

PROSPECTUS

2026



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



We are extremely proud to have received the prestigious 'Spirit of Catholic Education Award' for our outstanding work and commitment to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all in the St Colm's community. The awards are presented annually in conjunction with Catholic Schools Week to celebrate outstanding contributions to Catholic education.

- 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 the participation of 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.



 **Schools of Sanctuary**

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

Head Boy: Ciaran Elliman

Head Girl: Dearbhla Green





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.



'My son has really taken to St Colm's... and has just blossomed in confidence... You have made his transition so much easier and enjoyable and I cannot express enough thanks to you all. You are all incredible.'

Parent

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

You should go to the summer school at St Colm's because the trips are really great and you will meet new friends. I really enjoyed being with my friends on the trips.' Year 8

'I decided to go to the summer school because the trips looked like a lot of fun. I loved the cinema trip because everyone got to bond.' Year 8

'I worried because my best friends weren't going to St Colm's but I quickly made friends. I would tell new pupils to go to the summer school because it really helps to meet new people.'

Connie, Year 8.



Literacy

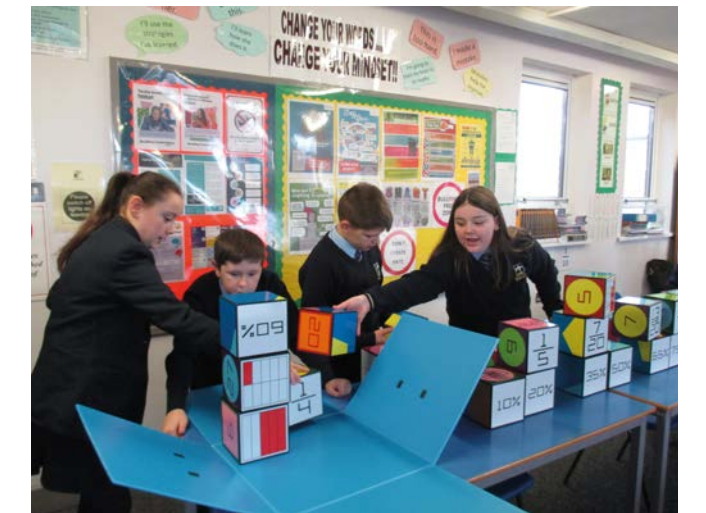
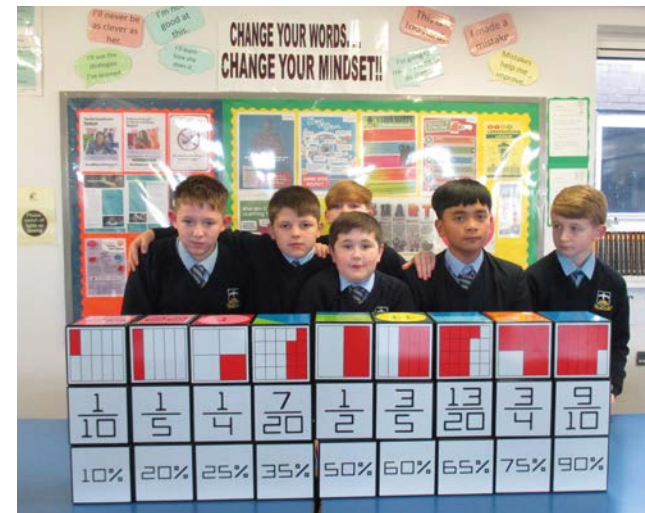
The English department ensures that every young person has the opportunity to realise their potential and that every pupil is developed into an effective and confident communicator, both orally and in written form. We also place a great deal of importance in nurturing a love of reading in each pupil 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 enjoy using online maths programs such as freckle maths which ensures that they experience success, grow in confidence and become self motivated learners.



'All the teachers in St Colm's are kind, sweet and amazing.'

Aoife, 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.

'I would recommend St Colm's because the people are all really nice and helpful and there is lots of great afterschool clubs.'

Shanniya, Year 8.



'Take 5' Day of Health and Wellbeing

We actively promote student wellbeing and resilience through an evidenced-based approach, delivered by our fully trained staff. Our passionate 'Pupil Champions' are key drivers in improving physical and emotional health, both within our school and in the wider community.



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.

'My heart was set on St Colm's the first time I saw it.'

Jack, 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

We view building relationships within the community as a significant privilege and a highly valued part of our students' development. Our young people regularly engage in enriching activities that benefit others. This year, our Irish Traditional Group, complete with Irish dancers, brought joy to residents at Brooklands Nursing Home and children at Good Shepherd Nursery. Furthermore, our Year 10 students successfully participated in the 'faith friends' initiative, where they acted as mentors, buddying with Year 7 students from Oakwood Integrated Primary School to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We give our students a competitive edge by integrating real-world experience through our Workforce opportunities, which are vital for building a strong career profile. Our strategic widening participation links with Queen's University Belfast are highly effective in raising aspirations, awareness, and attainment, successfully paving the way for our students to pursue higher education.

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

- Colin Neighbourhood Partnership
- Urban Villages
- Footprints Women's Centre
- Family Works Counselling
- Samaritans
- West Wellbeing
- Lighthouse Charity
- Emotional Health and Well Being Team



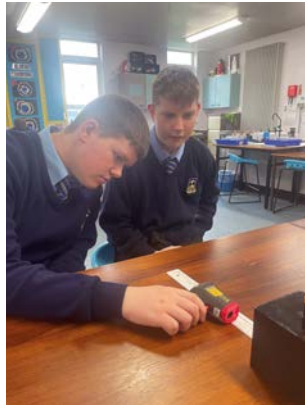
'All of the visits to the QUB campus have been enjoyable and instructive. We meet with students from other schools which has helped me to make new friends and increased my confidence. In our most recent session, we were shown effective ways to study and prepare for exams. I feel this will help me to pursue my dream to become a history teacher.' Sian, year 11

'I've loved the tours of the campus and meeting pupils from other schools. I definitely want to experience university, but I am still deciding what area I will study in.' Jessica, year 11.

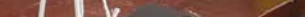
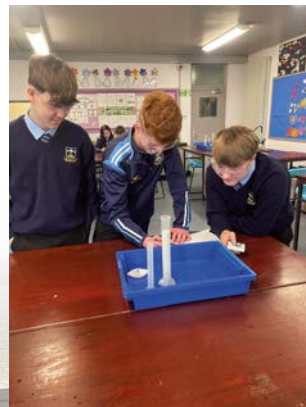
Conor, Year 9.



Science

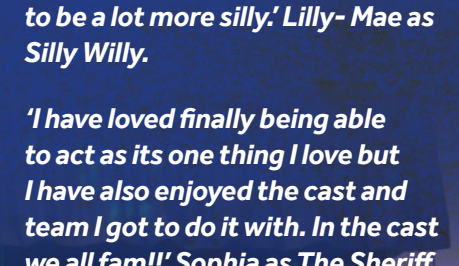
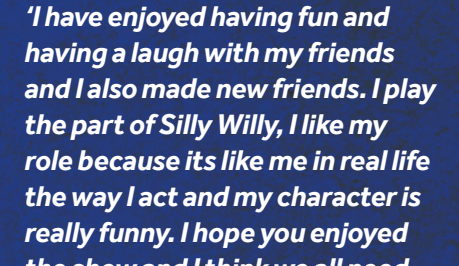


The Science Department at St Colm's High School is dedicated to providing a vibrant and engaging learning environment. Our curriculum inspires pupils by connecting science to everyday life while preparing them for exciting career pathways in the vital STEM sector. Students develop essential, transferable skills, including critical thinking and problem-solving, equipping them for success both inside and outside the classroom.



Drama

The Drama Department are committed to providing every student with a range of lifelong experiences. Drama provides essential life skills such as working as part of a team and developing self-confidence and concentration. It stretches your intellectual ability, challenges the way that you view the world and increases your capacity to communicate ideas.



'I have enjoyed having fun and having a laugh with my friends and I also made new friends. I play the part of Silly Willy, I like my role because its like me in real life the way I act and my character is really funny. I hope you enjoyed the show and I think we all need to be a lot more silly.' Lilly- Mae as Silly Willy.

'I have loved finally being able to act as its one thing I love but I have also enjoyed the cast and team I got to do it with. In the cast we all fam!!' Sophia as The Sheriff



Music

Our pupils get a wide range of experiences throughout Key Stage 3, with units of work including:

- Band Skills
- Ukulele
- Creating a Radio Show
- Creating a dance track
- DJing
- Film Music
- Blues Music
- Reggae Music
- Music Traditions in Ireland
- Pop Music through the decades



"The Music Department in St Colm's really kick-started my passion for music and got me into playing guitar. It has also helped me to think of music as an art form rather than just some noise". Jay, year 11.



"I love Music because I can express myself through music and it gives life to everything". Hannah, year 11.



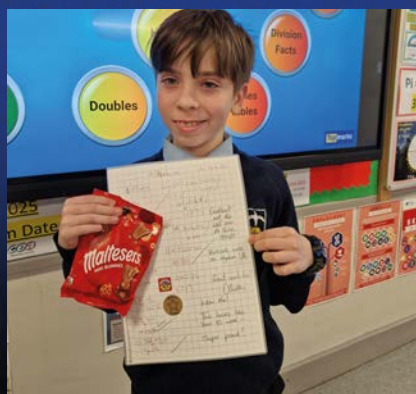
"The Music Department here really brings the school alive, bringing students and staff together". Ryan, year 11.



Rewarding Learning

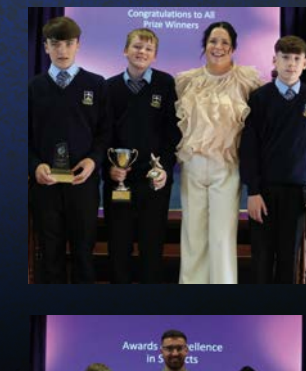
Recognising and rewarding the efforts and achievements of our pupils is a regular event in St. Colm's.

"Hands down the best school in Belfast. The teachers are an absolute credit to St Colm's High School." Parent

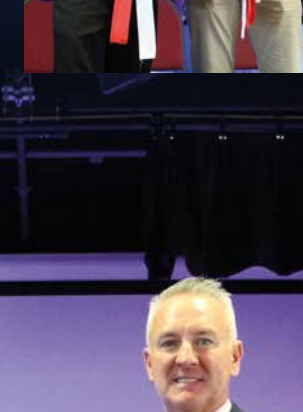


Celebration of Achievement

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.



"It has been an absolute pleasure to attend St Colm's., this school is amazing. I have achieved so much and never regretted any decision that I have made here."
Head Boy.



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

Key Stage Four

Key Stage Four Subject Offer

Core:

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

Optional:

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

- Drama
- Engineering and Engineering Services
- English Literature
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- History
- Hospitality
- ICT
- Irish
- Photography
- Politics
- Media Studies
- Music Technology
- Religious Education
- Spanish
- 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;

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



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.



Extended Schools Clubs and Activities

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

- Gaming Club
- Drama Club
- Art Club
- Book Club
- Cookery Club
- Gaelic Club
- Netball Club

Our Book Club promotes an awareness for the importance of reading for pleasure with the students who attend having become published authors in books by Young Writers.

Short Stories:

- **Integer: Stories Inspired by Numbers**
- **Mission Catastrophe**
- **Poetry: The Power of Poetry**

This helps to build confidence in our students and their abilities in literacy as well as giving them the drive and determination to realise they can achieve anything if they put their minds to it.

Similarly, all activities within Drama Club encourage our students to be confident while being creative. The students have the innovation to become playwrights, (writing their own scripts) along with the added courage of then performing in front of their friends and family.

Overall, our Extended School Clubs promote original thinking and team building, all the while maintaining a positive environment where our students can be safe yet have fun.

'After school clubs are so beneficial because you learn new skills, meet new people, spend time with friends and learn more about yourself and your interests.' Jay, year 11.

'They help me to learn something new and really help me to make friends and socialise.' Darren, year 11.

'I love after school clubs because they keep me busy. My favourite thing is they help with my confidence and to make new friends who aren't in my class.' Natasha, year 11.



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.



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.



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.



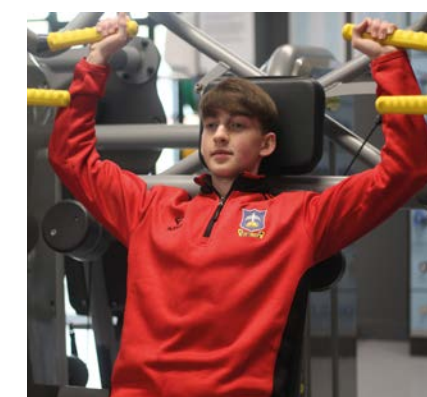
'Go to St. Colm's because the teachers are lovely and caring.'

Jessica, Year 10.



Coaching

St Colm's has partnered with the Football Management Company to offer a BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Sport.. This course offers students the opportunity to follow a career pathway into a range of occupations within the sporting industry.



Ski Trip

St. Colm's Ski Trip to Pamporovo



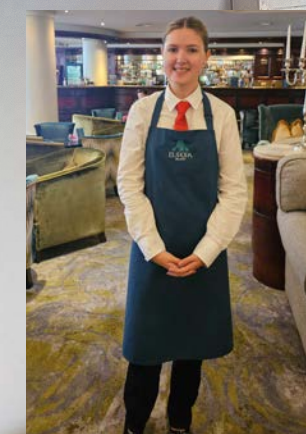
Careers

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.
- Personal Career Planning.
- Young Enterprise and STEM workshops.
- Support with university, college and finance applications.



"Your dedication and skills will make you a valuable asset to any team project" Liam



Kraków 2024 - School Trip

Kraków 2024... What a trip! Like most schools, St Colm's believe in the importance of developing the whole child, both inside and on this occasion outside the classroom. In addition to our ski trip, we have now added a jam-packed trip to Kraków, Poland to our list of school excursions. Pupils got the opportunity to visit one of the most breath-taking cities in Europe. From the stunning architecture to the historical aspect of the trip, pupils got the opportunity to take in all the sights and make memories with their friends that will last a lifetime.

After an early start from the school, pupils arrived in Kraków ready to explore the city. By day, the pupils had the opportunity to visit Auschwitz Concentration Camp, the beautiful Wavel Castle, the Salt Mines and Schindler's Factory (from the movie Schindler's List). Many of these are related to the History provision within the school programme of study. By night the activities did not stop; the pupils enjoyed a famous horse and cart tour of the Jewish Ghetto and historical Kraków, as well as shopping until they dropped in the large shopping centre. The fun did not stop there! On this trip we created a new school tradition, this is the St Colm's 'laser light bowl off' where Mr Mc Cann was crowned the champion.

Preparations are already underway for the next trip, and we would love to welcome some of our future Year 8 pupils on that trip too!





Charity Drives

Thanks to the generosity of our pupils, parents and staff we have raised over £18,000 for charities to include Children's Hospice, Cancer Fund for Children, Solving Kids Cancer, Community Food Bank and West Wellbeing.

'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

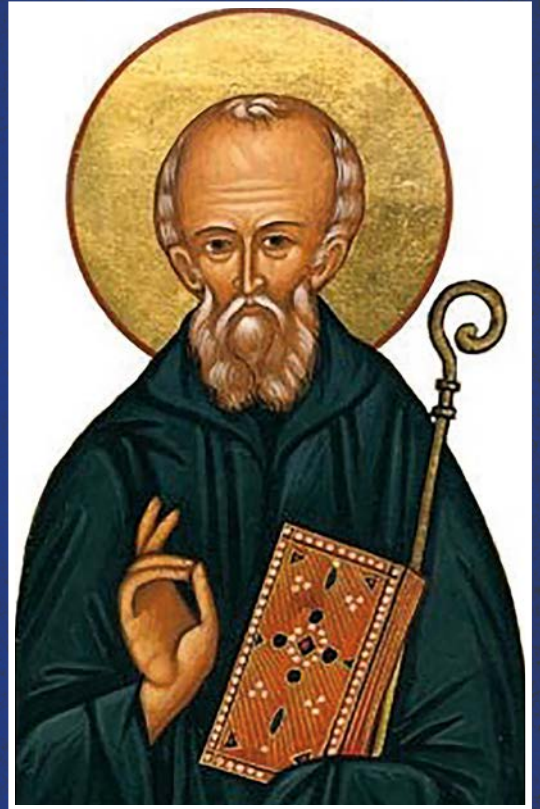


Tony Coulter
Chartered Accountant

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