

Be the best you can be!

NEWCASTLE
Primary School &
Nursery Unit



www.newcastleps.com

Vision

Newcastle Primary School is committed to the provision of an effective education for all its pupils. We seek to prepare our children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

Mission Statement

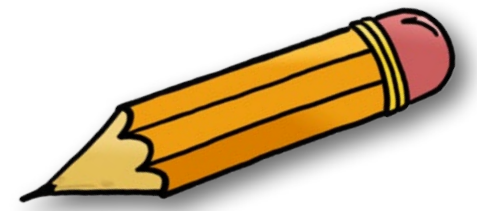
We seek to provide a happy and caring learning environment for each child. We hope that by helping them fulfil their potential, celebrating their achievements, respecting their differences and encouraging mutual respect for others, we will foster self-esteem and provide a sound foundation for their future life.

To achieve this, our aims are:

- To provide a happy, family atmosphere, where children can be educated to the best of their ability. We are concerned with all aspects of the children's development and work hard to ensure all the children acquire knowledge, skills, practical abilities and attitudes, which will lay good foundations for adult life.
- To encourage children to be confident, independent and responsible learners through the development of a curriculum which is adapted to suit the needs and abilities of all our pupils.
- To help develop in our pupils, lively, enquiring minds and an ability to apply themselves to the development of mental tasks and physical skills.
- To help our pupils understand the world in which we live and to appreciate human achievements and aspirations.
- To develop respect for religious and moral values, tolerance of other religions, races and ways of life.
- To work in partnership with parents and the wider community.



Principal's Welcome



Dear Parent/Guardian

May I take this opportunity to welcome you to Newcastle Primary School & Nursery Unit. If you already have a child at Newcastle or if this is your first association with the school, you are equally welcome.

We pride ourselves at Newcastle as being a very caring school community. We put the children in our care first and endeavour to create a pleasant, secure and happy environment, where the children can achieve their best.

Choosing the Primary School for your child is possibly one of the most important decisions that you will have to make. Before making that decision we would ask you to consider what Newcastle Primary School & Nursery Unit has to offer. This prospectus has been designed to help you know more about the life of our school, to enable you to make an informed choice for your child's education.

No prospectus can convey the full picture of school life. When Government and PHA regulations permit, I will be more than happy to meet you and answer any further questions you may have concerning our school. I hope that you will find our school welcoming and that it will offer your child a well-rounded education. I look forward to meeting you and your child in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J McCann

Principal





Our School

Newcastle Primary School & Nursery Unit is situated in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The School, which is south facing, has a panoramic view of the Mourne Mountains and is central to the town.

It was built in 1962 and serves the seaside resort of Newcastle and surrounding area. It is co-educational, inclusive and welcomes all pupils regardless of religious denomination or cultural background. The Board of Governors ably manage and support the school.

The maximum enrolment including a Nursery Unit, is 250. The staff consists of a Principal and 8 teachers. The Nursery Unit, fully functional since September 1999, serves the community well. There are two sessions per day with 26 pupils in each period. The committed team provide a balanced and broad curriculum delivered in a flexible manner to all pupils where expectations are high.

The school is well resourced with ActivPanels, computers, laptops and iPads in every room. Awards for All Lottery Funding has secured the development of an ICT suite as well. Pupils have opportunities to play the piano, a brass or woodwind instrument, sing in the choir, take part in annual performances, learn to swim, care for the environment and much more. After school clubs provide a large variety of sports and creative activities.

Outdoors, the school has spacious grounds which consist of a large tarmacadam playground, adventure playground and large lawn area which provide much space for play and games. The PTA, school fund and the school council has provided outdoor playground equipment.

Members of Board of Governors

EA Representatives

Mrs M Macauley

Mr N Jones

Transferors' Representatives

Mrs V Methven

Mr A Kincaid

Ms S Cornelissen

Parents' Representatives

Mrs R Hamilton

Ms T Blue

Teacher Representative

Mrs J Crutchley

Secretary

Mrs J McCann



Admissions Policy

Statutory online enrolment is available in the January of the year your child is due to start P1 on the Education Authority website. The admissions criteria below are also published online with Education Authority. Please ensure that your completed form is submitted to EA by the allocated closing date. The following criteria will be applied in the order set down below by the Board of Governors of Newcastle Primary School in selecting children of compulsory school age.

P1 Intake

Preference will be given to:

1. Children who, at the date of their application, have a child of the family currently enrolled at the school;
2. Children who, at the date of their application, have had a child of the family previously enrolled at the school;
3. Children, who at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school;
4. Children on the basis of the proximity of their home to the school as measured in a straight line using an Ordnance Survey web distance measurement tool from the child's house to the school.

Supplementary Criterion

In the event of over-subscription for September 2021, in any one of the above criteria taken in order, children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

ZVCTQSUMWRJNXGBIEDOALFKHPYMc

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used.

In the event of two children with exactly the same full name, children will be selected by strict chronological age, eldest to youngest, established by date-of-birth as entered on a Birth Certificate.

Applications for admission to P1 after the beginning of the school year:

1. Criteria as above.

P2 - P7 Intake

1. Criteria as above.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that any information which is relevant to the above criteria is included in, or attached to the application form.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by primary schools can result in the withdrawal of a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's application form.



The Curriculum

The Primary NI Curriculum comprises of:

The Foundation Stage: P1-2 Key Stage 1: P3-4 Key Stage 2: P5-7

The statutory school curriculum will be made up of the following areas of learning:

R.E	Language & Literacy	Mathematics and Numeracy	The Arts	The World Around Us	Personal Development and Mutual Understanding	P.E
In accordance with the core syllabus specified by the Department of Education	Talking and Listening Reading Writing	Processes Number Handling Data Shape and Space Measure	Art Music Drama	History Science and Technology Geography	Personal Understanding & Health, and Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community	Includes: Athletics Dance Games and Gymnastics

Religious Education

Non-denominational religious education is delivered by the class teacher and is available to all pupils.

There is assembly on Monday and Thursday each week, with the children taking an active part. We enjoy close relationships with the local Churches and their Ministers who often conduct Assemblies. We welcome other visitors to Assembly throughout the year. The school can also offer pupils the opportunity to prepare for First Penance, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Personal Development/ Health & Drugs Education

We endeavour to provide a healthy working environment for staff and pupils. Smoking is not permitted in any section of the school. The school's Drug Education Policy encourages a positive attitude to drugs education. Outside agencies, such as the PSNI, help us to deliver programmes relating to this.

Health Education is an important element of our curriculum. This is delivered through cross-curricular approaches. Matters relating to health and safety are kept under constant review as your child's safety is of the utmost importance to us.

We are dedicated to promoting the health of all our pupils. We have a healthy eating policy and healthy meals are promoted in school. We encourage the consumption of water throughout the school day. Newcastle Primary School & Nursery Unit is committed to educating all children in the care of themselves and the environment.

The area of Citizenship is promoted through activities such as 'Circle Time' and PDMU.



Information Communication Technology (ICT) Homework

ICT opportunities are given to all pupils. All classrooms have desktop computers, laptops, iPads and ActivPanels. The school has an ICT suite having secured an Awards For All grant from The Big Lottery. P4 to P7 are assessed in the Use of ICT which denotes their proficiency in all ICT skills.

Assessment

Continual monitoring and assessment of pupil progress takes place in all classes, through observation, class work, class tests and standardised tests. Assessment work is constructive and designed to support pupils and at the same time facilitate future planning. Pupil progress is formally reported to parents, through written reports in the summer term. Teacher/parent consultations take place in both formal and informal settings. Formal parent interviews take place twice a year.

Newcastle Primary School sees a value in children engaging in homework as a means of revising and reinforcing work which has been done in class, involving parents in their child's studies and in the development of self-discipline and good work habits. Against this must be balanced each child's need for recreation and development of private interests and hobbies. Therefore, the amount of homework should generally not exceed that which can be done in 30 minutes in Foundation/ KSI and 60 minutes in KS2.

To ensure regularity it will be school policy that homework will be set each night from Monday to Thursday, though this may be relaxed for special occasions and at holiday times. We would like parents to supervise homework, listen to reading, assist with spellings and tables and ensure that written homework is neatly presented.

P4-7 participates in online learning using Google Classroom, whilst Nursery to P3 use Class Dojo as their online platform. These two platforms have been used to set activities for the children to complete and give the pupils opportunities to stay in touch with their teacher and submit class or homework.

Extra-Curricular Activities

After school activities organised are chosen by the pupils – where the demand is greatest, we endeavour to run the activity with a minimum of ten pupils attending in order to make it feasible.

Clubs and activities, both past and present, include:

Football | Tag Rugby | Table tennis
 Netball | Hockey | Kwik Cricket
 STEM Club | Art | Scripture Union
 Cycling Proficiency | Computer Club
 Newspaper Club | Dance
 Cookery | French

Cross Community Links

An important element of school life is the promotion of Cross Community Links. The programme promotes self-respect, respect for others and building good relationships with those of different cultural traditions. The pupils are encouraged to value their own culture and show respect for and value those of different traditions. The school has a close Cross Community Link with St Joseph's PS, Tyrella, including visiting each other's schools, educational visits and residential outdoor education activities. The programmes that are arranged link with the school's day to day curriculum.

Special Educational Needs

Each teacher provides a full programme of work for all pupils in their class, irrespective of ability. The school recognises that all children have individual learning needs but for some children, these individual needs become special educational needs. Our first priority is to identify those children in a class who are displaying difficulties. Once the class teacher has identified a child, evidence of progress is collated and the child is referred to the SENCO. The decision will then be taken as to whether the child should/should not be placed on the Special Education Needs Register.

Some children progress within their own peer group where the class teacher provides work at the appropriate level. Some other children require more specific help. Each child's progress is assessed and monitored with frequent contact with parents/guardians and outside agencies.

Newcastle Primary School also caters for the needs of gifted children. Work is differentiated and challenging.



School Time-Table

Each school day begins at 8.55 am but in order to be ready to begin promptly, we expect children to arrive from 8.45 am onwards. No supervision can be provided before this time.

In the interests of safety, pupils are not allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours without first obtaining permission from the Principal.

The school is closed during July, three weeks of August and for all statutory holidays. Parents are issued with a list of other holidays at the commencement of the school year. We strongly advise parents not to take children on holiday during term time, as this can adversely affect your child's education. Should parents wish to take children out of school, the Principal must be informed.

In the event of an emergency school closure every effort will be made to notify parents to enable them to make alternative arrangements.

The time-table is set out below:

	PI - 3	P4 - 7
School Commences	8.55am	8.55am
Break Time	10.45am-11.00am	10.45am-11.00am
Lunchtime	12.30pm-1.15pm	12.30pm-1.15pm
School Finishes	2.00pm	3.00pm
After-School Activities End	2.45pm/ 3.00pm	3.45pm

School Discipline

At Newcastle Primary School, we encourage high levels of confidence and self-esteem in our pupils and adopt a positive approach to pupil behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for each other, the staff and their school environment. They understand and co-operate with the school positive behaviour policy and each class has its own behaviour plan and strategies. Our aim in promoting positive behaviour strategies is that our pupils will accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions and realise that there are consequences for others.

Child Protection and Pastoral Care

Newcastle Primary School has a caring ethos and the staff is committed to the care and welfare of the pupils. Our pupils know who to go to if they have any problems and they understand that their concerns will be listened to. The arrangements for Pastoral Care are set out in the school policy. It is regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. The designated teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Stewart and the Deputy Designated teachers are Mrs Crutchley and Mrs Bradshaw. These teachers attend all Child Protection courses available to them and disseminate to the rest of the staff. There is a clear Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Complaints procedure which is communicated to parents and staff.



School Meals

These are cooked on site. A menu will be published on the school website at the beginning of each term. Dinners are booked and paid for through the School Money App.

Healthy Eating

At 10.30 am each morning children have break. We operate a healthy eating policy at break-time and discourage pupils from bringing chocolate, crisps and fizzy drinks. For a weekly charge, the school canteen staff will provide the children in P4-7 with food, which normally consist of a bread based snack (toast, pancake or muffin) and a selection of fruit. P1-3 operates their own class healthy eating scheme and the weekly charge should be paid directly to the teacher. Milk and water are available in school. Please be aware that Newcastle PS & Nursery Unit is a NUT FREE zone.

Snacks are booked and paid through the School Money App.

Attendance

Annual attendance rates at Newcastle Primary School are good. Pupils are encouraged in their attendance by the awarding of certificates and prizes at the end of term and at the end of the school year. Attendance is monitored by the class teacher and Principal with the help of the school secretary. Pupils whose attendance falls below 88% will be referred for monitoring by the Education Welfare Office and the Department of Education.



Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Newcastle Primary School is proud to enjoy the support of an excellent Parent Teacher Association. The PTA arrange fund raising events designed to allow parents and the wider family to come together and at the same time provide additional funding for the school. PTA meetings are usually held twice per term and are open to all parents. We value their positive contribution and support for Newcastle. We are indebted to them for all their hard work and commitment.

Mid-Academic Year Changes

The Board of Governors reserve the right to review and change any information deemed necessary during the year.



Uniform

Boys P1-7

- * Royal blue school sweatshirt with school logo
- * White polo shirt with school logo
- * Grey trousers or shorts
- * Grey socks
- * Black shoes

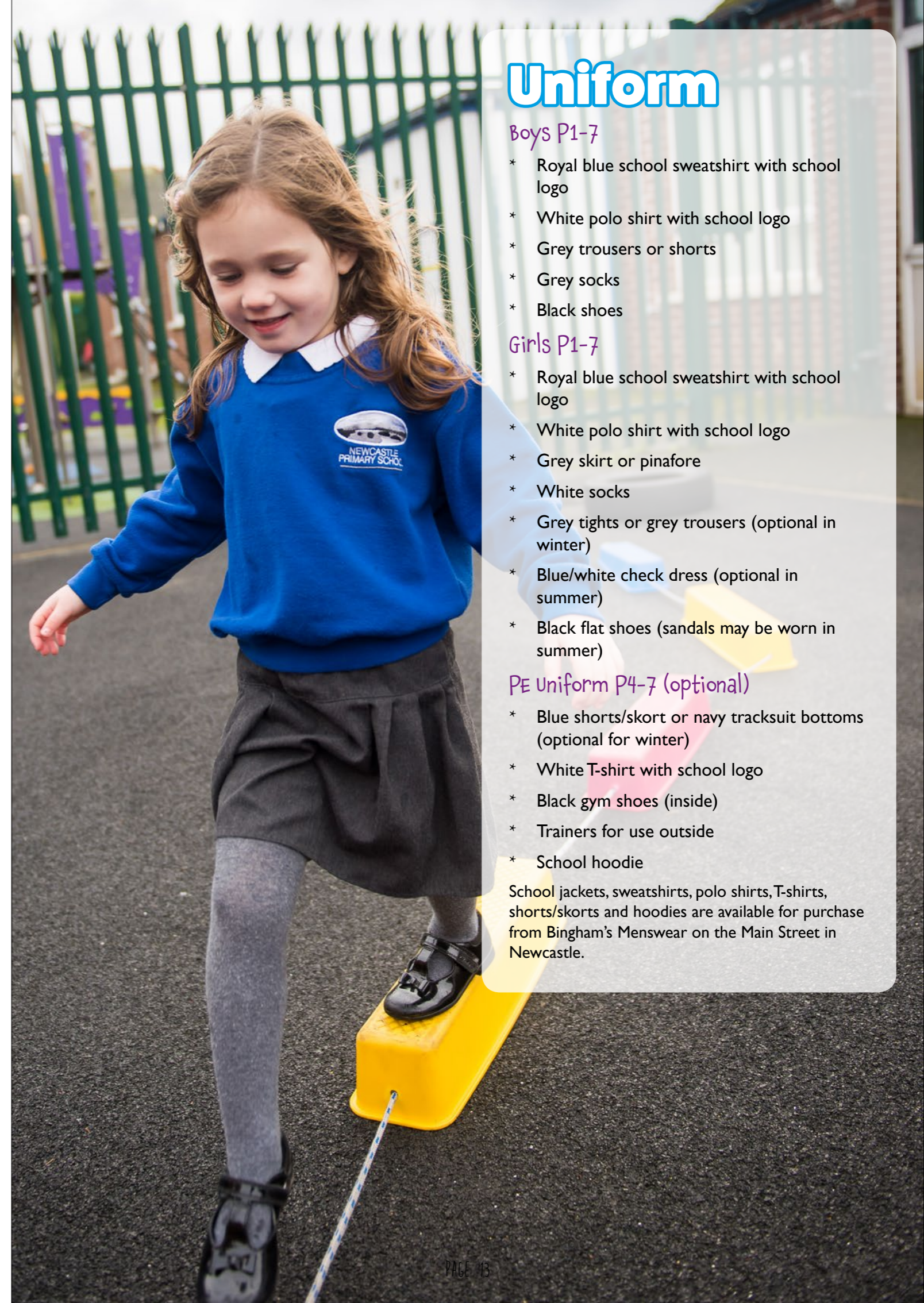
Girls P1-7

- * Royal blue school sweatshirt with school logo
- * White polo shirt with school logo
- * Grey skirt or pinafore
- * White socks
- * Grey tights or grey trousers (optional in winter)
- * Blue/white check dress (optional in summer)
- * Black flat shoes (sandals may be worn in summer)

PE Uniform P4-7 (optional)

- * Blue shorts/skort or navy tracksuit bottoms (optional for winter)
- * White T-shirt with school logo
- * Black gym shoes (inside)
- * Trainers for use outside
- * School hoodie

School jackets, sweatshirts, polo shirts, T-shirts, shorts/skorts and hoodies are available for purchase from Bingham's Menswear on the Main Street in Newcastle.

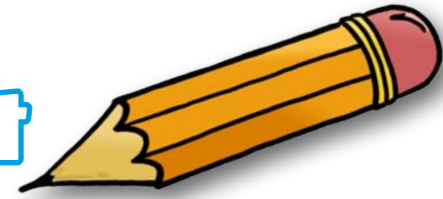


Newcastle Nursery Unit Vision

At Newcastle Nursery Unit we aim to promote the optimum overall development of each child through planned play experiences which reflect children's interests and curiosity in the world around them. In our cross-community, multicultural setting, we aspire to place "respect for all" as the cornerstone of our life with children, parents and the community.



Welcome to Newcastle Nursery Unit



We are delighted to introduce you to our learning environment. We are aware that choosing a Nursery School is an important decision and we hope this booklet will provide you with the information you need as you make an informed choice for your child.

About us

The Nursery Unit is purpose built and enjoys panoramic views of the Mourne Mountains as it adjoins Newcastle Primary School on the Shimna Road. Access to the unit can be gained from the Shimna Road or via Dunwellan.

The Nursery has two classes; each class enrolls 26 children.

The morning class is 9.00 am – 11.30 am and the afternoon class is 12.30 pm – 3.00 pm.

The staffing consists of one qualified teacher, Mrs Bradshaw and one Nursery Assistant. Occasionally, additional assistance may be provided for children with Special Educational Needs. We also benefit from close links with the primary school and have access to its facilities and support staff.

Our Daily Routine

An example of our daily routine includes:

9.05am

Child initiated play in areas that are of interest to the child.

9.40am

Buffet snack is available from this time.

10.05

Outside play

10.55 am

Tidy up time

11.05 am

Circle Time.

The teacher facilitates this group experience which promotes emotional development, language development, learning related to topic focus or it may simply be a musical or drama experience.

11.15 am

Story Time

11.20 am

Parting activities.

Children can be picked up at any time during the last 10 minutes of the session, this allows staff time to say goodbye to the children and to chat to carers.



Our Curriculum

Our curriculum has been influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach which celebrates our children's depth of wonder and joy in the world and engages them and their families in this exploration. This educational philosophy recognizes the worth, value and strengths of each child.

Our curriculum also adheres to the Department of Education's "Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education." It provides a broad and balanced programme of challenging play activities and learning opportunities arising from both the children's interests and the learning intentions relevant to the six key areas of the Early Years Curriculum:

- * The Arts
- * Language Development
- * Early Mathematical Experiences
- * Personal Social and Emotional Development
- * Physical Development and Movement
- * The World Around Us



Although the curriculum reflects six discrete areas the learning is actually connected and integrated through a topic approach. The topics are largely inspired by the children after staff observations and discussions. The staff become researchers and assist the children to construct their own knowledge through questioning, discovering, observing, investigating and playing inside Nursery and in our outside classroom. We promote Lynn Staley's stance, "Teaching is not talking. Teaching is guided discovery."

Visitors are invited into the classroom to reflect and highlight the interests and deepen the children's knowledge of the chosen topic. Where possible, trips into the community are planned to enable the children to investigate and observe the world around them.

During the sessions the children will be engaged in child initiated play, small group work and whole class activities – tidy up time, large circle time and story time.

The process of learning will be documented in a variety of ways through recorded observations, photographs, classroom displays and individual special books.



Partnership with Parents

Our Nursery Unit prides itself on its positive and successful relationship with parents whom we recognise as the key educators of their child. Parents are invited to play a role in nursery that suits their situation, from providing materials for the art and design area, talking to children at Circle Time about their occupations or interests or to join us on a Nursery outing. Over the course of the year parents are given opportunities to join us in Nursery and these are very special experiences for the children.

Staff report to parents informally each day during parting time.

There are two parent teacher meetings held during the year. The first is during the first term when we review the child's settling-in and progress to date.

The second meeting is towards the end of the second term when we look closely at the children's achievements in the six areas of the curriculum. At the end of the third term, we provide a written report for the pre-school child which has information for their PI teacher and for the parents.

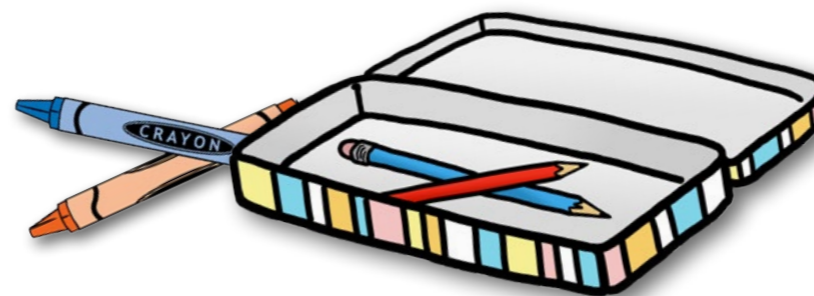
We welcome and highly value parental observations and information from home and we work in partnership with parents for the benefit of the children.

Special Educational Needs

Children with SEN are integrated into the Nursery taking into account what is appropriate for their individual needs. As with all children, effective use is made of observations, which enable staff to make changes to the curriculum when necessary. When appropriate, staff and parents will get support from other professionals for example speech therapists, educational psychologists, health visitors and occupational therapists. Parents are informed of the involvement of other professionals before they see any child.

Child Protection Policy

Newcastle Nursery Unit has a caring ethos and the staff is committed to the care and welfare of the children. We have a Child Protection Policy which is given to all parents of nursery during the home visit. The policy informs the parents of the procedures and safeguards to ensure that the nursery is a safe and secure environment for the children and the staff. All parents are informed about the procedures for toileting and the use of children's images is agreed with the parent when his/her child starts Nursery.



Healthy Eating

We run a buffet-snack where the child collects his/her healthy snack from the trolley. Your child will choose when he/she wants to leave his/her play for snack. The range of food includes: crackers, bagels, breadsticks, fruit, raw vegetables and toast. Your child will have an opportunity to butter their own bread and to pour their own drink. Milk and water are provided for the children to drink in Nursery.

Nursery Fund

This money allows staff to provide a healthy snack and purchase additional resources needed for particular topics in Nursery. Nursery Fund is payable through the School Money App.



Starting Nursery

During the month of June, parents are invited to an information evening where the parents can learn more about Nursery and meet the staff who work there.

The settling-in period is very important and the Nursery staff invest significant time and effort into getting this right for both parent and child.

At the end of August, we organise an induction day for the parent and child to spend time together playing in Nursery.

We operate a Home Visit Strategy where the child can meet the teacher and the Nursery assistant in his/her own territory. This has proven to be invaluable to each child to date because they are in control in their own home. It also provides an ideal opportunity for the parent and teacher to exchange information.

The "settling in period" is further enhanced by our staggered intake and flexible collection times. If a parent and/or child are experiencing separation difficulties, then a process will be put in place until the child realises that mums or dads always come back! We fully recognise that some children take longer than others to settle in.

Encouraging Good Behaviour

Staff work hard to establish warm, respectful and trusting relationships with each child. This will help to create a nurturing and caring ethos. To promote positive behaviour, we use a variety of strategies and our expectations are made clear to our children in various ways and throughout the whole year. We work closely with parents and children in establishing our Rules, Consequences and Rewards system and this encourages positive behaviour. Parents receive a behaviour policy leaflet on the home visit.



Nursery Uniform

Boys and Girls

- Royal blue school sweatshirt with school logo
- White polo shirt with school logo
- Navy embroidered jogging bottoms
- Suitable footwear

All the above items are available at Bingham's Menswear on the Main Street in Newcastle.

Please note that whilst Nursery uniform is optional we highly recommend that all children avail of this opportunity as play in the Nursery Unit can often be messy involving many different media including paint, clay, dough etc.



NEWCASTLE

Primary School & Nursery Unit



NEWCASTLE
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