

# Braidside IPS

Ballymena



Braidside Integrated Primary and Nursery School opened in September 1989 in a former shirt factory in Ballymena. A group of parents had worked with support from NICIE to generate interest in an integrated school for the town, and the same group spent the summer painting, putting in partition walls and laying carpet to make the rented building suitable for a school.

By September 1992 the Primary School was recognised for funding by the Department of Education and had moved to the present purpose built site on Frys Road.

The school has grown from small numbers in 1989 to maintain an enrolment of around 340 pupils in the Primary school and 26 in the Nursery. A very positive inspection in 2009 highlighted outstanding team leadership, special needs and pastoral care- strengths which we feel have grown out of the rich core principles of integration. The school received the Excellence in Integrated Education Award in 2011.

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The pressing need is now for a permanent building to replace the original prefabricated structures. The school was listed for rebuilding by the Minister in January 2013 and we anticipate a permanent build within the next few years. In the meantime the staff work hard to keep the premises welcoming, bright and comfortable. In recent years a friendship quilt and kite artwork have been designed and made by the children as part of successive Integrated Education Weeks. The quilt and the kite help to brighten our hall, and also underline the strong sense of community within the school.

From a small start based on the courage and commitment of a dedicated group of founders, Ballymena now has an established integrated choice based in Braidside Integrated Primary and Slemish College. We look forward to many more years of providing shared education and working to meet the broad full potential of the pupils.

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