



Rasharkin Primary School

“The children are well-motivated, display positive attitudes to their work and achieve very good standards.”

(ETI Report 2012)



November 2020



Rasharkin Primary School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for taking the time to read through our prospectus. This year, with new restrictions due to COVID-19 we are not so free to welcome visitors to our school, however we would be delighted to answer any queries you may have or just have a chat on the telephone to help you decide which school to send your child to.

We aim to ensure that during their time with us, all children are provided with the values, skills, knowledge and abilities that will develop them, not only academically, but physically, social and morally too. It is our desire that when children leave us, they have been equipped to deal with the breadth of challenges and experiences real life throws at us. Whilst we strive to ensure each child reaches his / her full academic potential, the aims of Rasharkin Primary School go beyond academic achievement. Children and adults alike are encouraged to value their contribution to the life and work of our school, whatever that may be.

As you browse through our prospectus, I hope you enjoy what you discover about our school and the work that goes on in it. Please get in touch if you would like any more information.



Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Ruth Howe (Principal)

Our School

Rasharkin Primary School first opened, on its current spacious site, in 1973. We cater for both boys and girls, from 4 – 11 years and have an average of ten children in each year group. As a small school we place great value on the close relationships that can be formed with children, their parents and their extended families.



Each of the four classrooms, are bright, attractive and well equipped and enjoy the benefits of educational technology, including interactive whiteboards. We also have the luxury of a KS2 library and FS playroom. The school also has a large multi-purpose hall, which is used for P.E.,



lunch, assemblies and various functions. The extensive grounds are well maintained and used for outdoor play, sporting and at break and lunch times.



Board of Governors

The Board of Governors for Rasharkin Primary School was reconstituted in 2018/19 with members usually serving a four year term.

What are the Board of Governors' main responsibilities?

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective management of the school. All governors serve in an entirely voluntary capacity with no remuneration. The Principal acts as Secretary but does not have a vote. The Governors have responsibility in relation to the curriculum, the appointment of staff, admission to the school, discipline and the school budget. There were two meetings altogether during the school year September 2018 to June 2019, including sub-committee meetings.

We wish to express thanks to all the governors for their time and commitment to our school. They faithfully attend meetings, often after a busy day's work, and provide much expertise and support in the successful management of the school.



Board of Governors for 2019/20	
Rev. Jeffrey Blue (Chair)	Rep. of Transferors
Mrs. Beverley McIlmoyle (vice-chair)	Rep. of Parents
Mrs Ruth Armstrong	Rep. in lieu of Transferors
Dr. Sandra Green	Rep. of E.A.
Mrs. Lorna Wylie	Rep. of Transferors
Rev. Roy Gaston	Rep. of Transferors
Mrs. Rosemary Calderwood	Rep. of Teachers
Mr. John Finlay	Rep. of E.A.
Mrs. Joanne Gillespie	Rep. of Parents
Mrs. Ruth Howe	Principal

School Vision and Aims

Our vision is to provide a warm, welcoming and secure environment where, children will be encouraged to reach their full potential, in all areas of school life.

We aim to equip children with the necessary skills to make a positive contribution to society, and deal with the challenges of a changing world.

At Rasharkin Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a stimulating, balanced curriculum that allows all pupils to be motivated and interested, so that they can succeed to their fullest potential
- Foster a respect for the core values of truth, hard work, kindness and concern
- Encourage new and existing leisure interests, in order to develop the whole person
- Prepare our pupils fully for the next stage of their lives, both academically and socially
- Hold high expectations for all, recognising that students learn in different ways, and at different paces
- Ensure that parents are fully involved in the education and social development of their child while in the school, through a constructive partnership
- Develop independent learning, thinking and problem solving skills
- Create meaningful and challenging learning environments, that provide opportunities for students to learn by experiencing
- Engage in a cycle of assessment, reflection and goal setting in order to support student achievement.



The School Day

9.10 am School day starts

10.30 am Break

12.15 - 1.15pm Lunch

2 pm School day finishes for
P1-3 pupils

3.00 pm School day finishes
for P4-7 pupils

A copy of the school holidays
is available on our school
website, or from the school
office.



Applications and Admissions to Primary One

School Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2017/18	11	11
2018/19	11	11
2019/20	12	12
2020/21	10	10

Uniform

We regard uniform as an excellent way in which children can identify with the school, and feel a strong sense of belonging. We are proud of how well our children look in their uniform, and encourage parents to support the school in this.

Uniform is compulsory in Rasharkin Primary School. It includes:

- Yellow polo shirt
- Blue sweatshirt with school crest
- Grey trousers or skirt / pinafore
- Black shoes

Optional

- Blue checked dress for summer term
- Grey shorts for summer term
- Blue waterproof coat with school crest



Special Occasions

On special occasions, e.g. concerts, prize day etc., children are expected to wear a white shirt and blue striped tie.

School sweatshirts, waterproof coats and book bags (with school logo) may be purchased online from the school supplier. Parents will be informed in the summer term when orders can be placed for the following school year. We also offer second hand items free of charge.

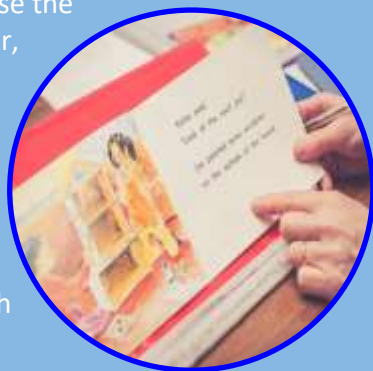
Attendance

The annual attendance rate (total days attended by all pupils on roll, as a percentage of the total possible days) was 92.9%, for 2019/20. The governors believe that the caring family atmosphere in the school has contributed to this encouraging attendance rate. We acknowledge the fact that many holiday companies inflate their prices to match school holidays and appreciate that budgets are never easily balanced. Holidays during term time are recorded as 'unauthorised absences' as per Department of Education requirements. We do appreciate the effort many parents make to keep their children in school for all the days we are open.



Special Educational Needs

Some children attending our school may have additional needs. These may arise from the child's physical incapacities or his/her learning abilities. As it is our intention to maximise the potential of each pupil, the school will endeavour, within its resources, to meet these needs. We are delighted to have an excellent record in meeting the needs of all our pupils. As evidenced by standardised test scores, which show, in the past three years, only one pupil was an 'underachiever', i.e. not meeting their potential achievement, in either Maths or English by the end of P7.



The school will identify specific difficulties, as early as possible, and draw up individual education plans to meet the needs of the pupil. Initially, support will be provided in the child's own classroom.

If the child is still unable to cope, he / she will progress through the Code of Practice, and eventually the Education Authority may issue a statement of the child's needs. These needs will then be met by the Education Authority, either through extra assistance or by a placement in another appropriate school.

The process of determining that a child has special educational needs in accordance with the law is a lengthy one, and involves close co-operation amongst the teachers, school, medical authorities, psychologists and the parents. The Education Officer responsible for special needs will make the final decision about the appropriate form of education.

Parents are kept fully informed at all stages via the S.E.N.C.O., education plans and the annual review process.

Curriculum

At Rasharkin Primary School our experienced staff offer your children a broad and balanced curriculum. It is the policy of the Board of Governors of Rasharkin Primary School that all pupils will receive their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

We endeavour to meet the specific needs of all of our pupils. The children learn in an active and meaningful way in a three class base (P1/2, P3-5 and P6/7, with part-time withdrawal for P3 or P5 subject to financial constraints).

We place a strong emphasis on practical and creative work within all classes but still maintain many of our traditional values. Children are provided with opportunities to develop the skills they need for life, in line with the recommendations of Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Religious Education and collective assemblies are provided in line with the N.I. Curriculum requirements. If you do not wish your child to take part in this area of the curriculum, please speak to the school principal.

Curriculum policies and Inspection Reports are available in school. Some documents are also available on our website.



We aim to encourage all children to achieve their full potential and experience success in a variety of areas, during their time with us.

At school your child will experience:

- Play / Activity Based learning
- Language and Literacy
- Numeracy
- ICT
- The World Around Us (topic work based around Geography, History and Science) (W.A.U.)
- The Arts (Music, Drama and Art & Design)
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (P.D.M.U.)
- Physical Development / Education (P.E.)
- Religious Education (R.E.)

Children's Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities will also be developed as tools that help children go beyond the acquisition of knowledge, towards becoming independent learners.



Extra Curricular Activities

As well as the statutory curriculum, your child will also have the opportunity to experience 'extra' activities. Some examples are given below. However, as opportunities / interest arises, different experiences may be offered.

- Cycling Proficiency
- Football
- Netball
- Multi Skills
- Tag Rugby
- Swimming
- Music
- Scripture Union



Throughout the school year, each class will enjoy at least one educational visit. These are usually to venues that relate to topic work, and add a great deal to the learning experience.

We also invite visitors into school to talk to the children on a range of topical subjects.

It is the policy of this school to encourage pupils to play and work amicably together, to show respect for other people's feelings, opinions and beliefs, and to show understanding, courtesy and tolerance, for all members of the wider community. All children will have an opportunity to participate in Shared Education classes with children from St. Patrick's P.S.

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions we are unable to offer many extra-curricular activities. We plan to return to offering a full programme as soon as it is safe to do so.



Assessment

A child's progress will be continually monitored throughout the year and detailed assessment will be carried out during the summer term. The standardised tests used as part of this, will provide teachers and parents with a better idea of the child's academic development, compared with a large sample of other children.

Parents will be informed of their children's progress during interviews in the first and second terms. A written report is also provided annually.

The pupils in Year 4 and Year 7 are formally assessed in accordance with the 'levels' required in the NI Curriculum. The results of children in the previous school year are seen below.

Percentage of children achieving level and above in Rasharkin Primary School at June 2019

		English	Maths	ICT
KS1	Level 2*	27	40	33
KS2	Level 4**	64	72	79

Expected level for average child at end of P4 () and P7 (**)

N.I. average (percentage) of children achieving level and above

		English	Maths
KS1	Level 2*	87.5	88.4
KS2	Level 4**	78	78.2

N.B. A number of schools did not submit data due to industrial action so results may not be accurate. Ref. Benchmarking Data – 2017/06

Homework

We believe that homework is an important part of the education process. It provides children with the opportunity to reinforce the work they have been doing in class, and gives teachers a better understanding of the child's ability in a certain area.

What do we expect?

- We expect each child to complete his/her homework to the best of their ability
- Parents should show they have supported their child in completing their homework by **signing it**. If a child has had difficulty with some aspect of his / her work a note to the teacher is also helpful.

It should not take children longer than 30 minutes (or 45 minutes for older children) to complete **all** their homework

The general guidelines for what we expect for homework in each year group are set out below.

Spellings and Tables P2—7

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights, spellings and tables will be provided for children to work on. On a Thursday night, the entire week's spellings and tables should be revised (P2 do not have tables).

English or Maths P1—7

A homework focusing on one of these areas, will be given for Monday—Thursday night.

Reading

Children will be encouraged to develop independent reading skills with a set reading task. The task may involve children reading certain parts of the story, or responding to the text.

Dues to current COVID-19 restrictions homework is now send home on a weekly basis.





Complaints

In cases where parents consider that the provision of the curriculum is not satisfactory, it is then possible for them to express

their concern. The following procedure should be adopted:

1. The Principal should be contacted in writing
2. The Chairman of the Board of Governors should be contacted in writing
3. The matter can be referred to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

Full details of this Complaints Procedure is available on our school website.



Pastoral Care Policies

All our school policies are available for inspection in the school and many are published on the school website. Included here is a brief summary of some important points.



Safeguarding and Child Protection

The school has a legal responsibility to be aware of child protection issues, and to take action if it is felt that a child is being abused or is in danger of being so. Mrs Henry is the designated member of staff for child protection. Staff are required by law to follow the Education Authority procedures if they suspect that a pupil is a victim of abuse. The school has a safeguarding and child protection policy, which is available on the school website.

The following are members of the school's Safeguarding Team:

Designated Teacher, Mrs R Henry; Deputy Designated Teacher, Mrs R Calderwood; Principal, Mrs R Howe all can be contacted at the school office (29571383). Designated Governor for CP, Mrs L Wylie, request contact details from school office; Chair of B.O.G. Rev. J Blue, Rasharkin Manse 29571665.

Bullying

We aim through our ethos and curriculum, to inform children about what bullying is, and how to deal with it appropriately. We also encourage children to develop a sense of self-confidence and self worth. As a school we do not tolerate bullying and have anti-bullying procedures in place if an incident occurs.

Health and Medication Needs

If your child takes ill, or has an accident while at school, we will endeavour to contact you (or other contact person you have indicated). In the case of an emergency, and if no contact can be made, the child will be transported to hospital. It is therefore vitally important that any changes to telephone numbers etc., are conveyed to the school, as soon as possible.

As asking staff to administer medicines to a child during the school day generates a lot of paper work for both you and the teacher, we ask that such **occurrences are rare.** (More details can be found in the school's Medication Needs Policy.)

Drugs Policy

Our Drugs Policy gives details of what a drug is and how we educate children to help them make wise choices. It also includes details of actions to be taken if drug misuse is suspected. Mrs Howe is the designated teacher for drugs.





Positive Behaviour

In Rasharkin Primary School we take pride in the fact that the vast majority of our pupils display good manners, are courteous and well behaved. This is, no doubt, due to good home and family discipline and we aim to continue with these standards at school. We believe in a positive approach to discipline but will use previously agreed sanctions when children fail to meet our high expectations. Our Positive Behaviour policy is shared with parents when your child enters our school and available on the school website. Pupils are annually involved in agreeing the school and class rules, and are reminded of these at various times throughout the year.

Use of Pupil Images

During the course of the school year, your child's image may be recorded for a number of reasons, e.g. participating in school events, class trips, etc. Such images may be used for display purposes in school, in the compiling of presentations, in the local press, or on the school web-site. Parents will be asked to give written permission at the beginning of each school year if they wish their child to be included in such recordings, in line with GDPR legislation. A record will be kept of this and can be changed at any time at the request of parents / guardians.

E-Safety

We recognise and value the contribution the Internet can make to a **child's education**, however we are also aware of the many risks it poses. As part of our E-Safety policy, any child must have written parental permission before he or she uses the internet. This will be collected from you once during your child's school career, and can be changed at any time, at your request.



A full list of policies on a variety of issues can be obtained from the school office. Copies of all our policies are available on request. If you have any queries about any of the information contained within this prospectus, or another matter, please contact the school principal.

We have endeavored to ensure all information in this prospectus is accurate. Any unforeseen changes to the information will be communicated via our website.

Rasharkin Primary School is a controlled school and is under the authority of:

Education Authority, North Eastern Region

Ballee Centre,

2-6 Ballee Road West,

Ballymena

BT42 2HS

Information about primary school admissions in the area can be obtained by contacting the Education Authority.

Contact Details

Rasharkin Primary School

Bamford Park,

Rasharkin,

Ballymena

BT44 8RX

Tel: 29571383

Email: rhowe432@c2kni.net

Chair of Governors: Rev. Jeffrey Blue

Principal: Mrs. Ruth Howe

Parents wishing to visit the school should contact the school office. Although we would be delighted to show you our school with current COVID-19 restrictions we are not free to do so.

