



STRATHEARN PREP  
BELFAST

# Parent Handbook 2025 - 2026

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## WELCOME FROM THE HEAD



A very warm welcome to Strathearn Prep. The purpose of this handbook is to give both new and current parents useful information about the various routines and aspects of life in our school.

Our aim is to enthuse children, enabling all to reach their potential and teaching them how to be independent as well as thoughtful and considerate of others. We provide a happy and caring environment, allowing everyone to flourish whatever their particular talents or interests and encouraging all to play a full

and active role in the life of the school. Our pupils experience a diverse curriculum that encompasses every aspect of their development – from their academic, physical and creative prowess to their social, cultural, spiritual and moral well-being. Pupils learn to work successfully with others and celebrate their own and others' achievements.

We recognise that we represent only one of several key stepping stones along a child's educational journey and therefore a smooth transition to subsequent senior schools is vitally important for us. As pupils move on from Strathearn Prep, we seek to equip them with the skills, confidence and enthusiasm to always give their best in the future and enjoy themselves whilst doing so.

Do please keep in regular touch with your child's Form Tutor. I am sure that you will agree that successful education is built on a strong partnership between home and school. I look forward to a happy and successful association with you and your family in the years ahead, working together to provide your child with educational excellence.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any further information or there are any aspects regarding your child's time in school that you wish to raise.

Leonora Martin  
Head

**1.0 INTRODUCING THE STAFF**



Mrs Leonora Martin  
Head



Mrs Erin Andrews  
Designated Safeguarding  
Lead  
Prep 7 Form Tutor



Mrs Diana Boyd  
Head of Maths  
Prep 6 Form Tutor



Mrs Alison O'Reilly  
Prep 5 Form Tutor

Image to  
follow



Mrs Emma Bell  
Prep 3 Form Tutor

Image to  
follow



Mrs Amy Irwin  
Prep 1 Form Tutor  
Head of English



Mrs Julie Walls  
Learning Support  
Tutor

Mrs Emma  
McAdam  
Prep 4 Form Tutor



Mrs Bethan  
Crawford  
Games Teacher

Image to  
follow



Mrs Wendy Frazer  
After-School Club



Mrs Joanne  
Clinning  
After-School Club



Mrs Jenny  
McGimpsey  
School Secretary

Mrs Leigha King  
After-School Club

**Classroom Support Staff**



Mrs Jen Kimber



Mrs Clare Shouldis



Mrs Rachel  
McCance

## 2.0 SCHOOL LIFE

### 2.1 Your Child's First Day in Strathearn Prep

On the first day of the Autumn Term, staff will be on hand from 8:30am to help new children and parents to find their way around the school. Prep 2 – 7 children can be dropped off at Morning Club 8:00 – 08:30am, or in the playground from 8:30 – 08:45am. Prep 1 pupils can be dropped off at 09:15am when Prep 7 pupils will accompany Prep 1s and their parents to the classroom.

If your child is joining Strathearn Prep mid-year, their Form Tutor and your child's nominated buddy will come to meet you both in the School Office when you arrive and take your daughter to their classroom.

Children should bring their school bag, water bottle, coat and blazer on their first day in school. They should take everything to their classroom and their Form Tutor will ensure that all their belongings are put away in the correct place.

At the beginning of the academic year, pupils will spend the first lessons of the day with their Form Tutors during which time stationery and exercise books will be issued. Form Tutors will also go through the timetable with their class and discuss any other important information.

Children require a Strathearn Prep rucksack and only those in Prep 7, a clearly named, small pencil case containing pencils, erasers and a sharpener and ruler. A set of colouring pencils is also useful for World Around Us lessons. It is not necessary for children to have felt tip or gel pens.

Children in Prep 7 will need at least one ink pen (rollerball or fountain pen with blue ink). They also are welcome to bring in their own calculators, compasses, protractors etc. though the school will provide these when necessary. It would help greatly if special individual items are also named.

Children are allowed to keep a clearly named water bottle, with a sports cap to minimise spillages, in class (no larger than 1 litre). Bottles should be plastic and not made of metal or glass. These should only contain water and be taken home and refilled daily.

### 2.2 Dropping Off, 8:00 – 8:30am

A Morning Club is available between 8:00 – 8:30am, during which time children are supervised in the School Hall and take part in a variety of games and craft activities. It is not necessary to book into Morning Club, it is assumed at any child arriving before 8:30am requires such childcare and their name will be added to the register.

Children whose parents do not require morning club provision should not be dropped off before 8:30am as the playground and classrooms are not supervised before this time.

At 8.30am, the children make their way to their classrooms for registration. Prep 1, 3, 4 and 7 to Penrhyn House building; Prep 5 to the Cabin Classroom; Prep 2 and 6 through the front door of the 157 building.

We encourage children to come into school carrying their own belongings unless necessary to have assistance and come into the building independently. We request that parents do not accompany their children into the classroom or cloakrooms so that they learn to manage their own belongings. The exception to this is for Prep 1 pupils until they have built up the confidence to come into the school building on their own.

All children need to be in their classroom ready for registration by 8:45am.

- All children and parents entering the school for drop-off should do so via the single gate on at the main playground.
- Those arriving outside of these times should buzz the single gate in the car park where they will be buzzed in by Mrs McGimpsey.
- The P1/P3 gate will no longer be used, except in an emergency or for school events.
- For pick-up, parents should enter the playground via the single playground gates and wait for their child on the road side of the playground. Children will then be dismissed to their adult.
- Children will not be allowed to leave the school grounds unless accompanied by an adult.
- For children in Prep 6 and Prep 7, permission for a child to walk home can be granted by the Head upon written request from parents.

### **2.3 Registration 8.45am**

Registration will take place in the classroom at 8.45am, after which the whole school go to Assembly (except on a Wednesday). Any children entering the classroom after 8.45am will be marked as 'late' in the register. Registration is an important part of the day when we prepare the children for the day ahead.

### **2.4 Late Arrival, after 8.45am**

If you arrive after 8.45am, please take your child to the School Office and sign the late register. Children should then make their way directly to Assembly with their belongings.

### **2.5 Assembly 8.45 – 9.00am**

There are four assemblies each week as follows:

Monday – Head's Assembly

Tuesday – Principal's Assembly

Thursday – Singing Assembly

Friday – Visiting Speaker or Class Assembly

We like to celebrate the children's achievements inside and outside school during Head's Assembly. If your child has gained any certificates, won trophies or achieved anything which you would like us to share with the whole school, you should send details to their Form Tutor on a Monday morning to be shared in the Head's Assembly.

Each class leads a Friday morning assembly once per term. This is a wonderful opportunity for children to gain confidence at public speaking.

### **2.6 Breaktime Snacks and Lunches**

Breaktime is at 10:30am and pupils may bring in a healthy snack to eat at this time.

Lunchtime is at 11:45am and pupils may choose to have a hot lunch which is freshly prepared on-site every day by our catering team, or bring their own packed lunch.

We ask parents to ensure that packed lunches contain healthy foods and that treats, chocolate and sugary foods are kept to a minimum.

A three-weekly menu is published at the beginning of each term and made available to parents through the newsletter.

All children eat their lunch in the Senior School canteen under the supervision of our team of dedicated Lunchtime Supervisors.

Parents should notify the school of any food allergies or other requirements using the Medical Form which is part of the Registration Pack. Should your child's needs change, please notify the School Office.

### 2.7 Collection – Prep 1 & 2 at 2:00pm and Prep 3 – 7 at 3:00pm

The school day finishes at 2:00pm for Prep 1 and 2 pupils and at 3:00pm for Prep 3 - 7. Parents should wait on the playground and your child's Form Tutor will bring the children out and dismiss them one by one. Children going to After School Clubs will be dismissed by the Form Tutor to clubs registration.

Children are dismissed in their green school coat during the Autumn Term and Spring Term and blazers remain in the classroom. In the Summer Term, we dismiss the children in their blazer.

Form Tutors are only allowed to dismiss children to someone other than their parent if the School Office receives notification from you (this also applies to play-dates). If we do not have permission, we will ring you to ensure that you are happy for the person presenting themselves to collect your child.

We wait on the playground until approximately 3:05pm; in the event that children are left after that time and have not been booked into After School Care or an activity club, we will take the children to the School Office and telephone you to ensure that all is well.

### 2.8 If Your Child is Ill or Absent

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or other circumstances, please call or email the School Office to notify us as soon as possible. If a child does not come into school and we have not heard from you by 9.30am, we will call to confirm the reason for the child's absence.

If your child is absent for more than five days then the school may require a doctor's note.

Please see **Appendix 2** for guidance on illness and exclusion times.

### 2.9 Uniform

Our uniform list can be viewed on the school website [here](#).

We expect pupils to wear the uniform as per the uniform list and for uniform to be well maintained and pressed. Please note that patent shoes should not be worn.

All uniform should be clearly named using name tapes or labels in an obvious place.

#### Hair and Jewellery

As stated in our uniform list, earrings and nail varnish should not be worn in school, nor should patent shoes. For health and safety reasons, any girls wearing earrings will be asked to remove them.

Hair should be tied back using hair coloured or school coloured scrunchies or bands. Hair should always be tied completely back on PE days. On other days, girls may wear it 'half

up, half down', but it must always be off the face. Green ribbon can be purchased from the school office. For house events, girls may wear house colour ribbons in their hair and all colours can be purchased from the school office.

Girls may attach small keyrings to their bag (a reasonable number is permitted). Labubu doll keyrings should not be brought into school.

### 3.0 LEARNING

#### 3.1 Curriculum

The curriculum in the Prep Department is closely allied to the Northern Ireland National Curriculum. However, as a Prep school, we are able to extend this to provide a broad and stimulating curriculum to engage pupils and engender curiosity and a love of learning as well as achieve high academic standards.

We are currently working on a document to outline the term by term curriculum in a format to circulate to parents. This should be available later in the autumn term. If you would like further information on a particular area of the curriculum, please speak to the teacher concerned who will be able to provide details on content and delivery.

All pupils have a Form Tutor who is their pastoral point of contact and who will teach the class for most of the curriculum. Alongside the core subjects of English and Mathematics and curriculum areas of PDMU, World Around Us, RE and Computer Science, children in Prep 4 – 7 also have lessons in STEM, Music, Drama, Outdoor Learning, MFL, Games and PE.

We feel that contact with several teachers during the day is a strength of the school as we use the specialisms of individual teachers who can pass on their enthusiasm and knowledge of different subjects to the children. For our pupils, it is also good preparation for senior school, where they will have a different teacher for every subject.

Pupils in Prep 1 – 3 also benefit from STEM, PE, Outdoor Learning and Music lessons taught by their Form Tutor.

There is a wide scope of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for children in the Prep Department. Regular sporting fixtures and tournaments with other local schools, trips as well as other special events throughout the year also greatly enrich the children's learning experience.

After the completion of SEAG exams in the Autumn Term, Prep 7 pupils take part in an exciting programme of life skills activities, as well as enjoying a stretching academic programme that touches upon elements in the Year 8 curriculum.

#### 3.2 Music and Drama Lessons

Tuition is available in a range of instruments including piano, violin, flute, iRock and singing, as well as speech & drama. If your child wishes to play an instrument that is not listed, we can usually find a teacher! Lessons are usually arranged on a rota so that pupils do not miss the same lessons every week.

As with most schools, our music staff are self-employed and your contractual arrangement is directly with the teacher, who will invoice you on a termly basis.

If you would like your child to participate in any of these lessons, please contact the School Office for an application form. Your application form will be overseen by your child's Form Tutor so that they may contact you if they feel that attending music/drama lessons during the school day will have a negative impact on their learning.

### 3.3 School Trips and Residential

Teachers usually organise at least one educational trip or in school workshop per term for their classes to support their studies.

Parents will be notified of trips well in advance and permission sought where necessary. The cost (travel plus entry fee) is added to your termly bill. Such notifications will appear in the weekly newsletter.

As part of the registration paperwork, parents have already given a generic permission for their daughter to take part in activities that take place in the local vicinity during the course of the delivery of our normal curriculum. As such, we will not seek permission for individual activities unless a cost is involved. Details of these trips will always appear in the 'What's On Next Week' section of the newsletter.

These would include:

- Visits to the local area (such as a walk to Belmont Park or local library)
- Rehearsals or school service at a local church (such as St Mark's, Dundela or Belmont Presbyterian)
- Weekly swimming at Templemore Baths
- Off-site sporting fixtures during the school day
- Educational visits to Campbell College Junior School

In addition to day trips, we also have a programme of residential trips in place for pupils in the Prep department. These are as follows:

Prep 6 – Summer Term, Outdoor Educational Centre (3 or 4 nights)

Prep 7 – Spring or Summer Term, Cultural Overseas Tour (3 or 4 nights)

Electronic equipment such as mobile phones, computer games and portable music players are not permitted on school trips.

Where appropriate, parents may provide a small amount of pocket money (max £5 unless otherwise agreed) for their children to purchase items whilst on the trip, but should not feel under any pressure to do so. Teachers will indicate in their trip letter when this is appropriate.

### 3.4 Handwriting

**We are reviewing our whole school approach to handwriting, but in the meantime please refer to Form Tutors for further information.**

### 3.5 Homework

Homework expectations vary from form to form, and these are communicated to parents at the start of the year by Form Tutors.

### 3.6 Learning Support Department

We have a department, led by Mrs Julie Walls together with Mrs Martin as SENCO, dedicated to supporting children who have particular learning needs. The Learning Support Department may support children for a short period to close a gap in their learning, or over a longer period if the need arises. Support available includes group support in class, 1:1 intervention, Personal Learning Plans detailing targets for the child and teachers to work on, or recommendation to or liaison with external agencies such as Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists. Referrals are usually made by the child's teachers, in consultation with the parents. However, if you feel that

your child may benefit from the guidance or expertise of Mrs Walls, please do contact your child's Form Tutor or Mrs Walls directly ([jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk)).

### 3.8 Gifted, Able and Talented

As a school we are committed to making provision for those children who excel in particular areas of the curriculum, or indeed across the whole curriculum.

We believe that all children have the potential to improve their level of performance and to become more able, acquiring and developing their skills through hard work. There will be those who are considered 'exceptionally able' whose individual needs will require special provision.

'Talented' children are those who are able in Art, Drama, Music and Sport; 'exceptionally talented' children will also require special provision.

Teachers will monitor the performance and progress of all children using assessments and examinations throughout their time in the School. The School considers that 'exceptionally able and talented' pupils are those pupils who achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of the average for their year group.

The school has its own internal procedure for identifying and supporting Gifted, Able and Talented children. If you feel that your daughter should be considered for the programme, please contact Mrs Martin.

### 3.9 Assessments

In addition to curriculum tests that enable to the teacher to identify gaps in learning, children also sit age standardised tests, which enable us to track their learning as they move through the school to ensure they make good progress. The cycle of assessment is as follows:

#### Prep 3 – 7: YEARLY OVERVIEW OF STANDARDISED TESTING

	PREP 3			PREP 4			PREP 5			PREP 6			PREP 7		
	AUT	SPR	SUM												
CAT			X	X			X			X			X		
PTE			X			X			X			X	X		X
PTM			X			X			X			X	X		X
NGRT	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X
NGST	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X
PASS*	X			X			X			X			X		

NGRT = New Group Reading Test

NGST = New Group Spelling Test

PTM = Progress Test in Maths

PTE = Progress Test in English

PASS = Pupil Attitudes to Self and School

CAT = Cognitive Abilities Test

#### Prep 4 – 7: SUMMER CHECK INS - TEACHER MARKED ASSESSMENTS

	PREP 4	PREP 5	PREP 6	PREP 7
English - Spelling	X	X	X	
Maths – Number Facts	X	X	X	
English – General paper				X
Maths – General paper				X
World Around Us				X

#### Prep 1 & 2: PHONICS ASSESSMENTS

	PREP 1			PREP 2		
	AUT	SPR	SUM	AUT	SPR	SUM
ELS Phonics check in	X	X	X	X	X	X

ELS = Essential Letters and Sounds, Tested throughout the year on 6 weekly cycle

### 3.10 Parent Consultations and Reporting

Staff are always willing to give feedback about a pupil's progress at any point in the year, but there are also set times of the year when parents will receive written or face-to-face communication about their child's progress.

**The timeline for parent consultations and reporting is under review and will be communicated to parents in due course.**

## 4.0 LIFE IN THE WIDER SCHOOL

### 4.1 Rewards

The school attaches much importance to courtesy, integrity, good manners, good discipline and respect for the needs of others and operates a positive behaviour policy.

**This policy is currently under revision and will be published during the 2025/26 academic year.**

### 4.2 Sanctions

**This policy is currently under revision and will be published during the 2025/26 academic year.**

### 4.3 House System

All children and staff belong to one of Strathearn four houses: Boucher, McCaughey, Barbour or Watts. The house system encourages friendships between year groups, and enables children to foster the values of loyalty and responsibility. There are regular inter-house competitions happen throughout the year. Children are allocated a house upon entry to the school, and siblings and daughters of old girls are always assigned to the same house.

### 4.4 After School Care and Activities

The school remains open until 5.45pm Monday to Friday, other than on the last day of each half-term and term and on other half days.

At 3.00pm, children are either dismissed to go home or may either go to a pre-booked activity club or After-School Care.

#### Activity Clubs

A wide range of Activity Clubs are on offer each term, including sports, arts, music, dance, drama, skateboarding and more!

Before the end of each term, a letter is emailed to parents outlining the details of clubs running the next term. A further online form is emailed to parents to complete with their chosen club selections. Parents are asked to complete this form as soon as possible to register their child for their chosen clubs. Places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Activity Clubs start at 3.00pm and finish at 4.00pm.

**Please note that there are no Activity Clubs during the last week of each term, or the first week of the Autumn Term. After-school Care is available during these times and if you would like to make an adhoc booking please contact Miss King.**

#### After-School Care

After-school care is available Monday – Friday from 2:00 – 5:45pm. Whilst managed by our own staff, Miss King, Mrs Frazer and Mrs Clinging, After School provision is inspected and overseen by Social Services.

Bookings should be made using the online which is sent to parents at the end of the previous term. Confirmation of bookings will be communicated to parents by Miss King before the end of term.

#### 4.5 Parents' Association

Our Parents' Association is a parent body which aims to promote and build the school community by holding regular events, parent socials and raising funds for extra-curricular activities in support of learning.

The PA is a group of fun-loving parent volunteers. They welcome and value any contribution you can make, however small or intermittent. Please see the Parents' Association website [here](#) for details about 'what's on', preloved uniform and how to get involved. Or for more information please contact one of the committee members or class reps.

#### 4.6 Transition

During the Summer Term, we aim to prepare children for the move up into their next class. Transition meetings also take place between teachers, ensuring that the progression from one year group to the next is as smooth as possible for the children.

Shortly after the half term holiday in May, the Head will write to parents with details of Form Tutor allocations for the following academic year. During the final week of the Summer Term, children will have the opportunity to spend an afternoon with their new teacher.

#### 4.7 Senior School Preparation

An essential role of the Prep Department is to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education, so that they will progress to senior schools as confident and independent individuals, with a joy of learning. In addition to SEAG preparation in Prep 6 and 7, after the SEAG exams in Prep 7, pupils enjoy a variety of experiences and activities that will further prepare them for senior school.

In the late autumn of Prep 7, following a robust and finely tuned process of class-based preparation, pupils take SEAG examinations, the results of which will gain them entry to grammar schools. Following the posting of results in January, all Prep 7 parents are invited to a consultation with the Principal of Strathearn Senior School and Head of the Prep School who will advise parents on suitable senior school choices for their daughter.

If you wish to discuss future schooling at an earlier date we would be very happy to do so. We have an excellent relationship with each of the local senior schools and are ideally placed to work with parents to identify the right school for their child, whether in the independent or state sectors.

#### 4.8 Leadership Opportunities

Throughout her time at Strathearn Prep, pupils of all ages will experience opportunities to hone their leadership skills. In the younger years, this can take the form of leading the line, being a book or table monitor for example. In Prep 6, pupils will 'buddy' with a girl in Prep 1 by looking out for them around the school and taking part in formal learning

opportunities such as paired reading, walking to lunch or accompanying Prep 1s on a trip.

In Prep 7, all the girls in the year are Prefects and are expected to contribute to the life of the school by not only setting a good example to the younger girls but also acting a Form Prefects, Office Prefect, Milk Monitors, amongst a plethora of other opportunities such as commentating at the Key Stage 1 Sports Day, acting as tour guides to prospective parents and welcoming guests to school events.

#### **4.9 Sporting Opportunities**

Strathearn Prep very much encourages all children to take part in a range of sports and it is most common that all children will have the opportunity to represent the school in competitive fixtures against other local schools when possible. Some matches will be friendly matches where we like to give all children the opportunity to compete, other fixtures will be more competitive when we will look to field our higher ability pupils. Participation in sporting after-school clubs is not a pre-requisite for selection in teams.

#### **4.10 Performing Arts Opportunities**

There is a strong tradition of Music and Drama at Strathearn Prep and both play an important part in the life of the school. Alongside weekly class Music lessons for all pupils, there are a significant number of performance opportunities throughout a pupil's time at the school. These include: choir performances, class assemblies, the carol service, Easter Bonney parade, together with the Prep 1 – 4 Nativity in December and the Prep 5 – 7 play in the Spring term.

#### **4.11 Mobile Phones, Laptops, Tablets, e-Readers, and Smart Watches**

Strathearn Prep operates a no mobile policy, neither are laptops, tablets and e-Readers allowed into school. In exceptional cases (such as a child walking home from school with permission from the Head), a child may be allowed to bring in a mobile phone which will remain in the teacher's desk until the end of the day.

For pupils who wish to wear a watch, we recommend parents purchasing an analogue model to aid pupil's ability to tell the time.

In order to safeguard pupils, children must not wear or bring to school smart watches that capture still or moving images, sound, send or receive messages or calls, browse the internet or play games.

### **5.0 PRACTICALITIES**

#### **5.1 Contacting the School**

Your daughter's Form Tutor has the responsibility for overseeing the academic and pastoral care of your child. It is the Form Tutor to whom you should turn to if you are concerned at any time about your child's work or social relationships. It is our hope that a constructive relationship will grow between your family and the Form Tutor that will enable everyday problems to be dealt with swiftly and satisfactorily.

The Form Tutor is supported by the Head of the Prep School and Head of Pastoral Care in monitoring academic progress and pastoral matters.

If you would like to discuss another area of school life, please contact the School Secretary who will direct you to the relevant member of staff.

### **The School Office**

The School Secretary will be happy to answer your queries, take messages, or direct you to the member of staff with whom you wish to speak.

The office is open from 8.30am until 3.30pm, during term time.

The main telephone number for the school is: 02890 474684

You may also wish to contact the school by email: [info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk)

**Please note that any urgent or time sensitive messages should be communicated to us by telephone.**

News stories and general updates are posted on our website:

[www.strathearnprep.org.uk](http://www.strathearnprep.org.uk)

### **Contacting Teaching Staff**

Due to the nature of their role, it is usually difficult for teaching staff to take telephone calls during the day. Likewise, during teaching hours they are unlikely to pick up emails especially those towards the end of the school day which detail changes in pick up arrangements for a child. For such communications please contact the School Office.

If you need to speak to your child's Form Tutor, please catch them at pick-up on the playground, call the office to make an appointment, or email them. Email addresses are listed in the appendix.

When emailing teaching staff, they will aim to respond within 24 hours. If your message is time sensitive, please call the school office. Staff are not expected to reply to messages outside of office hours.

### **Who Should I Contact?**

<b>Form Tutor</b>	<b>School Secretary</b> <b>Mrs Jenny McGimpsey</b> <a href="mailto:info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	<b>Head's Office</b> <b>Mrs Jenny McGimpsey</b> <a href="mailto:info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>
Any issues relating to homework, curriculum and pastoral issues.  Questions about school trips.  Notification of achievements for assemblies	Notification of sickness/unexpected absence from school or lateness  Notification of changes to pick up arrangements  Activity club bookings and queries  Questions relating to the school calendar  Reporting any changes to medical needs	Appointments with the Head  Admissions  Uniform queries  Requests for absence during term time, for the attention of the Head

<b>After School Club Co-Ordinator</b>  <b>Miss Leigha King</b>  <a href="mailto:lking811@strathearn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">lking811@strathearn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	<b>Head of Pastoral Care</b>  <b>Mrs Erin Andrews</b>  <a href="mailto:eandrews652@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">eandrews652@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	<b>Learning Support Tutor</b>  <b>Mrs Julie Walls</b>  <a href="mailto:jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>
After School Care, including ad-hoc bookings	Reporting of any safeguarding concerns  Escalation of pastoral matters not resolved by Form Tutor	Queries regarding Learning Support provision

If you are unsure, Mrs McGimpsey, will direct you to the member of staff who can help you.

All staff email addresses can be found in **Appendix 1**. The partnership between us will work best if communication is open and honest.

### **Contacting the Head**

If you need to discuss a matter with Mrs Martin, please contact Mrs McGimpsey at [info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk) to make an appointment.

### **Making a Complaint**

We pride ourselves on strong communication with parents and we hope that you won't have reason to make a formal complaint. However, our Complaints Policy can be found in the 'policies' section of our school website, or a copy requested from the School Office.

### **After School Club**

Should you need to contact the After School Club, please contact Miss Leigha King on [lking811@c2ken.net](mailto:lking811@c2ken.net)

## **5.2 Communication to Parents**

### **Email**

SeeSaw is no longer used in the School and all communication to and from Form Tutors will be via email. Staff with aim to respond to parents within 48 hours. It is not expected that staff will respond to emails outside of office hours or over the weekend.

### **Prep Post – our weekly Newsletter**

A weekly newsletter is electronically sent to parents at 6pm on a Friday each week. This newsletter will, as standard, contain logistical information about the week ahead, actions points such as trip permission forms, for parents to action, messages from the Parents' Association and general notices.

We strongly recommend that parents read this newsletter each week as it contains all the necessary information and updates that parents will need to know.

### **Parent Mail**

Very occasionally, it will be necessary to send a message to the whole school community or class group which cannot wait until the weekly newsletter. These will come via Parent Mail and will be sent directly to the email addresses that we hold on record for you.

### 5.3 If my child needs medicine during the school day

If your daughter needs to take medicine during the school day, parents should give this directly to Mrs McGimpsey and complete the relevant form.

### 5.4 Lost Property

All named items are returned to the children. Any unnamed items of lost property will be placed in a box in the Prep 4 cloakroom. Please contact your child's Form Tutor if they have lost any item.

### 5.5 End of Term Arrangements

School ends at 12 noon on the final day of each term and half term.

There is no After School Care on these days.

### 5.6 School Policies

Copies of our policies and procedures can be found on the school website or requested from the School Office.

Many of our policies are undergoing review during the 2025/26 academic year. As they are approved by the Board of Governors, updated policies will be posted to the website and included in the weekly Newsletter.

### 5.7 Photographs

The school will occasionally take photographs of pupils for curriculum or marketing purposes, or to record events such as sports matches, plays and performances or school trips.

Photographs are vetted by a member of the leadership team before being used on the school's website or in any of the school's marketing communications.

Permission for children's images to appear in online or in print is sought from parents when pupils start at the school. Parents may update their preferences at any time by contacting the School Office.

Parents are welcome to take photographs of their own children participating in school activities. If parents wish to place photographs of their children on social media websites, they must ensure that the photographs are not going to cause offence or embarrassment to the school, or any other child in the photograph. No child should be named as appearing in a photograph without the consent of that child's parents.

### 5.8 Snow

It may occasionally be necessary to close the school due to snow or other adverse weather. This will always be the last resort and the decision to close will only be taken if the Head (in consultation with the Principal) believes it is unsafe for the school to remain open.

If the school is to be closed, a ParentMail message will be sent to parents as soon as a decision is taken, and usually before 7.00am. Staff and parents should check the website before travelling to school if in doubt about whether the school will be open. Updates will also be placed on our Facebook and Instagram accounts.

If it starts to snow heavily during the school day we will endeavour to get the children home as soon as possible and will contact parents using the telephone numbers provided. Parents should please ensure that they keep the school updated of any changes in contact details.

### 5.9 Holidays during Term Time

Since a change of law it is no longer possible for the school to authorise parents to take their children out of school for holidays during term time unless the Head deems it an 'exceptional circumstance'. Requests for time off school should be made in writing to the Head.

Other than the standard homework, no other form of work will be supplied to pupils who are holidaying during termtime.

### 5.10 Fees & Invoicing

Fees are billed on a termly basis and are payable in advance on, or before, the first day of each term.

Fees can be paid by:

1. Monthly Direct Debit over 10 monthly payments (Sep – Jun). Direct Debit Forms are available from the Finance Office.
2. Direct transfer into the School's bank account – please add your child's name as the payment reference.
3. Cheque - please note your child's name on the back of the cheque.
4. Card, in person, at the Finance Office.

Please note that the Board of Governors reserve the right to exclude children if fees are not paid on a timely basis.

Extras such as Lunch, Milk, Activity Clubs, After School Club and school trips are invoiced at the end of each term.

Childcare Vouchers can be used to pay for Morning Club and After School Club only.

## Appendix 1

### Staff Contact Details

Martin, Leonora	<a href="mailto:lmartin821@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">lmartin821@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Headmistress
Andrews, Erin	<a href="mailto:eandrews652@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">eandrews652@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 7 Form Tutor, Designated Safeguarding Lead
Boyd, Diana	<a href="mailto:dboyd517@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">dboyd517@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 7 Form Tutor
Francis, Katie	Address to follow at start of term	Prep 6 Form Tutor
O'Reilly, Alison	<a href="mailto:aoreilly908@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">aoreilly908@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 5 Form Tutor
McAdam, Emma	<a href="mailto:emcadam814@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">emcadam814@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 4 Form Tutor
Bell, Emma	<a href="mailto:ebell666@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">ebell666@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 3 Form Tutor
Devlin, Emily	<a href="mailto:edevlin463@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">edevlin463@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 2 Form Tutor
Irwin, Amy	<a href="mailto:airwin229@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">airwin229@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Prep 1 Form Tutor
Walls, Julie	<a href="mailto:jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">jwalls403@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	Learning Support Tutor
McGimpsey, Jenny	<a href="mailto:info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk">info@penrhyn.belfast.ni.sch.uk</a>	School Office
King, Leigha	<a href="mailto:lking811@c2ken.net">lking811@c2ken.net</a>	After School Care Coordinator

## Appendix 2

### Illness and Exclusion Times & Medical Needs

From time to time children are sick (vomit) either at home or at school. Unfortunately, it is not possible to distinguish between the causes, and therefore it is essential that the same rule of exclusion applies in all cases of vomiting or diarrhoea. In the Health Protection Agency document, "Guidelines for the Control of Infection and Communicable Disease in School and Early Years Settings", the guidance is:

#### Diarrhoea and Vomiting exclusion

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting commonly affects children and staff and can be caused by a number of different germs, including viruses, parasites and bacteria. Infections can be easily spread from person to person (by unwashed hands), especially in children. In general, it is recommended that any staff member or child with diarrhoea and/or vomiting symptoms must stay away or be excluded from the school or early years setting until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours (the '48-hour rule') and feel well. Personal hygiene whilst ill must be very strict.

If your child is sick at school, we will ask you or your emergency contact to take your child home. They should not return for 48 hours. We appreciate that this is inconvenient in many cases, and you may not believe your child is ill, but you will appreciate that we do this in all cases and it should reduce the risk of infection for all children in school. As an example, if your child is sick at lunchtime on a Tuesday, they should not return to school until after lunch on Thursday, provided there have not been any further episodes of vomiting.

Thank you for your understanding with this. Further guidance on infection control may be found on the [Health Protection Agency website](#).

Other exclusion times (this list is not exhaustive)

Illness	Symptoms	Exclusion time
Chicken pox	Feeling sick, headache, high temperature, aching, painful muscles, spots in clusters anywhere on the body	Children should be kept away from school until all the blisters have formed scabs
Scarlet fever	Widespread fine pink rash which feels like sand paper to touch, high temperature, flushed face, red and swollen tongue, sore throat	Children should be kept away until they have been on a course of antibiotics for at least 24hrs
Slapped cheek	Bright red rash on cheeks, sore throat, headache, temperature, itchy skin	Children should be kept away while they are showing the red cheeks symptoms
Conjunctivitis	Sticky eyes in the morning, running eyes during the day	Children do not need to be kept away from school but should consult their doctor or pharmacist about cream which can be put on during the day
Norovirus	Sickness, stomach cramps, diarrhoea	Children should be kept away from school for 48hrs after the last episode
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Fever, poor appetite, runny nose, sore throat, blister-like rash on hands, feet and in the mouth	Children should be kept away from school if they have the rash and a fever
Ringworm	Ring like rash anywhere on the body but feet and groin area are most common	Children do not need to be kept away from school but the school should be notified to enable more stringent hygiene measures to be put into place
Worms	Most common type is threadworm which look like small white pieces of thread in stools. Sometimes people also get itchiness around the bottom and genitals	Children do not need to be kept away from school but the school should be notified to enable more stringent hygiene measures to be put into place

### **Medical Needs**

At the time of registering you would have filled out a medical form, containing details of any known medical conditions, allergies, etc. This information is held in the school's medical register and class teachers and kitchen staff are informed of any specific conditions or requirements.

Please inform the office of any change to an existing medical condition, or any new condition.

If your child is prescribed medication which needs to be administered during the school day, you will need to complete a Medical Consent Form, which can be obtained from the office.

### **Dietary Requirements & Allergies**

We are able to cater for most dietary requirements, and a vegetarian option is always provided. Please inform the office of any change in requirements.

Please note that Strathearn Prep is a Nut Free Zone. Please do not bring any products containing nuts or nut products onto the school site.