



PHOENIX INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY UNIT

“Achieving and Celebrating Together ...in the heart of Mid-Ulster”

School Profile/Background Information

Principal:	Mrs Heather Watson BA(Hons) PQH(NI)
Chairperson:	Mrs Liz Simpson
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Admission Number: 29

Enrolment Number: 223

FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

Phoenix Integrated Primary School is a Grant Maintained Integrated Primary school situated on the Fountain Road in Cookstown. The school opened in 2004 with 12 pupils, and now looking forward to celebrating 20 years of integrated education in Cookstown with an enrolment of 225 pupils. The school is an integral part of the local community and has strong links with other local primary and post-primary schools. The school employs 30 staff in total including 13 teachers.

The majority of our pupils come from the Cookstown area, however, a number travel a greater distance to attend the school to access our integrated ethos.

As an Integrated School we promote the principles of Integration; Faith and Values, Social Responsibility; Parental involvement and Equality. We enjoy a healthy mix of children from the two main religious traditions and others. In addition, we welcome children from a range of cultural backgrounds. We firmly believe that by educating the children together in the same classrooms every day, we normalise the education experiences for all. We celebrate our similarities and differences and promote opportunities to deal with issues which will help our society move forward. We work closely with local schools and value Shared Education as part of the continuum towards more integration in our schools.

NEW SCHOOL BUILD

We are currently in the middle of a new school build and are looking forward to completion at the end of June 2024. We are currently preparing to move into the new school buildings which will provide our children with state-of-the-art permanent education facilities to learn and play in. We have many exciting plans which includes the development of a forest school area, activity play areas and access to a range of technology resources. The whole school community is looking forward to this and we are excited about the future.

PRESCHOOL PROVISION

We opened our Nursery Unit provision in September 2015, providing 26-part time funded pre-school places for children in the Cookstown area. In June 2024 the school will move into a new purpose-built Nursery facility. Outdoor play is a fundamental part of the Nursery experience, and we believe there is “no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing”.

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

The school continues to provide a high standard of education for pupils; offering a stimulating, varied curriculum in which all children are encouraged to succeed. At Phoenix the staff work hard to not only inspire the pupils, but to engage parents and volunteers in the life and work of the school.

The most important thing for the staff at Phoenix IPS is that children are learning in a positive, encouraging atmosphere. Great importance is placed upon the acquisition of skills and concepts across the year groups. Providing support for mental health and wellbeing is well embedded in our school ethos, and we were delighted to be awarded ‘Model School’ status for PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), an international state-of-the-art programme designed to facilitate the development of self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem-solving skills.

To prepare their pupils for the technological world in which they live, we place great importance on the teaching and learning of ICT. Every classroom is equipped with an Interactive Whiteboard and pupils have access to a range of other technologies. Teachers use a range of approaches to support learning and avail of online learning platforms for home activities and to communicate with parents. At Phoenix we aim for students to become both digitally literate and digitally adept. Children have access to age-appropriate games/app development and computer coding experiences.

PART OF THE COMMUNITY

As an integrated school Phoenix strives to promote the principles of integrated education both within the school and wider community in a range of ways. The school promotes shared education, working closely with local schools on a range of projects. We take an active role in various community schemes and have been acknowledged as an ECO school. We recently joined the forest school community and look forward to developing our practice across all classes and the outdoor area of the new school grounds. Our community garden is used as a learning resource by pupils and members of the local community.

The school day starts at 8.30am with Breakfast Club and continues after 3pm with a variety of after-school clubs including Film Club, Storytelling, Digital Media Activities, Minecraft

Club, Netball, Soccer, Gaelic, Cooking & Baking and many more. We have also held workshops for teachers and provided opportunities for parents who have had the opportunity to engage with activities such as Yoga, reflexology, Internet Safety Training and Curriculum Workshops.

Educational visits are an integral part of school life. Not only do we provide travel experiences for children, we welcome visitors into the school to share their knowledge with the children. Previous trips include residential to France, England, and Scotland. As well as a whole school trip at Christmas where children get to experience the theatre, every class have the opportunity of a summer day trip in the 3rd term.

Due to our prime location the school can avail of the facilities at Cookstown Leisure Centre. Every pupil from Year 3 to 7 attends swimming lessons. The school also makes use of the multi-purpose sports hall for Sports activities and Sports Day.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT FOR PHOENIX IPS

Our growing school is a happy, vibrant place to work and as such it is an exciting time to join the team. We encourage all staff to engage in shared leadership of the school, building capacity at all levels.