

PROSPECTUS



St. Colmcille's High School

Caring, Learning, Believing, Achieving





Students, parents and carers

Thank you for taking the time to view our prospectus and to get to know St Colmcille's High School a little better. In St Colmcille's, our students are the most important people to us. From the moment you step into our school you will find that we place our students at the very core of all that we do and plan for here in St Colmcille's High School. Academic excellence, genuine pastoral concern and an attention to the current and future needs of our students, guides every aspect of our school.

The academic curriculum is built to be flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of every different year group. It is a curriculum which will provide every pupil with the opportunity to succeed. We have a well-developed and adaptive curriculum designed to meet the individual needs of all learners. Our curriculum has created a positive learning environment which will nurture individual talents and introduce new experiences designed to excite and develop our pupils' confidence in learning. Together, we enable each pupil to rise to challenges successfully, be confident to take risks in learning and achieve the highest level of success.

Our students know they are valued and cared for. Each student is unique and respected as an individual. Our pastoral care system is woven through every aspect of school life. Knowing each pupil as an individual is the cornerstone of our pastoral system. The very first word in our school motto is the word 'caring' - pupils who know they are cared for and valued. They have the confidence to take risks in their learning and be prepared to face new challenges, knowing that we are right beside them.

At St Colmcille's we work very closely with our parents to ensure that we can deliver experiences and opportunities to allow our pupils to fulfil their potential in all aspects of school life. You are our closest partners and we share the role of helping our pupils to grow and have options and choices for their future. The close connection with our local community expands these opportunities and experiences and provides us with access to resources beyond the physical school boundaries. Recognising the support we receive from our local community, we strive to return this support and be a supportive resource for our entire community. It is a source of pride for all our pupils and staff that we are active participants in our local community.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school.

Caring, Learning, Believing, Achieving

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Ethos

We promote excellence through providing a caring, supportive environment.

We develop each pupil to their full potential so that together, we achieve personal excellence.

St Colmcille's High School emphasises the four elements within our school's motto of '**Caring, Learning, Believing and Achieving**'. We believe that all children are unique. No two pupils are the same and how they grow and learn are as individual as they themselves are. Our school has built a pastoral and academic curriculum that is focused upon the individual needs of each child. Before our pupils even enter our school, we strive to discover the individual needs of each pupil, building upon our close relationships with our feeder primary schools.

Within our school, we recognise that our **pupils are the centre of all our endeavours**. All the decisions that we make and all the initiatives that we introduce, are based upon the needs of all pupils. In our rapidly changing world, we continue to respond and grow through building greater choice and flexibility within our academic curriculum and through enriching our pupils' experience with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. High quality teaching and learning is essential to support our academic curriculum and our results are consistently above the Northern Ireland average for similar non-selective schools. **Academic success** has ensured our pupils have choices and access to successful career pathways, fulfilling ambitions and wonderful possibilities. **Knowing the individual needs of our pupils** is essential in order to provide additional learning support to those who need it and to stretch our gifted pupils, allowing them to reach their full potential.

Academic success is only one element of what makes a successful school. The wellbeing and the **happiness** of our pupils is intertwined within our teaching across the entire curriculum and all pupils continue to grow within our pupil-centred ethos. Our **pastoral care supports** our academic curriculum as we believe that pupils who are happy, safe and secure will learn and achieve best.

Our size and close connection to our community provides us with the unique opportunity to enrich the educational experience of all our pupils. The close family bond that is created within our school allows pupils to have a positive voice within our school and our local community. **Our school belongs to our local community** and our school extends far beyond the final bell at 3:25pm.



Pastoral Care

Our Aims:

To create a positive environment so that learning and personal development can take place at all times.

To develop the values that underpin St. Colmcille's aims - namely, self-discipline, self-respect, an appreciation of the needs, talents and contributions of others.

To enable pupils, staff and parents to communicate and work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support, where the learning and well-being of others is always respected.

In order to work towards achieving our school aims, through our ethos, in St. Colmcille's we promote Christian values, academic and vocational excellence, and the personal development of every pupil in a caring, happy and welcoming environment.

Pastoral Care Provision:

Our Pastoral Care provision in St. Colmcille's aims to support all pupils; developing each pupil, physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. This requires a caring commitment by all of our staff and permeates all aspects of daily school life, contributing to the creation of our school as a caring Christian community of pupils and staff. Our school's pupil-centred Pastoral Care provision strives to ensure each pupil feels valued and is encouraged to contribute positively to their own personal development as well as to daily school life. We listen to and are responsive to the individual needs, aspirations and talents of our pupils. Through our Pastoral Care provision and Preventative Education programmes, we help each pupil to identify those issues in their lives which they must deal with as part of their own personal, social and emotional development; enabling each to grow into a well-rounded young person who can readily meet the demands of school and the challenges of everyday life, now and in the future. Weekly, timetabled Form Periods in both KS3 & KS4 help facilitate the delivery of programmes to pupils, morning Year Group Assemblies, sessions with our school Counsellor (EA Hope Counselling Services), as well as regular visits from a range of external agencies, all provide additional care and support for our pupils.

Caring, Learning, Believing, Achieving

Positive Behaviour for Learning

Our Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework helps promote this culture of growth, integral to our Pastoral Care provision, and is implicit in the ethos of our school. This framework creates and enables an effective, safe and secure working environment, high expectations of excellent behaviour and where quality learning and teaching can take place. Within this framework, pupils are recognized and rewarded every half-term in special Rewards Assemblies for both 'Attendance' and 'Achievement,' with opportunities presented for all pupils to achieve and experience success. Through this framework too, a mutually supportive, strong home school partnership develops and grows in the best interest of all our pupils.

It is through our Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework and pupil-centred Pastoral Care provision, that the whole school community of St. Colmcille's shows daily that we are Caring, Learning, Believing and Achieving, together.

Child Protection & Safeguarding

In St Colmcille's High School we have a Child Protection & Safeguarding Team which includes a designated Governor, who work very closely with the Pastoral Teams. Together they seek to promote a safe and secure environment in which pupils can learn and in which they feel safe and supported.

We want every child to be safe in their learning in school and to enable them to achieve their very best. Our Child Protection Policy is available which can be accessed via the school app.

Hi, my name is Noah Murray and my favourite subjects are I.T. and P.E.

In I.T., we completed a coding course using Scratch. It definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone, and even though it was challenging, I really enjoyed it because it was so much fun!

Noah Murray (Cedar I.P.S)

My favourite subject is History. I was thrilled to achieve over 80% in my first assessment—I even surprised myself! We are currently learning about primary and secondary sources, which has been really interesting, but I'm especially excited to start our next topic on the Normans.

When I'm older, I would love to be a History teacher like Mrs Morrissey. She makes every lesson engaging, and I can't wait to learn even more!

Amber McCarroll (Killyleagh Integrated)



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Pastoral Systems

In St. Colmcille's our Vice Principal, Mrs. P. Sloan, has overall responsibility for leading Pastoral Year Teams and co-ordinating the delivery of the school's Pastoral Care Provision.

Each pupil in our school is assigned a Form Teacher who assumes a caring, mentoring role for their Form Class. In addition, the Year Group is overseen by a Head of Key Stage who, as well as supporting the work of the Form Teachers, is responsible for meeting the pastoral and academic needs of their Year Groups through monitoring each pupil's general wellbeing, and academic progress as they move through the school year.

Pastoral staff work in close partnership with parents, and regular home-school communication is encouraged through each pupil's green Homework Planner. Additionally, should an issue or concern arise, communication or meetings can be requested through the school's Office with a pupil's Head of Key Stage.

School Council

The School Council is a very important vehicle for ensuring St. Colmcille's pupils have opportunities to have their voices heard on school life! Pupils are elected to sit on the School Council by other pupils in their class to represent their views, along with members of the Senior Prefect Team. The School Council reconstitutes each new academic year to maximise opportunities for different viewpoints to be raised by pupils and discussed, as well as coming up with practical solutions for improvement in all aspects of school life. Other opportunities to step up to ensure your pupil voice is heard and encouraged are when you take on additional roles of responsibility such as becoming: a Class Prefect, a Bus Prefect, a Senior Prefect & a Peer Mentor. Pupils are selected across these roles to represent the views of all of our student body in the School Council.



My favourite subjects are Home Economics, P.E., and Drama. Home Economics has given me the confidence to cook and bake on my own, which is something completely new for me! I really enjoy P.E. because we get to try lots of different activities and it's always great fun. My absolute favourite, though, is Drama. Miss Carney has already helped me build so much confidence this term, and she even encouraged me to join the choir. We sang at Prize Night, and I loved every minute of it!

As a Year 8 pupil, I've been thinking about what I would say to a P7 pupil who is considering coming to St Colmcille's High School:

Be yourself, be kind and enjoy making new friends— I certainly have! And try all the new activities because they are so much fun.

Matthew Fitzpatrick (Legamaddy)

KS3 Curriculum

Our intention is to provide a broad, balanced curriculum for all the pupils in St. Colmcille's, regardless of age or ability. All pupils follow a 3 year course of study leading into KS4 and into other externally validated examinations.

We believe that everyone has a talent and hope that through providing a wide range of activities and opportunities, every pupil will find something of interest.



Subjects offered at Key Stage 3:

- Art & Design
- Careers
- Drama
- English
- French
- Geography
- History
- Home Economics
- ICT
- LLW
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Science
- Technology and Design

KS4 Curriculum

Our options at Key Stage 4 (Years 11-12) are structured yearly, offering subjects from the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Courses in any subject will only operate if numbers are viable. Pupils should be guided by the subject teacher and possible future careers requirements when making choices.

A special booklet is prepared annually for parents and pupils of Year 10 about the Key Stage 4 Curriculum. This is circulated in March of each year, with a covering letter to explain about option choices. At Key Stage 4, an Information Evening is provided for parents and pupils in Year 10.



Subjects offered at Key Stage 4:

All students study the following at GCSE or equivalent level:

Core Subjects:

English Language

Mathematics

Religious Studies

Science (Single or Double Award)

Other subjects offered at GCSE

or equivalent level:

Art & Design

Business Studies

Child Development

Drama

English Literature

French

Geography

ICT

Health & Social Care

Healthy Living

History

Home Economics

Hospitality

Learning for Life & Work

Media Studies

Motor Vehicle Studies

Music

Performing Arts

Photography

Physical Education

Sports Studies

Statistics

Technology & Design

Travel & Tourism

Occupational Studies in Carpentry & Joinery, Hair & Beauty, Land Based Technology

Non - exam subjects:

Physical Education

Careers Education

Personal Development & RSE

Year 8 Induction



My favourite subject this year is Science. My teacher, Mrs McGonnell, is kind, approachable, and always makes our lessons exciting. We've already carried out lots of practical experiments in class. My favourite so far was lighting the Bunsen burner and making delicious s'mores!

Moving to secondary school can feel like a big step, and I was definitely nervous at first, but St Colmcille's is brilliant—I've enjoyed every minute of my time here!

Faye Cullen
(St Joseph's PS)

My favourite subject is Drama, which is a brand-new subject for me this year. We have so much fun in class, especially when we play exciting acting games. I was a bit nervous about coming to St Colmcille's, but Drama has really boosted my confidence and helped me feel comfortable performing in front of others.

Miss Carney believes in every one of us and encourages us to step out of our comfort zones and take chances. I'm so glad I did—because now I'm excelling in this subject. I can't wait to use my new skills in our upcoming Film Festival!

Jessica Magorrian
(St McCartan's PS)

P.E. is my favourite subject because I love sports, especially football. I was really nervous when I trialled for the school football team, but Mr McKernan believed in me and encouraged me to keep going. I'm so glad he did because I ended up playing in the match and scored six goals! I can't believe how much confidence I've already gained in Year 8.

I have also been involved YMCA workshops where we've focused on building self-esteem and creating positive relationships with my peers.

Harry Stranney (Cedar I.P.S)

My Day in St. Colmcille's by Mia Burgess

Hi, my name is Mia and I'm a Year 8 pupil at St. Colmcille's High School. I'd love to show you a fun little snapshot of my day—come along with me!

9.05am – Arriving at School

I arrive at school and meet up with my friends. It's always a lively start to the morning as we chat and get ready for the day.

9.15am – Registration/Form Class

Form class with Mr Parke is a great way to begin the day. He's really friendly and helps us get organised so we're all set for whatever's coming next.

9.25am – PE

PE is first—and it's my favourite! We get changed quickly and head to the hall. We're learning about Netball at the minute, which is so much fun, especially because I didn't get to play it much in primary school. My team gets competitive, but in a good way!

10.55am – Break Time

Break time means one thing: snacks! I meet up with my friends again and we head to the canteen. There's always loads to choose from, so we like trying something new whenever we can.

11.15am – Form Period

Back to form class with Mr Parke. This is a 'chilled-out' time where we talk about how things are going in school and learn about important topics like staying safe online, having healthy relationships and being kind to others.

11.45am – Art

Now it's time to get creative! In Art, we use all sorts of materials to draw and design. It's one of my favourite classes because we get to express ourselves and have fun with our ideas.

12.45pm – History

History is always interesting because we get to dive into stories from the past. Right now, we're learning about medieval times—it feels a bit like stepping into a different world!

1.15pm – Lunch

Lunch is one of the best parts of the day. I meet up with my friends, we chat about literally everything, and enjoy something tasty from the canteen. It's a great break in the middle of the day.

1.55pm – Maths

After lunch, it's Maths. I actually enjoy it because it feels like solving puzzles. Our teacher makes the lessons fun and helps us understand tricky things step by step.

2.55pm – English

We finish the day with English. We read different stories and learn how to write in creative ways. I love hearing everyone's ideas—they always make the lessons more fun.

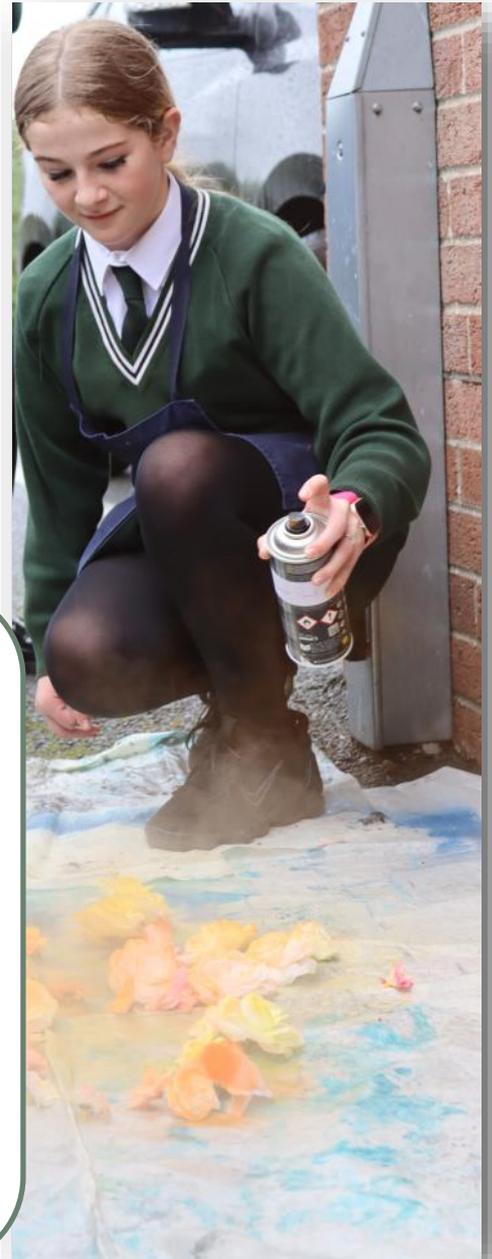
3.25pm – Home Time

The bell rings and it's time to go home. I meet up with my friends again, and we walk out of school together, chatting about our day and what we're doing after school.



A Snapshot of Key Stage 3...

PERIOD	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	History	English	LLW	Form Period	ICT
2	Art	English	Science	Careers	French
3	Art	Maths	English	French	English
4	Maths	RE	Drama	ICT	PE
5	French	RE	Drama	Drama	PE
6	English	History	Maths	Maths	PE
7	English	History	Maths	Maths	LLW
8	Form Period	Home Econ	Geography	Geography	RE
9	Science	Home Econ	Music	Geography	Science
10	Science	Home Econ	Music	Library	Science



My favourite subject is Art. This year we've been learning lots of different techniques—for example, how to draw using a bird's feather. I love that Art lets us express ourselves in so many creative ways!

I was the only student coming from St Caolan's PS, so I was extremely nervous at first. Now I look back and laugh, because I absolutely love it here. I've made so many new friends, and I'm really excited for the rest of the year!

Orlaith McMullan (St Caolan's PS)



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Additional Learning Support

The school focuses on the inclusion of all pupils - regardless of any physical disability or learning difficulty. Our main aim is the provision of quality teaching and learning matched to the individual ability of each pupil in a pupil centred manner.

The admission arrangements, with respect to the majority of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), are consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils. St. Colmcille's provides for pupils with a wide range of special needs within both mainstream classrooms and within small support groups.

Children with statements of SEND are placed in schools at the request of Education Authority. The school is well supported with provision from the Education Authority and works closely with all its advisory agents and Outreach Support. The Education Authority, through the Medical Officer, supports the needs of children with medical, emotional and physical disabilities. Adaptations have been made to facilitate wheelchair users.

Our main aim is to improve the self-esteem and the basic skills of each child. Many children have specific learning difficulties and require some extra help in overcoming, and by-passing their difficulties. Some pupils may also receive extra support from our Specialist SEN Teachers and External Agencies whilst others have access to a Classroom Assistant.



Specialist Provision in Mainstream - The Burrow (KS3) & The Den (KS4)

We are a Specialist Provision in Mainstream for Autism and Social Communication

About us

We provide an inclusive, positive environment where all pupils are encouraged to participate and engage in school life.

We focus on each learner's unique needs, by promoting their social, emotional and academic well-being.

We aim to build confidence, resilience and essential life skills, preparing students for the future.

Curriculum

We follow a differentiated version of the mainstream KS3 curriculum. This approach ensures that all learners receive the appropriate level of support and challenge to make excellent progress throughout the Key Stage and also allows pupils to fully integrate into classes, as and when appropriate.

At Key Stage 4, pupils have the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects tailored to their individual interests. We work closely with the school's Careers Advisor to ensure qualifications are meaningful and learners have options for future pathways at post 16.

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Extra Curricular

A little 'snapshot' of some of our pupil activities *outside* the classroom...



Caring, Learning, Believing, Achieving

Believing & Achieving...



Believing & Achieving...



Our School Connected to its Local Community...

St. Patrick's Choral Society performances
(Legally Blonde and All Shook Up)

Kilmore Football Club Training

Mourne Water Initiative

Kilmore Cross-Community Foodbank

Teconnaught GAC Hallowe'en Camp

Irish Dancing School

Choir Initiatives

Drama Festival

Film Festival/3Fortyfive Film Company Links

Bells SuperValu Sponsorship (Breakfast Club & Rewards)

Monastery use – e.g. Year 8 Fun Day

PTA Initiatives

Uniform Recycling Scheme

Uganda Link Group

Bells Car Sales Business Studies Event

Down GAA Coaching sessions



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Careers Education

Careers Education is a core aspect of the KS3 and KS4 curriculum and makes a significant contribution in helping prepare young people for their journey through life. Timetabled classes allow pupils to investigate the world of work and develop their own personal action plan which enables them to make informed decisions about pathways at Post 16 and beyond.

A range of visiting speakers form an integral part of the KS4 programme and this enables our pupils to hear from industry experts on their experiences in the world of work.



We have an independent Careers Officer, Louise Murray, who meets individually with all Year 12 pupils to give them personalised, up-to-date and relevant information. We have annual events held in school, and within the local Area Learning Community, that further enhance the knowledge and understanding that the pupils have about Careers and opportunities available to them.

Our Partner Primary Schools



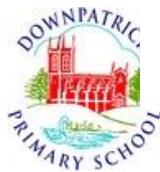
**ST CAOLAN'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**St. Joseph's PS,
Strangford**



St. Nicholas'



**Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School
Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig**



Academy PS



**St. Joseph's PS,
Crossgar**



St. Mary's PS



St. Brigid's PS

Admissions Policy

During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered. The application procedure opens on 27 January 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 19 February 2026 at 12 noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12 noon (GMT) on 19 February 2026 and up to 4pm on 24 February 2026 will be treated as a late application. Late applications received after 4pm on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 will NOT be processed until after the close of procedure on Saturday, 9 May 2026.

All children are welcome to apply to our all-ability co-educational high school. The Board of Governors of St Colmcille's has determined that the following criteria shall be applied, in the event of the number of pupils applying for places in Year 8 in September being greater than the admissions number, in the order set out below.

Within each criterion, priority will be given to pupils normally resident in NI.

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

Pupils whose parents/guardians are resident in the parishes of Kilmore, Killyleagh, Loughinisland, Saintfield – Carrickmannon.

Applicants who are entitled to Free School Meals *(FSME): Priority to be given so that the proportion of such children admitted is not less than the proportion of first preference FSME applications received within the total number of first preference applications received.**

** "entitled to Free School Meals" will mean applicants who are listed on the Education Authority register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has submitted their post-primary Transfer Application, or at any date up to and including the final date for parents to communicate FSME to the Education Authority as specified in the separate annual Circular – Open Enrolment in Nursery, Primary and Post Primary Schools – Timetables."*

*** The calculation of this proportion will be on the basis of first preference applications received by the post-primary school no later than 4pm on 24 February 2026.*

Pupils transferring from the school's partner primary schools located in the parishes listed in Criterion 1 whose parents/guardians are not resident in those parishes.

Pupils whose parents/guardians are resident in the parishes of Dunsford & Ardglass and Drumbo.

Pupils who, at the date of their application, have a sibling currently enrolled at the school.

At the point of over-subscription within any of the above criteria, then pupils will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter of surname in the order set out below.

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

The order was determined by a randomised selection of letters. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used.

Duty to Verify

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure the information relevant to the above criteria is included on the Transfer Application or attached/uploaded thereto.

Applicants should also note that the provision of false or incorrect information or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by post-primary schools can result in the withdrawal of a place and the inability to offer a place on the part of any school nominated on the applicant's Transfer Application.



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SCHOOL UNIFORM

All pupils are expected to wear the school uniform as detailed below. Wearing the school uniform helps pupils identify with the school and assists in creating a sense of community.



- Bottle green 4 kick-pleat skirt (must touch the knee) or black school trousers
- White shirt
- Bottle green jumper (with white stripe around the neckline— optional)
- School tie
- Green blazer with school crest
- Black tights only during autumn and spring terms
- Bottle green socks or black tights during summer term
- Black plain flat shoes with a height of no more than 3cm. (no colours/branding permitted) or plain black trainers
- School scarf (optional)*



- Black trousers
- White shirt
- Bottle green jumper (optional)
- School tie
- Green blazer with school crest
- Black socks only
- Black plain flat shoes - not boots or plain black trainers (no colours/ branding permitted)



PE Uniform for all

Youth Packs cost £65 and Adult packs cost £75 to include pupil initials.

What's included in the pack:

- Quarter zip
- T-Shirt
- Track bottoms or leggings
- Shorts
- Socks

To purchase please use the following link:

<https://playr-fit.com/St-Colmcilles-Crossgar>

Home School Communication

We work closely with parents and communicate through different channels including the School app, school website, Parent text, Phone calls, written reports, Parent Teacher Meetings and the Stu-

Parent Teacher Meetings

For each Year Group a parent/teacher consultation is scheduled annually where parents have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with their child's subject teachers and key pastoral staff, i.e. Form Teacher or Head of Key Stage. Pupils may also accompany their parent(s)/carer(s) to this meeting. This is an excellent opportunity to discuss your child's progress, where their strengths can be highlighted and key areas for improvement identified.

School App

Our custom-designed school app is available for free download from Google Play or the App Store. It is designed to improve communication as it contains all the information that you require at your finger tips! This is our main method of communication with parents.

Secondary365 app available on App Store or Google Play Store

Search for Crossgar–St. Colmcille's High School



Website/Social Media

We encourage our parent to follow the school's Facebook and Instagram page as we regularly post information on the latest news and events. It is a great way for parents and carers to see what happens in school on a daily basis.

On the school website you can find information on term dates, School Policies, etc. There is also a link to allow pupils to access their school documents.



www.stcolmcillescrossgar.org.uk

www.facebook.com/stcolmcillescrossgar

[st.colmcilles_high_school_](https://www.instagram.com/st.colmcilles_high_school_)



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