

Loughries Integrated Primary School – Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Loughries Integrated Primary School?

Our school is a small rural setting in an idyllic location just outside Newtownards. Parents often tell us how convenient the journey is because we are outside the town. Drop-off and pick-up times are usually quicker as you are travelling in the opposite direction to most traffic.

What is an Integrated School?

As an integrated school, we bring children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other beliefs, cultures, and communities together. Children from different backgrounds learn side by side every day in the same classrooms. We are essentially Christian in character but actively respect and include all traditions. Our aim is to empower children as independent thinkers who can positively contribute to a shared society. For parents who wish their child to receive sacramental preparation, we have a teacher and resources to support this in partnership with families. Integrated education is value-driven and child-centred, focusing on equality, respect, and developing every aspect of a child's potential. You can read more in our Statement of Principles on our website: <https://www.loughriesips.com/our-school/integration>. Children also learn about World Religions and topics such as: P3/4: Celebrating Differences, P5/6: Knowing Me, Knowing You, P7: Flags and Symbols. We regularly invite people from different faiths to speak at our Friday assemblies.

What is this school's approach to student discipline?

Our Positive Behaviour Policy encourages all children to behave appropriately. Pupils helped create our School Contract which is displayed in the Dinner Hall. Each class negotiates its own rules together. Good behaviour is rewarded with praise, and children quickly learn that positive behaviour earns more attention. Visitors often comment on how well-behaved our pupils are both in school and in the community. All adults model and teach good manners every day.

How do you celebrate achievements?

Pupil of the Week certificates and badges are presented during whole-school assemblies. We celebrate achievements both inside and outside school. Sporting and musical successes are shared in assembly, and photos are posted on our website and Facebook page.

This year, we have introduced **House Teams** to encourage teamwork and school spirit. Each month, we focus on a special **value**—such as kindness, respect, or perseverance—and the children earn points for their House by demonstrating these values in school life.

It's a fantastic way to celebrate positive behaviour, build friendships, and make learning fun! At the end of each month, we announce the winning House and celebrate their achievements together.

How much homework do students receive?

Homework varies by class: P1/2: Word boxes, Maths, English, and Reading. P3–P7: Literacy, Numeracy, Spellings, Tables, Reading, and other subjects throughout the year. Our full Homework Policy is available on our school website under Policies.

Do you offer extra reading resources?

Yes! The Library Bus visits our school once a month. Each class has its own library and uses the Belfast Library Service for topic-related books. We have several reading schemes and novels for pupils to enjoy. Daily silent reading gives children time to choose and read books they love.

How is ICT used to support teaching and learning?

Each class has iPads, a Smart Board and access to an individual Chromebook. Weekly sessions are timetabled for each class to teach ICT skills e.g. Coding using the microbits or Beebots. The children have the opportunity to reinforce skills through apps and educational games on the C2K network. Pupils take part in the Sumdog Mental Maths Competition, often performing very well against other NI schools.

Is there a school choir, band, or orchestra?

Yes! Our KS2 choir performs in the local community, visiting places like Donaghadee Garden Centre, Tesco Newtownards, and residential homes.

What extracurricular opportunities are available?

We offer a wide range of clubs throughout the year, including: Irish Dancing, Science Club, Art Club, ICT Club, Lego Club, Clayrazy Club, Rounders Club, Netball Club, Badminton Club, Basketball Club, Coding Club, Football Club, Gardening Club, Yoga Club, Book Club, Spanish Club, Archery Club and Cookery Club. Music tuition is also available on a Wednesday and Friday afternoons.

Are you a healthy eating school?

Yes! We encourage healthy snacks Monday–Thursday, with a treat allowed on Friday.

Does the school have a programme for gifted students?

Yes. Children identified as gifted and talented receive a targeted plan and extension activities tailored to their needs.

How does the school support students with academic, social, or emotional difficulties?

Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) are written for these pupils. Our SEN Teacher, Mrs Rea, works with children every afternoon. The Principal provides Booster Numeracy lessons weekly. Pupils take part in Mental Health Week annually. We have an outside classroom, garden, and polytunnel for hands-on learning and wellbeing activities.

Does the school offer Physical Education (PE) classes?

Yes! All children have two PE lessons per week. We use the Ards Evangelical Church Hall in bad weather. From P5, pupils attend swimming lessons at Blair Mayne Leisure Centre with a qualified coach. All children are activity engaged in the Daily Mile.

Is there an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA)?

Yes! Our PTFA organises events such as: Family Fun Day, Disco, Summer BBQ, Bag Packs, whole school trip to the Pantomime, Raffles and Quizzes throughout the year.

Do the children go on class trips?

Yes! Each class enjoys trips throughout the year, and P6/7 have a residential in May/June.

What are some of the school's greatest accomplishments?

We have won the Mental Maths Sumdog competition. Success in Carson's Art Awards (1st place in primary section). Strong performances in Glashury Football and Rounders competitions. P7 pupils excel in Design and Technology Challenges. Our small school

environment fosters confidence, resilience, and excellent academic results, helping pupils thrive in post-primary education.

How can I find out more about the school?

Visit our website and Facebook page for a glimpse into school life.

Individual tours are available—please contact us: Telephone: 02891 817528 or by email: info@loughriesips.newtownards.ni.sch.uk