels

Accelerated  
Reader

iPads in every  
class

School Library

Izak 9 and  
Numicon

LIVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER



**St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit**

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