

# St. Laurence O'Toole's Primary School Belleeks



## Learn, Work, Grow Together

School Prospectus 2023-2024

[www.stlaurenceotooles.co.uk](http://www.stlaurenceotooles.co.uk)

Principal: Ms. C Monaghan

Learn, Work, Grow Together



# St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S.

31 Main Street Belleeks Newry Co. Down BT35 7PH

**PRINCIPAL:** Ms. C Monaghan *B.Ed (Hons) M.Ed*  
Tel: 028 30 878387

Email: [info@stlaurences.belleeks.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stlaurences.belleeks.ni.sch.uk)  
School Website: [www.stlaurenceotooles.co.uk](http://www.stlaurenceotooles.co.uk)

---

Dear Parents/Carers,

On behalf of the staff of St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S., I would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your child.

St. Laurence O'Toole's is a Catholic Maintained School which aims to provide our pupils with a high standard of education and a wide variety of experiences in a happy and caring environment. Our Catholic ethos creates an atmosphere in which each child can achieve their full potential and develop skills, knowledge and self-esteem helping them to grow into independent and responsible people.

This prospectus is intended to give you an idea of the work and life of school. It will provide you with information on the curriculum we offer and the experiences available to our pupils.

We believe that we can only achieve the best for your child by close co-operation between home and school. From this partnership the link to the parish and wider community is strengthened.

Should you have any further queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Ciara Monaghan  
Principal

## History

St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. Belleeks was opened in October 1973 and this year marks our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A new school extension was added and opened in February 2016.

The Department of Education, who carried out an inspection of St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. in September 2012 concluded:

'that the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement'

A Sustaining Improvement Inspection of the school was held in January 2016 and it concluded that: 'St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained self-improvement in the interests of the children.'

## Mission Statement

We the Governors and Staff of St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. believe that our school plays a vital role in the Catholic community. Each child's education is of equal importance and each child has something positive to give to the world. Each child is encouraged to develop a personal relationship with God.

We hope that through their education, our children will become caring and responsible individuals who contribute to community and society and who are aware of the value they can add to the environment and world of work. Our school vision is a central theme that is reflected throughout everything that makes our school. This includes relationships, the Curriculum, extra-curricular activities, policy and practice. We have a common goal that we are preparing our children for their future ensuring that everyone involved has a voice and will be listened to. There will be equal opportunities for all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, religion, age or ability. Each child is encouraged to embrace our agreed school ethos:

**'Learn, Work, Grow  
Together'**

Learn, Work, Grow Together

## General Information

### Staff

Rec/P1	Mrs. G. McGrath/Ms. C Monaghan
P2/3	Mrs. A. Toner/Ms. C Monaghan
P4/5	Mrs A. Breen
P6/7	Mrs K Hughes

Secretary	Mrs. C. McVerry
Classroom Assistants	Mrs. C. McVerry, Mrs. M. O'Neill, Mrs. S. Gorman, Mrs. B Loughran Miss Clarke, Mrs Toner

Dinner Supervisors	Mrs. M. O'Neill/Mrs. S. Gorman
--------------------	--------------------------------

Building Supervisor	Mrs. C. McTaggart
---------------------	-------------------

Kitchen Staff	Mrs. F. McVerry
---------------	-----------------

These are the present class grouping arrangements for the incoming year.

The arrangements are agreed on by teaching staff together, and are based on how we feel we can best provide for the children throughout the school, and so this may change form year to year.

A certain degree of flexibility to allow for practical management of various curricular areas is at times required, which means that teachers may change around for occasional lessons.

The principal will employ a substitute teacher, usually for two days per week, in order to cope with the administration workload. This will be increased at certain times of the year as the administrative demands increase.

## School Timetable

	Reception	P1 – P2	P3 – P7
Morning	9:00 am – 12.00	9:00 am – 12:00	9:00 am – 12:00
Lunch	12:00noon - 12:45pm	12.00noon – 12:45 pm	12:00noon – 12:45 pm
Afternoon		12:45pm – 2:00pm	P.3 -2:00pm and then 3:00pm in third term P.4-7 – 12:45pm - 3:00pm

**Children may arrive in school from 8:45 am, however children attending breakfast club can arrive at 8am.**

## School Uniform

Boys	Girls
Emerald Green jumper (crest) White shirt Navy trousers Navy/Emerald school tie Plain black shoes (not trainers)	Emerald Green cardigan/jumper (crest) White shirt Navy pinafore/skirt Navy/Emerald school tie Navy socks/tights Plain black shoes (not trainers) Green/white checked dresses (Summer)

P.E. Uniform

Navy sweatshirt (crest)

Navy jogging bottoms

White polo (no team jerseys)

Trainers

**Reception/P1 wear PE uniform Mon-Fri**

**Children in P.2-7 may only wear the PE uniform on PE days. All items must be clearly labelled.**

**Summer (Optional)**

**Green Summer dress/ Plain navy shorts**

It is the Board of Governors' wish that all pupils should wear the school uniform. The uniform gives the children a sense of identity with St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S.

Forms for assistance with purchases of the uniform are available on the Education Authority website.

Uniform Suppliers:

McEvoys Drapery – 13 Monaghan Street, Newry  
BT35 6BB  
Tel: 028 3026 2294

School dinners are served in the canteen. The dinners are £2.60 and dinner money is payable on Monday for the whole week to the class teacher. Application forms for free school meals can be acquired from the School secretary and can also be completed digitally through the Education Authority website. Children taking lunch are supervised in the canteen.

Throughout the school we promote Healthy Eating. There is a healthy break policy where children are only permitted to eat fruit/vegetable or a plain bread product. We also advocate that parents refrain from sending fizzy drinks into school for lunch or break. Children are allowed to access personal bottles of water throughout the school day. Milk is also available to purchase at the beginning of each week at a cost of £1.50. It is free for children in Reception. Children are educated in the principles of healthy eating through the Areas of Learning (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, The World Around Us and Physical Education, etc)

## Communication

### Home – School Partnership

We encourage strong relationships with our parents. We value their role and encourage them to become actively involved in their child's education.

1. In October each year, we have individual Parent-Teacher meetings to discuss the progress of your child.
2. In Term 3, parents receive a detailed Annual Report on their child.
3. Information meetings are held with parents whose children are preparing for the Sacraments of First Confession, First Communion and Confirmation.
4. Throughout the year, parents can arrange meetings with their child's teacher or with the Principal by booking an appointment (028 30 878 387)
5. Parents are issued with regular information letters and monthly newsletters via the Class Dojo App. The school website is updated regularly.

### Parent-Teacher Communication

We would ask parents to please forward a note to the class teacher under the following circumstances:

1. To provide the reason for absence from school when your child returns to school.
2. If your child is suffering from any medical condition or taking medication.

3. If your child has to be exempted from any school activity for medical reasons.
4. If your child's usual travel arrangements for the afternoon are to be changed or you need to collect your child early. Parents/Carers should sign the late book if arriving late and the early departure book if leaving early. This book is situated in the front porch.
5. If you wish to make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher.
6. If any domestic or other difficulty is affecting your child's schoolwork. (In this case you may prefer to speak privately to the teacher or Principal – please contact school for an appointment by telephone.)

## The Curriculum

The curriculum in our Catholic school refers to the learning experiences that are presented to each child: those planned by the staff and from our school ethos and environment. Since Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school, our entire curriculum will attempt to reflect Christ's message. When we plan our curriculum we take into account the uniqueness of each child and values. Our aim is to offer each child a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the Northern Ireland Education Order.

The curriculum shall be implemented so that the desire to learn will be encouraged in pupils and that thinking, and reasoning will be stimulated. It is important that children learn to independently apply themselves to the work in hand and are ready for transition at every stage.

All parents will be invited to a curriculum information afternoon at the beginning of each academic year. They will be informed about the expectations of the year and receive an overview of the expected learning. Staff will also answer any questions Parents/Carers may have.

### Reception

The curriculum for the Reception class will be built around the needs of the individual children, the teacher will:

- Encourage positive attitudes and dispositions to learning.
- Support the child's social and emotional development
- Provide opportunities for periods of sustained activity
- Provide opportunities to encourage and facilitate talking and listening

## Primary Curriculum

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

The Areas of Learning are:

- Religious Education
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The Arts
- The World Around Us
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU)
- Physical Development and Movement (Foundation Stage)/Physical Education (Key Stages 1 and 2)

The Cross-curricular themes are:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The Curriculum also develops pupils' Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. These are transferable skills which are transferable to many curricular areas and will be of use to the children throughout their lives. They are as follows:

- Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-making
- Self-Management
- Working with Others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative.

**For full details of the Curriculum, see the official website, [www. nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk)**

## The Religious Education Programme

St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S is a Catholic Maintained school; the Religious Education Programme follows the requirements of the Diocesan Religious committee. The ethos of the Catholic School permeates all aspects of school life and is delivered using the Grow in Love programme. Prayer is a regular part of the school day. Each school year begins and ends with a school mass to which parents are invited. The programme prepares each child for participation in the liturgy and Sacraments of the Catholic Church – First Confession and First Holy Communion (P4) and Confirmation (P7).

Children in P.4-7 attend Mass in St. Laurence O'Toole's Church each Tuesday morning.



We warmly welcome learners from the Catholic tradition, other Christian traditions and non Christian traditions as well as those who do not identify as having any religious faith. Under article 21(5) of the Education and Libraries (NI) order 1986, parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of collective worship and/or RE lessons. If parents wish to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons and collective worship, please inform the Principal in writing.

## **Assessment**

Children's learning is at the heart of our work. A child's progress – academic, social and physical – will be continuously be reviewed and parents will be informed formally and informally of their child's progress.

The main purpose of assessment is to establish through a variety of means what each child is able to do. Assessment also assists the teacher in planning appropriate tasks for each child.

Assessment in P1/P2 is ongoing and informal through observations. In P3 – P7 children will be tested in core subject areas. CATS intelligence tests are carried out in P4 and P6. Assessments in other curricular areas will be based on class work and teacher observations.

## **Homework**

At St. Laurence O'Toole's we believe that homework provides an important link between home and school and helps to reinforce the work being done in class. It allows parents to become involved in the education of their child by giving a little help and much encouragement. Homework is best done in a setting free from distraction. It should be a positive experience, free from anxiety or stress. Parents are asked to promote accurate, neatly presented work and "not to do it for them" and to contact the class teacher if there are any concerns about the homework. If you check over their work and sign it, then you are seen by the child to be in partnership with the teacher (and the teacher is reassured of your support also). The teacher may also write comments on the homework, which you should discuss with your child. These may be written to praise their efforts so that you can also let them see how proud you are of them, or on the other hand they may be written so that you can back up the teacher by insisting on higher standards. Either way, the comments are there to help the child. Homework will range from fifteen minutes in Year 1 and 2 to about 40-45mins in Years 6 and 7. Generally homework is not set at weekends or during school holidays.

## **Special Educational Needs**

The school implements the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs and Disability Order.

We seek to identify, as early as possible, those children with Special Educational Needs, through careful monitoring, testing and of course contact with parents/guardians. This allows the teacher to adopt a strategy for teaching within the classroom, which will meet those needs as far as possible. The staff is committed to working as a team, and as such will collaborate in whatever way they see fit to cater for the pupils.

In order to provide the best possible opportunities for the pupil, we may with agreement from the parent/guardian, seek further support from the EA to secure extra provision for individual pupils. We work closely with Peripatetic Service and advice and support is also sought and received from a range of services including school nurse, Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS), Primary Behaviour Support team (PBST), speech therapists, occupational therapists etc.

Mrs Toner is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

## **Pastoral Care and Child Protection**

At St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S., pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith. We see the school as a community in which pupils, staff, parents, governors and all those connected to St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. take great pride in all that we do. We feel that everyone has an important role to play in contributing to the success of the school.

We are firmly committed to:

- the aims of Catholic education;
- providing effective education for all our children including individuals with special needs;
- developing positive pastoral care systems in our school;
- establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community;

The atmosphere of the school is based upon good relationships between governors/staff/pupils/parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other's roles and responsibilities and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the well being of each child and so our teaching approaches and experiences presented enable them to achieve their maximum potential.

We recognize and value the important role parents' play in their child's education. Every effort is made to ensure parents feel welcome, that they are made aware of

the school's aims, objectives and policies and that they too recognise their child's individual needs, progress and achievements. We expect our parents to co-operate fully with us in achieving these goals.

If a pupil is identified as having problems, the staff will become actively involved in trying to find a solution. Pupils are encouraged to confide in their teachers in times of difficulty, and again it is important to emphasise the significance of close contact between parents and teachers. Therefore, each teacher will welcome any information regarding difficult home circumstances, which may be causing a pupil distress or anxiety. Any such information will be treated with complete confidentiality.

The school operates a Child Protection Policy which meets with requirement of the Area Child Protection Committee's "Regional Policy and Procedures". It recognises that the interests of the child are paramount.

The following members of staff have responsibilities for Child Protection:

DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILD PROTECTION	Ms. Monaghan
DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILD PROTECTION	Mrs Breen, Mrs Toner

All parents are informed that the full School Child Protection Policy is available for view on the website.

## Sporting and Extra Curricular

At St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S., we provide physical and sporting activities through Physical education. All classes are timetabled for P.E. during the week. We make use of a multi-purpose hall for many activities. In good weather teachers and children make use of the playground.

Our overall aim is to ensure every child receives a regular balanced and progressive Physical Education programme which promotes health, fitness and sportsmanship.

- All children are given the opportunity to participate in regular games and through this programme our pupils have the opportunity to develop personal qualities such as positive self-esteem, self confidence and tolerance.
- They have the opportunity to interact and co-operate with others and become aware how physical education promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Cycling Proficiency is presented to P6/P7 children as an after school activity. An Activibty club is available for P1 –P2 children from 2:00 – 3:00 pm daily. Various other clubs are presented throughout the year.

## Charges and Remissions Policy

From time to time, appeals will be made to parents for voluntary contributions towards school funds. However, no child will be disadvantaged in any way if parents choose not to make a contribution. School trips which are organised may require parental contributions to help with the costs.

## Drugs and Health Education

Whilst we recognise that parents are the primary educators of their children, we realise that St. Laurence O'Toole's P.S. is well placed to provide strong support and care in the area of substance misuse and therefore we strive to respond to the personal, emotional, social and educational needs of our pupils through our interaction with them in the classroom and beyond. We emphasise the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and the misuse of medicines. This is done at an age appropriate level, mostly through The World Around Us, Religion and Personal Development and Mutual Understanding lessons.

## Positive Behaviour/Discipline

Our School Positive Behaviour Policy is based on the school's Christian values and beliefs. We aim:

- to provide a supportive environment which will foster the growth and development of caring and responsible adults;
- to create a well-ordered school in which all pupils can learn effectively;
- to develop in our pupils a sense of self-worth and self-control;

To this end we have some school rules for our pupils which we will implement fairly and consistently. It is the school policy that discipline should be based on respect for self, respect for other pupils, respect for adults and respect for property.

When a pupil fails to meet the minimum required standards of behaviour, the school is entitled to impose such sanctions as outlined in the Discipline policy. These may include suspension and, if necessary, expulsion.

Advice and guidance from CCMS and DENI will be followed in such circumstances.

**A copy of the School's Discipline Policy will be given to parents when their child starts school and is available on request from the school Principal.**

## Complaints Procedure

In accordance with the school's policy of involving parents in the education of their children, we attempt to deal with complaints or concerns in a totally professional manner and would urge you to do the following if you have a concern.

- In the first instance, contact your child's teacher through a note or a phone call to the school to arrange a meeting. This way you can sit down together and talk through the situation. Remember, the teacher wants what is best for your child too.
- If you are unable to resolve the issue with the teacher, make an appointment to see the Principal.
- If you are still not satisfied that the matter has been resolved, the Chair of the Board of Governors can then be contacted.
- If the matter remains unresolved, the chairperson will put you in contact with  
Catholic Council for Maintained Schools/ EA Complaints Tribunal for  
Curriculum Matters

We wish to assure you that any query/concern will be dealt with professionally and confidentially.

## Attendance

Regular, punctual attendance is very important in pupils making good progress in school. Each child should be aiming for the target of full attendance throughout the year.

The school is part of the Department of Education's SIMS Management System. Reasons for pupil absence must be registered each day. To assist with this please send a note to the teacher giving the reason for your child's absence. Attendance figures are monitored each month by EA's Educational Welfare Officer. Where there is a pattern of regular absence the EWO will make home visits.

A child can **ONLY** be marked present for a day if they have attended for more than 50% of that day, ie 3 hours.

## Accidents/Sickness at School

When a child is sick or injured, the school will attempt to contact the parents to inform them. In cases of danger when a parent cannot be contacted, the doctor may be contacted or the child even brought to the hospital. In all cases, it will be the policy of the school to act in the interests of the child.

### **MEDICATION**

In the interest of Health and Safety, if a child needs to take any form of medication during school hours, parents must come into school to administer the medication where possible.

A medical form must also be completed by parents.

No member of staff will be permitted to administer medication.

Inhalers used by asthmatic children, may be made readily accessible at all times of the school day.

Children should not attend school if they are sick or feeling unwell.

### **HEADLICE**

In the event of head lice parents should contact the school immediately. The school will then send out an information leaflet to all parents.

### **TOILETING ACCIDENTS**

A child who has an accident related to the above will be helped to change by two adults. A change of clothes will be kept in school for this purpose. Parents are asked to wash and return the clothes as soon as possible thereafter. Parents will be informed of such accidents.

## Educational Visits

The school values highly the contribution Educational visits make to the all round development of its pupils. Every opportunity to participate in such 'visits' is availed of - beginning with visits to places of local interest and broadening out to places of interest in the wider community.