



Portaferry
Integrated Primary School



Proudly Investing in Pupil Success



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welcome to...

Portaferry
Integrated Primary School





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in Pupil Success*



Welcome to Portaferry Integrated Primary School

Thank you for considering Portaferry Integrated Primary School for your little one, and taking time to look at and read our prospectus. In the following pages we have presented a flavour of the wide variety of learning opportunities we provide for the children in the school, which help them grow into independent and responsible young people.



We hope to achieve this by the close co-operation between the school and home. In the coming years, there will be many opportunities for you to share in your child's education. The Principal and staff will try to

foster this "Parents as Partners" view from the very beginning of your child's primary school experience.

Our aim for the children entrusted to us is to ensure that they are happy, safe and well looked after at all times. We also aim to develop their full academic, social and moral potential by offering a varied and stimulating curriculum which meets the needs, skills and talents of all pupils. In recent years, we have added Spanish to our curriculum as we feel that children are never too young to start learning a modern language.

As part of our welcoming ethos, we invite prospective parents to come along for a visit during the school day and experience first hand P.I.P.S. in action!





From the Beginning...

Portaferry Integrated Primary School is situated in pleasant, spacious surroundings at the top of High Street in Portaferry - a very central location within walking distance of all parts of the town. Built in 1934, it became an integrated school in September 1995 and so serves families from both main religious communities as well as those from other faiths or no religious affiliation. Our child centred ethos and integrated values allow children to grow and develop with mutual respect as friends and equals, regardless of gender, religion, background or disability.

There are four bright, cheerful classrooms, well resourced to meet the needs of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. All classrooms are equipped with modern computing facilities, including interactive whiteboards. The school is proud to offer an I.C.T. suite with up to date technology.

Our school offers everything that is special about a small school: a low pupil teacher ratio, a caring, family atmosphere and an environment where each teacher knows every child by name, and can consider individual needs and cater effectively for these. The building includes an administration block, a pupil support area and two play resource rooms. Our extensive school grounds provide stimulation with a range of outdoor art work, willow dome huts, two large playgrounds and a grass area for outdoor play as well as an adventure playground which is very environmentally friendly. School meals are served in a bright, well equipped dining hall, which offers a variety of food, from snacks to traditional meals. The school is a health promoting school and thus offers children a healthy break and incorporates healthy eating into the life and education of the children.





Our Ethos - Our Aims - Our Vision

Proudly Investing in Pupil Success

Broad Aims

- To encourage children to be life long learners.
- To develop for every child a positive self-image and a belief they can succeed.
- To arouse children's curiosity.
- To help children respect and appreciate the society and environment in which they live.
- To help children acquire and develop moral and religious values, and a respect for beliefs and values held by others.
- To develop awareness of self and sensitivity to others and to foster habits of self-discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- To develop all aspects of a child's literacy.
- To understand the application of mathematical ideas in various situations in home, classroom, school and local area.
- To develop a sense of enquiry by equipping children with the skills to think for themselves and develop confidence and independence in their learning
- To broaden children's awareness of their world through exploring its history, geography, science and technology and through equipping them with life skills and awareness of their roles as young citizens.

We place high value on:

- An effective principal supported by dedicated subject co-ordinators
- Caring and committed teachers and classroom assistants
- High expectations among the staff, the pupils and their parents.
- High quality of teaching and learning.

- A clear focus on the standards of pupils' work, informed by the appropriate setting and quality marking of tasks.
- Addressing the needs of pupils who are low achievers or under achievers by providing individual work plans which are shared and endorsed by the pupil and their parents.
- Working closely with parents, pupils and the wider community for the benefit of all.

Vision

To continually promote among pupils and key stakeholders, the values which are at the heart of our school, i.e, respect for self and others, caring and supportive attitudes, diligence, empathy, honesty, celebrating diversity, team spirit and responsibility.

The principal and senior leaders will inspire confidence and respect within our whole school community, promoting high self esteem and empowering others to achieve and maximise their strengths.

We will keep communication channels among governors, parents, staff and especially pupils, open and accessible so that all voices are appropriately represented.

We will engage in continued professional development to ensure that high standards are underpinned by knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and its developments.

Led by the principal and in collaboration with the governors, we will ensure effective and accountable management of the school.



First School Years

Parents are invited to an informal, introductory morning in the summer term at which the organisation of the school is outlined. The school day is discussed and details of the curriculum followed by your children are explained. Suggestions as to how the parents can help their children at home are discussed and details concerning uniform and the equipment required for school are provided.

An invitation is issued to the children to come and visit their classroom and meet their new teacher. On this visit the children are able to experience the play materials provided and explore the environment that will be their new classroom and structured play area.

We will make every effort to establish a good relationship with all parents, as this is the beginning of a partnership between the child, school and parents. Parents are welcome to ask questions or clarify any aspect of starting school about which they are unsure.

Learn to Play - Play to Learn

Young children, who haven't yet started to read or write, express their feelings through play. Play is a young child's work. Our school promotes a meaningful balance between free play and structured play

Even when they begin reading and writing skills, play helps children discover new things about the world, acquire new skills and build up relationships with their friends. When playing in a structured and directed manner, children are learning at the same time. When playing freely, children are using their imagination, developing their social skills, and, perhaps most importantly - having fun!

A great deal of knowledge, especially in Science and Technology, Numeracy and Literacy, is acquired through play. It has therefore an important place within our curriculum for Foundation Stage, thus part of every day will be spent on play activities in the classroom, outdoors, or in the structured play resource room.

We provide a bright and stimulating print rich environment for our little ones, encouraging the development of their imagination, mark making and early writing skills, awareness of number, shape and colour and curiosity about their world.





Areas of Study

Mathematics and Numeracy
Communication

(Language and Literacy)

Personal, Development and Mutual Understanding

The World Around Us

(Science and Technology, History and Geography)

The Arts

(Creative and Expressive Study)

Physical Education

Information and Communication Technology

Religious Education

Spanish

(Primary Modern Language Programme)

The development of thinking skills and personal capabilities is intrinsic to all areas of study

Language and Literacy

Well developed language and literacy skills provide the key to unlocking a world of learning. Through talking and listening, reading and writing, our children are taught to use language and literacy to explore their world, to express themselves confidently, to think creatively and to interact with others. In this way, they learn to communicate effectively in a wide range of ways.

Mathematics and Numeracy

An investigative approach to number is encouraged in our school. Children are taught to use a range of thinking skills to solve problems, seek solutions and make accurate and efficient mental calculations. They explore the world

of shape, measures and data handling through activity based learning experiences designed to promote confidence and enjoyment in all aspects of Mathematics.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT is an integral part of learning and teaching in all aspects of the curriculum. Children are taught to use personal computers and interactive white boards to enhance their learning, to communicate by e-mail, to use websites for research, to play educational games and to publish their work using text and images. Digital photography is used for the children and by the children to support their learning or record significant events and achievements. Our school website includes celebration of pupil achievement and samples of pupil work.

The World Around Us

Through our exploration of the world around us, we aim to provide the children with historical, geographical, scientific and technological knowledge by stimulating their natural curiosity about their world. Activity based topics such as The Vikings, Ancient Egypt, The Human Body and The Zoo are taught through hands on experience, research, educational visits and creative tasks. Children undertake a detailed, coherent Local Study which explores all aspects of the Portaferry area, history, geography, natural habitats, language, music, dance and culture. By the time they reach Primary 7 they are familiar with, and have learned to appreciate the richness and diversity of their local heritage and environment.



The Arts

Art and Design, Drama and Music are cross-curricular in our school - these creative activities enhance the learning experience, develop new skills, encourage creativity and help the children to express themselves confidently. One of the highlights of our school year is the annual Christmas show where two musicals are performed - a nativity play for the younger children and a pantomime style performance by older pupils. We have a strong winning tradition in our school for a range of Art competitions, most recently joint first prize in The Carson Awards organised by the Integrated Education Fund in memory of the late Frank Carson.

Physical Education

All children enjoy regular PE lessons which cover games, dance, athletics and gymnastics. Children learn to swim from Primary 3, attending weekly lessons in Ards Leisure Centre in both swimming and gymnastics. In our outdoor school environment, hard surfaces and grass areas are available for a range of sports, and our school is adjacent to both the astro turf and Portaferry Sports Centre. PE is, therefore an all year round activity, whatever the weather. Children have opportunities to play competitive sports, particularly in soccer and rounders, and enter a range of tournaments in the summer term. Residential visits to local outdoor education centres allow the senior pupils to experience sports such as archery, kayaking, climbing and laser tag.

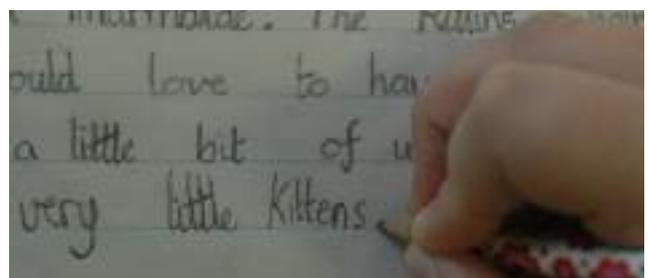
Religious Education

We come together on a weekly basis in our Thursday Assembly for collective worship and to celebrate similarities and differences. As pupils move through the school, they develop an understanding of their own faith,

the faiths of their classmates and other religions throughout the world. In Religious Education classes, children listen and respond to bible stories and learn about positive character traits such as respect, honesty and kindness. Children from the Roman Catholic faith are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Parents may exercise their right to have their children excused in whole or in part, from attending religious education or collective worship.

Learning Support

Each teacher provides a full programme of work for all children in his/her class, whatever their ability. Where pupils with special educational needs are identified through regular monitoring of progress, they are given support through individual/small group targets, and through individual learning programmes in literacy/numeracy. This is in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 5 stage plan and is co-ordinated by the S.E.N.C.O. (Special Needs Educational Needs Co-ordinator). When monitoring and assessment shows that a child is capable of more challenging learning experiences, these are also provided. It is our policy to inform parents from the earliest stage when identifying special educational needs. We believe that home/school liaison is the key to addressing these needs most effectively. For further information, a policy is available in school for your inspection.





Homework

Pupils are given homework because it is useful in consolidating and extending the work done in the classroom. In addition it strengthens the educational partnership between parents and teachers and provides a means by which parents can monitor their child's progress.

Homework is important - your child should attempt as much as possible on his own, but it is of vital importance that parents show interest in their child's homework and provide support in a positive and encouraging way. It is **ESSENTIAL** that parents set aside

TIME

- to check the Homework Diary to find out what work has been set.
- to listen to their child reading and talk about what has been read.
- to ask spellings and tables.
- to check written work ensuring that it has been completed to a satisfactory standard.
- to sign homework regularly.

If the homework takes significantly longer than suggested the parent should sign the effort of their child and return it to the class teacher with an explanatory note.

Assessment

Pupil progress is continually monitored through observation of children, marking of their work, giving them feedback and asking them to assess their own progress and that of their peers. Written reports are sent out once a year. An individual assessment portfolio begins in P.1 and comes through with the child until P.7 when they are presented with the Primary Record of Achievement.

Formal testing reinforces teacher judgement and allows our school to analyse progress at individual, class and whole school level, ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential. These include:

- End of Key Stage Assessment (P4 & P7)
- Computer Based Assessment (P4 - P7)
- January and Summer Class Assessments
- MIST Assessment (Foundation Stage)
- NFER Assessment in English, Mathematics and Reading (May annually P3 - P7)
- Non Readers Intelligence Test (NRIT) (May annually P3 - P7)
- Single Word Spelling Test (May annually P3 - P7)

For further details, an Assessment Policy is available in school for your inspection.

Pastoral Care

Our Pastoral Care Programme is centred on the child and begins with the induction of Primary 1 pupils before the commencement of school. Each teacher has a pastoral care role and will guide and counsel each child in his/her care. They have an important pastoral role to perform through the responsibility for their own class. Our aim is that each child is happy, contented and working to full potential throughout their time at primary school. This is best achieved where child, parent and teacher work in co-operation and harmony. Parents and pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts or concerns with teachers so that these can be addressed before they become problems. If something prevents a child from being happy, contented and successful, then school and home must co-operate to remedy this as soon as possible. It is worth considering that the child who gets most from home gets most from school and the child who gets least from home gets least from school. We also have an active and enthusiastic School Council made up of pupil representatives from Primary 4 - 7. They speak on behalf of all the children and bring ideas, and initiatives, concerns and worries to monthly meetings.



Promoting Positive Behaviour

Our school promotes a positive approach to discipline, rewarding good behaviour and providing high expectations for pupils. Key elements of our approach are centred around the values of mutual respect, taking responsibility for own behaviour and self discipline, being considerate and well mannered towards each other, and also towards school staff and visitors. Each class operates a reward system which included termly star pupil awards, pupil of the week certificates, team points systems and an annual celebration of achievement day. Our school council allows pupils to voice their opinions and make suggestions through their class representatives. Children who are sometimes reluctant to talk to an adult about their worries will often use one of the pupil councillors as a method of getting their message heard.

Policies

Policies related to pastoral care and discipline are available in school on request. These include; Pastoral Care Policy, Discipline Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Policy on Relationships and Sexuality and Drugs education Policy.

Child Protection

The welfare of the child is paramount. This is the underlining principle for Portaferry Integrated Primary School's policy on Child Protection.

AIMS

- To ensure that the school complies with the demands of the Children's NI Order 1995.
- To introduce procedures into the school to ensure that vulnerable pupils are protected and

- suspected cases of child abuse are properly dealt with.
- To appoint a teacher with designated special responsibility for handling child protection issues.
- To appoint a second designated teacher to assure, in case of the absence of the first teacher, this responsibility.
- To provide clear training and guidance to all staff in all aspects of safeguarding and child protection.
- Handling of disclosures by children, reporting procedures.
- To ensure that parents are well informed with regard to the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.
- To ensure safe use of information and communication technologies, in particular the internet.
- To ensure that any concerns which parents have about pupil safety are acted upon efficiently and effectively.





After School Provision / Breakfast Club

A wide range of after school clubs and activities are available for pupils. These vary from term to term, depending on the interests and requests of the pupils. Most recently, after school provision has included; ICT club, Ball Skills club, Let's Build club, Art club, Football club, Rounders club, Homework club, Story & Drama club, Maths Games club and GAA sports activities. Breakfast club is also available, essentially for working parents, but all are welcome to attend. This opens at 8 o'clock every school morning.

School Uniform

The wearing of a school uniform is expected at this school, unless otherwise stated by the principal (e.g. non-uniform days). If you wish your child to be excused from wearing all or part of the uniform for some exceptional reason, please make your request in writing to the principal.

Boys and Girls

Navy "Octopus" Sweat Shirt.

Boys

Navy trousers/ plain jogging pants, yellow polo shirt, black shoes for class. Navy shorts are permissible in summer.

Girls

Navy skirt / pinafore / plain jogging pants / leggings, yellow polo shirt, black shoes. Navy shorts or a yellow or navy gingham dress are permissible in summer.

Hats, caps, coats and fleeces are also available and are a good way of promoting the image of the school.

For details of the current uniform stockists please contact the school secretary.

PE Uniform

White 'T' Shirt and navy shorts/jogging bottoms
Sports shoes / Football boots

Swimming Kit

Swimsuit (not bikini) or trunks
Towel
Goggles (optional)
Swimming cap (optional)

For reasons of safety, we do not encourage the wearing of jewellery or high heels to schools and these are strictly forbidden for PE lessons.

Absence

A pupil returning after absence will receive an Absence Form. Parents must state on this the reason for the absence. A note must also be brought to the class teacher if the child has to leave school early for any reason.

Illness

In the event of a child requiring medical attention during class hours, an attempt is made to contact parents. Under no circumstances can any member of staff administer medicines unless with written permission from the child's parents. A Health and Safety Policy is available in school for your inspection.

School Milk

A scheme operates in the school. Milk is ordered and paid for in advance on a termly / half termly basis. Milk for children in the reception class is free.



School Meals

School meals are available daily and a menu is provided each term. The money for the week, or days in the week on which dinners are required, should be brought in on Monday morning. For parents in receipt of limited income, there is a special scheme available. Further information can be obtained from the school secretary.

Packed Lunches

Children bringing lunches to school are supervised at lunchtime. Glass containers are to be avoided and the use of a separate bag is advisable to avoid accidental spillage on school books.

Healthy Break Time Snacks

Fresh fruit and sandwiches are prepared daily in school to encourage healthy eating at break time. Parents have the option of sending a healthy snack to school for their child, or purchasing from the healthy tuck shop at a very reasonable cost.

Charging and Remissions

Most activities and educational experiences are free to all pupils. Special events such as the annual visit to the Christmas pantomime or school trips and residential incur a charge. Charges are always kept to a minimum and are non profit making in order to provide value for money for parents. The cost of many outings is subsidised by the school to take the additional financial burden off parents. A copy of our full charging and remissions policy is available in school.

Home - School - Community - A Tremendous Trio!

All new parents are invited to join our Parents' Support Group, which meets regularly and informally (usually over a cup of tea or coffee) to discuss fundraising ideas, new initiatives, school news and general views and opinions about all school related matters. Parents are also welcomed into the school to read with the children, help out with school events such as sporting occasions and educational visits, or give their ideas and opinions about new policies or practices. There are two occasions in each year where parents are formally invited into school to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher, and a written report is compiled for each pupil towards the end of the school year. However, our small school ethos and welcoming atmosphere means that parents can talk informally to teachers or the principal at any convenient time. Parents are kept well informed about school life through regular newsletters, school website, school notice boards and text to parents service. Our school has forged strong and meaningful links within the local community. In recent times we have worked / are working on a range of educational projects with

- **Portaferry Regeneration Society**
- **Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership**
- **Strangford and Lecale Partnership**
- **Portaferry Credit Union**
- **Strangford Lough Ranger**
- **Ards Borough Council**

At Christmas, our children spread seasonal cheer among the elderly residents of our community by carol singing and the giving of small gifts. Each year, we strive to be involved in all community initiatives or celebrations because we feel that it is important for our children to feel a sense of pride in their community.



Portaferry
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