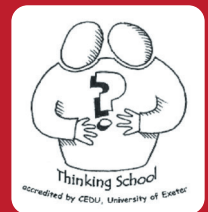

St. MacNissi's

PRE-SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS

2025 - 2026



Learning every day in a fun & safe way.

Welcome to
St. MacNissi's Pre-School



2025

“ Learning every
day in a fun
& safe way.”



Dear Parents / Guardians

The staff and Governors would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your child at St. MacNissi's Pre-School. Our Pre-School is a purpose built modern unit. It was opened in September 2017 to accommodate the growing number of families requiring Pre-School provision within the Parish of St Mary's on the Hill.

The St MacNissi's Pre-School provides a great experience in your child's early development. We aim to create a stimulating and enjoyable, safe and secure environment, where children can learn through play to build up both their confidence and social skills in a happy, relaxed atmosphere.

As parents / guardians you naturally want the best possible education for your children. We hope you will find this prospectus helpful as it will give you an insight into what makes St. MacNissi's Pre-School so special.

J McAuley
Principal

Our vision

It is our vision, at St. MacNssi's Pre-School, that we create an inclusive environment where our children are:

'Learning every day in a fun and safe way'

At the core of everything we do are our school values of: Respect; Teamwork; Compassion; Community; Diversity; Independence, as they underpin our teaching and learning.



In order to develop these qualities in our children we aim to:

- create a happy, stimulating and secure environment for each child.
- offer a well structured and balanced curriculum within the statutory requirements contained within the DENI document 'Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education'.
- ensure that the individual child feels a sense of self worth and encourage the development of confidence and self esteem.
- develop an awareness of the need of independence, which leads to respect for other people and a sensitivity towards them.
- encourage the children to acquire positive attitudes towards others of differing religious beliefs and an understanding of the wider world in which we live.
- develop a genuine partnership between the home and the school.

Learning every day
in a fun & safe way.

Thinking School

St. MacNissi's Primary School is one of only two Accredited 'Thinking Schools' in Northern Ireland. The use of Thinking Skills links with the 'Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education'

In our Pre-School class ,through our planning we support our children's thinking by introducing aspects of three thinking tools; David Hyerle's 'Thinking Maps', Edward De Bono's 'Thinking Hats' and 'Philosophy for Children'. The strategies are used to develop and organise the children's Early Mathematical Experiences and Language Development and they empower the pupils to produce their own thinking in a unique and valuable style.



The children enjoy using the strategies and show:-

- High levels of motivation in their work
- An increase in their ability to manage their own learning
- More confidence in risk taking

Early Years Inspection Report



The Pre-School setting is inspected annually by Northern Health and Social Care Trust and the most recent Inspection Report found many strengths within the setting which included:

- Staff members have created an environment which encourages acceptable behaviour through role modelling, encouragement and praise.
- The setting offers a safe and stimulating environment and it was evident that the children were confident, comfortable and relaxed in the care of the staff.
- The level of staffing is of a high standard and staff carry out their job with professionalism and enthusiasm.

Parental Comments

"Fantastic Pre School with excellent staff and facilities"

"We are extremely satisfied with the care, support and development and play being produced".

Daily Routine

Children are welcome into school from 8:45 am. Classes begin at 9.00 am.

We have a daily routine that is suitable for the stage of development for the children. The range of activities provided each day are designed to build each child's confidence and independence.

Time	ACTIVITY
8:45am-9:00am	Arrival, welcome and settling in time
9:00am-9:05am	Good morning and register including overview of the day & Prayer time
9:05am-10:30am	Indoor Play - including tidy up Snack is available 09:30-10:15 Tidy up from 10:15
10:30-11:30	Outdoor Play – including games, rhymes/songs
11:30-11:45	Indoors: Circle Time/Music/ Dance & Movement, or Table top activities
11:45am-12:00pm	Story time and Award time
12:00pm	Dismissal Children move into Sleepy Hollow



Curriculum

The Pre-School Curriculum is based on play. A child's parents / guardian are the very first teachers and each child comes to Pre-School with a wide variety of experiences upon which the Pre-School will build. First hand experiences underpin all aspects of the Pre-School and lead to quality learning.

Pre-School play experiences are structured, observed and recorded by staff to ensure there is progression. Children learn best through play experiences that are relevant and meaningful to them. We plan activities to stimulate the children and reflect their interests.

We aim to create a rich, stimulating, happy and challenging environment where children will have the opportunity to develop their potential.

We lay great emphasis on learning outdoors and children will experience being outdoors in all seasons and weathers.

Our planning is guided by the 'Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education'. This guidance is presented as six areas of learning that will provide a foundation for later achievement.

“ Play is the highest form of learning in early childhood. ”

Tina Bruce
Learning through Play 2001



The six areas are:

1. Personal Social and Emotional Development
2. Language Development
3. Early Mathematical Experiences
4. The World Around Us
5. The Arts
6. Physical Development and Movement

Learning Journals

The Pre-School keeps a record of achievement in the form of a "learning journal" for each child. The learning journal contains observations, photographs and examples of your child's learning during their time at Pre-School. Your child's learning journal helps us to celebrate their achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for their well-being and to make progress. We like parents / guardians to keep us informed of their child's needs, activities, interests and achievements and would encourage families to contribute to their children's learning journals. We provide each child with their learning journal and a report when they leave for their next setting, this should assist you as a parent / guardian and their next educator, to understand their progress so far.



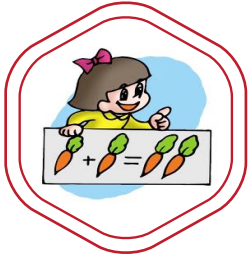
Personal Social and Emotional Development

Children learn to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, respect for others, social skills and a positive disposition to learn. Children are supported in their emotional well-being to help them to know themselves and what they can do. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings and to develop strategies to cope with new and challenging situations.



Language Development

Children become competent in communicating, speaking and listening and using language for a variety of purposes. In order to be a good communicator it is important to be a good listener, so listening skills are developed and children are especially encouraged to listen to and respond to others. Children are also encouraged to show understanding through responding to instructions and questions. Children are encouraged to enjoy stories, books and rhymes and begin to recognise that print carries meaning. By developing the ability to distinguish between, sounds, becoming familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration and by beginning to link sounds to letters. Children gain skills that will enable them to become competent readers and writers. Mark making is valued as children begin to write.



Early Mathematics Experiences

Children gradually know and use numbers and counting. They develop an awareness of the relationship between numbers and amounts. Opportunities are also provided for children to handle and talk about shape, quantities and position. Developing a mathematical vocabulary is important as they begin to develop mathematical ideas and learn to solve practical problems using their skills with confidence and competence.



The World Around Us

Children develop the skills and knowledge that help them make sense of their world. Opportunities are provided for children to encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environments, to find out about real-life situations and to investigate and experiment. By finding out about their own culture and community and that of others, children learn to respect and value all people. Children learn by using ICT and programmable toys.



The Arts

Children's creativity is extended by supporting their curiosity, exploration and play. They are provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through the arts, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role play.



Physical Development

Children learn best by being active and interactive. They have opportunities to improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Children learn to move with confidence, imagination, safety and with an awareness of personal space and others. They handle both small and large equipment. They also develop an understanding of the importance of healthy living and well-being.

Healthy Eating

It is the policy of St MacNissi's Pre-School to promote children's health and to encourage healthy eating habits, both during the Pre-School years and beyond.

Our children are provided with a mid-morning snack. These snacks are always healthy and nutritious. Our staff will cater for any special dietary requirements.

Procedures

- We provide healthy eating by ensuring that:-
- A menu of fruit, ham, cheese a selection of healthy bread, cereal, milk and water will be available on a rota basis. The menu will be displayed in class.
- Cookery activities will be aimed towards healthy foods (soup, stew, pizza and fresh fruit, salad etc) as part of the curriculum. Such foods maybe consumed in the setting, parents / guardians will be informed of such events.
- Birthday celebrations and other special events such as Christmas, Easter etc. will focus on the occasion rather than the provision of rich sugary foods and drinks
- Due to Food Allergies we request that no food is sent into Pre-School by parents / guardians to share amongst the children on special occasions such as birthdays.



Pastoral care

Our Pre-School is a community where we encourage children to live together to work and play in a friendly atmosphere, one which is based on good relationships between staff, children and parents / guardians. We have a caring staff who work within the principle that the class is a family where the potential of each child is developed to the full. As a staff we work closely together respecting the role that each has in the overall development of the children in our care. We adopt a Positive Behaviour approach to discipline and the pastoral care of pupils – emphasising praising and rewarding good behaviour – is adopted and encouraged throughout the Pre-School.

We value the role and contribution made by parents / guardians therefore we always make the effort to welcome parents / guardians and encourage them to become more aware of their child's education.

The Pre-School places great importance in the fostering of the personal and social development of each child through Pastoral Care. A copy of the Pre-School's **'SAFEGUARDING CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES'** is available at the school. Also available is the Primary School's procedures for dealing with 'Child Protection'. In these matters the Designated Teachers, Mr J. McAuley, Mrs R Mitchell and Mrs McCorry ensure that procedures are correctly followed.

St. MacNissi's Pre-School 'Learning every day in a fun & safe way'.

Pre-school policies

Pre-School Policies and general information about school life can be viewed on St MacNissi's School's Website,

www.saintmacnissis.com
follow us on Facebook



Staff 2025 - 2026

Mrs P. McCorry:	Pre-School Leader (Qualified Teacher)
Miss T. Meshesha:	Classroom Assistant (NVQ Level 3)
Mrs. D. Lavery:	Classroom Assistant (NVQ Level 3)
Mrs. S. Feenan	SEN Classroom Assistant

Admissions

The Pre-School class can accommodate up to 24 pupils funded by DENI. In selecting children for admission we will apply the criteria. The majority of pupils transfer to St MacNissi's Primary School for the next stage of their education.

	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2023/2024	30	24
2024/2025	31	24
2025/2026	27	24

Accommodation and Resources

St MacNissi's offers a Pre-School class for children in their final pre-school year. The purpose built unit is sited within the grounds of St MacNissi's Primary School and the pupils have access to all the Primary School resources and facilities. Outdoors The class has its own self-contained playground to support outdoor play activities and access to 2 large multi-purpose play areas, a quiet area and a grass pitch.



Visiting Arrangements

The Pre-School operates an 'Open Day' in the Autumn term when prospective parents / guardians have an opportunity to see the group in operation. An induction meeting is held for parents / guardians in June and a 'meet and greet play session' is organised, in the Pre-School setting, for children and parents in June to meet the Pre-School Teacher and Assistants. At these meetings you may discuss any relevant information about your child with the Teacher. In the Autumn term a Curriculum Meeting is held when there will be an opportunity for parents / guardians to find out about the Pre-School Curriculum.

Our policy is to ensure that, as parents / guardians you are kept well informed of your child's progress. Interviews are arranged, in which Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with the teacher. A detailed Transition Annual Report is sent home in June.

Parental Involvement

St MacNissi's Pre-School welcomes the support shown by its parents / guardians and encourage participation at a number of planned events. Nativity Production; Book Week; Grandparents' Day; International Week; as well as sharing any interesting skills or jobs.



Links with other Agencies

We co-operate with and fully support the work carried out by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust- Gateway Team, Early Years Organisation and when necessary we seek the help and advice of other statutory agencies.

“ Our policy is to ensure that, as parents / guardian you are kept well informed of your child's progress. ”

OPEN ENROLMENT – ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

St MacNissi's Pre-School Centre

The Management Committee has determined that, in the event of more applicants than the places available, the following admissions criteria will be applied, in the order set down, to select children for the available places.

CHILDREN WILL BE ADMITTED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING STATUTORY CRITERIA:

1. Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year who were born:
on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school; or,
on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged child; and,
that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2026.

Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.

2. Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by criterion 1).

SUB-CRITERIA

In the event of over-subscription in any of the above criteria, selection will be applied in the order set down below.

A place will be offered to:

- a. Children will be admitted in accordance with preference for St. MacNissi's Pre-School named on the application form i.e. those whose form indicates a first preference will be selected before those whose form indicates a second or subsequent preference, second preferences will be selected before third or subsequent preferences.
- b. Children who have a sibling presently enrolled in St. MacNissi's Primary School.
- c. Children who are the eldest or only child in the family - as defined in Department of Education Guidance Circular Number 2024/19 Open Enrolment in Primary Schools (revised 18 October 2024).
- d. Children who have attended St. MacNissi's 'Eager and Curious to Learn' group in the previous year.
- e. Children whose brother/sister, (state name of sibling) are prior pupils of St. MacNissi's Primary School.
- f. Children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter of surname (as entered on Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

P G S F M c Q O' M Y B V I M a c D W Z J E R C X K H N A T O U L

- g. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the final selection will be on the basis of child whose home is closer to the school than that of another child (as measured by 'Google Map' the distance from the school's gate to the child's home address).

NON-STATUTORY CRITERIA

3. Children who were born:
on or between 1 April 2022 - 1 July 2022 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and, that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1.