



Starting Primary 1 in August 2020

Information for Parents

Transition during this Recovery Phase



As we prepare for children to return to school in August it is important that we give special consideration the children going in to primary 1.

With schools and nurseries being closed at the moment our staff teams are adapting transition arrangements to suit the current situation.

Parents tell us that their child's safety and wellbeing is most important. During this time of recovery we will prioritise the things that matter to you and us.

As professionals we think of transition for children and families as: an adjustment over time to new contexts outside the family. So, it's not a one-off activity or visit.

Meaningful transitions need to happen over a course of time and involve the key people children know already whilst also introducing important new people. It's not about stopping and starting. It's about moving along. In Falkirk, we like to think about the move from nursery to primary 1 as 'a next step' rather than being something completely new for children.

Our schools, teachers and ELC professionals are all working together to offer a wide range of opportunities to support your child's transition. It is important for you and your child to engage in these as much as possible.

It is important to keep connected during this time with your school's communication channels.

Twitter is favoured by Falkirk schools and many have set-up a special account for P1 transition. Your school's website or App will also have important information for parents and for children.

It doesn't end there though...

Your child will remain in the transition phase when they return to school in August begin primary 1. Familiarisation activities based on relationships and wellbeing will be the priority. This will be the case for as much time as is necessary until children are fully settled.



The focus during the first few weeks of primary 1 is:

- Familiarisation with the building: the classroom, outdoor learning area/ playground; toilets.
- Establishing and practising daily routines;
- Developing personal bonds and rapport with key adults and friends, known and new;
- Opportunities for lots of engagement in familiar learning opportunities like block play and role play;
- Daily outdoor play and learning; and,
- Lots of together times for talking, stories, signing & rhymes and group games.

Of course, there are many new things for children to look forward to and experience as they progress in primary 1. These new experiences will be introduced when it is appropriate and children are ready. It is important that we judge carefully what children need to know at this time.

Making the most of what is familiar...

- It is important for children to keep a connection to what and who they know. Many children will already be very familiar with the school and key staff having attended the school's nurse class.
- Some children will have siblings, family members, friends or neighbours who are already pupils of the school.
- Talk more about 'going back' after the holidays rather than 'starting'.
- Steer way from phrases like 'the big school' 'new friends' 'new teacher'.
- Don't make a big thing of going to school too early on. Let children enjoy the stage they are at just now.
- Engage as much as possible in the opportunities provided by your child's nursery and school to stay connected.

Falkirk's Approach to Learning & Teaching in Primary 1

Almost all children will have had several terms of early learning and childcare. This, as well as learning from daily routines and activities at home, children entering primary 1 come with already developed skills and attributes. The Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence spans nursery and primary 1. This supports a seamless experience for children where new learning builds on what they already know and can do.

“Play is an intrinsic part of human development. Through play a child develops their cognitive, social, emotional and physical capacities.”

Realising the Ambition, 2020





National policy states that a play-based approach is a crucial aspect of a successful transition from nursery to primary 1, and beyond.

We are very fortunate in Falkirk to have already implemented a play-based approach to learning and teaching in the early stages of primary school. In Falkirk we refer to our approach as: **Play is the Way.**

We have developed this approach because research tells us that this is the way that young children learn best. In primary 1 children will experience a curriculum based on play that will:

- Inspire them to learn by sparking their interest in the world around them.
- Provide daily opportunities for high-quality small group teaching so that learning is targeted appropriately to children's needs.
- Develop and enhance the use of creative approaches to learning and teaching, including maximising opportunities for outdoor learning and the use of spaces out with the classroom.
- Enthuse and motivate children to be lifelong learners, developing them as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

