



# NEWTOWNABBEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS 2010 - 2011



### **Mission Statement**

“Newtownabbey Community High School is a caring well-ordered school with an experienced leadership committed to high standards and positive relationships within an actively involved community. It offers teaching and learning opportunities based on the needs of the individual pupil, while promoting excellence for all”.

**Newtownabbey Community High School  
Shore Road  
Whitehouse  
Newtownabbey  
BT37 9AD**

**Telephone (028) 90851558**

**Fax (028) 90855600**

**Email: [info@nchs.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@nchs.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk)**

**Website: [www.nchs.info](http://www.nchs.info)**

**Principal - Mr R M Holmes**

**Chairman of Board of Governors – Mr B Snoddy**



Dear Parent

Thank you for taking the time to read the Newtownabbey Community High School prospectus. I hope it gives a flavour of what makes our school special. To find out more about the school you are equally welcome to our Open Evening or we would be happy to give you a tour of the School on a normal working day.

In Newtownabbey Community High we are fortunate in that we know our pupils well and can provide them with a supportive environment where they can develop to their full potential.

Again, this year I have been encouraged by excellent GCSE results coupled with an increase in enrolment. This bodes well for the future of what is a vibrant school.

Our primary aim is to encourage and motivate our pupils to focus on academic achievement and progress. However, it is also important that they grow up to be mature citizens fit for a place in an increasingly exciting and challenging outside world.

We place particular emphasis on the following features:

- Rich and purposeful work within the classroom.
- High expectations of pupil conduct and progress.
- Productive, positive partnerships between parents, pupils and school.
- Varied opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

We in Newtownabbey Community High School firmly believe in our motto “Excellence For All”. Every child is entitled to a first class education. It is my aim to provide a high standard of education which suits the individual needs of all our pupils. I have every confidence that the motivated and willing staff of the school will ensure that this is the case.

Best Wishes

Mr R M Holmes



It is the responsibility of the Principal to work for and with the Board of Governors in applying the criteria for Year 8 admission set by the Board of Governors.

The school will accept pupils:

1. Who are resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission, before the admission of any children not so resident.
2. Who have older brothers or sisters at the school or whose parents attended the school.
3. Who are the first child in their family.
4. Who have a parent employed in a permanent capacity at the school.
5. For whom this school is the nearest secondary school.
6. For whom this school is the shortest distance from home to school, measured, if necessary, by public road from the pupil's permanent home address to the pupil entrance to the school.

### School Aims

- To provide effective and efficient leadership which secures the respect and confidence of parents, pupils and staff alike and which regularly and objectively evaluates its work as a basis for improvement;
- To promote a positive, supportive learning environment based on good relationships among pupils, teachers and parents;
- To cultivate worthy values in pupils who are being prepared for life and work;
- To ensure the delivery of a broad and balanced relevant curriculum within the Northern Ireland Entitlement Framework which meet the needs of each individual pupil;
- To enrich the educational experiences of our parents and pupils beyond the school day;
- To meet and develop the needs of the local community by providing access to the school's resources;
- To generate in the community a justifiable confidence in, and appreciation of, this school's standards and achievements, so that parents will wish to send their children to us.





## Working together for your child's Education

The single biggest influence on a pupil's achievement in school is the degree of support and encouragement which comes from home. We promise to keep you as informed as possible about your own child's progress and about the school more generally. In return we expect you to take an active interest in the education of your child and to support us in issues such as discipline, homework, uniform, attendance and punctuality.

As a school, we are always accessible. If you have any concerns whatsoever a note or phone call is all that is needed to make contact.

You can expect Newtownabbey Community High School to:

- Set high standards of work, behaviour and dress,
- Make contact directly if we have any serious concerns about work or behaviour,
- Pass on praise and congratulations if your child has achieved something of particular merit,
- Provide reports on your child's progress each year (interim and end of year reports),
- Provide an annual consultation evening to discuss progress with subject teachers,
- Offer special information evenings and issue regular letters to keep you informed.

## Primary School Liaison

Newtownabbey Community High School pupils are drawn from a large number of primary schools. Each year we offer a comprehensive induction programme for Year 7 pupils during which they will visit us for that all-important "taste" of secondary school life.

We appreciate that parents will want to find out as much as possible about the school. As well as the formal occasions parents are welcome to visit on a typical school day. We hold individual interviews for parents and pupils with a member of the Leadership Team at the end of the Summer Term preceding the start of Year 8.

Comprehensive information on each child's academic progress is passed on with them, ensuring a smooth transition from Year 7 to Year 8. However, the preparation for the move to secondary school begins many years before this. Our close and supportive partnership with our primary schools ensures that all their pupils become familiar with Newtownabbey Community High School from an early age. Our Head of Year 8 and the Principal pay regular visits to primary schools and attend events and activities.





## Home School Agreement

At Newtownabbey Community High School we believe that education is a three way process involving a genuine partnership between school, parents and pupils. We base this partnership on agreement and understanding in two vital areas. Our aims are to foster in all pupils a lifelong love of learning, to ensure that each child experiences success at school, to provide the highest standards of learning and teaching and to provide a calm, disciplined environment where teachers can teach and pupils can learn. Secondly, our partnership is based on recognising and carrying out our respective responsibilities whether we are pupils, teachers or parents.

It is a voluntary agreement designed to establish the relationship between home and school on a basis of mutual trust and openness. We ask each parent and pupil intending to join the school to consider the Agreement carefully before signing it with a member of the Leadership team.

### Code of Conduct

The members of the school community are expected to behave in a responsible manner to themselves, to others and to the environment, showing consideration, courtesy and respect to other people at all times.





## Teaching and Learning

### Curriculum

The curriculum has been designed to achieve the following educational aims:-

- **Achievement**  
We have high expectations of our pupils. We encourage them to work towards realising their full academic potential.
- **Breadth and Balance**  
All pupils have access to a broad and balanced Northern Ireland curriculum which is in line with the entitlement framework.
- **Relevance**  
The curriculum is designed to be relevant to the needs of individual pupils. It provides opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, understanding skills and challenging individual ability and aptitude.

### Key Stage 3

In support of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, Newtownabbey Community High offers each child a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to improve the basic skills, extend abilities and introduce new learning areas and techniques.

All pupils at Key Stage 3 will study the following:-

Mathematics  
English  
Science  
Music  
Languages  
Geography  
History  
Art and Design  
Technology  
Physical Education  
Learning for Life & Work  
Home Economics  
Religious Education



The core skills of ICT, Communication and Numeracy as well as Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through each area of learning.





## Key Stage 4

The move from Junior School into Key Stage 4 is an exciting time for all pupils. Having had the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects in Year 8, 9 and 10 pupils are then asked to make some decisions about what they would like to follow to examination level.

Under the new Entitlement Framework all schools must provide a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4 in which all pupils have access to both academic and vocational pathways. In order to meet these requirements there are some subjects which all pupils at Newtownabbey Community High School must follow. The compulsory subjects are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Learning for Life and Work
- Physical Education
- Religious Education

In collaboration with other local schools and the Northern Regional College we are able to provide students with a wide variety of courses from many different vocational areas. This means that some of the units will be taught in another local school or Northern Regional College (NRC) during a six period block each Thursday for Year 11 and Friday for Year 12 pupils. Transport will be provided free of charge for students travelling to other sites.

Level 2 Courses currently available include:

Hairdressing and Beauty	Hospitality and Catering
Horticulture	Retail & Office Administration
Construction and Engineering	Rockschool – Music Practitioner
Design	Sport, Leisure and Travel
Digital Technology	Vehicle Studies
Vehicle Maintenance and Repair	Care

Rather than choose from these Occupational Studies pupils can decide instead to study for an extra GCSE subject in this Option Block. Subjects currently available include:

Expressive Arts  
 Drama/Performing Arts  
 Financial Services  
 Hospitality  
 ICT  
 Journalism  
 Music  
 Physical Education  
 Technology & Design





## Education as a Lifelong Process

Our curriculum enables pupils to develop their full potential, prepares them for adult life and encourages them to see learning as a lifelong process.

Pupils learn in a variety of ways. If you visit us, you will see traditional teacher led discussion and individual work, but you will also find group work, practical work and independent research taking place.

Particularly able pupils are identified on entry and their progress is carefully monitored.

Pupils with learning difficulties are supported by a strong team of specialists led by our Special Needs Co-ordinator.



## Moral, Spiritual, Cultural and Social Development

We attach great importance to the moral, spiritual, cultural and social development of our pupils. We believe that pupils' development in these areas will be enhanced by their involvement in our school. We encourage them to develop a sense of personal responsibility and a commitment to the school and the wider community.

We are also clear that there needs to be formal elements to our approach to helping pupils develop a system of values that will fit them for life in the adult world.

We have a Tutor programme, which is a vehicle for Form Tutors to work with Tutor Groups on issues such as building social relationships and social and moral issues related to health.

We have a carefully planned assembly programme with themes, which reflect important aspects of school life within a wider spiritual and moral framework.

We feel that this very important area of school work should reflect the views and needs of our local community. For instance, we seek the support and guidance of representatives of the local churches, health professionals and police.





## Religious Education

There are regular collective acts of worship each morning. In addition, RE is provided as part of the core curriculum for pupils. In exceptional circumstances a parent may withdraw a pupil from the school's RE Provision. Such an arrangement must be requested by letter to the Principal.

## Special Educational Needs

The Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of pupils with Special Needs is operational within the school. Individual needs may fall into one or a combination of the following:-

**Learning Difficulties**  
**Physical Difficulties**

**Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties**  
**Medical Condition**

Children are supported by a number of specialist full-time and part-time staff, either in class or group situations. The school has a good working relationship with a variety of external agencies which we can involve, if necessary, to cater for individual needs. These include the Youth Service, Psychology, Education Welfare and Counselling.

## Homework

We believe that homework is an important extension to the pupils' learning day and also provides an opportunity for pupils to develop their ability to work on their own, to carry out research or to extend themselves.

Homework is therefore set regularly for all students. A guide for parents and pupils showing the amount of homework that will be set and the types of activities involved is published each year.

Each pupil receives a homework planner, which will help to develop the important skill of planning and organising work. Parents are expected to check the planner weekly and sign that they are satisfied that the work has been done. Parents, who have concerns about homework whether on an isolated occasion or a problem of a more general nature, should contact their child's Tutor to discuss their concerns.

## The School Day

Registration	9.00 – 9.10
Period 1	9.10 – 9.45
Period 2	9.45 – 10.20
Period 3	10.20 – 10.55
Breaktime	10.55 – 11.10
Period 4	11.10 – 11.45
Period 5	11.45 – 12.20
Period 6	12.20 – 12.55
Lunchtime	12.55 – 1.25
Period 7	1.25 – 2.00
Period 8	2.00 – 2.35
Period 9	2.35 – 3.10



- No Period 9 on Wednesdays. School finishes at 2.35pm for pupils to allow for staff development.



## Careers Education

Newtownabbey Community High School seeks to offer a broad, balanced and effective Careers Programme which helps young people make informed and realistic decisions based on up-to-date information and upon their interests.

The school prepares pupils for Adult and Working life by a number of strategies. Namely:

- offering facilities for the pupils to search the internet to look for specific work areas;
- through the Learning for Life and Work modules;
- by pupils undertaking projects to examine particular career paths;
- each pupil is given the opportunity to participate in one week of work experience in a career of his/her choice;
- by organising guest speakers and appropriate careers visits;
- by providing the pupils with individual Careers Guidance Interviews with an experienced Careers Advisor from the Careers Service Northern Ireland.

## Extra-curricular activities

Newtownabbey Community High values the place of extra-curricular activities. A wide range of clubs and societies is offered.

These include Revision Classes, Art Club, Badminton Club, Choir, Craft Club, Drama Club, Educational trips to Europe, Hairdressing, Fitness Training, Football Training, Football (boys and girls), Hockey, Netball and Scripture Union.



## Resources for Learning

We believe that all pupils have a right to free school education and to that end activities that are offered wholly or mainly during teaching time are available to all pupils regardless of parent's ability or willingness to pay. Occasionally, however, we are able to offer activities that would enrich the pupils' experience but are too expensive for the school to provide free of charge for all of them. In these cases, we rely on donations from parents. Parents will be offered these experiences for their children and invited to make a financial contribution. If there is sufficient interest, the activity will run and the school will provide limited help for those pupils whose parents are unable to afford it.

Activities that are wholly or mainly out of school hours carry charges to cover costs. These include trips and visits at home or abroad that take place either at weekends, half-terms or other holidays. In some cases we can provide limited financial support for pupils.

Exercise books and file paper are issued as necessary and textbooks are lent to the pupils. We ask parents to provide items of basic equipment.





## Pastoral Care

We regard the well being of each individual pupil as the utmost importance. Each pupil has a Form Tutor who deals with daily matters.

There are also Key Stage Heads responsible for general welfare and guidance.

Parents can consult and receive information through regular evening meetings with Subject Teachers, Form Tutors and Key Stage Heads. Individual interviews with Key Stage Heads, Vice Principal or Principal can also be arranged.

All pupils participate in a Personal Development Programme which prepares them for life outside school and after their school careers are complete.

## Child Protection

Child Protection forms an integral part of our Pastoral Care Policy and necessary procedures are in place to ensure the care, welfare and safety of our pupils.

We, in Newtownabbey Community High School, have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of our pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. The school has a designated teacher for Child Protection.

All our staff volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. The staff of our school have also adopted a **Code of Practice** for our behaviour towards pupils. The staff have also adopted a policy on the **Use of Reasonable Force** to restrain or control pupils in line with Department of Education guidance.

The purpose of the procedures of **Child Protection** is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance of the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The over-riding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration.





## Relationships and Sexuality

In Newtownabbey Community High School we believe that sex education is an educational entitlement of all pupils and an integral part of each pupil's development into adulthood.

### AIMS

To encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour.

To promote self esteem.

To encourage pupils to respect and value themselves and others and to behave responsibly.

To help pupils to develop the ability to recognise peer and social pressures where appropriate.

To encourage pupils to recognise, prepare for and manage growth, development and change.

Delivery is through

- Planned aspects of sexuality and relationships within the Science, Religious Education and Personal Development curriculum.
- Addressing moral and ethical issues within other areas of the curriculum.
- Outside agencies being invited to the school to provide 'authority and expertise' to our provision.

Parents will be informed of the content of talks, lectures and lessons in which their children will be involved and can request their withdrawal from these programmes if they so desire.

## Drugs Education Policy

The school ensures that its pupils know the risks of drug taking and are empowered with the confidence, knowledge and skills to make informed choices about drugs. Our Drugs Education Policy enables all staff to act in a consistent manner towards the whole issue.

### AIMS

- To inform young people of the effects of drug abuse.
- To help young people distinguish between different drug substances and consider their use, abuse and harms.
- To minimise the chances of pupils using drugs.
- To explore healthy methods of dealing with pressures, and anxieties, boredom etc.
- To develop skills in young people to enable them to live in a drug orientated society.
- To help young people to understand the influence they can have on their friends.

Drugs education is dealt with through Personal Development classes at Key Stage 3 and Learning for Life and Work programme at Key Stage 4. On occasions outside agencies are invited into school to enhance our drugs education provision.

**Staff are aware of procedures laid out in the event of:**

- Finding an illicit substance in school.
- Pupils being suspected of possessing / distributing an illegal substance.
- Pupils being suspected of having taken drugs in school.

**In the interests of the protection of the children in our care these procedures are mandatory and must be applied.**





## Bullying

Bullying is highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully.

Any complaint by a parent that they suspect their child is being bullied will be fully investigated by a Key Stage Head and team action will be taken to protect the victim. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the Key Stage Head within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action being taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of privileges or position of responsibility he/she holds in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the school's child protection procedures.

## Promoting Positive Behaviour

The school makes every effort to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and behaviour. A pupil behaviour agreement is in places so that all pupils are aware of their rights and responsibilities for Safety, Respect and Fair Treatment and Learning.

We encourage pupils to have 'ownership' of this Agreement so they have been consulted about appropriate Learning Behaviours in class. The following rules have been agreed by pupils and staff:-

Listen when someone is talking  
Follow instructions  
Come prepared ready for work  
Stay on task  
Keep hands, feet, objects and unkind words to yourself  
Ask politely when help is needed

A reward system is in operation – pupil's success, both in class and for extra curricular activities is celebrated on a regular basis.





NEWTOWNABBEY COMMUNITY  
HIGH SCHOOL