GORTIN

Primary School

Prospectus

Gortin Primary School
9 Plumbridge Road
Gortin
Omagh
BT79 8QB

Telephone: 02881648268
www.gortinps.com
Gortin Primary School

E-mail: info@gortinps.omagh.ni.sch.uk

Dear Parents / Guardians

Thank you for showing an interest in Gortin Primary School, I hope this Prospectus will give you an insight into the life, ethos and work of our school. It focuses on what our school is aiming to provide, namely an equal entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum embracing the Northern Ireland curriculum, which will enable each pupil to reach his or her full potential in a supportive and caring environment. Our country school has a strong sense of community (family, friends & neighbours), hardworking effective teachers and small classes where children are challenged and valued.

We consider a close partnership between home and school essential. Through building an open and honest relationship, together we can support and encourage your child/children throughout their primary school years. We believe that the years spent at primary school should be thoroughly enjoyed and should produce secure children, socially well adjusted, proud of their own achievements and ready to continue with the next stage of formal education.

If your child will be commencing Gortin P.S. in September, we look forward to meeting you and your child at our Induction afternoon in June. You will receive notification of the date.

In conclusion if you need further clarification, or have any questions, do not hesitate to make an appointment. We look forward to meeting with and welcoming you to our school.

Mrs Iris Wallace
Principal

The Board of Governors
Members Nominate by the Transferors:
Mr J McConnell
Mrs P Mayers
Mrs J Crawford
Mrs M McFarland

Members Nominate by W.E.L.B.:
Mr A Houston (Chairperson)
Mrs A Laughlin

Members Elected by Parents:
Mr T Hempton
Mr D Allison

Member Elected by Teaching Staff:
Mrs L Allen

Secretary (Non-Voting):
Mrs I Wallace

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the managing and functioning of the school, including the appointment of staff both teaching and non-teaching. The Governors meet on a regular basis and take an active interest in and support the work of the school.

Mission Statement –
"Working Together to Achieve our Best"

Ethos/Values of the School

At Gortin Primary School we strive to create an emotionally and physically safe, happy, caring, and supportive environment in which high quality teaching and learning take place. We work towards developing the academic, personal, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual potential of each child as part of our Christian ethos whilst welcoming those from all religious backgrounds.

We provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities for all children to reach their full potential and to experience achievement and success irrespective of gender, race, religion, or ability. We aim to create a partnership involving all staff, children, parents, Board of Governors, and our local community.

In our small school we adopt a shared leadership approach where we work closely as a team.

Vision

At Gortin PS we aim to educate the whole child to reach their full potential in a nurturing, stimulating environment.

Staff

Principal:	Mrs Iris Wallace
Co- Principal:	Mrs Laura Allen
Assistant Teachers:	Mrs Judith Hawkes
	Mr Gareth Barbour
School Secretary:	Mr Jonathan Lervy
Classroom Assistants:	Mrs Dawn McCormack
	Mrs Mariel Tuohey
	Mr Jonathan Lervy
Kitchen:	Ms Doreen Varnhill
Lunch-time Supervisors:	Mrs Dawn McCormack
	Mr Jonathan Lervy
Caretaker:	Mr Rodney Lucas
Cleaner:	Mrs Gillian McIlwaine

General Aims of the School

- To create a happy, caring, safe and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected.
- To develop a sense of self-respect to live as independent self-motivated adults, having ability to become contributing members of the local community and beyond.
- To educate the whole child by providing a broad and balanced curriculum in the areas of study as set down by the Northern Ireland curriculum, which is inclusive and helps children develop their abilities in all curricular areas and fulfil their own personal potential.
- To help pupils develop lively enquiring minds with the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply themselves to tasks individually and as a team preparing them for adult lives in a rapidly changing world.
- To help pupils to have an understanding, tolerance and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all races, religions, and ways of life without discrimination.
- Be aware that the school is part of the local communities and beyond and to encourage families and local community to become actively involved in the life of the school.

To achieve these aims the support of you, the parents, in creating an encouraging attitude and involvement with the school and providing a working atmosphere at home to support study would be essential.

General Information

Gortin Primary School is a Controlled School, owned and maintained by the Education Authority. It admits boys and girls from age 4 – 11. It is set in its own grounds on the Plumbridge Road. The school seeks to promote a happy, caring atmosphere and have developed strong positive links with parents through encouraging them to become involved in many aspects of school life.

The school was opened in February 1983 and major refurbishment and renovations were completed in August 2007 in time for the school's 25th Anniversary in February 2008 which we are very proud of. It has three classrooms, a resource/library area equipped with a fabulous selection of fiction and non-fiction books, a large sports/dining hall with sports floor, gymnastic wall bars, a stage and audio and lighting system, staffroom, principal and secretary's office. Our refurbished library/resource area provides an essential backup to individual classroom activities. Outside there is a large tarmac area at the back of the school which has colourful markings and a pitch marked. There is a newly developed play area with soft/safe play surfacing with permanent multi play unit. We also have a large storage container and have purchased a wide variety of play equipment and play trail. A successful application to NGO Big Challenge funding provided the school with a sensory garden, poly tunnel and raised beds for growing flowers/vegetables. A successful application was made in October 2021 to the Rural Community Pollinator Grant through the Live Here Love Here Scheme. A Woodland area for Biodiversity was created at the side of the school with the help of parents and children.

Computers are in daily use throughout the school and children have the opportunity to become proficient in operating techniques while working through a variety of educational material in the

computer suite. All classes are resourced with interactive white boards and at least one networked computer and a laptop. ICT equipment includes the internet, digital cameras, projector and microscope. The school also has purchased a networked photocopier. A successful application to Awards for All provided the school with a computer suite including desk top computers and iPads. Rural Funding provided additional desk top computers and most recently a charging dock and Chrome Books. All classes are timetabled for the computer suite twice a week.

Children have a choice of main meals. Meals are delivered from Our Lady of Lourdes, Greencastle and are eaten in the dining hall, supervised by lunchtime supervisors. Packed lunches are also supervised in the dining hall and should be brought into school in a separate bag or box and not inside schoolbags. Healthy options are encouraged and rewarded. Glass bottles are not allowed! Milk is available at a reasonable cost for break time for which a charge is made bimonthly. We operate a Healthy Breaks policy and encourage the children to stay hydrated with chilled water drinkers in all the classrooms. The aim is to encourage children to drink only milk or water and/or eat fruit/veg or other healthy snack only at break time i.e.
10.45 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.

School Hours

The school day begins at 9.15 a.m. and children should be seated in their classrooms by this time. Children should not arrive at school before 8.55 a.m. when teacher supervision begins.

Y1 - Y3 9.15 a.m. - 2.05 p.m.
Y4 – Y7 9.15 a.m. - 3.05 p.m.
Morning break is from 10.45 – 11.00 am.
The lunchtime break is from 12.30 p.m. – 1.15 p.m.

Attendance

All children should attend school for the 190 days, which the law requires, unless they are ill. If a pupil is absent, parents/guardians are requested to phone the school on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason for absence and expected length of absence. Please confirm this with a written note when your child returns to school.

In relation to medical, dental, optical or other such appointments, a letter from the parent/guardian giving details of the date and time of the appointment is required.
Staff should also be informed if a child is going to be late into school. The Attendance Policy is available on our website.

Annual Attendance rate for 2023/2024 was 96.5%. Attendance is regularly monitored by Education Welfare Officers. A certificate for full attendance is awarded at end of school year.

E.A. Guidelines.

1. Attendance calculated twice daily from 9.15-12.30 and 12.30-2.05/3.05.
2. It is accepted that a child has full attendance if she/he misses not more than one full day per year.
3. Less than a half day is not acceptable towards an attendance mark.

Admission Arrangements as set out in EA Handbook

Number on Roll (1 September 2024) 65
Expected Number on Roll (1 September 2025) 62

Admissions Number: 15 Enrolment Number: 106

The current policy is to admit into the Y1 class on the first day of the Autumn term those children who have reached compulsory school age, i.e. children whose 4th birthday falls on or before 1st July.
Parents considering sending their children to this school are invited to make a prior visit, to see the school in action on our Open day and to talk to the Principal and teachers. The admission arrangements as set out in the E.A. website.
Parents (and children entering Y1 in September) will be invited into the school for an afternoon in June to meet with staff and spend time in Y1 classroom.

Admissions Criteria for Year 1

The Board of Governors of Gortin Primary School, which includes the Principal, has determined that the following criteria shall be applied by them in the event of the number of pupils applying for places in Year 1 being greater than the admissions number, in the order set down below. Priority will be given to pupils who are normally resident in Northern Ireland.

1. Children of compulsory school age regarded by Board of Governors on the basis of written or other evidence supplied by the parents and statutory or other agencies, as having special circumstances, i.e. medical, social or security reasons.
2. Children of compulsory school age with older brothers or sisters, half-brothers/half-sisters, foster brothers/foster sisters presently enrolled at the school.

3. Children of compulsory school age whose parents are employed or appointed to take up employment in the school.
4. Children of compulsory school age who have no previous connection with the school but who live in the school's catchment area.
5. Children of compulsory school age who have a specific family connection i.e. mother/father as a past pupils of the school.

In the event of over-subscription in the last criterion that can be applied selection for the remaining places will be on the basis of distance from the home to the school.

The admission criteria will also apply to a child seeking admission to Y1 after the first day of the Autumn Term.

Admissions Criteria for Years 2-7

The following criteria will be applied in the order set down below to all pupils seeking admission to years 2-7. However, the school shall not cause or permit the number of registered pupils to exceed the school's enrolment number as determined by the Department of Education. Priority will be given to pupils who are normally resident in Northern Ireland.

1. Pupils, for whom their admission would not, in the Board of Governors opinion, prejudice the efficient use of the school's resources.
2. Pupils, for whom their admission would not, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, prejudice the provision of efficient education in the school.

If there are more applicants applying for the last criterion that can be applied, then the criteria for Year 1 will be applied.

Application and Admissions to Gortin P.S.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
No. of Applications	5	10	6
No. of Admissions	5	10	6

Class Sizes 2024/25

Year 1	7
Year 2	9
Year 3	5
Year 4	8
Year 5	9
Year 6	7
Year 7	12

Curriculum

Stages of the Primary Curriculum

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

The new 'Revised N.I. Curriculum Primary' has been implemented in each class and in each school in N.I. since June 2010.

Its main areas of study are: -

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics &Numeracy
- The Arts (art/design, music, drama)
- The World Around Us (history, geography, science & technology)
- Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

- Physical Education
- Religious Education

Delivery of the Curriculum

Children learn best when learning is interactive, practical and enjoyable. Teaching will make use of a wide range of teaching methods, balancing whole class, group and individual activities to engage children in effective learning.

Whole Curriculum Skills & Capabilities

At the heart of the curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for life long learning and for operating efficiently in society. Children should develop skills in:
Cross Curricular Skills including: -

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using Information & Communication Technology

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities including:

- Thinking, Problem Solving & Decision Making
- Self Management
- Working with Others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

We are committed to providing a range of high quality learning experiences for all our pupils which will lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement. To this end a range of teaching strategies are used using guidance from the 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods' book.

In the classrooms a visual timetable is displayed so the children know what is happening throughout the day. The learning intentions are shared with the children prior to a lesson and learning outcomes discussed at the end.

The teachers set whole class targets and individual targets for/with the children.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The N.I. Curriculum embraces the principles of Assessment for learning by placing formative assessment at the heart of the learning and teaching cycle. The emphasis is on improvement, raising achievement in pupils' learning and celebrating success.

Children are given tasks which match ability and are challenging. They are given opportunities to achieve success and gain approval, and as a result, are confident, feel secure and are aware of the boundaries. The school carries out its statutory responsibilities of delivering the NI Curriculum to all FS, KS1 and KS2 children in our care.

Mathematics and Numeracy

Numeracy is a life skill used in making everyday decisions and in virtually every work context. As a result, a strong emphasis is placed upon practical investigative work, mental mathematics and problem solving. Pupils will be given opportunities to work with calculators and computers to reinforce maths work. Mathletics is an online program used to reinforce work taught in school and set also for homework where the teacher can monitor progress. Children have a daily maths lesson lasting between 45 minutes – 1 hour depending on age. Children will spend time with a range of activities and tasks with lots of problem solving using mental maths and group work. The areas taught within mathematics and numeracy are processes, number, measures, data handling and shape & space.

Language and Literacy

This includes talking and listening, reading and writing and opportunities to incorporate drama. Reading and writing are complex skills and are introduced through modelled, shared and guided reading and writing lessons.

Word work including sounding out letters, recognising letters, groups of sounds, learning spellings and spelling rules, increasing vocabulary and

practising handwriting. Sentence work includes learning grammar, punctuation and working on sentence construction. Text work includes reading comprehension, writing composition, and enjoying fiction, poetry and non-fiction.
Each classroom has a well stocked library and children are encouraged to bring books home to read. There is also a well stocked library in our resource area. Pupils are encouraged to read each night.

The World Around Us

This focuses on providing opportunities for the children to develop skills and knowledge in Geography, History, Science & Technology. Primary Science is concerned with looking at the environment, human influences on earth minerals and developing investigation skills. The full range of the N.I. Curriculum is followed including life processes, living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.

In History pupils will have opportunities to study important events and development in the history of Britain, Ireland and the wider world and history from the earliest times to present day. The teaching of history is supported by visitors and field trips, to local places of historic interest e.g. The Ulster American Folk Park.

In Geography pupils will have the opportunity to learn about a variety of environments beginning from their locality and reaching out to the wider world developing a greater responsibility for their own environment and the wider world. Where possible learning will be connected to current events in the world around them.

Design Technology is taught either through design projects linked to topic work or in separate units of work. Resources include technology kits such as Lego and K-Nex and a range of everyday materials and components to enable personal designs. They also learn to handle tools and equipment and be aware of safe practices at all times.

The Arts

This includes Art & Design music and opportunities to incorporate drama. Our children are encouraged to develop co-ordination and manual dexterity and to explore various media available in Art and Craft.

A range of art media is available to meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum with regard to investigation and making. The children's work forms the basis of displays in classrooms and corridors. The school has been awarded many prizes in local art competitions such as the annual Omagh Gardening Society and Omagh Agricultural Show Art competitions.

All classes will be engaged in music making. All have the opportunity to work creatively with sounds and listen to and respond to their own and others music making. All children engage in a 'Musical Pathways to learning', lesson per week. In Y4-7 they have the opportunity to join the school choir which has been very successful, winning runner up and first places in local competitions.

The children are encouraged to express themselves freely through Drama & Music, nurturing children's individuality, imagination and creativity. Harvest services, Christmas Pantomimes/Carol Services and our annual Open Day provide an opportunity for the children to work creatively with sound, sing and perform with simple instruments and contribute to a whole school performance with an audience from within the school and wider school community.

Personal Development & Mutual Understanding/Mental Health & Wellbeing

The focus is on encouraging each child to become personally, emotionally, socially effective to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives and to become confident, independent and responsible citizens, making informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives. We aim to help pupils develop a healthy lifestyle and are a Health Promoting School. We have a Healthy Breaks Policy and work with parents to ensure healthy lunches. The school are holders of a Gold Health Promoting School Award.

It incorporates our planned activities for Relationship and Sexual Education and Mental Health Awareness. It has implications beyond the curriculum for school ethos, pastoral care, child protection, schools positive discipline and relationships within school and beyond. Our main resources are the PATHS

(Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) programme designed by Barnardo's and the CEA Living/ Learning Together Rainbow Resource packs. Also used is Relax Kids a physical Programme delivered by a trained coach taking children from high energy to relaxed state using techniques to find inner calm and ultimately build resilience.

Physical Education

Physical development and movement is about experiencing and developing a range of fundamental movement skills that will improve co-ordination, control, balance and manipulation. It also helps children gain confidence and self-esteem and enables them to feel the benefit of being healthy and active.

Pupils in the Foundation Stage (Y1 & 2) and Key Stage 1 (Y3 & 4) will have 2 lessons per week – approximately 30-40 minutes each. Pupils in Key Stage 2 (Y5 – 7) will have 2 lessons per week – 45-60 minutes. One of these lessons will focus on learning of games and will include an opportunity for Y6/7 to visit Omagh Leisure Complex for 8 weeks/year to participate in swimming lessons the continuation of which depends on parents making a voluntary contribution to the cost.

Teachers will ensure to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in athletics, dance, games and gymnastics for all children. Children will have opportunities to avail of specialist coaching

and opportunities to participate in competitive sport through their annual Sports day, Community Football/Rugby Competitions (in which the children have gained much success) and outside school in afterschool sport for Y4-Y7.

Religious Education

Religion is an important element of the school's life. The teaching of R.E. in each year group is based on the core syllabus for N. Ireland using resources from the Bible Educational Services and is of a non-denominational character. It will be taught approximately twice per week as an area of study on its own or integrated with other subjects. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons or collective worship and should inform the Principal in writing if they wish to exercise this right. The school will take care to ensure any children in this position are not made to feel excluded from the general life of the school.

Morning assembly will be held on 1 morning of each week with the local minister leading these assemblies monthly and occasionally visiting speakers e.g. NSPCC, Barnardos, CEF.

Education Visits Outside/Inside School

These visits have always been an important part of the school curriculum. Preparation for and follow-up work is well planned with the visit being the central point of the work undertaken. In addition to day visits and visits to school by outreach teaching facilitators the Year 6/7 may go on residential trips which take them away from home for a few days. The continuation of these activities will depend on the voluntary contributions of parents towards the costs.

Homework

Gortin P.S. sees a value in children engaging in homework as a means of extending the learning beyond the boundaries of school and to help develop the skills required for lifelong learning to take place. Again, this must be balanced against each child's need for recreation and quality family time.

To ensure consistency it is schools' policy that homework will be set each night from Monday – Thursday though this may be relaxed for special occasions/holidays. All homework for Y1-7 will be purposeful and related to work already covered in class. Pupils in Year 3-7 will have spellings/spelling activities and tables/number facts every night. Y2 will commence spellings in the spring term. All pupils are encouraged to bring home library books and we ask parents to read and discuss books at home to offer encouragement and support. We have been developing a blended learning approach to our homework combining traditional written homework with online learning through, Mathletics and Word Shark which enables teachers to set and monitor children's work online.

Parental involvement and help in this process is vital. Check that homework is completed neatly – if it is not to your satisfaction then ask the child to do again – indicate this on homework books/Homework diaries/Home school link books. Check that completed homework has been put back into schoolbags. Homework will not be set for completion at weekends or during school holidays.

Special Education Provision

Some of the children attending our school will have special educational needs. As it is the intention of the school to maximise the potential of each of the pupils the school will endeavour to meet those needs. These children will be taught with their peers and additional help will be given through differentiation and individualised programs to ensure that they experience the breadth of study as outlined by the N.I. Curriculum. Personal Learning Plans will be written, shared and agreed with parents. Learning support folders will be provided by their teachers based on their Learning Plan and sent home for learning reinforcement. If despite this assistance a child has significant difficulties in Gortin P.S. further assessment can result in a statement of the child's needs to be issued by the EA and the specialist services of the Boards Special Education service will be used. Also to support pupils who are experiencing specific learning difficulties our Learning Support Co-ordinator (Mrs Hawkes) will assist staff, parents and pupils.

Gortin P.S. works with the EA services to refer, diagnose, withdraw, support and provide necessary remediation to enable pupils to cope with confidence in mainstream classes.

Drugs Education

This school is committed to the development of a response to the issue of drugs so that the children can distinguish between drug

substances and consider their use, misuse, benefit and harm. We aim to: -

- Equip children with the skills to deal with a drug orientated society and build foundations for a healthy lifestyle.
- Use drug education as a vehicle for addressing myths and misconceptions concerning drugs and drug taking.

A Drug Education Programme, which has been drawn up in accordance with DENI Circular 2004/19, is included in our overall Health Education Programme. Drug related issues will be integrated within other subjects e.g. Religious Education. P.D.M.U. Science and Literacy. Y6 & Y7 pupils are involved in Hope NW Healthy Living Education Programme and Ulster Cancer 'Smoke busters' campaign. There is a non-smoking policy throughout the school for all staff and visitors and the whole school participate with a variety of activities to support the National Non-Smoking Day.

Shared Education

This includes Community Relations, Equality and diversity in Education as we emerge from conflict and strive to live and work together in building a peaceful, just and prosperous society based on equality and good relations. We work towards the improvement of relationships between people of differing cultural traditions so that the children learn to value and respect our increasing diverse society. We endeavour to work with our local/wider community and in particular the local maintained primary schools, St. Patricks Gortin and St. Peters Plumbridge to participate in joint learning experiences, involving the children, parents and wider community. We have also used resources, Promoting Reconciliation in the N.I. Curriculum with Y6/7, Lift off, Human Rights Education with Y4/5 and Media Initiative for Children Respecting Differences Programme with Y1-3 to enhance this learning. Y3 – Y5 participated in the CASE PEACE IV

Programme along with St Patrick's & St. Peter's P.S. We are starting a 4 year ASPIRE programme (Advancing Shared Partnerships through Inclusive Relationships in Education) with St Peter's and St Patrick's PS.

Information Communication Technology

Children experience a broad and balanced ICT curriculum that is developing the 5 E's (explore, express, exchange, evaluate and exhibit) and is connected to the areas of learning. The school has purchased an annual subscription to the Mathletics online maths Programme and Word shark an online Spelling Support Programme for use in school and for HomeWorks. This can be effectively used for whole class or group teaching through the interactive whiteboards as well as by individual pupils at a laptop, iPad, or Chrome Book.

The school currently has PC's and laptops connected to the C2k network and printer/photocopier connected in our furnished computer suite which children are timetabled for twice per week. Also each classroom has an interactive whiteboard and at least one PC. Funding for Desk Tops, i Pads and Chrome Books were successfully awarded through funding application and fund raising by our very active PTA.

Extra-Curricular Activities

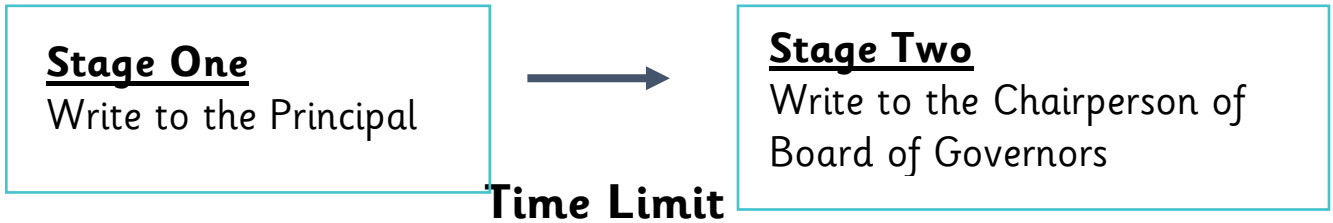
A range of extra-curricular activities are provided for children in Y4 – Y7 between 3.05 – 4.05 pm at least once per week. Sports

Coaches, parents and staff facilitate these sessions depending on expertise. Parents may be asked to make a voluntary payment to help cover the cost external coaches. Activities have included football, soccer, hockey, netball, volleyball, basketball, badminton, aerial gymnastics, dance, tennis and cycling.

Complaints Procedure

Gortin Primary seeks to be a "listening school" and will do its best to enable parents to feel confident to raise issues and concerns with appropriate staff. A full copy of our recently agreed policy is available on request or from our website. Complaints concerning the curriculum and other matters referred to in Article 33 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 33 and regulations subsequently made by the Department of Education.

Complaints Procedure – At a Glance



Time Limit

To enable complaints to be resolved, please contact the school as soon as possible.

Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated.

If the complaint is about the principal, proceed to Stage Two.

The school requires complaints to be made in writing
The principal will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but within 10 school working days. If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage One, the complaint may be progressed to Stage Two which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two

If your complaint is about the principal or if the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the chairperson of the Board of Governors. The letter can be left at the school office and marked *'private and confidential'*. The chairperson will convene a committee to consider the complaint.

In the case of the complaint being about the principal, this committee will investigate the complaint.

The chairperson of the committee will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but at least within 10 school

working days. A final response will normally be made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the second letter. The response will be issued by the chairperson of the committee and will indicate, with reasons, whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to **The Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).**

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

A continuous monitoring system operates throughout the school as part of the formative record of achievement commencing with baseline Assessment in Y1. Each pupil in Y1-7 has a personal folder in which is placed, once per term; samples of his/her work in English, Maths & ICT. Results of teacher based and standardised tests are tabulated on pupil profile forms.
In October parent/teacher interviews take place. Parents are invited into school if they require an update and in the summer term an end of year report will be sent to parents.
Pupils take part in the Statutory Assessment Procedures at the end of KS1 (Y4) and KS2 (Y7). Parents are informed of outcomes in the pupil's annual report and the Y7 results are shared with the children's Secondary School.
Y7 pupils may sit a Schools Entrance Assessment (SEAG) for entry to their local grammar school, based on programmes of study in English & Maths. Parents have the responsibility to register their child for these tests on line.

A summative record of achievement is issued to Y7 pupils at end of year 7. This record may be taken to the child's secondary school. ROA (Records of Achievements) contains final summary of the child's achievements and experiences at primary school.

Pastoral Care

We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge and we will carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care Policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment within which the academic, personal, social, cultural, moral and spiritual potential of each child will be developed.

Our Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of good relationships and mutual respect.
The Board of Governors, Principal and all staff, teaching and non-teaching have a responsibility for pastoral care. We update our pupil records and store all this information on the SIMS computer system.

Child Protection

We in Gortin Primary School have a responsibility for the Pastoral care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care. All our staff have been subject to appropriate background checks and adopted a Code of Conduct for behaviour towards pupils. All staff, teaching and non-teaching are alert to the signs of possible abuse and know the procedures to be followed. At Gortin P.S. all actions and decisions taken by staff will follow the detailed guidance set out in Department of Education (NI) guidance. Children (NI) Order 1995. Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools (DE Circular 2017/04, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Child Protection and Procedures (2017).

We have a Child Protection Policy regularly reviewed, amended, and verified by our Board of Governors. This is available on our website and is available on request from school. Our policy sets out full guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or

harm to a child is suspected. Please see our 'At a glance guide for parents who may have a potential child protection concern.'

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Allen. The Deputy Designated Teacher is Mrs Wallace.

School Discipline/Behaviour Policy

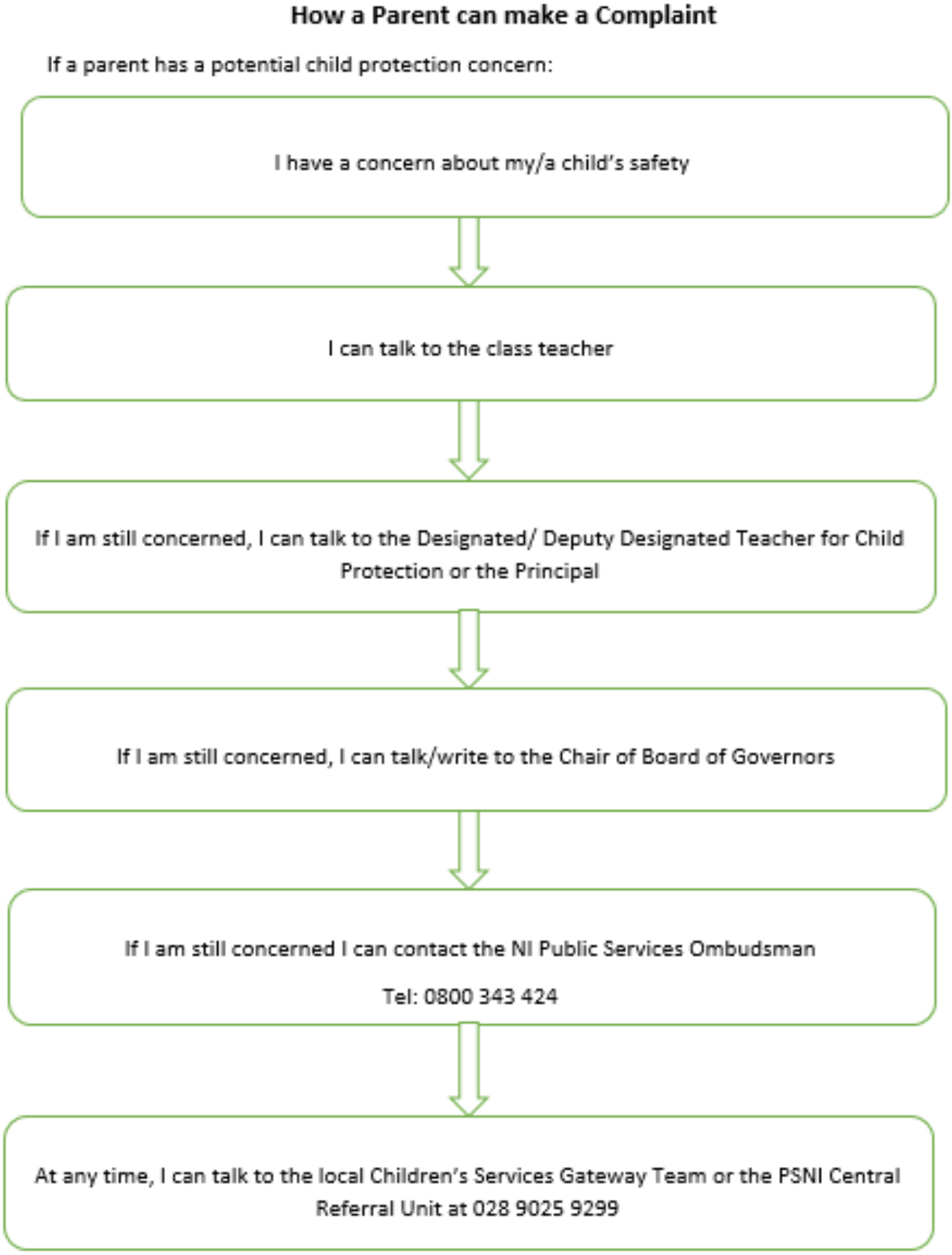
In order to promote good attendance, behaviour and discipline we aim to:

- Provide a welcoming, attractive and stimulating learning environment
- Provide opportunities for good behaviour of pupils to be praised, as set out in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy
- Provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' successes and achievements

The school has a Positive Behaviour policy, which is a pupil friendly agreed document. Each year we have a whole school special assembly, where the children are reminded of the school rules and Golden rules adopted in each classroom. The children are also reminded of rewards and sanctions for behaviour. Each teacher agrees/displays common Golden rules and has sanctions and rewards in place. At a weekly assembly a particular aspect of good behaviour or discipline in class/school is highlighted and a child is chosen to receive an award for Pupil of the Week for displaying these qualities. There is also a monthly prize for 4/6 children from each classroom highlighted in assembly for special effort as recorded in each classroom Award chart.

The school has in place a policy and procedures in the Use of Reasonable Force to Restrain or Control pupils in line with DENI guidelines – May 2004.

The school follows guidelines as issued in DENI's guidance – Promoting Positive Behaviour – June 2001.



Addressing Bullying Behaviour Policy

Our school policy has been developed through a process of consultation with pupils and parents meeting the requirements of The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016. We understand that not all unacceptable, unkind, hurtful behaviour is bullying behaviour.

'The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (N.I.) 2016' provides schools with a legal definition which ***must*** be used by all schools to assess reported concerns of bullying type behaviour.

Addressing Bullying in Schools **Definition of "bullying"**
(1) In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of— (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication, (b) any other act, or (c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils. (2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- Physical: kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping
- Verbal: name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours
- Indirect: includes isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others, interfering with personal property) and includes Cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include misusing mobile phones/ computer and internet programmes to humiliate, threaten and isolate another, bullying through Social Networking Sites, messaging and chat rooms.

LET THE SCHOOL KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

Internal Structures

The Principal will deal with specific complaints from parents, but all staff are involved in the implementation of the policy. Our school Positive Behaviour policy will support children who are being bullied and those who are engaging in bullying behaviour.

Individual counselling is available for all children in the school by the staff. Children will be made aware that they may talk in confidence to their class teacher or any member of staff regarding bullying behaviours.

The Principal will inform parents of children involved in repeated bullying of the situation.

Staff constantly monitor key areas of school where children could be most easily bullied. These areas include the cloakrooms, corridors, playground and dining room. Teachers, classroom assistants and lunch-time supervisors have responsibility in these areas and will report to teachers/principal names of children suspected of being bullied. Suspected bullies are closely observed, recorded and reported directly to the appropriate member of staff.

Promotion of Addressing Bullying Behaviour Policy

Through the curriculum, children have opportunity to discuss, listen and partake in aspects of anti-bullying education, including participation in activities designed by N.I. Anti-Bully Alliance for Anti-Bully Week.

Statutory Process Flow Chart
SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO EXPERIENCE OR DISPLAY BULLYING OR ALLEGED BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOURS

Enhanced Accountability for BoG, schools and supporting agencies to deliver timely, individualised, multi-disciplinary support to identify and addressneed.

Learner Centred Approach with pupil and parent/carer voice listened to, valued, and reflected in the plan.

Behaviour reported as alleged Bullying Type Behaviour

Maintain clear chronological records - If a young person is educated off-site, ensure effective sharing of information for accountability

Ensure all support complies with relevant legislation and guidelines such as: The Children (NI) Order (1995), Code of Practice (1996), Freedom of Information Act (2000), Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001), Welfare and Protection of Pupils ELB (NI) Order (2003), SENDO (2005), The Education (SDP) Regulations NI 2010, SEN Resource File (2011), SEND Act (NI) (2020), Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) (2016), EOTAS Centre's Guidance in the Use of SIMs (2017), GDPR (2018), Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (2020), A Fair Start Report (2021), CYPS Emotional Health and Well-being Strategy (NI) (2021), Guidance on Remote Learning (2022), Revised PEP (2023), Guidance on Parental Responsibility (2023) etc.

Process to be followed

In every case when an alleged bullying type of concern is raised a record must be kept e.g BCAF and should be attached as a document to a digital record (e.g. SIMS or C2k Private Folder)

Gather information regarding the current incident and review records of previous incidents.

A record must be kept of the assessed outcome aligned to the legal definition/criteria:
TRIP (targeted, repeated, intentional, psychological, or physical harm) e.g BCAF part 1.

Positive Behaviour Policy

Record/BCAF Parts 1 indicates criteria for Bullying Type Behaviour has **NOT** been met.
Inform parent.

Select, implement, and record individualised, solution-focussed, interventions and responses to socially unacceptable behaviour.
Maintain records.
Ensuring that within the SEND COP, appropriate behaviour and support interventions and processes are implemented effectively using for example Emotional Health & Wellbeing Framework

SENCO/LSCo pastoral lead, to consider initiation of PLP, PEP, RRAP, Calm Plan, UNOCINI etc to address presenting SBEW

Key staff assess the information gathered against the criteria derived from the legal definition -TRIP/one off.

If YES, follow AB Policy
If NO, follow SBEW Policies

All behaviour is communication. Schools must ensure that behaviour is analysed, supported, and responded to consistent with all pastoral policies- SEN, CP, PB, Nurture, EHWB, SG rather than sanction-led.

Addressing Bullying Policy

Record on BCAF Parts 1 and 2 indicates criteria for Bullying Type Behaviour **HAS** been met. Engage with parent(s) and agree support plans for pupils involved- Complete a support plan/Part 3 BCAF

Select, implement, and record individualised, solution-focussed, effective interventions and responses to bullying type behaviour.
Update Support Plan /BCAF

Part 3a
Consult with Parents /Carers to agree support for the pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour. Update Support Plan/BCAF

Part 3b
Consult with Parents /Carers to agree strategies for pupils displaying bullying type behaviour. Update Support Plan / BCAF

Track, monitor & assess progress aligned to SEND COP, to determine the efficacy of the interventions & outcomes for all pupils involved, whether displaying or experiencing socially unacceptable or bullying type behaviours. Ongoing review of support plans, interventions and/or Parts 3 & 4 in consultation young people and parents/carers, to achieve agreed

Consider timely referral to CYPSP agencies to support plan. Update records.

Review & digitally record OUTCOMES

Outcomes used to inform summary reporting to BOG.

Review & digitally record OUTCOMES on BCAF Part 4

Consider timely referral to CYPSP agencies to support plan. Update BCAF

The duty of the Board of Governors is to:
Ensure that incidents of bullying type behaviours feature as a standing item on every agenda.

Oversee reported incidents of bullying or alleged bullying type behaviour involving a registered pupil at the school.

Analyse statistics and patterns of alleged or confirmed incidents of bullying type behaviour and respond with agile policy review detailing the preventative curriculum to address changing needs.

School Uniform

It is the policy of Gortin Primary school that school uniform should be worn on 3 days/week and P.E. Kits on P.E. days 2 days /week and we would like to see all children doing so. We are proud of our uniform, which reflects the individuality of our school and offers all children a common form of dress. The wearing of school uniform has a positive effect on the ethos of our school, standards of discipline and on pupil's self-esteem.

Boys - grey shirt, grey trousers, school sweatshirt, and school tie, **black shoes** (Velcro for those children who cannot tie laces). Boys may wear short grey trousers in the summer.

Girls – white blouse, grey skirt/pinafore, school sweatshirt, and school tie, black shoes (Velcro for those children who cannot tie laces). Girls may wear a red gingham dress, in summer and grey tights in winter.

A red school reversible fleece jacket (with school logo) is available for all pupils to wear.

The full school uniform is available from J. Kemps & Sons, Newtownstewart.

P.E. Kit

Our P.E. kit consists of navy shorts or navy tracksuit bottoms and a white collared school t-shirt with logo. A red hoodie with school logo is also available which may be worn with navy tracksuit bottoms on P.E. days and for attending sport events and outings. These are available from J Kemps, Newtownstewart. The shorts and T-shirt double up as a summer uniform in the very warm weather. Children in all classes require appropriate footwear, slip on plimsolls required where a child cannot tie their own laces. Earrings or any other jewellery should not be worn on P.E. days and shoulder length hair should be tied back.

Names on Clothing

If all children are to arrive home wearing the same clothes in which they left, it is desirable that ALL items should be labelled with the child's name. Please name all items of clothing.

Jewellery

Children are discouraged from wearing jewellery to school because of the safety factor. Children may wear a watch. If children have their ears pierced, they may wear one pair of stud earrings. If children do come to school with inappropriate jewellery, the class teacher may require that they remove the items, or that they do not take part in activities where the teacher feels that the jewellery constitutes a safety hazard.

Schools Council / Eco Council

The school has a school council of pupils from Y3-Y7 elected by their peers to represent them and their views at a meeting held once or twice per term. This provides meaningful leadership opportunities and a chance for pupils to have their opinions being valued when decisions are being made on school issues.

The school also has an eco-council where pupils are elected annually and explore environmental issues and draw up action plans for the whole school to participate in. The eco schools programme aims to make environmental awareness and action as part of the life and ethos of our school. The school has been awarded the Eco-School Green Flag Award in recognition of their environmental contributions in school and the local community. We have been runners-up in the Best Kept School Award for the Western Region of the EA.

Home/School Contact

All members of staff believe in working closely with parents for the benefit of the children involved. Opportunities are provided to meet with teachers to consider pupil progress or particular problems. These take the form of specially arranged appointments either at the teachers or parents request or at a Parents Evening. The principal is always willing to talk to parents and through her, appointments can be made to meet members of staff. Parents are formally invited to meet with teachers at least once yearly to discuss their children's progress.

In the third term, children will receive a written report.

The Induction Programme will be held during the summer term for the children/ parents of children who are entering the school in the following September.

Parent/Teacher Association

All parents are encouraged to become actively involved in school life and their children's learning. Every three years the parents are issued with a questionnaire to evaluate/consult with parents on how they feel the school is developing and areas for improvement. Parents are welcome to air their views or make suggestions and we genuinely do value and act upon their feedback both positive and negative. A PTA has been established in the school for many years to which all parents are invited and they have raised a considerable amount of money (including many successful applications for funding) which has been used to purchase resources to enhance the teaching and learning in our school. The association organises events at the school, sometimes for fund raising, sometimes for social purposes.

Parents have been involved in the Paired Reading Programme, Parental Involvement in Numeracy programme and Parent Workshops.

Community Links

The children are encouraged to enter local competitions including sports, arts, music, maths and technology and have been successful in the past.

The local church ministers lead assembly once a month on a Friday. A member of the CEF (Christian Evangelism Fellowship) and SUNI (Scripture Union N.I.) lead an assembly once per month each.

We enjoy good Shared Education and Cultural heritage links with our local maintained primary schools, and wider community, with local playgroup and elderly clubs invited to join us for drama and music events. We have group clustering with maintained schools for staff development training and have completed joint environmental projects. We are starting a 4 year ASPIRE

programme (Advancing Shared Partnerships through Inclusive Relationships in Education) with St Peter's and St Patrick's PS.

We have continued to foster links with feeder playgroup provisions and post primary school to which our Y7 children progress.
Local businesses have supported our fund-raising events and are involved in sponsorship of our school sports strips and fund raising.

Charging and Remission Policy

The Board of Governors have adopted the following Charging and Remissions Policy:

Charging Policy

It is the policy of the Governors to charge for:

- Board and lodgings on residential visits;
- Costs associated with the provision of individual tuition on a musical instrument whether inside or outside school hours unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for an approved public examination or to meet the requirements of Article 11 (1) (b) of the order;
- The cost, in cash or in kind, of ingredients or materials needed for practical subjects (such as Home Economics) where parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product;
- Optional extra activities which take part wholly or mainly outside school hours and are additional to the education provided by the school for the purposes of preparing pupils for an approved public examination or for the purposes of meeting the statutory requirements imposed by Articles (1) (a) and (b) of the 1989 order. Participation in any such activities is to be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made.

Remission Policy

Charges will be remitted as follows:

The charge for the board and lodgings cost of a residential visit will be remitted in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit if the education provided on that visit must otherwise be provided free, that is, the activity takes place mainly or wholly in school hours and/or is provided as part of the syllabus for an approved public examination or is required in order to fulfil statutory duties in relation to the NI Curriculum or Religious Education.

Voluntary Contributions

In cases of activities within school time which the school cannot afford, the school will attempt to subsidise these by asking in advance for voluntary contributions from the parents of those children directly involved. Such requests for contributions will indicate the actual costs to the school and suggest this as a suitable contribution. All the children in the group will take part in the activity, whether their parents have contributed or not. In cases where contributions are such that the school (through the school fund) cannot make up the short fall, the activity will not take place and all contributions already made by parents for the specific activity will be returned to them.

Breakage/Losses

The Board of Governors reserves the right to seek to recover from parents the whole or part of the cost of breakages and losses incurred as a result of a pupil's behaviour.

Inspection of Policies

A large number of policies are available for inspection at the school should parents request this. Parents wishing to inspect any of these should give written notice to the Principal at least 3 clear

school days in advance of the time they wish to see them. This does not preclude an informal request to the Principal, who may make the documents immediately available, if this is convenient. Copies of the documents may also be made available if a week's clear notice is given. A number of our Policies are available on our school website www.gortinps.com

Changes in School Arrangements

Changes occur from time to time in the staffing and organisation of the school and parents will be informed of these by newsletter. The summaries in this booklet give the present arrangements with effect from September 2023.

School Website - www.gortinps.com/Facebook Page

Please visit our school website and Facebook Page. It includes lots of up-to-date information about school, including policies, photos of school life, upcoming events, recent school newsletters and links to educational websites.

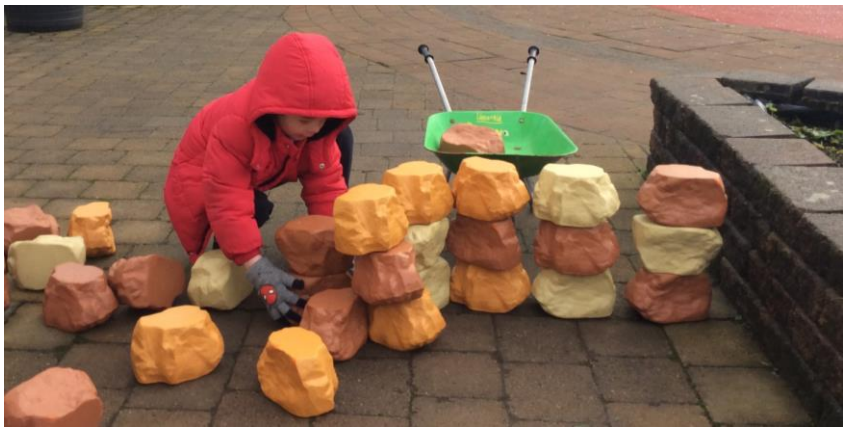
ETI Inspection

At the schools most recent inspection in June 2016 (Follow up partial inspection June 2019) the inspectors noted that 'the quality of the children's learning experiences across the year groups is consistently very good, there is effective differentiation, good pace and challenge and the learning is enhanced by the skilled use of Information and Communication Technology'. Also noted was that 'the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding' and 'the leadership of the school is highly effective, demonstrating a clear strategic vision for school improvement'. We are very proud of these findings and are very

aware that the challenge remains to maintain and enhance this to provide the best possible learning experience for our children.

Keeping in Touch

Regular monthly newsletters are available on our school website along with general school policies and practices. Regular updates on activities and achievements in school are posted on our Facebook page. Texts are sent home as reminders for upcoming events and notifications. Notes can be sent home in your child's schoolbag or in their homework diaries.

There will be several occasions when parents are invited to visit the school. These include Harvest service, Christmas plays, Parent/Teacher Meeting, Parent Workshops, Transfer Procedure Meetings, Book Fairs, Open Days, Information evenings and social events. Your support at these events is truly valued.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time to speak to class teachers and/or Principal however it is important to make an appointment.