



St. Patrick's College Ballymena

'Where all pupils can achieve'



'For a better tomorrow'

Prospectus 2026

St. Patrick's College

BALLYMENA





Our Mission Statement

To nurture and value each person's worth
through living and practising our faith
and our commitment to one another.

Ethos

The Curriculum of St. Patrick's College is built upon the foundation of the Catholic ethos, which values the worth of each individual pupil. Teachers will therefore seek to develop their pupils' self-confidence, self-discipline and respect for others.

School Aims

Our College aims to actively promote, through co-operation between home, school and community, the spiritual and moral values of the Catholic faith and to help pupils to learn to respect and value themselves and others.

We seek to provide a caring, supportive and educational environment in which each pupil may develop his/her potential in the personal, social, intellectual, physical, cultural and environmental aspects of life.

We create a framework for pupils to experience success in various aspects of life. Pupils develop qualities such as self-discipline and independence, thereby preparing them for the experiences, challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

Welcome from the Principal

Dear Pupils and Parents / Guardians,

I am delighted to welcome you to our prospectus, and I hope that it will give you an insight into the opportunities we can offer you in St Patrick's College.

Here in St Patrick's College, we are more than just a school. We are a community of teachers and support staff, who care about the young people in our school, and who work to provide them with the best possible educational experiences. Pupils are supported to achieve their maximum potential and – most importantly – they succeed.

Any young person or parent considering St Patrick's should feel secure in the knowledge that students leaving us either at the end of Year 12 or Year 14 are equipped to compete at the highest levels in Further or Higher Education and in the job market.

I would urge you to visit us on our Open Evening on **Wednesday 14th January 2026**, when you will be able to see a school community looking forward to the future with confidence and optimism.

Like all schools we face challenges. However, we see these not as obstacles, but as opportunities which we continue to embrace with the belief that the welfare, well-being and happiness of our pupils is our main priority.



We ensure that all the young people who come to us are offered the best provision and a truly excellent standard of pastoral care in an environment where each is valued and provided with a sense of worth, based on our strong Catholic ethos.

We look forward to seeing you on **Wednesday 14th January**.

Paul Fitzpatrick
Principal

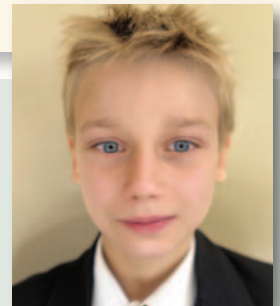


Year 8 Comments



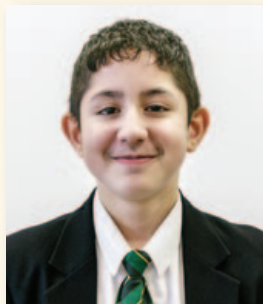
"My first term in St Patrick's was really good because I made new friends, and I have kind teachers. I have a mentor called Mara who I meet with once a week and if I have any problems, I can talk to her about them. You will really enjoy big school come September as you have a lot of different teachers."

Elyza



"I went to primary school in Martinstown and was worried about the bus journey to school. I didn't need to worry. I like all my teachers, but PE is my favourite subject. I am in the school football and cross-country team."

Michael



"My experience so far in St Patrick's has been great. My favourite subject at present is Home Economics. I have made an apple pie, fruit salad and a grilled cheese toasty. In technology we cut wood and paint, I am making Christmas trees which light up. Hope to see you next year in St Patrick's."

Florin



"I have really enjoyed my first term in St Patrick's. I love doing art and learning how to do shading and painting. I go to Netball, Gaelic and Camogie after school which is really good fun."

Aoibh



"So far St Patrick's has been amazing. My favourite subjects are music and drama. I love singing and dancing. I am in the school show Beauty and the Beast. I love St Patrick's, and I know you will love it too."

Saoirse



"I love St Patrick's as you have so many different subjects. You get to play basketball, football after school. I want to make the school football team."

Joel

Head Boy and Head Girl Welcome

I am so grateful for St Patrick's for giving me the opportunity to grow and learn. This school means more to me than just a place of learning as it is where I have grown in confidence, formed lifelong friendships and learned values that will guide me through my life.

I would love to express my appreciation to all my teachers who have guided and supported me all these seven years. Their help and encouragement has shaped my academic success and their dedication inspired me to work so hard.

I hope to go to university after sitting my exams this summer. I am so proud to be a student here in St Patrick's College and will always cherish my memories and the amazing experiences I have had in school.

Aleena Shiji



I am extremely grateful to St Patrick's College for the opportunities it has given me throughout my time here. The school has provided an environment where I have been able to grow in confidence, not only academically but personally as well. One of the most important experiences for me has been developing my love for acting, which was encouraged through supportive teachers who recognised my passion and helped me push myself creatively. The drama department gave me the confidence to express myself, take risks, and truly enjoy performing. The genuine care shown by teachers across the school has made a huge difference to my journey, always offering guidance, encouragement, and belief in my ability. My time at St Patrick's College has shaped who I am today, and I will always value the memories, skills, and friendships I have gained here.

Ruairi Hendron



Pastoral Care

Our Pastoral Care programme is based on the belief that a child will be happier and perform better if someone takes an interest in them personally. Given that belief, the school has set up a Pastoral Care Programme whereby each first year pupil has the same Form Teacher, over the course of Years 8 to 12.

The role of the Form Teacher is to establish a positive relationship with each pupil to facilitate the development of the whole person through adolescence and in preparation for adult life.

The Pastoral Care system in St. Patrick's is based on the principle that the key to good learning and teaching lies in good relationships.

*'The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding...
The school has a nurturing and supportive ethos'.*

Excerpt from our last full ETI inspection

Induction

Our Induction Programme for Year 8 pupils includes seminars addressing specific issues important to the development of the child and not dealt with in the normal curriculum.

In St Patrick's we believe that the key to our pupils' success lies in the establishment of good relationships with all of our young people from when they first arrive in the school.

Student Mentoring

We have a well-established Student Mentoring programme for our Year 8 pupils which helps the young people coming to us for the first time to settle with confidence. Each Sixth Form Mentor is assigned one or two pupils to whom they make themselves available during break and lunch in order to befriend and support.



Promoting Positive Behaviour

In St Patrick's College we believe that it is an important aspect of a child's development that they behave in an ordered and disciplined fashion. We have a clear, concise set of expectations on display in every classroom and we can In school we do all we can to encourage each pupil to take responsibility for his/her own actions.

Our Pastoral Care structure allows each child to build up a relationship with the Form Teacher in a small, secure tutorial group where each individual is valued and supported. We have developed close links with parents and the wider community in which there is mutual support, built up through organised Parent/Teacher Meetings and - equally importantly - through many informal meetings, interviews, visits, and telephone calls. We have a well-established whole school approach to maintaining high standards of behaviour that reflect the values of the school.

Our Reward Scheme acknowledges positive behaviour and is based on good attendance, pupil presentation and pupil contribution to school life. This scheme aims to create a positive culture that promotes excellent behaviour, ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment.

KS3 and KS4 pupils are rewarded throughout the year with various different activities for those pupils who gain the designated number of merits. We encourage pupils to contribute to their own Pupil Profile which records positive achievement and progress in all aspects of school life.





Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Pupils in St Patrick's College are encouraged to take responsibility for their health and well-being by making healthy lifestyle choices. We provide pupils with opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe and healthy. We also encourage pupils to participate in our lunch time activities.

Through our Preventative Curriculum, our taught Pastoral Programme, Assemblies, Student Council and whole-school initiatives we raise our pupils' awareness of important matters such as: Anti-Bullying, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Substance Misuse and e-Safety.

We have a Student Health Officer who is responsive to the needs of pupils with specific medical conditions and those who may need to visit the Medical Room during the school day. A School Counsellor is also available.

Healthy Eating

St. Patrick's College aims to present consistent healthy eating and drinking messages through the taught curriculum and the provision and promotion of healthy food and drink during the school day and on school trips. We realise that a healthy diet is one of the best ways of maintaining young people's health, both now and in the future.

At lunchtime a selection of nutritionally balanced hot and cold meals are available, a pasta and noodle bar or individually prepared sandwiches. Pupils can enjoy their lunch in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere in the Canteen.



Wellbeing HUB

At St Patrick's College we believe that wellbeing and mental health are central to the aims and objectives of our college's curriculum.

Wellbeing describes a state of feeling healthy and happy and that life is going well.

Good mental health is a state of wellbeing in which we can:

- realise our own potential.
- cope with the normal stresses of life.
- work productively.
- contribute to our community.

We have created a Wellbeing HUB that is a safe space and provides additional support for those young people who have been identified as in need.

Our Wellbeing HUB offers a supported environment for the development of social skills and prepare young people physically and emotionally for learning. The focus is on social and emotional well-being alongside learning and will enable a pupil to develop self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and personal and emotional well-being.

The range of therapeutic interventions include one-to-one sessions, group sessions, drop-in centre in the morning, break facilities and a lunch-time games club.





Inclusion and Diversity

St. Patrick's College is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child. We welcome individuals from diverse backgrounds and with different experiences.

All students at St. Patrick's College are given encouragement and support to overcome barriers to learning to help them to make progress, grow in confidence and realise their aspirations regardless of what language they speak.

We aim to provide an education which is sensitive to individual needs and accessible to all children regardless of language barrier, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, belief, gender identity or disability.

For Newcomer students who arrive at St. Patrick's College with English as an Additional Language support is provided on either a one-to-one or group basis as needed by our Language Support Teachers and Language Assistants. Home languages are celebrated, and students have the opportunity where possible, to sit a GCSE in their community language, with tutoring in-school for the exams.

Learning Support

The Learning Support Department at St Patrick's College is a dedicated, hardworking, and caring team that strives to do the best for our pupils to enable them to become independent and active contributors in our society.

Learning Support provision in our school follows a holistic approach; everyone works together to maximise the development of our students. We firmly believe in working as a team and liaise with home regularly so we can ensure that everyone at home and at school are working together to best cater for the needs of our pupils. Our Classroom Assistants are invaluable ensuring students with additional learning needs have the assistance they require to reach their full potential.

Confidence and self-esteem building are paramount for success. We believe when the students see that we as a school community have faith in their ability and achievable opportunities are created, their confidence will grow.

We also have 'The Base' which is a quiet and calm area designated for respite during unstructured times such as break and lunch.



Specialist Provision in Mainstream School

At St Patrick's College, we believe in nurturing an environment where every student feels valued and understood. Our new Specialist Provision stands as a testament to our commitment to inclusivity and excellence.

Our Specialist Provision consists of two types of dedicated classes, each tailored to meet distinct needs.

Our Specific Learning class is designed to support students who require additional guidance and resources for their academic progress. With smaller class sizes, personalised learning plans, and specialised teaching methods, we aim to create a supportive learning atmosphere that caters to individual needs.

Our Social Communication Class is specially designed for students with Autism, aimed at enhancing their social skills and communication abilities. Our experienced staff, trained in the latest educational practices, work closely with students to develop their interpersonal skills, boost confidence, and encourage positive interactions.

Our Specialist Provision is integrated within our mainstream school, ensuring that students can benefit from a broad educational experience and participate in all aspects of school life. As an inclusive school pupils have the opportunity to participate in all practical subjects and whole school activities. We maintain strong communication with parents and caregivers, offering regular updates on student progress and involving them in the support process. Together, we build a nurturing and collaborative environment for our students.





The Student Voice

In St Patrick's College we have a very effective School Council. Every pupil has a voice and Class Representatives meet regularly throughout the school year to help make the school a better place, make appropriate positive changes and give pupils a voice so they can be heard.



Education for the 21st Century

In St Patrick's College we believe that a 21st century education is one that responds to the economical, technological, and societal shifts that are happening at an ever-increasing pace. The rapid pace of change means a broad knowledge and a transferable skills base is vital. Ours is an education that sets children up to succeed in a world where more than half of the jobs they may have over their careers don't even exist yet.

The use of ICT in St Patrick's College not only improves the classroom teaching and learning process, but also provides the facility for e-learning. ICT has enhanced the school blended and distance learning in the 21st century. All pupils now have access to their own Tablet or Chromebook in school and at home. This has had a transformative impact on teaching, learning, and pupil research.



Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning is an integral part of the learning process and informs our tracking of pupil progress, enabling decisions to be made about how best to support our pupils and develop their skills to maximise their potential.

Our system of assessment, tracking, reporting and target setting helps to empower pupils to take responsibility for the progress of their learning. There are four assessments throughout the year and departments ensure the quality of assessment is high and the data is used effectively to monitor the progress of students in order to set them challenging and achievable targets

Homework Policy

It is school policy to set homework as this extends the learning experience. Homework can be used to support classwork, increase overall understanding, give evidence of progress to parents and teachers, develop skills necessary for independent study and sometimes undertake tasks which are time consuming in school. Teachers set homeworks using the Satchel One app, which sends information on the homework directly as a notification to pupils and their parents/guardians.





Year 8 School Day – Timetable

Typical School Day for a Year 8 Pupil

Time	Activity	Lesson
8.20		Building open to students
9.00 - 9.15	Registration or Assembly	Form Class
9.15 - 9.55	Period 1	English
9.55 - 10.35	Period 2	Geography
10.35 - 10.50		Break
10.50 - 11.30	Period 3	ICT
11.30 - 12.10	Period 4	History
12.10 - 12.45	Period 5 - Junior Lunch	Lunchtime activities
12.45 - 1.20	Period 6	Science
1.20 - 2.00	Period 7	Maths
2.00 - 2.40	Period 8	RE
2.40 - 3.15	Period 9	LLW
3.15 - 3.30		Buses depart
3.30 - 4.30		Extra-curricular activities

Curriculum

At St Patrick's we strive to nurture and value each person's worth through living and practicing our faith and our commitment to one another.

We provide a caring, supportive and educational environment where each pupil is encouraged to develop their full potential in personal, social, intellectual, physical, cultural and environmental aspects of life and aspire toward Life Long Learning.

At all Key Stages we have high expectations and standards for all our pupils. Our curriculum is broad and balanced and offers all abilities the opportunity to learn and develop according to their needs.

Key Stage 3

Years 8 – 10

Key Stage 4

Years 11 & 12

Key Stage 5

Years 13 & 14

Uniform

A high standard of personal appearance is expected of all students.

General

- Black Blazer (with integrated School Badge)
- Green Pullover Years 8 - 12
- Charcoal Grey Pullover Years 13 & 14
- School Tie (Clip-on)
- School Scarf (optional)
- Black School Shoes
- School Bag
- No Jewellery allowed except a Watch
- No visible body art.

Girls

- White Blouse
- Black Knee Length Skirt (Box Pleated)
- Black School Fleece (Optional)
- Black Tights
- NO MAKE-UP
- Hairstyle should be neat with no extreme colours.



Boys

- White Shirt
- Black School Trousers
- Black School Fleece (Optional)
- Black or Dark Grey Socks
- Hairstyle should be neat, collar length, with no extreme colours or less than number 2 cut. Shaven patterns or designs in hair are forbidden.
- Clean shaven at all times.



P.E. Strip

- Top (Green, Black and White)
- Shorts (Black and Green)
- Leggings with School badge
- Sports Socks (Green with Black stripes)
- Tracksuit (Optional)
- Swimwear - all Year 8 pupils.



SCAN ME

PE strip is available from O'Neills online store.



A scarf can be purchased at the School Office.

SCAN ME

A cash grant towards the cost of a full School Uniform may be available from Education Authority.



GCSE and A Level

The following subjects are offered to GCSE Level

Art & Design	History	Performing Arts
Business & Communication Systems	Home Economics	Personal Success and Wellbeing
Child Development	ICT	Physical Education
Construction	Learning for Life & Work	Princes Trust
English	Mathematics	Religious Education
English Literature	Motor Vehicle & Road User Studies	Science
French / Irish / Polish	Moving Image Arts	Travel and Tourism
Health & Social Care	Music	



Post-16 courses offered in St Patrick's College

OCR Cambridge Technical Art & Design
 GCE English Literature
 GCE Applied Health & Social Care
 OCR Cambridge Technical ICT
 GCE Life and Health Sciences
 GCE Performing Arts
 GCE Polish
 GCE Religious Studies
 BTEC * National Extended Certificate in Sport
 BTEC * National Extended Certificate in Construction

Ballymena Learning Together Options

GCE Biology
 GCE Business
 GCE Business Studies
 GCE Environmental Technology
 BTEC * National Extended Certificate in Engineering
 BTEC * National Extended Certificate in Hospitality
 BTEC * National Extended Certificate Travel and Tourism
 CTEC Business

Occupational Studies

Students in Years 11 and 12 have the opportunity to avail of Occupational Studies at the Northern Regional College one day per week.

These courses are designed to provide a more 'hands-on' approach to learning.

There are a number of areas of study from which pupils can select:

- Catering
- Motor Vehicle
- Plumbing & Electrical
- Joinery
- Beauty (Facial Care & Nail manicure)
- Hairdressing
- Manufacturing Sheetmetal
- Travel & Tourism

Learners' achievements are based on evidence from practical work completed throughout their course.

These qualifications are approved by the Department of Education for teaching at Key Stage 4.

A Level 2 Certificate in Occupational Studies is graded at the same levels as a GCSE A* - C on the National Qualification Framework and a Level 1 Certificate at the same levels as a GCSE D - G on the National Qualification Framework.

Achievement below Level 1 is also recognised by CCEA as a First Skills Certificate which equates to Entry Level 1, 2 and 3.

These courses enable progression to other courses, particularly vocationally related courses, and to training and employment.



Transition Programme

Our Transition Programme is designed for students progressing from GCSE level who want to enhance their skills and improve their qualifications in order to make the most appropriate choices for their future career.

These new and innovative Post-16 courses develop relevant skills necessary for the very competitive world of work and also lay a solid foundation for further study at A Level.

This special curriculum affords the students a further year to mature as well as offering the opportunity to participate in a supervised and structured work experience programme which is now considered a valuable asset and much appreciated by employers.

The Transition Programme offers students a range of qualifications including:

Transition programme of study 2025-26

Level 2 Diploma Vocational Skills

Students complete units in ICT, Art, Health and Social Care, Hospitality, and Personal Development

BTEC Level 2 sport

Students study units including Fitness for Sport and Exercise, Practical Sports Performance, Training for Personal Fitness and Leading Sports Activities

GCSE English

Students have the opportunity to repeat or improve their GCSE English grade

GCSE Maths

Students have the opportunity to repeat or improve their GCSE Maths grade

Work experience

Students spend one day each week on a work placement of their choice.



Careers Education

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is a range of activities designed to help students and young people make informed decisions about their future educational and career paths. CEIAG is an important part of the curriculum, particularly at transition stages where students are starting to make key decisions about their post-16 pathways.

The purpose of CEIAG is to help young people make informed decisions about their post-16 pathways. By providing them with personalised advice and guidance, we ensure that students are aware of and can explore a wide range of career opportunities. This approach helps them to understand and navigate their career options and educational opportunities more effectively.

Our support is crucial not only in preparing them for the workforce but also in enhancing their employability and facilitating a smooth transition from education into work. Through CEIAG, we aim to broaden their perspectives and encourage them to consider diverse paths that align with their interests and abilities.

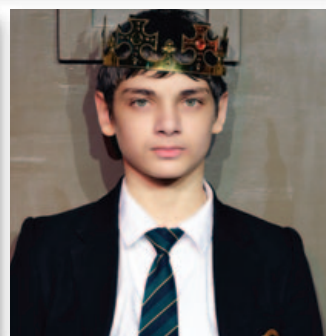




Sport and Extra Curricular Activities

The College seeks to provide opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of sporting activities, both individual and team, through both the P.E. programme and after-school activities. The College has excellent indoor sporting facilities including a Sports Hall, a Gymnasium and a Fitness Suite, as well as an outdoor all-weather playing area. Regular use is also made of local facilities including the Seven Towers Leisure Centre and the Ballymena Showgrounds. Coaching and competitions are held in a wide range of sports including Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Camogie, Cross-Country, Gaelic Football, Golf, Hurling, Netball, Soccer, Table Tennis and Volleyball. A range of lunchtime activities are organised and supervised by staff.





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