

St. Benedict's College



Gúigh Agus Foghlaim

St. Benedict's College

# St. Benedict's College

PROSPECTUS 2025

St. Benedict's College



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## School Management Information

**Acting Principal:** Mr Stephen Keown

**Acting Chairperson of the Board of Governors :** Mrs Frances Doole

**School Type:** Catholic Maintained Secondary School

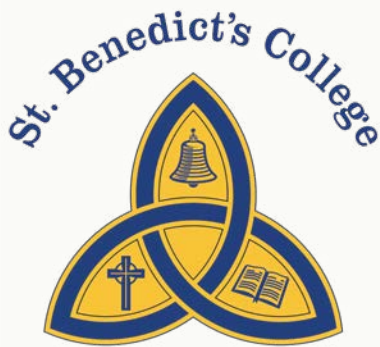
**Age Range:** 11-16 years

**Approved Enrolment:** 500

**Year 8 Admissions Number:** 100

A photograph of two students, a boy and a girl, in school uniforms. They are both smiling and holding up a large bunch of autumn leaves. The boy is on the left, wearing glasses and a dark suit with a tie. The girl is on the right, wearing a dark blazer over a white shirt and a dark skirt. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with more autumn leaves.

# Welcome to St. Benedict's College



### **Guigh Agus Foghlaim**

We are delighted to welcome pupils and parents to our warm, caring, friendly, inclusive school.

Here in St. Benedict's College our pupils are nurtured, supported, challenged and encouraged to be the best that they can be and that is why our pupils continue to achieve so well in their examinations and in other areas of school life.

In our school we focus on our children feeling happy in their learning environment. A happy child will succeed in all their endeavours and we are proud of our pupils' exceptional achievements in the classroom and beyond.

Our school is a small Post Primary School with a huge community spirit. Our pupils feel like they belong here from the moment they start with us, from when they first arrive in their new school uniforms, eager to learn and ready for a new adventure as they become part of our family. Pupils are introduced to a variety of exciting subjects, delivered by enthusiastic, caring, and supportive staff. In St. Benedict's College we take the time to get to know each child so that we can best support them throughout their Post Primary journey. We are extremely proud of our college's sporting tradition and of pupil achievements in extracurricular areas and encourage our young people to embrace every opportunity offered to them at the college.

Our pupils greatly benefit from the fabulous relationships they have with their teachers, peers, and the larger St. Benedict's family. This, we believe, is key to our success. We get

to know our pupils well and take an interest in their aspirations and ambitions. We recognise and reward their successes and support them in overcoming their individual challenges. Each child's progress is carefully monitored and we communicate regularly with parents to support further attainment. Our Pathways into Key Stage 4 offer a breadth of subjects which enable all pupils to meet their potential and to progress to Post-16 study, training, or the world of work.

Our intake extends beyond Randalstown, with pupils travelling from Antrim, Toome, Moneynick, Cargin, Moneyglass, Staffordstown and Creggan. We really are only a hop, skip and jump away! So why not come and visit our amazing school.

There's a warm welcome awaiting you in St. Benedict's College, Randalstown.

#### **St. Benedict's College Senior Leadership Team**





# Our Identity

## College History

St. Benedict's College was founded by the Down and Connor Diocesan Trustees in 2006, through the amalgamation of St. Olcan's High School and St. Malachy's High School. St. Benedict's College is a well-established and successful 11-16 Catholic, all ability, co-educational college that mainly serves families from the parishes of Antrim, Duneane, and Randalstown.

## College Crest

### THE CROSS

Represents the High Cross of St. Olcan, associated with Cranfield and the former patron of St. Olcan's High School.

### THE BELL

Represents the monastic life of St. Malachy, the former patron of St. Malachy's High School, and St. Benedict, our patron.

### THE BOOK

Represents the Bible, the Word of God, and is a symbol of Learning. The design which encloses the three symbols, the Triskele, is deeply rooted in Celtic Tradition and represents the Trinity and Eternity.

## College Motto

Our motto is **Guigh agus Foghlaim - Pray and Learn**. The motto of St. Benedict was 'Orare et Labore' - 'To Work and to Pray'. This was adapted to create the school motto 'Guigh agus Foghlaim' - 'Pray and Learn', to reflect our Catholic ethos, our aims, and our Irish identity. For students in St. Benedict's their 'Work' is 'to Pray and Learn'.



### **College Mission Statement**

St. Benedict's College is a Catholic, all ability, inclusive school committed to delivering excellence for all. Together with home and community, we strive to enable our students to be happy, safe, and successful.

### **St. Benedict's Prayer**





O Gracious and Holy Father,  
give us wisdom to perceive you,  
intelligence to understand you,  
diligence to seek you,  
patience to wait for you,  
eyes to behold you,  
a heart to meditate on you,  
and a life to proclaim you;  
through the power of the  
Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen



**A Nurturing School at the  
Heart of the Community**



# Our Aims

-  To deliver excellence for all.
-  To ensure all our students are happy, safe, and successful.
-  To ensure all our students are challenged and supported to be the best that they can be.
-  To empower all our students to achieve their personal potential.
-  To ensure all our students' achievements are celebrated.
-  To ensure all our students are included, valued, and respected and that religious and cultural differences are celebrated within the school community.
-  To develop our students' understanding of their Catholic faith and to promote Christian values and attitudes within the school community.
-  To awaken in our students a sense of their own dignity and self-worth and to promote their self-confidence.
-  To promote student health and well-being and develop student resilience.
-  To provide enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities to enrich student experience.
-  To support our students to become independent and lifelong learners.
-  To prepare our students to meet the challenges of a changing world in the 21st century.
-  To work in partnership with parents, parish, and community.
-  To develop a culture of accountability, responsibility, self-evaluation, and self-improvement.

# Our Core Values

Staff and students in St. Benedict's College will:



**Respect ourselves, others,  
our school, and our  
community.**



**Demonstrate  
kindness,  
empathy, and  
concern for  
others.**

**Be inclusive  
and tolerant of  
other religions,  
cultures, and  
traditions.**



**Be honest and truthful.**



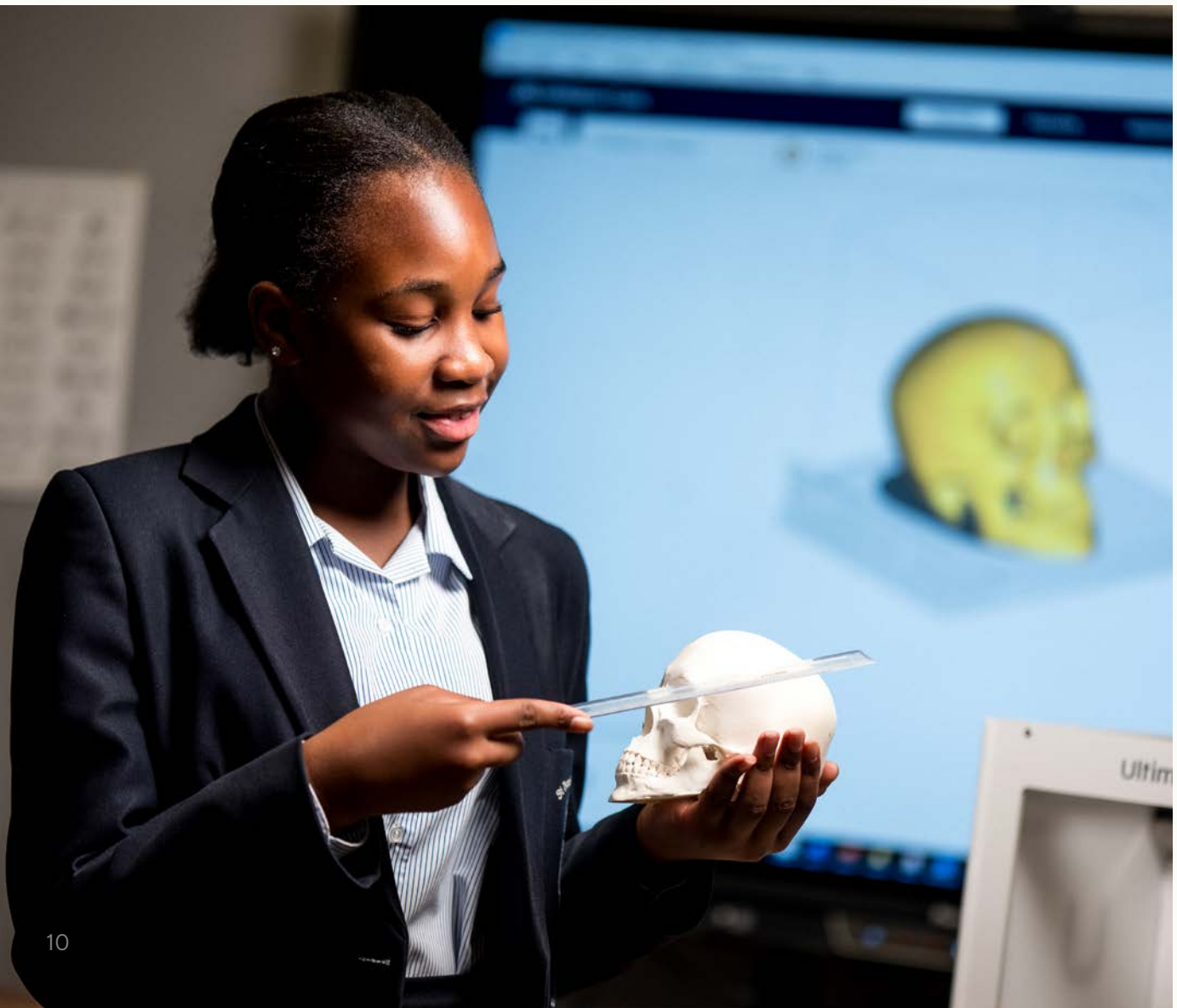
**Be charitable  
and giving and  
demonstrate a  
commitment to  
service and social  
justice.**

# Becoming a Happy, Safe and Successful Learner in St. Benedict's College

## TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

We recognise that the move from Primary to Post Primary school is a “big move” and one that can be difficult and stressful for both students and parents. As a college we strive to ensure that all our students are happy, safe and successful from their arrival

in Year 8 to their departure in Year 12. We have a dedicated and experienced Year 8 Team who advise, guide and support our youngest students to ensure that their transition to us is a positive, happy and stress-free experience.



## Before you arrive:

### Primary School Visits (June)

Our Head of Year 8 and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) visit our feeder primary schools. They meet P7 teachers who provide us with a profile of our transferring students.

### Enrolment Meetings (June)

Year 8 students and their parents are invited to an Induction Meeting with a member of our Year 8 Pastoral Team. This meeting is an opportunity for pastoral and academic information to be shared.

Students with additional needs are invited to meet the SENCo.

A Welcome Pack, containing key information about the school, is provided to students and parents at this meeting.

### Welcome Day (June)

Year 8 students are given the opportunity to revisit the school, meet the Year 8 team and begin the process of making new friends. We complete CAT4 Testing to ensure accurate and appropriate class placements. Progress Tests in English and Maths are also used in this process.

## When you arrive:

### Fun Day (August)

All Year 8s are invited to participate in a range of interactive, fun activities designed to allow them to get to know other Year 8 students and the school building and grounds.

### Induction Day (August)

The Year 8 Induction Day sees only Year 8s on site. They get to know their Form Tutors as well as the layout of the school and daily routines.

### Induction Programme (August/September)

An Induction Programme is developed and delivered to all Year 8 students by the Year 8 Pastoral Team who remain constant and are highly skilled and experienced in dealing with the challenges of transition.




## Support in September


- Year 12 Mentors are assigned to each Year 8 Form Class to provide important peer support. Bus prefects also provide reassurance.
- Year 9 class guides are in place for the first fortnight of the school year.
- Year 8s have an early lunch and are allowed on the bus first.
- Year 8s enjoy break and lunch in their own designated recreational area.
- The Homework Club, supervised by teaching and support staff, is available Monday to Thursday until 4.30pm.
- The School Counsellor is available to Year 8 students who require support.





## Pastoral Support in Year 8


We believe that a student needs to feel happy and safe in school if they are to succeed there. Fundamental to our pastoral approach is the promotion of a caring ethos and family atmosphere and the development of positive and respectful relationships throughout the school community.


 Year 8s are looked after by The Year 8 Pastoral Team, a team of Form Tutors who are led by the Head of Year 8, who is supported by the Key Stage 3 Manager. This Team is highly experienced as they remain constant.

 The Assistant Principal advises and supports the Year 8 Team and deals with any Safeguarding and Child Protection issues that may arise in her role as Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

 The Learning Support Co-ordinator works in partnership with the Learning Support Team, teachers and parents to ensure that students with additional educational needs are enabled to make a positive and successful start in their new school.

 The School Counsellor is available to Year 8 students who are having difficulty and require support.

 Form Tutors deliver our Personal Development Programme in a timetabled class delivered weekly. The programme addresses issues such as bullying, drugs and alcohol, e-safety, road safety and relationships and sexuality in an age-appropriate manner. A variety of speakers and external agencies support us in the delivery of the programme by addressing assemblies and facilitating student workshops.

 We have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying.

## Staff Voice

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“ I have been Head of Year 8 for six years and I love my job. My main role is to support and guide you and to make sure you settle into our school as quickly and easily as possible. The Year 8 Team and I organise lots of fun activities for your induction to help you recognise all the new faces that you will see and to make sure you feel comfortable navigating the school. I monitor attendance, punctuality, achievement and behaviour and look after the welfare of everyone in Year 8. I will try to resolve any worries or issues that you may have in your transition from primary to secondary school to make sure that you are happy, safe and successful in St. Benedict's.

**Ms Lisa Woods** (Head of Year 8)

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# Curriculum & Learning

## KEY STAGE 3

Our Key Stage 3 Curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for all students to reach their full potential. Across Key Stage 3 and in Year 8 all students study: Art & Design, Drama, English, French, Geography, History, Home Economics, IT, Irish, Learning for Life & Work, Mathematics, Music, PE, Religious Education, Science, and Technology & Design.

Year 8 students are assessed regularly during the school year and receive a Progress Update at Christmas and a full written report in June following end of year examinations. All parents are invited to the College for a Parent Teacher Meeting in Term 2 and individual progress meetings can be arranged on request.

Curriculum opportunities in Year 8 are enhanced by the Shared Education Programme.

## GCSE Performance Statistics 2023-2024

## KEY STAGE 4

At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is designed to meet the needs, abilities and aspirations of all our students. We offer a wide range of academic and vocational subjects so students can choose to study subjects that best fit their educational needs. Students studying GCSE or equivalent subjects are provided with pathways that lead to success at GCSE and progression to Post-16 study, training or employment.

For GCSE, all pupils study the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science and Religious Studies. GCSE Subjects can then be chosen from Art & Design, Business Communication Systems, Child Development, Construction, Double Award Science, Drama, English Literature, Geography, History, Irish, Learning for Life & Work, Media Studies, Music, Single Award Science, Statistics, Sport Technology & Design. The Princes Trust Achieve Programme and a variety of Occupational Studies and OCN Level 2 certificates are also offered.

**87%**

achieved 5 or more GCSE grades at A\* - C

**49%**

achieved 5 A\* - C grades including GCSE English and Maths

**60%**

38 out of 63 students, achieved 7 or more A\* - C grades



# Top 3 Performing Students 2023-2024

**Liam  
Mc Closkey**

6A, 2B, 1C\*

**Shannon  
McNeilly**

3A, 5B, 1C\*

**Gabriele  
Bulkaite**

1A\*, 2A, 3B, 3C\*

Our school has performed above the Northern Ireland Average.

## CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION & GUIDANCE

Careers Education, Information and Guidance is at the heart of the curriculum in St. Benedict's College. Students are guided to make well informed and positive choices regarding their education and future careers. In our college students are encouraged to develop their skills and to recognise the wide range of transferrable skills required for employment. Labour Market Information is a key focus in Careers Education and

Skills in Demand are used to highlight skills shortages and areas for employment growth.

All students at Key Stage 3 receive careers guidance as part of the Employability strand of Learning for Life and Work. At Key Stage 4 all students receive timetabled careers lessons to ensure that they are well prepared for their Post-16 Pathways.



### Ewan Mc Grath

*Attending St. Patrick's College, Maghera studying BTEC Engineering & BTEC Applied Sciences.*

“ Saint Benedict's College has been such a positive experience in my school life. I have made friends for life and my learning was conducted in such a positive environment. Mrs McCann was my favourite and she helped and guided me through.

There were several sporting achievements that are vivid memories. The most special was winning the Noone Cup two years in a row. These achievements have taught me the importance of working as part of a team. I have carried this through in my new school where it is important to keep trying and never give up. I would strongly recommend St. Benedict's College to any P7 pupils as it will provide you with pathways to further education, the strongest friends and the happiest of memories.



### Liam Mc Closkey

*Attending St. Louis Grammar School, Ballymena studying Health and Social Care, Digital Technology, Engineering and Business.*

“ My time at St. Benedict's was an enjoyable experience as it helped me become a better person. St. Benedict's has supported me so I could think about and prepare further for my future - this is thanks to the great assistance and support from my teachers. I have wonderful memories of all classes with my friends and teachers, there's a real sense of community in St. Benedict's. I'd recommend St. Benedict's to Primary 7 students as I can say for absolute certainty that they will make lasting memories with the people they will meet. In addition, it's also certain that the teachers and staff will help their students to do and be their best, just as they helped me. I am very grateful for the education received at St. Benedict's.



### Shea Mc Cann

*Attending St. Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt studying Health and Social Care, Religion and BTEC Sport.*

“ St. Benedict's has shaped my character and made me the person I am today. I had an enjoyable and happy time during my five years there. I am grateful for the many friendships I developed during my time there and know that they are people that I will remain in contact for life. St. Benedict's broadened my mind and helped me make informed decisions about my future. It developed me to have a good work ethic and a desire to achieve. I felt heard and supported which helped me excel and achieve a place in St. Mary's Grammar School where I always wanted to go when I left St. Benedict's – mainly to play Macrory football.

I loved the caring environment in St. Benedict's where teachers know you on a personal level and genuinely care. One of my greatest memories is winning two Ulster Medals in the Noone Cup.

The background of the page features two young men in dark blue suits, seen from behind, looking at a large wall display. The wall is covered with numerous colorful, hand-drawn masks or faces, each with unique patterns and colors like yellow, red, blue, and green. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor gallery or classroom setting.

# Wellbeing

We are delighted that we have been designated a **Take Five School** in recognition of the work we do in promoting positive mental health. Take Five Student Champions have been appointed and are helping drive the Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme across the school. Each month we have a whole school focus on one of the 5 Steps to Wellbeing and actively promote it across the College through assemblies and follow up activities. At the end of each half term we celebrate Wellbeing Friday. We suspend the teaching timetable for the afternoon to allow students and staff to come together to engage in a variety of activities all designed to make everyone feel positive about school and life.



# Student Leadership



**Students are given leadership opportunities throughout their school career.**

## **YEARS 8 -10**

In Key Stage 3 students can be appointed as the Class Prefect for their form class.

## **YEAR 11**

We have Take 5 Student Champions in Year 11 who are working in partnership with our own staff to design and drive our whole school health and well-being programme.

## **YEAR 12**

In Year 12 students are given the chance to become members of the prestigious Student Leadership Team and to take on the role of Year 8 Mentor, Prefect, or Head Boy/Head Girl. Year 12 Mentors, actively support Year 8 at the point of transition, attending morning registrations and assemblies with their assigned tutor groups. Two Year 12 Prefects are linked to each year group, including Year 8. They undertake a supervisory role at break and lunch and are available to provide advice, guidance and support to their peers. The Student Leadership Team further support Year 8s in their role as Reading Buddies.



# Student Voice

In St. Benedict's College we recognise the importance of Student Voice. We are fully committed to ensuring that our students are given a voice and that their voice is heard and valued. We have an active Student Council with elected representatives from all year groups. Student Voice Surveys are completed on an annual basis and Student Focus Groups are regularly used. Student comments allow us to evaluate our practice and provision and to identify areas for improvement and development.

# Head Girl

## Mavourneen Mulholland



I feel honoured to be chosen as a leader in this school. At all times, I strive to lead by example, support younger students and endeavour to inspire others to get involved in all aspects of life at St. Benedict's so they too can fulfil their full potential, and be a happy safe and successful learner.

# Head Boy

## Noyel Saji



Having the opportunity to serve as the Head Boy for St Benedict's college is a great honour for me. I hope to foster an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and empowered to express themselves. I am motivated to ensure that all students are treated with respect and dignity as I was when I walked through the doors of St. Benedict's college.



# Benedict's College

HEAD GIRL & HEAD BOY





# Sport & Extra-curricular Activities

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We are fully committed to the holistic development of all students. We deliver an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities, all designed to develop our students' skills, talents and personal capabilities. Clubs and Societies facilitated by our dedicated staff, are offered before school, during lunchtime and after school. They offer our students opportunities to experience new things and to build new friendships.

## **Extra-curricular activities available to our students include:**

Alpha Programme, Art Club & Credit Union Art Competition, Breakfast Club, Choir, Coding Club, Cookery Club, Drama Club, Eco Club, Gaeltacht, Hip-Hop Dance Club, Homework Club, Lego Club, Library Club, Minecraft Club, Rotary Youth Leadership Programme, STEM Club, Supported Study (Yr 11 and Yr 12), and 3D Printing Club.





## 2024 Achievements in Gaelic Games

Our Boys' and Girls' Gaelic Teams, as well as our Camogie and Hurling Teams, have a proud tradition of success. In 2024 our:



U16 Girls' Gaelic won The Foyle Cup in the Ulster Competition for the first time.



U14 Camogie team retained the Lily Spence Shield, second year in a row.



U16 Hurlers won the Noone Cup for the second consecutive year.



3rd Year Hurlers made it to the QF of the Danaan Cup.



Year 8 Boys' Gaelic Team won the Antrim Shield.



Dylan McLarnon received a Year 12 All-star award for Hurling.



Shea McCann was a finalist in the Year 12 All-star awards for Gaelic.

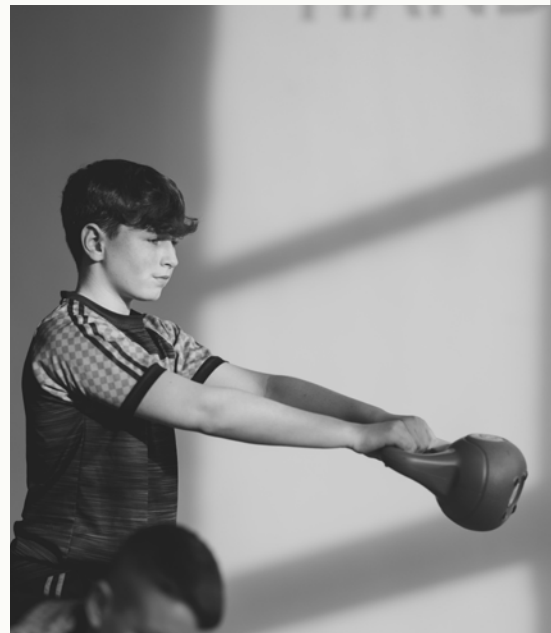
### SPORT

Physical Education is compulsory for all students at Key Stage 3 and 4 and is available as a GCSE option. It encourages students to engage in sporting activities to improve their physical fitness and to maintain positive mental health and well-being. All sporting activities are designed to enhance our students' communication, teamwork and leadership skills while developing self-discipline, self-confidence and resilience.

#### Sports available to our students include:

Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Camogie, Cross Country, Dance, Gaelic Football (Girls and Boys), Gymnastics, Hurling, Netball, Soccer, Swimming, Table Tennis, Volleyball and Rugby.

We are proud of our continued partnership with our local GAA Clubs: Erin's Own Cargin, Kickham's Creggan, St. Ergnat's Moneyglass, Tir na Nog Randalstown, and St. Comgall's Antrim.





# Pupil Voice



## Max Young

*Past Pupil of St. Joseph's PS, Antrim*

“ My time at St. Benedict's is going really well. I've made some new friends and I'm really enjoying all the different subjects like Technology and Design and Home Economics, which we didn't really get to do at primary school. I've also been encouraged by the teachers to do my best. They are all very nice and have helped me settle in. In St. Benedict's I've been made to feel welcome and safe. We are starting our swimming lessons soon and I can't wait.



## Iarfhlaith McCann

*Past Pupil of St. Oliver Plunkett's PS, Toomebridge*

“ My first day at St. Benedict's, I was really nervous, but after my first week I had settled in really well and am much more confident. What I have really enjoyed so far is PE, and the PE teachers who are all so nice. It has been brilliant as I have got to play in lots of tournaments and am a member of the Hurling and Football teams. PE is great because it helps me keep fit and strong and I get to participate with all my friends.



## Aoife McAuley

*Past Pupil of Mount St. Michaels PS, Randalstown*

“ My favourite thing about St. Benedict's so far was meeting all my friends on the first day. What was really comforting is the school is not too big, though it is big compared to my primary school. My favourite subjects are Art and Maths. I was really nervous on my first day, now I've settled into school a bit more, I'm much happier and so glad I came here.



## Katie McBrien

*Past Pupil of Mount St. Michaels PS, Randalstown*

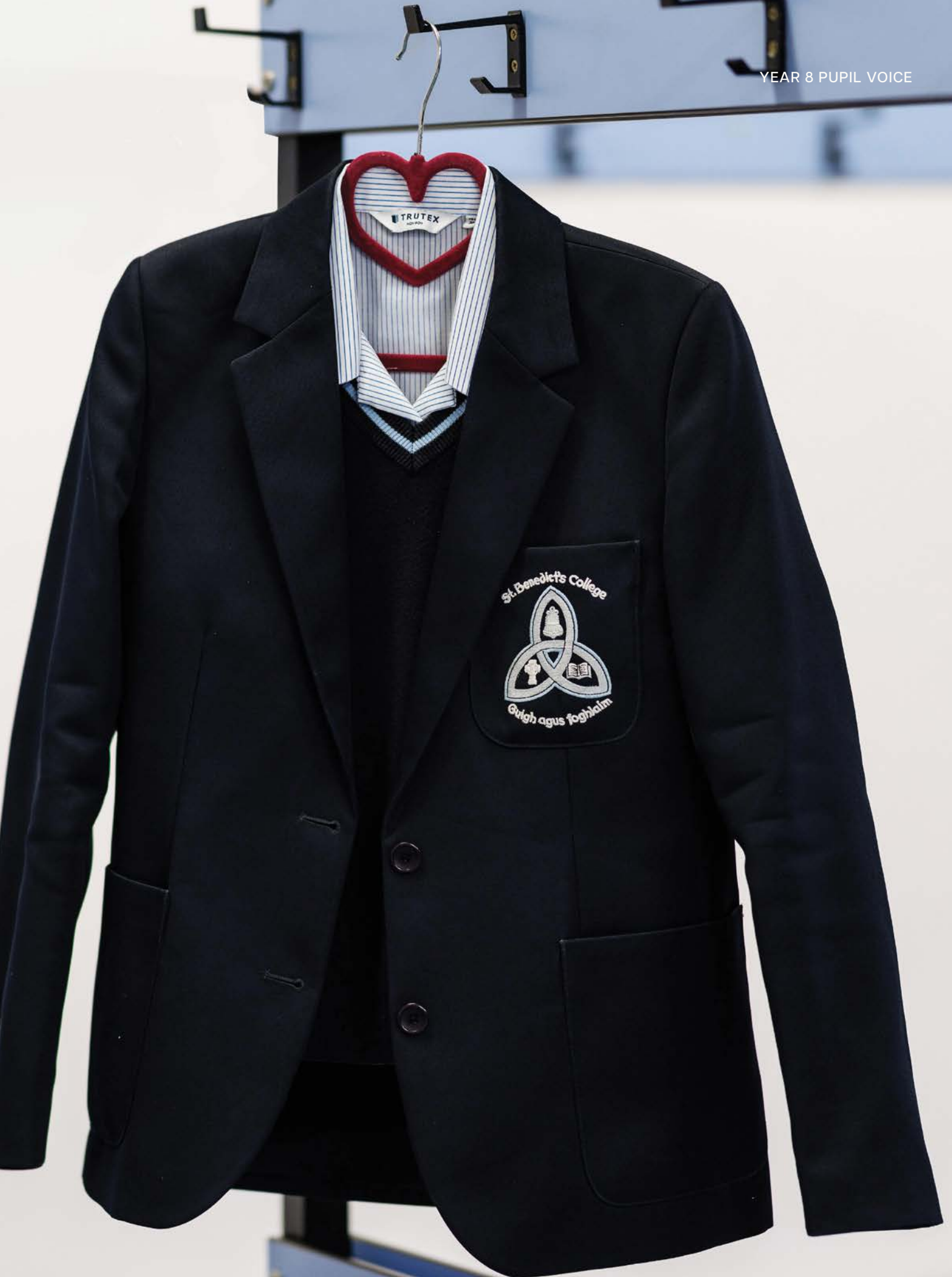
“ I remember my first day really well. I was upset and to be honest, a little scared. However, after a couple of days I felt right at home. The teachers are very nice. My favourite subject so far in St. Benedict's is probably Art. It is fun and not very tricky. Now that I've been in the school for a few weeks I feel more confident and happier. I have lots of friends and I know my way around the school.



## Desza Kelly

*Past Pupil of St. Joseph's PS, Antrim*

“ I have really enjoyed St. Benedict's so far. I have met so many lovely new friends. My favourite subjects are P.E and Art. I really like moving from room to room, subject to subject, so we don't stay in the same seat all the time. On the 1st day I felt nervous but very excited. I thought I wouldn't know anyone, but I did. I feel very happy and safe and I am really pleased that I chose to go to St. Benedict's as everyone is here to help us. I really like St. Benedict's.



# Community Partners

## PARENTS

We believe that parents are the prime educators of their children, so we work hard to develop and sustain positive and respectful partnerships between school and home. We are always accessible to parents and operate an open-door policy. We communicate with them on an ongoing basis through the ParentApp, phone calls, texts, and letters. Parents are kept up to date with school news through the ParentApp, our school website, Facebook and Twitter pages. We invite parents into school on lots of occasions, to attend Induction Meetings, Parents' Meetings, SEN and Careers Information Evenings, Parent Workshops and a variety of celebratory events.

We have an energetic PTA (Parent Teacher Association) who actively support us in our fundraising endeavours; things like our monthly Half the Pot draw and annual events such as our Christmas Fayre and Christmas Raffle.

## COMMUNITY LINKS

We pride ourselves on being a school at the heart of its community.

We are an active member of the **Moving Forward Together Partnership** within the Antrim/Newtownabbey Borough Council. It sees 21 nursery, primary and post primary schools working collaboratively to meet the varied needs of all their students.

We are members of two Area Learning Communities **Antrim Area Learning Community** and **Ballymena Area Learning Community**. Our membership allows us to

develop meaningful links with all the Post Primary Schools in both localities which greatly supports students transition to Post-16 study in a variety of partner schools.

We have been actively involved in the **Shared Education Project** since its inception. Our Shared Education Partnership sees our Year 8s work together with students from Antrim Grammar School and Parkhall Integrated College.

We are honoured to be **Tidy Randalstown's** Educational Partner and are grateful to them for all the fantastic opportunities they have created for the members of our School Eco Club. Not every school gets to work with such a vibrant, committed and talented team of volunteers, a team who have, with the help of our young gardeners, created the Elevation Garden at the Viaduct and secured both Ulster and Britain in Bloom titles for Randalstown.

## CHARITY

**Charity is at the heart of the ethos of the College, and we support both Trocaire, and St. Vincent de Paul's annual campaigns. Other charities are also close to our hearts: Autism NI, Cash for Kids, Children's Cancer Centre, Concern and Mc Millan.**



## Eimhear Craig

Past Pupil of St. Oliver Plunkett's PS, Toomebridge

“ What I have really enjoyed most about the school is that I've made loads of new friends, and the teachers are so, so nice. My favourite subjects so far are English, Drama and History. On the first day of school I felt excited and nervous at the same time. I don't know why I was nervous because it has all been great.



# Year 8 Admissions Criteria

The Board of Governors of St. Benedict's College has determined that the following criteria shall be applied, in the event of the number of children applying for places in Year 8 in September being greater than the Admission Number, in the order set below. Within each criterion priority will firstly be given to children normally resident in Northern Ireland and then to those children regarded by the Board of Governors based on supporting evidence provided by Parents and/or Statutory Agencies, as having special circumstances e.g. medical, social or security factors.

**In the event of over-subscription children will be selected based on application of the following criteria which will be applied in the order set out until the final place has been allocated.**

1. Applicants who are entitled to Free School Meals\* (FSME)
  - . Priority to be given so that the proportion of such children admitted is not less than the proportion of first preference FSME applications received within the total number of first preference applications received.\*\*
  - . \* "entitled to Free School Meals" will mean applicants who are listed on the Education Authority register as entitled to Free School Meals at the date on which their parent or guardian has submitted their post-primary Transfer Application, or at any date up to and including the final date for parents to communicate FSME to the Education Authority as specified in the separate annual Circular – Open Enrolment in Nursery, Primary and Post Primary Schools – Timetables."
  - . \*\* The calculation of this proportion will be based on first preference applications received by the post-primary school on or before [insert final date for post-primary schools to advise the Education Authority of pupils selected and those not selected at first preference stage -as specified in the separate annual Circular – Open Enrolment in Nursery, Primary and Post Primary Schools – Timetables.





## Maya Gomula

*Past Pupil of St. Brigid's PS, Ballymena*

“ Everyone at St. Benedict's makes you feel welcome. At the start of the year I was scared because I thought that I wouldn't make any friends. But now I'm scared no longer, and I have lots of friends. My confidence has improved so much. As well as my new friends, my teachers will do everything they can to help and are only too happy to do so. My favourite subjects so far are Art, English, Home Economics and Science. I'm so glad to be at St. Benedict's.

2. Applicants living in the parishes of Antrim, Duneane and Randalstown, not listed in any order of preference.
3. Applicants who have a sibling currently attending the school. This information must be clearly stated on the application form.
4. Applicants attending Creggan, Millquarter, Moneynick, Mount St. Michael's, St. Comgall's, St. Joseph's and St. Oliver Plunkett Primary Schools, not listed in any order of preference.

### ADMISSIONS TO YEAR 8 THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR

Parents who wish to have their child considered for Admission in the event of a place arising after 1 September 2024 should write to the principal clearly stating this. The above criteria will be applied to these applications only in the event of such a vacancy arising.

Applicants should note that they may be required to produce documents verifying information pertinent to the Schools Admission Criteria.



# Our Learning Support Co-ordinator

“

**Our Learning Support Department continues to grow as every year more and more parents are entrusting us to meet the individual needs of their children, confident that all students in our college are given every opportunity to thrive.**



## **Welcome**

My name is Keira Armstrong and it is my privilege to work with and care for all the pupils with additional needs at St. Benedict's College. Every day I feel so lucky and blessed to lead a dynamic and caring team of Learning Support Assistants and coordinate a committed, hard-working teaching staff who nurture and support every child to reach their true potential.

We understand that transitioning from Primary School to Post Primary can be exceptionally daunting for both parents and young people, so a lot of care goes into making the transition as smooth as possible. To meet the needs of young people we have

several resources and strategies in place which have proven to be effective for all our children with additional needs. To assist you in making the important decision on which school to select for your child, we wanted to illustrate what support your child can expect when they join the St. Benedict's family through the voices of the children themselves and the professional team who work with them.

If you require clarification or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours in partnership.

**Keira Armstrong**

Learning Support Co-ordinator



**Excellence** in education is when we do everything we can, to make sure they become everything that they can.

# Our Mission for Learning Support

## E

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

## M

MEANINGFUL PROGRESS

## P

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

## O

OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE THEIR VOICE HEARD

## W

WARMTH, RESPECT AND NURTURE

## E

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SUPPORT

## R

ROLES OF RESPONSIBILITY

## Empowerment

The Learning Support Team at St. Benedict's College, in partnership with home, strives to promote excellence in Special Educational Needs. We have one simple goal; to **EMPOWER** our young people and support them in developing the skills and qualities needed to enjoy success. It is our mission for all learners to feel included, respected and valued while they are in school and to leave us ready to become happy and thriving contributors to society.



# Our Support Package for Children with Additional Needs

PERSONAL  
LEARNING PLANS

PUPIL PASSPORTS

PRIVATE SCHOOL  
TOURS

SMALLER CLASS  
SIZES



MULTI-SENSORY  
ROOM

BUDDY SYSTEM

YEAR 12 STUDENT  
LEADERSHIP  
MENTORS

VISUAL TIMETABLES

PE UNIFORM  
CONCESSION ON  
DESIGNATED DAYS

SENSORY TOOLKITS

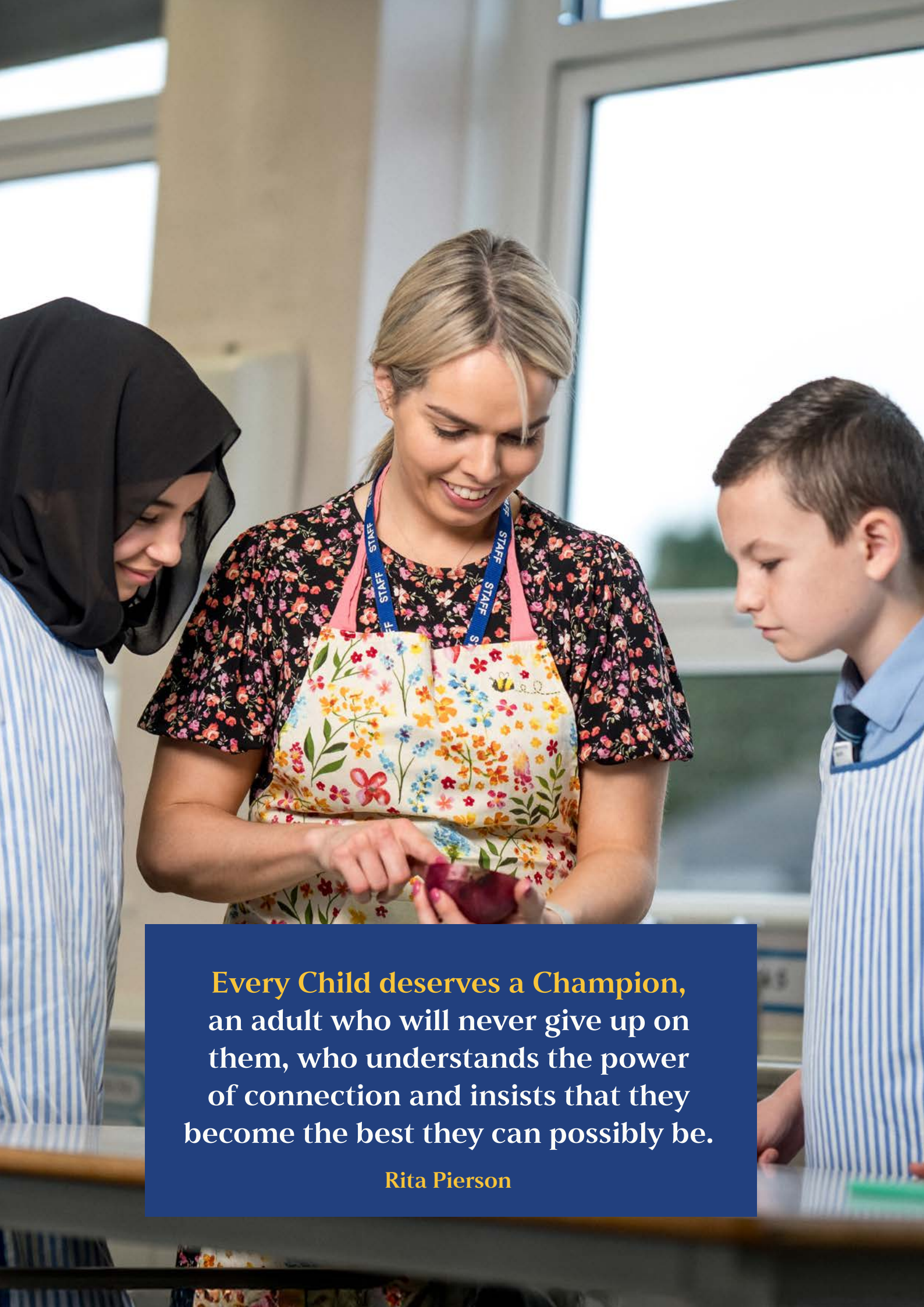
EARLY CANTEEN  
PASS

ASSIGNED LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT TO  
EACH YEAR 8 CLASS IN TERM ONE



SUPERVISED  
LIBRARY SPACE AT  
BREAK AND LUNCH

REDUCED  
TIMETABLES



**Every Child deserves a Champion,**  
an adult who will never give up on  
them, who understands the power  
of connection and insists that they  
become the best they can possibly be.

**Rita Pierson**



# Celebrating Diversity

Here at St. Benedict's, we have a rich and diverse school population. We provide a warm and welcoming environment where all students are welcomed, accepted and valued. We work hard to meet the pastoral, curricular and linguistic needs of all newcomer EAL students.

When students arrive to our school we assess each student's English language proficiency using the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR). Extra literacy support classes are provided on a small group basis and students will be given the opportunity to take GCSE exams in their home language, where possible.

To ensure that our written and spoken communication with families is effective, interpreters and translated letters are used. Interpreters can be arranged throughout the year for Parent/Teacher meetings. Support from the charity Barnardo's helps with school enrolment and assimilation into school life.

St. Benedict's places high importance on embracing the cultural identities of each student. It is our job to ensure that students can see their language, culture and identity reflected in the classroom and the wider school.

Opportunities for promoting and celebrating diversity include:

- Having multi-lingual signs and displays throughout the school
- Making accommodations across all areas of the curriculum
- Providing targeted extra-curricular activities
- Organising special assemblies and celebrations (e.g. European Day of Languages and Schools Speak Arabic Event)
- Having a designated area for private prayer
- Provision of Halal and Vegan foods in the school canteen

**Miss Megan Hutchinson**  
Newcomer Support Teacher



St. Benedict's College



Gaígh Agus Foghlaim

**St. Benedict's College**

5 Craigstown Rd, Randalstown, Antrim, BT41 2AF  
028 9447 2411 / [info@stbenedicts.randalstown.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stbenedicts.randalstown.ni.sch.uk)  
[www.stbenedictscollege.co.uk](http://www.stbenedictscollege.co.uk)