

BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE



ST. COLM'S
HIGH SCHOOL
Believe & Achieve



THIS IS ST. COL- HIGH SCHOOL

—
RESPECT

—
FAITH

—
RESPONSIBILITY

—
COMMUNITY



ST. COLM'S
HIGH SCHOOL
Believe & Achieve

MS

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WELCOME TO ST COLM'S

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

You are very welcome to St. Colm's High School and thank you for your interest in joining our school community.

St. Colm's has a long history of providing outstanding educational experiences for the young people in the local area. St. Colm's has an outstanding staff; our teachers and our support staff work tirelessly to ensure all in our care fulfil their potential. We have high expectations of our young people and craft a curricular and extra-curricular programme that both extends and supports them.



'A key strength of the school is the proactive and highly creative engagement in a wide range of projects with community groups and organisations.'
- ETI January 2025

Our Cornstore Youth Club works closely with Ballinascreen Community Forum to ensure we contribute to the planning and execution of community celebrations such as the Christmas Lights event, the Teddy Bears' Picnic and Ballinascreen in Bloom.

We also continue to prepare our students for life beyond school. In partnership with Workspace, our **Careers ConneXtions** event provided students with invaluable insights into career pathways, apprenticeships, and higher education opportunities. This initiative reflects our commitment to ensuring every student is equipped to make informed choices about their future.

Sporting achievements also abound. In 2024–2025, we celebrated three Ulster titles: our U13 soccer team won the Northern Ireland Small Schools Cup final for the first time, our U14 hurlers claimed the Brother Mallon Shield, and our U14 camogie team won the Ulster Sciath Aoife title. These victories reflect the dedication and talent of our students and staff.

Academically, we continue to outperform non-selective schools across Northern Ireland. In 2025, 92% of all GCSE subjects studied at St. Colm's were above the Northern Irish average, with seven subjects achieving a 100% pass rate at grades A*–C. Our students' achievements in English and Maths were nearly 20% and 30% above the NI average respectively – a testament to their hard work and the excellence of our teaching staff.

We are proud of the wonderful young people in our school and are grateful to the community for entrusting them to us for their education. The ETI rightly reflected this in their report:



'The pupils are very welcoming, friendly and respectful. Their behaviour is exemplary; they are a great credit to their families and to the school.'
- ETI January 2025

I look forward to welcoming you into the St. Colm's family in 2026.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sinead McAllister'.

Sinead McAllister
Principal

OUR AIMS

To create a caring Christian community within this school where the truths and practices of our Catholic faith are taught daily, learned and experienced by all staff and pupils and in so doing, foster spiritual growth.



To provide a learning environment that is caring and hard-working and cherishes the nurturing and development of each individual pupil.



To develop pupils who are appreciative of their heritage, their community and their civic responsibilities.



To prepare pupils for the experiences and responsibilities of their adult lives - personal, social, cultural and working.



To foster and develop in pupils an awareness and appreciation of other denominations and cultures.



To develop parent and community partnerships in the education of the next generation.



To promote the well-being and professional development of all staff.

OUR CATHOLIC ETHOS

A young man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a dark blazer, light blue shirt, and a blue, green, and yellow striped tie, is speaking into a black microphone. He is looking slightly down and to his left. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Our distinctive Catholic ethos permeates all that we do in St. Colm's. Christ's teachings are central to the experiences of students, staff, parents and the wider community. We regularly worship as a school community and invest in our young people so that they can contribute positively to their parishes.

School experiences are enriched with activities such as retreats, pilgrimages, fundraisers and all our Post-16 students engage with the John Paul II Award.

Our Catholic ethos is evident throughout the school. It is reflected in prayers in the classroom; our shared school values and a cross curricular approach to learning about and protecting our environment for the future.

We bring our Catholic ethos to life through the warm, welcoming and nurturing environment we provide for all in the St. Colm's community.

“

CHRISTIAN FAITH SHAPES THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL AND THERE IS A TANGIBLY STRONG BOND BETWEEN FAMILY, SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

- ETI January 2025

OUR VALUES OUR COMMUNITY



ST COLM'S HIGH SCHOOL UPHOLDS
THE VISION OF '**BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE**'
WITH PUPILS AND STAFF LIVING OUT
THE VALUES OF **RESPECT, FAITH,**
RESPONSIBILITY, AND COMMUNITY.

- ETI January 2025



The school year begins with the celebration of Harvest Mass when we unite as a community.

OUR PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMME

The aim of Pastoral Care is to support, encourage and develop all pupils as individuals, as young people and as students.

Every teacher is responsible for Pastoral Care in every class. It is Pastoral Care policy that all pupils have continuous points of reference (i.e. Tutor & Head of Year) for advice, encouragement and trust over their years at school.

ST. COLM'S PASTORAL CARE



The Head of Year is the leader of the Tutor Team.

The Head of Year is responsible, through and with the Tutor Team, for the well-being of every child in the year group.

ANTI-BULLYING

We believe that every child has the right to be free from intimidation of any kind and that every child has the duty to respect each person's property, time and point of view.

The personal and social development of every child –

The student's whole experience of school should continually contribute to their personal and social development. However, the relationships between pupil and Tutor and between pupil and Head of Year are especially important. Each Tutor is responsible for their tutor group under the guidance of the Head of Year.

The academic progress of every child –

It is the Head of Year's responsibility, through the Year Team, to ensure that each child is learning as effectively as possible. Subject teachers scrutinise the results of each assessment and keep the Tutor and Head of Year informed of academic achievement. They praise those doing well, assist those who are under-achieving and set targets for improvement.

Drugs education –

The school's programme aims to educate children about prevention and protection around drugs.

Relationships and Sexuality education –

This programme is delivered through Religious Education, Learning for Life and Work, Home Economics, Pastoral Care, Science and P.E. As a Catholic school we ensure that all issues are placed in a Christian and Catholic framework.



YOU ARE IN SAFE HANDS AT ST. COLM'S

The extra curricular provision for the year group as a whole –

Extra curricular activities are an essential part of a good school. The Head of Year encourages extra curricular activities in the year group.

Cara system –

Every Year 8 pupil is given a special friend or 'Cara' from Year 12. This helps each pupil to settle in quickly and provides a feeling of security during this time of transition.



Our Staff Will –

- Foster in our pupils, self esteem, self respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and the bully. They will also learn the importance of telling a trusted adult when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Head of Year.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully on the action taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively; in accordance with agreed procedures.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

All aspects of discipline are in the context of pastoral care. Staff, pupils, parents and governors are consulted on the main principles of positive behaviour. Pupils learn in a secure, happy and industrious environment, conducive to effective learning and personal development.

The school expects the highest possible standards in the following areas:

- Uniform, punctuality, attendance, homework
- Co-operation in the classroom, and around the school grounds
- Self-respect and respect for others
- Participation in school events
- Order in the corridors, playgrounds, canteen, coming to and going home from school
- Respect for school and other people's property

Our school policy is to seek to be positive. Staff will endeavour to use every opportunity to encourage and praise the achievements of all pupils.

- There are monthly and annual awards for excellent attendance
- Heads of Year will seek out opportunities to celebrate success in their year group. Evidence of this will be displayed on success boards
- Positive comments, when appropriate, will be written in the Student Planner and in pupil workbooks
- We seek every opportunity to acknowledge and publicise the achievements of our pupils in school, in the local and national press
- We seek to involve all our pupils in all aspects of school life
- We are especially interested in targeting underachievement through our mentoring scheme
- We operate an incentive reward system for KS3 and KS4





**PUPILS LEARN
IN A SECURE,
HAPPY AND
INDUSTRIOUS
ENVIRONMENT**

LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

St. Colm's creates many opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and talents outside the classroom.



Music

We have an active choir that performs at a variety of events throughout the year. We offer tuition to students who wish to learn a musical instrument.



Cultural Activities

We celebrate our cultural identity at every opportunity, with our traditional music group, Irish dancers and Irish language events.



Educational Trips and Visits

We are keen that our pupils have an opportunity to learn through field visits, practical activities and travel. Annual trips include a ski trip and a History trip to Poland. We have a new and exciting educational link with a partner school in Madrid.



Sporting Opportunities

Physical wellbeing is central to our ethos and we encourage competitive and fun sports activities at every lunchtime and through our extensive extra-curricular provision.



Charity Fundraising

We encourage our students to actively contribute to their community through volunteering and fundraising. We support local and global charities throughout the year.



School Council

We are a listening school. Our School Council is elected annually and meet to discuss the needs of the pupils across all years. The council is a powerful voice for important change.



Learning in the Great Outdoors

As a Catholic school we are called to enhance and protect our environment. At every opportunity we make use of 'Susan's Trail' as an educational tool.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

St. Colm's is a rural school with a global outlook!

We love our community but also take every opportunity to seek learning in new and exciting environments.

We have the tried and tested trips:
Carrickfergus Castle, Magilligan Field Centre, Balmoral Show, agricultural markets, the Jungle and many more.



Our Post-16 students have the exciting opportunity to ski! This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and it is where lasting memories are made. Students ski, fall over, slide on donuts, fall over, eat pizza and quite often... fall over! It is a wonderful trip, one that many spend their school years dreaming of.

History students are offered the opportunity to travel to Berlin, see the iconic Brandenburg Gates and Checkpoint Charlie. It is an extremely busy trip where you are guaranteed to hit your 10,000 steps!

Students get the opportunity to try new food, meet new people and challenge their perceptions of history. It is an extremely popular trip.

France 2024 was so successful 2026 we have a fabulous return trip scheduled for the end of the year. We plan to visit the Eiffel tower, walk the Champs Elysee and visit Notre Dame.

Our current Post-16 students will have the opportunity in June 2026 to walk the Camino Portugues. We will explore our faith, tend to our blisters, laugh and learn about our faith and our friends. This pilgrimage ensures our faith is practised, made real and grounds students in our key values of **FAITH, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY and COMMUNITY**.



SCHOOL CURRICULUM

KEY STAGE 3

Year 8 - 10

Pupils choose from a range of both Academic and Vocational qualifications in the following subject areas

- Religious Education
- Mathematics
- Science
- English
- Irish
- French
- Geography
- ICT
- History
- Home Economics
- Technology
- Art and Design
- Music
- Physical Education
- Learning for Life and Work
- Drama

KEY STAGE 4

Year 11 & 12

Pupils are required to follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum. This includes a compulsory core and a range of optional subjects.

Compulsory Core

- Religious Education
- Mathematics
- English
- Science (Double Award)
- Science (Single Award)
- Physical Education
- Careers Guidance

Optional Subjects

- Agriculture
- Art and Design
- Construction
- English Literature
- ICT
- Irish
- Business Studies
- Physical Education
- Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies
- Performing Arts
- Health and Social Care
- Child Development
- Technology and Design
- French
- Music
- Business and Communication Systems
- History
- Leisure and Tourism
- Geography
- Drama
- Media Studies
- Occupational Studies
- Learning for Life and Work

PREPARATION FOR LIFE LONG LEARNING... AND THE WORLD OF WORK

POST 16

Year 13 & 14

Pupils choose from a range of both Academic and Vocational qualifications in the following subject areas

- The following subjects are taught –
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Construction
- Religion
- Health and Social Care
- Sport
- ICT
- Mathematics
- Media Studies
- Geography
- Irish
- History
- Music
- Engineering
- Chemistry
- Environmental Technology
- Psychology
- Life and Health Science
- Politics
- Performing Arts
- Music
- Spanish
- French

Some of these subjects are offered in collaboration within the Magherafelt Rural Learning Partnership.

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

All Year Groups

Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of subject specific educational visits across all Year Groups

- Fund raising activities supporting local and national charities
- Entrepreneurial Skills Programmes
- Subject specific competitions
- Digital Leaders
- STEM Ambassadors

CURRICULUM PARTNERSHIPS

Year 13 & 14

The pupil's interests are at the heart of everything that takes place in St. Colm's which informs and guides the core of our Curriculum provision.

A sample of our community links –

- Workspace
- GreenPower
- Bank of Ireland
- Learn Spark
- W5
- STEM Module
- NI Careers Service
- Young Enterprise
- Sentinus
- Gaeltacht
- Pope John Paul Award
- Work Experience
- Industry visits
- Geographical Sites
- Field trips
- Catalyst Innovation Centre





Like

YEAR 8 PUPIL EXPERIENCES

Some of our Year 8 pupils who transferred from local primary schools tell us about their experience of life at St. Colm's.



Name: Seanan
School: St Brigid's Primary School, Cranagh

My name is Seanan. I am in Mr Mc Gees tutor class. I came here from St. Brigid's Cranagh. I like St. Colm's because it is the perfect size and everyone is really kind and supportive. One of my highlights here at St. Colm's is meeting new friends and teachers. I love learning the new subjects. I like how all the teachers know my name and how the principal is kind, everyone is very kind and supports each other. I was excited to take part in the Christmas concert and to take part in it. I also loved doing the year 8 mass. The mass was very special, and I loved getting the candle. I'm excited to go on my London trip next term. I really like St Colm's and I know you will too.

Name: Caolan
School: Gaelscoil na Speirini

My name is Caolan, and I came to St Colm's from Gaelscoil na Speirini. So far in St. Colm's I have had many opportunities to be part of lots of fun activities, like HE practicals. I love to make food; we have made soda bread pizzas and spicy potato wedges. I also like PE because I play soccer, gaelic and it is a really fun class. There is a lot of opportunities in St. Colm's like sports teams and school trips. We are going to London next year. We also do school musicals and other activities in the community such as the light switch on which was prepared by St. Colm's. The light show was great fun, and I hope to get involved in all the activities already planned for next year.

Name: Johnny
School: St. Columba's Primary School, Straw

Hello my name is Johnny I went to St . Columba's Primary School, Straw. I am a very proud pupil of St. Colm's High School. I have had lots of opportunities this term, we had two soccer matches were I was joint captain with my cousin. This helped us all learn together both inside and outside the classroom. We also have had a Hurling and Gaelic match. My favourite teacher is into farming and I really enjoy learning about Agriculture which I love. Next term we are going to London for a school trip and we are so excited to explore on this adventure.

Name: Bella
School: Gaelscoil na Speirini

My name is Bella and I came from Gaelscoil na Sperrin. Here at St. Colm's we have lots of opportunities for a range of fun activities including Music, Drama and Sports. My favourite class is drama with Mrs. Young, I hope I have an opportunity to be in the school musical in the future. I really enjoy the sports days and getting to do lots of games. I have really enjoyed my first term in St. Colm's and I know you will too.

Name: Jodie
School: St. Columbs Primary School, Cullion

My name is Jodie. I came from St. Columbs PS Cullion. I am delighted to share the many opportunities I've had in St. Colm's already. Firstly, I was asked to participate by playing the tin whistle for the first-year mass, and I also got to read the responsorial psalm which really helped my confidence. I have met so many new friends. I have been given the opportunity to go to London next year with all my friends. We get to use iPads and computers to bring learning to life. The food is really nice and we have so many fun things to do at lunchtime. We have a brilliant wellness day and going to the cinema as our end of year trip before London next year.

Name: Kaeden
School: Knocknagin Primary School

My name is Kaeden, and in my first term here in St. Colm's. It is a brilliant place and I like how everyone gets on so well together. I think St. Colm's is a good school with lots of opportunities like football, youth club, homework club, running club and lots of fun days out. It's a good community school which makes it a great place to learn. We organised a Christmas Concert with pupils and past pupils. I'm from Knocknagin and St. Colm's invited us to Beauty and the Beast musical it was amazing. I can't wait to be part of the next one.

Name: Maranna
School: St. Columba's Primary School, Straw

Hi, my name is Maranna, and I moved from St. Columba's Ps Straw to St. Colm's High School. The things I like about this school is that it is smaller than other secondary schools. So, we are like one big family. My tutor is Mr Mc Gee, he is funny and nice. At my year 8 beginning mass I sang a hymn during communion and I got a lot of compliments. My favourite subject is HE because I love cooking, but my favourite teacher is the technology teacher Miss Cassidy because she is funny and has a very good sense of humour. I can't even describe to you how good the canteen food is, and I would rate it a 10/10. Another thing I really want to tell you is that I started playing violin and I have been making very good progress at it. The final thing I'm going to say is that the teachers are very caring and thoughtful. I've really enjoyed my time here at St. Colm's so far.

Name: Aidan
School: St. Eoghan's Primary School, Moneyneany

My name is Aidan, I am in Mr McGee's tutor class, I came here from St. Eoghan's, I feel so welcomed. Ms McAllister is so nice and so is everyone else who helps us everyday. I have made so many new friends that I barely knew before. It really feels like we are a big community, everyone knows each other and looks out for one another. There are so many talented people in our school. I feel like a duck in water here in this lovely school. We are going on lots of school trips and we are going to London next year. This school is simply brilliant and so are the range of subjects we get to learn, I really enjoy H.E.

APPROVED

I BELIEVED I ACHIEVED



Aaron Bradley

- Physiotherapist
- Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Head of Performance Derry GAA

Hi, I'm Aaron Bradley, a past pupil of St Colm's High School. I am now a physiotherapist and strength and conditioning coach, currently Head of Performance for Derry GAA, while also running my own performance and physiotherapy business. Alongside this, I am completing a Master's degree in Performance Coaching.

During my time in St Colm's, PE and Science were the subjects that stood out most to me. Sport was a natural passion of mine from an early age, but Science was something I initially struggled with. Rather than avoiding it, I learned that it was something I needed to embrace in order to get where I wanted to go. With the

support and encouragement of my teachers, it became a subject I began to enjoy and one that ultimately played a huge role in shaping my future career.

There were key moments during school where guidance from staff really helped shape my path. Ciaran Meenagh and Sheilah Maguire both offered invaluable personal and career advice at times when I was unsure about my direction and the best pathway to follow. Their belief and honesty helped me make decisions that felt right for me, not simply what was expected.

Sport played a huge role in my time at St. Colm's. I was involved in Gaelic football, hurling, soccer and athletics, and these experiences helped shape my discipline, confidence and identity. Being Head Boy in sixth form was a proud moment for me and taught me leadership, responsibility and the importance of setting high standards. One of my fondest memories has to be the sixth-form ski trip, alongside winning multiple football championships, moments that created friendships and memories I still value today.

Beyond grades, St. Colm's gave me confidence, resilience, a strong work ethic and belief in myself. Looking back, the biggest change from school to now is clarity and self-belief. I learned that setbacks, challenges and changes in direction are part of the journey, and that it's okay to step away from a path that doesn't feel right and pursue one that truly excites you.

After leaving school, I initially followed a route that felt expected of me, before having the confidence to change direction and pursue physiotherapy and performance, a decision I am extremely grateful I made. If there is one message I would give to current pupils, it is to trust the process, embrace challenges and don't be afraid to back yourself. With hard work, support and belief, you can carve your own path.

I am proud of my time in St Colm's and grateful for the role it played in shaping who I am today.

I truly believed, and I have achieved.



IF THERE IS ONE MESSAGE I WOULD GIVE TO CURRENT PUPILS, IT IS TO TRUST THE PROCESS, EMBRACE CHALLENGES AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO BACK YOURSELF.

I BELIEVED I ACHIEVED



Denise O'Sullivan

- Audit Manager
- Chartered Accountant

Hi, I'm Denise, a past pupil of St. Colm's High School. I am currently an Audit Manager and a fully qualified Chartered Accountant.

I studied my A Levels at St. Colm's before completing an undergraduate degree in Accounting at Ulster University. I then undertook my Chartered Accountancy training contract with BDO Northern Ireland, where I now work as a Manager following qualification with Chartered Accountants Ireland.

During my time at St Colm's, Business Studies, Maths and Performing Arts were subjects I enjoyed. The skills I developed through these subjects include confidence, communication and public speaking, have all been invaluable in my career and continue to support me when presenting and

working with senior leadership teams and company boards.

One of my proudest roles at school was being Deputy Head Girl, which allowed me to develop leadership skills and a strong sense of responsibility.

I am also very proud of taking part in the school musical, The Sound of Music, which was a highlight of my school years and a time where I made lifelong memories with friends.

Some of my fondest memories from St Colm's include the school ski trip and being involved in the musical. These experiences helped shape my confidence and created friendships that I still value today.

St. Colm's played a huge role in preparing me for my career by helping me develop the key characteristics required to succeed as an accountant, including discipline, resilience and self belief. I am especially grateful for the guidance I received when choosing the right academic pathway which helped lead me to my current profession.

I feel incredibly proud and happy of my time in St Colm's. I have built a successful career in the accounting sector and met some of my closest friends during my time at St. Colm's.

I am proud to say that I believed, and I achieved.



ST. COLM'S PLAYED A HUGE ROLE IN PREPARING ME FOR MY CAREER BY HELPING ME DEVELOP THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS REQUIRED TO SUCCEED AS AN ACCOUNTANT, INCLUDING DISCIPLINE, RESILIENCE AND SELF BELIEF.



SPORT IN ST. COLM'S

St. Colm's is committed to ensuring our young people are fit, healthy and can enjoy their lives to the full. Opportunities exist to become involved in the following sports:



Hurling & Camogie



Rounders



Athletics



Netball



Boys & Girls
Gaelic Football



Cross Country



Soccer



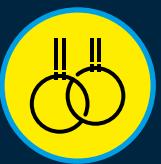
Badminton



Archery



Handball



Gymnastics



Basketball



Table Tennis



Orienteering



Swimming

PUPILS ARE WELL SUPPORTED AND NURTURED; THEY BENEFIT FROM A RANGE OF CURRICULAR, ENRICHMENT AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- ETI January 2025





Facilities

Our sporting facilities are second to none and include a state-of-the-art sports hall, with indoor handball walls, a fitness suite for strength and conditioning and spin bikes. We also have a flood lit 3G pitch to ensure field sports continue regardless of the weather.

Our pupils regularly compete in the Co. Derry Sporting codes of athletics, camogie, hurling and gaelic.

Our facilities are used regularly by the local community, neighbouring primary schools. Our Post-16 Sports Studies students and teachers provide coaching to our local Primary Schools. We are so proud of our pupil's sporting prowess.

Congratulations Mr Meenagh

"We at St Colm's are absolutely delighted and incredibly proud to see Mr Meenagh appointed as the new Derry Senior Football Manager. This is a fantatsic achievement and a well-deserved recognition of his dedication, leadership and passion for the game. We have no doubt he will bring great success to the County, just as he has inspired so many of us here at St. Colm's"



Sporting Success

St. Colm's has a long tradition of sporting success. We continue to compete in Ulster camogie, football and hurling and soccer.



**ST. COLM'S TOOK ALL
SPORTING CODES BY STORM
IN 2024 -2025! WE ARE PROUD
ULSTER CHAMPIONS IN
U13 SOCCER, U14 CAMOGIE
AND U14 HURLING. THREE
WONDERFUL SPORTING
ACHIEVEMENTS.**

THE ST. COLM'S INITIATIVE

The **St Colm's Initiative** is a pioneering, student-led enterprise designed to empower young people through real-world business experience.

Our mission is to build financial sustainability for school activities, enrich education through hands-on learning, and inspire an entrepreneurial mindset.

Our work is guided by our school values of community and responsibility. Through the St. Colm's initiative we aim to create a self-sufficient model that strengthens community partnerships and prepares students to become confident, capable leaders and job creators.

Vision —

A thriving, self-sustaining enterprise that enriches student life and positions St. Colm's as a hub of creativity and leadership.

Mission —

- Empower students through genuine enterprise experiences.
- Build financial independence to support school initiatives.
- Inspire entrepreneurial thinking and practical skill development.

Our Aims —

- **Educational Enrichment:** Learning through doing—product development, marketing, finance, and leadership.
- **Skill Development:** Teamwork, communication, digital literacy, and critical thinking.
- **Community Collaboration:** Strong partnerships built on shared purpose, not dependence.
- **Long-Term Impact:** A legacy of innovation and resilience for future generations.



KEY STRENGTH OF THE SCHOOL IS THE PROACTIVE AND HIGHLY CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT IN A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECTS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS. AS A RESULT, THE PUPILS DEVELOP A CLOSE AND AUTHENTIC APPRECIATION OF THEIR COMMUNITY, CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND LOCAL HERITAGE.

- ETI January 2025





CAREER CONNEXTIONS

The Career ConNEXTions Event was an innovative collective community approach to shaping our young people's futures. It is essential in a rapidly changing educational and employment landscape.



THE 'CAREERS CONNECTIONS' EVENT HELD IN THE SCHOOL DURING THE LAST YEAR BROUGHT THE PUPILS FROM YEAR 10 TO YEAR 14 TOGETHER WITH THEIR PARENTS/ CARERS AND 28 LOCAL EMPLOYERS FROM A WIDE RANGE OF SECTORS, TO SIGNPOST THEM TO SUITABLE RESOURCES AND ACCESS APPROPRIATE CAREERS ADVICE AND INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRESSION PATHWAYS AND THE WORLD OF WORK.

- ETI January 2025

Business Links

In Mid-Ulster we have local companies enjoying global success – we welcomed 31 local companies, employers and higher education providers who see the worth in aligning the core key values of St. Colm's with their own to ensure our pupils are receiving the support, advice, information and guidance they need.

Our event wouldn't have been possible without our wonderful partners in workspace – who

have the capacity drive projects and generate employment opportunities across many sectors.

The key figures bringing this event to life were Laurence O'Kane, Georgina Grieve, Sheilah Maguire, Adele McIvor and Anne McKernan. They had a shared vision and worked tirelessly to make it a reality.

We look forward to forging strong and valuable links with our local partners.



MEET THE TEAM

Our Teaching Staff



IN ST. COLM'S WE ARE
RIGHTLY PROUD OF
THE ACHIEVEMENTS
OF OUR PAST PUPILS.
WE ARE DOUBLY
PROUD OF THOSE PAST
PUPILS WHO HAVE
JOINED US AS STAFF!

Mrs Leanne Steele History Teacher

My own history is deeply rooted in St. Colm's. As a past pupil and living within the local community, I feel a deep sense of belonging with St. Colm's. It is my school, and I am now so proud to work as a teacher here. I often talk about my time here as a pupil with my own classes; fondly remembering the changes that have taken place over the years, the staff that have come and gone. I hope that one day, my own children will also make their own little bit of History here too!



Miss Jacqui Conway Religion Teacher

St. Colm's will always be a very special place for me. The community that the school builds helps each child to develop a sense of belonging and highlights all their individual strengths. I have experienced the school from many different angles; as a pupil, a teacher and as a parent. I can honestly say that St. Colm's will always be home for me.

Mrs Marie McKernan Geography Teacher

My St. Colm's journey started as a year 8 student and I feel very fortunate to still be part of the St. Colm's family. I am very proud to be a past pupil and have many fond memories of my time here as a student. St. Colm's is a special place that fostered my love for learning and supported my ambition to become a teacher. It is a wonderful place for both pupils and staff.

Mrs Emma Young Music Teacher

I never thought, as a pupil in St. Colm's, that one day I would return as the Music teacher. It was a nostalgic and proud moment to walk through the doors again and be welcomed into a place that taught me so many valuable lessons that I've been to carry into adulthood.

Mary Mc Ivor Business Studies, Digital Technology and Religion Teacher

I am a past pupil and current teacher of Business Studies, Digital Technology and Religion at St. Colm's. I am a form tutor to a year 11 class, and I have recently taken on the leadership role of Head of Year 11 which is proven to be a fulfilling and gratifying experience. I work with a team of three other form teachers to ensure that each pupil transferring to GCSE makes a smooth transition. St. Colm's is a fantastic school with a wealth of opportunities on offer for all students. I often reminisce upon my fond memories as a pupil, and I am so proud to return as a teacher!

Our Support Staff



Mrs Maria Doherty

Learning Support Assistant

I was a past pupil in St. Colm's many years ago! Throughout my time in the school, I was extremely happy and thoroughly enjoyed being a student in such a warm and caring environment. I am currently a learning support assistant in St. Colm's and delighted to be back. It is very rewarding to see our students achieve their full potential in line with our school ethos 'Believe and Achieve'.

Mrs Anna Marie Mullan

Learning Support Assistant

As a pupil, I loved St. Colm's. I will always remember the feeling of being part of a family that you can only get in a small rural school. I was delighted to rejoin the St. Colm's family as a learning support assistant. I love the interaction with the pupils; we have fun but we learn together every day. It's a great place to work!

Mrs Louise Toner

Learning Support Assistant

I enjoyed my time here so much I came back as a staff member! St. Colm's is a friendly school and everyone is made to feel very welcome. We all work together as a team. We support each other to learn and to have fun!

Mrs Karen McGuigan

IT Technician

It sometimes feels like I have been in St. Colm's forever! I started in 1986 as a Year 8 pupil and joined the staff in 1992. I loved school and rarely missed a day. Everyone was so friendly, and the staff were brilliant. I have worked alongside some amazing people who go beyond their duty of care. St. Colm's is a very homely school where everyone is welcome.

Mrs Una O'Hagan

Learning Support Assistant

As a pupil of St. Colm's I loved the way teachers and pupils cared for each other. I was delighted to return as a learning support assistant in 1997. I enjoy the interaction with pupils and watch how their social and intellectual skills develop over the years.

My School Day

Diary of a St. Colm's Pupil Aged 11 $\frac{1}{4}$



HELLO



8.50am

Tutor

I go to my tutor's classroom every morning, we say a prayer, catch up with our friends, hear messages and take a register. It is over in a flash, but I am glad to see my Tutor, they are always kind to me.



12 - 12.40pm

Lunchtime

I bring my packed lunch, the canteen is great, but there is so much to do at lunch! We can play table tennis, go to the ICT suite, play soccer on the 3G pitch, swing ball in the summer and lots of other clubs and activities too!



9.10 - 10.00am

Period 1: English

I love English (although I'm not a great speller!). Our teacher sometimes reads to us, we all love that as it is a calm way to start the day!



12.40 - 1.30pm

Period 4: French

'Bonjour', that's hello in French. French is fun, on international languages day we had crêpes (French pancakes) and a quiz too.



10 - 10.15am

Breaktime

We can buy hot food from the canteen or bring our own snack. There is just enough time to chat to my friends, eat something, visit the bathroom and the bell has gone for period 2.



1.30 - 2.20pm

Period 5: LLW

This is one of the many new subjects. It means Learning for Life and Work. We study all sorts of things including learning more about ourselves, our health and how to stay well.



10.15 - 11.55am

Period 2 and 3 PE

This is one of my favourites! We are going swimming this term. It's very busy but we love it. There's always good craic on the bus and we are starving for our dinner when we get back to school.



2.20 - 3.10pm

Period 6: Maths

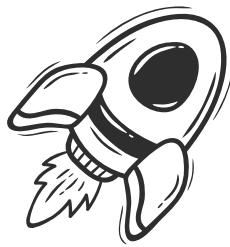
I thought Maths was difficult in Primary School, it still isn't easy, but I know I can always go to Maths clinic after school if I need help.



3.10pm

HOMETIME! 
The buses are all outside the school gates and teachers help you find your bus and cross the road if you need to.

Sometimes I like to get all my work done before I go home, on these days I go to Homework Club. It runs from 3.10 to 4.15 and there are teachers and learning support assistants to help.

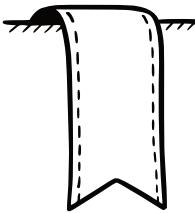


I can't wait to see you all in September!

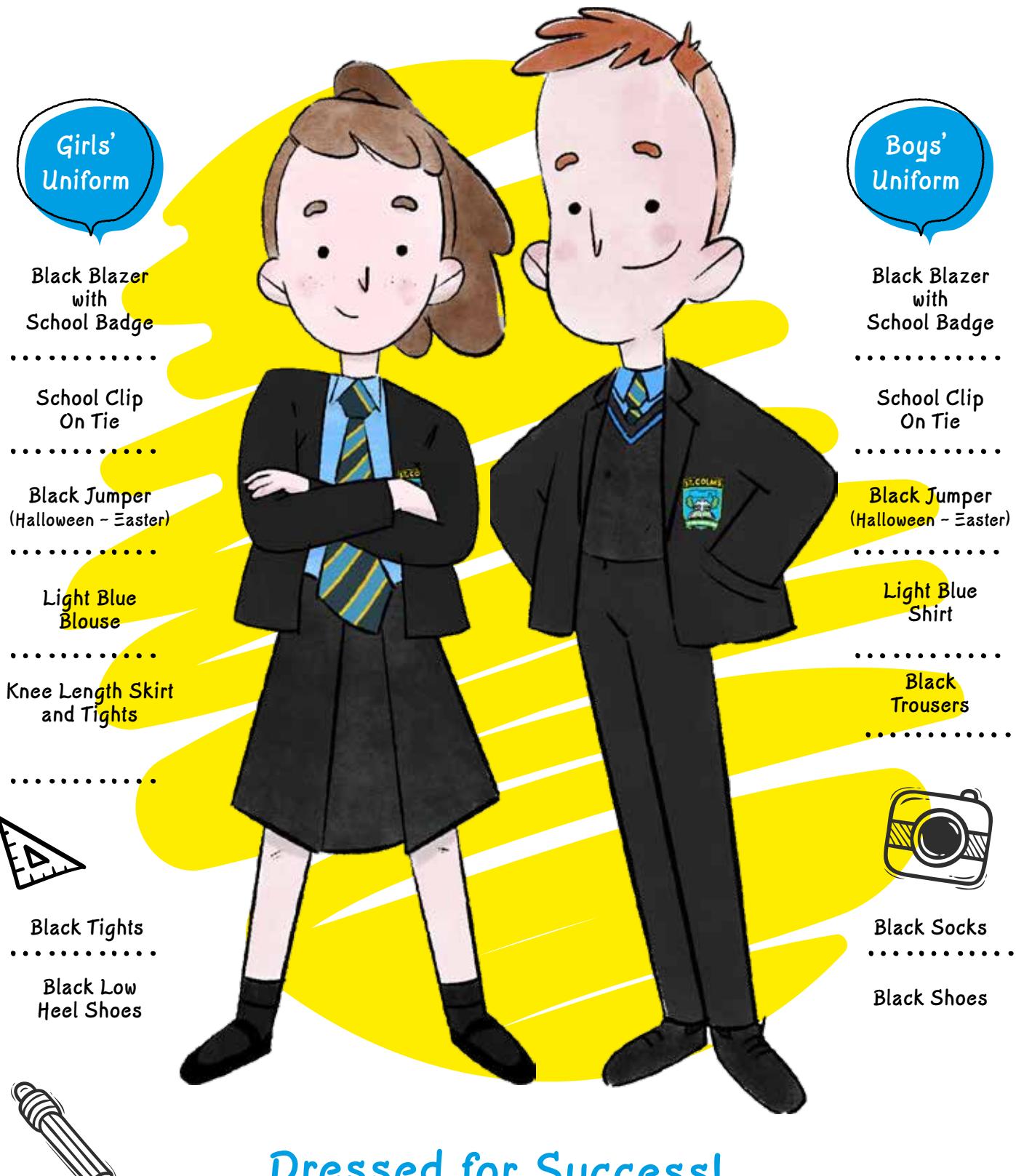




Our School Uniform



We wear our uniform with pride!



Dressed for Success!



THIS CORNS

The Cornstore youth club opened its doors in September 2001 with a fresh-faced Michelle Magee as youth tutor and 80 members.

The last 22 years have witnessed many changes – staff have come and gone and the Cornstore has moved out of the building that gave it its name. January 2022 marked the opening of the brand new Cornstore building leased to St. Colm's by Workspace.

However, one thing has remained consistent – the unwavering and constantly creative leadership of Miss Magee, now Mrs Belaid.

Cornstore is the epicentre of activities for the young people of Ballinsacreen and surrounding areas. It serves the local community, and in turn, the community has offered steady support to the leadership and membership of the Youth Club – now totalling in excess of 200!



CORNSTORE IS THE EPICENTRE OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF BALLINSACREEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

STORY YOUTH CLUB

Community links dominate the activities in the Cornstore with strong associations and projects involving Ballinascreen Community Forum, Ballinascreen Mens' Shed and Ballinascreen Fold. The work of the Youth club team has brought about the annual Christmas lights event, and it facilitates volunteering as part of the John Paul II and Duke of Edinburgh/President's awards. The Youth Club membership are currently working on a Ballinascreen in Bloom initiative.

Mrs Michelle Belaid's contribution to life in St. Colm's and the Cornstore Youth Club was recognised in 2023 with the Teacher of the Year Award as part of the Families First Awards.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

- ARTS AND CRAFTS
- POOL
- FOOZEBALL
- ON-LINE GAMING
- BOARD GAMES
- TABLE TENNIS
- REST AND RELAXATION IN THE NURTURE ROOM
- FOOTBALL
- IT ACTIVITIES
- DANCE
- FAITH GROUP

Monday Yr 9 & Yr 10
Tuesday Yr 11 & Yr 12
Wednesday Yr 8 & P7
Thursday P5 & P6
Time: 6.45pm - 9.15pm
Cost: £1 per night





My Time at the Cornstore

I am privileged to have been part of the Cornstore community over the last 6 years. The Cornstore has brought me boundless experiences, memories, and lifelong friendships. Because of this, I have developed a great interest in and passion for youth work and I see first hand the impact and benefits it brings to an individual and the community. My time as a member of the Cornstore has come to an end, yet I still choose to attend as a volunteer. I am happy to devote my time to the youth club as I want all the members to have the same experiences I am so grateful to have had.

Through the youth club I was offered the opportunity to complete my Duke of Edinburgh bronze and silver awards. Mrs Belaid showed us the rugged natural beauty of her home county of Down. I can now confidently claim that I can overcome challenges, work as part of a team, and achieve goals I could only have dreamed of before joining the Cornstore. Despite the mental and physical challenges I faced in Duke of Edinburgh, it is one of the best memories I have in my life to date.

Relationships and friendships developed through the youth club are those I hold closest to my heart. From the second I walked through the green doors as a new member to this very day, Mrs Belaid has guided and supported me and allowed me to become the person I am today. She has taught me many life lessons and has proved herself to be one of the most reliable and trusted support systems in my life – in and out of school.

My experiences in the youth club have been the most enjoyable of my life. I am grateful for the unconditional love and support shown by all those involved in the Cornstore.

Katie



ECO SCHOOL A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENTS!



As a proud Green Flag Eco-School and Ambassador School, we have spent this year turning sustainability into action and what a year it has been!

Preloved Fashion Show

One of the standout highlights was our Preloved Fashion Show. It wasn't just about style it was about sustainability. Students showcased 90 fabulous outfits, helping us save a significant number of textiles from landfill.

Partnership

Partnership is at the heart of what we do. We have teamed up with local community groups and our feeder primary schools to make a real difference. Our students have been out and about, getting hands-on to protect and improve our local environment.

Community

This year, we have added colour and life to our community by:

- Creating recycled flower reels for Draperstown streets
- Building bird boxes for The Plantin and Susan's Trail
- Making garden boxes for local schools and community spaces
- Planting 9,724 bulbs in a stunning hot-air balloon display at Fair Hill

Our efforts didn't go unnoticed! We were thrilled to win the Community Eco Award at the Mid Ulster Arts, Culture, and Community Awards, and

our very own Mrs Belaid was crowned Eco Teacher of the Year. These awards reflect the passion and dedication of our entire school community.

Junk Kouture

We have just embarked on the exciting Junk Kouture journey. A fashion competition challenging schools to design, upcycle, and create high-end sustainable fashion from recycled materials and already our innovative designs have caught the eye of major social media platforms!

**TOGETHER, WE ARE
PROVING THAT SMALL
ACTIONS LEAD
TO BIG CHANGE.**





ST. COLM'S

H I G H S C H O O L

Believe & Achieve

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