

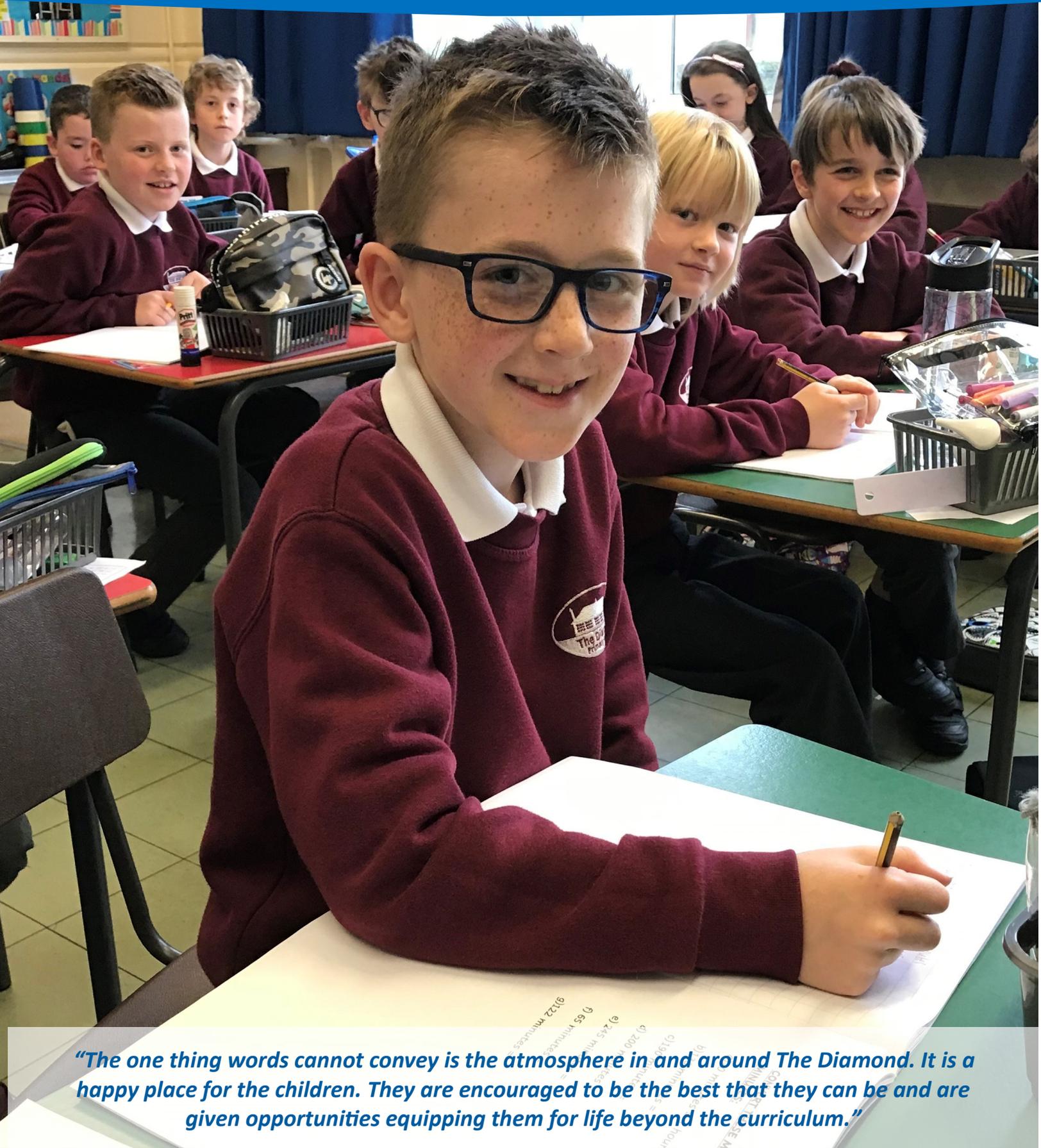
THE DIAMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.diamondps.co.uk



We are all DIFFERENT
We are all UNIQUE
We are all SPECIAL

Welcome



"The one thing words cannot convey is the atmosphere in and around The Diamond. It is a happy place for the children. They are encouraged to be the best that they can be and are given opportunities equipping them for life beyond the curriculum."

Thank you for showing an interest in The Diamond Primary School. Whether you already have a child at The Diamond, or this is your first step on the primary school journey, you are equally welcome.

This brochure has been designed to give you a succinct insight of everyday life within our school. A much more detailed prospectus in PDF format is available for your perusal on the school website and can also be downloaded directly from www.diamondps.co.uk

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.



**Mr M Beattie
Principal**

The Diamond Primary school is a little school in the Cullybackey countryside but with big ideas and a lot of punch! It is a safe and happy place where the corridors and rooms are filled with the buzz of fun and excitement, smiles and laughter. That's really important to us, not only because we love that buzz and we love to laugh and smile, but because we firmly believe that kids learn best when they are comfortable, excited and enjoying themselves and each other. Yes, it gets a little messy and noisy at times – but usually it's a beautiful mess and a very rewarding noise.

Our motto – 'We are all different, we are all unique, we are all special,' says a lot about who we are and what we try to do. We try to meet each child exactly where they are and not where others expect them to be. We aim to draw alongside each child, embrace their personality and character, then challenge them towards success and achievement. We love doing that – and we love to think about new, innovative and inspiring ways to teach, thinking outside the usual educational boxes. Yes, that gets a little messy too, but who ever made progress without creating a little chaos first?

Our kids make us proud every day as they achieve big things, create amazing masterpieces, make beautiful music and dance. But they also make us proud as they smile at us each morning and greet us with the warmth that we so enjoy. They make us proud as they share with each other, encourage and support each other and stand up tall for the things they believe in.

The Diamond Primary School is a family, a home; it's always evolving, adapting and changing. We love our local community and we get excited about the impact our children will make as they step out into the big world.

Yes, we're a little school – but with a huge heart. We love to explore big ideas and we know our children will make their mark wherever they go.

School Ethos and Aims

At The Diamond we pride ourselves in providing a happy, caring and safe environment for everybody - where a love of learning is fostered and everyone is valued for their unique talents and individual abilities.



ETHOS

At The Diamond Primary School we are committed to the care and education of the children regardless of race, religion, sex or status. Our ethos is founded on Christian principles where tolerance and respect for others is paramount. This ethos reflects and dovetails into our RE curriculum which uses the Christian Bible as its core text. It is our intention that everyone feels valued and our pupils are encouraged to develop their full potential in a caring and supportive atmosphere.

The school is highly regarded by parents and the community and we aim to provide a high standard of care for our children in a friendly, positive and structured environment and to develop all pupils academically, socially, physically and emotionally whatever their perceived abilities.

At The Diamond Primary School we aim:

- ◆ to help each child develop his/her individual potential to the full through acquisition of the skills of literacy and numeracy by high quality teaching provided by an enthusiastic, highly motivated and reflective staff.
- ◆ to provide a positive school atmosphere in which each pupil is not only preparing for the next stage in his/her education but is thoroughly enjoying the one through which he/she is passing.
- ◆ to offer a curriculum that is balanced and broadly based and is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils at the school and thereby, of society.
- ◆ to help pupils acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a fast-changing world.
- ◆ to ensure that the highest standards of pastoral care and child protection are in place.
- ◆ to encourage each child to take account of the feelings, views and needs of others, respect diversity and develop in each child the social skills required as a member of the community, both in and out of school and to foster, value and encourage partnership between school, parents, families and the community.
- ◆ to help develop personal qualities such as self-confidence, independence and self-discipline through praise and positive reinforcement.
- ◆ to develop each child's confidence, ability and maturity in using ICT across all aspects of the curriculum and at home.
- ◆ to enable children to appreciate their environment and to show consideration to others.



The Curriculum

The Board of Governors and Staff of The Diamond Primary School believe that the curriculum is all the activities, opportunities and experiences, planned and incidental, available to the children through school and are committed to providing pupils with access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Literacy is at the heart of primary education. The Literacy Curriculum provides opportunities for children to read, write and to engage in talking and listening activities. The school places emphasis on the building of a sight vocabulary through the use of a structured guided reading scheme and to the development of word-attack skills through phonics. Children are also encouraged to read widely fiction and non-fiction texts both for pleasure and to seek information. Books are brought to life through drama and initiatives such as our annual World Book Day event.

Our library is organised and catalogued to tie in with The Accelerated Reader programme. This programme has been specially designed to further encourage the children's love of books by motivating them to achieve high standards through a system of class awards. The programme carefully charts the progress of the children as they undertake online comprehension 'quizzes' and alters the levels of difficulty, challenging each child to improve.

MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

As part of the NI Curriculum the school offers a wide variety of opportunities in this important area of study. Activities are made relevant to the five Attainment Targets - Processes, Number, Shape and Space, Measures and Data Handling. Children are encouraged to use these mathematical skills in a real life context at every opportunity.





If children are to cope effectively with the practical demands of everyday life they need to be at ease with numbers in computation, measurement, data handling and problem solving. Mathematics contributes to many other subjects of the curriculum. Other subjects can provide the opportunity to develop and enhance mathematical thinking skills and knowledge. Mathematics also makes a significant contribution to the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. Pupils will be involved in activities which promote the skills of managing information, solving problems and being creative, whilst developing their abilities of working with others and self management.

The more that you read, the more things you will know.

The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.

Dr Seuss

USING ICT [Information and Communications Technology]

Computer literacy is an essential skill in the modern world and all children have the chance to work with computers and digital equipment. The Diamond has a full complement of networked computers and iPads; each classroom has an interactive whiteboard and all classes are timetabled weekly to the ICT suite.

The children are taught how to use ICT tools safely to find, explore, analyse and present information. Frequent opportunities are given to produce work in a variety of word processing, presentation and database packages. Children develop research skills through the use of filtered internet provision, and they are able to share their work with parents in real time during the day using the Seesaw app.

THE ARTS [including Art and Design, Drama and Music]

Art stimulates originality and imagination. During their time in school, children are introduced to a wide range of creative activities including drawing, painting, modelling, printing and needlecraft.

The school has a range of tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments that are used by classes for creative music and appreciation. The pupils have occasion to showcase their musical and acting talents at school events such as Harvest Thanksgiving, Christmas Plays and Concerts. Children have the opportunity to participate in the annual Ballymena Festival and gain tremendously from this experience, helping to develop not only their communication skills, but also their confidence and esteem.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education [PE] is viewed as an important part of the curriculum in which we aim to develop agility, physical co-ordination and the ability to express feeling through movement. P1-P4 PE lessons are complemented by weekly coaching visits by volunteers from Coaching for Christ. P4-P7 have the added benefit of swimming lessons for one term each year with many developing their skills and gaining distance awards by the end of the year.

THE WORLD AROUND US [Geography, History, Science and Technology]

Each class uses a 'themed' approach to The World Around Us. These themes fire the children's curiosity about our historical and natural world and help them consider how the past influences the present. The children develop knowledge of places and environments throughout the world and explore what products are used for and the needs of the people who use them. This topic work promotes investigative and problem-solving skills and the school aims to use the immediate local area to extend the children's knowledge and experience.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education enables children to acquire a knowledge and understanding of religious insights, beliefs and practices, so that they are able to continue in, or come to, their own faith beliefs. The Bible as the core text in this area is the basis upon which our ethos is built. Collective worship is also conducted two mornings per week at the School Assembly.

PDMU [Personal Development and Mutual Understanding]

PDMU aims to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident and independent lives, and become informed and responsible citizens. They also learn basic rules for keeping themselves healthy and safe and for behaving well. Good citizenship is encouraged by our BEAM rewards programme where Behaviour, Endeavour, Attitude and Manners are acknowledged publicly in front of the entire school. The emphasis at The Diamond is always on the positive approach of encouragement and praise.



Other Activities

FRIDAY CLUBS

Friday afternoons are always a cause of great excitement for the P4 to P7 pupils. The children are split into four groups where they follow a ten week session in a variety of activities which may include Scripture Union, iPad Club, Greenfingers, Textiles, Photography, French/Spanish, Dance and Drama, Technology, First Aid and Cookery.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

A range of extra curricular activities are provided for children from P4 upwards. During the year pupils are able to take part in:

Choir

Netball / Hockey

Football

Skills Club [P7 Transfer]

When the opportunity arises the school believes in giving children the opportunity to compete in a competitive situation. The boys compete in local Ballymena Primary School 7-aside tournaments and the girls in the Netball League.

There is also provision for P1 to P3 children each day from 2:00-3:00pm in the form of our fun Diamond Dazzlers Club.





MUSIC TUITION

We provide tuition for piano and singing. These lessons are offered to children in P4-P7 [subject to availability]. An expert tutor provides the tuition and prepares children for ABRSM/Trinity Guildhall examinations when ready.

SCHOOL TRIP

In both P6 and P7 children have the option of going on a residential school trip. These trips may take the form of an activity/attractions-based trip and are always enjoyed by staff and pupils alike!

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

We are fortunate to be able to organise many exciting trips during school time, as these stimulate interest and enhance our children's educational experience. As we seek to benefit from the expertise in our community we regularly invite visitors to come and share their knowledge and experience. We are also able to hold video conference calls using Skype to allow interaction with people further afield whose work or life relates to the theme in the classroom.

CHARITIES

Our school is involved in helping others and each year the children support charities through specific fundraising events.

Environmental Awareness



At The Diamond we encourage our children to look after the local and wider environment. As well as recycling paper and cardboard, collection bags are available all year round from the School Office for recycling unwanted clothes. Parents are encouraged to send old batteries to school for proper disposal and we are happy to receive old children's books [in good condition] that may be incorporated into our Accelerated Reading Library or class reading resources.

We have close connections with the Ballymena Foodbank and were in fact the first local primary school to sign up to provide regular donations. Children are encouraged to bring in non-perishable items of food and toiletries and place them in the container box in the corridor. These are then collected by Foodbank representatives and taken to the depot for distribution to families in need.

Within the classroom our children are actively encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles and pupils are well-informed on how to keep fit in body and mind. They are taught about the importance of eating healthy diet, the importance of regular exercise and guarding their mental attitudes.

We often make use of recycled materials in our art and design classes and examples of our creative work are displayed around the school. Parents and visitors to the school are kept up-to-date with all our environmental initiatives in our dedicated eco-corridor leading down to the Assembly Hall.

HEALTHY EATING

We want to encourage healthy eating among both pupils and staff. We encourage children to eat fruit, vegetables or bread-based products at break time and drink milk or water. Milk is available to order on a termly basis and water is available all day.

Seesaw Communication

SEESAW - A WINDOW INTO THE CLASSROOM

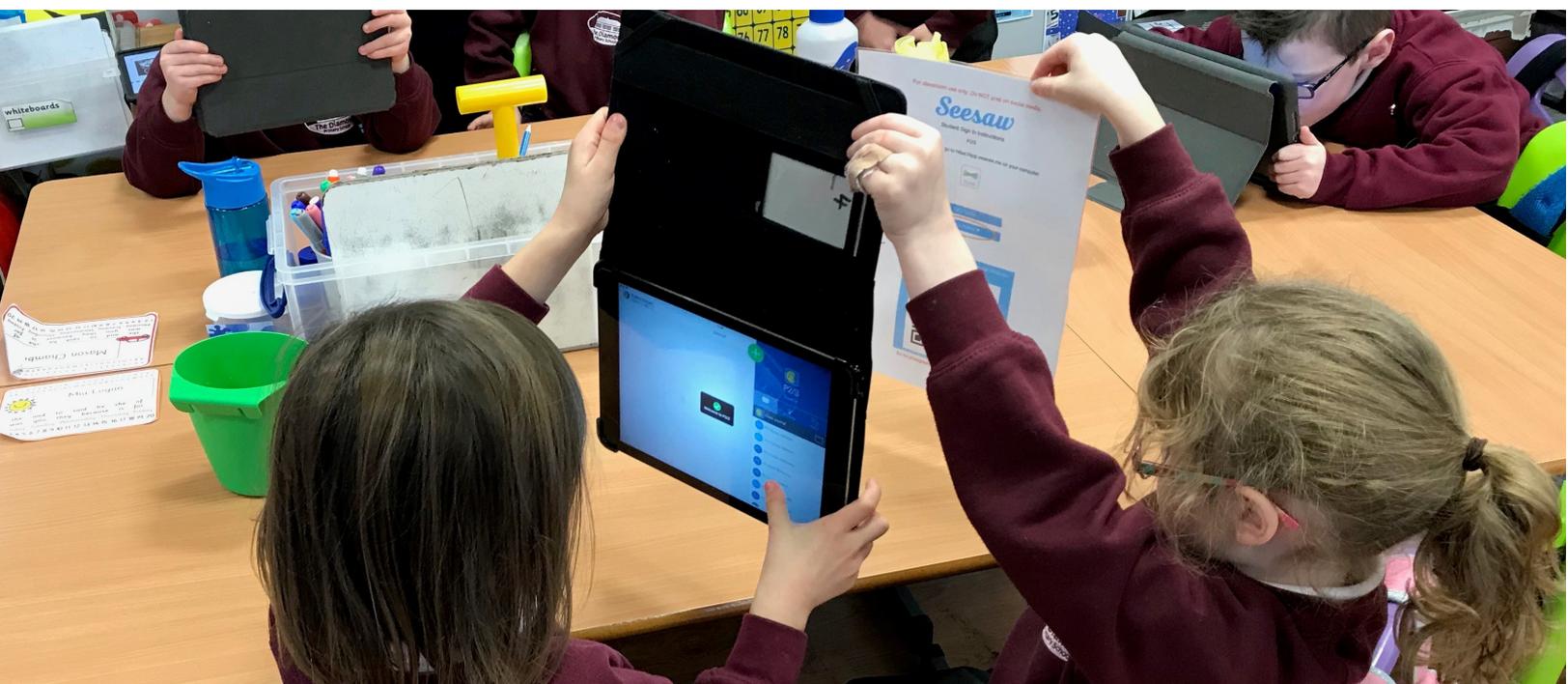
At The Diamond, we value partnership and communication. This is why we have adopted the use of the Seesaw app, a digital communication platform through which we can share work and success with family members and guide future progress. This happens day and daily at The Diamond.

Our parents have really appreciated and enjoyed Seesaw. It has provided so many opportunities for parents to praise their children for their success during the school day and it is a wonderful platform to demonstrate progress made or how you can further support your child in their learning. The children in our school love it too! They are hugely motivated to work and achieve in the knowledge that their work will be shared with their most adoring audience! Receiving notifications on your phone, iPad or computer means instant communication - and the opportunity for children to receive praise from mum or dad during the school day!

Seesaw is helping us to further develop our ethos of family and teamwork - and is bringing the term 'partnership' to a whole new level.



"As a parent, I absolutely love Seesaw. It's not only a great way for us to communicate with teachers but a fantastic way for our kids to showcase their work. The fact that it's instant means I can see what they are doing in school while I'm at home and it gives me an opportunity to leave a message of encouragement which they can read straight away. I can't recommend it enough!"



Daily At The Diamond



THE SCHOOL TIMETABLE

8:30am	Doors open
9:00am	School commences
10:45am	Break
11:00am	Midday Classes
12:00pm	Quiet Reading Time
12:15pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Afternoon Classes
2:00pm	P1, P2 finish P3 finish [Wed & Fri] Diamond Dazzlers [optional]
3:00pm	P4-P7 finish
3:05pm	Selected after-school clubs
4:00pm	Clubs finish



PARENTPAY ONLINE PAYMENTS

We use an online facility called ParentPay to collect payments for school meals, swimming lessons, class trips etc. Meals can be ordered and all payments made using this fantastic programme on any phone, tablet or computer. No more searching the house for loose change!

LUNCH PROVISION

School meals are available each day in school and each family can order and pay for meals using our online ParentPay programme. If you prefer, your child can bring a packed lunch.

HOMEWORK

All children undertake homework to help consolidate and reinforce the learning in class. It will encompass reading, learning or written work in any of the subject areas, but concentrates mostly on the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling and mathematics.

DIAMOND DAZZLERS

P1-P3 children may remain in school each day until 3:00pm if desired. Our Diamond Dazzlers club provides an informal and stimulating hour, as often as you wish them to attend.

WORKING TOGETHER

At The Diamond, we want to work with parents and the community for the benefit of all our children. We aim to keep parents and families well informed in all aspects of school life and the door is always open if you have any questions.



“It is clear that every child is very special and although the school may not be the biggest school, it provides so much more to our children than just a place to learn.”



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