

# St Sophia's Primary School HANDBOOK 2016-17





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# A Message from the Head of Education

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. In writing the following pages, colleagues are attempting to do two things. The first is to provide you with the information you need so that your child can be given access to all of the services and facilities to which they are entitled. The second purpose is to seek and promote a genuine partnership with you as the main responsible adult in your child's life. Without that partnership it will not be possible for your daughter or son to take maximum advantage of their education and so to fulfil their potential. Quite simply, we want the best for your child in exactly the same way you do.

My invitation to you is that should you have any doubts about your child's progress or their entitlement to a service, then you should not hesitate to contact the school or early childhood centre. You are entitled to an explanation of anything that is of concern to you and staff will be very pleased to assist you with an answer to any question you have. All we would ask is that you do this with the courtesy that you yourself would expect.

I know your child will enjoy their time with us and they will learn and progress every day. However old your son or daughter, never be afraid to ask what they were doing today and whether they were having any difficulty or problem that we, or you, can help them with. By our working together in this way, I promise that your child will succeed and will have a great preparation for life.

Kindest regards

**Alan Ward** 





# Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents/Carers,

On behalf of the school community of St. Sophia's Primary, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child.

The staff, children and parents work in partnership to create a positive, stimulating teaching and learning environment where we strive to meet the intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional and creative needs of every child in our care.

Beginning primary school is an exciting and important milestone in a child's life and we at St. Sophia's will do our utmost to ensure that it is a happy, welcoming and worry free time for both parents and children. The information in this handbook is intended to give an insight into the life of the school to all parents and new children. However, if you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. We hope that you and your child will soon feel at home in our school community.

As a Catholic school our Christian Faith permeates all aspects of school life where everyone is treated with equality, fairness, love and respect. We are committed to, and look forward to, working with you, the parents, to help our children become confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors and successful learners.

We are also delighted to inform parents that our school has been included in the recent funding for a new school. The process is at a very early stage and parents will be fully involved in the planning and consultation.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Heron





# ethos, vision and values

St Sophia's is a lovely small school but with a big heart and the children are a joy to work with and they are all very proud of their school and their links within the community.

The parent council are like one large family working together with the school, parents and pupils to make the children's time at Primary school the best it can be.

It is my pleasure to be chair of the parent council at this wonderful school.

Angela Thomson Chair of the parent council.

At St Sophia's Primary we have an ethos that puts our children's learning and long-term development above all else. We have a culture of collaborative working within the staff and with our active and supportive parent body. We have high expectations of ourselves, our colleagues and the children. As a school we are committed to continuous improvement and enthusiastic about the opportunity to develop in new ways. As a whole school community we aim to have the energy and imagination to move the school forwards, but also the confidence and insight to nurture what is special about St Sophia's.

St. Sophia's: growing in love and learning

Our love of self, others and learning encourages....happiness, creativity, teamwork, nurture, honesty, enterprise, skills for life, achievement, challenge, healthy lives, respect, fairness, inspiration, success, partnership and community.

Our philosophy is founded in the promotion of Gospel Values and based on equality of education.

Across the school, staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They make classrooms interesting places for learners and respond to children's ideas and interests when they plan lessons. Children are actively involved in planning the learning and identifying resources.

Staff provide children with different ways to make progress by ensuring that they have a good balance of individual, group and class teaching. Well-planned tasks help teachers give clear feedback to help them build on their strengths and improve their work.

Children's engagement in their learning is actively encouraged. Children are aware of the high expectations of their class teachers and the school. Children are aware of learning outcomes and success criteria and this was acknowledged by HMIE during the Education Scotland curricular visit. The ethos within the school aims to promote success, confidence, responsibility and value as an individual and as a member of the school community.

Homework activities support what children are learning in lessons and help to prepare for the next step in their journey as learners. Feedback from our Parent Council and the Parent Focus Group during the Education Scotland curricular visit indicate that Homework is an area for the school to develop.





# ethos, vision and values

Children are encouraged to respond to a variety of issues affecting them in school and through forums such as the Pupil Council, Eco Committee and Enterprise Club, have opportunities to contribute to a variety of school events and experiences.

We have introduced Junior Road Safety Officers and are participating in Kerbcraft. Children take an active part in the day to day running of the school by being our photographers, dining hall monitors, music leaders, playLEADers and Assembly preparers. Children also participated in Focus groups during the Education Scotland curricular visit when their views were sought on a range of matters including the quality of their learning experiences within the classroom.

Parents and parishioners are regular visitors to our school to take part in Assemblies and Monthly Mass. We have very good links with St. Sophia's Parish.

Children, parents and the wider community actively contribute to the school by regularly attending fundraising events.

Children have worked collaboratively and creatively to raise significant amounts of money for SCIAF and practical support through 'Backpacks for Malawi'.

We have been awarded our third 'Green Flag' and the Eco-Committee work hard to enhance our working environment. Among many other projects, children have developed a garden area to enhance the school grounds and grow edible plants. This involved working together with the school community including parents and carers who contributed and offered resources, skills and assistance.

Children have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and are making very good progress in physical education through the variety of opportunities provided by school staff and visiting specialists. Over the past year we have taken part in the Sportshall Athletics Championships, Day of Dance, Learning Community Netball Tournament, Badminton, reaching the finals, and events organised by our Active Schools co-ordinator e.g. Martial Arts and Orienteering.

We offer a variety of after school clubs.

Children have also been involved in Galston Community Fete, Loudoun Horticultural Show, Ecumenical Services with local Churches and many other local and national competitions.

#### Children's comments:

I love my school. The work is really good fun. Luca Pr 1

I like the staff. There are so many nice people. Maisie Pr 2

I love singing songs when we are learning, like Jolly Phonics songs. Islay Pr 2

I love writing stories. Jack Pr 2



# Establishment ethos, vision and values

It is a really good school and I love it. I learn a lot of things. Byron Pr 3

This school is perfect. It is fun and we have a great adventure playground. Malachai Pr 4

I like it because the teachers are kind and helpful. Skye Pr 3

I like that all the classes are bright and colourful and our work is put on display. This shows everyone the great work we do. Blaise Pr 5

I love being able to use my imagination when we do writing. The staff and the children help each other. Evie Pr 5

I like all the visits we go on and we do fun competitions. Connor Pr 6

I love everything about St. Sophia's. My three words to describe it would be fantastic, amazing and spectacular. Katie Pr 7

It is a really good school and the teachers make learning fun but also give us lots of their time. Jody Pr 7

It's fun but you learn a lot. The teachers are very kind. Jack Pr 7

The teachers take time to care about all the children and they also make learning fun. Declan Pr 7





# **Establishment** information

| Name: | St. Sophia's Primary | School |
|-------|----------------------|--------|
|-------|----------------------|--------|

Address: Nelville Drive

Galston

KA48BN

Telephone/Fax: 01563 820521

E-mail: Elizabeth.Heron@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Present Roll: 70

Stages taught: P1-P7

Present working capacity: 126

Parents should note that the working capacity may vary dependent upon the number of children at each stage and the way in which each class is organised.

The school is co-educational and Roman Catholic.

Our school day for children is

School opens: 9.00 am

Morning Interval: 10.45 am - 11.00 am

Lunchbreak: 12.30 pm - 1.15 pm

School Closes: 3.00 pm



# **Establishment** information

St. Sophia's is the designated Catholic school for Galston, Newmilns, Darvel, Fenwick and outlying areas. It is an important aspect of our school that our pupils feel a sense of community and we are very fortunate that our children have a varied, and at the same time, common culture. The support of our communities strengthens a sense of belonging.

St. Sophia's Primary School consists of one main building and a classroom hut which is currently used for Art & Design and Music lessons. There are four rooms used as classrooms in the main building. There is a multi-purpose hall used for lunches, P.E., drama, assemblies and productions. We also have a generous sized 'quiet room' which is used for small group teaching and visiting specialists. The larger 'general purpose' room houses our well stocked school library. We are fortunate that our parents assist with the library on a weekly basis. The disabled facilities include ramps at the main entrance and entrance to the hall.

The Dining Hall provides a varied, healthy option of meals, however some children bring a packed lunch. All Primary 1-3 children are provided with a free school meal. Children in Primary 1-2 are also provided with a variety of healthy snacks for break time.

We are trialling a healthy tuck shop which offers toast, fresh fruit and crisps. Please note that we are a nut free school.

We operate a breakfast club. This is very popular and children can attend Monday – Friday from 8.15 am for a small charge.

Enrolment for new children entering Primary 1 takes place in January each year and information of the dates and times is advertised in the local press, Church Bulletin and School Newsletters.

The associated Early years establishments are:

Darvel Early Childhood Centre: 01560 320785
Galston Early Childhood Centre 01563 820360
Newmilns Early Childhood Centre 07763 568 533





# **Establishment** information

**Associated Primary Schools** 

St. Andrew's Primary, Kilmarnock KA3 7SL Head Teacher Mrs A Murray,

Mount Carmel Primary, Kilmarnock KA3 3EL Head Teacher Mrs B Gibb

St. Patrick's Primary, Auchinleck KA18 2LA Head Teacher Mrs C Gray

St Xavier's Primary, Patna KA6 7LY Head Teacher Miss A Rooney

**Associated Secondary School:** 

St. Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock KA3 7SL Head Teacher Mr Daniel Cardle

St. Sophia's is a member of the St. Joseph's Learning Community which brings together a wide range of services to benefit young people. The principal purpose of the Learning Community is to ensure that services are better co-ordinated in order to meet the needs of young people and raise attainment. Learning Communities support the government's approach to GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child). This means that if a child/young person needs support then, where possible, there will be one co-ordinated assessment and one plan for that child/young person.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of provision made by the establishment, you should contact the establishment in the first instance. Our aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible at the first point of contact.

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# **Establishment** security

Public access to St. Sophia's can only be gained through the Main Entrance during the teaching day for security reasons. The security doors are released from inside the school allowing entry to the building. The door has a bell which when pressed alerts the office staff who can then release it to allow you to enter the building

On arrival, please complete the log-in book located at the visitor's reception. You will be asked to provide your name, reason for visit and time entering and leaving the building.

All members of school staff can be easily identified by their school badge, which is worn at all times.

No unauthorised photography or videoing is allowed within the school premises without the permission of the head of establishment.

Parents and carers are asked to comply with the requests on photography and videoing at school/establishment events which will be published in relation to each individual event. Such requests are made of you solely to protect the interests of individual children and families.





# Establishment calendar

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL School Holiday Arrangements 2016/2017**

| Term     | Break    | Dates of Attendance                   | Cumulative           | Cumulative   |
|----------|----------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
|          |          |                                       | <b>Holiday Total</b> | Working Days |
| First    |          | Teachers (In Service) Tue 16 Aug 2016 |                      |              |
|          |          | Pupils return Wed 17 Aug 2016         |                      |              |
|          |          | Local Holiday Fri 16 Sep 2016         | 1                    |              |
|          |          | Local Holiday Mon 19 Sep 2016         | 2                    |              |
|          |          | Close Fri 7 Oct 2016                  | 7                    |              |
|          |          | Teachers (In Service) Mon 17 Oct 2016 |                      |              |
|          | Mid Term | Pupils return Tue 18 Oct 2016         |                      |              |
|          |          | Close Fri 23 Dec 2016                 |                      | 85           |
|          |          |                                       |                      |              |
| Second   |          | Re-open Mon 9 Jan 2017                | 17                   |              |
| Mid Term | Mid Term | Close Fri 10 Feb 2017                 |                      |              |
|          |          | Teachers (In Service) Thu 16 Feb 2017 |                      |              |
|          |          | Teachers (In Service) Fri 17 Feb 2017 |                      |              |
|          |          | Pupils return Mon 20 Feb 2017         | 20                   |              |
|          |          | Close Fri 31 Mar 2017                 |                      | 140          |
| Third    |          | Local Holiday Mon 17 Apr 2017         |                      |              |
|          |          | Re-open Tue 18 Apr 2017               | 31                   |              |
|          |          | May Day Mon 1 May 2017                | 32                   |              |
|          |          | Teachers (In Service) Thu 4 May 2017  |                      |              |
|          |          | Local Holiday Mon 29 May 2017         | 33                   |              |
|          |          | Close Thu 29 Jun 2017                 | 66                   | 195          |

Session 2017/2018 Teachers (In Service) Wed 16 Aug 2017 Pupils return\* Thu 17 Aug 2017

<sup>\*</sup>Pupils attendance will be 190 days after deducting 5 in service days



## Staff information

#### **Staff**

The Head of Establishment is: Mrs E Heron

The teaching staff comprises of: Mrs A Tait Primary 1/2

Mrs L Macdonald Primary 3/4

Miss N Galloway Primary 5/6

Mrs G Hall Primary 7

Mrs N Hart E.A.S.T Core Support

The invaluable support staff comprises:

Senior Clerical Assistant: Mrs C Brown

Classroom Assistants: Mrs S Scoular

Ms D Oliver

School Janitor: Mr A Munro

Catering Assistant: Ms S Maxwell

Mrs L McCartney

Cleaning Assistants: Mrs M McVie

Ms M Chapman

The school is further supported by a visiting keyboard specialist, a visiting brass instructor, an active Schools Co-ordinator, Speech and Language Therapist, School Nurse and an Educational Psychologist. The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the safe running of the school.





# **Improvement**

- Across the school, staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They make classrooms interesting places for learners and respond to children's ideas and interests when they plan lessons. Pupils are actively involved in planning the learning and identifying resources.
- All staff are using the Experiences and Outcomes of CFE in planning lessons and through updated PLP's and Achievement folders, and clear assessment guidelines, are becoming more skilled at involving learners in gathering evidence of learning, attainment and achievement.
- The updated PLP's and Achievement folders, issued three times per session have resulted in indepth conversations with learners to identify areas of strength, next steps and support needs.
- Assessment data has been used to plan learning and support which has resulted in almost all children making significant gains in reading and spelling ages, with many children now achieving beyond their chronological age.
- All learners have had opportunities to work on STEM projects through Primary Engineering, and excellent links to the world of work through partnership work with engineers from Vesuvius and Grants distillers. One team achieving second place at Apprentice Level 2
- Learners in P4-7 have undertaken the Scottish Engineering Special Leaders Award with seven achieving the award with distinction.
- Staff provide children with different ways to make progress by ensuring that they have a good balance of individual, group and class teaching. Well-planned tasks help teachers give clear feedback to help them build on their strengths and improve their work. Staff are more skilled at using a range of assessment evidence in order to provide feedback to learners.
- Staff spend time weekly in quality discussions with learners about how much and how well they
  have learned in order to set targets for the coming week, thus allowing children opportunities to
  reflect on their learning and to identify next steps in their learning. These targets are shared with
  parents.
- All parents, children and staff completed an audit of attitudes towards homework. Staff audit of
  homework tasks and materials. Parents, staff and learners involved in planning for the new
  Homework policy. New Homework Policy and procedures devised in draft form for consultation/
  trialling. Refresh of homework materials and tasks. Staff continue to demonstrate the value of
  homework by use of charts and points for completion. Parent Support guides devised for Big
  Maths, Spelling and Writing. Updated homework diaries incorporating weekly evaluations and
  target setting. Introduction of a homework/ study club with a focus on attendance of LAC
  children.





**Improvement** 

- Moderation of Literacy (Writing) staff involved in useful professional dialogue at school and learning partnership level. More skilled at sharing standards and expectations to support their professional judgements.
- All school staff have undertaken training and support in the content and delivery of French and an additional language: Spanish. Newly devised planners in place to ensure progression in talking and listening, reading and writing in French across all stages from P1-7. Flexibility of First Level planners allowing for staff to devise contexts for learning to promote an additional language. Staff making effective use of the advice on Education Scotland website sharing practice 1+2.
  - Very effective lesson visits to P6/7 from PT modern Languages. Links with St. Joseph's Academy for reciprocal visits to observe lessons planned for session 2015-2016 in Spanish to seek advice on pronunciation, word lists etc. an interdisciplinary project using appropriate E's and O's to facilitate the teaching and learning of Spanish has been devised for use in session 2015-2016.
- EAC standardised assessment materials in Literacy and Numeracy being used at P 4 and P 7. Assessment procedures and portfolios of evidence now more effectively tracking learner progress. Baseline data is identifying gaps in learning in Literacy and Numeracy, and targeted support has raised attainment in both areas. There is more effective use of AiFL, quality questioning and feedback to learners across the school. Staff continue to implement 'Big Maths' and ensure between 10 and 30 minutes of every maths lesson has a 'Big Maths' focus. The 'Friday Maths Challenge' and numeracy assessments, indicates that almost all children have made significant gains in numeracy skills. Teejay CFE materials for core maths teaching has been introduced across all stages and staff have undertaken training in order to upscale numeracy tasks.
- Learners, staff, parents, parishioners and other partners were consulted regarding the efficacy, understanding and appropriateness of our current vision, values and aims. Through reflection, debate and consultation we gathered the views of all stakeholders to develop and shape a common vision for our school. This took into account initiatives within the school such as Nurture and 'Bounceback'. We audited our current vision in relation to outcomes for learners, ensuring it was in line with local and national priorities and amended it appropriately. Our amended vision, values and aims will ensure the work of our school gains direction from our clear statement. Extensive consultation was carried out with all stakeholders and an updated vision, values and aims has been created in order to promote the work of the school and encourage partnership with learning and teaching and in promoting health and wellbeing.
- The school has worked very closely with partners in EAST, Health, Campus Cop, Active
   Schools, Children and Families, the School Chaplain and with the Educational Psychologist, to



# **Improvement**

ensure families and learners are supported. Almost all children on the ASN Log who have an Individual Action Plan or Individual Learning Plan have achieved or overtaken their targets.

- We are trained in the use of 'Seasons for Growth' and this is used effectively to support children and families as required. Most school staff are trained in nurture.
- We are delighted to have achieved our Third Eco-Schools Green Flag.

#### Our Areas for Improvement are:

- Q.I. 1.1/1.2 Moderation: Literacy, Numeracy
- Q.I. 1.1/1.2 Homework
- Q.I. 1.1/2.1/2.2 Dyslexia Friendly Schools: Bronze Award
- Q.I. 1.1/2.1/5.8 God's Loving Plan
- Q.I. 5.1/5.3/9.1 Vision, Values and Aims

#### Maintenance Activities

- Curriculum for Excellence: enhanced curriculum planning and classroom practice around the 4 capacities.
- Continue to develop effective systems of assessment, moderation and tracking in accordance with National and L.A. guidance.
- Development of STEM and technology throughout the school, building on our initial year one STEM involvement and extend throughout the school.
- Consolidate GIRFEC Model and Integrated Children and young People's Service Plan.





Curriculum for Excellence is the education system in Scotland. It includes nurseries, schools, colleges and community learning from 3 to 18 and beyond.

From autumn 2010, learners from pre-school to S1 will be working to Curriculum for Excellence guidance and standards. Pupils who are in S1 in 2010-11 will be the first to take the new Curriculum for Excellence qualifications from 2013-14. Young people in S2 and above will work primarily within the existing curriculum and qualifications system, whilst benefiting from improvements in learning and teaching through Curriculum for Excellence.

The table below matches the five curriculum levels to stages of learning generally applicable, with flexibility (for example, for young people who are particularly able and/or have additional support needs).

| Level               | Stage  |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Early               | The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.  |  |  |
| First               | To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.   |  |  |
| Second              | To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.   |  |  |
| Third and<br>Fourth | S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4.  The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the fourth level outcomes. |  |  |
| Senior<br>phase     | S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.   |  |  |

From pre-school to the end of S3 (3-15) young people will experience a broad general education which is designed to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor. The broad general education will include all of the Experiences and Outcomes across all curriculum areas up to and including the third level. Throughout all learning, prime importance is given to literacy, numeracy and thinking skills; skills for learning, life and work an understanding of so lety, the world and Scotland's place in it, and an active

and healthy lifestyle. A range of teaching methods and contexts for learning is used, including active and enterprising learning, which encourage young people to become enquiring; learning across the curriculum which helps young people make links between subjects, and learning outside classrooms in the outdoors and in the community, which gives opportunities for learners to deepen their learning in real-life contexts.

Most learners will progress into the fourth level in many aspects of their learning before the end of S3, laying strong foundations for more specialised learning.

Curriculum for Excellence emphasizes that assessment is an integral part of day-to-day teaching and learning. Learners' progress will be closely monitored by staff, who reflect with them on their strengths, learning needs and next steps, and take action based on this. Learners themselves will be increasingly involved in this process, as they develop the skills needed to be able to make effective judgments on their own learning; skills that will be important to them throughout life. Testing will continue to be part of the framework of assessment, providing additional evidence of what learners know, understand and are able to do, and helping teachers plan learning experiences which are motivating and challenging.

www.youngscot.org (learners)

www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk (parents and carers)

www.sqa.org.uk (information on qualifications)

<u>www.hmie.gov.uk</u> (standards, inspections)

www.ltscotland.org.uk (teaching practice and support)

www.engageforeducation.org (share ideas and questions about education)

www.scotland.gov.uk/cfeinaction(real-life examples)

#### Curriculum Provision

St. Sophia's Primary School provides a full and varied curriculum which follows the Curriculum for Excellence framework and reflects the policies of East Ayrshire Education Authority.

#### Literacy



The initial approach to reading in St. Sophia's is varied in order to give as many children as possible the best chance of success. Materials used for building basic vocabulary and delivering required skills development are chosen for interest, presentation and enjoyment. Our children learn to read through a variety of activities which involve children's interaction with each other, their teacher and their parents. Many opportunities are planned for children to work in pairs, groups, with the teacher and other adults.

The reading scheme used in the early stages is Oxford Reading Tree and is heavily supported by the Phonics and Language programme, Jolly Phonics.

As children progress into junior school they transfer to a variety of resources e.g. Kingscourt, Winners, Sprints, Get Real, Wolf Hill and Rapid Readers to develop a wide variety of literacy skills.

The good practice of library is encouraged throughout the school. We value the help of parents at all stages in enabling their child(ren) to read at home.

Our extensive range of literacy resources and 'Big Writing' are used in school to provide a structured and cohesive programme for the learning and teaching of writing skills. Children are taught to write for many purposes and learn to recognize the appropriate format for the task e.g. letter, report or instruction. We have a large selection of Big Books which are used to model good examples of the writers craft.

The school has developed a programme of study for the teaching of spelling to ensure that all spelling rules are covered P1-P7. A variety of resources are used and children enjoy using the interactive white boards to 'have a go' and many other active spelling techniques.

#### Numeracy

Teejay CFE Mathematics (P1-P7) is used as the core teaching resource, supplemented by 'Big Maths'. Daily interactive mental mathematics is an important feature of classroom routine and encourages a challenging, confident application of skills. Problem solving skills are used on a regular basis with planned introduction and teaching of all strategies. Each stage has a folder of activities taken from a variety of resources and pupils are given regular opportunities to work individually, in pairs and in groups.

TeeJay Mathematics and teachers own resources are used for homework activities and provide a valuable link with parents and their child's learning.





Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools

The revised outcomes and experiences lay a firmer emphasis on the use of Scripture, Sacramental Preparation, Prayer, Reflection, Magesterium of the Church, Traditions and Practices, Ethics and Moral

Issues, Personal Search and other World Religions. Where previously equal emphasis was placed on Christianity, Personal Search and other World Religions a sharper focus is now placed on Christianity in the catholic tradition. The revised guidelines are implemented through the use of 'This is our Faith' and we plan, deliver and assess Religious Education through the use of the revised Diocesan Planners. Again this subject may be promoted through an integrated approach and there are clear links between This is our Faith and the Experiences and Outcomes of RERC and Health and Wellbeing.

We are very ably supported by our school Chaplain Fr. Ben Lodge who regularly visits the school and assists with the preparation of candidates for First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Currently children in Primary 3 undertake the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Children in Primary 4 undertake the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion. We have strong links with the parish of St Sophia's.

We have regular monthly masses and services in school to which parents and parishioners are invited.

Parents who do not wish their child to participate in religious instruction or observance should discuss this with the Head Teacher in order that mutually agreeable alternative arrangements can be made.

#### Interdisciplinary Planning

With the development of a Curriculum for Excellence we have introduced interdisciplinary topics. These are broad based, thematic projects that are planned to span all areas of Social Subjects and Expressive Arts, Literacy and Numeracy.

The curriculum aims to help every learner develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work; which are encapsulated in the four capacities – to enable each child and young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective learner.

Interdisciplinary topics which are based across the curriculum areas can provide relevant, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences and stimulating contexts to meet the varied needs of children and young people.

Examples of children's work is retained in their PLP/Achievement folder as evidence of the progression of skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of curricular areas.

#### Social Subjects





This area of the curriculum is designed to help each child become aware of his/her place in society through relationships to the past, interaction with the present and in meeting the challenge of the future:

- Science: Living Things and The Processes of Life; Energy and Forces, Earth and Space
- Social Subjects: People in the Past; People in Society; People and Places
- Technology: Technological capability

Thematic and interdisciplinary themes encapsulate a broad balance of social subjects.

#### **Expressive Arts**

Expressive arts are integrated within interdisciplinary projects whenever possible. Each area, *Drama, Music, Art and Design, Dance,* emphasizes different methods of self-expression and all build confidence and self-awareness as well as promoting co-operation and understanding. In addition every opportunity is taken to extend experience in these areas through outside agencies with particular expertise.

A variety of resources are used to supplement interdisciplinary topics these include:

- Sounds of Singing which gives children the opportunity to sing, listen to music and create music of their own. ABC Music is used throughout the school. All staff participated in an opportunity for in-service for this new online resource.
- From Primary 5 onwards, children have the opportunity to learn to play keyboard or a brass instrument.
- The school has based P1-P7 developments on the Drama Resource pack and North Ayrshire Drama pack. Theatre Companies e.g. Scottish Opera, have run very successful projects within our school involving various stages/groups.
- The core programme for the teaching of Art and Design is Borders Art and this incorporates evaluation by children of their own and others work including that of famous artists.

#### Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing is a curricular area which comprises a number of existing and new modes of learning. These include:

- Personal and Social Education
- Health Education
- Physical Education

This curricular area has been given co-equal status along with Literacy and Numeracy as a result of various directives and information from the Scottish Government. School practices are evolving towards a more integrated approach to the development of this area. In common with Literacy and Numeracy



every opportunity to further develop the key outcomes in Health and Wellbeing occurs across all areas of the curriculum.

The themes within Health and Wellbeing are:

- Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Planning choices and changes
- · Physical education, physical activity and sport
- Food and Health
- Substance misuse
- Relationships, sexual health and parenthood, guided by 'God's Loving Plan'

We work very closely with all other health professionals, Vibrant Communities and our active schools co-ordinator to ensure children have a wide range of experiences relating to their health and well-being. We participate in a range of activities to offer children a wide variety of experiences e.g. sporting events, Scottish country dancing, football coaching, residential visits for Primary 7 children, cycling proficiency etc.

Every Wednesday morning the whole school participates in activities to promote health and wellbeing, usually involving outdoor learning.

Parents are kept fully informed by letter about visits from specialists who support our Health and Wellbeing programme and are given notice of how and when we teach children about sexual health and relationships. Parents are advised that they may view and discuss any resources to be used in the teaching of sexual health prior to their use with their child. We are guided by 'God's Loving Plan' in the teaching of sexual health and relationships.

Physical Education is delivered using the Borders Programme of Study and regular opportunities are given to enable pupils to develop skills in games, dance, fitness and gymnastics. With the support of Vibrant Communities Primary 7 children also receive swimming lessons at some point throughout the year. East Ayrshire Activity Motivators work with each class during the year to promote active health and fitness programmes.

#### Information Communication Technology

The school is resourced with a wide variety of educational software. Interactive whiteboards in all classrooms, enhances the learning and teaching taking place every day in St. Sophia's. Discrete skills are taught and then used by children across the curriculum to enhance learning and teaching.

#### French Language

We are fortunate to have two teachers trained through the Modern Language Programme. This enables us to deliver a programme for the teaching of French from Primary 1 to Primary 7. Collins Primary French is proving to be a valuable resource but is supplemented with a variety of teacher made



resources. In Primary 1-3, the focus is on the listening and talking, with greater emphasis on reading and writing skills as children progress from Primary 4 through to Primary 7. This year we are planning to introduce Spanish to all children throughout the school, with the emphasis being on listening and talking skills through a topic based approach.

#### Homework

- To provide children with the opportunity to practise, consolidate, extend and enrich learning taking place in school.
- To allow parents to engage and become involved in their child's day-to-day class work.
- To encourage children to become independent learners and to establish good study habits.

The school has updated its policy, however children across all stages continue to have regular homework on four nights per week. Children can expect to be set homework across a range of curricular areas. All children have a Homework Diary suitable for their stage of learning which informs parents of the tasks and the date due for submission. Homework should last no more than 20 - 30 minutes depending on the age and stage of the children. We ask parents to sign the diary on a regular basis. The Homework Diary can also be used by parents to communicate with the teacher about any aspect of the homework set.

Parents are asked to contact the school if they have any concerns regarding homework





# Assessment and reporting

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises that assessment is an integral part of day-to-day teaching and learning. Learners' progress will be closely monitored by staff, who reflect with them on their strengths, learning needs and next steps, and take action based on this. Learners themselves will be increasingly involved in this process, as they develop the skills needed to be able to make effective judgments on their own learning; skills that will be important to them throughout life. Testing will continue to be part of the framework of assessment, providing additional evidence of what learners know, understand and are able to do, and helping teachers plan learning experiences which are motivating and challenging.

In St. Sophia's assessment is built into the learning and teaching process and is part of the teacher's daily practice. Children's progress is continuously being assessed by their teachers through questioning, the marking of written work and observation of their children at work. This continuous assessment means that the teacher can plan the next step in learning for each child and problems and difficulties can be detected as soon as they occur.

This profiling includes records kept of progress through the programmes of study in Language and Mathematics to inform teachers of required next steps for the groups within the class. Group records are also kept e.g. reading, common words, spelling/phonics and problem solving. Evidence of learner achievement is gathered each session and passed on throughout the school P1-P7.

The Head Teacher monitors teachers' record keeping in Assessment Folders on a termly basis.

Reporting to Parent meetings take place twice during the session. The Reporting to Parent meeting in October gives parents an oral report and a brief outline of how children are progressing, their strengths and areas for development. Prior to this meeting in October, teachers send a brief written report, describing how well children are learning in school. The second Reporting to Parent meeting takes place in April and includes the levels of achievement in all curricular areas as well as the recommendations for the child's future progress. These evenings give parents an opportunity to discuss their child's progress as well as allowing an opportunity to view their child's class work.

A written Annual Report is issued for all children just before the second Reporting to Parent meeting takes place, and provides evidence of pupil progress in the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Reports allow for children and parents to comment on progress or highlight areas of concern.

Parents, however, do not need to wait until Parents' Evenings to discuss their child's progress. Parents are welcome to visit the Headteacher at any time. Meetings with Class teachers can also be arranged through the Headteacher.

As part of the Headteacher's remit, various monitoring exercises occur throughout the session to ensure that all children are progressing within the various programmes of study in class. With the implementation of the national initiative "Assessment is for Learning" children are becoming more skilled at using self and peer assessment techniques to improve their learning and identify next steps.



# **Policies and procedures**

There are a range of policies and procedures available for parents to view within the school.

#### **Promotion of Positive Behaviour**

The relationship between children and staff is similar to the relationship between child and parent/carer requiring a degree of mutual trust and respect. All staff are committed to the promotion of positive behaviour and the development of personal and social skills. Recognition of good behaviour and effort is given high profile in class and whole school context. Assembly gives opportunity to celebrate both individual and class achievement.

Children are in 'Houses', which are guided by elected Captains and Vice Captains. Children are encouraged to earn 'Golden Ticket's, for showing positive behaviour, which are swapped for house stars. The winning house receives a special termly treat.

Every member of staff is involved in support for discipline and approach is uniform in order to create stability. Circle Time is the basis of our discipline and is built on respect for self, others and property. It helps build an atmosphere in which children, parents and staff can work together benefiting all and encourages each one to take pride in their achievements and the achievements of others. One of our Classroom Assistants is a trained Circle Time trainer who gives valuable support to children and staff. Our Golden Rules are agreed by all, given to parents and displayed prominently to constantly reinforce commitment:

Do be gentle Don't hurt anyone

Do be kind and helpful Don't hurt others feelings

Do be honest Don't cover up the truth

Do work hard Don't waste time

Do look after property Don't waste or damage things

Do listen Don't interrupt

Children sign a weekly contract agreeing to observe the Golden Rules and understand that failure means loss of some or all Golden Time. The purpose of Golden Time is to reward all those children who regularly behave well and encourage other pupils to do likewise.

The promotion of positive behaviour is the responsibility of all staff and pupils and extends to all areas of the school and playground. A variety of sanctions are used when rules are continually broken or children are performing 'outside the circle'. It is always our intention to help children move from poor



# Policies and procedures

attitudes/habits to become more positive and we value the support of parents/carers in this area. We prefer to contact the family early if difficulty arises and keep parents/carers informed of progress.

We also use the 'Bounce Back' Programme to help children develop resiliency skills. The core values are recorded in our homework diaries.

#### Anti-Bullying Policy

There may be times when your child feels that they are being bullied. It is most important that parents/carers who are concerned about possible bullying contact the school at the earliest opportunity to discuss the problem. This discussion will focus on the action that will be taken and how your child can be supported. Bullying is a problem which cannot be stopped by pupils, parents/carers or teachers acting alone and parents/carers should therefore not hesitate to seek the advice and support of the school, if the need arises.

East Ayrshire Council is committed to creating and sustaining a safe, positive and inclusive environment, where respect is shown to and is given by all of its children, young people, staff and parents/carers. A number of initiatives and policy documents are in place to support, protect and encourage children and young people to lead happy and successful lives. These policies have a direct influence on the "Respect and Protect" anti-bullying behaviour policy, launched in November 2010, and updated in 2014, which outlines guidance and procedures for schools.

#### **Medical and Health Care**

In the event of a child taking ill, or having an accident during school hours, the parents or emergency contact are informed immediately. It is vitally important that the school has an up - to - date emergency contact, change of address or telephone number. All children are forwarded an emergency contact list each August and Parents/Carers should forward at least two alternative contacts. The school has facilities to cope temporarily with minor ailments and accidents. The children will be cared for by our Classroom Assistant who is a qualified First - Aider. Parents should not send their children to school if they believe them to be ill. Not only is it disadvantageous to the child but there is also the possibility of spreading infection throughout the school. Parents are asked to inform the school of any particular medical requirements so that arrangements can be made to assist the child.

Should your child be prescribed medicine which requires to be taken at school then forms are available from the school office. These must be completed and signed by parents before any medicines can be administered in school.





# **Policies and procedures**

#### **Physical Education**

All children have at least 2 hours of P.E. per week. Children are expected to have their P.E. Kit in school on their P.E. days. The P.E. kit consists of a T-shirt, shorts and suitable indoor shoes e.g. sandshoes.

For health and safety it is important that all jewellery is removed and that aerosol sprays and talcum powder are not brought to school.

Parents are asked to inform the school if a pupil is unable to participate in P.E..

#### **Learning Outdoors**

Some learning, including P.E., takes place outside the classroom. It is important that children bring appropriate outdoor clothing to school every day e.g. a jacket or coat so that they are comfortable, warm and dry during outdoor activities. In St. Sophia's, Wednesday mornings are dedicated to outdoor learning activities within a 'House' setting. A member of staff is responsible for one of each of the 4 Houses and they organise activities to develop team work, challenge, problem solving and good citizenship across a range of curricular areas. We are often supported in this work by Active Schools e.g. martial arts, orienteering, golf and football.

This session we will also be trying out the 'Mile a day' initiative.

Please note that children will be allowed to play outside at break and lunchtime, unless the weather is particularly inclement





# Additional support for learning

The Educational (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 has replaced the law relating to special educational needs. This has now been updated by the 2009 Act which came into force on 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2010.

The majority of children and young people are able to access their curricular programme at school without the need of additional help other than that which any teacher will provide in any classroom. However, there may be a percentage of children/young people, who may, at some point in their education, have difficulties that will act as a barrier to their effective learning. In such circumstances the child or young person may require additional support in order to help them overcome barriers to their learning. Such children/young people will be considered to have 'additional support needs'.

All schools and nursery establishments have a variety of procedures to assist in early identification of children and young people with additional support needs. Identification and support planning will take place at the earliest possible stage.

Children and young people who have been identified as having additional support needs will be supported through an Individual Action Plan, Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or in some cases a Coordinated Support Plan. In line with legislation, parents/carers/children and young people will be fully consulted at all stages. The 2004 Act has been updated by the Educational (additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. This Act places additional responsibilities on local authorities for children who are looked after by the local authority. It will also give more rights to parents in respect of requesting assessments in relation to their child/young person.

Further information can be obtained from various leaflets, that can be accessed through council website or individual copies are available in school.

At St. Sophia's we recognize that, for a variety of reasons, a child may experience difficulty in learning and may require additional support. Children's needs will normally be met within the daily class routine, working at their own levels. However, sometimes a child requires more attention than the class teacher can provide. In such cases, the East Ayrshire Support staff will work co-operatively with the class teacher to support the child. It is our aim to provide provision so that every child is able to fulfil his/her potential.

We aim to identify difficulties quickly by constant monitoring and steps are in place to take forward concerns as they appear. Screening procedures include:

P1 and P3 as we feel early intervention to be most effective

P2-P7 spelling to identify problems, acknowledge strengths and monitor improvement

P4-P6 mathematics to identify problems, acknowledge strengths and monitor improvement



# Additional support for learning

The school has a variety of resources aimed at supporting pupils experiencing difficulty. These include:

- Wolf Hill (reading)
- Rigby Navigator (reading)
- Cripps Hand for Spelling
- Phonological Awareness Programme
- Nessy and Lexia (ICT)
- Toe by Toe (Dyslexia/spelling)
- Word Wasp (Dyslexia/spelling)
- The 5 Minute Box
- Active Literacy Kit

The school has the support of the Health Board for pupils requiring Speech and Language Therapy and/or Occupational Therapy. They are very valued members of our team. The Head Teacher is responsible for co-ordinating the services of outside agencies required and parents are always consulted and kept informed.

It is our aim to provide appropriate education for every child, through an understanding of the wide range of children's learning difficulties.

#### Additional Support Needs: East Ayrshire Psychological Service

Advice and support may be sought from other appropriate staff within the school and through consultancy with visiting professionals, including the educational psychologist.

The educational psychologist visits the school regularly to work with and, through the staff, to best support children and young people who are experiencing barriers to learning. Their role is often in giving advice to the school and in the sharing of expertise with staff. School staff may discuss the support needs of individual children with the psychologist in order to ensure that support plans are appropriate to the individual needs of the child. However, the psychologist would not observe or meet with a child without the prior consent of the parents.

The school is responsible for ensuring that parents are aware of their procedures and the psychologist's role within them. The school is also responsible for seeking parental approval, when necessary, for the psychologist to be directly involved with a child or young person.

If you believe your child has additional support needs East Ayrshire Council publishes a range of informative advice. Please contact the establishment or Educational & Social Services:

telephone: 01563 576000

email: education@east-ayrshire.gov.uk





# Additional support for learning

#### Mediation

Mediation & advocacy services are also available and information about these can be obtained from the contact details below. Enquire - the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning. Operated by Children in Scotland, Enquire offer independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

- a telephone helpline 0845 123 2303
- an email enquiry service info@enquire.org.uk
- □ an online enquiry service
- two websites <u>www.enquire.org.uk</u> (for parents/carers and practitioners) and <u>www.enquire.org.uk/yp</u> (for children and young people)

Enquire also provide a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets explaining everything from 'additional support in the early years' to 'what planning should take place for moving on from school'.



### **Transition**



#### Transfer from Early Years to Primary

Throughout the session, opportunities are taken to make links between Early Years Centres and St. Sophia's. During the summer term a more focussed series of visits is made to our associated Early Childhood Centres by the Primary 1 teacher/Head Teacher. Children are invited to visit St. Sophia's with their parents and to take part in a series of activities and events in the Primary 1 classroom. During these visits, children meet with their future classmates. A meeting for Parents/Carers is held during the first transition visit for the children when Parents/Carers are introduced to some of the routines and teaching methods used in the school.

Our Associated Early Years establishments are:

Darvel Early Childhood Centre: 01560 320785
Galston Early Childhood Centre 01563 820360
Newmilns Early Childhood Centre 07763 568 533

Transfer from Primary School to Secondary School

Children are normally transferred between ages 11 and 12, so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents will be informed of the arrangements no later than December of the year preceding the date of transfer at the start of the new session.

Throughout Primary 7, a range of visits and events are organised to ensure children make meaningful and useful links prior to transferring to secondary school. This involves visits to secondary schools, secondary staff visits to St. Sophia's, a Residential Experience, Parent's Information Evenings and Newsletters.

The associated secondary school is: St. Joseph's Academy

Grassyards Road,

Kilmarnock

Tel.No. 01563 526144

The Head of Establishment is:

Mr Daniel Cardle



## Parental involvement

Parent helpers are greatly appreciated on all school outings and are encouraged to be involved in many aspects of school life. Our school library would not exist in its present form if it were not for parental input and continuing help. We are most fortunate in St. Sophia's in having an active group of volunteer parents who assist with our library on a weekly basis. This group continues to give their time and support to the school.

We value the help given by parents by:

- Fundraising
- School outings
- School events
- Paired reading/maths projects
- Library activities
- Operating the tuck shop
- Leading after-school clubs

Our school would be a poorer place without their willing support.

Our school endeavours to maintain a close relationship with parents. For this reason we operate an 'Open Door Policy' and encourage worried or concerned parents to contact the school to make arrangements to discuss their child. Information is regularly given in the form of newsletters highlighting forthcoming events, parent workshops, holidays, occasions etc.

As a parent of a child in attendance at the school, you are automatically part of the Parent Forum of the school. The membership of the Parent Forum is made up of all parents who have a child at the school. The Parent Forum can decide to form a smaller body called the Parent Council. The Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent them.

The duties and responsibilities of the Parent Council include:-

- To play an active role in supporting parental involvement
- To provide opportunities for parents to express their views
- To support the school in its work with parents
- To represent the views of parents
- To promote contact between school, parents, pupils, providers of early education and colleges.
- To report to the Parent Forum

We look forward to many years working in partnership with our Parent Council.

Chairperson: Mrs Angela Thomson, St Sophia's Primary School, Neville Drive, Galston KA4 8BN





## Parental involvement

#### Absence from School

Parents must contact the school by telephone or in person by 9.15 am on the first day of absence, explaining the reason for non-attendance. It is important that the school is notified to prevent unnecessary procedures being followed e.g. in extreme circumstances, there may be a need to involve social services or police. The parent should provide a written note on the child's return to school, confirming the reason for absence.

Due to the avoidable disruption to children's education caused by family holidays in term time, the Scottish Government issued a new Circular on attendance and absence in 2003. This national circular makes it clear that without the prior agreement of the school, family holidays will be classified as unauthorised absence. Schools will only give such agreement in exceptional circumstances related to the well-being of the family. Within the terms of the national circular reasons which are not acceptable include the availability of cheap holidays, the availability of desired accommodation, poor weather in school holidays, holidays overlapping the end of term, and parental difficulty in obtaining leave (except in specific circumstances).

The school and Authority seek your fullest co-operation in communicating to all young people the value of their time at school by ensuring that no learning and teaching is lost through unnecessary and avoidable absence.

Parents may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to make an extended visit to relatives. Only written requests detailing the destination, the duration and the provision that will be made for their continuing education will be granted and the pupil noted as an authorised absentee in the register.

Clearly with no explanation from the parent, the absence is unauthorised.





# **Learning Community**

St Sophia's Primary is a member of the St Joseph's Learning Community.

The Learning Community brings together a wide range of services to benefit young people. The principal purpose of the learning community is to ensure that services are better co-ordinated in order to meet the needs of young people and raise attainment. Learning Communities support the government's approach to GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child). This means that if a child/young person needs support then, where possible, there will be one co-ordinated assessment and one plan for that child/young person.

We have an excellent relationship with our Learning Community and there are arrangements and procedures in place to ensure that children are supported at all stages.

Parents are kept fully informed of these events, visits and opportunities throughout the school year.

Teaching and Support Staff also benefit from joint in-service.







# Wider community links

#### School and Community

The school is an important feature of the local community and as such it aims to be actively engaged in fostering good relationships amongst the members of the wider community. We have close links with Fr Ben Lodge and the parishioners of St Sophia's Parish Community. The Parish Community is made welcome at our school masses, celebrations and concerts.

Children, as part of their work, will be involved in exploring their environment and we are always keen for the people in the community to offer their expertise to enrich this work. All local organisations and groups are encouraged to advertise their activities in the school. We work closely with Vibrant Communities and Ayrshire College Students to facilitate further opportunities and experiences for our children.

The children are encouraged to get involved in the wider community by taking part in local projects and initiatives e.g. Newmilns Ski-centre, the Bio Dome, pupils involved in Galston Community Fete, Darvel Horticultural Show, Dean Park Harvest Festival, local community tree planting initiatives and competitions organised by Galston Parish Church and Community Council.

Through STEM we are currently developing links with Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce. Children in the upper school have been involved with Borders Cars in a design competition. Children have also participated in design competitions with the local TESCO store.

School staff have worked collaboratively with local groups and schools to produce an excellent resource: Glaston Town Trail.

We have an excellent relationship with the local community who helped us achieve our third Green Flag.





### Other information

## **Contact Details**

#### **Head of Education**

Alan Ward, East Ayrshire Council, Economy and Skills Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU

#### **Head of Community Support**

Kay Gilmour, East Ayrshire Council, Economy and Skills Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU

#### **Cabinet Member for Skills and Learning**

Councillor Stephanie Primrose

East Ayrshire Council, Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU

# **Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Children's Champion**

Councillor Iain Linton

East Ayrshire Council, Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU

#### Local elected members for ward

Councillor G Mair, Councillor B McDill, Councillor J McFadzean and Councillor Elena Whitham East Ayrshire Council, Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU

# **Disclaimer**



Although this information is correct at time of publication, there could be changes affecting any of the matters dealt with in the document:

- · before the commencement or during the course of the school year in question
- in relation to subsequent establishment years

This document is also available, on request, in braille, large print or recorded on to tape, and can be translated into Chinese, Punjabi, Urdu, Gaelic and Polish.

Ma tha sibh airson fiosrachadh fhaighinn ann an cànan sam bith eile, cuiribh brath thugainnaig an t-seòladh a leanas.

閣下如需要這份資料的其他語言版本,請透過以下的地址與我們聯絡。

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਹੇਠ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

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