

Greenwood Primary School

September 2023 Enrolment: Primary 1

We are pleased to welcome you to our website and hope that you enjoy browsing its content. We trust that you will gain a snapshot of life at Greenwood and our educational provision.

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you will make. We, at Greenwood, want to welcome you and believe selecting **our** school for **your** child will ensure the best possible start to their education.

Below is a summary of information we offer to parents and the responses to a few frequently asked questions.

ETHOS



Our mission statement, “**Nurturing children for a life of learning**”, encapsulates our child centred approach and guides us in supporting children through all aspects of their development. It also assists us in providing quality education for all children, at whatever stage of their learning, and makes the school inclusive in outlook and enrolment.

The school aims to provide a rich and varied curriculum to promote the all-round development of each child, in a happy, caring environment. We establish competence in the basic skills and pride ourselves on developing the pupils’ confidence, self-esteem and independence. Enjoyment in learning is considered important and through a carefully structured curriculum, we enable children to foster their intellectual, physical, aesthetic, moral and spiritual development.

FACILITIES

The school building is a blend of traditional and modern with excellent facilities and resources. The extensive grounds are used for Literacy, Numeracy, World Around Us, Art, outdoor play and sports coaching. The children have first-hand experience of planting, tending, investigating, exploring and risk-taking, thus extending their curricular experiences.



- Three classes in each year group, an additional classroom, large Primary 1 central play area opened in 2004, learning support room, multi-purpose hall - PE, dinners, school performances, PTA events, after school clubs - e.g. tennis, athletics, football training.



- Extensive grounds and grassed area with a pond, willow dome, mini beast habitats, bird boxes, fruit trees etc. Outdoor furniture and benches for class time and lunch time use. Outdoor classroom with covered canopy installed 2014/2015. Trim trail equipment funded by our PTA and installed in September 2018.



- “Wrap around care” provided within the school building by Sleepy Hollow, offering breakfast club and after school care all year. Also continuity of care provided by Sleepy Hollow in Strandtown.



- Well stocked library with books for all ages which children borrow every week, 250 books on loan at any time! Cosy nooks in which to enjoy your book.



- Very well resourced classrooms, all with computers, iPads and Activ Panels (installed December 2019), large selection of graded materials for teaching literacy, numeracy and other aspects of the curriculum.



STAFFING

Greenwood has ten class teachers and one learning support teacher. Working alongside the teachers are the classroom assistants in all Primary 1 and 2 classes. The school allocates part of its budget to extend the statutory provision given by the Department of Education and also provides some classroom assistance in the Primary 3 classes. The office, cleaning and supervisory staff all contribute much to the Greenwood community. We also value the unpaid contributions of vetted parents who work tirelessly for the very successful PTA and those who volunteer to support learning, for example, through our Reading Partnership scheme.

ORGANISATION FOR LEARNING

Each year group has 87 places and these are split across three classes of 29 each. The three classes in each year group plan learning activities collaboratively.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum forms the core of the education we offer. However, we believe, and parents confirm our view, that the pastoral dimension evident at Greenwood provides a strong, supportive ethos that enables our pupils to settle into school easily and prepares them for the future.

We also have many visitors coming to school (wild life experts, theatre companies, etc) and have a programme of school outings.



AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

All Primary 3 pupils benefit from a later finish on Monday to attend clubs organised by the staff, which currently include music, art, ICT (i-Movies) and resilience and movement. The programme varies from year to year. Parents may also enrol their children in after school clubs run by coaches e.g. tennis, football, dance, athletics, Spanish and Jumping Clay. These operate

Tuesday through to Friday. During 2019/2020 we trialled the extension of clubs to Primary 2, with Ready for Anything and Jumping Clay.



HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents are always welcome at Greenwood and are seen as partners in education, with strong home school links being encouraged and established.

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through consultations, written reports and curriculum workshops. Informal contact with staff is also valued and the school has an open door policy.



We have a very comprehensive programme of meetings for parents, for all year groups. These include a meeting for all parents to attend in early/mid-September when each class teacher outlines important information for that school year; individual parent/teacher meetings are held twice a year and, in order to ensure parents receive valuable information on the curriculum, the teachers present a workshop on literacy and numeracy early in Term 2. Establishing good relationships and sharing our knowledge is fundamental to equipping parents as they support their child's learning.

use Parentmail, an emailing facility which allows school notes, information and reminders to be sent electronically, helping us to greatly reduce paper usage and ensure notes are not lost in transit!

Our school website also keeps everyone up to date and new content is added on a regular basis, highlighting recent events and learning opportunities in school.

www.greenwoodps.co.uk

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December 2022

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *My child didn't get a place in the nursery, what are the chances of getting a place in Primary 1?*

There are an extra 35 places for admission to Primary 1 so there is a much better chance of enrolment. Attendance at Greenwood Nursery is not part of the criteria when applying for a place in Primary 1.

2. *Is the enrolment process similar to that for nursery?*

This year the Education Authority, in conjunction with the Department of Education, is continuing to use an online application portal as part of the application process. The information required to complete the online application form will be very similar to that needed when applying for pre-school last year. The system of schools applying criteria when allocating places is still relevant. It is important to read the criteria schools set and to include the necessary information on the application form indicating how your application meets set criteria. For new families to the school, the distance of your home to the school, taken as a straight line measurement, will dictate which applications are successful. ***However, unlike the nursery process, if you don't get allocated your first preference, your form goes to your second preference school where it is considered equally along with first preferences which have been received.*** You are not ruled out at any stage because of how you rank ordered your choice of school. Your biggest decision is how you place schools in order of preference.

3. *How does Greenwood decide which class my child will be in?*

There are three Primary 1 classes in Greenwood. Each class has a spread of boys/girls and birthdays across the whole school year. In addition, we look at any special needs the children may have and consider information given by each child's pre-school setting. Around 8/9 children from each Greenwood nursery class will be placed in all three of the Primary 1 classes. We also follow the advice of the pre-school setting regarding grouping children in a class who have been to nursery together.

4. *What induction programme do you have?*

Greenwood has always followed the practice of visiting each child's pre-school setting as we believe it is important to establish links early. We are the only local primary school who provides an additional visit for children attending a nursery other than Greenwood. In May, small groups of around 8 children visit us for a story. The additional time required to organise this is greatly beneficial and gives the children added confidence and reassurance.

The next stage is a visit to your child's Primary 1 classroom, half of the class at a time. Simultaneously parents attend a power point presentation by the principal in the hall.

In early/mid-September we hold a meeting for parents in your child's classroom to outline the year ahead and specific issues for new pupils and their parents. In October each parent is

offered an individual meeting with the class teacher when you will be given details regarding your child's initial progress and how they have settled.

There is a phased intake for Primary 1 pupils over approximately one week, attendance is then to lunchtime during September and 2 o'clock from October onwards.

This is one of the most extensive induction programmes offered by any school and demonstrates our understanding and commitment to the early years.

5. Do the children go on school trips?

All year groups have organised trips ranging from Streamvale Farm, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Mount Stewart and Ulster Museum. Visitors are often invited to school - School of Falconry, theatre companies, W5 Science Workshops, fire fighters, wild life experts and new visits are introduced each year.

6. How are the children taught?

Greenwood has a balanced approach to teaching the curriculum. Whilst the teaching of literacy and numeracy is important, we also work hard to develop each child's personal skills and capabilities, at a pace appropriate to their stage of development. The staff work hard to extend the confidence levels of each child using established teaching methods and adopting the proven new approaches.

All children in the school benefit from experiences that enhance the core curriculum. Every child in the school participates in a year group drama and musical production each Christmas, with the Primary 3 children performing again in their Leavers' Concert. The use of our extensive school grounds and outside facilities further adds to the educational experience.

For further information on the statutory curriculum visit www.ccea.org.uk.

7. What happens at the end of Primary 3?

Children apply for a place in Strandtown Primary School; application forms will be available in early January. The children look forward to the move and are carefully prepared. There is good liaison between schools; the children and the class teacher visit the school in June and parents have an information evening in June, prior to admission.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Greenwood community.

If you would like to find further information on any aspect of the school, please contact the principal, Miss Lindy Forster.

WHAT DO PEOPLE SAY ABOUT GREENWOOD?

Comments from Parents

“Greenwood is very successful in providing a structured, secure and positive environment to support children in their learning.”

“The school has a lovely, welcoming atmosphere and provides an interesting and fun learning environment for children.”

“We are having a very good experience at Greenwood. The children are stretched and challenged and inspired to love learning beyond reading, writing and maths.”

“The whole school feels “happy” – not sure how you achieve this but it’s palpable – please keep it up!”

“The calm atmosphere and superb outdoor facilities contribute to what we believe is a very special school.”



Comments from Education and Training Inspectorate (February 2016)

“The children ... show high levels of interest, motivation, engagement and enjoyment in their learning.”

“The children’s interests and ideas were reflected in the choice of themes and learning was set within meaningful real life contexts.”

“The children respond well to the school ethos where they are encouraged to have a go and take risks in their learning. They are kind to their peers, respectful of staff and welcoming to visitors; the children’s behaviour is exemplary.”

“The pastoral care in the school is of a high quality and there is a warm, welcoming and calm ethos. The children enjoy learning in a very nurturing and supportive environment.”



“The children’s work and achievements are recognised and celebrated in numerous ways and they benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities which develop their talents, skills and confidence.”