

SULLIVAN UPPER PREP DEPARTMENT



**PROSPECTUS
2016–17**

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Welcome

A warm welcome to the Preparatory Department of Sullivan Upper School.

The concept of lifelong learning is a very important concept to us and we believe that learning should be a fun, rewarding experience for everyone. Through our teaching, we aim to equip our children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.



The school motto “Lamh foisdineach an uachtar” is in the Irish language and means “the gentle hand foremost”. This is a constant reminder about the virtue of “gentleness” in dealing with others.

Mission Statement

We seek to provide a happy and caring learning environment for each child by helping them to fulfil their potential, by celebrating their achievements, by respecting their differences and by encouraging their mutual respect for others. We aim to foster the development of self-esteem and provide a sound foundation for their future lives. Our overall aims are:

- To encourage children to be confident, independent and responsible learners through the development of a curriculum which is adapted to suit the needs and abilities of all our pupils and which enables them to fulfil their potential;
- To deliver a curriculum which will help our pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds and an ability to apply themselves to the development of mental tasks and physical skills;
- To help our pupils to understand the world in which we live and to appreciate human achievements and aspirations;



- To develop respect for religious and moral values, tolerance of each other and tolerance of other religions, races and ways of life;
- To work in partnership with parents and the wider community;
- To encourage our children to acquire knowledge and skills in preparation for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

An ETI Report for a General Inspection of the Preparatory Department in May 2012 includes the following information:

Re: The Head of Department:

'She has high expectations for the work of the school and gives high priority to the care and well-being of all of the children and to raising further the standards they attain.'

Staff

Headmaster

Mr CJW Peel BA(Hons), MEd, PGCE, PQH(NI)

Bursar

Dr C Byrnes BSc, ACA

Head of Prep

Mrs E A Smith MScEd, BEd, PQH(NI)



Part-time staff:

PE/Games Mrs E Wilkinson BSc, PGCE
Games (KS2) Mr C Henderson BSc, PGCE (Sen
Games (KS2) Miss S Wilson BSc, PGCE (Senior School)
Art (KS2) Mrs L Feldman BEd(Hons)
Learning Support Mrs J Thompson BEd, BA
Music (KS2) Mrs G Pitt (BMus, MTD, LTCL, ALCM)
Speech & Drama Mrs C Gardiner LLAM, ALCM, SIE Dip, MALT

Non Teaching Staff:

Classroom Assistants:

Ms R Johnston: Foundation Stage NVQ III (Education)
Mrs R Moroney: Foundation Stage/KS1; NVQ III (Education & Playwork)
Ms L O'Connor: KS2 Assistant; Cert Lib St.
Mrs H Malseed: Foundation Classroom Assistant; BSc Hons
Miss N Barbour: SEN Classroom Assistant & Development; NVQ Childcare Learning
Ms J Connolly: SEN Classroom Assistant
Miss E Dennison: SEN Classroom Assistant; BSc

After School Club Team:

Mrs R Moroney: Supervisor NVQ III (Education & Playwork)
Miss E Dennison: Acting Deputy Supervisor; BSc
Miss N Barbour: Assistant Supervisor; NVQ Childcare Learning & Development
Mrs D Berry: Assistant Supervisor

Secretary: Mrs G Dempster
Caretaker: Mr R Campbell
Patrol Lady: Ms A McMinn

Teaching Staff:

Full-time staff:

Prep 1 Miss K Worthington BA(Hons)
Prep 2 Mrs J Lockhart BEd(Hons), MEd (SENCo)
Prep 3 *Miss E Cairnduff BEd(Hons)
Prep 4 Mrs A Patterson BEd(Hons) (SENCo)
Prep 5 *Mrs M Galway BEd(Hons), PQH(NI)
Prep 6 Mrs K Wilson BA(Hons)
Prep 7 Mrs J Matthews BA(Hons), PGCE, MSc

*Lower & Upper Prep Co-ordinators

Pastoral Care

We promote a child centred approach in our school and provide a stable and caring environment where children can form trusting and secure relationships to help them achieve their full potential.



We encourage the development of a positive ethos in order to enhance pupils' learning and develop a strong sense of self-esteem. Each child is respected for his/her unique qualities.

'...The staff know the children very well and work hard to promote a caring, family ethos based on mutual respect. The children develop self-awareness and appreciation of others in the school and the wider community through the Personal Development & Mutual Understanding programme.'

'...The quality of the arrangements for the pastoral care of the children in the preparatory department is outstanding. The children are friendly and courteous and during the inspection their behaviour was exemplary.'

It is our belief that in order for effective learning and teaching to take place, good behaviour is very important. We therefore aim:

- To create a caring environment by promoting positive behaviour and discipline;
- To develop in pupils a sense of self-discipline and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions;
- To create an orderly environment in which effective learning can take place to encourage self-respect and respect for adults and other pupils;
- To develop in pupils an appreciation of their school surroundings and a respect for all property;
- To encourage a positive relationship with parents to assist with a shared approach in their child's education.

Safeguarding/ Child Protection

The staff, both teaching and non-teaching, in exercising pastoral responsibility towards the children in the school, will take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved.

All of our members of staff have a commitment to the protection of our children and receive appropriate training in safeguarding procedures annually. All staff and volunteers in the school are subject to appropriate, stringent background checks through Access NI procedures.

The staff have adopted a Code of Conduct for our behaviour towards pupils and this is reviewed regularly and shared with all new members of staff. A copy is available on request.

Current policies are shared regularly with parents at Class Meetings and are updated as appropriate. Mrs Smith (Head of Prep) is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Mrs Galway (P5 teacher) and Mr Peel (Headmaster) are both trained as Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection. The Child Protection/Safeguarding & Anti Bullying Policies are on the school's website.

Anti-Bullying

In our school we provide a caring and welcoming environment.

We take pride in having a happy and contented body of pupils who know that their opinions and views, alongside their rights as individuals, are respected and valued.

'The children contribute meaningfully to discussions and decisions that directly affect them through circle time sessions, a comment box and the active school council; there is evidence that their opinions and ideas are acted on and valued.'

Whilst we do not perceive bullying to be a major problem in our school, we are nevertheless determined to minimise its occurrence. We condemn bullying of any kind and have a line of procedures and strategies in operation throughout the school to deal with incidents.

Parents and children are reminded of these actions on a regular basis.

'The children indicated ... that they know what to do if they have worries about their care and well-being'...

'The children value the support given by their teachers...'

Homework Policy

- Homework may be given for Monday to Thursday; some homework is given with a longer date to encourage the use of a home computer for research or to give more time to manage it around assorted children's activities.
- The duration and type of homework will depend on the age and ability of each child. Guidance will be given to parents at each year group meeting taken by the class teacher.
- Homework may be written, oral, IT-based and/or investigative. It will reflect previous class work so as to reinforce skills and knowledge, or for preparation/ completion purposes.
- Homework diaries may be used by pupils in KS2 classes in order for them to develop the forward planning skills needed for management of tasks given by different teachers later in their school careers. Details for homework will be given according to each class teacher's practice.



- Parents should encourage homework to be done in a quiet place with a minimum of distraction.
- Parental involvement is strongly encouraged and parents are asked to sign each piece of their child's homework. This action encourages parents to keep up to date with what is being done and how well their child is able cope with class practices.
- Problems may arise with homework and we encourage parents to inform teachers should this occur with their child. This contact may be made in writing or by arranging a suitable time for a meeting.

We aim for our children to spend an appropriate amount of time on homework relative to their age. For written work this ranges from 10 minutes maximum in Prep 1 to 40–45 minutes in Prep 7. Teachers will guide parents about individual needs.

Life in Lower Prep

P1, P2 & P3 classes are situated in Dromkeen House and P4 is located in Loughhead House.

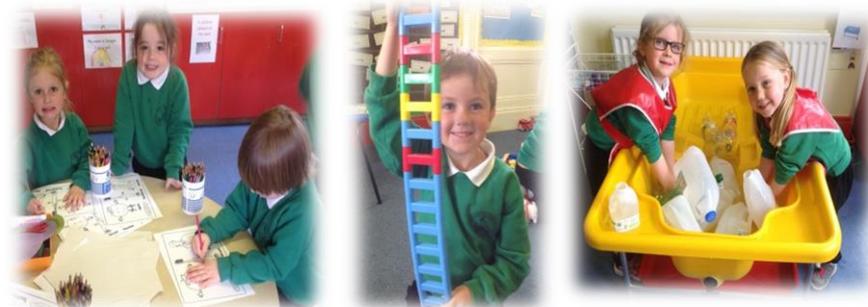
Preps 1 & 2 are known as Foundation Stage and Preps 3 & 4 are known as Key Stage or KS1.

School begins at 8.50am with supervision available for those pupils who arrive from 8.30–8.45am. Prep 1 children may go to their room from 8.30am for an initial period up to Hallowe'en. All classes will be collected by their teacher from the playground at 8.45am. Pupils who arrive after 8.45am should go straight to their classroom.

In the interest of your child's safety, parents should please note that there is **no** supervision **before 8.30am** and that children **should not be left unattended** for safety reasons.

A split break for **Foundation Stage** (P1 & P2) and **KS1** (P3 & P4) children operates Tuesdays and Thursdays. This is to maximise the two groups' access to a play area where they can engage in the assorted meaningful outdoor play activities on offer. We encourage our pupils to eat a healthy snack with no fizzy drinks allowed and crisps are discouraged. We encourage our children to drink water throughout the school day.

Lunch time is from 11.50am – 12.40pm. P1–P3 children are supervised in the Dromkeen Dining Hall. Dinners are cooked in the Silver Robin restaurant of the Senior School and transported to the Prep to arrive just prior to serving. Prep 4 children walk to the Silver Robin cafeteria on the Senior School site and they eat there with the P5–P7 classes. After their lunch they are walked back to Dromkeen playground for additional play to 12.40pm.



Preps 1 and 2 finish school at 2pm every day. Preps 3 and 4 finish at 3pm Mondays to Thursdays and at **2pm on Fridays**. We ring a bell at 2.55pm to indicate the approaching end of school day.

Parents are advised to tell us of an unexpected delay, or change of person to collect their child. We will not release children to people who we do not know without checking.

Life in Upper Prep

P5, P6 & P7 are situated in Loughead House.

This age group is also known as Key Stage 2 (KS2).

The school day has the same initial arrangements for supervision from 8.30–8.45am. Teachers collect their class and move to their Loughead House classrooms at 8.45am and the school day starts officially at 8.50am.

There is a mid-morning break 10.20–10.40am each day. Children are supervised in the Senior School Tennis Courts' area or other large play areas on the Senior School site.



Lunch is between 11.45am and 12.30pm, with children leaving Loughead House with their class teacher before 11.45am to walk to the Senior School cafeteria. All children eat together in “The Silver Robin”, supervised by a team of dinner supervisors and a Classroom Assistant. A further playtime is supervised by the Classroom Assistant and a teacher before the children return for afternoon classes which begin at 12.30pm.

Preps 5 to 7 finish at 3pm each day. They should be picked up inside the school grounds and parents should note that no children should be collected by a sibling who is under 18 years of age.

Any pupils who have not been collected will be taken to the Prep Office in Dromkeen House and the Secretary will seek to contact parents.

Parents are advised to telephone the School Office should they experience an unexpected delay in collecting a child.

Please inform the Prep Secretary, should your child ever be absent from school. This is a further safety measure to ensure your child is registered as being absent or present.

After School Activities

We provide opportunities for children to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities and children may “sign up” for these termly. Year-round clubs may include:

For Lower Prep: (Prep 1–4):

- Monkeynastix
- Dodgeball
- Cookery Club
- Book Bug Club
- JAM Club (Scripture Union)
- Jumping Clay
- Junior Choir
- Art Club
- Games Club
- Speech & Drama

“The key strengths of the pastoral provision include the wide range of activities, events and visits, which enhance the quality of learning experiences for the children.”

For Upper Prep: P5–7):

- Fencing
- Drama
- Football
- Green Club
- Art Club
- JAM Club (Scripture Union)
- Music Club
- Cross Country
- Hockey
- Rugby
- Netball
- Lifesaving
- Speech & Drama
- Jumping Clay

School Lunches

Parents may choose to send packed lunches for children or avail of ‘The Silver Robin’ catering services. Preps 1–3 eat in Dromkeen Hall and P4–P7 walk to the Senior School’s ‘Silver Robin’ cafeteria. For Prep 1–3 children, a menu is sent home to parents so that they can plan the meals for their children for the following three weeks. For Preps 4–7 there is a self-service system in operation with a wide variety of food being offered daily. With an emphasis in our curriculum on eating healthily, children are encouraged to make healthy choices at lunch time.

*‘The preparatory department gives **very good attention** to promoting **healthy eating and physical activities**. There is a range of strategies and initiatives to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles, including the promotion of healthy snacks and lunches and a wide range of physical and sporting activities.’*

A Dining Hall Supervision team and a Classroom Assistant, along with the Catering staff, are at hand to advise and supervise. The Manager of the Silver Robin endeavours to provide a balanced healthy meal for our pupils and spends a large percentage of the cost of meals on fresh ingredients. She may be contacted to discuss an individual’s specific dietary needs. Payment for school lunches should be made through the School Office with a week’s notice for changing to another option.

Curriculum

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children in the school. We use the Northern Ireland Curriculum document as a foundation for the planning of our school curriculum and we aim to meet the needs of all of our pupils.

Structure of the Primary Curriculum:

- Communication: including Talking & Listening, Reading and Writing.
- Using Mathematics: including the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum.
- The Arts, including Art & Design, Drama and Music.
- The World Around Us: including Geography, History and Science & Technology.
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: including emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, Health Education etc.
- Physical Education: including development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and physical activities.

*'The children are **highly motivated** and engage fully in the learning process...'*

*'...and by end of KS2 they are developing **high levels of independent learning skills.**'*

At the heart of our curriculum in the Prep lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and operating effectively in society. We aim for our children to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum progressively developing:

Cross Curricular Skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using Information and Communications Technology

and

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

- Thinking, Problem–Solving and Decision–Making
- Self Management
- Working with Others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

Differentiation

In our school, we aim to provide effective teaching by matching the level of work to the individual ability of each pupil so that s/he may reach her/his potential in subjects across the curriculum.



To assist us in our school, we have the services of a Learning Support teacher who works on a part-time basis. This teacher works closely with the SENCos and the appropriate class teacher to support the development of work suitable for an individual's needs.

*'...there is evidence to show that the actions taken have resulted in **significant improvement** in the children's learning.'*

Children may receive extra support in either individual or small groups, or indeed in class, as needed, to enable them to make appropriate progress in specific areas. These lessons take place in the 'Sunshine Room' in Loughhead House or in the child's classroom. Team teaching also occurs in our classrooms as appropriate.

Class teachers are responsible for ensuring children's individual needs are met inside the class's curriculum. Staff are diligent in their preparation for this aspect and work with the Learning Support Teacher and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators to ensure maximum attention in this matter.



Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy in our school follows the DENI Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

The policy accepts that there is a wide variety of difficulties which may lead to a child's specific educational needs:

- General/specific learning difficulties
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Medical and or physical difficulties

We, as class teachers, continuously observe and assess our pupils. If a child is identified as having a learning difficulty or a behavioural or emotional problem, the class teacher reports the concern to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo). The parents will be informed at this stage and the Code of Practice implemented. We may also involve the Learning Support teacher at this stage.



Should additional help be required, assessment and advice will be sought from the Educational Psychology Service provided by the Education Authority's South-Eastern Region (SER). **ASCET**, a multi-disciplinary team which includes physios, OTs etc, also works with our school to provide additional support in whole class and through small group activities. Holding a pencil and how to listen well have been two of their recent training sessions with staff.

Parent interviews about the progress of their child receiving this support will take place after Half Term in Term 1 each school year on a 1:1 basis with the appropriate teachers/support attending.

Communication will be on-going throughout the year as appropriate, with a mid-year interview also given. Parents may request an interview at any time in the school year.

Assessment

A written report called a **Pupil Profile** is completed for each child from Prep 1 to Prep 7 and is given to all parents at the end of the school academic year. Reports are based on the continuous monitoring of both class work and class tests. The report includes information about End of Key Stage Assessment outcomes at P4 and P7 level regarding the individual Levels of Progression in Communication and Understanding Mathematics.

All teachers offer formal interview times for parents to discuss pupil progress in November and March annually. Parents of Foundation Stage and P3 children receive information about how their child is settling and progressing. Parents of P4–P7 children receive updated details re progress in class based work and about academic and social/interaction factors.

In addition, Prep 7 parents are offered interviews in September and/or October as needed, to discuss AQE/Transfer preparation. P7 parents are invited to attend Transfer Interviews which take place in the week following the publication of AQE/Transfer grades in February regarding their individual choice of a Y8 school.

'Effective use is made of a comprehensive range of data to help bring about improvement in the children's attainment. The children's progress is tracked and realistically high targets are set for their future achievement.'

*'An analysis of the KS2 assessment data over the past 4 years shows that the preparatory department's performance in mathematics and English, when compared with both the Northern Ireland average and schools within the same FSM (Free School Meals) band, are **consistently above the average.**'*

'An analysis of the school's internal performance data indicates that almost all of the children in KS2 achieve standards in line with their ability in English and mathematics.'

Children in Prep 4 and Prep 7 receive reports about the statutory CCEA **End of Key Stage Levels of Progression**. Each pupil will be awarded a Level in Literacy and Numeracy in each Key Stage, with individual results published to parents. ICT assessment is again targeted for continuation in 2016–17, with updates to be given as appropriate re the progress of this work carried forward from last year by staff.



AQE P7 Transfer Results

AQE Transfer Results 2015–16: Average AQE score 109

111–123	52%
100–110	28%
99 or below	20%

*(Please note that AQE informs us that a score of 100 is 'Average')

AQE Transfer Results 2014–15: Average AQE score 109

111–123	40%
100–110	42%
99 or below	18%

AQE Transfer Results 2013–14: Average AQE score 111

111–125	64%
100–110	18%
99 or below	18%

AQE Transfer Results 2012–13: Average AQE score 110

111–125	54%
100–110	36%
99 or below	10%

End of Key Stage Results

2012–13 was the initial year of reporting to parents regarding P4 & P7 End of Key Stage 1 & 2 results and it was to be used to trial the then 'newly' published CCEA Levels of Progression in Communication and Using Mathematics. Teachers were to familiarise themselves with the new tasks and then report each Key Stage's pupil's end of year progress in their Pupil Profile.

Our P1–P7 teachers have spent much time since this initial date working on the development of tasks for these two curriculum areas and putting together whole school portfolios of examples of work throughout the assorted Levels of Progression. This will be continued.

Pupils are now expected by CCEA to achieve Level 2 in Communication and Using Mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 and Level 4 by the End of Key Stage 2.

We are unable to report our End of Key Stage results for 2015–16 as there is no standardisation across the schools in Northern Ireland due to industrial action. Our school, however, consistently achieves very high standards in both Communication and Using Mathematics. The majority of our pupils move to Year 8 in the Senior School and for the last 15 years 100% of our pupils have moved to a Year 8 grammar school.

Specialist Teaching

MUSIC

In the Upper Prep classes, the music curriculum is taken by a music specialist teacher in order to maximise our pupils' ability. These classes occur twice a week. Extra-curricular Music Clubs are on offer each week throughout the year.



The Music Department of the Senior School provides tuition by peripatetic teachers. This is a private arrangement and payment should be directly to those individual teachers. Tutors must keep these lessons to break and lunch times to allow minimal disruption to the core subjects, a particularly important point. Currently, pupils avail of tuition in saxophone, piano, singing, drums and violin. A full range of instruments is offered. KS2 children are escorted between sites to any lessons held in the Senior School. Tuition may be accessed from Prep 3.

SPEECH & DRAMA

Lessons in Speech & Drama, taught by Mrs Catherine Gardiner, LGSM, are available from Prep 1 to Prep 7.

Classes are held in either Dromkeen House or Loughhead House. Fees and availability of places may be advised by contacting Mrs Gardiner.

The ability to express oneself, with poise and confidence, is becoming ever more important. Tuition in Speech and Drama provides the skills necessary to give young people "the edge". Lessons span the entire spectrum of Speech and Drama – voice production, reading aloud, mime, improvisation, poetry appreciation, choral speaking and drama. Currently, Mrs Gardiner's pupils are achieving excellent results in local festivals



SPORTS

A Physical Education specialist teacher teaches from P1–P7.

P1–P2 have two periods of PE a week;

P3 & P4 have two periods, with swimming included for P4 after Christmas and for P3 after Half Term in February;

P5–P7 have 3 hours' PE with an hour each for swimming, PE and an hour with two teachers for half class teaching in Games.

*'Of particular note is the **importance** given to developing the children's **musical, creative and sporting** abilities, as a means to develop further their personal and social development.'*

A wide variety of sports is on offer in class time, as well as after school. We include: swimming, hockey, football, tag-rugby, dance, netball, gymnastics, athletics, rounders and cricket. We have introduced basketball, sports hall athletics and cross-country running in the last few years.

Our teams continue to have great success on the sports field, competing in 5–a–side Football Teams, Hockey Teams, Netball Tournaments, swimming and cross country races.

We believe in letting children 'have a go' at representing the school and we value everyone's contributions. We also believe in teaching the children the elements of good sportsmanship, by being able to win and lose graciously.



ART/DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

In KS2 we have a part time Art/Design & Technology specialist teacher and the children are inspired by the challenges on offer to them, as illustrated by their regular displays of work throughout the school. We use the curriculum area of the World About Us as a focus for art work and regularly enter pupils' work into local competitions.



In the past we were involved with a Creative Youth Partnership Programme where the Lower Prep classes worked with an artist in the community and the Upper Prep working with ceramicist Diane McCormick. All of this work is on permanent display in both Dromkeen House and Loughhead House.

ICT

Wide use of ICT is apparent throughout the school and we have use of a timetabled computer suite for children from P1–P7. Specialist teaching is given to develop ICT.

'The children demonstrate high levels of ICT skills to research, plan and present their work to a very good standard.'

In **May 2016** the Prep was awarded the '**Digital School of Distinction Award**' in recognition of excellence in integrating technology in learning and teaching.



An exciting addition in the school (September 2014) was the purchase, and development of the use of, 48 iPads. These are used throughout the school and we continue to build on our practices to extend our children's learning in this area. We use iPads alongside regular teaching and learning practices to *enhance* education rather than simply provide 'play' facilities. Staff training continues in this area.

Educational Visits & Visitors

Educational visits are an integral part of the teaching and learning in our school and they fit very well under the Northern Ireland Curriculum's World Around Us programme. To cater for the range of children's learning styles, we try to include a wide range of experiences for our pupils throughout their time in the Preparatory Department. During the year individual classes and groups visit many venues throughout Northern Ireland which may include: Belfast City Hall, W5 workshops, Parliament Buildings at Stormont, Belfast Zoo, the Ulster Museum, Science Magic, the Argory in Armagh, Clondeboye Estate, Castle Ward and local forest parks. Our pupils enjoy visits to local pantomimes and shows organised by our local community and neighbouring schools.



We welcome many visitors to our school to assist in our delivery of the curriculum, either as part of our charity support or as an interested party about subjects through the years. A recent charity focus was Marie Curie where we raised £1000 through holding a 'Blooming Great Tea Party'!

Our teaching of Health Education is part of pupils' Personal Development programme and is enhanced by visits from the Dental Nurse and Community Nurse. We regularly invite practitioners who take science-based experiences for our pupils. Many visitors and some volunteer parents, including radiographers, optometrists, dentists and doctors, visit classes in the Foundation Stage as well as help teach the concepts of the Young Enterprise programme and support various 'real life' topics in assorted classes.

Our annual Book Week provides a focus for us to welcome authors, poets and publishers as an inspiration for our young readers and writers. 'Replay', 'Konflux' and 'Clydebuilt Puppets' are examples of visiting theatre companies who perform for our pupils' enjoyment.

North Down Borough Council representatives help to enrich environmental topics in various classes.



Assemblies

The Lower Prep pupils enjoy participating in seasonal activities in Mount Stewart in October and visit W5 regularly for interesting science and musical experiences, alongside assorted class trips supporting the World Around Us aspect of the curriculum.



A short overnight visit to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum is scheduled annually for Prep 6 pupils. Prep 7 enjoy a longer 5 day **residential** trip which is based at an activity centre in Greenhill YMCA in Newcastle. Assorted activities include: canoeing, low level assault courses, mountain walking and team challenges. It is always the highlight of their P7 year!



Pupils in the Lower Prep and the Upper Prep meet for their own separate assemblies during the week and, on Fridays, we gather together as a whole school in Dromkeen Hall.

This is a very special weekly occasion where classes meet to welcome representatives from charities and/or visitors or where our pupils put on a class assembly on a chosen theme.



The Headmaster likes to join us along with assorted visitors and speakers and everyone enjoys each class's efforts to take the assembly. Recently Matt McGovern, Team Ireland at Rio's Olympics 2016, joined us to talk about his preparation for the event where he sailed a 49er with Ryan Seaton, placing 10th overall. He hugely inspired our children!

Prep 1 Induction

An Open Day meeting is usually held on the **last Friday in September each year** and all prospective Prep 1 parents are invited to attend. It takes place in Dromkeen Hall and it is an ideal opportunity for prospective parents to hear about the school. Everyone can visit all the classrooms and talk to the teachers and non teaching staff in attendance in each room. We also arrange a visit at that time to the Senior School site to view the facilities on offer to the Prep regarding their assorted venues. Prep 7 pupils help us on this occasion and they love to answer any queries visitors might have!

Offers of 26 places are posted on 1 October. Parents who accept a place then pay a non-refundable deposit at a meeting scheduled in October and this reserves their child's place. This deposit is then offset against the first term's fees.



In the summer term, we hold two Induction Meetings: one for Parents called 'Getting Ready for School'; the other is an opportunity for the incoming P1 pupils to meet with their class teacher and future classmates.

On the first of these afternoons, parents are invited to come to the Prep 1 classroom to meet the Prep 1 teacher, other appropriate members of staff and each other. During this meeting, parents are given general information about the organisation of the school and Prep 1 class in particular, especially with regard to getting children ready for starting school. As it is very important to us that parents and teachers work closely together to ensure that children feel happy and secure about coming to school, there is an opportunity at this meeting for parents to have any concerns addressed.

The following day, the children are invited to spend some time in their new classroom with the Prep 1 teacher and Classroom Assistants. While the children are meeting their new teacher and friends, parents are invited to meet together to view uniform samples and have a chat over coffee.

The Prep 1 intake in September is '**staggered**' over **approximately 10 school days** to help establish a routine and address settling-in needs. The class is divided into groups of 4 or 5, with the youngest children starting school first. The children finish at 12 noon for that period and then in the first full week after that, they stay for lunch and a 2pm finish. Speech & Drama and Monkeynastic Club starts at that time for them.

Details of individual starting dates and times will be given at the Prep 1 Induction Meeting during the summer term.

Communication

'The preparatory department is committed to maintaining and extending communication with the parents.'

As a staff, we are aware of the need for clear communication with all of our stakeholders. With this in mind we endeavour to carry out the following:

PUBLICATIONS:

We make regular use of the 'Parentmail' email system to improve the dissemination of information. All parents are contactable by this system and a weekly Parentmail leaflet goes to all parents on a Friday to summarise events which have occurred during the week and post reminders.

Other publications include:

- Yearly Overview Calendar to inform parents of key dates for the Prep
- Calendar of events on a termly basis
- List of extra-curricular activities on a termly basis
- Posting of policies and pupil activities/work on the school's website
- Pupil Reports to parents – June

MEETINGS:

- Parent meetings are held at the beginning of each academic year for each class in September
- Parent meetings for pupils receiving Learning Support – September & May
- Transfer Meetings for Prep 7 parents in September / October (and as needed)
- P1–P7 Parent/Teacher Interviews Meetings in November & March
- Prospective Prep 1 Parent Open Meeting – usually the last Friday in September
- Workshops taken by staff for Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 parents – Terms 1 & 2 as appropriate
- Prep 7 Transfer Results Interviews re school option for Y8 – February
- P6 parent meeting about transition to P7 & preparation for Transfer – March/ April
- New Prep 1 Parent Meeting – May
- New Prep 1 Pupil Meeting – May

You can assist us by:

- Sending all communications to us enclosed in a clearly labelled envelope
- Forwarding absence letters to your child's class teacher so that we can fulfil our obligations regarding a formal attendance record
- Using the children's homework diaries as a means of communication, especially in KS2 classes

The Prep Department's website operates under the Sullivan School website. We endeavour to keep this updated with news and events of importance to assist with parents' planning needs and share children's activities. Please log on to www.sullivanupper.co.uk or www.sullivanprep.weebly.com for additional information about class and school activities.

Our school website has been updated over the last two years with a huge variety of information about the school. It also acts as a vehicle for children's work and is a source for activities for them to enjoy. Please visit us regularly!

Personal Possessions

Pupils should not bring items of value to school. These items include: jewellery, mobile phones, cameras, electronic games, iPads, e-books, or assorted other personal possessions. The school will not be responsible for the loss or damage of these assorted goods.

Any pupil who loses or finds an article should report this fact to a member of staff immediately. Personal items should not be left in cloakrooms or changing rooms. Once again, Sullivan Upper School will not be responsible for any valuables.

All clothing, private property and belongings brought to school **must** be clearly marked with the owner's name and kept in the appropriate place when not in use.

Mobile phones **must not** be switched on in the school building or playground or be used during school time for text messages or taking photographs. Mobile phones may be switched on after school hours. Parents wishing to update their children's arrangements should contact the Prep Secretary.

School Rules

Following training of all staff by SER personnel, we developed a set of whole-school 'Golden Rules' for our pupils. Along with class-produced classroom rules, these are designed to encourage our pupils to value and interact well with each other and be a responsible member of our school community.

School Golden Rules:



Class Rules:

These will be particular to each class and will be generated by the pupils themselves for their ownership. The pupils will 'sign up' to the rules, as appropriate to their age and the rules will be revised regularly.

Types of work:

We have different types of work in each classroom and we establish the appropriate voices to go with that work:

- Silent
- Quiet
- Partner
- Group
- Whole class

Consequences:

- Verbal reminder
- Time out
- Teacher warning 1:1
- Meeting with Head of Prep for repeated inappropriate actions
- Informing parents

Rewards:

- Class teachers may generate rewards for their class as appropriate (such as a DVD/popcorn; or perhaps an additional playtime in the playground)
- Head Teacher's Award



School Events

HARVEST SERVICE:

We walk to a local Hollywood church and all of the children, including parents and other family members and friends, participate by singing, prayers and readings as well as drama activities. We often raise money to support a charity.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS:

We hold Christmas Concerts in December. Preps 1–4 perform a Nativity-based item and Preps 5–7 participate in musical/dramatic activities. The choir performs at KS2 events. The choir also likes to sing at assorted venues, which may include Christmas Fairs or shopping centres.



SCHOOL PRODUCTION:

Each child is included in a whole school performance in the Lower Prep as well as in an Upper Prep production during his/her time in the Prep. Performances may take place in the Senior School's Drama Theatre or School Hall or in a local church venue. Parents and friends are always invited to attend.



PREP 7 LEAVERS' CONCERT:

Prep 7 pupils organise a special end of year programme of events for their parents, the Headmaster and all of the Prep's staff to enjoy. The event is usually followed by a party, organised by parents. An individual Record of Achievement for each pupil leaving Prep 7 is presented by the Headmaster or guest speaker along with their Prize Day awards.

PRIZE DAY:

This special event takes place in the Senior School Hall towards the end of term in June annually and parents are invited to attend. Prep 1–6 pupils receive a book and Prep 7 pupils receive a Gift Token presented by SUPPA (the Parents' Association). Some of the P1–P4 children may also receive a special award or a cup for assorted efforts in the Lower Prep. In the Upper Prep some pupils receive a special award for subject excellence, expertise or assorted qualities eg: cups for Citizenship etc. Some of these awards are nominated by the pupils themselves. Prep 7 collect the Inter House Awards on Prize Day but receive their separate awards at their Leavers' Concert scheduled for the following day. Prep 7 get awards for academic, sports, drama, art, computer, science and music achievements. These are always announced on Prize Day and included in the programme for the event. Musical and Speech & Drama items accompany the Prize Day proceedings.

SWIMMING GALAS:

Each child from Prep 3 to Prep 7 has the opportunity to learn how to swim on a weekly basis. We hold an annual swimming gala for each class and points for their individual Houses can be gained. Due to the lack of seating space, parents are unable to attend this event, but it is a greatly anticipated and very noisy occasion!

SPORTS WEEK:

This is an opportunity for our pupils to enjoy a selection of activities and experiences, offered by parents, staff and sporting volunteers, in which they may normally not be able to participate. Activities may include golf, yoga, cricket, hockey drills, rugby skills, hurling, aerobics, discus, javelin and badminton. We ask parents and coaches from many different sources to assist us.



SPORTS DAYS:

Prep 1–3 pupils enjoy assorted games with parents in attendance at the Senior School site. All receive rewards for participation in the activities. Prep 4–7 participate in a programme of events with heats and finals for parents to attend. Certificates are presented at a separate ceremony and points earned are forwarded for the Inter House Cups awarded on Prize Day.

Sullivan Upper Prep Parents' Association

There is a very active Parents' Association in Sullivan Prep which raises considerable amounts of money each year to purchase equipment which benefits the school and its pupils.

In past years, SUPPA has provided the funding for new reading schemes throughout the school; computer equipment, which included 7 interactive whiteboards for each class P1–P7 plus one each in school Hall and specialist teachers' room; play based learning resources; and digital cameras for each class. Their focus for the last few years has been fundraising to equip the school with the infrastructure for 48 iPads. Renovations in the school's buildings have also been supported by SUPPA funds. We are very appreciative as a staff for all of the Committee's efforts!



Their programme for the year usually includes enjoyable social events for both parents and children such as Spooky Fun Night and the annual barbecue, as well as a Christmas party, sometimes a dads' Golf Day, and usually a May/June Ball for parents and friends. All those who attend are made to feel very welcome and there is the added satisfaction of knowing that the children will benefit hugely from money raised at these events.

Members of the SUPPA committee and parent volunteers assist at our Sports Days and concerts by providing refreshments. The SUPPA committee is made up of 10 parents and 2 members of staff. Members are elected at the AGM each year and serve on the committee for two years. Volunteers are always welcome!



"The Parent/Teacher Association has raised significant funds which have been used to help broaden the children's learning experiences."

Inspection

In **May 2012** the **EDUCATION & TRAINING INSPECTORATE** carried out a **FOCUSED INSPECTION** of the Preparatory Department and here are some more of their comments:

The strengths of the preparatory department include:–

The outstanding quality of the pastoral provision for the children characterised by the caring, family ethos and their exemplary behaviour;

The very good standards attained by the children in literacy and numeracy;

The very good and outstanding standard of the teaching observed;

The high quality of the special educational needs provision;

The breadth and balance of the curriculum;

The whole–school commitment to effecting improvement in learning and teaching

'In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this preparatory department is very good. The preparatory department is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self–improvement.'

Learning:

*'Children are **highly motivated** and **engage fully** in the learning process.'*

English and Literacy:

*'The children are **confident and mature** in their responses to questions and in their discussion with each other'*

*'The children enjoy reading...they are **fluent, expressive readers**...'*

*'The standards attained by the children in writing across all the key stages are **very good**.'*

*'The teachers make **very effective use of ICT** to support the development of English and literacy skills. The children demonstrate high levels of ICT to research and plan their work to a very good standard.'*

Mathematics and Numeracy:

*'... the children responded very well to the teachers questioning and were able to discuss the methods they used to solve problems and **demonstrated clear understanding and enjoyment** of mathematics.'*

*'In KS1 and KS2 teachers use a **very good range of practical resources**, to develop and consolidate the children's learning.'*

*'The planning provides a programme which is broad and balanced, sets the work in **meaningful, real-life situations** and, in best practice, includes appropriate differentiation of tasks.'*

The Quality of Provision for Learning

*'During the inspection, almost all of the lessons observed were **very good or outstanding**. In the best practice, the teachers share the learning intentions with the children, make very good cross-curricular links, set their teaching in **real-life contexts**, and consolidate and review children's learning throughout the lesson and in the plenary session.'*

*'The **teachers know the children very well** and use a variety of techniques and strategies to meet individual needs and to keep the children focused and on task.'*

*'The teachers' use of questioning is consistently of a **very high standard** and is **differentiated** to make sure children are secure in their knowledge, before progressing with the lesson.'*

We will finish by including a section from a letter from the Department of Education's Director for Curriculum, Qualifications and Standards, Adrian Arbutnot:

'On behalf of the Department of Education I would like to congratulate the Governors, the Principal and all the staff for the hard work and commitment which is necessary to obtain this high standard.'... 'Your school's capacity for sustained self-improvement is a successful example of the policy vision set out in "Every School a Good School".'

'I have noted in particular the ETI's positive comments regarding the very good standards attained by the children in literacy and numeracy and the whole-school commitment to effecting improvement in teaching and learning.'

I took his hand and followed

My dishes went unwashed today
I didn't make my bed.
I took his hand and followed
Where his eager footsteps led.

Oh yes, we went adventuring,
My little child and I.
Exploring all the great outdoors
Beneath the sun and sky.

We watched a robin feed her young,
We climbed a sunlit hill.
Saw cloud-sheep scamper through the sky,
We plucked a daffodil.

That my house was so neglected,
That I didn't brush the stairs,
In twenty years no one on earth
Will know or even care.

But that I helped my little child
To noble adulthood grow.
In twenty years the whole wide world
May look and see and know.



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