



***Round Tower Integrated Primary School
And Nursery Unit***

Prospectus 2024-25



Priorities

- Safety
- Happiness
- Learning

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for taking the time to read our prospectus. We hope it gives you some useful information as well as an insight into our school.

At Round Tower, the uniqueness and individuality of each and every child is valued and celebrated. We believe that children need to feel safe and happy in order to learn and we strive to create a nurturing and welcoming environment.

High quality learning and teaching are central to our ethos. Children have the opportunity to engage in creative and challenging learning both in and out of the classroom, developing knowledge alongside transferrable skills.

We endeavour to build, maintain and sustain positive relationships with and between all members of our school community. We seek to engage fully with parents and carers as well as external agencies so our children may meet their full potential, in turn becoming responsible, respectful and compassionate citizens.

Please speak to us if you have any questions or if we can be of any further help.

Kind regards,

Mrs M Turner
[Signature]



Mrs Turner and Mr Hutchinson (Co-Principals)

General Information

Round Tower Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit is a co-educational day school and nursery for children aged 3-11 years of age. It is centrally located within the Antrim area serving a wide catchment area with children from both urban and rural communities attending. The primary school was opened in September 1978 originally as Springfarm Primary School. In 2003, however, it transformed to controlled Integrated status. The new name was chosen and Round Tower Integrated Primary School was established. Our integrated nursery unit opened on September 1st 2022 for our first cohort of preschool children and we currently have 26 children enrolled on a part time basis. It is the first integrated nursery unit in the area.

Our present enrolment for primary and nursery is 253 children. The Round Tower team comprises 10 full-time teachers, one part time Nursery teacher, a part time Newcomer teacher, a part time Learning Support teacher, 22 learning and teaching assistants, a clerical officer, a building supervisor, 3 ancillary staff, 4 catering staff, 11 lunchtime supervisors and a school counsellor.

As an integrated school we aim to provide a learning environment where children from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, as well as those of other faiths and none can learn with, from and about each other. We celebrate and value diversity and aim to provide a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment for all.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Mrs M Turner – **Principal** (Mondays and Wednesdays)

Mr R Hutchinson - **Principal** (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays)

Vice Principal – Mondays and Wednesdays

Teaching Staff

Foundation Stage

Mrs J Donnelly

Mrs C McStay

Mrs E Kulikova

Mrs D Monaghan **Vice Principal**
(Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays)

Key Stage 1

Mrs N McIlwrath

Mr L Shannon

Key Stage 2

Mrs J Duggan

Mrs J Murray

Mr C Logan

Mr R Hutchinson

Mrs K Mawhinney

Learning Support Teacher

Mrs N Connolly

Newcomer Support Teacher

Mrs E Kulikova

School Counsellor

Mrs B McLarnon

Learning and Teaching Assistants

Mrs R Ryder

Mrs M Wilding

Mrs D Zbib

Mrs D Jones

Mrs K Watson

Miss C Sherwood

Ms J Smyth

Ms V Law

Mrs L McWhinney

Ms S Latif

Mrs A McDowell

Mrs A Caldwell

Mr J McIlwrath

Ms S Green

Mrs N Alkhatib

Mrs C Cordova

Miss V Carroll

Miss E Nelson

Mrs N McSorley

Miss L Pierce

Ms A Hamilton

Ms C Scott

Non Teaching Staff

Office and Building Support Staff

Mrs D Murray - Clerical Officer

Mr S Foster - Building Supervisor

Lunchtime Supervisors

Mrs M Adair

Mr A Robson

Mrs R Ryder

Mr J McIlwrath

Mrs N McSorley

Ms S Green

Ms C Scott

Mrs C Cordova

Mrs A McDowell

Ms J Smyth

Mrs M Wilding

Mrs D Zbib

Cleaning Staff

Mrs A McDowell

Mrs E McGarrigle

Mrs M Wilding

Catering Staff

Mrs B McCloskey

Mrs K McCarroll

Mrs L Scott

Mrs S McLaverty

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

We are currently in the process of reconstituting our Board of Governors.

CONTACT DETAILS

ROUND TOWER INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Durnish Road

Antrim

BT41 2TH

www.roundtowerips.org

Telephone: 028 94 468 672

Email : info@roundtowerips.antrim.ni.sch.uk

Facebook : @roundtowerips

- They hang up their coats, say goodbye to parents/carers and say hello to Mrs Black!
- There is indoor play, snacktime, outdoor play, tidy up time and stories and songs to end the session.
- Children finish at 11.30am and are collected from the Nursery entrance,

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We have a smart but simple uniform. Wearing it portrays our ethos and shared positive values. We encourage all pupils to wear school uniform and take pride in their appearance.

SCHOOL DAY – TIMES



Doors open each morning at 8.45am

Staff are on duty at all entrances

The bell rings at 8.55am for school to start

BREAK

10.30-10.45

LUNCH

First Lunch 12-12.40pm Second Lunch 12.20 -1pm

HOMETIME

P1 & 2 finish at 2pm Monday to Thursday and 1.50pm on a Friday

P3 finish at 3pm every Monday, 2pm Tuesday to Thursday and 1.50pm every Friday.

P4 - 7 children finish at 3pm Monday to Thursday and 2 pm on a Friday

A copy of the school calendar dates can be found at the end of this prospectus and on the school website.

THE NURSERY DAY

- Children come in through the Nursery entrance at 9.00am each morning.



BOYS

This is a Round Tower IPS sweatshirt, a Round Tower IPS polo shirt and grey trousers. Grey/dark socks worn with black shoes.

GIRLS

This is a Round Tower IPS sweatshirt, a Round Tower IPS polo shirt and grey pinafore, skirt or trousers. A blue and white summer dress (gingham or striped) may be worn. Grey tights/grey socks worn with black shoes.

White socks can also be worn.

NURSERY UNIFORM

- Round Tower Nursery sweatshirt
- Round Tower Nursery polo shirt
- Navy track bottoms
- Suitable footwear that children can manage by themselves

All items of clothing should be clearly labelled.

Signature Schools are our uniform supplier.

Nursery Uniform Link

<https://www.signatureschools.co.uk/other-areas/nursery-schools/round-tower-integrated-nursery/>

School Uniform Link

<https://www.signatureschools.co.uk/other-areas/primary-schools/round-tower-integrated-primary-school/>

SCHOOL PE KIT

It is important for pupils to wear correct clothing for physical activities. For PE children require a white t-shirt, navy shorts or tracksuit bottoms and trainers or gym shoes.

Jewellery must not be worn for sporting activities and long hair should be tied back, in the interest of health and safety.

LOST PROPERTY

Naming all items reduces the risk! Any items of lost property are put in a Lost Property area where children can ask to check for missing items. Displays of lost items are made at the end of each term before items are recycled and reused.

SCHOOL MONEY APP

School Money is our school payments system. When your child joins RTIPSNU you will be sent a welcome message via email and text. This enables you to register and you will then be able to make

payments for e.g. school dinners, breakfast club, after school clubs, school uniform etc.



SEESAW APP

Seesaw enables communication between home and school. In addition, it is a learning journal where the children are able to add e.g. photos, videos, taskheets, pieces of writing, drawings and voice recordings to their Seesaw journal to be shared privately with you and other family members.



ILLNESS AND ABSENCES

Regular attendance is central to raising standards in education and to ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential. However, if your child is unwell they should stay at home until fully recovered.

If your child is absent through sickness or any unavoidable cause, please inform your child's class teacher via Seesaw.

Please use the helpful diagram below for common illnesses.

Do I need to keep my child off school?					
HSC Public Health Agency					
Chicken Pox Until spots have cleared over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 24 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Head Lice & Nits No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo Until lesions are healed & healed in 48 hours after commencing treatment
Measles or German Measles 14 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies Until started treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Shingles No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 hours after commencing antibiotics
Flu Until recovered	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed		

NURSERY ADMISSIONS

The Board of Governors will formulate and review the Admissions Criteria. The criteria will be applied by the Principal on behalf of The Board of Governors.

Admissions Criteria

A timetable of pre-school admissions procedures setting out the dates by which an application is to be submitted is available at www.eani.org.uk/admissions under 'Pre-School Admissions'. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 10 January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 24 January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 24 January 2025 will be treated as a late application.

As the pre-school admissions procedure is in two stages the timetable also specifies the relevant dates at Stage 2 which will determine if an application is to be considered as punctual or late.

As an integrated nursery, a key purpose is to educate Protestant and Catholic children together in an essentially Christian ethos. We welcome children of all religions and none and the Board of Governors strives to ensure a balance in the school community of 40% Catholic, 40% Protestant and 20% other world religions and children of no religious affiliation. The school's integrated ethos reflects the four key principles of integrated education: equality, faith & values, parental involvement and social responsibility. Parents can find out more about the integrated ethos of the school in the 'Statement of Principles' of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education which is available on the school website.

As an integrated nursery school, it is a key principle that children of all religions and none are educated together at Round Tower Integrated Nursery School. In order to maintain this distinctive character of the school it is important that we monitor the religious balance of the school and therefore the religious affiliation / community background (Catholic, Protestant, Other or None) of all pupils.

Parents/guardians applying for a place via the Education Authority's online application or paper application will be prompted to and must select your child's religious affiliation when completing the form.

The Board of Governors will strive to maintain a balance of religions within our nursery school.

Admissions criteria to be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed. The criteria are listed in order of priority.

Statutory Criteria

1. Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year who were born:

- on or between 2 July 2021 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school; or,
 - on or between 1 April 2021 and 1 July 2021 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
- ➔ have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged child; and,

- that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2026.

Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.

2. Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by Criterion 1).

Sub-criteria

In the event of oversubscription on the application of a statutory criterion the sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down.

- a. Children who, at the time of their application, have a child of the family currently enrolled in Round Tower Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit.
- b. Children who are the first or only child in the family.
- c. Children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter of surname **as entered on birth certificate** in the order set out below:

**M C M B F D J K Y L T V R G N X M A C H A E C
Z W I O U S P Q**

This order was determined by a randomised selection of letters.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used. In the event of any remaining tie, a method of random selection will be used.

Non-statutory criteria

Note: Applications falling under Criterion 3 are processed only during Stage 2 of the admissions process, after final pre-school year (Statutory 1 and 2) applications.

3. Children who were born:

- on or between 1 April 2021 - 1 July 2021 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,

- have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and,

- that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1, or

- on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive); or,
- on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2025.

In the event of oversubscription on the application of a non-statutory criterion the same sub-criteria

will be applied in the same order set down above for statutory sub criteria.

Duty to Verify

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application form.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by the Board of Governors can result in the withdrawal of a place.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or attached to the application form. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application form or attached to it.

Waiting List Policy

Should a vacancy arise after 10 June 2025, all applications for admission to nursery that were initially refused, new applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. The waiting list will be in place until the end of the academic year.

The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the school by this method. Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish for your child's name to be removed from the list.

PRIMARY ADMISSIONS

Enrolment Number : 276
Admissions Number : 39

The Board of Governors will formulate, apply and review the Admissions Criteria, while the Principal will administer the criteria.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on the application or provided directly to the school. Parents/Guardians should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application or provided directly to the first preference school.

As an integrated primary, a key purpose is to educate Protestant and Catholic children together in an essentially Christian ethos. We welcome children of all religions and none and the Board of Governors strives to ensure a balance in the school community of 40% Catholic, 40% Protestant and 20% other world religions and children of no religious affiliation. The school's integrated ethos reflects the four key principles of integrated education: equality, faith & values, parental involvement and social responsibility. Parents can find out more about the integrated ethos of the school in the 'Statement of Principles' of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education and the school prospectus both of which are available on the school website.

As an integrated primary school, it is a key principle that children of all religions and none are educated together at Round Tower Integrated Primary School. In order to maintain this distinctive character of the school it is important that we monitor the religious balance of the school and therefore the religious affiliation / community background (Catholic, Protestant, Other or None) of all pupils. Therefore, when applying online, you must select your child's religious affiliation when completing the form.

The Board of Governors will strive to maintain a balance of religions within our primary school and will monitor the religious balance in each academic year.

OPEN DAYS

There will be an Open Morning held on Thursday 28th November from 9.30am – 11am.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 10th January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 24th January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 24th January 2025 and up to 4pm on 29th January 2025 will be treated as a late application, this is also the last date and time for processing a change of preference in exceptional circumstances. After 4pm on 29th January 2025 no applications will be processed until after the close of procedure on 9th April 2025.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

Any child who reaches their 4th Birthday on or before 1st July 2025 is of Compulsory School Age. Under the School Age (NI) Act which became law in Northern Ireland in April 2022, 'compulsory school age' also includes those children who deferred commencing Primary 1 in September 2024 as defined by the new School Age (NI) Act (both groups to be treated equally).

Priority will be given to children resident in

Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the school before those who are not so resident.

Admissions criteria to be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed. The criteria are listed in order of priority.

1. Children who, at the date of their application, have a child of the family currently enrolled in Round Tower Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit.
2. Children who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school. *Please provide one of the following documents to prove eldest child - A letter from a member of the clergy, a Public Servant to include a Health Visitor, or an Educational Professional to include a Nursery/ Pre-School Principal/ Teacher directly involved with the family.*
3. Children for whom the school is the nearest integrated school to the child's normal place of residence.
4. In the event of a tie for the last available place, the following criteria will be applied:
 - a) the eldest child as established by date-of-birth as entered on a Birth Certificate;
 - b) initial letter(s) of surname (as entered on a Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

**MCMBFDJKYLTVRGNXMACHAEC
ZWIOUSPQ**

This order was determined by random selection.

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames

the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used. In the event of any remaining tie, a method of random selection will be used.

DUTY TO VERIFY

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application.

The provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by primary schools can result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's application.

WAITING LIST POLICY

Should a vacancy arise after placement letters have been issued, all applications for admission to Primary 1 that were initially refused, new applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. This waiting list will be in place until the end of the academic year. The school will contact parents in writing if a child gains a place in the school by this method. A child's name will be automatically added to the list. Parents should contact the school if they wish for their child to be removed from the list.

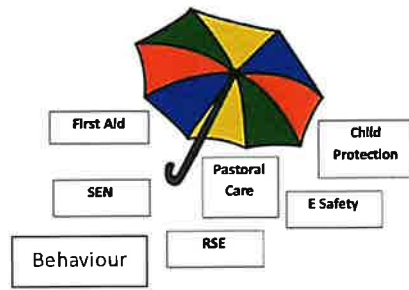
ADMISSION TO P2 – P7

- The above criteria will also be used for applications for P2-P7.
- Whilst oversubscribed, requests for places in P2-P7 will only be considered if a vacancy arises in the appropriate year group or a relevant class and further enrolment is not

prejudicial to the efficient use of resources.

Applications and Admissions to Primary 1		
Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2022/2023	26	26
2023/2024	30	30
2024/2025	32	32

SAFEGUARDING



Safeguarding is the overarching term used to cover a wide range of areas. Here in Round Tower keeping children and adults safe pervades all that we do.

Our Safeguarding Team is made up of the following people:

Chair (Principal) - Mrs M Turner
DT for Child Protection – Mr R Hutchinson
DDT for Child Protection - Mrs S Black
DDT for Child Protection – Mr C Logan
DDT for Child Protection – Mrs D Monaghan
Designated Governor for Child Protection – to be appointed
Chair of Board of Governors - Mrs C Cawley

Pastoral Care

The pastoral dimension of our school involves all children and adults involved in the life of the school. Their welfare is our priority. It is our aim, therefore, to provide a warm and caring environment for the children and adults so they feel safe, secure and happy.

Child Protection

We aim to protect the children in our care by ensuring that everyone who works with them has clear guidance and training, where applicable. At all times the school's over-riding concern must be the care, welfare and safety of the child.

We are legally bound to act if we have concerns regarding the welfare of a child. This may involve referring to relevant outside agencies e.g. Social Services.

Behaviour

We seek to be positive about discipline and behaviour through the use of praise, encouragement and rewards. This extends outside school when travelling to and from it or when representing school at events or on educational trips. All members of our school community have a responsibility in ensuring that the principles of respect for oneself, for others and for our environment infuse all that we do.

Our Promotion of Positive Behaviour Policy is based on the three school priorities in order: safety, happiness and learning. We believe that in order to learn, a safe and happy environment is essential. Only then can learning be maximised. Our Promotion of Positive Behaviour Policy sets out clear rules and an agreed system of rewards and consequences to be fairly and consistently applied.

Well Being

Positive mental health is vital to overall well-being. We are committed to supporting the children's emotional regulation, resilience and well-being throughout the curriculum both formal and informal.

We have achieved our Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing Level 1 Award and are now working towards our Level 2 Award. We have made amazing progress in our Take 5 journey through the hard work of pupils and teachers supported by our P7 Take 5 Ambassadors,

We have a counselling service in school too. Our counsellor Mrs McLarnon works with children individually supporting them in various ways. Counselling can be accessed by speaking to your child's class teacher, Mr Hutchinson or Mrs Turner.

Online Safety

We believe that the Internet and other digital technologies are very powerful resources which can enhance and potentially transform learning and teaching when used effectively and appropriately. The Internet is an essential element of 21st century life for education, business and social interaction. We provide pupils with opportunities to use the excellent resources on the Internet, along with developing the skills necessary to access, analyse and evaluate them.

We run a safer internet week where we participate in many age-appropriate activities to develop our knowledge and understanding of being safe online. We are also well supported by our community police officers.

First Aid

It is our policy to provide emergency first aid to any person who is within the premises and grounds or to any pupil or member of staff on an educational visit outside school.

We have three fully trained first aiders:

- Miss C Sherwood
- Mr C Logan
- Mrs S Black

Medication

If your child requires prescribed

medication through the school day please complete the relevant form available from the school office. Please note that staff are under no obligation to administer medicines. Only staff who have volunteered to administer medications will do so.

Drugs Awareness

In Round Tower we aim to build, develop and sustain a supportive and nurturing environment in which pupils and staff are encouraged to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

RSE

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) seeks to provide young people with formal opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and how to develop the skills and values needed to maintain and sustain healthy relationships.

RSE is a lifelong process where there is a need to acquire information and develop attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with parents/carers and continues throughout school and adult life.

RSE plays an integral part of a child's education in preparation for adult life.

School Meals (P1-7)

Meals are freshly prepared and cooked in our own kitchen daily. You will receive monthly menus via Seesaw.

Dinners are £2.60 per day, £13 per week. There will be a price increase from January. Money should be paid at the start of the week via the School Money app.

Free School Meals and Uniform Grants

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) can apply if their child is in full-time education and if they are in receipt of one of the following benefits:-

- Income Support;
 - Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Related Employment and Support Allowance;
 - Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit;
 - Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit with an annual taxable household income of £16,190 or less;
 - Universal Credit with net household earnings not exceeding £15,000 per year
- Or
- if you are an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office Asylum Support Assessment Team (ASAT); or
 - if your child has a statement of special educational needs and is designated to require a special diet.

Parents and carers can apply online at:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/free-school-meals-and-uniform-grants/apply-for-free-school>

Free meals can only be provided when both parent/carers and school obtain written confirmation from the Education Authority.

Special diets are catered for by arrangement with our school cook Mrs McCloskey.

Eating and Drinking

We encourage the children to eat a healthy break every day. Children in P1-7 can buy a break for 30p per day from the Kitchen. There is a bread and fruit option each day. In order to stay hydrated throughout the school day, children should bring a bottle of water (preferably with a sports cap). There is a water fountain in school where children can refill their water bottles throughout the day.

Exercise

We value the importance of physical activity. Children in P1-7 have regular P.E. sessions as well as two outdoor playtimes one in the morning and one at lunchtime. Children in our nursery have a daily outdoor play session.

Please send your child with suitable clothing as we endeavour to get them out in the fresh air whenever possible.

P6 and 7 pupils have the opportunity to attend Swimming lessons at The Antrim Forum.

As a whole school, we participate in The Daily Mile initiative. The aim of the Daily Mile is to improve the physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of our children – regardless of age, ability or personal circumstances.

Use of The School Grounds

We are extremely fortunate to have spacious grounds surrounding our school building. The children have access to the large grass field for play and outdoor PE. We also hold special events here such as Sports Day and even a fundraising colour run. There is a wooden balance trail beside the main playground and at the bottom of the playground beside the stone round tower we have raised beds where rhubarb, lavender and mint grow as well as an orchard with apple, plums and pears. We have a large polytunnel where we grow vegetables.

We are an official Forest School accredited by NIFSA (Northern Ireland Forest School Association)

Forest School is an educational programme developed from Danish ideas of working with children and young people in the outdoors, helping to build self-esteem, social skills and independence. Hands-on activities with natural materials develop practical and intellectual skills, which can be linked to the National Curriculum. Forest School aims to boost confidence through setting children up to succeed. Tasks are broken down into small achievable chunks that are matched to children's capabilities.

In addition, Forest School helps children become part of an effective efficient team and to participate in a range of creative, sensory and environmental awareness activities.

Forest School uses children's learning styles as a basis for the presentation of all activities. Children who learn visually can access learning through the demonstrations. All activities are

presented through speech for those children who learn aurally. Freedom to touch, feel and "do" satisfies the kinaesthetic learner.

We received our NIFSA Forest Schools

Accreditation plaque in May 2024.



Dogs

Whilst we recognise that dogs are an important part of family life and as such are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school, some members of our school community may find the presence of dogs in the playground and school grounds stressful, even frightening. Furthermore, even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in a busy, noisy and crowded environment.

We therefore only allow dogs on school premises for educational purposes or with pupils, staff or members of the public as a registered service dog.

Car Parking

Please support us in making the car park safe for our children by refraining from the following:

- Blocking the road - emergency vehicles and other traffic may need access
- Parking on yellow lines or clearly signed 'no parking' areas
- Parking on the pavement
- Parking where you will cause inconvenience to other road users
- Parking in our accessible spaces (we have only 2 and they are needed for members of our school community)
- Leaving your vehicle with the engine still running
- Stopping in the middle of the road to drop your child off, even for a few seconds

Access to the school building

To comply with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures parents and carers should not go to their child's class without prior arrangement.

Visits by parents and carers to discuss any aspect of their child's safety, happiness and learning are very welcome. Please arrange an appointment with the relevant member of staff.

Smoking

It is our policy that all of our workplaces are smoke-free and all employees and pupils have a right to work in a smoke-free environment.

Smoking is prohibited throughout the entire workplace with no exceptions. In our case this means the grounds and buildings.

Smoking include all tobacco products and e-cigarettes.



Learning and Teaching

Learning is at the heart of our school and we believe it should be a positive experience for all. Through high quality learning and teaching we aim to equip our children with the skills, knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions about their lives, contributing effectively to society. We regard both adults and children as learners each capable of learning new things and in different ways. We aim to create and sustain a stimulating learning environment for all where learning is fun and enjoyable.

Composite classes

Our intake for admissions to P1 is set at 39 pupils. This means that we have classes where children from two year groups are in the same class.

The central consideration in allocating children to particular classes is the needs of the child. Some but not all factors that may be considered include:

- Friendships
- Attainment
- Independence
- Social interaction
- Self-motivation
- Responsibility
- Confidence
- Co-operation
- Team working skills
- Self esteem

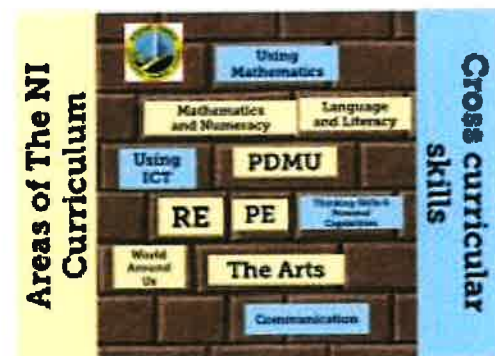
The Curriculum

By following the NI Curriculum, we aim to ensure our pupils learn the necessary knowledge and skills to reach their full potential and become effective contributors to society.

The Primary Curriculum

This is based on the Curriculum Guidance for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 2 issued by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) <https://ccea.org.uk/foundation-stage> and <https://ccea.org.uk/key-stages-1-2>. This outlines the range of learning opportunities that children of these ages should have.

There are seven areas of the curriculum and four cross curricular skills which infuse all areas as shown below:



The Nursery Curriculum

This is based on the Pre-School Curriculum Guidance issued by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) <https://www.ccea.org.uk/pre-school>. This outlines the range of learning opportunities that children of this age should have through play and other relevant experiences.

There are six areas of the nursery curriculum. They are :

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Language Development
3. Early Mathematical Development
4. Physical Development

5. The Arts
6. The World Around Us



Curriculum Development

Our School Development Plan sets out our plan for school improvement. There are five stages in the school development planning cycle to improve outcomes for all.

Stage 1 – What is our vision for our school?

Stage 2 – How well, based on evidence, are we doing?

Stage 3 – What more do we want to achieve in 1 – 3 years?

Stage 4 – What must we do to make it happen?

Stage 5 – Take action and review progress.

The School Development Plan includes Action Plans which outline in more detail specific targets, personnel involved, timescales and monitoring/evaluating procedures. It is a working document which will be referred to over a 3 year period and may be adapted and amended on an annual and on-going basis to take account of developments which affect the school.

Assessment

Assessment is a continuous process integral to learning and teaching and in turn improvement.

Assessment opportunities, which are a natural part of learning and teaching are constantly taking place in the classroom through for example, regular observation, discussion, listening and analysis of learning.

Children use self and peer assessment. Some examples include traffic light colour coding and “Two Stars and A Wish.” In Nursery to P3 the children have class learning files. In P4-7 the children keep learning diaries. Learning files and diaries enable the children to record and reflect on their learning regularly.

It is essential that children and teachers alike are part of the learning cycle and that both know key areas of strength and areas for development.

In years 3 -7 we use computer-based tests - Progress Test in Maths (PTM) and Progress Tests in English (PTE) in term 2 and 3. P2 use paper copies of these tests.

Children in Year 4 and 6 use the computer based Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT). This along with PTM and PTE scores and teacher judgement enable staff to plan how best to support all children across a range of abilities and needs.

We use Pupils Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) annually with year 4 to 7 pupils. Social and emotional wellbeing is essential for effective learning. PASS helps us to understand where children may be experiencing barriers for example, they may need reassurance with learning or may not always feel connected with school

and their teachers. PASS focuses on three broad areas – how a pupil feels about themselves, their engagement with the curriculum, and their feelings about school. PASS results enable us to effectively identify and support children.

Reporting

Reporting to parents / carers provides the opportunity for communication about their child's achievements, abilities and future targets. There is an opportunity to meet the teacher face to face in October and February. The end of year reports will be written so that they have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, motivation and self-esteem.

Homework

We believe homework is an important part of the learning process which should complement in school learning. Homework can develop good habits of study which will serve children well as they progress through primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Homework is a supported or independent task undertaken outside curriculum time which reinforces, extends or enriches learning.

Purpose and nature of homework

The purpose of homework is to:

- establish good habits
- promote and develop independent working and perseverance
- reinforce classroom learning
- keep parents informed about what is happening in class.

Homework can be set in many different forms with many different expectations and outcomes.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

100% Attendance	0 Days Missed
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed
85% Attendance	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed

(Taken from School Attendance Matters, A Parent's Guide DE)

We will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Our average attendance for 2023-24 was 91%.



Religious Education

We are committed to the religious, moral and social development of each child, no matter what their belief or background.

Children follow a broadly Christian based curriculum (largely comprised from resources prepared by the Belfast Board some years ago), and the more general aspects of the Catholic teaching aid 'Alive-O') which includes Bible Stories, the life of Jesus and moral studies.

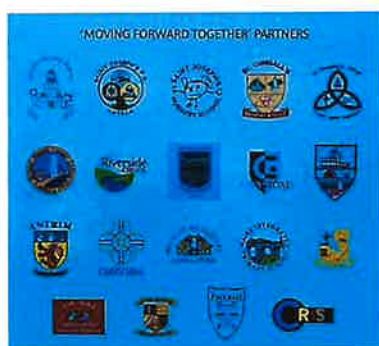
For children whose parents wish them to be prepared for The Sacraments they follow the Catholic Church's 'Grow in Love' programme of instruction, reflection and preparation. The teachers work alongside parents and Father Emerson and Father David to prepare the children for First Confession in P3, First Communion in P4 and Confirmation in P7.

Alternative provision will be made for those pupils whose parents or carers do not wish them to participate in any religious activities or classes. Please speak to your child's class teacher.

Outside School

We are extremely fortunate to have extensive links with local schools, community groups and outside agencies.

We are members of Moving Forward Together (MFT) which is a group of 18 schools within the Antrim and Randalstown Areas. The aim of MFT is *'Promoting good relations between children, young people and the wider community in the Antrim and Randalstown Area.'*



We maintain strong links with feeder nurseries and post primaries.

Last year pupils starting in P1 transferred from:

- Round Tower Nursery
- St Joseph's Nursery
- Steeple Nursery
- Little Hands Playgroup
- Muckamore Pre-school

And transferred to :

- Antrim Grammar
- Ballyclare Secondary School
- Parkhall Integrated College
- Slemish Integrated College
- Sperrin Integrated College
- St Benedict's College
- St Louis Grammar
- St Patrick's High School, Ballymena

The children benefit from various visitors who come to school and support our work including:

- PSNI
- Amazon Jungle Show
- The Fire Service
- Uberheroes
- M&M Productions - Aladdin.
- Yoga classes
- Boxing classes
- Tesco Community Champion
- Fresh Little Minds
- Work experience students from local schools
- Interactive Art Experience
- Maxcoding - Coding and VR (ICT)

Our children have had the opportunity to participate in the following after school clubs over the past year:

- Choir including participation in The Peace Proms event held at the SSE Belfast
- Playsport Football
- Gaelic
- Hurling
- Football Club including participation in The Antrim Schools League
- Transfer Club
- SETS Club
- Art Club

SETS Club (Sports Technology Engineering and Maths)

This is aimed at building confidence and self-esteem in children in KS2 (P5-P7). The idea of the club is that all children attending come with a parent or carer to try new things and learn new skills together...and most of all, to have a bit of fun. Activities held in the summer term included Nerf Tag, Bottle Rocket building competitions, mixed sports, a

raft building session and Golf Lessons at Allen Park.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club Starts at 8.00am. As well as enjoying a hearty and nutritious breakfast the children have the opportunity to socialise before school starts.

Breakfast Club costs £2 per day or £1.50 for those entitled to free school meals. Booking can be made via The School Money app.

After School Care

We operate an after school club called "Rounders," Monday to Friday from 2-4pm. It is staffed by Miss Sherwood (Rounders leader), Mr McIlwrath, Miss Green and Mrs Ryder.

Rounders offers two sessions, from 2pm to 3pm and from 3pm to 4pm, priced at £3 per hour. There is also an option for children to attend both sessions, from 2pm to 4pm. A registration fee of £10 per family is required to register for Rounders. This should be paid through SchoolMoney and will give you access to bookings.

In order to ensure correct staff ratios and inform Rounders staff of working patterns, please aim to book your sessions by Thursday evening for the following week. This will guarantee your child's place for the next week. We understand that plans change so bookings can be accepted up until the day before you wish your child to attend, subject to availability. Bookings made on the day will not be accepted.

A snack will be provided each day.

A programme of activities will be offered to children including : arts and crafts, games and puzzles, baking, I pads etc. In good weather, the children are outside. Whilst this is not a homework club, children may complete homework if you wish.

We aim to make 'Rounders' a place where children feel they can relax and unwind after the school day.

There will be a non-refundable annual £10 registration fee per family and the cost will be £3 per hour per child each day. A full week from 2pm-4pm will therefore cost £30 per child.

At present we will restrict numbers to 32 pupils.

Charity

In Round Tower we believe that showing consideration and respect to others is key. We raised money for The Children's Cancer Unit and supported The Antrim Foodbank last year.

Excellence in Integration Award

We have been awarded the Kitemark Award for Excellence in Integrated Education on two occasions. This award recognises our integrated ethos and demonstrates our commitment to developing and strengthening it. We are currently working towards and hoping to achieve the award for the 3rd occasion in 2025.

School and Home

Round Tower PTA consists of a dedicated group of staff, parents and carers.

Our Summer Fair raised £2015, which helped to pay for 4 new Promethean Smart Panels. The panels offer a range of great features, helping to improve teaching and learning in the classrooms.

Recent fundraising events and totals raised are as follows:

- Crazy Hair Day - £ 207
- Bake or Buy Coffee Day - £ 811
- Halloween Disco - £ 849
- Don't Stop Moving Day - £ 2691.01
- Halloween Dress Up Day - £ 190
- M and M Productions 'Aladdin' - £579
- Donations £8500

Given diminishing school budgets, additional funds are crucial to all schools and the school community is extremely thankful to all who have supported these events.

Pupil Voice

The children's voice is extremely important to us and school affords many opportunities for the children to have their ideas and opinions heard.

The children also have opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities within school including:

- Peer Mediators
- Playground equipment Monitors
- Take 5 Ambassadors
- House captains and vice captains
- Junior Road Safety Officers

- Reading Buddies

We are extremely proud of our children and value their capacity to effect positive change.





ROUND TOWER INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT
PUPIL HOLIDAYS 2024 – 2025



Autumn Term (2024)

- New Term Commences Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th and Friday 30th August (half day)
- School Development Day (children do not attend) Monday 28th October
- Halloween Holiday Tuesday 29th October – Friday 1st November (4 days)
- Autumn Term Ends Friday 20th December at 12 noon – no lunch on this day
- Christmas Holiday Monday 23rd December – Thursday 2nd January (9 days)
- School Development Day (children do not attend) Friday 3rd January

Spring Term (2025)

- New Term Commences Monday 6th January
- School Development Day (children do not attend) Monday 10th February
- Half Term Holiday Tuesday 11th February – Friday 14th February (4 days)
- St. Patrick's Day Monday 17th March
- Spring Term Ends Friday 11th April at 12 noon – no lunch on this day
- Easter Holiday Monday 14th April – Thursday 24th April (9 days)
- School Development Day (children do not attend) Friday 25th April

Summer Term (2025)

- New Term Commences Monday 28th April
- May Bank Holidays Monday 5th May and Monday 26th May
- School Development Day (children do not attend) Tuesday 6th May
- Summer Term Ends Monday 30th June at 12 noon – no lunch on this day

Family holidays should not be arranged during term time. Thank you for your co-operation.