

St. Andrew's N.S.



School Booklet

Revised November 2024

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Scoil Naomh Aindriú

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are delighted to give you this copy of our School Booklet. It contains information and a brief outline of some school policies reflecting many hours of careful thought and consideration by our staff, our Board of Management and our Parent Teacher Association.

As time progresses, we will update and amend this booklet in line with legislation and as experience dictates. We very much welcome your comments and input and will endeavour to incorporate any suggestions made into future editions.

What we would like to convey within this booklet is the positive ethos and atmosphere in our school. This is created by:

- Our committed and talented team of teachers and other staff who nurture a positive attitude to learning among our pupils.
- Our pupils who respond positively to the caring attitude of our school staff.
- Our much valued body of parents.
- Our supportive Board of Management and Parent Teacher Association.
- Our positive educational advisor (school inspector).
- Personnel in the wider community with whom we work collaboratively.

The best way to experience our nurturing ethos is to pay us a visit to St Andrew's. Visits can be arranged by appointment. This is to minimise disruption to the learning of our pupils.

I look forward to meeting you.

Daphne Wood M.Ed. Dip. in SEN and Mentoring
Principal Teacher

St. Andrew's National School

Mission Statement

St. Andrew's N. S. endeavours to nurture each pupil within a committed, caring and mutually supportive community of learners. This includes pupils, teachers, parents/guardians and management. We strive to promote a positive attitude towards learning thereby enabling our children to recognise their gifts and to achieve their full potential.

School Ethos

Our ethos is borne out of our Christian faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is further reflected in the traditions and values of our Trustee Churches; the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church. Our ethos is inclusive in nature and values all of God's creations equally.

When a family joins our school community, it is with the understanding that they will strive to uphold and contribute to our school Mission Statement and Ethos.

Background of St. Andrew's N.S.

St. Andrew's N.S. was founded in 1888 under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. As early as 1888 the need for a Presbyterian school in Bray was recognised. To address this need, a site was purchased and a fund was opened. Generous contributions were made from the local church community with a subsequent appeal being made to the wider community.

The foundation stone was laid by the Earl of Meath on 20th August 1887 and the school was opened in January 1888. The trowel used in this original ceremony is in our possession and is on display in our school foyer, having been rescued in a London auction room, purely by chance. The same trowel was used by Her Excellency President Mary Robinson in laying the foundation stone of our new school in 1991.

Back in 1888 there was still an outstanding debt on the school building. At the suggestion of his congregation, the then Presbyterian Minister, Doctor Irwin, went on a lecturing tour of America and Canada, raising £400 – a huge sum in those days.

In 1889 there were ninety-seven pupils enrolled in St. Andrew's.

In the 1940s the main part of the school was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt thanks to the generosity of the Presbyterian community of Bray and particularly the late Mr. Sam Heagan. Sam remained as treasurer of St Andrew's until his death in the middle 1980s and his dedication to and work on behalf of our school is affirmed by those of us who fondly remember him.

In the late 60s and early 70s the then Department of Education closed St. Paul's Church of Ireland School and it was amalgamated with St. Andrew's. St. Paul's had been opened in 1907 and consisted of an Infant School, a Boys' School and a Girls' School. It even had a science laboratory and facilities for Home Economics.

The wish of the Department of Education, at that time, to maintain St. Andrew's as a two teacher school was strongly resisted and thwarted by the strength of will of the late Reverend Alec Reid (Presbyterian Minister in Bray) and also the late Reverend Richard Large (Church of Ireland Rector of Christ Church Bray). Both men 'convinced' the then Minister of Education to agree to enlarge St. Andrew's to accommodate the two teachers and pupils from St. Pauls. Our Large Hall in the present school is named in memory of Reverend Large and our school library, The Reid Library, was dedicated to the memory of Rev. Alec Reid.

The patronage of the school was then shared between the Church of Ireland and Presbyterian churches. This arrangement worked amicably for about fifteen years.

In October 1981, it was evident that the school's accommodation was totally inadequate and sub standard due to the huge increase in pupil numbers and the great changes taking place in education (even in those days)! Having closely scrutinised all of the alternatives open to us, it was decided that our only course of action was to purchase a site and build a new school. By coincidence, two factors enabled us to do this.

Firstly, a large influx of children of members of Bray Methodist Church prompted a move within our school's Board of Management to further strengthen the ties with that church. Following a period of discussion, the Methodist Church was appointed as one of our trustees along with the Church of Ireland and Presbyterian churches. The Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin assumed the role of school patron. We were/are the first/and only school in Ireland to be shared by three churches. This arrangement has worked well and is mutually beneficial.

Secondly, Sunbeam House Special National School Bray was also looking to rebuild on a new site. Fortunately, Reverend Large was manager of both schools and along with Mr. John Giles (former director of Sunbeam House) planted the 'mustard seed' which has grown into our current schools, St. Andrew's and New Court School.

A design team was set up to source a site and build two schools, one for St. Andrew's and the other for Sunbeam House (now New Court School). This team became known as S.A.S.H. Ltd., which owns the building on behalf of the Trustees of St. Andrew's N.S. and the Governors of Sunbeam House.

Our school is where it is now because of the selfless work, skill and enthusiasm of all of the ministers and rectors of our trustee churches and their congregations, our friends from Sunbeam House (now New Court School) and the many parents, teachers and pupils in St Andrew's who fundraised for our new school in the past. It is impossible to mention everyone who was involved as it really was a community effort. It is thus incumbent on us all to continue the good work and leave an even better school for future generations as those in the past did for the current school population. Change and improvement do not happen of their own volition: we, as a community of learners, make it happen.

Peter McCrodden B.A.M.Sc.H.Dip.Ed. (Principal in St Andrew's from 1981-2017)

(Source: *History of Bray* (2004) by Arthur Flynn.)

Equality Statement

St. Andrew's N. S. values each member of our school community equally, irrespective of:

- Gender
- Social background
- Family circumstances
- Educational achievement
- Physical or intellectual ability
- Ethnicity
- Creed

Classes

We have eight class groups from Junior Infants to Sixth Class in St. Andrew's N.S.

We enrol one Junior Infant class per year; our average class size varies between 25 and 27 pupils depending on Government funding.

Child Protection

- a) All activities within our school, whether educational or social, are conducted within the solid framework of our school's Ethos and Mission Statement. Foremost in our minds is our duty of care towards our pupils. To this end we have compiled a very comprehensive Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment based on The Children First Procedures and relevant DES Circulars, which set out the responsibilities of all adults within our school community with regard to child protection and welfare. A crucial aspect of this policy involves the appointment of a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and a Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) for Child Welfare. The DLP is Ms Daphne Wood and the DDL is Ms Roisin Mulligan.
- b) Garda Vetting: As a school we encourage and value the involvement of parents/guardians in the day to day life of our school. Activities such as library, extra reading activities and school trips could not happen without significant voluntary input from parents. As a Board of Management we strive to familiarise parent volunteers with our procedures for best practice when working with children within this school. Since September 2009 the Board of Management, through the Church of Ireland Board of Education, has processed Garda vetting forms for all new families entering the school. If you have any queries or concerns on this matter please speak with the Principal.

Staff

At present we have:

- One Principal Teacher
- Eight Mainstream Class Teachers
- Five full time Support Teachers (one shared with St Lawrence's N.S., Greystones)
- Four Special Needs Assistants
- One School Secretary and one part time School Secretary
- One part time Caretaker, shared with New Court School
- One part time Classroom Assistant

Teaching Staff

We are very fortunate to have a skilled, committed and highly qualified teaching team who are dedicated to providing our pupils with a high-quality learning experience.

Class teachers plan their programmes of work for delivery during the school year. These involve long term schemes of work (for the school year or term), medium term plans (for a month or fortnight) and short-term plans (compiled on a daily basis).

These plans contain:

- learning aims and objectives/outcomes
- skills to be taught
- teaching methodologies used
- teaching and learning resources
- subject and lesson content differentiation to cater for pupils with differing needs
- assessment of/for learning
- use of the local environment
- use of IT to support teaching and learning

At the end of each month class and support teachers compile a monthly progress record of the work completed during the month.

Support Teachers plan in similar detail for individual pupils and groups of pupils under their care. They also compile Pupil Support Plans and comprehensive progress records for each child or group of children under their care.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

St. Andrew's N.S. is committed to supporting the concept of continuing professional development of all staff through:

- Supporting teacher attendance at seminars and courses on areas relating to pupil learning and support.
- Providing teachers with opportunities to teach at different class levels and within different teaching contexts in the school.
- Facilitating professional collaboration among teachers and SNAs to enable staff members to share expertise.

Teacher Induction and Probation

Since 2002 the school has been part of a programme which supports the mentoring of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in their first-year teaching. Currently the school has four trained mentors as we are now also involved in a scheme to induct and probate newly qualified teachers into the school and the teaching profession. This new development called Droichead (bridge) sees much of the work, previously undertaken by the school inspectors, completed at school level by our own Professional Support Team (PST) consisting of teaching staff in the school.

Staff Meetings

Our staff meets both formally and informally on a regular basis to address important issues relating to pupil learning and general well-being. Issues such as curriculum development, school organisation and planning, child protection and health and safety are discussed. **All of these meetings take place outside of school hours where possible.**

School Management

St. Andrew's N.S. is held in trust by the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches. The post of Chairperson and the composition of the Board of Management changes on a four yearly basis. The school is under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough.

In-School Management (I.S.M.) Team

At present, five members of our teaching staff have been assigned responsibilities in addition to their full time teaching duties. Each member of this team is responsible for the coordination of a curricular area and an area or areas of school administration and an aspect of pastoral care within the school. Our current I.S.M. team consist of:

Name of I.S.M. team member	Area of Responsibility
Roisin Mulligan (Deputy Principal)	IT SEN
Zara Bailey	Maths Wellbeing
Emily Murphy	Literacy SESE
Ellen Friel	Gaeilge Health and Safety

Board of Management (B.O.M.)

The Board of Management consists of:

- Two elected Parents'/Guardians' Nominees (one father/guardian, one mother/guardian)
- Two Patrons' Nominees
- One elected Teachers' Nominee
- The Principal Teacher
- Two members of the wider community who are unanimously co-opted by the other six nominated board members with the aim of providing targeted expertise to the board.
- The membership of the current BOM includes:

Ms Brid McNamee	Parents' Nominee
Mr Warren Phelan	Parents' Nominee
Ms Zara Bailey	Teachers' Nominee
Ms Frances Fitzell	Community Nominee and Secretary
Dr. Leonard Madden	Community Nominee and Treasurer
Mr Peter McCrodden	Patron's Nominee and Chairperson
Rev Andrew Gill	Patron's Nominee
Ms Daphne Wood	School Principal and ex-officio member

- All members of the BOM, apart from the principal teacher, serve on a purely voluntary basis.

The B.O.M. has many duties but is chiefly concerned with ensuring the smooth and efficient running and upkeep of the school building as well as the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. The B.O.M. is also responsible for the ratification of school policies and over-all management of the school in accordance with:

- The Rules for National Schools - the Department of Education and Skills (D.E.S.)
- Circulars and guidelines issued by the D.E.S.
- The Education and Education (Welfare) Acts
- Other legislation and procedures prescribed by An tOireachtais

Successful school management is achieved through an inclusive partnership involving parents/guardians, staff and management. St. Andrew's N.S. B.O.M. greatly values the support and cooperation of parents/guardians and staff who play a crucial role in the running of the school.

Responsibility for all monies collected on behalf of the school, plus the administration of funding from state sources, lies with the B.O.M.

The B.O.M. is also charged with responsibility of appointing school staff when a vacancy arises.

S.A.S.H. Ltd.

As there are two separate schools sharing our site and building, our trustees formed a company called S.A.S.H. (St. Andrew's and Sunbeam House) to manage the building. S.A.S.H. has no role in the day to day running of either school and is purely a conduit set up to build and manage the school buildings. S.A.S.H., through its Buildings Advisory Group, which included teachers, parents and school trustees, progressed the building of the new extension to our schools and an upgrade of the original building in 2009/2010 respectively. The total cost of the latter was €5.5 million which was mainly funded by the DES. Through prudent fiscal management and planning, there is no outstanding debt accruing to us.

Financial Support from Parents/Guardians

Each year we receive grants of approximately €75K from the Department of Education. These grants go towards lighting, heat, cleaning, grounds maintenance, insurance for our school buildings plus their upkeep and that of our school site of circa 6.5 acres. They also go towards the salaries of the secretaries and caretaker. **However, the financial demands and expectations on the school have remained at a high and ever-increasing level. We therefore experience a significant shortfall in the funding of our school. This necessitates us asking parents to contribute to our school maintenance fund.**

At present we have set our parents' contribution at **€250 per family per annum.**

We also ask for a payment of **€50 per child per annum.**

This sum covers contributions to our classrooms materials, art materials, pupil 24 hour insurance, photocopying, online resource and homework journal.

Tax Refund Scheme / 'Tax Claw Back'

Through the Office of the Revenue Commissioners scheme of Tax Relief for Donations to Eligible Charities and Approved Bodies, our school can claim a tax refund on behalf of parents/guardians. This is achieved easily by parents/guardians filling in a simple form once in a five year cycle. CHY3 forms will be sent to all who qualify to participate in the scheme. We then forward information from collected forms to the Revenue Commissioners and St. Andrew's N.S. duly receives a large tax refund on behalf of parents/guardians this amounts to circa €7,000 per annum.

Please be assured that the school cannot and does not wish to have any access to or knowledge of parents' tax affairs and confidentiality in ALL financial matters is assured.

Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.)

In St. Andrew's we are fortunate to have an active, creative and energetic P.T.A. which gives valuable assistance and support to the school. All parents/guardian are members of the PTA and are welcome and encouraged to participate in it. If you feel you have skills or knowledge that might be beneficial to our school community, please let us know!

Aims and Objectives of the P.T.A.:

- To provide opportunities for parents/guardians and teachers to share ideas.
- To represent the views of parents/guardians on general issues affecting the school.
- To inform parents/guardians of developments in the school and in education.
- To support co-operation between parents/guardians, staff and school management.
- To organise and assist in extra-curricular activities (E.C.A.) and leisure/sporting activities for pupils, e.g. Sports Day.
- To provide information for parents/guardians (e.g. parenting skills and anti-bullying strategies, etc.).
- To help with the provision of extra equipment and teaching aids for the school.
- To assist with the formulation of some school policies through consultation and liaison with staff and school management.

Offices of the P.T.A. include: Chairperson, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Extra-Curricular Activities (E.C.A) Coordinators and Fundraising Committee Members. P.T.A. members are elected by parents/guardians and staff on an annual basis. The Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) of St. Andrew's P.T.A. is held in the first term of every school year. We would encourage all parents/guardians to attend the A.G.M. to familiarise themselves with the work done by our P.T.A.

Extra-Curricular Activities (E.C.A.)

Extra-curricular activities are also organised by our school's P.T.A. These may include: science, hockey, Zumba, athletics, basketball, drama, art and craft, playball, football, music and aspects of I.T. The supervision of the children during these activities is the responsibility teacher/coach of the activity supported by designated parent/guardian volunteers.

These activities take place only through the selfless efforts of our P.T.A. Committee, ECA coordinators and volunteers and depend on active support from all parents.

Under no circumstances may children remain unsupervised in school while awaiting the commencement of extra-curricular activities. The B.O.M. or school staff cannot provide supervision in this case.

The Curriculum

In line with the Department of Education and Skills' Primary School Curriculum (1999), children are taught within seven curricular areas in an integrated manner. The defining features of the curriculum are that it:

- Focuses on the varied ways in which individual children learn.
- Is relevant to the needs of the child in contemporary society.
- Is broad, balanced and holistic in nature.
- Includes activity and skill based learning.
- Requires school-based assessment, both formal and informal, to take place in support of pupil learning.
- Requires school-based planning to enhance learning and teaching and ensure that all learning objectives are covered over a specific time period.

The subject areas of the curriculum are:

1. Primary Language Curriculum
2. Mathematics
3. Social Environmental and Scientific Studies (S.E.S.E.)
4. Arts Education to include Music, Creative Arts and Drama
5. Social Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.)
6. Religious Education
7. Physical Education

Aspects and features of teaching and learning within each subject area are addressed within the curriculum; these are called "Strands". Each Strand is sub-divided into a number of "Strand Units". The entire Primary School Curriculum is available at www.ncca.ie

The Primary Language Curriculum

The Primary Language Curriculum is an integrated curriculum for both English (Language 1) and Irish (Language 2). This means that it has the same structure for both languages. The curriculum is divided into 3 Strands:

1. Oral (Teanga ó Bhéal)
2. Reading (Leitheoireacht)
3. Writing (Scríbhneoireacht)

Each strand heading is further divided into three areas. These are Communication (*Cumarsáid*), Understanding (*Tuiscint*) and Exploring and Listening (*Fiosrú agus Usáid*).

Gaeilge

In St. Andrew's N.S. the Gaeilge curriculum is designed to enable children to develop communicative competence in Irish in an enjoyable way. We are focusing on our spoken Irish and fostering An Gaeilge mar Mean Cumarsáide (Irish as a means of communication). We also endeavour to use Gaeilge outside the classroom, for example

when greeting a child or sending a child on an errand in the school. We strive to use it throughout the day informally in the classroom, such as when giving instructions, eg *bailigí na leabhair, croch suas do chóta*, etc.

It is important for parents to foster a positive attitude towards Irish within the home. This can be achieved by speaking a bit of Irish in the home and encouraging your child to 'teach you' what s/he has learned in school.

English

Oral Language

Oral language is an integral part of each curricular area as it is central to the development of the child's ability to express himself/herself. In St. Andrew's N.S., talk and discussion is recognised as a valuable methodology and is duly encouraged. Through oral language activity children develop the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, develop reading and writing skills as well as enriching their language experience and imaginative and cognitive powers.

Reading

A love of books is fostered from a young age within our school, where big books are used in the art of storytelling. Pupils also avail of the extensive range of books (both factual and fictional) in the school library, which has a wide range of books catering for all age groups and spanning a variety of genres. Formal reading commences in Senior Infants. In Junior Infants, the emphasis is on a more language-based approach, developing children's oral, pre-reading skills and in particular a positive attitude towards books.

Writing

As a school, we nurture a "process" approach to writing where pupils engage in planning, drafting, editing and publishing their written work (writing forms include stories, poetry, recounts, procedural writing, etc.).

Mathematics

In St. Andrew's N.S., we aim to develop a positive attitude towards Maths. We foster problem-solving abilities and help pupils to see the applications of Maths to everyday life. The importance of mathematical language is emphasised at each class level and pupils are encouraged to use mathematical language effectively and accurately. In order to achieve proficiency in mathematical skills, a hands-on approach is utilised where concrete materials help pupils to understand new concepts. In St. Andrew's, we have extensive maths resources to support each strand of the curriculum.

The Mathematics Curriculum comprises of five strands:

1. Number
2. Algebra
3. Shape and space
4. Measures
5. Data and Chance

Central to each strand of the curriculum is a child-centred approach where pupils acquire mathematical skills through guided discovery and directed teaching approaches. I.T. is used to provide a richer mathematical experience where pupils benefit from use of the interactive whiteboard, iPads and chromebooks.

Social Environmental and Scientific Education (S.E.S.E.)

S.E.S.E. provides pupils with the opportunity to explore investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural aspects of local and wider environments. The three subjects in this curricular area, while integrated in nature, play a distinctive role in fulfilling the aims and objectives of the curriculum.

This curricular area includes:

Geography

The three strands in the Geography curriculum are Natural Environments, Human Environments and Environmental Awareness and Care. A wide array of themes may be covered within these strands which aims to develop pupil's appreciation of:

- The interdependence of individuals, groups and communities within their environment, promotes respect for different cultures.
- Fostering a sense of responsibility for caring for the environment.

Throughout their studies in this subject area pupils will develop the following skills and concepts:

- A sense of place and space
- An understanding of maps, globes and graphical skills
- An appreciation of geographical investigation skills

Emphasis in the Geography Curriculum is placed on the exploration of the children's surroundings and local area. We are fortunate that Bray Head, Bray Seafront and

Kilruddery Estate are all within walking distance of our school and thus, field trips may be organised to these or other locations during the school year.

History

History is an investigative subject which encourages the child to work as a historian. Through their analysis of the different topics in History pupils will be enabled to develop their knowledge and understanding of people, events and developments in the past at local, national and international levels. The strand units within the History Curriculum vary across the different class levels and may include:

- Myself and my family
- Story
- Early people and ancient societies
- Life, society, work and culture in the past
- Eras of change and conflict
- Politics, conflict and society
- Continuity and change over time

As they encounter the strands listed above, opportunities will be provided to develop the following skills and concepts:

- Time and Chronology
- Change and Continuity
- Cause and Effect
- Using Evidence
- Synthesis and Communication
- Empathy

Science

The Science Curriculum is practical in nature and aims to enable children to develop basic scientific ideas in an environment where emphasis is placed on the process as well as the outcome of an experiment. It encourages pupils to develop their scientific skills of *working scientifically* and *designing and making* as they explore the biological and physical aspects of the world.

The four main strands in the Science Curriculum:

- Living things
- Energy and forces
- Materials
- Environmental awareness and care

These strands are also subdivided into strand units which cover a wide range of concepts. In the senior classes pupils record the methodology, results and conclusion for scientific investigations based on these concepts, in a hard-back notebook.

Social Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.)

S.P.H.E. concentrates on the development, health and well-being of the child. It aims to promote self-awareness and understanding by helping children to:

- Name and manage their own feelings
- Recognise and appreciate individual abilities
- Cope with change of various kinds

Through the programme the children are also taught how to create and maintain supportive relationships and how to become an active and responsible citizen in society.

The three strands of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum are:

- Myself
- Myself and others
- Myself and the wider world

Arts Education

This curricular area includes:

Visual Arts

The school encourages art as a medium by which the children can learn to express themselves. Art is activity-based and developmental in nature. It builds on children's previous experience. The Visual arts curriculum consists of six strands, each representing a medium for developing the child's expressive abilities. These strands are:

- Drawing
- Paint and Colour
- Print
- Clay
- Construction
- Fabric and Fibre.

In the Visual Arts curriculum, the child is encouraged to look at and respond to a wide variety of artworks. In making art, the process of making is as valuable as the final product. The children are encouraged to experiment in spontaneous, imaginative and increasingly structured ways with a range of art materials. These include:

- Pencils of various sizes and forms
- Paints of different types including watercolours
- Crayons, chalks and markers and inks
- Clay
- Fabric and fibre
- Construction materials.

Opportunities for integration with other subjects include interpreting stories/Bible stories, poems, songs, drama and historical events in drawing, painting or in a three-dimensional medium.

Drama

Drama provides children with ways to explore our cultural heritage and new dimensions of a changing world. Language plays a critical role in drama. The Drama Curriculum contributes to developing the child's competence and confidence in English, Irish and other languages. Drama helps the child to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding. In drama, the child explores the motivations and the relationships between people which exist in a real, imagined or historical context. This can help him/her understand the world in which s/he lives. The child is encouraged to make decisions and to take responsibility for those decisions within the safe context of the drama.

Music

Music provides children with opportunities to engage with a wide range of musical styles and traditions. The Music Curriculum comprises of:

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing

The curriculum, in music introduces children to music reading and writing, to song singing and to playing classroom instruments. Music is integrated with subjects such as Gaeilge, R.E., Drama, P.E. and Art through dancing, illustrating, storytelling and making drama.

The child is encouraged to listen, with attention, to sounds in the environment and to become gradually aware of how sound is organised in music. Performance incorporates a balance of singing and instrumental playing of his/her own work and the work of others. Ways of using sound are explored in composing, both with the voice and with a widening range of musical instruments. Performance is balanced with opportunities to hear and to make a personal response to music of different styles, periods and cultures.

Religious Education

As our school is a Christian one, the characteristic spirit of the school is guided by the teachings of our trustee churches. Throughout the school and permeating our curriculum, we strive to live this characteristic spirit.

A Christian ethos not only informs our lessons in Religious Education but also in every other area of the curriculum. Our teachers implement the *Follow Me* programme, which is the Religious Education curriculum of the Church of Ireland (devised in consultation with the Presbyterian and Methodist churches). Teachers use teaching materials which are deemed appropriate by our teaching team in consultation with our trustee clergy. The clergy (and other volunteers) from our trustee churches enhance our work in this area by regularly leading school assemblies and teaching individual classes for periods during the school year by arrangement.

In our school we are fortunate to have families from many different faiths, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. We treat all pupils in our school as individuals and respect the chosen religious ethos of their families.

Parents of pupils who are members of churches other than our trustee churches and who wish for their own individual denominational requirements to be covered must make their own arrangements for same outside school hours. Pupils will not be given permission to leave during school hours to receive outside religious instruction.

While emphasising the inclusive ethos of our school, we require that all families entering our school commit to respecting and upholding our school ethos.

Physical Education (P.E.)

In St. Andrew's, we are fortunate to have excellent indoor and outdoor sports facilities consisting of the Large Hall, an extensive green area, as well as a hard play area. We also now have a playground which is shared with New Court School.

Through the P.E. curriculum, we aim to ensure that pupils receive a wide and varied experience of this subject area and develop a positive attitude towards physical activity.

The P.E. curriculum consists of six strands, these are:

- Athletics
- Dance
- Gymnastics
- Games
- Outdoor and adventure activities
- Aquatics (All pupils in 1st - 6th classes attend swimming lessons in Shoreline Leisure Centre Bray.)

In addition to our vibrant P.E. curriculum, outside facilitators conduct an array of workshops which may include G.A.A., rugby, cricket, cycling, karate, dance, etc. Each year, we hold a Sports Day in the summer term where pupils are given the opportunity to take part in a variety of races, ranging from relay races to the three-legged race. The importance of participation is highlighted and it is always a greatly anticipated event in the school calendar. The school also strives to be an Active School and promotes physical activity outside school hours.

Information and Communication Technology (I.T.)

In St. Andrew's we use ICT to enhance learning. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard. We have 30 iPads, which are generally used in the junior classes. We also have 30 chrome books for 3rd and 4th classes to share and similarly we have 30 chrome books shared between 5th and 6th classes.

IT hardware is upgraded and replaced on a regular basis.

We have a staff computer committee who undertake the responsibility for progressing our use and resourcing of ICT as an essential learning tool and as a means of communication.

Other I.T. equipment utilised in our school includes digital cameras, visualisers and a networked photocopier. We as a staff are committed to upskilling in the area of IT through staff collaboration and training from outside organisations.

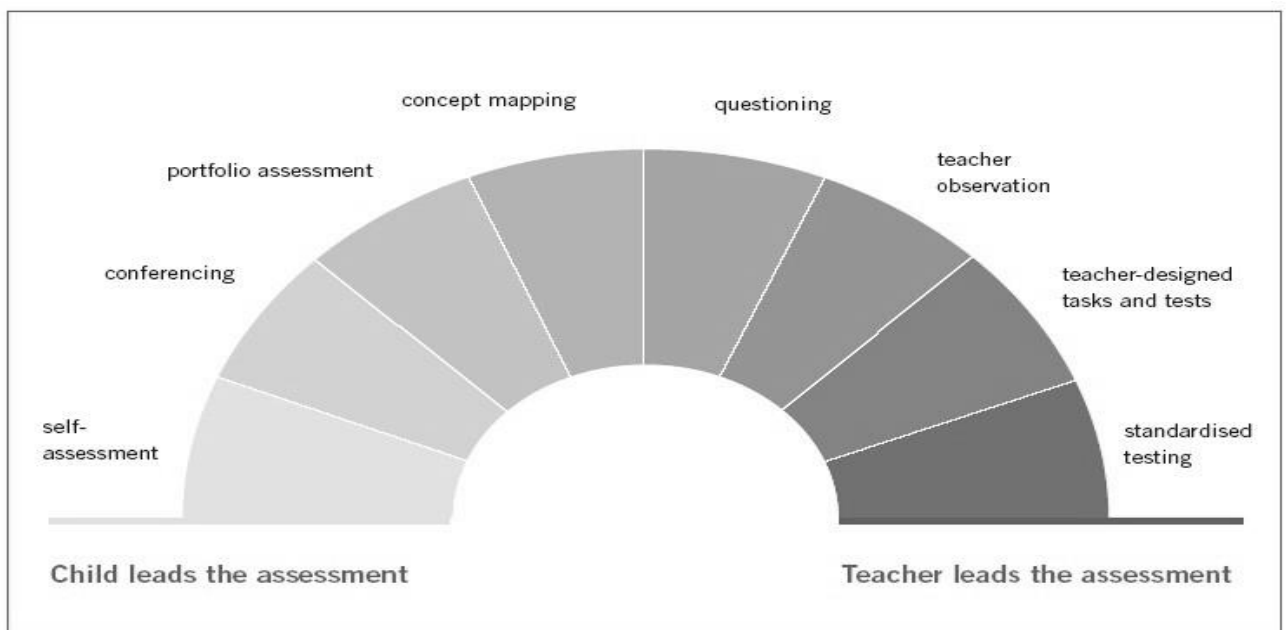
School Website

Our school website can be found at www.standrewsbray.ie. The purpose of our website is to provide information about our school to our parents/guardians, community, prospective parents and other interested groups. School policies, calendars, relevant forms, school news and other interesting information can be found on our website.

Assessment

In St. Andrew's N.S., we appreciate that each child is an individual and that his/her learning style differs. Therefore, we aim to use a range of assessment methods in order to successfully evaluate children's *"progress and/or achievement"* (N.C.C.A., 2007). Assessment can range from teacher-led to child-orientated self-assessment. As with utilising a range of assessment methods, it is important to ensure that there is a balance between teacher and child-led assessment. The diagram below shows the range of assessment strategies which we use in St. Andrew's N.S.

Source: *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools* (NCCA, 2007)



Standardised and Diagnostic Testing

Standardised tests in English and Mathematics are undertaken every year in 1st to 6th classes. Senior Infant pupils also undergo a screening test at the end of their school year. When resources permit, Junior Infants are screened to identify strengths and learning needs.

More precise testing is conducted by our support teachers when it is deemed necessary by school staff. This is done following consultation with parents/guardians. Children are thus allocated 'slots' in support teachers' timetables to address any identified needs following assessment. While every effort is made to give parents prior notice of this, it may not be possible to do so, especially when a time 'slot' becomes available within a teacher's timetable at short notice.

In-school diagnostic testing is very valuable and enables teachers to identify children's strengths and needs. We will thus ask for your consent to engage in pupil assessment of this kind, by our school staff, during our Infant Induction evening.

In cases where a further and more detailed, in-depth assessment is required, the school's Educational Psychologist is consulted. (As this service is grossly under-funded, it may be necessary to engage the services of a psychologist on a private basis which is funded by parents). This can only happen with parent approval.

Parents/guardians are updated on their child's progress through notes in journals and meetings with teachers. All pupils receive an end of year report.

Parents of our pupils who have assessments/diagnoses from professionals such as speech and language and occupational therapists, psychologists etc., meet with school staff to draw up/review learning plans for their children.

Pupils With Additional Needs

St. Andrew's National School welcomes pupils with additional needs into our school. We endeavour to nurture each individual pupil within a committed, caring and mutually supportive community of pupils, teachers, parents, guardians and management. We promote a positive attitude to enable our children to recognise their gifts and achieve their full potential. Based on pupils needs, we aim to develop methodologies and further programmes of work which can enhance pupil learning, e.g. Motor Skills, Social Skills, etc.

Special Needs Assistants (S.N.A.s) are funded by the D.E.S. to cater for the care needs of designated pupils in our school. We currently have four S.N.A.s, this number varies on a yearly basis. These colleagues keep detailed records, on a daily basis, of progress and needs for the specific pupils under their care.

Support Teaching

Support Teachers support children either individually, in small groups or provide in-class support to address learning needs in a targeted way. Within our school we have developed a co-teaching approach to learning support and resource teaching. Here two teachers can provide in-class support in the same classroom for a period of time. This enables all children within the class to receive supplementary support and attention

from the learning support/resource and class teachers. This approach also ensures that children don't miss out from being withdrawn from the classroom too often.

The current Model of Special Education Teaching Allocation now provides one single allocation to schools, which schools must deploy according to Individual Learning.

Home-School Liaison

Good communication and effective cooperation between parents/guardians and staff is fundamental to the development of a happy and effective learning environment within a school. This is achieved in St. Andrew's in the following ways:

- Teachers being available to meet with parents/guardians both on designated parent/teacher consultation days and outside school hours by appointment only. We request that parents do not engage class teachers in discussing important issues or concerns during school hours as teachers have a duty of care to the pupils in their class. If you have a specific concern, please contact the teacher through the school office or by note to arrange a mutually suitable meeting time. Here issues can be discussed in a private and professional manner.
- Notes may also be written by parents/guardians or teachers in a child's homework journal (3rd – 6th class).
- An email can also be sent to the child's class teacher.
- A written report on each pupil is provided at the end of each school year.
- School Newsletters are issued regularly. They include updates on school, B.O.M. and P.T.A. news and notices of forthcoming events. Children and other members of the school community also make valuable contributions to this. Newsletters are emailed to every parent.
- All correspondence will be emailed to parents/ guardian. Please ensure that the school office has the correct email address for you and please notify us of any change.
- The school also uses Aladdin Connect which has a free text messaging service.
- SMS (text-message) notification is also used for the distribution of urgent information, e.g. if the school has to close.
- The school website www.standrewsbray.ie is fully functional and regularly updated.

Grievance Procedure

The following grievance procedure has been agreed between the Department of Education and Skills, school management bodies and the teachers' unions. Accordingly, the school authorities and principal are required to abide by these procedures as set out below:

1. If you have an issue of concern about your child's education or general wellbeing, this can be discussed with the child's teacher in the first instance **(please see previous section on home-school liaison)**. In the vast majority of cases a mutually satisfactory resolution is reached at this stage.
2. In the event that you are not satisfied with the outcome of a discussion with your child's teacher, you may then raise the matter with the school principal or in her absence with the deputy principal. **Again, please make an appointment for this and indicate the nature of the matter for discussion to allow for an informed discussion/resolution to take place. It is school policy that when parents/guardians are making appointments to see teachers through the school office, a general description of the subject matter for the meeting is given**
3. In very rare cases, if the matter remains unresolved, the issue can be passed on to the chairperson of the school's Board of Management. Further attempts at resolution may subsequently be directed to the Board of Management in writing as the board may only deal with written complaints.
4. Having gone through the procedures above, parents have the right to contact the Department of Education and Skills, should a grievance remain unresolved. Again such issues will only be addressed by the D.E.S. when put in writing and signed.

Homework

Regular homework is a valuable part of the learning process and it helps children to develop good study habits and practise skills and concepts covered in class.

Homework is more beneficial to children when parents/guardians take an active interest in the task: by hearing reading, practising spellings and tables and monitoring written work. In the latter case children should be encouraged to edit their own work. Homework is not normally given on Fridays although individual children/classes (at the senior end of the school) may be given homework/project work or study assignments on weekends.

Suggested time to be spent on homework:

Junior Infants	10 – 15 minutes
Senior Infants	15 – 20 minutes
First class	20 – 30 minutes
Second class	30 minutes
Third Class	30 – 40 minutes
Fourth Class	30 – 40 minutes
Fifth class	Approximately 1 hour

Parents/guardians should sign journals (1st – 6th classes) on satisfactory completion of homework by the child. If a child is consistently spending significantly longer than the suggested time on homework, the class teacher should be contacted. The school very much values this crucial input of parents to their child's learning.

Textbooks

The school supplies all books required for school. A book loan scheme is in operation for class novels, infant readers, some textbooks and reference books.

School Timetable

8.30am	Doors open for reception of pupils and pupils are engaged in learning activities
8.45am	Pupils arriving after this time are considered late
9.45 am	Official roll call
10.15 – 10:30am	First break
12:10-12:30pm	Second break
1.10pm	School finishes for infant classes
2.10pm	School finishes for 1 st to 6 th classes

Pupil Absences

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, parents/guardians are required to provide a written explanation for each absence of a child from school on the day they return. Notes regarding absences must state the specific reason for each absence, i.e. a note saying "child is sick" or "child is absent with my permission" are not sufficient. In St. Andrew's parents/guardians can complete absent notes on the Aladdin Connect app. Under the Education (Welfare) Act the school is required to inform the Education Welfare Officer of any cases where pupil absences exceed 20 days in any school year, or any other cases of non/irregular attendance which cause concern.

The school has a detailed Attendance Policy, a copy of which is available in the school or on www.standrewsbray.ie or from the school office.

If you wish your child to leave school early, a written note or email must be sent to the class teacher where possible. A log book is available to be signed for pupils arriving late or leaving before the end of school. This must be signed by parents/guardians. Pupils may not leave the school premises during school hours unless accompanied by an adult.

Punctuality and Pupil Safety

School begins at 8.30am. When the school doors are opened, pupils must go directly to their classrooms. We expect all pupils to be seated in their classrooms by 8.45am, after which time they are late for school. A record of late arrivals is kept to identify habitual latecomers. Lack of punctuality is both upsetting to the child concerned and disruptive to the class as a whole.

The Board of Management provides supervision for pupils within the school building and grounds after 8:25am and up until classes finish at 1:10pm for infants or 2:10pm for other classes.

Children should not be left unsupervised in school before 8:25am or after closing time (1:10pm and 2:10pm) as there is no adult supervision available. Pupils must be supervised by their parents/guardians or another adult designated by the parent/guardian before school opening and after school closing times.

The car park is a potentially dangerous place at the start and end of school day. Pupils are only allowed to play in this area when there are no motor vehicles present, e.g. at break times or during school-based activities when the gates are closed.

Pupils should be trained to tell a teacher or other member of staff if they have not been collected, are unsure as to arrangements for their collection or if they need any other assistance after school hours. Our school secretary finishes work at 3:00pm. While the school has contact numbers for all families, children should be taught to memorise parent/guardian phone numbers for emergency use.

Infant Drop-Off and Collection

At the beginning of the school day all infant pupils, with their parents/guardians or older siblings, should enter the building through the side door of the school. This is located outside the infant classrooms. Infant pupils must be given into the care of their teacher in their own classroom. At 1:10pm they must be collected, again from the side door, where they will be given over to parents/guardians by a member of staff. The arrangements for this will be further explained to you when your child enters the school.

On windy or very wet days access and egress is through the main school entrance.

Holiday Lists

Holiday lists are forwarded to each family prior to the beginning of each school year and to parents of the incoming Junior Infants during the induction evening. Additional copies are available upon request and on the school's website. We encourage parents/guardians to arrange family holidays to coincide with school holiday times. **It is school policy that teachers do not provide extra schoolwork for children who are on holidays during the school term.** If a child is absent for this reason, the onus is on the parents/guardians to ensure any topics missed are covered at home.

The Reid Library

We have a well-stocked and attractive library facility in this school which is currently being upgraded with funds raised by our PTA. Parent volunteers provide much valued help to ensure the smooth running of the library. Children are encouraged to borrow books on a regular basis. We have a computerised library system and all books are barcoded. Our library stock is purchased mainly with the Department of Education Library Grant.

Pupil Welfare, Health and Safety

ALL STAFF, PUPILS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND MANAGEMENT HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ST. ANDREW'S N.S. REMAINS A SAFE PLACE IN WHICH TO WORK, LEARN AND VISIT.

St. Andrew's N.S has a Safety Officer, Ms Ellen Friel, with specific responsibilities for coordinating our practice in this area. St. Andrew's N.S. and New Court School have a joint safety committee which addresses safety issues affecting both schools.

Remember: We are all responsible for health and safety in our school, don't leave it to someone else!

A detailed Safety Statement is available from the school office on request.

Our aim is to ensure the health and safety of all those involved in school activities, i.e. staff, parents/guardians, pupils and visitors.

Pupil Illness or Medical Needs

At the beginning of each school year, we request that parents/guardians inform the class teacher regarding any allergies or medical conditions which their child may have.

On entry to the school parents/guardians are required to fully complete an emergency contact form. The information supplied on this is used to contact parents/guardians, minders, etc. if the child becomes ill in school. Any changes to contact details should be given to the school secretary, in writing or by email, for inclusion on our database.

Please do not send children to school if they are ill or if they are likely to infect others around them while in school. It is our policy to send children home if they are unwell. We do not have resources to care for children who are ill. If your child has suffered from diarrhoea or vomiting please keep them at home for at least 48 hours to prevent the spread of infection. Children on antibiotics will also need at least 24 hours for the medication to take effect and should postpone their return to school. Children should not be sent to school while covered by a medical certificate.

Administration of Medication

Where possible, parents/guardians should make every effort to administer medication to their children outside of school hours. In exceptional cases, where medication must be administered to pupils during school hours, parents/guardians are required to complete the relevant Administration of Medication Indemnity form and return it to the school office. A detailed policy on the administration of medication is available from the school office.

If a child suffers from a condition which may necessitate life saving measures, e.g. epilepsy, severe allergies, etc. parents must instruct staff in the required procedures **at the beginning of each school year.**

First Aid

There are trained First Aid personnel on the staff of the school. Minor cuts, bumps and bruises are dealt with by school staff. Parents/guardians will be contacted in the case of injuries which give staff cause for concern.

Funding for training of school staff in basic First Aid is provided from the family maintenance contribution as there is no Department of Education and Skills funding for this.

It is our policy to clean cuts and bruises with an antiseptic wipe and to cover them with a plaster. If your child has an allergy to any of these products please let us know in writing, otherwise we will use the above 'cleansing' procedure.

Bump to Head: If a child receives a bump to the head, a text message will be sent to the parent. If the school is concerned this will be followed up with a phone call.

Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

The pupils in this school are friendly, courteous, caring and mannerly. All pupils are expected to treat their peers, staff members, other adults and all property with respect and courtesy at all times. Staff model appropriate ways of communication and treat all pupils with kindness and respect. The above forms a crucial part of our school's ethos.

The same ethos of respect must also apply to intrapersonal communication among staff, management and parents within our school.

On entry to the school, a copy of the full Code of Behaviour is made available to all families. This must be read, discussed with the children (in an age appropriate way), signed and returned to the school secretary prior to enrolments.

Our Code of Behaviour has been audited and reviewed in line with the Education Welfare Act. It has been discussed with staff and a sub-committee consisting of staff and parents and has been approved by the Board of Management. Copies of the revised Code have been sent to all families for their information and support.

Bullying of any sort, whether physical, verbal or emotional, carried out by a group or by individuals will not be tolerated in this school.

Parents/guardians and/or children must inform the class teacher, principal or deputy principal of any problems immediately. If the school is not made aware of bullying behaviour we are unable to address it. Our Anti-Bullying Code applies to both children and adults.

St. Andrew's N.S. does not tolerate bullying.

Teachers constantly remind their pupils to tell them, or another trusted adult, if they are anxious about anything. Older pupils are also encouraged to look out for the welfare of their peers and the younger children.

Safe Parking and Driving in the School Grounds

All visitors to the school are expected to drive and park in a safe, courteous and careful manner. Speed restrictions and other warning signs must be **strictly** adhered to by all drivers. Ramps are also provided to protect us all. A detailed policy document on this subject is issued to all families on enrolment in the school. The latter contains our car park rules which are also on display at the school entrance.

Due to traffic congestion in the yard, the school's Board of Management, in consultation with our partners in the school, may periodically issue guidelines for collecting/dropping children from school. These are reviewed on a regular basis.

We would ask you to help alleviate traffic congestion in the yard by walking, cycling and car-pooling where possible.

S.A.S.H., St. Andrew's Board of Management or their agents cannot accept responsibility for damage to or loss of possessions by any visitors to our school, either in the school building or its environs.

Parents and others collecting children are asked to report instances of dangerous/careless driving to the BOM. Please also supply registration details, make of car etc.

Emergency Closings

Emergency school closings can occur for reasons such as failure of heating or electrical systems, vandalism or inclement weather. We will make every effort to notify parents of emergency closings by text but this may not always be possible. We will also place notices at the entrances to the school. It is imperative to ensure that the school is open before you leave the school grounds each day.

Lost Property

A lost property box is situated in the school foyer. Please check lost property on a regular basis. We remind you that **all personal belongings** should be clearly marked with your child's name for easy identification. Unclaimed lost property will be periodically donated to charity or disposed of.

Valuable personal property should not be brought to school by pupils. **The school does not accept responsibility for personal belongings lost or damaged.**

Animals/Pets

While we love pets and value the positive effects they have on our lives, for health and safety reasons we cannot allow dogs on school grounds. On occasions, for educational purposes and by prior arrangement, animals may be allowed to visit the school under the supervision of a responsible adult owner.

Dress Code

- Pupils should be dressed neatly and appropriately for school at all times. Should pupils wear clothing or footwear which is deemed unsafe or unsuitable by the class teacher or school principal, contact will be made with home with a view to securing a change of apparel.
- Pupils must wear the school's uniform to school each day. Currently this consists of a navy blue school sweatshirt or cardigan, with our school crest embroidered on the left hand side, over a white collared polo shirt. School uniforms are available from our designated supplier.

The School Wear House, Tesco Shopping Centre
Hillside, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
Phone No. 01 287 3420

Please contact our school office as our designated supplier is subject to change.

- Pupils must wear flat soled, well-fitting shoes (no open-toed sandals, high heels, wedges or flip flops please). Footwear should be suitable for physical activity.
- Appropriate clothing should be worn on all Physical Education (P.E.) days. During the last term of each school year we try to do extra P.E. activities, so we suggest that pupils dress for physical activity every day.
- **Stud type earrings only.** Make-up, false eyelashes or false nails should not be worn in school.
- The school recommends that jewellery should not be worn in school. The school takes no responsibility for the loss of any jewellery worn into school.
- Long hair must be tied back to minimise the spread of head-lice. This applies to all pupils. Also, long hair must not impinge on the pupil's ability to engage with text and/or other school activities.
- Hairstyles must be such which does not adversely affect the pupils' ability to complete tasks unhindered.
- Sunscreen should be worn on sunny days.

- Pupils must bring weatherproof clothing to school each day, even during the summer term. Coats should be waterproof.

Lunches

- We observe a healthy eating policy. Please ensure that your child has a healthy lunch which he or she will eat. Crisps, lollipops, sweets, chewing gum and fizzy drinks should not be brought to school.
- Only send food in containers which your child can manage independently.
- Drinks should be carried in a sealed plastic container/carton (**no glass bottles please**).
- Food should not be consumed in the playground.

Break Times

- Pupils vacate classrooms during break times, weather permitting. Only children who are injured may remain indoors and must stay with the staff member on indoor duty. If a child is unwell they should not be sent to school. If they are well enough for school, they should be well enough to go outside at break times.
- Pupils must play in the areas of the playground assigned to them.
- The school field is to be accessed via the ramps/steps only and not the banks.
- Running and rolling on the banks or ramps is not permitted.
- Rough or dangerous play is not tolerated.
- Toys may only be brought to school for activities such as “show and tell” and should not be brought out to the school play areas.

All children are taught the school rules and the reasons for them in an age appropriate manner. We expect all pupils to abide by these rules.

Mobile Phones

- Mobile phones should not be brought into school as they may be damaged, lost or used inappropriately. In exceptional circumstances pupils in 4th – 6th class may bring a phone into school if they are walking to or from school unaccompanied by an adult.

If it is essential that phones are brought to school phones must:

- Be switched off and kept in schoolbags during school hours.
- Never be taken to the swimming pool.

Pupils may use school phones with permission in emergencies only.

Any breach of these rules will result in the confiscation of phones. Once confiscated, phones must be collected from the school office by parents/guardians.

Communicating with the School

The school may be contacted by telephone on 01 2867161 or by e-mail at info@standrewsbray.ie. Voice messages can be left if necessary. While every effort is

made to ensure messages are checked regularly, it may occasionally happen that messages do not get through to the class teacher or school principal in time.

The school uses a web-based text message facility to communicate important information to parents, such as changes to school operating times, early or emergency closings and pending notes and other news/requests. It is essential that all families are included in this service, the cost of which is funded by our school's Board of Management and PTA.

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This booklet contains only a brief outline of learning activities and organisational matters within our school. There is a myriad of extra supports, provided by staff, management and our many parent volunteers, which make St. Andrew's N.S. a welcoming and affirming place of learning.

The school staff and Board of Management thank you for taking the time to read this booklet and request that you adhere to the rules and procedures outlined. This will ensure that the staff can devote the maximum attention to the care and learning of our pupils.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, our school secretary or myself if you have any queries or suggestions to improve this information booklet.

Daphne Wood
Principal

Reviewed November 2024

Inspector's Report

In December 2016 St Andrew's N.S. underwent a subject evaluation in the area of Mathematics.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in Mathematics is very good; they display very good levels of motivation and interest and experience learning in a positive, encouraging and open environment.
2. Pupils' mathematical skills are generally well developed and in line with curriculum expectations; there is a need however, for the systematic development of pupils' higher-order skills.
3. The overall quality of the teaching observed was very good, and this included a number of examples of excellent practice.
4. A positive culture of teacher collaboration exists, which includes opportunities for teachers to engage in peer observation.
5. Assessment practices in Mathematics are good overall, with some highly effective approaches to assessment for learning; there is scope for greater focus on the assessment of pupils' skills.
6. The highly effective principal, with the significant support of members of the in-school leadership team, successfully leads and oversees provision in Mathematics and have managed a very good school self-evaluation (SSE) process that has resulted in improvements in pupils' learning.

The full report can be accessed by clicking on the link below:

https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Curriculum-Evaluations-in-Primary-Schools/13597M_CEM_3410_20161209.pdf