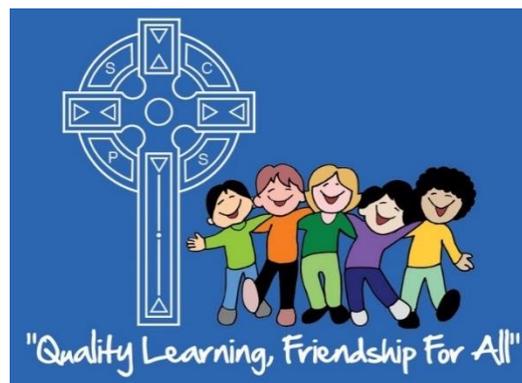




St. Comgall's Primary School
23 Brunswick Road
Bangor
Co. Down
BT20 3DS

St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor

Quality Learning, Friendship For All



Board of Governors Annual Report

Academic Year 2019 - 2020

www.stcomgallsps.co.uk

Twitter: [@ComgallsBangor](https://twitter.com/ComgallsBangor)

Principal: Mrs Cathy Hunter

[Marking 130 Years of St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor](#)

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**Thank you for your time and support for the life & work of
St. Comgall's Primary School**



Dear Parent/Carers & Friends of St Comgall's,

In a year like no other, in the midst of heartbreaking tragedy and a global pandemic, on behalf of the Board of Governors I present the Annual Report for the Academic Year 2019/20.

This year's report acknowledges the many exciting plans and events which should have taken place, outlines the, as always, incredible work of the staff and children and pays tribute to the heartbreaking loss of our much loved P6 pupil, Tommy, the sad passing of our former Playtime Supervisor, Bernie Digney, as well as the school's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite working under extreme financial pressure with larger than average class sizes and limited accommodation in 19-20, it was clear for all to see that St Comgall's continued to strive for excellence in all areas of the curriculum, academically and, in particular, pastorally.

Engaged by both CCEA and Stranmillis University College as a showcase school for best practice, these agencies highlighted the work of our school staff in Early Years practice, Learning Environment design and the use of educational technology to support remote home learning during lockdown. The Governors too wish to commend the tireless work of the Staff and the level of partnership they promote with parents in the best interests of pupils.

Lockdown brought about many challenges and hardship for us all. The Governors pray that all families remain safe and well and seek to reassure all families of our commitment to help where we can.

It is only right too that we acknowledge the team efforts of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, for all that they did to keep the school open to key worker and vulnerable children throughout lockdown, continue high quality teaching & learning and manage to retain a sense of community working remotely via their thoughtful engagements and interaction on Seesaw.

During 2019-20 the school said farewell to two long-serving members of Staff, **Mrs Catherine Coleman**, released from post in August 2019 and **Miss Julie-Anne Mullally**, in August 2020.

The Governors and Staff wish to place on record their thanks to these two outstanding and highly talented teachers and wish them both well in their new schools and onward career paths.

Governors would also like to continue to pay tribute to the School PTA and Volunteers. Your financial and community support has enabled the staff of St Comgall's to continue to focus on the delivery of high quality learning experiences. Our staff do an excellent job and your support really helps! Whilst the style of fundraising permissible may need to adapt for the future, the need for financial support continues. Sincere thanks to the PTA for the continued sponsorship of the school's FamilyWorks Counsellor, Sharman, who provided vital support and services to pupils throughout the lockdown period.

I commend this report and the work of the school to you and emphasise to you that the continued partnership between Home, School and Parish remains the cornerstone of what we, in St Comgall's, are all about.

Yours sincerely,

B Jamison

Chair of the Board of Governors

VISION STATEMENT

“Quality Learning, Friendship for All”

St Comgall's is committed to the aims and ideals of Catholic education and through this, we seek to develop each child's full potential in a climate of joy, challenge, co-operation and celebration in partnership with and between Home, School, Parish and the wider community.

MISSION STATEMENT

We believe the school to be a vital part of the Catholic Community.

We are firmly committed to providing a loving and caring atmosphere, which embodies our Catholic Ethos in which the children can grow and develop to their full potential in all aspects of their life.

We, the Governors and Staff of St. Comgall's Primary School believe the school to be a vital part of the Community.

We, as a staff, aim to cultivate and nurture a Catholic and Christian ethos which will permeate every aspect of school life.

Positive inter-personal relationships with all at St Comgall's are the cornerstone of this principle.

The Governors & Staff of St Comgall's are firmly committed to:

- the aims of the school
- providing effective education for all our children
- developing pastoral care in the school
- establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

*St. Comgall's seeks to establish an educative community
centred on Christ so that His values and gospel message
pervade the whole life of the school.*

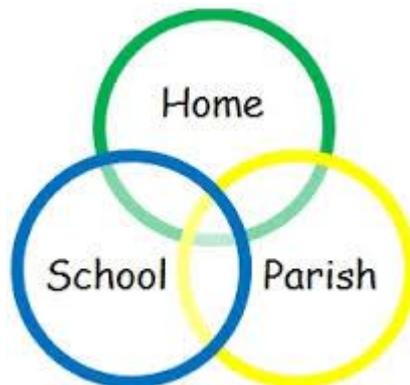


STATEMENT OF SCHOOL AIMS

“Quality Learning, Friendship for All”

As a Catholic School we are committed to:

- fostering and nourishing Christian values for life
- creating a happy, caring, safe learning environment
- providing a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum
- promoting innovative teaching and an investigative skills-based approach to learning
- embracing new initiatives in our quest for life-long learning
- using a varied, up-to-date, range of learning resources
- providing an enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits
- endeavouring to strengthen partnerships between school, home, parish and community



Alone we can
do so little;
together we can
do so much.

School Profile & Achievements

Situated on the Brunswick Road in Bangor West, St Comgall's National School opened in October 1890 with an enrolment of forty-eight pupils.

The original school building was the former parish church. A new school was built in 1929 and extended in 1956.

The Sisters of Mercy, who taught in the girls' school since 1932 remained closely associated with St Comgall's Primary School until 1990.

In March 1990 the Department of Education approved the building of a replacement school. This project began on site in March 1994 and was completed at the end of June 1996.

There are nine permanent classrooms, three on either side of central resource areas. In addition, there are three modular classrooms, a Library/ICT Zone, multi-purpose gymnasium and school kitchen. A new FS/KS1 soft play area was added to our accommodation in 2003 and in 2013, an additional Eco-Trail was installed in partnership with our hard-working PTA.

The school is well resourced with a wide range of equipment including twelve interactive whiteboards, indoor and outdoor play-based learning equipment, P.E. equipment and a plentiful supply of textbooks, book banded reading books and in 2015, a newly established, well stocked, library and study break-out area was added.

In 2007 St Comgall's underwent the C2K Lot 6 Refresh to complement our range of networked PCs. The school continues to recognise the benefits of ICT and invests heavily in providing our pupils with state-of-the-art technology and software packages to support their learning. We have excellent ratios of iPad technology in the school and continue to fundraise to add to our current deployment of Apple™ Technology to further enhance learning & teaching.

In December 2016 through Minor Works Application, a state-of-the-art replacement P5 Mobile Classroom was installed with the latest Clevertouch Technology. A further application to replace the Upper Playground Mobile was turned down by EA.

An **“Investors in People Silver Award School” (2010)** we value and invest heavily in the training of our staff. Staff are involved in a number of initiatives which further enhance the curricular programmes within the school.

In June 2019, we became proud holders of our second **Eco-Schools Green Flag Award** having previously been awarded in 2016. We were also awarded Fair Achiever School status in June 2019 – the only school in the Borough to have achieved this.

St. Comgall's places great emphasis on developing our international and cross-community potential. Always to the fore of innovation, we have developed an International Dimension to the Curriculum to enrich our learning with school based projects linked with schools across Europe. Indeed our international work with schools in Sweden and Spain was recognised in 2009 when St. Comgall's achieved the prestigious **“International (Gold) Schools Award”**. In 2012, the school was the first in Northern Ireland to receive the equally prestigious **“Schools Church Award”** and in **October 2015** we officially enrolled as a **Global Learning Programme (GLP) School**.

St Comgall's is an inclusive Catholic school. We welcome pupils from all faith and non-faith backgrounds. We celebrate, respect and cherish each and every pupil. We treat everyone as unique and cater for their individual needs.

Our **Unicef Rights-Respecting School Pupil Council** aims to give pupils a voice and to involve them in the decision-making processes and life of our school. They are a fantastic group of proactive children, voted for by their peers and always a credit to our school.

Our School **Eco-Council** also gives pupils a voice and plays an active part in developing Global Citizenship and Environmental awareness within our school. In May 2018 we achieved **Bronze Sustrans Active Travel Award**.

We actively promote the development of strong parental partnerships through a wide range programme of parent workshops, events and regular Parent Teacher meetings. We operate **Parent Mystery Reader Programmes, Reading Partnerships, Parent Learning Workshops and more.**



Roots of Empathy
Racines de l'empathie



Parent Teacher Association

We are blessed to have had the support of a very enthusiastic and **Parent Teacher Association** who worked tirelessly to source and provide additional funding for the school through regular fundraising activities and grant applications.

Presently they finance our School Family Works Counsellor who provides 1:1 counselling for children who have suffered through bereavement, illness, family issues or anxiety.

They also supported projects such as the development of our outdoor areas, purchase of additional sports equipment, sports day medals and team clothing, as well as supporting our 2018 full school production of 'Matilda' and fundraising for additional Play equipment.

Their motto is 'Pay it forward' and all classes/families are encouraged to buy into the idea of making a better future for the next and giving something back. This generates a true sense of Community and ensures that everyone is treated equally and fairly in the distribution of resources and services, especially at important and momentous occasions such as Sacramental celebrations.



Enrolment & Pupil Profile

(*Please note not all data available at time of print)

Enrolment Profile	Data Year				
	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Enrolment P1-7	299	309	322	312	303
FSM %	11.4	9.7	9.9	9.9	*
FSM Pupils within P1-7	34	30	32	31	*
SEN % Stages 1-4	14.0	7.8	17.1	19.6	*
SEN Pupils Stages 1-4	42	24	55	61	*
SEN Stage 5%	3.0	3.2	2.8	3.2	*
SEN Stage 5 Pupils	9	10	9	10	*
Newcomer Pupils %	2.0	3.9	4.0	1.6	*
Newcomer Pupils P1-7	6	12	13	5	*
Looked After Children (LAC) %	0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0
Looked After Children (LAC) Pupils P1-7	0	1	1	1	0

Source: Annual DE Census

Pupil Attendance

Pupil Attendance	Data Year				
	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Pupil Attendance P1-7 %	96.8	96.3	96.7	*	*
NI Average Attendance %	95.5	95.5	94.9	*	*

Source: Annual DE Census

Attendance in St Comgall's PS is not a cause for concern.

We exceed the NI Average each year. For those pupils whose attendance/punctuality falls below expectations, in consultation with the School Education Welfare Officer (EWO), individual targets and monitoring arrangements are put in place.

Pupil Teacher Ratios

PTR	Data Year				
	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
School Pupil Teacher Ratio	23.0	23.8	23.3	26.0	27.5
NI PTR	21.4	21.4	21.7	22.2	*

Source: Annual DE Census & Teachers Payroll

Unfortunately budget constraints have impacted on class size in St Comgall's and at present it is necessary to operate larger and in some cases composite classes.

Our teaching staff continue to work extremely well with great success despite having classes that have a higher than the NI Average Pupil/Teacher Ratio.

The number of children presenting with Special or Additional Educational Needs has also greatly risen in recent years.

The Curriculum

When we speak of curriculum in our school we mean the learning experiences that are present for each child.

When planning the curriculum we take into account the uniqueness of each child and their individual needs.

Our aim is to offer each child a broadly based and suitably balanced curriculum in line with the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum.

This involves six Areas of Learning:

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- The World Around Us
- The Arts
- Physical Education
- Religion

In addition there are Cross Curricular Skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using ICT

Special Educational Provision

We identify the educational and welfare needs of each child at the earliest opportunity to ensure early intervention and cater for them accordingly. We are dedicated to early identification of need and remediation and support as apt.

The identified educational needs of each child will be catered for by his/her class teacher through differentiation i.e. group and individual teaching, in-class support and **if appropriate**, through withdrawal for further specialised learning opportunities/intervention and/or additional support from existing staff and/or the appropriate agencies.

The provision for Special Educational and Additional Needs is reviewed and assessed regularly by the Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo), **Mr Bernard Noble** in consultation with SLT, staff and EPS.

Where appropriate, an Individual Education (IEP) Plan will be drawn up for a child in collaboration with all relevant bodies.

The SENCo offers support to all teachers in drafting IEPs and since September 2015, has been supported by the services of a highly-experienced, full-time **Learning Support** assistant, **Mrs Janet Mullan**, to provide individual and small group withdrawal as a **short-term intervention strategy**.

A dedicated **Learning Support Room** was established and stocked with plentiful SEN Resources.

St Comgall's also avails of additional support for our pupils and staff from Educational Psychology (EPS), Education Welfare (EWO), ASD Service, Cottown, RISE, CAMHS, OT, Speech & Language Therapy and where apt, Social Services.

The use of iPad technology has also supported pupil progress and internal performance data reflects the successes achieved and the high quality learning experiences on offer.

At present, approx. 21% of pupils are recognised as having an additional or special educational need with almost 3% having a Statement of Special Educational Need.

St Comgall's PS has established an excellent reputation for promoting high levels of pastoral care and setting and realising high standards for all of our children.

This was very positively commented upon during our recent **ETI Inspection** (May 2017).



Bangor Parish Family of Schools



Religious Education

As a Catholic School we promote and foster the development of the Catholic faith, in partnership between Home, School & Parish.

However, Catholicism by nature is inclusive and all are taught to have and demonstrate respect for others.

We work closely with our Parish Priest, Father Gunn and our Bangor Parish **Family of Schools (BPFS)** – St Anne's PS, St Malachy's PS & St Columbanus' College - to foster, nurture, develop

and promote the Catholic faith, Christian values and to secure in our pupils a Love of God & Love of Neighbour.

Inter-Generational & Community Partnership



In addition to the BPFs and our many collaborative links and programmes, St Comgall's has also established strong transition and partnership links with our local Pre-School providers –St Comgall's Pre-School (based in St Comgall's Parish Centre) and Trinity Nursery School also situated on the Brunswick Road.

We are also proud to link with St Comgall's Senior Citizen Friendship Club, Bryansburn Care Home & Oakmont Care Home to develop intergenerational links through The Arts and Eco-Schools.

School Discipline

St. Comgall's Primary School adopts a positive approach to discipline expecting pupils to behave in a responsible manner by showing consideration, courtesy and respect for others at all times.

This expectation is further reflected and communicated to parents via our school newsletter and monthly Assembly Themes.

The school aims to create an atmosphere of **“Love of God and Love of Neighbour.”**

Children are taught to show respect to priests, teachers, ancillary staff, visitors and to one another. Good behaviour promotes effective learning and the development of application, concentration and honest effort.

St Comgall's PS operates termly Pastoral Awards in addition to a Curricular Awards system to motivate pupil behaviour and establish clear expectations and role-models for the whole school community.

P7 pupils act as Playtime Buddies who ensure that our Pastoral Care policy is as active in our pupils as it is in our staff. Our P7 Pupil Leadership Team & Prefects are excellent ambassadors for our school.

The warm welcome and behaviour of our pupils is often commended by visitors and was noted as **‘exemplary’** in our 2017 inspection and the standard of Pastoral Care as **‘outstanding’**.

St. Comgall's Leadership Structure

Board of Governors

Principal – Mrs Cathy Hunter

(SMT)

Vice-Principal – Miss Anne Higgins

SLT

Miss Bronagh Carey

Mr Bernard Noble

Miss Julie-Anne Mullally

Middle Leaders

Miss Nicole O'Connor

Mrs Charlene Lavery

***Mr Sean Ennis (co-opt SLT)**

Teachers (with Additional Duties)

Mrs Parker

Mrs Monaghan

Miss Graham

Miss Oliver

Mrs Mc Callion

Miss Reid

Key Stage Leaders

Foundation Stage

Miss Mullally

Key Stage One

Mr Noble

Key Stage Two

Miss Carey

Co-ordination Focus Teams 2019-20

Subject / Learning Area	Led By:	Supported By:
Literacy	Miss Mullally	Mr Ennis & Miss Reid
Numeracy	Miss Carey	Miss Graham & Mrs Parker
UICT, E-Safety & Digital Learning/Marketing	Miss O'Connor	Mrs Hunter & Miss Carey
Assessment	Miss Carey	Mrs Hunter & Miss Mullally
World Around Us (incl PBL/ABL) & STEM	Mrs Lavery	ECO-Team
Eco-Schools	Miss Graham & Miss Oliver	Miss O'Connor & Mr Busby
The Arts (Culture)	Mrs Parker	Mrs McCallion & Miss Graham
Religion, Personal & (Faith) Development	Mrs Parker	Miss Higgins & Mrs Mc Callion Mrs Lavery (RoE)
Learning Support (SEN)	Mr Noble	Mrs Hunter, Miss Carey Mrs Mullan (Learning Support Asst)
Play & Physical Development	Mrs Monaghan	Miss Mullally & Mr Ennis
PE, Health, Sport & Extra-Curricular Development	Mr Ennis	Miss Savage, Coaches & Parent Volunteers – Mrs Carol Boal
Pastoral Care, Safeguarding & Well-Being, Parental Liaison	Miss Higgins	Miss Mullally, Mrs Hunter & Miss O'Connor
School Management, Finance, Curriculum Design, Staff CPD, School Council & Pupil Voice	Mrs Hunter	SLT: Miss Higgins, Miss Carey, Miss Mullally & Mr Noble

St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor
Board of Governors 2019-2020

Very Reverend Fr Joe Gunn
Mr Brian Jamison
 Mr Pat McCartan
 Mrs Pat Mc Quillan
 Mrs Cecilia McMahon
 Mr Tony Slack
 Mr Ray Havlin
 Mr Bernard Noble
 Mr Anthony McBrearty
 Miss Anne Higgins
 Mrs Cathy Hunter

Trustee
Chairperson & Trustee
 Vice-Chair & DE Representative
 Trustee
 EA Representative
 EA Representative
 Parent Trustee
 Teacher Representative
 Parent Representative
 Vice-Principal (co-opted)
 Principal & Secretary to Governors

PRSD Arrangements 2019-2020: The common foci for PRSD this year were:

Professional Practice:

Contribute to the review, development and implementation of Year 2 **School Development Plan** (2018-21) and in particular, areas highlighted as Year 2 Priorities.

Maintain high quality Year Group Planning Folders incorporating Evidence (MER) and Data Tracking.

Participate in the development of Tracking Pupils Support sessions and programmes in Literacy & Numeracy.

Participate in **Shared Education** partnership-building/training & events with Grange Park PS, Bangor.

Continue to **share good practice** with each other through participation in e.g. St Comgall's TeachMeets, Key Stage Team Meetings, Twitter, Pinterest, Staff CPD & Professional Planning Time etc.

Maintain an **active class portfolio on Seesaw**.

Further embrace **Flexible Child-Centred Learning Environments** (classrooms & other areas) to support Active Teaching & Learning.

Pupil & Curriculum Development:

Literacy Focus: Talking & Listening – Developing Listening Skills & Promoting Vocabulary Development.

Confident Speakers. Promotion of Guided Reading, Literature Circles, Writing For An Audience, Opportunities for Performance/Presentation – links to UICT Podcasting/Blogging etc.

Numeracy Focus: Processes & Articulation (Math Talk).

Verbalising learning through discussion around strategies.

Active Maths learning connected to real-life examples where possible.

The promotion of Practical Maths strategies in whole class teaching.

Further develop use of **Seesaw Portfolios** to showcase learning processes and (as apt) offer Tutorials/Parental Guidance to support/connect learning from School to Home.

UICT Focus (addressing the 5Es) across the curriculum ensuring a **balance between C2K & iPad** technology/tasks.

Promote the school's **Digital Vision:** Creativity, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Communication and Confidence.

Work in partnership with **NerveBelfast** to introduce elements of **Podcasting, Music & Blogging** to support Talking & Listening & **Wellbeing** through The Arts/ICT.

Promote & develop opportunities for **Pupil (& Staff) Wellbeing** through Mindfulness, Sport, The Arts, Outdoor Learning etc

Personal & Professional:

Personal Wellbeing: Participate in School Staff & Pupil Wellbeing Programmes/Training. Seek to manage own time more effectively, try to pace workload, seeking help from colleagues and working collaboratively as apt.

Contribute to the achievement of any school awards such as Unicef Rights-Respecting School, Fair-Trade School, Dyslexia-Friendly School, Digital Schools of Distinction etc

Principal's PRSD was scheduled to take place on **30/4/20** – Governors & External Advisor:

Reviewee: Mrs Cathy Hunter

Reviewers: Mr Brian Jamison, Mrs Cecilia McMahon, Mrs Susie Johnston (CCMS Advisor)

Monitoring & Evaluation Processes 2019-2020

<u>Learning Area</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Co-ordinator</u>	<u>Monitoring Visits & Work Samples</u>	<u>Evidence</u>
Language & Literacy	<u>Communication:</u> TSPC within Talking & Listening Cross-Curricular Skills – integration of UICT Literature Circles (KS2) Promotion of Writing Process	Miss Mullally	PRSD Visit/ Co-ord Visit Collegiate Book Monitoring Monitoring of IEPs / RoC <u>Assessments:</u> PM Benchmarking, Reading Age Tests, Schonell Spelling, SWST, CAT, PTE etc	Planners: Term 2
				PTE 2019 Analysis Targets Term 1a
				Co-ord/PRSD Visits Term 2
				Literacy Book Look (CBM) Term 1/2
				PTE Results & Analysis Term 3b
Mathematics & Numeracy	<u>Communication:</u> Cross-Curricular & TSPC - integration – Maths Talk Maths Processes & Vocabulary Balance between Number & Topic Work Real life & Problem-Solving Strategies & Investigation	Miss Carey	Co-ordinator PRSD Visits Collegiate Book Monitoring Monitoring of IEPs / RoC <u>Assessments:</u> CAT, PTM, Class Assessments	Planners: Term 1
				PTM 2019 Analysis Targets Term 1a
				Maths Week - Visits Term 1b
				Numeracy Book Look Term 2
				PTM Results & Analysis Term 3
UICT	Balance between iPad & C2K technology to enhance Teaching & Learning NERVE Belfast Podcasting, Music & Blogging	Miss O'Connor	PRSD Visits / Co-ordinator Visits Seesaw Monitoring School ICT Events Planners	Planners Term 2 & 3
				UICT Seesaw Portfolios &/or Book Looks Term 1-3

	<p>Compilation of Digital Learning Portfolios – Seesaw</p> <p>Use of ICT to support 'Learning Talk' & Processing/TSPC</p> <p>ESafety Promotion</p>		<p>NERVE Programme</p> <p>Internet Safety Activities, Keeping Safe & other activities eg Google Internet Legends etc</p>	Support for Awards ongoing
<p>Cross – Curricular Skills Promotion</p> <p>School Programmes</p>	<p>Cross-Curricular Skills – <i>Using Mathematics, Using ICT & Communication</i> – used to support WAU, PDMU, PE, STEM</p> <p>Shared Education Sustrans Roots of Empathy Eco-School Global Partnership Rights-Respecting School</p>	<p>Miss O'Connor (UIC)</p> <p>Mrs Lavery</p> <p>Mr Ennis Mrs Lavery Miss O'Connor Mrs Hunter</p>	<p>PRSD Visits</p> <p>Co-ordinator Visits</p> <p>Book Looks</p> <p>Working towards Achievement of Awards</p>	<p>Planners</p> <p>Action Plans & SDP</p>
<p>Pastoral Care</p>	<p>Promotion of PDMU Strands & Thinking Skills NSPCC Safeguarding & Keeping Safe Programme School Counsellor School Council & Pupil Leadership/Voice</p>	<p>Miss Higgins</p> <p>Mrs Hunter</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>'Learning Talk'</p> <p>Ongoing...</p> <p>Planners Book Looks Homework Surveys Work Samples Short Visits Pupil Feedback Pupil Presentations Assemblies Events Photos etc</p> <p>PRSD 2019-20: (see timetable)</p>
<p>Faith / RE</p>	<p>Incorporating RE, RSE, Sacraments, Ethos, PDMU & Diocesan Resources</p>	<p>Mrs Parker</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>PE</p>	<p>Progression of PE P1-7 Promotion of Pupil WellBeing: Growth Mindset, Resilience, Healthy Eating & Lifestyle (BASE) Links to Shared Education</p>	<p>Mr Ennis</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>The Arts (Culture)</p>	<p>Linking The Arts to WAU Planning PBL & ABL activities, WELLBEING</p>	<p>Collective Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

Enrolment & Transfer 2019-2020

New Pupils 2019-2020

Forty-One pupils enrolled in Primary One in September 2019.

We were again oversubscribed and unfortunately further families were disappointed not to have been granted places despite repeated attempts at Temporary Variations for additional places.

Further discussion between Governors & CCMS were planned for 2019-20 but halted due to Covid-19. It is intended to pursue a Development Proposal with DE & CCMS to find a solution to our need for an increased admissions and enrolment figure. Currently we are the only school in Bangor operating with large composite classes when we are clearly, consistently over-subscribed.

Open Enrolment

We were again allocated **41** places for admission to Primary 1 in September 2020, however we received **112** total applications. We admitted as many P1 pupils as could be safely accommodated.

We currently have a Waiting List for places in all year groups throughout the school.

Our projected enrolment for September 2020 (based on data June 2020) is **309** pupils.

Transfer to Post-Primary

Forty-five Primary Seven pupils transferred to Post-Primary Education in September 20120.

Some pupils chose to engage in the unregulated Common Entrance Examination Process.

Increasingly, a large percentage of children have chosen to opt-out of the tests in favour of direct transfer to our BPFS all-ability, non-selective Post-Primary partner, St Columbanus' College.

Post-Primary School Allocations

School	No of Pupils Transferring
OLSPCK	16
St Columbanus' College	15
Strathearn School, Belfast	2
Campbell College	1
Bangor Grammar	4
Bangor Academy	1
Regent House School	0
Strangford IC	1
Bloomfield Collegiate	0
Glenlola Collegiate	2
Lagan College	3

Pupil Progress and Standards of Attainment

In 2019-20, due to ongoing industrial action by all of the major teaching unions, End of Key Stage data was not intended to be provided to DE.

St Comgall's PS continue to closely monitor and track the progress of all of our pupils and regularly meet to discuss and agree internal standardisation of pupil work across the school.

As per usual moderation practice, St Comgall's PS were due to administer **NFER Standardised Tests** in **English (PTE)** and **Mathematics (PTM)** during April & May 2020 but this did not happen as a result of Covid-19 Lockdown.

Annual written Progress Reports were made available to parents on Friday 19th June 2020.

Additional Support to enhance Curricular Provision

*Please note that not all activities completed due to Covid-19 Lockdown

Organisation	Area of the Curriculum	Year Group
BiTC Time to Read Partnership	Literacy: Reading	P5
SUSTRANS	Active Travel & Road Safety	P1-7
Irish Football Association	Football	P1-P7
PSNI	PDMU, Citizenship, Parent Workshops, Bee Safe Programme	P7
*NI Fire & Rescue Service	Fire Safety & Community Workers	P5
*North Down Borough Council	Citizenship Environmental Awareness The Arts Helping Hands – Women's Aid	P1-P7 P5
NSPCC & Childline	Child Protection, Anti-Bullying & Safety (Keeping Safe Programme)	P1-P7
Sport NI	Multi-Sports	P1-P7
Gymnastics Coaching (Aurora)	Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing	P1-4
*Swimming Coaching (Aurora)	Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing	P5-7
The Daily Mile	Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing	P1-7
Yoga & Mindfulness	Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing	P1-7
*Beach Schools NI & Forest Learning Activities	Outdoor Learning, Physical Education, Health & Wellbeing	P1-4

*Shared Education	Physical Education, PDMU, Health & Wellbeing	P5-7
Ulster GAA	Gaelic Football	P1-7
*Clare Gould	The Arts & Drama	P1-7
Alex Kane	EA Classical Violin Tuition	P3-7
Niall Mc Clean	Traditional Irish Music Tuition	P3-7
Rick Reith	Guitar Lessons	P3-7

BASE: Before & After School Engagement 2019-2020

In addition to curricular enhancement within school time, St Comgall's also offers a host of **Before & After School Club/Activity Provision**.

Sincere thanks to **Mr Sean Ennis** (PE, Health & Sport Co-ordinator) for his hard work in arranging such a wealth of activities for our pupils and to **Miss Savage & Mrs Boal** for supporting him.

Breakfast Club operates daily **8am – 8.45am** ably led by **Miss Pickard** and **Mrs Mc Loughlin**. In addition, after-school clubs are available for P1-7 pupils daily from 2-4pm.

These include:

- Cross-Country Running
- Gymnastics
- Football
- Gaelic Football
- Netball
- French
- iCode
- Yoga
- Irish Dancing
- Drama
- Athletics
- Traditional Music Group
- Choir
- BASECamp After-School Support 2 - 5.15pm – led by St Comgall's Classroom Assistants.

*Unfortunately Covid-19 meant that we only got to complete Term One activities in full and part of Term 2. We had been excited for our Summer Term programme and our Summer BASECamp programme in July/August – but Covid had other plans.

Sincere thanks to all club leaders, coaches and volunteers who contribute so much to enhance the experiences for our pupils. Thank you.

Transition:

As part of our Community Outreach Focus we enjoy established and deepening relationships with both St Comgall's Pre-School (three members of staff & two Governors form part of the Committee) and Trinity Nursery School.

Throughout the course of the year both groups were encouraged to use school facilities to support Outdoor Play and Reading Buddy Sessions. Ongoing visits between the schools and connections with staff really enhanced and ensured a smoother transition for children transferring to St Comgall's PS.

The benefits of this partnership really came into their own this year when we could not complete our normal Induction & Transition Term 3 programme. The solid relationship between the schools and the fact that the children were already so familiar with St Comgall's school environment and staff was a blessing to us all.

At Post-Primary level, excellent connections have been made with OLSPCK and in particular, St Columbanus' College.

We were able to welcome visits from both Principals, their staff and some of our own former past pupils. These visits are always of great benefit and reassurance to our P7 children.

Year Six enjoyed practical workshops at St Columbanus' College and our annual very successful Transition Mock Timetable Day for P7 had been scheduled to take place in the third term.

The Staff of St Columbanus' College have also been hugely generous and giving of their time and talents to support us. We are very appreciative of the ongoing partnership and support we receive.

Parent Teacher Association

St. Comgall's PS are blessed and very grateful to have such a strong and active Parent Teacher Association.

These wonderful parent/carers give generously of their time and talents to organise fundraising activities to support the acquisition of additional, otherwise unaffordable, resources for the pupils. They also support and attend Pastoral & Sacramental Events.

They are an essential asset to the continued success of events run by the school and we encourage all **parents to get involved in whatever way they can.**

In 2019-20, in addition to financing our FamilyWorks School Counsellor, their fundraising efforts supported the requisition of additional Interactive Touchscreen technology.

Fundraising was halted by the tragic and unfolding events of the year but we had been looking forward to the many events they had planned such as Discos, Friday Takeaway Treat Days, Fitness Freddy and various themed days.

The PTA had intended to support all Sacramental celebrations in addition to numerous Parent Events/Meetings but unfortunately lockdown halted these plans

Prior to Lockdown the PTA and some Parent Volunteer Helpers completed the purchase of resources to build our new InterGenerational Eco Green House and Growing Beds with a grant from **Live Here, Love Here**. The project was completed by Mr Busby & Mr Dalzell and will be used by the whole school, as well as Pre-School & Inter-Generational partners – a great boost for our parish community.

On behalf of the Governors and entire school community of St Comgall's PS, I'd like to express my **sincere gratitude** to the PTA for their amazing commitment, enthusiasm and hard work and, in

particular to **outgoing Committee Members** Tara Brankin & Cristina Zampalo as well as to Paula Gow, Karen Campbell & Jane Hill and all of the wonderful committee & volunteers.

Huge thanks to the entire school community who support the work of our PTA whether through contributing donations, attending or helping out at events, sponsorship, newsletter design, idea generation, stalls... the list is endless! **We really value all you do!**

Thanks also to the many Dads who attend our PTA Meetings and/or support events and give of their time, talents, services or goods; in particular, special thanks to the following **Mr Tony Sheridan** (Resident DJ), **Mr Pete Dalzell**, **Mr Mark Johnston**, **Mr Conor McCann**, **Mr Jonathan Boal** (for the many donations – Centra, Holywood) and **Mr Thomas McMullan** (Thomas' Shop).

We are also blessed to have a great group of parents who also support and assist with our many sporting ventures – **you know who you are – THANK YOU!**

Particular thanks to **Mrs Carol Boal**, **Mr Paul Busby**, **Mr McNally**, **Mr Flannigan**, **Mr Braniff**, **Mrs Mulligan**, **Mrs Stirling & Ms Brankin** for the many lifts and great pitchside encouragement!

Communicating School Life 2019 – 2020

In a year like no other, our pupils still managed to experience and enjoy a wide range of curriculum enhancing experiences. Our **School Newsletter** in its calendar format and the school **Twitter Feed (@ComgallsBangor)** provide up-to-date tasters of all that is going on in our school daily. We have found Twitter not only to be a great communication and PR tool, but an excellent way to make connections and links with other schools and educators.

The continued whole-school provision of the paid version of **Seesaw For Schools** – a digital learning platform to display pupils' work – continues to be a huge success. Whole-School Weekly News is posted to all parents on Seesaw each Sunday for the week ahead in addition to all pupils tracking and recording their work digitally across the year to share with their parents. Such is the value of this service that St Comgall's PS continues to fund this provision for parents. We also continue to avail of text messaging and email services to parents also.

School Money, an online payment system was also introduced in 18-19 and has eased the stresses on the school office enormously and helped reduce banking fees. We are very grateful for parent support in this matter.

Other Events 2019-2020

Sacraments & Catholic Faith Development

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated 27th Jan – 2nd February 2020.

Service of Light & Commitment: Took place on Thursday 23rd January 2020 in preparation for Confirmation.

Confirmation: Unfortunately was postponed due to Covid until October 2020.

P3 Sacramental Programme Enrolment Service: took place on Thursday 16th January 2020.

First Penance: The Primary Three Boys and Girls received the Sacrament of Reconciliation (First Penance) on Thursday 5th March 2020

First Holy Communion was due to be celebrated on Saturday 16th May 2020 but was unfortunately delayed until September 2020.

Mrs Hunter, on behalf of the whole school community, would like to express sincere thanks to **Father Joseph Gunn** for his ongoing support and dedication to his role of Parish Priest and School Trustee.

Other Events:

Hollywood Music Festival: We were thrilled that our Traditional Music Group again came 1st in the Hollywood Music Festival for the 16th year in a row – Amazing! We were especially pleased that so many of our individual musicians were recognised – congratulations to them all! My sincere thanks to **Mrs Sharon Parker & Mr Niall Mc Clean** for all of their hard work, time and energy in working with these young superstars.

Open Day and Evening: Thursday 5th December 2019 – a great success! This was very well attended as reflected in the enrolment application figures for September 2020.

Catholic Schools Week: This was celebrated from **26th January – 2nd February**. Events were held throughout the week including a special school Mass and Grandparents' Mass & Tea. These were very well attended and were a credit to the inclusive, welcoming ethos throughout the school.

Annual BPFs Staff Ethos Day: All of the staff from the Bangor Parish Family of Schools (BPFs) attended a Retreat & Ethos Training Session in the Clandeboye Lodge Hotel on Friday 31st January.

Bangor Speech & Drama & International Choral Festival: Individual pupils from P1-P7, two choral speaking groups and the school choir had prepared extensively for their performances at these annual festivals. Unfortunately due to Covid both competitions were cancelled but Mrs Hunter would like to congratulate all of the children (and staff) for their dedication, commitment and resilience. The children involved did manage to perform to the rest of the school in our St Patrick's Assembly on Friday 13th March 2020, just before Lockdown commenced.

For a full look at all of the many themed weeks, celebrations and events that took place throughout the year, parents are directed towards their child's Seesaw account as well as the School's Twitter Profile (@ComgallsBangor).

Fundraising, Charitable & Pastoral Events:

St. Comgall's PS is a caring community which embodies the Catholic faith and models Jesus' message of **'Love of Neighbour'**.

In 2019-2020 we supported the following charities in order to assist and give back to others. This remain a core element of our 'Take 5' approach to mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

Children in Need
Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal
Fairtrade UK
St Vincent de Paul
Trocaire

School Accommodation

The school is well maintained by an excellent, hard-working Building Supervisor (Mr Paul Busby) and his Cleaning Staff.

The Upper Playground Mobile remains in need of replacement – the PTA did a great job painting it in 2018 to enhance its appearance but, to-date, the EA have declined the application for Minor Works to have the Mobile replaced to meet regulation size, heating and access.

In 18-19 some repairs were made to our roof – the pitch is too high and we often get loose tiling which needs to be replaced. In addition, the Emergency Lighting is faulty and the Fire Escape Doors in the Hall are badly damaged/worn and need replaced. All of these and other ongoing faults have been repeatedly logged with the EA who have told us that currently there is no money available to carry out these repairs. Mr Busby continues to do what he can and reports regularly to Governors through Health & Safety audits.

Space continues to be at a premium both in terms of rooms and playground facilities. We continue to struggle to provide suitable rooms for those providing peripatetic and outreach teaching and for general use such as meeting with parents, SEN Assessment, Physical Education/Clubs, Medical Assessment, Music Tuition and Counselling.

A split lunch format to ease playground burdens implemented in Term 3 2019 has worked effectively to reduce congestion. Continued development of outdoor areas and resource is necessary to support us going forward.

Our sincere thanks to **Father Gunn** and the **Parish Centre Committee** for kindly allowing us continued use of their Hall and side rooms when needed. We are very grateful for your support.

Mrs Hunter, on behalf of the entire school community, would like to acknowledge and express her sincere thanks to **Mr Paul Busby** for his extremely high level of care and pride in this school, for his generous nature and commitment to providing the best learning environment for our pupils.

FINANCE – Local Management of Schools (LMS)

The school budget is robustly monitored by the Principal and the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors.

At present, like most schools, the school is operating in a deficit position. EA and CCMS are monitoring school financial planning and spending the majority of which comes down to staffing and running costs - lights, heating & bathroom/cleaning requisites.

Regular Governor Finance meetings ensure that the school is resourced to the best of our ability in line with the priorities on the School Development Plan.

We are indebted to the expertise of this Committee.

**At the time of print, outturn statements were unavailable.*



Those we love aren't far away, they walk beside us every day.

Tommy Jennings (12th June 2010 - 23rd January 2020, aged 9 years)

Thursday 23rd January was a normal day like any other in school. The children were busy in class learning and enjoying being with their friends. After school, Tommy and his P6-7 teammates headed off to the Aurora for our after-school football training sessions.

At 4.15pm, Tommy's Dad picked him up to take him home, he had homework to do and dinner to eat before he was to head off for another football training session later that night, this time with his beloved Bangor Swifts team. Tommy never made it to that training session, God had other plans.

The phone call I received on the evening of 23rd January is one no Principal ever wishes to receive and one I will never forget. The hearts of our school family broke that night and will never be the same again.

Tommy was a kind, loving, energetic, bright young boy. He lived his life in school with great joy and enthusiasm. Surrounded by friends, Tommy was a popular teammate in our after-schools programme as well as being a talented member of the Bangor Swifts Juniors football team. An avid Liverpool fan, Tommy loved all sports and determinedly gave everything a go!

Tommy will forever be greatly missed by his many friends, fellow pupils and all staff at our school.

Heaven gained a very special angel that day and whilst our hearts, and the hearts of Tommy's parents - David & Rena, his siblings Peter & Matilda and his wider family circle - will forever be broken, we place our trust in God and know that we have a special guardian angel watching over us all.

Bernie Digney

Just three weeks after Tommy's tragic passing, our beloved long-term member of staff and great friend of St Comgall's, **Mrs Bernie Digney**, lost her battle with cancer.

Bernie was a formidable character, deeply loved and admired by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Her kindness, faith and joy lives on in her family and friends, particularly those we work so closely with in St Comgall's Friendship Club.

May both their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace, Amen.

Our Friend Tommy

Everyone knew our friend Tommy,
The hard working Primary Six,
He was funny, friendly and clever,
Up to lots of tricks.



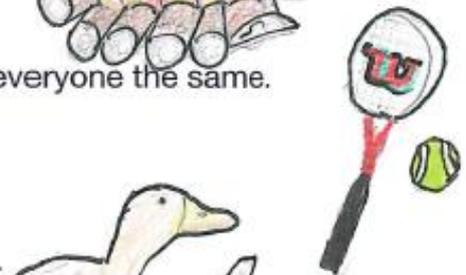
Tommy was a kind and helpful child,
A little bit mischievous and a little bit wild,
He always said please and thank you,
And did the job he was given to do.



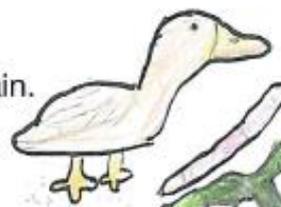
Tommy's writing was beautiful and neat,
His times tables no-one could beat,
In our class he always had a smile on his face,
During the daily mile he was sure to win the race.



Tommy loved being outside and was active and fit,
From tennis to camping where fires were lit,
A fair friend to all, he enjoyed many a game,
From board games to the playground, he treated everyone the same.



When he was young he loved to play on a bike,
Ducks and Worms was a wonderful sight,
He liked to play draughts and crown his men,
Coming to school on his flicker to do it over again.



Creative and funny, that's our Tommy,
He was smart and warmed everyone's heart,
For his friends and classmates he went the extra mile,
And when we think of him, we just smile.



Killy May ♥ ✨
 Ales
 Rory Polak ♥
 Ollie
 Matthew
 Ellie
 Anthony
 Anna
 Eva ♥
 Charis
 Shayla
 Che
 Lar ♥
 Isabella ♥
 Caoimhe ♥
 Denny
 Patrick
 Phoebe
 Luke B ☺
 Sophie ♥
 Maddie ♥
 Ciaran
 Sarah
 Aidan
 Francis
 Ryan
 Maebh
 Irwin
 Holdyn
 Leo
 Niamh
 Reuban
 Hannah
 Cate
 Cairenn
 Ronan
 Jdhran
 Ryan

St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor

Report to Governors



Covid-19 Response 2020 & Informed Future Planning 2020-21 (Year 3 SDP)



In response to the rampant spread of the Coronavirus global pandemic, the NI Executive announced that all schools should close for face-to-face teaching from Monday 23rd March 2020.

Schools across Northern Ireland found themselves in uncharted territory and scrambled (many overnight) to try to put systems in place that would allow for the continued provision of learning for pupils. No one could have predicted how the situation would unfold, the scale and impact of the pandemic on our local communities or indeed the length of the school closure period.

This report seeks to record the timeline and response of the School Community of St Comgall's PS, Bangor throughout the period March - June 2020, reflections and lessons learned since and identify any future implications for the academic year 2020-2021.

St Comgall's PS, Bangor closed to pupils for the planned St Patrick's break on Friday 13th March 2020. Prior to this, the SLT, increasingly concerned by the spread of Covid-19 had met in late February and begun to put in place some emergency contingency plans for what we thought might be a possible short-term closure.

P6 Parent Transfer Meetings which had been originally scheduled for late March were brought forward and all parents were provided with a range of homework activities and prepared assessment materials that would cover a period of three weeks initially.

These face-to-face meetings were a blessing, in hindsight, showing parents that we were forward-thinking and prepared with our pupils' needs, as always, at the forefront of our priorities. Parental response to these meetings and the materials provided was very grateful and reassured.

As we drew closer to our St Patrick's break, the Principal and SLT directed other year groups to follow suit in preparing a range of hard copy materials (where apt - e.g. not appropriate at P1/2) which could be provided to pupils at short notice to cover any short-term closure.

In addition, as a Seesaw Ambassador School with 100% uptake and connection with families via the app, we were already equipped to communicate, deliver activity instruction and maintain contact with our children and their families in any circumstance.

Following the St Patrick's break, the school had been due to reopen to pupils on Wednesday 18th March but, in consultation with Governors, in light of increasing rises in case numbers across NI, the decision was taken that in order to safeguard the school community, some Staff Development Days would be rescheduled which would allow the school to remain closed to pupils 18th-20th March inclusive. This gave staff invaluable time to prepare some further hard copy materials and arrange for families to pick these up at appointed times from the school. Other materials were posted to families who could not attend. By Friday 20th March the NI Executive announced the full closure of all schools effective from Monday 23d March.

Throughout the period 23rd March - 28th June, St Comgall's PS remained open to provide essential childcare for the children of families with 2 identified Key Worker Parents and those children deemed vulnerable or with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Detailed risk assessments and protocols were put in place with families signing up to an agreed set of procedures, booking system and protocols.

Unlike other local schools who only opened sporadically as required or who joined as a cluster with other schools to open on rota only, St Comgall's PS remained open all day, every day for the children of our school, including throughout the Easter Holidays. This facility was staffed daily by the school Principal and a rotated team of mostly local non-teaching staff and when necessary teaching staff.

Attendance ranged from 1-18 children daily, mostly made up of multiple sibling groups, children of Police, Health/Medical, Transport & First-Responder services.

The Principal had felt it best, given the geographical spread of teaching staff (ranging from Fermanagh, Tyrone, North Antrim and the Ards Peninsula), that staff would be better placed to focus on teaching & learning by remaining at home without added travel pressures.

It should be noted that staff remained in close contact throughout and on many occasions, attended school to support the Principal with childcare provision and to make pastoral check-in phone calls to families or arrange provision/delivery of further home learning resources.

It's also worth noting that many staff are parents to young children themselves and/or had caring responsibilities for elderly/ill/shielding family members or were required to shield themselves.

In the earliest days of lockdown, the Principal and Vice-Principal (Pastoral Lead & Designated Teacher for Safeguarding), supported by the school secretary, compiled lists of families it was felt were vulnerable and/or had additional needs in relation to a need for ongoing long-term pastoral support. These families received regular phone calls from school staff throughout lockdown to check on family health, home circumstances and wellbeing and were signposted to any relevant agency support as required.

Some families, identified via these phone calls (placed on the Free Schools Meals Register) were provided with food parcels which school purchased and the VP/P and Secretary compiled and the school caretaker delivered directly to family homes on a regular basis. This service remained available to in-need families throughout the lockdown period, even when additional pupil FSM payments were made directly into family bank accounts.

The school also liaised closely with our local conference of St Vincent DePaul, addressing need where identified and where we could assist.

Other families with children at Stage 5 on the SEN CoP also received regular phone calls to ascertain pupil/family wellbeing and provide a listening ear, advice and practical coping strategies as required. The school SENCo also continued to process and progress assessments and statutory referrals throughout this period.

Through regular confidential liaison between teaching staff and families via Seesaw (Inbox), other family issues emerged which required additional school support. Some families struggling to access learning due to financial circumstances were provided with technology to support children. In some cases these device donations had been gifted to the school by members of the local Parish and in other cases, were gifted by the school from a range of older devices held at school.

Families dealing with ongoing pastoral issues, requiring expert input, were also further supported with weekly telephone sessions with our School Counsellor, Sharman Gilliland. This was a lifeline to many families where pupils were dealing with issues related to serious illness, bereavement and high level trauma and anxiety.

Outside of the high quality provision of learning and teaching via Seesaw, staff were also on a learning journey. It's fair to say that whilst technically, we were miles ahead of many schools who did not have a well developed digital strategy and school platform, we too were catapulted overnight into a remote digital teaching scenario, one which no school staff has ever received training for nor been prepared.

Staff were experiencing their own technical difficulties, not least being physically separated from school, their usual resources as well as their year group and key stage colleagues, but also in trying to find ways and routines to enable them to work from home through a variety of home life and family circumstances with a range of challenges regarding technical ability, Wi-Fi connectivity and general technical delays.

It's easy for others to criticise, we are fully aware that many professions had to adjust to working from home practices but its also to easy to forget that those other professions have had investment and training poured into remote working practices and are well used to dealing with adults over technology.

Trying to 'teach' all children ranging in age from 4-11 years with limited resource, no physical contact and where children have a wide range of individual needs, technology access, abilities, concentration spans and home support is nigh on impossible. Work/life balance was incredibly challenging with staff reporting increased levels of anxiety, isolation and spending hours creating digital resources which could be viewed and completed in minutes. Morale amongst staff was extremely low and parental engagement was at times unappreciative and unkind.

As is typical of St Comgall's staff, our commitment to the delivery of the highest quality provision of learning experiences remained and staff began growing in confidence, demonstrating incredible resilience to overcome barriers and work together, remotely, and creatively to engage the children.

The development of teacher presence via video and audio commentary made a huge difference to parent and pupil engagement levels and, whilst highly uncomfortable for staff, teachers and indeed support staff began to see the impact for the better.

Our practice continued to evolve weekly through careful reflection, parent and pupil feedback and staff collaboration. Some staff accessed additional online training support via emerging teacher forums and Stranmillis University College, many gaining additional recognition. We focussed on trying to align our provision to that of our curricular range when in school. We were only too aware of the wide set of family contexts and circumstances to support home learning via interactions with parents vis Seesaw, phone calls and physical chats with key worker families and we tried to align to an asynchronous delivery which sought to mitigate any widening of the already present poverty/ability gaps. We also wanted to offer families a wide range of curricular activities which suited home life, wholistic needs and the varying independence of the children.

Staff practice evolved to such an extent that by the end of lockdown we had been selected as a showcase school for Stranmillis University College, having supported our children through all curricular areas and in some cases even extending the learning to include pastoral wellbeing challenges, WAU & outdoor learning, PE, virtual sports days and field trips. I cannot thank the staff enough for all that they did, the risks they took and the countless hours they put in to creating digital resources and activities for families which in many cases could rival that of most educational production companies.

In June 2020, we undertook a review of our practice with invited feedback from all families via a Google Forms Survey. The range of responses varied greatly with many clear contradictions in need identified by families. What some families had praised us for, others were critical of and vice-versa. What some families requested, others said was unworkable. Whilst the overall survey responses were inconclusive, the SLT spent a great deal of time analysing every response and gleaning from each any commonalities which could support informed future planning.

Whilst the findings only further supported our belief that in these extraordinary set of circumstances, there is no 'one size fits all' approach that can cater to all family circumstances, we did take heart from the fact that parents acknowledged the incredible effort staff had put in, in trying, to continue to provide a context for learning which allowed families to adapt to meet their own working from home, device/Wi-Fi access, key worker and other challenging circumstances.

Outside of the academic and pastoral support provided, we also tried to strengthen a sense of community and parish belonging. Father Gunn provided regular podcast messages and services for school which we embedded into Seesaw for all families to access. These were particularly pertinent at Easter, what would have been First Holy Communion time in May, a special birthday Mass in memory of Tommy on 12th June and a very poignant P7 Leavers' podcast. Father Gunn was also a regular visitor to school throughout lockdown checking on staff and key worker children and providing a vital link between school and parish.

On 12th June, the Principal and Vice-Principal visited the family home of Tommy Jennings on what would have been his 10th birthday and left a gift on behalf of the whole school community.

In addition to the spiritual podcasts provided by Father Gunn, the school developed our own internal weekly podcast show, led by and compiled by our ICT Co-ordinator, Miss Nicole O'Connor. The weekly podcast celebrated all of the children's (and staff) birthdays, provided a platform for collaboration, conversation and performance (ranging from pupil jokes to parent/pupil duets and musical masterclasses) and featured a guest interview with members of our staff - allowing parents and pupils to get to know us better, hear a wide range of lockdown perspectives and most importantly, have something to look forward to and a sense of belonging to something greater than just ourselves - a school family. We even managed to squeeze in a few VIP slots with local radio and sports personalities offering messages of support to the school.

The school podcast was further supported by weekly messages, 'thoughts for the week' and guidance/signposting for parents by the Principal.

Class and Year Group Padlet Walls, Seesaw Inbox and regular phone calls all added to the sense of community collaboration, social connectivity and togetherness we tried to establish - not easy when we were spread all across Northern Ireland.

It's only right that as a school staff we pay enormous tribute to the efforts of all parents/carers and pupils to continue their learning journey with us throughout lockdown. We've always recognised the role of parents as the first educators of their children but none of us could have imagined just how much would come to be expected of families in 2020. Sincere thanks to all families for all you did and particular thanks to those families who reached out in kindness and appreciation to the efforts of school staff. Your thoughtfulness helped support a weary and isolated staff and provided a much needed reminder of our purpose and community.

Towards the end of June, we arranged for all year groups to visit school (outside in small groups) to collect belongings, reports, chat with staff and each other and for our Primary Seven Leavers we arranged for some special leavers mementos and an ice-cream van (which Father Gunn & Staff really enjoyed!) to mark the end of their primary years. Primary Seven had already been given their Leavers' Hoodies in March 2020 along with a range of certificates acknowledging their numerous talents and contributions to school life throughout their time with us.

A range of suggestions were drawn out of parental responses which have been used to inform our planning for any further potential future closures, blended learning scenarios or local lockdowns. These suggestions seek to build upon existing good practice and include but are not exclusive to:

- Pre-posting of materials in advance of the day they are to be used to allow families to prep resources and plan adult support in advance - a particular request from key worker families reliant on childcare.
- A singular focus on Literacy and Numeracy in upper Key Stage Two classes with less requirements to engage in 'optional' subjects such as WAU, The Arts and PE.
- A flexibility in approach for families allowing daily or weekly completion of tasks (much like homework) to particularly support 'working from home' families where devices are being shared.
- Further provision of hard copy written materials to minimise printing from digital resources.
- Collection of materials from school rather than via post - though this is school and Covid circumstance dependent.
- A change to the presentation of keynote backgrounds and slides - reduction in colour.
- Access to teachers via Inbox messaging for support or advice during school closure periods.
- Continued teacher presence and direction.

It was suggested by a minority of parents that 'live teaching' be considered via Zoom or other alternative platforms. This was discussed at length by staff in conjunction with EA/DE & ETI guidance on Remote Learning but was decided against due to the age and stage of pupils amongst other reasons.

A cognisant school policy for Remote Home Teaching & Learning will be finalised by September 2020.

Going forward in the era of Covid-19

A number of issues will need to be further addressed in order to see school reopen safely to staff and pupils for the academic year 2020-2021. Not least of these will be class size and accommodation. The Governors had already begun work on finding lasting solutions to the persistent oversubscription to the school and the numbers of families not accessing catholic education as a result.

In February 2020 the Governors directed the Principal to begin work to reconfigure classes and negate the need for large composite classes. With the latest and current social distancing guidelines in mind, it was necessary to recruit additional temporary staff to allow for the creation of three extra classes (creating 13 in total) to allow pupil-teacher ratios to remain within safe levels. Talks were begun with DE/CCMS for a development proposal to establish an increase in admissions and enrolment but stalled due to the pandemic.

In the interim, the Parish Priest stepped up and kindly offered an accommodation solution in the Parish Centre, converting the upstairs of the Youth Centre to accommodate the P5 Year Group.

The Principal undertook to creatively resource and furnish this provision and, in order to secure its use as an extension of the school site, sought to physically connect the two buildings by providing an external set of stairs linking from the KS2 playground to the front door of the Youth Centre.

Furthermore, the centre was kitted out with Interactive CleverTouch technology meaning that provision of resource in the centre is equal with that provided within the main school building and mobiles.

Education Restart Guidance continued to change weekly making school reopening plans very challenging and fluid but school was ready and receptive to pupils from 19th August as directed by the Minister.

At present we are operating dual entry straight classes from P1-7 with all of year five housed within the Parish Centre. Total enrolment is 306 pupils (after a few moves) and class size ranges from 19-26, much more in line with our neighbouring counterparts and a huge improvement on our previous composite classes of 33.

This approach is vital long-term (not just for Covid) if we are to secure the longterm future of the school and compete for enrolment with neighbouring controlled sector schools who can comfortably afford smaller class sizes in more recent, state-of-the-art facilities. Only recently, Bangor Central IPS was announced for a brand new build school, ready for 2024, which is intended to accommodate 600 pupils.

Further update to our outdoor provision is also required and the Principal will work with the PTA and try to access other sources of funding to accommodate this.

A review of staff provision is also required to meet the changing circumstances and needs of the school.

Future Opportunities & Challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
Over-subscribed Enrolment & Waiting List Covid-19 New 3 Year SDP 2018-2021	COVID-19 - rising costs, staff & pupil health & wellbeing 290 Capped Enrolment – very limiting – oversubscribed school – denial of Temporary Variations / lack of progress CCMS/DE support for Development Proposal. Accommodation: Limited Space within School Building - use of Parish Centre. Making the most of our Budget in light of capped enrolment & rising staff/utility costs Lack of training & support from EA – SEND numbers rising
Established Digital Strategy and Seesaw for Schools platform Active Learning & Teaching Methodologies iPad Technology Flexible Reggio-inspired Learning Environments	Covid-19 - Remote Learning Need for continued investment in ICT CPD for staff to meet remote teaching needs. Lack of DE Funding/Training/Infrastructure/Guidance and/or Support for Staff Need for teacher training to meet needs of ALL pupils Cost of school ICT maintenance - lack of funding
Highly Supportive PTA	*Three Year Plan (taking account of Rising Costs) indicates continued deficit Sustainability Serious concern over Rising Costs Capped enrolment figures mean no access to additional funding PTA – a need for future-proofing & planning given their vital contribution to school life/funds.
Staffing/Class Restructuring DE (Minister Weir) open to application for Development Proposal	New class sizes need to be permanent arrangement. Temporary staff appointments drain resource and training budgets and create uncertainty. Deficit/Lack of Budget
ETI Report & Positive Feedback (May 2017) ETI Chief Inspector & CCEA Visit (June 19) – highly positive Reputation for excellence Showcase school for CCEA & Stranmillis UC School Awards & Achievements	Staff morale, workload, health & wellbeing in light of Covid. Managing parental expectation in remote learning scenarios Sustaining & improving upon current provision & Academic Performance Improving upon Teaching & Learning Provision to sustain Outstanding - Sustaining Improvement ETI Visit anticipated
Vibrant school community & active parental involvement Partnerships with External Agencies & Transition Links Positive Links through BPFs, Transition & Shared Education – Grange Park PS	Maintaining partnership, community and connectivity in light of Covid restrictions Lack of funding. Need for continuous fundraising. Sustainability of Shared Education – future funding sources – Brexit? Challenge of school promotion without visits to school site - Virtual Open Night, Social Media PR, Connecting with prospective families and maintaining existing partnerships remotely - Transition, Shared Ed, InterGenerational etc
School Development Plan - Strong Wellbeing Focus	Rising concern over staff and pupil physical, mental health and wellbeing Lack of funding (outside of PTA) for School Counsellor services Need for financed training and support for schools Access to support for staff for own wellbeing needs

Glossary of Terms:

DE	Department of Education
BOG	Board of Governors
EA	Education Authority
KS	Key Stage
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SDD	School Development Days
CPD	Continued Professional Development
EPD	Early Professional Development
ETI	Education & Training Inspectorate
PRSD	Performance Review & Staff Development
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
EA - (SER)	Education Authority (South Eastern Region)
LMS	Local Management of Schools
CCMS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CCEA	Council for Curriculum Examinations & Assessment

Thank you for your time in consideration of this document

Cathy Hunter - September 2020



St Comgall's PS, Bangor

Quality Learning, Friendship For All



Bangor Parish Family of Schools