



Garvagh Primary School

Empowering Children for the Future





Welcome to Garvagh Primary School



| Thank you for taking an interest in our school.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for taking time to look through our prospectus and for considering Garvagh Primary School as a suitable school for your child. As you read through this prospectus, I hope you will gain an understanding of the ethos and vision for our school, “Empowering children for the future”.

Garvagh Primary School truly is a very special place. It is a school which has children at its heart. It is a place where children are always put first, a place where every child matters equally, a place where every child is valued, respected, cared for and loved. The members of staff at Garvagh Primary School are a strong, professional team ensuring that every child is engaged in their learning and meeting their potential. We are committed to providing a safe, friendly environment in which our children are able to develop their personalities and skills so that they have a firm foundation for life in an ever-changing world.

We strongly believe that education is a partnership, working closely with parents and carers to develop each child.

Throughout the year, there are many opportunities, both formal and informal, provided for parents/carers to be involved in the education of their children at Garvagh Primary School.

I recognise that choosing a school is a very important decision and I welcome you to get to know more about us by reading this prospectus. While this document is designed to provide you with an insight into our school life, it cannot give you the full picture of what school life is really like. Therefore, I encourage you to take the opportunity to visit us at our open evening to see for yourselves the wonderful experiences and opportunities enjoyed by our pupils or to speak with any parents or pupils you may already know. Alternatively, if this is not convenient, I would invite you to make an appointment with me to visit the school or to have a conversation to get a full picture of life at Garvagh Primary School.

Garvagh Primary School is the school at the centre of the community with the community at its heart — I know that this will be just the perfect place for your child! I look forward to meeting you and welcoming your child.

Mr M. Creelman
Principal

About our school

Garvagh Primary School was originally established in 1835. The school occupied various premises in the town until it moved to the site of Garvagh House in the grounds of Garvagh High School in January 1965.

As the school continued to grow a new building was required. Our present site of Ashes Meadow was purchased and our current building was officially opened in 1973. The school building is very well kept and over the past few years has undergone significant premises improvements. Today the school enjoys a renewed period of growth and provides Primary education for pupils from the Garvagh district. We also provide Pre-School education in the form of Reception.

Accommodation comprises of nine classrooms, four of which have been repurposed to support particular aspects of curriculum provision. We offer an Early Years Playroom, an Accelerated Reader Library, a SEN room, an ICT suite and a community room. These additional indoor learning spaces complement traditional classroom spaces.

We also have a large Assembly Hall which serves as an equipped gym and dining hall. We are very fortunate to have our own school canteen on site which also supplies school meals to other local schools.

Our extensive school grounds provide large tarmacked play areas for recreational sports and games during playtimes. We also have a new play park specially designed by our children, parents and staff. This is a much loved play space which greatly enhances the well-being of our children. The site also boasts an expansive grass play area which offers fantastic space for organised games and events such as soccer, rugby, athletics as well as summer playtimes.

As the school is conveniently located at the heart of the town we can take advantage of facilities on our doorstep such as the library, museum and forest to enrich learning.

To support our families we offer a daily Breakfast Club from 8am until 8.40am (playground supervision from 8.40 - 9.00am) and a Ducklings After School play club for pupils between 2pm and 3pm, along with a homework club that runs from 3pm to 5pm. All pupils enjoy a varied range of after school clubs four days per week.

The School is also serviced by Education Authority School Bus Transport.





Mission Statement

- At Garvagh Primary School our Mission Statement is “Empowering children for the future”. We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun.
- Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.
- We are a self-improving school. We believe to give the best to our children all staff need to be the best they can be, individually and as a team. Through Continuing Professional Development opportunities we uphold a Capacity Building approach which is at the heart of our drive for self-improvement.
- The Governors, Principal and staff of Garvagh Primary School believe that a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of each child should be offered to all pupils and that their learning experience takes account of individual needs and prepare each pupil for their life's journey.
- We work hard to ensure our children grow up within a safe, nurturing environment where they know they are deeply cared for by adults whom they can trust.
- Garvagh Primary School aspires to be a school at the heart of our community with the community at its heart... a place where every child and family are safe, valued, respected, cared for, nurtured... empowered.

Quality of Provision

ETI carried out a Sustaining Improvement Inspection in May 2018 in which they noted the school was one of high capacity. In particular attention was drawn to the Leadership and Management of the school which received high praise, the involvement of stakeholders and the positive learning experiences of the pupils. ETI noted:

- The work of the Principal in effectively promoting a culture of robust self-evaluation;
- Very good management oversight;
- The school's use of effective Consultation processes;
- The action planning processes linked to the School Development Plan;
- The rigorous monitoring processes in place which support learning well;
- Close links with the School Governance team;
- Pupils' reports of being happy and well supported;
- Positive working relationships between pupils and all staff;
- The role of the School Council in articulating the pupil voice;
- The range of important improvements that have taken place since the last inspection including pupils' appreciation of the recently rejuvenated outdoor play facilities.



A copy of the Inspection Report is available to download at:

www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications

Admissions

Garvagh Primary School is a Controlled co-educational Primary School.

The enrolment number and admission number for the school are:

Enrolment number: 236 (ie total enrolment permitted)

Admission number: 30 (ie total admissions permitted to P1)

The admissions criteria for the school is drawn up by the Board of Governors and administered by the Principal. Criteria will be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed. The criteria are listed in order of priority.

1. Preference will be given to any pupil who has attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission in accordance with the school's admission number.
2. Preference will be given to any child who has/had older brothers, sisters or parents enrolled at the school.
3. Preference will be given to any child whose parent/guardian is an employee of the school.
4. Preference will be given to pupils who are the first in their family to seek entry to the school.
5. Preference will be given to pupils who have/had siblings at other Primary Schools in the area.
6. Compulsory school age children whose home address is closest to the school as measured by public road.

7. In the event of places being available after the admission of all compulsory school age applicants, consideration will be given to the admission of children below compulsory school age who have reached their 4th birthday.

The admissions criteria is reviewed annually and is subject to change. Please contact the school office for the most up to date information.



School Day



8am - 8.40am	Breakfast Club
8.40 - 9.00am	Supervised playtime arrival
9.00am	School begins
10.40 - 11.00am	Break and Outdoor Play
12 noon*	Pre-School Reception finishing time
12.25pm - 1.15pm	Lunch
2.00pm	P1 & P2 daily finishing time
3.00pm	P3 Wednesday & Thursday finishing time P3-7 Friday finishing time P3-7 Monday & Tuesday finishing time P4-7 Wednesday & Thursday finishing time

Break

We actively promote a Healthy Break policy. Pupils are encouraged to bring a piece of fruit, vegetables or bread product to school for their break.

Our canteen offers a break time 'toast stop' which sells items such as toast and fruit. Pupils are also encouraged to drink water from the bottled water coolers or purchase school milk.

Lunch

Pupils can either enjoy a packed lunch brought from home or a school dinner made on the premises and served in the dining hall. Dinner menus are distributed at the start of each term.

Pupils can select their choices for the week and pre-order on Monday mornings. If you think your child is entitled to Free School Meals please contact the School Office and we will be pleased to help you.

*reception pupils are valued members of our school and are welcome to stay for special events e.g. Christmas, Easter trips etc.

School Uniform

Primary Boys

- Light blue crested polo shirt
- Navy school sweatshirt
- Grey trousers
- Grey socks
- Black shoes
- Grey shorts
- P1 & 2 gym shoes for PE
- P3-7 PE kit - plain tee shirt, shorts and gym shoes

Pre-School Reception Boys

- Red polo shirt
- Navy school sweatshirt
- Grey trousers
- Grey socks
- Black shoes
- Grey shorts
- Gym shoes for PE

Primary Girls

- Light blue crested polo shirt
- Navy school sweatshirt
- Grey pinafore or skirt
- Grey socks/tights
- Black shoes
- Navy hair accessories
- Blue gingham summer dress
- P1& 2 gym shoes for PE
- P3-7 PE kit — plain tee shirt, shorts and gym shoes

Pre-School Reception Girls

- Red polo shirt
- Navy school sweatshirt
- Grey pinafore or skirt
- Black shoes
- Red hair accessories
- Red gingham summer dress
- Gym shoes for PE



Pupil Behaviour

Garvagh Primary School operates by family values. We promote and nurture a strong family ethos. In so doing we actively teach our children to care for themselves and each other. We expect our pupils to behave in a responsible manner, showing consideration, courtesy and respect at all times.

We have behaviour management strategies in place for all classes which children help to create at the start of each year. This focuses on rules, rewards and consequences. We actively promote making good choices. This positive approach to discipline enables our children to settle well to learning and work towards achieving personal bests.

With the exception of a medical alert bracelet, a watch and a pair of stud earrings jewellery is not permitted for health and safety reasons. Black shoes must be worn.



Primary School Curriculum

There are now three Key Stages within the Primary School:

- Primary 1 & 2 are Foundation Stage
- Primary 3 & 4 are Key Stage 1
- Primary 5, 6 & 7 are Key Stage 2

Garvagh Primary School provides a broad and balanced curriculum planned to suit the needs of the individual child across each Key Stage. The curriculum focuses on the following areas:

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

* All parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education classes should they wish to do so.

Pre-School Curriculum

We are also pleased to offer Pre-School Reception provision to children below compulsory school age who have reached their 4th birthday.

This provision is teacher-led and is supported by a full time Early Years assistant. We adhere to the curricular guidance for pre-school education and our carefully planned programme takes account of children's age, stages of development and interests to provide enriched indoor and outdoor learning activities. We work in close partnership with families to ensure all children settle well and enjoy early learning success.

We believe that high quality pre-school education ensures the best long-term outcomes for children and helps them achieve their full potential in all areas of development.

Our Reception class is an integral part of Garvagh Primary School, and is involved as far as is possible, in all aspects of school life.



Homework

School Homework

In our school all Primary pupils receive regular homework. Spending time working together with your child enables them to consolidate key concepts and helps inform you about what is being studied in class.

Homework is an important home-school link. As children progress through the Key Stages homework activities may consist of practical or written activities, reading, learning, investigations or a research task. We encourage all parents to take an interest in their child's homework and sign it upon completion. We are always available for support or advice if this is needed.

Monitoring pupil progress

We have an open door policy whereby we work in partnership with parents so the benefits can be multiplied for children. Parents are always welcome to discuss any concerns with their child's teacher either on an informal basis or by requesting a meeting. During the year we hold two Parent Interviews which provide opportunity for parental and professional discussion about your child's progress. We also hold a series of meetings on educational themes for parents.



Assessment

From an early age we encourage pupils to take ownership of their own learning. Staff encourage pupils to think about how they have engaged in their daily tasks, the standards they have achieved and the steps which might need to be taken for further improvement. Pupils regularly participate in ongoing class based assessments which allow teachers to gauge what the child can now do and plan for the next steps in learning. From P3 upwards pupils annually undertake standardised tests which further help determine progress. At the end of P4 and P7 NI curriculum levels are awarded in Communication, Mathematics and ICT. Parents are kept fully informed of the outcomes of all assessments and advised as to how to help their child maximise future learning.

Monitoring pupil progress

We recognise that all children learn at different rates and in different ways. Our class sizes mean that the maximum amount of support is available to each child from the teaching and assistant team. Where a child is experiencing learning difficulties or delay we will devise an Individual Education Plan in consultation with the parents. Where appropriate the school will also work with external agencies to further support the child. As a school family we recognise that a small number of children may be gifted or talented. Children of exceptional ability will also be nurtured and supported appropriately.

Community



School Council

Each year pupils from P3 — 7 submit manifestos and canvass prior to a democratic election of the School Council at the ballot box. Pupils are then able to meet regularly and voice opinions about what is working well for them and put forward any new ideas they might have. This is a very popular aspect of life in Garvagh Primary School.

Community links

As a school we are active in the life of the community and the community are active in the school. We regularly participate in local and regional events and invite members of the community to visit classes in school support pupils' learning.

We believe that maintaining a high level of community engagement adds exciting dimensions to the educational experience we offer to all children in Garvagh Primary School.

Parent Teacher Association

All parents of Garvagh Primary School are warmly invited to attend the PTA. We have a very active PTA who help organise many social and fundraising events such as Christmas fairs, family fun nights, coffee mornings, fashion shows, concerts, Pudding parties as well as the usual monthly meetings.

We benefit greatly not only from their fantastic fundraising efforts but also from their positive enthusiasm in supporting the work of the school. In the past few years PTA has helped to make our dream of a play park a reality for the children. They have also supported us in the purchase of Interactive Whiteboards, additional books, resources and specialised equipment, funded theatre visits and provided refreshments for school functions. You will be made most welcome at PTA meetings or events.

Come along because this is a place that's just right for you.



Extra-curricular activities

Garvagh Primary School offers a wide and varied programme of extra-curricular activities for all pupils including:

- Breakfast Club
(Monday-Friday 8.00 - 8.40am)
- Ducklings (Monday - Friday 2-3pm)
- Homework Club
(Monday - Friday 3-5pm)
- Speech and Drama Club
- Tennis
- Football fanatics
- French Club
- Multi-skills
- Messy Monsters Art & Craft
- Piano lessons
- Transfer club
- Film Club
- Board Games
- Cycling Proficiency
- Ipad Club
- Lego Club
- Hockey Club

We encourage our children to try activities from our programme which interest them knowing that they will find them enjoyable, challenging and ultimately rewarding experiences which add an extra dimension to school life.



Musical experiences

We also offer our pupils musical opportunities including; choir, recorders, piano and instrumental tuition. We encourage our children to share their talents by performing for their peers, taking part in school events and local competitions.

Educational visits

Educational visits take place throughout the year and are linked to the topics the pupils are studying. The visits range from sessions in the local library, forest and museum to days away to locations such as Belfast Zoo, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, W5 to a three day residential trip to Carrowmena Outdoor Pursuits Centre for older children where pupils have the opportunity to try canoeing, abseiling, archery and climbing.

Shared education

Since 2018 the school has also been involved in Shared Education, effectively partnering with St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's Primary Schools. Children have been able to work together on joint projects funded by the Peace IV Programme. This allowed children to learn about each other while valuing and respecting each other.

Pastoral care and child protection

Pastoral Care

Garvagh Primary School works hard to ensure all children learn in a safe, nurturing environment where they are deeply cared for by adults whom they can trust. We work very closely with families and other agencies to ensure the well-being of each child.

Life can sometimes be difficult for adults and children alike. From time to time problems outside school or indeed personal worries may affect the child's performance in school. We welcome parents to share their concerns with us and assure them that information shared will be treated with sensitivity.

Often just a little bit of extra encouragement, support, time or understanding will be enough to help the child through a difficult period. If required we can call upon a number of support services for further help including; School Medical Officers, Educational Psychology or Educational Welfare as well as a range of non-statutory support agencies. Please don't keep your concerns bottled up. We are here to help.



Child Protection

We operate a Child Protection policy and have a dedicated Safeguarding team of teachers and Governors. A Safeguarding Notice Board for parents is located in our Entrance area. We welcome parents to highlight concerns to us regarding their own or another child's safety. The procedure below sets out how parents can bring a concern to the staff.

I have a concern about my child or another child's safety

I can talk to the class teacher

If I am still concerned I can talk to the Principal/Designated Teacher, Mr Creelman

If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr S Cole

At any time I can consult with Social Services, EA Child Protection Officer or PSNI



Garvagh Primary School
is just the place to be!



Garvagh Primary School

Empowering Children for the Future

1 Coleraine Road, Garvagh, BT51 5HP

Call: **028 2955 8540**

E-mail: **info@garvaghps.garvagh.ni.sch.uk**

www.garvaghprimaryschool.com