



# St. Mark's Primary Newsletter

## August – October 2017



Website: [www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/st-marks](http://www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/st-marks)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stmarksprimary1>

Dear Parent & Carers

A warm welcome back to everyone! I hope you had a lovely summer. It's been great to see our children back at school and ready to work and has been lovely to welcome so many new pupils. We have 46 new Primary one pupils and a few other at various other stages throughout the school. We also have some new and returning staff members, so we would like to extend a warm welcome to the St Mark's Family.

Our website and Twitter page has lots of essential information so I would encourage you to check them regularly and if you haven't yet signed up to twitter, please do. You can follow us **@StMarksPrimary1**.

### School News

#### ATTENDANCE - Getting it right for every child

In East Renfrewshire, education matters, so attendance for every child is expected to be 96% or above for the whole year. Your child's attendance is monitored closely and where patterns or trends occur or where there are issues with attendance or punctuality, parents will be informed and meetings will be arranged to discuss. If attendance continues to be a concern, it is at that point the school will contact partner agencies who will work with school and parents to address and support this.

When your child is absent from school a learning opportunity is lost. Research has highlighted that attainment is directly linked to attendance. St Mark's therefore needs the boys and girls to be at school to ensure they achieve and have every opportunity to be the best they can be.

Where possible any appointments (doctors or dental etc) should be made after school hours to avoid any disruption to your child's learning. However, if your child is going to be absent from school due to illness or an appointment, **we ask that you call the office before 9am, on 0141 570 7400 and let us know**. Your child's safety is our number one priority and this will allow us to keep an up to date register every day.

#### Uniform – Dress for excellence!

I am delighted to say that all our boys and girls have returned to school looking very smart, ready to learn and to be the best they can be. Thank you so much for the effort you make to ensure your children come to school wearing full school uniform. The standard across the whole school is high and clearly shows your commitment to East Renfrewshire's "Dressing for Excellence" policy.

**School uniform encourages in every child a sense of pride and belonging so please be assured that we will continue to reinforce this key area with the children on a regular basis. Unfortunately, our Scottish weather can be very unreliable so I would urge you to ensure your child also has a waterproof jacket.**

**Finally please remember that trainers are not part of our school uniform – we ask that children wear black school shoes and keep their trainers for PE times and when playing football during playtime. We would also encourage your child to bring in a pair of plain back plimsolls to change into to wear around the school and in classrooms to help keep our flooring and carpets clean.**

### Outdoor learning

In line with curriculum for excellence guidelines, pupils participate in learning outdoors and outdoor PE lessons on a regular basis each week. Pupils are also actively encouraged to play outdoors unless there is extremely wet or dangerous weather.

Please ensure that your child comes to school dressed appropriately for the ever-changing Scottish weather. All pupils should bring a waterproof jacket **each day** and jogging trousers or leggings along with their PE top and a jumper or cardigan and trainers. This can be stored in their PE bag.

### Staffing

We are pleased to welcome our new members of staff to our team. Hopefully you had the opportunity to meet them at our 'Meet the teacher' event at the beginning of term.

### Teaching Staff

Head Teacher  
Depute Head Teacher  
Principal Teacher  
Principal Teacher  
Acting Principal Teacher

Mrs Natalie Fitzsimmons  
Miss Christine Healey  
Mrs Gillian Hamilton  
Mrs Lindsay Kelly  
Mrs Laura Law



### Class Teachers

Mrs Paula Hemphill	P1a
Miss Carlyn Coyle	P1b
Mrs Ashley Guy	P2a
Mrs Amanda McCluney	P2b
Mrs Louise Robertson/Mrs Lindsay Kelly	P3a
Mrs Stephanie Patterson	P3b
Mrs Deborah McLaren	P4a
Miss Brogan McFlynn/Mrs Louise McMillan	P4b
Mrs Sharon Nelson	P5
Miss Claire Kennedy	P5/6
Mr Daniel Farrell/Mrs Gillian Hamilton	P6
Miss Gillian McKay	P6/7
Miss Clare McAnally	P7

Art Groups  
NCCT  
Learning Support Team

Mrs Janie McIntyre  
Mrs Catherine Falconer  
Miss Amy Itcovitz  
Miss Lucy Fawcett  
Mrs Claire Whalin  
Mrs Rosie McBrearty

## Support Staff

Office Manager  
Clerical Assistant  
Clerical Assistant

Mrs Margaret Kennedy  
Mrs Jillian Ewing  
Miss Kayleigh Roberts

Pupil Support Assistants

Mrs Kathleen Stewart  
Mrs Marion Muirhead  
Mrs Rhona Macdonald  
Mrs Karen Muscat  
Mrs Carol Morrison (0.5)  
Mrs Martin McKay  
Miss Stephanie Allison



Janitor

Mr Michael MacDonnell

Catering Manager  
Kitchen Staff:

Mrs Vikki Gilligan  
Mrs Fiona Wilson  
Mrs Kathryn Logue  
Mrs Emma Drinnan  
Mrs Marie Conway  
Mrs Kay Gallagher

Cleaning Supervisor  
Cleaners:

Mrs Linda Hamilton  
Mrs Kath Murphy  
Mrs Carolann Fleming  
Mrs Fiona Fulton  
Mrs Kirsty Deehan  
Mrs Patricia McLaughlan  
Mr James Kierney

## Visiting Specialists

Music

Mrs Gillian Carey  
Miss Baillie (Violin/Viola)  
Mr Brian Deans (Brass)

Active Schools Co-ordinator

Mr Steven Percy

## Staff News

We are delighted to have two new additions to our Leadership Team, Mrs Laura Law and Mrs Lindsay Kelly who have joined the team as Principal Teachers. In doing this we have been able to facilitate a Stage Mentor approach within the school, see below for details:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Stage Mentor</b>
P1-3	Mrs Laura Law
P4-5	Mrs Lindsay Kelly
P6-7	Mrs Gillian Hamilton

The Principal Teachers will get to know your children well and will be working within these classes, supporting learning and assisting pupils, staff and parents with any concerns or issues which may arise. In order for us to be able to continue to deal with any query, concern or issue quickly it would be helpful when

calling the school to speak to a member of staff you give the nature of your call to the office staff so that they are able to direct your call to the correct Stage Mentor, however as always both Miss Christine Healey and myself are always happy to meet with any parent/carer also.

All Staff in St Mark's have agreed to use their Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) time this year on 'Building the Learning Power'.

'Building the Learning Power' is about helping young people to become better learners, both in school and out. It is about creating a culture in classrooms – and in the school more widely – that encourages habits and attitudes that enable pupils to become better learners; face difficulty and uncertainty calmly, confidently and creatively.

Pupils who are more confident of their own learning ability learn faster and learn better. They concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable. 'Building Learning Power' prepares youngsters better for an uncertain future. We are educating not just for exam results but for lifelong learning and pupils need to have learnt how to be resourceful, imaginative logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive. This staff CLPL will enable our pupils to do this.



### **School Photographs**

School photographs will be taken by Tempest on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017**. All children should come dressed in **full** school uniform. To avoid disappointment please ensure your child arrives on time for school. Individual and family photographs will be taken on the same day.

### **House System**

As a way of promoting positive behaviour in St Mark's we have a house system. There are 4 houses - **Mackintosh**, **Ogilvie**, **Bell** and **Wallace**. The pupils in Primary 1 have now been allocated a house and all pupils will be given a badge which is their house colour. A good place to wear this is on their tie. Pupils in Primary 1 who have older brothers and sisters in the school are placed in the same house as them. Pupils are awarded house points for a variety of reasons including behaviour, manners and effort.

### **Parents' Night**

Parents' night will take place on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October from 3 – 8.30pm. This evening will give you an opportunity to hear how things are going and the progress your child is making towards their expected targets, appointments will be sent out in due course.

### **PE Kit and Water Bottles**

Your child will receive two hours of P.E. each week. PE is a compulsory and important aspect of our curriculum. It is also a key vehicle by which the Scottish Government wishes to improve the health of Scottish children. **Your child should come to school with a full PE kit that is suitable for all weather conditions:**

- **Indoor kit required – Black plimsolls, black shorts, red/white/yellow tshirt**
- **Outdoor kit required – trainers (old ones which should be kept at school), dark joggers, black fleece/sweatshirt and waterproof jacket - blazers are not suitable for outdoor PE**

Kits should be kept in gym bags stored on pegs where possible. PE sessions will take place on the following days for each class:



***If you have not yet given the school an email address or should you have a new email, please contact the office and allow us to update your records. All communication will be sent via email this year and paper copy of letters will be kept at the office should you require a hard copy.***

We are continuing to reduce the number of hard copies we send out and this service will allow us to become a more eco-friendly school. We would love to know what you think of the new service and would welcome any feedback. We look forward to the introduction of the mobile app later this year and hope that this will allow for faster, easier and more efficient communication for our parents/carers.

**ParentPay:** We still have a number of parents who have not yet signed up for our online payment system which allows you to pay for school meals, tuck and school trips online. **We are no longer able to accept cash and our lunch machine in the dining hall will soon be removed.** This system is quick and easy to use. Should you require a replacement letter with your individual username and password, please do not hesitate to contact the office who will be happy to supply this, alternatively we can help you to set this up.



### ICT Forms

Responsible User Agreement forms for the use of ICT equipment in the school have been sent out to all pupils. Could I please ask that parents/carers take time to read this important document? Please sign and return this as soon as possible. **Children will not be allowed to use ICT equipment until a completed form has been returned to the class teacher.**

### Medical

- \* *Due to some children within St Mark's having allergies we ask that you do not send your child to school with any snacks or lunch that may contain nuts.*

If your child requires any medicine during the course of the school day you must visit the school office and complete a consent/request pro-forma which will ensure that all medicines are administered safely. **Should your child need an inhaler, it is vital that your child informs their Class Teacher if they have received it in the morning, this is to ensure that each child receives the correct dosage.** No child should be given medicine to take without the school having been informed and the correct forms being completed. I would urge all parents to read the letter that was issued on Monday 21st August in relation to the new guidance which is now in place.



### Car Parking

Please be mindful when parking in the streets around the school not to cover our neighbour's driveways or on the pavements which can be dangerous for pedestrians. Please also **do not use the staff car park to drop off your child.** This is a major health and safety hazard for us as **pupils should never be in the car park.** This is the same for taxis. **If a child is being dropped off for any reason in a taxi they should not enter the school car park.** We appreciate your support with this.

### Celebrating Achievements

We love to hear about our pupils achievements outside of school. **Every 5 weeks at assembly we have the whole school together** and we have an awards assembly and pupils can stand up and share their achievements as well as show their medals, trophies and certificates to the whole school. If they are too shy to do this and you are as proud of your children as we are then please share their achievements with us through the following link!

<https://twitter.com/stmarksprimary1>

## St Marks' Parent Council News

The Annual General Meeting of the Parent Council will take place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September in St. Mark's at 7pm. New members are always welcome to join us and share their ideas for helping to make St Mark's even better.

### **Parent Council Chair's Forum**

The Parent Council is the body that represents all parents in a school. Two members of the Parent Council can attend these meetings to represent all parents within the school. Dates, venues and times are as follows:

- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – Williamwood High School 7pm
- Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 – Woodfarm High School 7pm
- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – St Luke's High School 7pm

### **Equalities Forum**

This meeting is for a nominated parent representative from each school and schools' Equality Co-ordinators. Date, venue and times are as follows:

- Thursday 15th September 2016 – Mearns Castle High School 7-9pm
- Thursday 19th January 2017 – Mearns Castle High School 7-9pm
- Thursday 11th May 2017 – Mearns Primary School 7-9pm

Contact for this group is David Gordon, Quality Improvement Officer, telephone 0141 577 3942 or email [David.Gordon2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:David.Gordon2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

### **East Renfrewshire Parent Information Line**

Available: Mon to Fri 8am- 6pm

Freephone: 0845 84 100 10

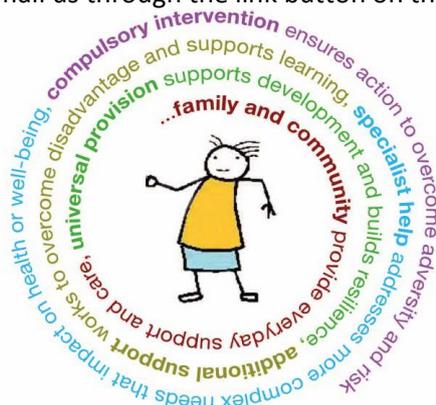
East Renfrewshire's Parent Information Line is a free telephone information service concerning all matters relating to children's education. The service is available between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday and is also available in Urdu/Punjabi.

Parent Information Line is staffed by professionally trained personnel, who are able to provide information on a wide range of educational issues, e.g. ideas to help with homework, advice on choosing a child-minder and guidelines for using the internet safely with children. Enquiries can be made in confidence (unless a child is at risk and there is a child protection issue).

For more information on East Renfrewshire's Parent Information Line, contact the web site:

[www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/parents/](http://www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/parents/)

In St. Mark's we want every child to be the best they can be, achieve and fulfil their aspirations whilst enjoying high quality learning experiences within a safe, nurturing and happy environment. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will do all we can to address them. We would be delighted to hear any thoughts or ideas you would like to share with us in order for us to work together to continue to make St Mark's the best place for our young people to learn and grow. Please pop in at any time, make an appointment or e-mail us through the link button on the school website.



**A personal thank you to each and every one of you who have continued to help and support both myself and the staff here in St Mark's, please use the slip below to give us any comments or suggestions or use the link below to e-mail us.**

Natalie Fitzsimmons

Head Teacher

Email: [schoolmail@St-Marks.e-renfrew.sch.uk](mailto:schoolmail@St-Marks.e-renfrew.sch.uk)

Website: [www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/st-marks](http://www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/st-marks)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stmarksprimary1>

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I have received and read the August-October 2017 newsletter.

Name of child.....Class .....

Signature of Parent/Carer .....

We value your comments and/or suggestions.