



St Bernard's

Primary School & Nursery Unit





Mr. Kavanagh
Principal

WELCOME

On behalf of the children, staff, governors and parents, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to St Bernard's Primary School and Nursery Unit.

We are a vibrant and welcoming school that is committed to providing high-quality, engaging learning for our pupils. We have a holistic approach to each child's development and we provide a child-centred, nurturing, inclusive learning environment to ensure that every child makes the best of their unique God given talents.

We have strong links within the local community and recognise that by building effective working relationships with each child's home, we can ensure that, together we are doing the best for every child.

Our staff are delighted that you have shown an interest in enrolling your child in our school and we hope that in choosing St Bernard's, you will have many happy years watching your child fulfil their potential.

WHO We Are

We are a Catholic Maintained Co-Educational Primary School and Nursery Unit with an enrolment of 621 children from Year 1–7, alongside a Nursery Unit of 52 children attending in two sessions of 26.

Our school is set on a large estate with excellent facilities. Accommodation includes a separate Nursery and Year 1 building, the Clairvaux Building for Year 2 and 5 and the main school building. We have 22 classrooms, a library, a well-equipped gymnasium/Assembly Hall, Medical Room, Staffroom, Administrative Office, ICT Suite, SEN Room, Sensory Rooms and a Dining Hall, all designed to

support high-quality learning experiences.

We are proud to have recently opened a Specialist Provision Unit for children with severe learning difficulties, offering tailored resources and specialist staff to meet individual needs in an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equality.

Our Nursery Unit has its own entrance, outdoor play area and private playground. Classrooms are spacious and designed for play-based learning. Year 1 and 2 enjoy safe play areas and a resurfaced playground shared across the Foundation Stage.

Our school has full disability access and is highly regarded for academic achievement, pastoral care, a wide range of extra-curricular activities and our innovative, forward-thinking approach to teaching and learning.



OUR School

VISION

To create a supportive and inclusive environment, where every child feels valued, encouraged and empowered to succeed in a changing world.

MISSION

We are a caring Catholic community, where every child is appreciated and respected in an environment which celebrates diversity, nurtures talents and recognises the achievements of all.

VALUES

B - belonging
E - empathy
R - respect
N - nurture
A - achievement
R - resilience
D - determination

MOTTO

Inspiring Minds, Creating Futures.



CATHOLIC Distinctiveness

St Bernard's has been serving the Catholic community of our Parish for over 50 years. In aiming for excellence, our children learn and grow in a happy, secure and nurturing environment with Christ at its centre.

As a Catholic School, our overriding aims are to establish and foster Christian values and provide an effective education for all our pupils. Prayer is at the centre of school life. The spiritual development of our children comes through each individual's journey of faith, along with developing a sense of the importance of God's creation and a spirit of social responsibility through the Gospel values.

* Parents/Guardians are permitted to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship.



CURRICULUM

At St Bernard's Primary School, we are committed to giving every child the best start in life through high-quality teaching and learning. Our approach reflects the latest developments in education and is guided by research and best practice, ensuring all children can thrive and reach their full potential.

Our curriculum combines strong subject knowledge with essential life skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. In the Foundation Stage, we focus on play-based learning and continuous provision—meaning children have access to a wide range of carefully planned activities and resources throughout the day. This allows them to explore, create, and learn at their own pace in a safe, stimulating environment.

Modern assessment methods, technology integration, and a focus on emotional well-being ensure St Bernard's provides an inclusive, forward-thinking education that prepares children for life.





OUTDOOR Learning

We know that children benefit in many ways when learning outside the classroom and we encourage this as much as possible in everyday school life. Whether it's making the most of our beautiful grounds, going on a trip, or simply learning in a different space, our teachers relish the chance to get outdoors.

Outdoor learning offers many advantages. It promotes physical health through active play, fosters a connection with nature that supports mental well-being and makes lessons more engaging and memorable. It also encourages creativity, problem-solving and teamwork while building responsibility and environmental awareness—helping children understand the importance of caring for our environment as caretakers of our planet.

We are proud to be working towards becoming a registered Forest School with the Northern Ireland Forest School Association. This approach uses our natural spaces to provide rich outdoor experiences where children develop confidence, communication and teamwork through practical tasks.



INCLUSIVE Education



Every individual child possesses unique qualities and differences. Our curriculum is carefully designed to impart knowledge, foster understanding, build confidence and foster resilience in every learner, equipping them for success in life. We work closely with parents and caregivers to ensure that all children, including those with additional needs, develop the attitudes and skills necessary for effective learning.

Our highly skilled teachers apply flexible strategies to deliver exceptional teaching tailored to each child. Where extra support is needed, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) / Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are implemented and parents are kept fully informed about progress and targets. We believe that strong partnerships between home and school create the foundation for curiosity, independence and a lifelong love of learning.



As an Autism Champion School, we are committed to creating an inclusive, understanding, and supportive environment where every child's unique strengths are celebrated and their needs are met with care and expertise.

Our dedicated SENCO ensures timely advice, referrals, and support, while continuous staff training enhances understanding of conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and early childhood trauma. This proactive approach ensures that every learner receives the right support at the right time.

Our ethos is rooted in creating a safe, happy and caring

environment. Our pastoral team provides unwavering support to children and families and we work closely with external agencies to remove barriers to learning and well-being, ensuring a holistic approach to every child's development. Through enrichment activities, community engagement and a culture of respect, we empower pupils to grow academically, socially and emotionally, preparing them for a bright and successful future.





PHYSICAL EDUCATION and Sport

At St Bernard's, fostering a lifelong passion for physical activity and sports is a core aspect of our educational philosophy. We aim to instil in children the values of a healthy and active lifestyle, equipping them not only to participate in various sports but also to thrive in external competitions.

Our children engage in a diverse range of sports, including Gaelic, soccer, CrossFit, hurling, netball, cross-country running, badminton and Irish dancing, often receiving coaching from external clubs or professional sports instructors. Actively participating in inter-school competitions is a highlight, where our emphasis is not only on achieving success but also on the invaluable experience of teamwork.

We believe that through exposure to various sports and collaborative efforts, our students not only develop physical skills but also essential life skills such as determination, discipline, and resilience. St Bernard's is committed to nurturing well-rounded individuals who carry their love for sports into the broader world beyond our school walls.

MUSIC

Music holds a prominent position within our school, not only showcased through the exceptional music education within classrooms but also through the diverse array of musical events and opportunities that students actively participate in throughout the academic year. Our commitment to fostering musical talent extends beyond traditional classroom settings, offering extensive extra-curricular

activities. These activities serve as platforms for children to enrich their musical knowledge and gain invaluable experiences.

Our school provides a variety of instruments for students to master, including violin, harp, tin whistle and guitar. The vibrant sounds of our large choir resonate at all major events. The children enjoy numerous opportunities to

showcase their musical prowess, whether through the annual school production, the St. Patrick's Day concert, or the festive Christmas plays.

These events not only celebrate the musical achievements of our children but also contribute to the vibrant and creative tapestry of our school community.



PERSONAL Development

At St. Bernard's, personal development is at the heart of our ethos. Pupils are offered numerous opportunities to take on leadership and supportive roles that reflect their interests and strengths. Each year, Digital Leaders, School Councillors and House Captains are elected through a democratic process, ensuring the student voice remains central to school life.

These roles allow children to contribute meaningfully to decision-making, share ideas and influence positive change. By joining groups that align with their passions—whether technology, community or leadership—pupils develop confidence, responsibility and communication skills.

Participation in these roles is closely linked to our school values of respect, resilience, empathy and teamwork, helping children understand how these principles guide their actions and relationships. Through these experiences, we nurture well-rounded individuals who actively shape our inclusive and supportive school community.



Digital Leaders



Eco Team



School Councillors



House Captains

Our NURTURE Approach

St Bernard's places pupil well-being as the focal point of all learning, equipping children with the essential skills, attributes, attitudes, and resilience for successful and positive societal engagement.

To promote mental health, we integrate the "Take 5" steps to well-being into our ethos, emphasising Connection, Physical activity, Taking Notice, Continuous Learning and Giving Back. This holistic perspective permeates every aspect of our educational environment. The Grow In Love religion program offers a vibrant and enjoyable platform for children to explore faith both at home and in school.

Our commitment to recognising achievements is evident in monthly award celebration assemblies, highlighting successes in line with our values. Our BERNARD Values: Belonging, Empathy, Respect, Nurture, Achievement, Resilience and Determination serve as guiding principles, shaping our children's thinking and behaviour. These values underpin everything we do, helping pupils develop holistically within our school community.

Together, these elements create a nurturing and empowering educational environment at St Bernard's.



Wraparound Care

At St Bernard's Primary School, we offer quality wraparound care from 7:45am to 6:00pm, managed by our very own dedicated school staff. This ensures that the children are cared for by familiar faces who know them well, fostering a safe and nurturing environment.

Start the day with a healthy boost at our Breakfast Club, open every morning from 7:45am to 9:00am. Children enjoy a variety of nutritious options, giving them the energy and focus they need for a successful day of learning while supporting their overall growth and well-being.

We offer a wide variety of after-school activities, including Coding Club, Gardening Club, Homework Club and Art Club. These clubs give children the chance to discover new interests, develop valuable skills and enjoy a rich, well-rounded learning experience, all within the safe and supportive environment of our school.

As our wraparound care is in-house, it is offered at a highly competitive rate, making it affordable and accessible for all.



WORKING with Parents

At St Bernard's we acknowledge the pivotal role parents play as the primary educators of their children, and our priority is to collaborate closely with you, throughout your child's educational journey with us. We take immense pride in the invaluable support parents provide, whether it be accompanying us on educational excursions, participating in class assemblies, or attending school performances.

At St Bernard's, the bond between home and school is strengthened by the dedicated involvement of our Parent Teacher Association (PTA), known as Friends of St Bernard's. This dynamic group significantly enhances the school community through a myriad of engaging events, fostering a sense of togetherness. Moreover, the PTA actively raises funds to further enhance the educational experience for our children, exemplifying a collective dedication to enriching the young lives entrusted in our care.



St Bernard's Primary School & Nursery Unit
Elmfield Road
Glengormley
BT36 6DW

T. 028 90 844 634
E. info@stbernardsps.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk
www.stbernardspsglengormley.com