

Primate Dixon Nursery



Parent Information Booklet 2026-2027



PRIMATE DIXON PS – MISSION STATEMENT



'EVERY CHILD IS MORE THAN GOOD ENOUGH'

**In Primate Dixon Primary School, we want to give every child every opportunity
to grow and develop to the best of their individual potential
within a secure, caring, Catholic ethos and our whole school Nurture environment.**

We want to provide the very best primary education for every child in our school.

We want all our children to learn and grow to be the very best that they can be in every way.

We want our children to be confident and to know that they are always more than good enough.

We want our school to be a place where no one is left out and no one is left behind.

We want to ensure that there are no barriers to learning.

We aim for Best Practice in every area of our work.

**We want to do this by working together in partnership –
home, school and parish community.**



Welcome

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to Primate Dixon Nursery. This is a very exciting new chapter in your child's life and we are so pleased that you have chosen to send your child to Primate Dixon Nursery. Our school motto is 'Every child is more than good enough' and this motto encapsulates all that we do every day in Nursery.

The information in this booklet is designed to help you understand what happens in Nursery, how we intend to help your child develop over the course of this year, how you can help and be involved in the process. We hope you find the information useful and informative.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers

We are proud of our record of forming close links with our parents and carers. Good communication between staff and parents enables us to provide the best possible start to your child's life. We appreciate the sharing of key information about your child or any changes throughout the school year. We ask parents to complete an All About Me booklet prior to your child beginning to gain a little insight about your child. The Open Afternoon in June gives parents and children an opportunity to meet with staff and see their new Nursery.

Nursery staff

Principal:	Mrs Siobhán Murphy
Vice Principal:	Miss Caitríona Devlin
Nursery Teachers:	Mrs Nadine McMullan and Ms Émer Murphy
Nursery Assistants:	Mrs Louise Kennedy and Miss Claire Dillon
School Secretary:	Mrs Anne Mitchell

Contact Details

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Coalisland
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Aims of Our Nursery

We believe that each child grows, learns and develops at his or her own pace and we enhance their learning through the experiences and activities that we provide. We have created an atmosphere where our children feel happy, secure and valued as individuals. The aims of Primate Dixon PS Nursery are:

- To encourage positive self-image, confidence and independence.
- To help each child acquire a basic understanding of the concepts essential to later learning.
- To promote the development of skills necessary for future learning.
- To provide a warm, safe, loving environment for every child.
- To develop lively enquiring minds.
- To celebrate early childhood experiences.
- To instil in the children an attitude of respect and tolerance towards others.
- To help each child develop the ability to communicate confidently and clearly with others.
- To allow every child to experience personal achievement in the activities they engage in.
- To have fun and enjoy their preschool experience.

The Nursery Day

The Nursery opens at 8.45am and class ends at 1.15pm.

We have a staggered intake in the mornings so children may be dropped off any time between 8.45am and 9.00am and collection times are also staggered with children able to be collected from 1pm to 1.15pm. All children must be collected by 1.15pm.

Your child must be brought to and collected by a parent or designated adult.

Regular routines are very important to children. We will ask you who may collect your child from nursery. If this changes for any reason, please let us know in writing. If changes are due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact us by phone to let us know. If we do not have written or telephone parental confirmation, we **will not** allow the child to leave nursery.

Access to the Nursery

The entrance to the Nursery is located to the left of the main school building. The main door opens around 8.30am and parents are welcome to wait in the Nursery foyer until Nursery opens at 8.45am. Parents are encouraged to ensure their child is in Nursery for 9am. After 9.05am the Nursery door will be closed, and parents will have to buzz to gain access to the Nursery.

Settling In

It is important that your child feels happy and secure with us and to help this transition from home to nursery, please consider the following points.

- Bring your child along to visit the Nursery and meet the teacher at the open day in June.
- Be prepared that it may take time for your child to feel settled at Nursery. Every child is unique and some children take a little longer to settle in the beginning.
- The intake for Nursery children will be staggered during September. We have found this makes it easier for the children to adapt and settle. It is nursery policy to start the youngest children first.
- To begin with, the children will stay for short periods which will gradually build up to a full day session.

You will be sent a letter during the summer detailing your child's starting date and times for collection throughout September. Your child will begin with a small group of children to allow staff and children to get to know each other.

All children will begin Nursery for a two-hour session for two weeks to introduce and consolidate Nursery routines. After two weeks the children will then stay for dinner until 12.15pm. By the end of September, all children will be staying until 1.15pm.

In some circumstances, these dates and times may change according to the needs of your child. Some children may need a little longer to settle. We work with our parents to ensure the best possible settling period for your child.

Nursery Uniform



The Nursery uniform consists of a green polo shirt, a navy jumper with the school logo and jogging bottoms or navy leggings. We strongly encourage the children to wear a pair of trainers each day with grips on the soles to help with physical play outside. Trainers with laces are often too difficult for Nursery children to tie independently, so when purchasing please consider trainers with velcro fastening.

We recognise that the girls often prefer to wear skirts however we strongly recommend all wear jogging bottoms/leggings to aid with physical play which gives the child more protection at the knee and encourages more physical play.

We are acutely aware of the cost of school uniforms to parents and the only item that we ask to have the school logo is the school jumper, all other items may be purchased at any high street retailer.

Please ensure all jumpers, coats, hats, scarves etc are clearly labelled.

We ask parents to provide us with a set of spare clothes which are all clearly labelled. These will be kept in your child's drawer in case of any spills or accidents. These spare clothes do not need to be an extra uniform. If your child is still toilet training, please provide a few extra spare pants, bottoms and socks.

School jumpers can be purchased from local suppliers in the town.

Snack Time and Dinner Time

Shared meal and snack times are very important parts of the Nursery Day. As part of the Northern Ireland Preschool Curriculum all children attending Nursery benefit from taking school dinners.

Snack time and dinnertime provide excellent opportunities for learning. Nursery staff eat dinner with the children. It gives Nursery staff a perfect setting in which to talk naturally and informally to the children about healthy foods, good table manners, as well as hygiene and good eating habits.

Each morning a healthy snack will be available for your child. This will consist of fruit daily and a snack such as yoghurt, cereal, sandwich. At times children will make their own snack such as pizza, fruit salad, scones or bread.

Please do not send in any snack/drinks with their child. It is nursery policy that sweets, bars, crisps and fizzy drinks are not brought into nursery.

Nursery children develop their independence and fine motor skills through using tongs to select snack, pouring their own drink and washing and drying their own cup and plate after snack. Nursery children use real cutlery and plates at dinner which again helps develop fine motor skills. Children scrape their own plate and help clean the Nursery after dinner.

Dinner - £15.00 per week

Snack - £8.00 per month

Dinner money is paid via the Teachers2Parents app and should be paid on a Sunday evening for the week ahead. Snack money envelopes are sent home each month with the accompanying newsletter and monthly rhymes.

Free milk is supplied to every child in the Nursery.

Health

If your child is unwell, he/she should be kept at home until he/she is fully recovered. This is essential as it prevents the spread of the infection to other children/staff and equally important, a sick or tired child cannot fully participate in the day's activities.

A list of infectious diseases with incubation and exclusion periods is posted in the nursery hallway can be found online on the HSCNI website under Guidance on Infection Control. We have included a list of common childhood illness and exclusion periods in this booklet.

It is essential that we have a telephone number at which you can be reached if your child is ill.

We ask every parent to complete a contact form and return it to us before their child starts nursery.

Please ensure we have a number of contacts.

If contact numbers change, particularly mobile numbers, please be sure to let us know.

Medicines

If your child has an allergy, please inform the nursery staff before your child begins nursery. Antihistamines and Epi-pens need to be clearly labelled with the child's name and instructions for use and a Care Plan needs to be completed by the parent.

If your child has asthma and needs to take an inhaler regularly, it is advisable that one is kept in the nursery. Inhalers need to be clearly labelled with the child's name and a care plan with instructions for use needs to be completed by the parent.

If there is any medical information or change in circumstances, please tell a member of the nursery staff.

All information shared is treated in strict confidence.

Parental Involvement

You know your child best. We believe that in order to provide the best care and start to your child's education, the school and home must work together as a partnership. At Primate Dixon PS Nursery, we value the partnership of parents in the care and education of their children.

We hope that you as parents will feel welcome in the Nursery and know that any worry or query you may have will be dealt quickly and in strict confidence.

We use the Seesaw app to help share information and photos of your child. Please ensure you download the app on your mobile. Staff will provide details of how to download once your child begins.

You may arrange to talk with the Nursery teacher at any time and parent-teacher meetings are held twice a year. A settling in meeting is held in early November and a follow up meeting is held in February.

A parent's board is located at the entrance to the Nursery. Remember to check it regularly for the activities your child will be engaged in, as well as any special events or closures.

A monthly newsletter is also sent out to parents along with the rhymes for the month. We also send an information leaflet about key curricular areas and ideas on how parents can help develop this area with their child.

A book borrowing service is available throughout the year. We encourage parents to make use of this.

Each child has a drawer in the foyer below their coat hook labelled with the child's name and symbol. Here you will be able to collect messages from the teacher, collect children's work and leave snack envelopes.

During the year we will ask your opinion on nursery life and activities. We very much welcome your thoughts and opinions.

We ask parents to share important information about their child with us so that we can best meet the needs of the child.

Please inform the nursery teacher as soon as possible if your child has:

- a medical condition
- an allergy
- any dietary requirements
- had a referral made by a health visitor or GP
- is attending/or on a waiting list to attend a Speech Therapy or Occupational Therapy Clinic or Community Paediatrics

Please keep us informed about any change in the child's circumstances or any significant happenings that could affect your child.

The 'Nursery Parents as Partners Policy' is displayed in the nursery foyer and a copy is available upon request.

Sharing Information

We aim to share key school information with you with as much information as possible.

If there ever is other information you think would be useful, please be sure to let us know.

SCHOOL TEXTS

When necessary, we use a texting system to pass information to you quickly.

When we send a text message to two adult contacts, we are sending well over a thousand texts.

So, for most texts, these are sent to first contact only – be sure you have indicated who should be your child's first contact.

For any information that is very important, we will text this to two contact numbers,

SCHOOL EMAIL

We send detailed information about school arrangements by email.

Emails go to the two contacts you have indicated as first and second priority.

The majority of school information goes to families this way.

KEEP US UPDATED OF CHANGES

Be sure to let us know if any contact details change, including mobile numbers and email addresses.

PRINT COPIES OF LETTERS

We issue very few print letters.

When we do in exceptional circumstances, we will text parents to check schoolbags.

FACEBOOK

We also post other information and photos of events and special days to Primate Dixon Facebook.

Please note:

We do not monitor Messenger on Facebook, please do not send queries on Facebook or Messenger. These will not be answered.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Other information, including the range of school policies is posted on Primate Dixon website.

<https://www.primatedixonpscoalisland.org/>

SAFETY ROUTINES – ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

Numbers of children in the school have increased greatly in the past few years.

In September 2026, we will have over 600 pupils here at Primate Dixon.

Staff numbers have increased, doubling to almost 90 staff working here in school.

We constantly review our safety and security arrangements to do all we can to ensure safe and smooth operation of school each day.

Vehicle access arrangements are in place to reduce the numbers of vehicles coming into school each day.

The safety of children and the school community will always be our priority.

Details of vehicle access arrangements can be seen on the school website.

VEHICLE BARRIER ENTRY

Vehicle entry is managed by barrier-controlled entry at the school's bottom gates.

Access is for school staff and EA vehicles only.

This has added greatly to safe children and adult pedestrian movement inside school grounds.

ACCESS INTO OUR SCHOOL BUILDING

All doors into the school are securely managed by staff cards. This protects both entry into and exit from school.

The arrangements we have in place are there only to promote the safety of all and the smooth operation of school each day.

Your views are welcome always on these.

Preparing Your Child For Nursery

- Talk to your child in a positive way about the Nursery. Your attitude will make all the difference to the way your child views starting Nursery.
- Familiarise your child with the transition booklet that you received in your Information Pack. Here you'll find lots of things to talk with your child about over the summer.
- Encourage your child to be independent. Allow your child to dress him/herself and feed him/herself.
- Encourage your child to try to put on their own coat and roll up their sleeves.
- Help your child learn the traditional Nursery Rhymes, read and enjoy books at every opportunity. Join the library.
- Encourage your child to paint, draw, cut, glue etc.
- Let your child get messy with dough, water, paint. Messy play is not only fun for children but a vital part of their development.
- Help develop independence at toilet time by encouraging your child to clean him/herself, tuck him/herself in, flushing and washing his/her hands.

The Pre School Curriculum

Each of the following areas will be available daily for your child. The curriculum is carefully structured so that the children can participate in a range of activities that are interesting, challenging and enjoyable. The curriculum is planned in such a way as to emphasize the process not the product.

The Pre-School Curriculum is divided in six areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development and Movement
- Language Development
- Early Mathematical Experiences
- The Arts
- The World Around Us



Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Children learn to express themselves, co-operate and share.
- Develop social skills, build self-esteem and gain confidence.
- Begin to understand their emotions.
- Follow simple routines and develop independence, such as tidy up time and putting on their own coat.
- Develop positive dispositions to learn.
- Children will be given time to develop and know they are valued as individuals.
- Make choices and take responsibility.
- Play with other children and help each other.
- Become aware of personal safety, hygiene and taking care of themselves.
- Good PSE development gives children the best opportunity for success in other areas of learning.

Physical Development and Movement

- Develops gross and fine motor skills.
- Enhance manipulation and hand eye co-ordination.
- Helps with co-ordination and balance.
- Develops a sense of space.
- Provides challenges & opportunities for success thus promoting self-esteem and confidence.
- Provides opportunities to respond creatively to a range of stimuli, such as music, songs or equipment.



Language Development

- Language development is central to all learning that is taking place in the Nursery.
- Children will talk about their play, experiences, feelings and ideas.
- Extend their receptive and expressive vocabulary.
- Children will learn rhymes, poems and songs.
- Children will have access to a wide range of story and information books.
- Children will listen to stories.
- Become aware that printed word has meaning.
- Children are encouraged to “write” in their play using a variety of tools – pencils, crayons, chalk.
- Writing should be interpreted as scribbling and mark making, where children mimic what writers do. It is not intended to imply that children should be forming letters although over time some children may begin to do this.



Early Mathematical Experiences

- Opportunities to develop mathematical language.
- Develop positive attitudes towards mathematics.
- Match, sort, order, compare, classify and count.
- Develop and explore mathematical skills and concepts such as, shape, capacity, number, size, pattern etc.
- Children's understanding and enjoyment of early maths can be enhanced through songs, stories and games.
- Develop an understanding of sequences and time. These include daily and weekly routines such as snack and dinner time, helper days etc.



The Arts

- Creative activities offer a variety of sensory experiences and opportunities for self-expression.
- Provides opportunities to extend their creativity and develop originality of thought.
- Develops fine motor skills, hand-eye co-ordination, manipulation skills.
- Provides enjoyment.
- Gives children opportunities to experiment with colour, shape and texture.
- Talk about their work using appropriate language.
- Through drama and dance, children are able to express their feelings and imagination.



The World Around Us

- Children are naturally curious about the world and how it works.
- Children will be given opportunities to observe, explore, investigate and experiment with a range of materials, such as making dough, cooking and planting seeds.
- The hands-on approach enforces skills and concepts.
- Children will be given opportunities to develop an understanding about the environment around them.
- Talk about the seasons and weather.
- Take some responsibility for their own environment.
- Play with materials associated with people in their community e.g. Doctor and shopkeeper.

Spiritual Awareness

- Spiritual awareness will be fostered through prayers, songs, stories, visits to the chapel, drama and music.

Music

- Opportunities to create and respond to music.
- Develop an awareness of pulse, rhythm and tone.
- Enhance listening skills and become aware of sounds around them.
- Listen to and join in songs and rhymes.



Outdoor play

Outdoor and energetic play are essential parts of the nursery day. Therefore, please ensure that in cold weather your child has a warm coat, hat and gloves with him/her every day. In warmer weather your child must bring a sun hat each day and have sun block put on before they come into the nursery.



I Took His Hand and Followed

My dishes went unwashed today,
I didn't make my bed.
I took his hand and followed,
Where his eager footsteps led.

Oh yes, we went adventuring,
My little child and I,
Exploring all the great outdoors,
Beneath the sun and sky.

We watched a robin feed her young.
We climbed a sunlit hill,
Saw cloud-sheep scamper through the sky.
We plucked a daffodil.

That my house was so neglected,
That I didn't brush the stairs,
In twenty years, no one on earth,
Will know or even care.

But that I helped my little child,
To noble adulthood grow,
In twenty years, the whole wide world,
May look and see and know.

Author Unknown

Guidance on infection control in schools and nurseries to minimise the risk of infection to other children and staff

Rashes and Skin Infections	Period to be kept away from school (once child is well)	Comments
Chickenpox	Until all vesicles have crusted over	It is not necessary to wait until spots have healed. IMPORTANT: see FEMALE STAFF, see VULNERABLE CHILDREN
Cold Sores	None	Cold sores generally mild and self-limiting.
German Measles (Rubella)	4 days from onset of rash	Preventable by immunisation (MMR x 2 doses) See: Female staff – pregnancy
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted or healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period
Measles	4 days from onset of rash	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x 2)
Ringworm	Exclusion not usually required	Treatment is required
Roseola	None	None
Scabies	Child can return after first treatment	Household and close contacts require treatment
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24 hours after commencing appropriate antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment recommended for the affected child. If more than one child has scarlet fever contact PHA Duty Room for further advice
Slapped Cheek (Parovirus)	None once rash has developed	See: Vulnerable children and female staff – pregnancy
Diarrhoea and Vomiting Illness	Period to be kept away from school (once child is well)	Comments
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting (with or without a specified diagnosis)	48 hours from last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting	
E. coli 0157 VTEC*	Should be excluded for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea	Further exclusion is required for young children aged five years and under and those who have difficulty in adhering to hygiene practices
Cryptosporidiosis*	Exclude for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea	Exclusion from swimming is advisable for two weeks after the diarrhoea has settled
Respiratory Infections	Period to be kept away from school (once child is well)	Comments
“Flu”	Until recovered	Most infectious just before and at onset of symptoms.
Tuberculosis	CCDC will advise on action	Generally requires quite prolonged close contact for spread.
Whooping Cough (pertussis)	5 days from commencing antibiotic treatment	Treatment is recommended though non-infectious coughing may still continue for many weeks.

Other Infections	Period to be kept away from school (once child is well)	Comments
Conjunctivitis	None	If an outbreak occurs consult the Duty Room.
Glandular Fever	None	
Head Lice	None	Treatment is recommended only in cases where live lice have been seen.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until seven days after onset of jaundice (or seven days after symptom onset if no jaundice)	The duty room will advise on any vaccination or other control measure that are needed for close contacts of a single case of hepatitis A and for suspected outbreaks
Meningococcal meningitis/septicaemia	Until recovered	Some forms of meningococcal disease are preventable by vaccination (see immunisation schedule). There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. In case of an outbreak, it may be necessary to provide antibiotics with or without meningococcal vaccination to close contacts. The Duty Room will advise on any action needed
Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered	Hib and pneumococcal meningitis are preventable by vaccination. There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. The Duty Room will give advice on any action needed
Mumps	Exclude child for five days after onset of swelling	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x 2 doses)
Threadworms	None	Treatment recommended for child and household contacts
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes, but most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic

Vulnerable Children : some children have medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable to infections that would rarely be serious in most cases.

Such children include those being treated for leukaemia or other cancers, children on high doses of steroids and children with conditions which seriously reduce immunity.

These children are especially vulnerable to chicken pox or measles. If a vulnerable child is exposed to either of these parents should be informed promptly.

Female Staff : some infections if caught by a pregnant woman can pose a danger to her unborn baby. – Chickenpox – German Measles - Slapped Cheek (Parovirus)

Further Information can be found at www.publichealth.hscni.net