

PROSPECTUS

2023



ST. COLM'S HIGH SCHOOL

www.stcolmshigh.org



Principal's Welcome



St Colm's is a vibrant learning community where our young people are provided with a whole range of opportunities to help them develop their skills and academic profile, to better prepare them for the world of work and as contributors to society.

Our goal is to enable each pupil to achieve their full potential in a caring, safe and supportive environment.

St Colm's is a family and community school where pupils are supported through life experiences and learning to ensure that each individual is valued and respected.

Our young people have access to high quality education and benefit from the committed and highly professional team of teaching and non-teaching staff, who share a genuine interest in their development. Through our strong partnership with staff, pupils and parents we are able to help students thrive and to live by our motto 'we do our best to be the best that we can be.'

We want our pupils to be happy and to flourish in every aspect of their educational journey. We are passionate about our pupils and we are committed to ensuring they have a rich and successful experience while at St Colm's. I hope that this prospectus gives you a flavour of life at our school and we look forward to welcoming you in the near future.

Mr Adrian Walsh Principal

Mission Statement

'St. Colm's seeks to develop a Catholic School community which is well-ordered and within which both staff and pupils can work co-operatively and in mutual respect in the pursuit of all aspects of spiritual, educational and personal excellence.'



Pastoral Care

As a Catholic School, we are distinctive for our emphasis placed on caring for all members of our community; pupils, parents, teaching/non-teaching staff, and Governors. We seek to build a network of supportive relationships at all levels based on mutual trust and respect.

Our Aims



St Colm's was extremely proud to be recently awarded School of Sanctuary status in 2019, by ensuring that the school is a place of safety where everyone is welcomed and included, and where all cultures are valued equally. Ursula Mackel, coordinator stated; *"We believe that St Colm's has always provided sanctuary for those students in our care...encouraging us to celebrate and value diversity."*



- To provide a happy, sensitive, positive and secure environment and so encourage effective learning.
 - To foster respect for the nature and dignity of each person and an appreciation of self-worth.
 - To promote co-operative efforts to establish full support for pupils by maximising participation by parents, parish, partner primaries and external support agencies.
 - To recognise and reward achievements of all pupils in both the academic and non-academic fields.
 - To enhance life, social and study skills thus preparing our pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities within school and beyond.
 - To utilise a variety of teaching strategies which
- are responsive to the different needs, abilities and aspirations of all pupils.
- To enhance personal and social development through planned curricular and extra curricular activities which give pupils experiences outside their local environment.

Pastoral Teams

Students are supported and guided from their first day in St. Colm's with a strong and dedicated pastoral team. The Head of Year Group and their team of form tutors will be the first point of contact for our young people. They will remain with them through all of their school experiences, developing a very special bond which will stay with them beyond their school years.



School Uniform Years 8 - 12

Girls

- Pale Blue Shirt & School Tie
- Navy Jumper (with School Badge)
- Navy Box Pleat Skirt
- Navy Tights
- Plain Black Leather Shoes
- Navy Blazer with School Badge

Boys

- Pale Blue Shirt & School Tie
- Navy Jumper (with School Badge)
- Black Trousers
- Plain Dark Socks
- Plain Black Leather Shoes
- Navy Blazer with School Badge

PE Uniform

Order online from Playr-fit.com
Items available in school colours:

- Sweatshirt
- Tee-shirt
- Half zip
- Skinny track bottoms
- Leggings
- Shorts and socks



School Uniform Sixth Form

Girls

- Navy & White Striped Blouse
- Navy Sixth Form Jumper
- Navy Box Pleat Skirt
- Navy Tights
- Plain Black Leather Shoes
- Navy Blazer with School Badge

Boys

- White Shirt & 6th Form Tie
- Navy Sixth Form Jumper
- Black Trousers
- Plain Dark Socks
- Plain Black Leather Shoes
- Navy Blazer with School Badge





St. Colm's Welcome our New Year 8

We maintain excellent links with our partner primary schools to ensure a smooth transition for our new year 8 pupils. We start building relationships and an essential understanding of the needs of our young people before they leave their primary classroom. This is managed through meetings with key staff in each primary school, meetings with parents, induction mornings for our new pupils and our summer school which is a huge hit with our young people. All of this along with effective online testing in Literacy and Numeracy allows us to immediately identify the individual needs of each child and put education plans in place.



'You would love to come to St. Colm's. The teachers are very kind and helpful, and everyone in the school helps out a lot. I am proud to be a St Colm's pupil.'

Caycee, Year 8.



Year 8

Summer School

Every student joining St Colm's in year 8 has the opportunity to join the rest of their year group for a week of fun filled outings and team building activities; forging new friendships and building confidence. There are many opportunities to build literacy and numeracy levels through interactive and practical sessions as well as enjoying sport, creative arts and drama.

'Thanks for making this transition from primary school to secondary school more relaxed and enjoyable for my son' Parent

'The summer school has benefitted my daughter no end! This has enabled her to gain some familiarity with her new environment, staff and peers – she is less anxious and cannot wait to join in September' Parent

'Attending the summer school has made me more confident because I know most of the people I'm going in to school with in September' Pupil

'I made a lot of friends during the summer school' Pupil

'My favourite activity in school was doing art and cooking because we made paninis, pizza and rice crispy buns and cake' Pupil

'All of the trips were my favourite; swimming, cinema, Black Mountain Walk and the zoo' Pupil

'You should definitely consider going to St Colm's. Don't worry if you don't know anyone, we have a summer scheme where you will meet lots of new friends.'

Jazmin, Year 8.



Literacy

The English department ensures that every young person has the opportunity to realise their potential and that every pupil is developed into an effective and confident communicator, both orally and in written form. We also place a great deal of importance in nurturing a love of reading in each pupil and in ensuring that reading skills are enhanced and developed.

St. Colm's English Department is lucky to house a fantastic Reading Room. This is a beautiful space with an informal, relaxed and chilled out vibe where our young people can curl up with a book and lose themselves in the world that their favourite author has created!



Numeracy

The Maths department use active learning strategies to ensure that all students consolidate their skills and have the opportunity to progress with confidence. Problem solving is developed in class and celebrated with enjoyable and challenging activities that all students can access. Rising stars also have the opportunity to participate in the UK wide Maths Trust Challenge. Our students of all levels and abilities excel in our accelerated maths programme which ensures that they experience success, grow in confidence and become self-motivated learners.



'St Colm's is a happy school. The teachers are always smiling.'

Tamia, Year 8.

Support

Our very experienced support teams ensure that individual needs are identified and supported with the right interventions.

Withdrawal support for literacy and numeracy offers targeted intervention for small groups to ensure that their confidence grows along with the skills that they need to better access their learning in class.

In-class support ensures that students receive the adjustments and accommodations necessary to allow pupils to make progress and have a positive and enjoyable learning experience alongside their peers.

Our Social and Communication Centre provides the right mix of nurture and engagement for our students that have difficulty with the transition into post primary school. Students avail of intensive support with their literacy and numeracy, with a broad mix of learning activities. They also enjoy a range of practical subjects and manage a very successful integration into our mainstream.

'Come to St Colm's, it is really fun! I enjoyed meeting teachers and getting books on the first day. The teachers are really nice.'

Curtis, Year 8.



Sensory Room

St. Colm's are delighted to have opened a specially designed Sensory Room to offer a calm, safe and welcoming space for those young people with autism and for those who have additional and sensory needs. This is a fully equipped space that will support students with emotional regulation.

"Here at St. Colm's we are always looking for ways to support the needs of all of our young people, and this sensory room will go some way towards doing that. Our young people deserve the best and at St. Colm's we always strive to give them just that."
Ursula Mackel, senior teacher.



'I like the way the teachers greet you at the door in St Colm's.'

Anna, Year 8.





Primary Links

We maintain close links with all of our partner primary schools to ensure the highest standards of continuity and progression in learning across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

- Sharing good practice across the phases
- Improving levels of literacy, numeracy and ICT
- Building on previous skills and achievements
- Promoting self-confidence and self esteem
- Building positive and productive relationships
- Breaking through barriers



Well established links within the community

Building relationships within the community is a privilege for our young people and is highly regarded by all involved. This year, our choir brought Christmas cheer to the residents of Milesian Manor in Magherafelt with their performance of carols and traditional music.

Well established links with Saints Youth Club and Youth Initiative ensures that the positive environments that we foster are enjoyed in all aspects of the lives of our young people.

Workforce and Hair Academy offer our students a real world experience alongside their studies to build a broader profile and essential experience for their future career pathways.

Our links with external agencies enable us to signpost support for families in the community.

- Colin Neighbourhood Partnership
- Footprints Women's Centre
- Family Works Counselling
- Samaritans

'My new school is great. My favourite subject is science and I have made lots of new friends.'

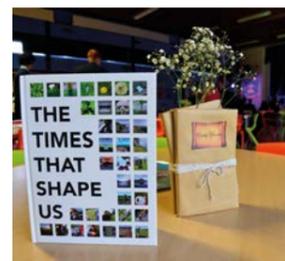
Conor, Year 8.



Creative Schools

The creative schools initiative provides opportunities for our young people to build their artistic and creative skills; to communicate, collaborate, stimulate their imaginations, be inventive, and to harness their curiosity.

St. Colm's have been involved in the programme since 2017, providing opportunities to reinforce the impact of creativity on our young people's learning, development and well-being.



St. Colm's Pupils Launch Anthology Reflecting on Life in Lockdown

St. Colm's High School in Belfast hosted a special event on Wednesday 10th November to celebrate the launch of a new poetry and photographic anthology, created by pupils, entitled 'The Times That Shape Us'.

The poems composed by the young people reflect their time in lockdown and how this period affected their mental health. Pupils also produced a collection of photographs, which depict snapshots of what mattered to them during this pivotal point in their history.

Thank God for the Outdoors

Outdoors is a wonderful place, where Covid no longer has a face.
 Underneath the waterfalls.
 Trees as tall as skyscrapers
 Sunflowers in the meadow waving a cheery hello
 Indoors all is quiet as we wait, wait, wait ...
 Dangerous thoughts exit my mind as soon as I am in the sunshine
 Everyone hold their breath as we hope for this awful time to pass

A poem by Reece Blaney

"It has been wonderful to watch the self-confidence and self-esteem of our young people grow as they enjoy new experiences through engagement with the arts and the opportunity to meet a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures. It has been inspirational to witness how they channelled their experiences of the pandemic and lockdown into poetry, photography and music. There is no doubt about the immense benefits of this programme for our young people"

Adrian Walsh, principal.

"It has been a privilege to work with this group of young people on The Creative School Partnership Programme. The disruption of the educational journey of our students and their subsequent return to some sort of "normality" gave us the impetus to pursue our ambition of the publication of an anthology of their work in poetry and photography. The fact that they have lived through what will be known as a significant point in history enthused and encouraged them to share their experiences and we are delighted with the finished project."

Ursula Mackel, Senior Teacher and Creative Schools' Coordinator



Rewarding Learning

Recognising and rewarding the efforts and achievements of our pupils is a regular event in St. Colm's.



Celebration of Achievement

Our Celebration of Achievement is one of the biggest events in the school year. We are immensely proud of our students and we firmly believe in rewarding and celebrating their successes in every aspect of school life. Every September, pupils are joined by parents, teachers, governors and invited guests from education and industry, to honour our young people for their tremendous efforts.



Curriculum

St. Colm's offers the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum which aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible choices throughout their lives. We believe in creating a supportive learning environment by ensuring that the contribution of all pupils is valued and that pupils feel cared for and respected.

Key Stage Three

- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Physical Education
- Home Economics
- Personal Development
- English
- Mathematics
- Geography
- History
- Religious Education
- Irish
- I.C.T.
- Spanish
- Science
- Technology
- Learning for Life and Work

Key Stage Four

Key Stage Four Subject Offer

Core:

- English
- Maths
- Single Award Science
- LLW/Prince's Trust
- Personal Development
- PE

Optional:

- Art & Design
- Business & Services
- Business Studies
- Child Development
- Design & Creativity
- Double Award Science

- Drama
- Engineering and Engineering Services
- Geography
- History
- Hospitality
- ICT
- Irish
- Photography
- Music Technology
- Religious Education
- Spanish
- Triple Award Sports Studies
- Technology
- Environmental Action

Post Sixteen

Courses on offer in St. Colm's Sixth Form, or in collaboration with other schools, to Advanced Level;

- Human Biology
- English Literature
- Law
- Health & Social Care
- Moving Images
- Travel and Tourism
- Engineering (SERC)
- Art and Design
- CACHE
- Digital Technology
- Media Studies
- Child Care
- Religious Education
- Government & Politics
- Sports Coaching
- Performing Arts
- Health & Life Sciences
- Finance
- History
- Hospitality



LALC

As a key stakeholder in Education and Training in Lisburn, St. Colm's is an active participant in the Lisburn Area Learning Community, sharing good practice and experience and promoting and meeting the needs of our learners through consultation and collaboration.



Music

Our Music Department is a fun, vibrant and bustling learning area for our pupils. We have a state of the art department which includes a Mac Suite, Recording Studio/DJ room and a large well equipped Music Classroom.



Peripatetic Lessons/Clubs – We offer free lessons in Guitar (acoustic and electric), Drums, Tin Whistle, Irish Traditional Flute and Bodhrán where the pupils are encouraged to take graded exams.



'St. Colm's is a very good secondary school. I'm always looking forward to going in.'

Cora, Year 9.



Preventative Curriculum

We have a responsibility to keep our young people safe and to protect them from harm in every aspect of their lives.

Our preventative curriculum provides pupils with information, advice and guidance regarding safety and boundaries, empowering them to be strong and in control of their body and feelings. The programme is delivered through Form Time, Personal Development and a range of guest speakers and external agencies who visit the school throughout the year.



Extended Schools Clubs and Activities

St. Colm's Extended Schools is as vibrant as ever, with a range of activities for pupils each week, along with Enhanced Workshops for pupils, staff and parents alike. All activities are free of charge.

- ICT/Gaming Club
- Eco-Council
- Art and Photo Club
- Cookery Club
- Music Lessons
- Sports Club

Our Eco Council promotes an awareness of the importance of our environment, engaging in projects both within school and the wider Colin community. The students consider innovative ways to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. All activities encourage the students to be creative and to work as a team in a fun and safe environment.



Sports

In order to promote healthy minds and bodies, students are provided with the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sporting activities. We have a well-equipped sports hall, assembly hall, all-weather surfaces and two outdoor table tennis tables. We also have access to the Brooke Leisure Centre and all its facilities to offer a comprehensive programme through our PE curriculum. Pupils can also avail of a number of activities at break and lunch time or even join an after-school team.



Coaching

St Colm's has partnered with the Football Management Company to offer a triple award advanced level in Sport. This course offers students the opportunity to follow a career pathway into a range of occupations within the sporting industry.



'Go to St. Colm's because the teachers are lovely and caring.'

Jessica, Year 9.

St. Colm's Sports Teams

The boys and girls of St Colm's have taken pride in representing their school in a range of sports and enjoyed the success of their hard work.



Careers

Right from Year 8 through to Year 14, our students follow a fresh, relevant and engaging employability programme, ensuring that they are well prepared to cope with the world of work.

- Meet employers.
- Visit a workplace.
- Experience work of your choice.
- Have a mock interview.
- Develop an understanding of your own interests, potential and realistic prospects.
- Develop the broad skills needed for your future career success and flexibility.



Charity Drives

Thanks to the generosity of our pupils, parents and staff we have raised over £10,000 for charities to include Children's Hospice, Cancer Fund for Children, Tiny Life and CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young).



'A great big thank you' to all pupils, parents and staff from Head of Pastoral Care, Henry Campbell, and current Year 8 pupils.

"By helping others we help ourselves"



Alumni

We wish all of our past pupils the very best in whatever career pathway they have chosen and hope they won't be strangers.



James McGonnell
Financial Services
Operations Analyst



James Tennyson
Professional Boxer



Jennifer Kettle
Child Development Lecturer



Lauren Heenan
Wedding and Events Coordinator



Leeann Hall
SEN Classroom Assistant



Matthew Prendergast
Electrician



Dr Susan Lagdon
Psychology Lecturer



Thomas Johnston
Paediatric Anaesthetic Nurse

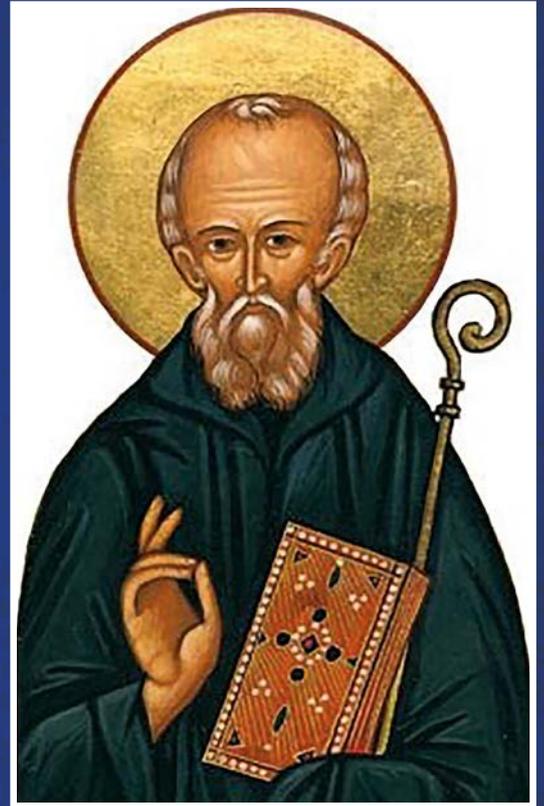


Tony Coulter
Chartered Accountant

Remembering our Patron Saint
St Colm born 1500 years
ago in Donegal.

A Prayer for St Colm

Be O Lord,
a guiding star above me,
a smooth path below me,
a kindly shepherd behind me
and a bright flame before me;
today, tonight and forever. Amen



Born 7th Dec 521 AD
Died 9th June 597 AD

