#ProudtobeBraniel

BRANIEL

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY SCHOOL



BELONG • RESPECT • ASPIRE

PROSPECTUS


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PRIMARY SCHOOL • NURSERY SCHOOL

Welcome

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for taking the time to read our prospectus and learn more about Braniel Primary and Nursery School. Whether you are considering us for the first time or already know our school community, we extend a very warm welcome to you and your family.

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you will make, and we are committed to supporting you throughout that journey. This prospectus offers a glimpse into the caring, inclusive and engaging environment we are proud to provide, where every child is valued as an individual and encouraged to achieve their very best.

At Braniel Primary and Nursery School, our vision is shaped by our core values of Belong, Respect and Aspire. We believe every child should feel a strong sense of belonging within our school community, learn to treat themselves and others with respect, and aspire to reach their full potential. These values are at the heart of everything we do and help create a happy, safe and nurturing environment where children can thrive.

We recognise that education is most successful when there is a strong partnership between home and school. By working closely together, we aim to provide children with rich learning experiences, lasting friendships and memories that will remain with them long after they leave our classrooms.

We hope this prospectus gives you a sense of what makes Braniel Primary and Nursery School such a special place to learn and grow. We look forward to welcoming you into our school community and working alongside you to help your child flourish academically, socially and emotionally. Together, we want every child to develop the confidence, skills and love of learning that will support them throughout their lives and leave Braniel proud of who they are and proud to be Braniel.

Niall Manogue

Principal







About Our School

Braniel Primary School is a controlled, co-educational primary school located in the heart of the Braniel community in East Belfast. As a controlled school, we are managed by the Education Authority through our Board of Governors. We are non-denominational and welcome children and families from all backgrounds, faiths and cultures.

Our Board of Governors holds overall responsibility for the strategic direction and governance of the school, while the day-to-day leadership and management are entrusted to the Principal, who works closely with an experienced Senior Leadership Team and dedicated staff team.

The governors are committed to ensuring that every child receives the highest quality educational experience within a safe, caring and inclusive environment. They work closely with school leaders to support our vision and ensure that Braniel Primary School continues to meet the needs of both our pupils and the wider community we serve.

Representing the Education Authority, local churches, parents and staff, the Board of Governors plays a vital role in the life of the school. They are responsible for setting admission criteria and helping to shape the strategic direction of the school, ensuring our values of Belong, Respect and Aspire remain at the heart of everything we do.

Braniel Primary School is fortunate to be situated within extensive, beautiful green grounds that provide an outstanding setting for learning, play and adventure. Our vast outdoor space includes a dedicated forest area for outdoor learning, a beautiful wooden play trail that encourages exploration and imaginative play, and large grassy areas where children can be active and enjoy the natural environment. These unique facilities enrich school life and provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop confidence, resilience and a love of the outdoors.

Our well-equipped classrooms provide welcoming and engaging learning environments where children can achieve their best. The school also offers a range of additional learning spaces to support intervention programmes, small-group work, nurture provision, music and extracurricular activities. Significant investment in digital technology ensures that pupils have access to modern learning tools, helping them develop the skills needed for the future.

At the heart of our school is a dedicated team of staff who work together to create a happy, safe and inclusive environment in which every child can thrive. Teachers, classroom assistants and support staff are committed to nurturing the whole child, recognising individual strengths and encouraging every pupil to reach their full potential.

Our Values

Our work is guided by our core values of **Belong, Respect and Aspire.** We want every child to feel a genuine sense of belonging within our school community, to show respect for themselves and others, and to aspire to achieve their very best. These values shape not only our learning but also our relationships, attitudes and expectations.

We believe that every child brings unique talents, interests and abilities to school. Through high-quality teaching, encouragement and support, we help children develop confidence in themselves as learners, reflect on their progress and take pride in their achievements. At Braniel Primary School, success is celebrated in all its forms, both inside and outside the classroom.

Strong partnerships with parents, families and the wider community are fundamental to our success. We value the support of our families and believe that children thrive when home and school work closely together. As a school at the heart of the Braniel community, we are proud of the relationships we have built and remain committed to strengthening these connections for the benefit of every child.



Braniel Parent: "The teachers are fantastic: caring, nurturing and always approachable. Braniel has such a positive, welcoming feel. It feels like a real part of the community, and we always feel welcome and supported as a family."

Braniel Nursery

Our Nursery Unit is a valued and integral part of Braniel Primary School, providing an important first step in every child's educational journey. With 52 places across two full-time classes, our Nursery offers a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment where children feel safe, happy and ready to learn.

Through high-quality play-based learning experiences, children are encouraged to explore, investigate and develop their independence, confidence and curiosity. Our dedicated Nursery staff provide a nurturing environment where every child is known, valued and supported to progress at their own pace.

At Braniel, our values of Belong, Respect and Aspire are introduced from the very beginning. Children are encouraged to develop positive relationships, learn to respect themselves and others, and build the confidence to try new experiences and embrace challenges.

As part of the wider school community, Nursery children and their families are welcomed into school life from the outset. Close links between Nursery and Year 1 ensure a smooth and seamless transition, helping children settle confidently into the next stage of their learning journey.

Through play, exploration and meaningful interactions, our Nursery provides rich opportunities for children to develop their communication, language and social skills, laying strong foundations for future learning and success.









Curriculum and Learning

At Braniel Primary School, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum that supports children academically, socially and emotionally. Teaching follows the Northern Ireland Curriculum and ensures clear progression at every stage:

The 3 Stages of the Primary Curriculum:

Foundation Stage
Nursery, Years 1 - 2

Key Stage One
Years 3 - 4

Key Stage Two
Years 5 - 7

Teachers use a range of approaches, including whole-class, group and individual teaching, to meet the needs of all learners. Learning activities are carefully planned and differentiated to provide appropriate support and challenge for every child.

Progress is monitored through ongoing assessment and observation, alongside standardised assessments from Y3 to Y7. This helps teachers identify strengths, address areas for development and ensure all children achieve their potential.

We value strong home-school partnerships and maintain regular communication with parents. Parent-Teacher meetings are held throughout the year, and a detailed written report is provided at the end of each academic year. Parents are encouraged to share any information that may impact their child's wellbeing or learning.

Guided by our values of Belong, Respect and Aspire, we aim to create a learning environment where every child can succeed and thrive.

Braniel Parent: "Braniel is a friendly and welcoming school. The teachers are kind, supportive and caring. They help children learn, feel safe and happy."









Homework



Homework is provided regularly and is carefully matched to children's age and ability. It may include reading, oral learning or written activities across a range of curriculum areas, with a particular focus on developing the core skills of reading, writing, spelling and mathematics.

As children progress through the school, expectations increase in terms of both the content of homework and the time spent completing it. Homework is designed to reinforce learning from the classroom, encourage independence and help children develop positive study habits.

At Braniel Primary School, we value the important role parents and carers play in supporting learning. We encourage families to take an interest in homework, provide encouragement where needed and celebrate their child's efforts and achievements.



Religious Education

At Braniel, Religious Education is non-denominational and is delivered in line with the Northern Ireland Core Syllabus, which is used by all schools across Northern Ireland. Through Religious Education, children explore Christianity and learn about the beliefs, traditions and celebrations of a range of world faiths, including Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Easter and Eid.

We value the strong links we have with our local faith community and regularly work alongside **Braniel Church, Braniel Community Church and Gilnahirk Baptist Church.** These partnerships enrich children's learning through school visits, assemblies, special events and opportunities to explore Christian values in a meaningful and practical way.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education and collective worship should they wish to do so, and requests will be respected in accordance with parental choice.





Music and Drama

At Braniel Primary School, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to shine. Through class assemblies, nativities, school productions and musical experiences, children are encouraged to develop confidence, creativity and self-expression. Pupils are given regular opportunities to perform, collaborate and celebrate their talents, helping them to grow as confident learners and valued members of our school community. These experiences bring our values of Belong, Respect and Aspire to life, ensuring every child feels they have a place on the stage and in our school family.

"The arts are not a luxury. They are a necessity." ***Sir Ken Robinson***

ICT and Digital Learning

At Braniel, we recognise the importance of developing strong digital skills for the future. Every classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard, and pupils have access to iPads and a dedicated ICT suite to support learning across the curriculum.

From Year 1 to Year 7, children develop their confidence and competence in using technology creatively, safely and responsibly. Through a range of digital learning opportunities, we prepare our pupils to thrive in an increasingly connected world.







PE & Sport

At Braniel, we are passionate about promoting active, healthy lifestyles and providing every child with opportunities to participate, compete and succeed. Our PE programme includes athletics, dance, swimming, team games and a range of activities that develop physical skills, teamwork and confidence.

We are proud to offer a variety of extra-curricular sporting opportunities and regularly work with specialist coaches and community partners to enrich pupils' experiences. In recent years, our boys' football teams have enjoyed significant success, winning numerous trophies and representing Braniel with distinction in local and regional competitions.

Whether competing on the football pitch, taking part in tournaments or enjoying PE lessons, pupils are encouraged to wear the Braniel shirt with pride and embody our core values of **Belong, Respect and Aspire**. Through sport, children learn the importance of teamwork, commitment, resilience and always striving to achieve their personal best.

Educational Visits/Residentials

Educational visits are an important part of life at Braniel Primary School, providing children with opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom through meaningful first-hand experiences. Throughout the year, each year group takes part in a range of visits and outings that enrich the curriculum, inspire curiosity and create lasting memories.

As part of our commitment to developing confident, independent learners, pupils also can participate in residential experiences. In Year 6, children enjoy a two-day, one-night residential visit to Ganaway Activity Centre, while in Year 7 they take part in a three-day, two-night residential experience at Share Discovery Village. These residential trips are often highlights of primary school life, helping pupils to build confidence, resilience, teamwork and friendships while enjoying exciting outdoor activities.





Pupil Voice

At Braniel, we believe every child should have a voice and the opportunity to make a positive contribution to school life. Through a range of leadership opportunities, pupils develop confidence, responsibility and teamwork while helping to shape a school community where everyone feels valued.

Student Council

Representatives from Year 4 to Year 7 are elected by their classmates to serve on the Student Council. Meeting regularly throughout the year, they gather views from their peers, share ideas and work alongside staff to help improve school life. The Student Council plays an important role in ensuring that pupil opinions are listened to and acted upon.

House Captains

Year 7 pupils can apply for leadership positions within our House System. House Captains encourage participation, lead by example and help build a strong sense of teamwork and school spirit throughout the year.

Eco-Council

Our Eco-Council empowers pupils to take an active role in protecting the environment. Members lead initiatives focused on recycling, biodiversity and sustainability, helping to create a greener school for future generations.

Braniel Buddies

Braniel Buddies support younger pupils during break and lunchtime, helping to create a welcoming, inclusive and friendly playground environment. They promote positive friendships and ensure that all children feel supported and included.

Listening to Every Voice

At Braniel, pupil voice is more than a programme - it is part of our culture. By providing meaningful opportunities for leadership and encouraging children to share their ideas, we help our pupils become confident, caring and responsible young people, ready to make a positive impact in their school and wider community.

Braniel Parent: "You provide a caring and welcoming place for the children."



Pastoral Care

We believe that happy, secure children are the most successful learners. We are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and supportive environment where every child feels valued, respected and safe.

Strong relationships between pupils, staff and families are at the heart of our school community. We work closely with parents and carers to ensure that children receive the support they need to thrive both academically and socially. Open communication between home and school helps us respond effectively to individual needs and circumstances.

Children are encouraged to develop confidence, resilience and emotional wellbeing through our Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) curriculum and a range of wellbeing initiatives. They learn how to recognise and manage their emotions, build positive relationships and stay safe through age-appropriate programmes, including NSPCC safeguarding resources and online safety education.

Our caring ethos, dedicated staff and strong community spirit ensure that every child is known, supported and encouraged to achieve their very best.

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. Braniel Primary and Nursery School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment where children can learn, grow and flourish.

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, or if concerns arise regarding a child's welfare, these concerns will be reported in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

The school's Safeguarding Team consists of:

Vice Principal and Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

School Principal

Our comprehensive Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on the school website and outlines the procedures followed to protect and support children should concerns arise.

At Braniel, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we are committed to working in partnership with parents, external agencies and the wider community to ensure the wellbeing of all our pupils.



Braniel Parent: "Braniel provides great pastoral care and support."

Parents as Partners

At Braniel, we believe that children achieve their best when school and home work together. We value strong relationships with parents and carers and recognise the important role they play in supporting their child's learning and wellbeing.



Parent Consultations

Parent Consultation Meetings take place twice each year, providing opportunities to discuss progress, celebrate achievements and identify next steps in learning. Staff are always happy to communicate with parents throughout the year should any questions or concerns arise.



Transition to Post-Primary School

Supporting our pupils and families through the transfer process is a key priority in Year 7. Parents are invited to meet with Y7 teachers and the principal to discuss post-primary options, receive guidance on applications and ensure that every child is well prepared for the next stage of their educational journey.

Seesaw

We use Seesaw to strengthen communication between home and school. Through the app, parents can celebrate their child's learning and receive important updates from teachers and the school. Seesaw provides a valuable window into school life and helps families remain connected to their child's educational experience at Braniel.







Special Educational Needs (SEN)

At Braniel, we are committed to helping every child reach their full potential. Through ongoing assessment, teacher observation and standardised testing, we identify children who may need additional support at an early stage.

Children with Special Educational Needs receive personalised support to meet their individual needs. This may include Individual Education Plans (IEPs), small-group interventions in Literacy and Numeracy, and support from specialist staff or external agencies.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) works closely with class teachers, parents and outside professionals to ensure appropriate support is in place. We value strong partnerships with parents and believe that working together is key to helping every child make progress and succeed.







Friends of Braniel

Friends of Braniel is our Parent Teacher Association, bringing parents, staff and children together through a range of events and activities that strengthen our school community. They organise fun, affordable events throughout the year, ensuring that everyone can take part and enjoy being involved in school life.

As well as creating memorable experiences for our families, Friends of Braniel plays a vital role in fundraising for the school. Through their hard work and dedication, they have raised significant funds to enhance our pupils' learning and play experiences. Last academic year, their fundraising efforts funded new playground markings, providing exciting opportunities for active play and learning outdoors.

Friends of Braniel welcomes all parents and carers to become involved, whether by attending meetings, helping at events, or supporting fundraising initiatives. Together, they make a valuable contribution to the life of our school and help ensure Braniel continues to be a positive, thriving place for every child.







Braniel Parent: “Every single teacher my children have had to this point have been incredible.”



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Braniel Parent: "We love the happy and friendly atmosphere at Braniel. There's a family feel to the school."







Braniel Primary School & Nursery School
Ravenswood Park, Belfast. BT5 7JU
info@branielps.belfast.ni.sch.uk
028 9040 1234

@branielps
Braniel Primary & Nursery School

www.branielps.co.uk