

Spires Integrated

Primary School

www.spiresips.org.uk



Prospectus



Welcome



Dear Parents,

As principal of Spires Integrated Primary School, I am delighted that you are considering our school for your child. Starting school is a very big step for each child and choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever have to make. I hope our prospectus will help to make that decision easier for you by providing an insight into what life is like for pupils at Spires.

As the only Integrated Primary School in the Magherafelt area, we provide an opportunity for children of all faiths and none, from different cultural and social backgrounds to be educated together in an atmosphere where they are all equally valued. At Spires differences are respected and celebrated.

The governors, staff and parents work in partnership to ensure that pupils receive a high quality education within a caring and stimulating environment. We aim to deliver a broad, balanced and creative curriculum, through which we can nurture the individual talents and abilities of each child, ensuring that they each reach their potential.

We welcome and encourage opportunities to work with parents. We believe that there should be a sound relationship between home and school. This relationship will help our children to become young people who are secure, happy, socially well-adjusted and proud of their achievements. The education and experiences they receive at Spires will lay the foundation for life long learning in a rapidly changing world.

Thank you for taking time to read our prospectus. I invite you to attend our Open Evening or to make an appointment to visit Spires Integrated Primary School so that you can experience our happy, caring and productive school.

Joan Bell
Principal
Email: jbell216@c2kni.net



Our Story so far ...



Spires Integrated Primary School owes its birth to the hopes and dedication of local parents and grandparents. People, who differed greatly in background, shared a common desire - to see children from different cultural and religious backgrounds educated together in an environment in which the traditions of all are valued equally. Its name derives from the three Church Spires which are evident on the town's sky line.

Spires opened in September 1999 in temporary mobile huts, catering for children in P1-P4. We moved to purpose built accommodation in January 2000 and now have an enrolment of over 200 pupils.

Our purpose built school is designed for learning in the modern world. Each classroom is bright, spacious, well resourced and equipped with modern technology.

In 2012 our grounds were extensively developed to create a beautiful Outdoor Classroom. This enables staff to bring teaching and learning beyond the classroom and to involve pupils in Eco activities such as pond dipping, planting bulbs and growing vegetables. We are recipients of the Green Eco Flag.



Mission Statement

Spires Integrated Primary School strives to promote primary education of the highest quality for all children, in an integrated and caring environment.

At Spires Integrated Primary School we aim ...

- To promote an opportunity for children of all faiths and none and from different cultural and social backgrounds to be educated together in an atmosphere where they are all equally valued.
- To provide a Christian approach that will foster a greater understanding and respect for the different traditions in the community, whilst at the same time encouraging the child to explore and value his or her own beliefs and traditions.
- To provide a child-centred education where the individual needs of the child are catered for in a caring, happy and stimulating environment.
- To promote the participation of parents in the school and develop close links between home, school and the wider community.
- To create an environment where all children can experience success and reach their highest personal and academic potential.
- To encourage self-confidence, self-discipline, self-esteem, self-respect, independence and respect for others.
- To promote positive attitudes and behaviour.
- To promote and develop an appreciation of the environment.
- To promote the social, moral, spiritual, cultural, intellectual and physical development of children.



The Curriculum

Spires Integrated Primary School follows the Northern Ireland Curriculum which is a statutory requirement for all schools. This provides for a broad and balanced education. It is delivered in a friendly atmosphere that encourages optimum personal achievement.

Language and Literacy

Literacy focuses on developing each child's ability to understand and use language as an integral part of learning. This enables children to interact effectively with the world around them, to express themselves creatively and to communicate confidently.

Mathematics and Numeracy

Numeracy is the development and application of mathematics across the curriculum and in real life situations. Skills in numeracy will help children to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives. At Spires, children will engage in a wide range of purposeful activities in this area, including playing, exploring and investigating.

ICT

At Spires we embrace new technologies and utilise them to enhance teaching and learning. Having achieved the ICT Kite mark, we are continually building upon this success by finding innovative ways of using ICT in every area of the curriculum. We are very well resourced, having interactive white boards in each classroom and a set of newly acquired iPads. The use of ICT provides pupils with the skills to handle and communicate information, solve problems, pose questions and be creative.

The World Around Us

The pupils are provided with opportunities to explore the world around them within the areas of Geography, History, Science and Technology. They can obtain answers through learning both inside and outside of the classroom. This learning may also take place in specific venues e.g. farms or museums, or in our own purpose built Outdoor Classroom.



The Arts

This Area of Learning comprises the subjects of **Art and Design, Drama and Music**. It provides rich opportunities for developing creativity, allowing children to express their ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world through pictures, sound, drama and dance. We encourage all pupils to participate in our annual Christmas Play, which encompasses all of these areas. Displays of pupils' art work can be viewed throughout the school. We promote creativity and invite pupils to express themselves through the use of different media. We have a very committed and successful school choir which has represented the school both at competitions and local community events.

Physical Education

Throughout our PE curriculum, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to experience and develop a range of fundamental movement skills that will improve co-ordination, control, balance, and manipulation. Through taking part in physical activities, children will begin to develop an understanding of safe practices and the relationship between physical activity and good health in everyday life.

Sport

At Spires we aim to provide frequent and regular experiences in a range of enjoyable and challenging physical activities that develop and consolidate the fundamental movement skills. A number of sporting skills are taught through our five areas within the PE curriculum – Games, Dance, Gymnastics, Athletics and Swimming (P5-P7).

We also invite sports groups to assist in the delivery of skills in;

- **Gaelic**
- **Rugby**
- **Soccer**

Pupils participate in local sporting competitions during each school year.



Religious Education

The school follows the core Religious Education Programme as set out by the Department of Education and agreed by the four main Christian Churches in Northern Ireland. This is a non-denominational programme.

During Religious Education the children work together to understand their shared and differing faiths, beliefs and cultures in an atmosphere that is safe and caring.

Other world religions are studied as part of this programme. Representatives of the Christian denominations and other world faiths are invited to take part in school assemblies.

Teachers who are qualified in Roman Catholic instruction prepare pupils for the sacraments. Parents, supported by the school, play an active role in the preparations.

Special Educational Needs

At Spires Integrated Primary School we strive to meet the needs of all children at each stage of their development. Account is always taken of particular difficulties or special talents that children demonstrate and every effort to guide and support them is implemented by teaching and support staff under the advice and guidance of our Special Educational Needs Coordinator. Such children may be taught as part of a small group within the whole class situation or may be withdrawn for additional support. It is our policy to identify and address special educational needs at the earliest possible stage. Where necessary, Education Plans are devised in consultation with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, class teacher, child and parents. These plans will be specific to the needs of the individual child.

Homework

Homework provides an invaluable opportunity for parents to participate in their child's education. The amount and type of homework set varies according to age and ability and is clearly set out in the school's homework policy.



Pastoral Care

At Spires we are a Rights Respecting School and are committed to providing a learning environment that is welcoming, happy, safe and secure. We aim to raise the self – esteem of all our pupils and ensure that they feel valued members of our school community. We promote a positive approach to discipline where we praise and reward children and encourage them to behave responsibly by showing consideration, courtesy and respect for others. In December 2008 and again in 2013, we received the Diana Anti-Bullying Award.

Peer Mediation

The school has a well-established Peer Mediation programme. The Mediators are trained in supporting children in the playground to find amicable and fair solutions to any conflicts which may arise.

Buddy System

Our Buddies organise games for the younger children in the playground and support them during their play activities.

School Council

Pupils from P4-P7 have an opportunity to become members of our School Council. Our School Council involves children in the democratic decision making process and it teaches them citizenship.

Healthy Life Style

The school has won an award for promoting a Healthy Life Style. We promote healthier snacks on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and school meals follow Department of Education healthy guidelines. We encourage children to walk or cycle to school as part of our Safer Routes to School programme.

COMMUNITY

We have established strong links with other schools in the Magherafelt area and our pupils engage with them in purposeful curricular and extra-curricular activities.



Assessment

In addition to regular informal assessment of a child's progress by the teacher, formal standardised assessment in Communication and Using Mathematics takes place at the end of Key Stage 1 (Primary 4) and Key Stage 2 (Primary 7).

Standardised Literacy and Numeracy tests are used in P3-P7 at the end of the year to inform teaching. The results are analysed and if there are concerns parents are notified. Parents meet with teachers regarding their child's progress in Term 1 & Term 2. They also receive an annual written report in June.

At the end of Primary 7, pupils also receive a Record of Achievement. This is a celebration of the child's time in primary school. It includes academic and non-academic achievements both in and out of school.

Charging and Remissions Policy

The vast majority of the expenditure incurred in educating children is met from the school's budget. Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to help towards the cost of educational trips. Charges may be made for damage or loss of property and some extra-curricular activities.





School Uniform

We encourage the wearing of school uniform. P1 and P2 wear PE uniform every day as they are involved in lots of physical activities. In P3-P7 formal uniform is worn on non-PE days.

Formal Uniform

- Red jumper and cardigan (knitted) with logo
- Tie
- White Blouse/Shirt
- Grey pinafore
- Grey skirt
- Grey trousers (boys and girls)
- Red and White Checked Dress
- Reversible Coat/Fleece with logo – can be ordered from the office.

PE Uniform

- To be worn daily by P1 and P2 pupils only and by other pupils during PE days.
- White polo shirt with logo
- Red sweatshirt with logo (v-neck or round neck)
- Black jogging bottoms (sweatshirt material)

Uniform is available from Select Sports and Cuddy's, Magherafelt.

The School Day



8.45am

9.00am

10.30am-10.45am

12.15pm-1.00pm

2.00pm

3.00pm

Staff on playground duty

The school day begins

Breaktime

Lunchtime

**End of school day for
P1 & P2 pupils (and P3 pupils
on Thursday and Friday)**

**End of school day
for P3-P7 pupils**



Admissions



In the event that there are more applicants than places available, the Board of Governors has determined that the following criteria shall be applied in the order set down for children of compulsory school age. It is important to note that almost every year pupils are admitted under Criterion 5.

We aspire to have a balance between Catholic (40%), Protestant (40%) and Other (20%) children.

PI Admissions Criteria

- 1** Children whose brothers/sisters (half brothers/half sisters) foster brother/sister already attend the school or are past pupils of the school.
- 2** Children whose parent/guardian/brother/sister are employees of the school or are due to take up appointment in the forthcoming year; or children of governors of the school who have served for a minimum of 12 months.
- 3** Children whose parent/guardian has played an active role in promoting integrated education – namely, working/employed in Integrated Education or is presently or previously been a member of a steering committee or Board of Governors of an Integrated School as defined by Education (NI) Order 1997. (Minimum of 2 years.)
- 4** Children from a mixed marriage/union i.e. where parents/guardians are from the two main traditions i.e. Catholic, Protestant.

- 5** Children who are not from a mixed marriage/union
- 6** Children will be selected on the basis of initial letter of surname, in the order set out on the attached sheet.

The order is determined annually by governors through a randomised selection of letters of the alphabet.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surnames 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 accordance with Education (NI) Order 1997, preference will be given to pupils resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission.

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any applicant's Application Form.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide verifying documents according to the required deadline can result in either the withdrawal of a place and the inability of the school to offer a place.



Admissions



Admissions Criteria Years 2 – 7

In the application of the criteria set out below the Board of Governors will seek to reflect, in the total number enrolled in the year group applied for, a reasonable balance of Protestants, Roman Catholics and Others.

When considering the offer of a place the Board of Governors will ensure that:-

- 1 the school enrolment number is not exceeded;
- 2 the acceptance of the pupil would not prejudice the efficient use of resources;
- 3 the acceptance of the pupil would not prejudice the balance within the class.

If a place is available P1 Admissions Criteria will then be applied.

Any parent wishing to apply for a place for their child at Spires Integrated Primary School, should complete an official EA form and return it to Spires before the closing date. These forms are available from EA website or from the school office.

We thank you for your interest in our school.



After School Activities

We have a range of after school activities which provide an extension to the learning taking place during the school day. A number of these clubs begin at 2.00pm for pupils in P1-P3. We currently offer:

- Sports Skills
- Music /Glee Club
- Choir
- Hockey
- ICT
- Cookery
- Eco
- Tag Rugby
- Cycling Proficiency
- Wildlife
- Craft

This list may change depending on the availability of teachers or external tutors.







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