



St Columba's High School
Gourock



2026-2027



**SCHOOL
HANDBOOK**



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Introduction by the Head Teacher

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Columba's High School. This handbook contains important information that you will need as your child joins us from his or her present school. I hope that it will give you an insight into our school, its aims and achievements.

As a Catholic school, we aim to put the teachings of the Gospel into practice in our everyday lives. We nurture the talents, interests and abilities of all our pupils and we work to ensure that they achieve their full potential spiritually and morally as well as physically, emotionally and intellectually. Our ethos is firmly based on Gospel values. We promote respect, understanding and a concern for other people. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to the promotion of justice and peace.

We ensure that every young person experiences the highest standards of learning and teaching so they develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to live fulfilled lives. We do this in an atmosphere which is happy, disciplined, purposeful and productive. We place great emphasis on the quality of relationships between staff and pupils as well as on academic achievement.

We are very proud of all of our pupils' achievements. These include consistently positive examination results, as well as achievements in sport, music, the arts, citizenship and enterprise. St Columba's was the first secondary school to achieve the UNICEF Rights Respecting School award and we are fully committed to the wellbeing of every pupil. The school has now become the first secondary school in Scotland to achieve this award at level 2.



The whole St Columba's High School community is committed to continually improving the service we provide to young people and their families. Our continued success relies on our partnership with parents who are encouraged to take an active part in the work and life of the school.

I hope that this will be the beginning of a partnership that will develop throughout your child's secondary schooling as we work together to ensure that he or she receives the best education possible.

Please contact me at the school with any comments or suggestions, or if you would like to talk about any of the information in this handbook.

Nicola Devine MSc
Head Teacher



Authority Strategic Statement

Building Inverclyde through excellence, ambition and regeneration.

Goals and Values

Our Core values are –

- Respect
- Honesty
- Tolerance

Our vision for the children and young people of Inverclyde is that they should be ambitious for themselves and be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

To achieve our ambition of building Inverclyde through excellence, ambition and regeneration our children must be:

Safe:

protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, school and in the community.

Healthy:

enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, with access to healthy lifestyles.

Achieving:

have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential.

Nurtured:

educated within a supportive setting.

Active:

active with opportunities and encouragement to participate in place and recreation including sport.

Respected and responsible:

involved in decisions that affect them, have their voices heard and be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their communities.

Included:

have access to high quality services when required and should be assisted to overcome the social, educational, physical, environmental and economic barriers that create inequality.



Equality

'Inverclyde Education Service is committed to ensuring that no children or members of staff or service users receive less favourable treatment on any ground including age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief. We have a moral, social and legal obligation to mainstream and put equality at the heart of everything we do. We aim to promote a culture in which equality of opportunity exists for all. We are opposed to all forms of discrimination, direct or indirect, and aim to eliminate all discriminatory practices. We will ensure that, in our schools and other educational establishments, equality permeates the curriculum and underpins all our policies and practices in terms of access to education. We must ensure that all our children achieve their full potential to develop physically, emotionally and academically. Finally, we believe that equality and inclusion should be a given right, where everyone is valued and treated with respect.'

Child Protection in Inverclyde

Inverclyde Council Education Services has Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which all schools and establishments are required to follow. Education Services work very closely with other agencies namely Police Scotland, Social Work Services, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the Children's Reporter to support children. Common responsibilities of all staff are to protect children from abuse and exploitation, to respond appropriately when abuse is identified, and to ensure whenever possible that all children are able to exercise their right to be raised in a warm, stimulating and safe environment with the support of staff, their families and carers.

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-protection/inverclyde-child-protection-committee>



CHILD PROTECTION

KEY INFORMATION FOR St Columba's High School

It is everyone's responsibility to protect children

All children have a right to grow up in a caring and safe environment. All adults have a responsibility to protect children, including:

Parents

Family members

Friends

~~Neighbours~~

Professionals

Members of the public

Community groups

What might make you concerned?

Most children grow up in homes where they are loved and well cared for however sometimes for a variety of reasons, a child may be being abused or neglected. For more information please consult your school's child protection policy / training slides and ~~Inverclyde~~ Child Protection Committee leaflet issued to all staff.

What to do if you are concerned?

Children cannot always get help for themselves, they may need you to get help for them.

If you are concerned about a child attending this school, please speak to:

MRS N DEVINE, HEADTEACHER

Nicola.Devine@st-columbashigh.inverclyde.sch.uk

or



MR I MCLEAN, DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Child Protection Coordinator & PREVENT Lead

Iain.McLean@st-columbashigh.inverclyde.sch.uk

01475 715 250



If the child is in immediate danger you should contact the police.

You can also talk to:

Social Work Services 01475 715365

Police Scotland 101

Scottish Children's Reporters Administration 0300 2001680

Glasgow & Partners Emergency Social Work Services 0300 343 1505

Make sure you

- Act promptly
- Note your concerns
- Give as much information as you can about the child and the family



Complaints

Any comments or complaints should be addressed directly to the school office where they will be dealt with by a member of the school leadership team. If parents seek a further response then they should contact Education Services, Wallace Place, Greenock PA15 1JB





OUR VISION

At St Columba's High School, we nurture every young person's God-given talents within a climate of love and kindness.



OUR VALUES



FAITH



AMBITION



INCLUSION



PERSEVERANCE

OUR AIM

To offer rich learning experiences which enable young people to be successful and use their gifts and talents to serve others.





St Columba's Charter





A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland



A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland

The mission of the Catholic school is to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good.

All Catholic schools in Scotland, in honouring Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, will feature the following characteristics:

- a commitment to the integrated education and formation of the whole person, in close partnership with parents as the first educators of their children;
- an inclusive ethos which aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person, made in the image of God;
- a commitment to the search for wisdom in life and to the pursuit of excellence, through the development of each person's unique God-given talents;
- a commitment to the spiritual formation of the school community, through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy, and in partnership with local parishes;
- the provision of religious education programmes which will enable young people to develop their understanding of Gospel values and of how to apply them to life;
- a commitment to uphold the moral teaching, faith tradition and sacramental life of the Catholic Church;
- a commitment to communicate Catholic social teaching and thereby to promote social justice and opportunity for all;
- a commitment to ecumenical action and the unity of Christians;
- the promotion of respect for different beliefs and cultures and for inter-faith dialogue;
- a commitment to support the continuing professional and spiritual development of staff.

All staff appointed to a Catholic school are expected to support and promote the aims, mission, values and ethos of the school, as illustrated in this Charter.



Introduction and General Information

St Columba's High School is a six year Catholic, comprehensive school, catering for both boys and girls.

St Columba's High School is committed to continuous improvement. As such we always welcome any suggestions you may have. Or, should there be any complaints, please do not hesitate to get in touch with any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The full postal address of the school is –

St Columba's High School
Fletcher Avenue
Gourock
PA19 1TP

Tel : 01475 715 250
E-mail : office@st-columbashigh.inverclyde.sch.uk

Information can also be found on our website –

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/>

The current school roll is detailed below –

S1	99
S2	112
S3	132
S4	111
S5	106
S6	94

Total 654

(data extracted on 15/9/25)



Accommodation

St Columba's High School is now seven years in its new building in Gourock.

The site provides a state of the art building fit to deliver a modern education well into the 21st century.

All classroom accommodation is fitted with modern furniture and interactive whiteboards.



Our library provides a very comfortable space with access to a class suite of PCs. The library also has a teaching area large enough to accommodate a full class with interactive whiteboard facilities.

The Technical department is housed in a wing and has two fully fitted multi-purpose workshops and two ICT rooms, with hardware and software allowing pupils to use commercial standard design and drawing programmes.

The PE department consists of fully fitted gym and large Games Hall and a completely new Fitness Suite has been provided. At the back of the school an international standard, floodlit pitch has been built for school and community use.



Throughout the school there is a plentiful supply of lockers for use by pupils.

The site is fully landscaped offering pleasant surroundings for pupils to socialise. There is also a Multi Use Games Area on site for use by pupils at interval time and lunchtime.



Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is composed of the Head Teacher and, currently, 2 Depute Head Teachers.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team are –

Mrs Nicola Devine
Head Teacher

Responsibilities include - Management of Learning and Teaching, Curriculum Planning, Faith & Learning, School Improvement, Staffing and School Finances.



Mrs Collette McGeehan
Depute Head Teacher

Responsibilities include – Primary / Secondary Liaison, Staff Development and all matters related to S1 and S4.

Mr Iain McLean
Depute Head Teacher

Responsibilities include – Pupil Support, management of non-teaching staff, ICT, School Timetable, all matters relating to S3 and S5.





List of Staff – September 2025

Art & Design	Mrs M Durning	PT	Music	Mr J Michael	PT
	Miss L Young			Mr J R Garrod	
Biology	Miss C Rogers		Physics	Mrs J Wraith	
	Mrs C McGeehan	DHT		Mrs L Robertson	
Chemistry	Miss E Ball		Physical Education	Mrs L McGurk	PT (0.6)
	Mrs C Leckie			Mr Begley	
English	Mr J Parker	PT	Religious Education	Mrs R Nicol	0.8
	Mrs J McQueen			Miss Falconer	0.8
English	Mr S Renshaw	PT	Religious Education	Mr R Begley	
	Mrs S Keane			Mrs K Miller	PT
	Mrs G Sloan	0.8		Mr J Wilson	
	Mr S Donaghay	0.6	Support for Learning	Mrs R McKechnie	PT
	Miss A Balmer			Mrs P Carroll	0.4
	Mrs M Robinson	0.6	Design & Technology	Mr K O'Neill	PT
	Mrs J O'Neill			Mrs A Quinn	PTG
	Miss N Doohan	NQT		Mr T Sharkey	
	Mrs J Docherty			Mrs K Nelson	0.6
	Mrs K Kinsella			Mrs N Reid	
Home Economics	Miss A Todd	0.8	Library Assistant	Mrs M Twaddle	
	Mrs L Mitchell	PTG	Business Coordinator	Mrs S Leslie	
Drama	Mrs A Mearns	0.6	Office	Mrs L Millar	0.5 Office Manager
	Mr G Burke	PTC		Mrs B Peacock	0.5 Office Manager
ICT	Mrs J Tweed			Mrs K Glasheen	Wellbeing Officer
	Miss E McLaughlin			Mrs L Gatens	
	Mrs R Murray	PTC		Mrs J Hamill	
Mathematics	Mrs A Mullan			Mr C Dillon	
	Mr J Stevenson	PTG	Technicians	Mr G Orr	
	Mrs P Carroll	0.6	Janitors	Mr C Lapsley	
	Mr S Stoddart			Mr J Gallagher	Mr C Heywood
	Mrs J Mitchell		Pupil Support Assistants	Ms L Davis	Ms S Davies
	Mr I McLean	DHT		Miss A Kerr	Mrs P Kelly
	Mrs E Donnelly	PTC		Mrs A Holland	Mrs A Mitchell
Modern Languages	Mrs B Anderson	PTC		Miss K Cann	Mrs T Prickett
	Miss R Lewis			Mrs S Hodge	Miss L Stevenson
	Mrs G McGlone	0.6			
	Mrs S McArthur	PTC			
Social Subjects	Mr G Currie		DYW Coordinator	Mrs J Little	
	Miss K McKay	PTG			
	Mr C Bonnar	DHT	SDS Careers Adviser	Mrs M Purdue	
	Mrs M Haggerty			Mrs S Stinson	
	Miss R MacKenzie	NQT			



The School Day

The school day consists of 7 periods on a Monday and Tuesday and 6 periods Wednesday – Friday. Details are given below -

Registration	0850 – 0900
Period 1	0900 – 0950
Period 2	0950 – 1040
Interval	1040 – 1055
Period 3	1055 – 1145
Period 4	1145 – 1235
Lunch	1235 – 1315
Period 5	1315 – 1405
Period 6	1405 – 1455
Period 7	1455 – 1545 (Mondays and Tuesdays only)



Transfer / Enrolment

In January/February pupils wishing to attend St Columba's in August of the same year are enrolled by the Head Teachers of the associated primary schools after due consultation with parents.

Parents who wish to enrol their children in the course of the school session should contact the school by telephone or in person to arrange an appointment with a Depute Head Teacher. Thus, due consideration can be given promptly to the most appropriate placing or choice of courses.

Placing Requests

If parents living out with our catchment area wish to make a placing request for their son or daughter to enrol in St. Columba's, they should contact Education Services, Wallace Place, Greenock PA15 1JB. The criteria for enrolment into St. Columba's are given in Inverclyde Council's Policy on Placing Requests, which can be obtained from Education Services. Parents wishing to make arrangements to visit the school prior to a final decision on placing request application should, in the first instance, contact the school office.



School Holiday Arrangements

LOCAL HOLIDAYS: *Parents will be informed of dates by the school by letter and/or via text message, Groupcall and X*

Inverclyde Council ~ Education Services																						
2026-2027 School Calendar																						
August 2026			September 2026			October 2026																
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S									
1							1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3							
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
30	31																					
November 2026			December 2026			January 2027																
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5			1	2							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
29	30																					
February 2027			March 2027			April 2027																
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S		
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					
28																						
May 2027			June 2027			July 2027																
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S		
						1		1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3					
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
30	31																					
 School Closed/ Holidays			 Teacher in-Service Day (no school for students)																			
 School Open																						
In-service days – 5 Teacher days – 195 Pupil days – 190																						



Information in Emergencies

We make every effort to maintain a full educational service, but on some occasions circumstances arise which lead to disruption. Schools may be affected by, for example, severe weather, temporary interruption of transport, power failures or difficulties of fuel supply. In such cases we shall do all we can to let you know about the details of closure or reopening. We shall keep you in touch by using letters, text messages, Twitter, Website, notices in local shops and community centres, announcements in local churches and announcements in the press and on local radio.

Associated Primary Schools

St Columba's enjoys an excellent relationship with its three associated primary schools. The close contact which has been established over the years helps to ease the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary. The associated primaries are –

St Andrew's Primary School
Chester Road
Greenock
PA16 0TT
(715806)

Mr Alan Connick
(Head Teacher)

St Joseph's Primary School
Wren Road
Greenock
PA16 7NH
(715719)

Mr Alan Graham
(Head Teacher)

St Ninian's Primary School
Staffa Street
Gourock
PA19 1SL
(715853)

Mr M Craig
(Head Teacher)



Primary / Secondary Liaison

The Curriculum for Excellence programme should ensure the continuity of learning between primary and secondary school. It is clear that secondary schools should work closely with their associated primaries to ensure that this happens. With this in mind St Columba's has in place a very comprehensive programme to ensure smooth transition for all pupils between P7 and S1.

The programme has the following features -

- staff from St Columba's and the primaries have regular meetings to ensure the liaison programme is as effective as possible
- where possible, staff from St Columba's will offer support to the primary school in some subjects areas
- Pastoral Care and Support for Learning staff will visit the associated primaries to obtain information that will allow St Columba's to provide the best possible support for pupils as they come in to S1
- pupils from P7 will visit St Columba's in June to follow a typical First Year timetable
- Pastoral Care staff will give careful consideration to S1 class composition, based on information provided by the primaries, to ensure a good balance of gender, friendship groups, abilities, etc
- in addition to receiving regular information from St Columba's, primary parents have the opportunity to attend two Information Evenings. The September evening involves a tour of the school providing a 'flavour' of the work done in departments in S1. The second meeting in June, gives details of the curriculum offered in St Columba's and the support provided for pupils upon their transfer

At the end of this liaison programme, St Columba's will have built up a comprehensive picture of each pupil arriving in S1. Pupils will know many of the staff with whom they will come into contact, and they will have met many of the pupils from other primaries.

St Columba's is proud of its programme of liaison with its associated primaries. However, we are continuing to work together to build on, and develop our already sound links.



Curriculum for Excellence

Our Curriculum Rationale is available on:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/school-information/documentation/>

The school has developed its curriculum in line with the Scottish Government's Curriculum for Excellence initiative.

The aims of Curriculum for Excellence are that every child and young person should –

- know they are valued and will be supported to become a successful learner, an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible citizen.
- experience a traditionally broad Scottish curriculum that develops skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a sustained focus on literacy and numeracy, that encourages an active, healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyle and builds an appreciation of Scotland and its place in the world.

The Experience and Outcomes under Curriculum for Excellence and the significant Aspects of Learning are written and take account of progression to qualifications described under the Senior Phase.

Our aim is to ensure that the courses we offer pupils coming to us from P7 integrate with, and progress from, the courses that they have been following in primary school. The section under Primary / Secondary Liaison describes in more detail how this is done.

S1 – S3 (The Broad General Education)

Pupils in S1, S2 and S3 follow a broad, general education which provides the opportunity for all learners to overtake the experiences and outcome up to level 4. Although subject choices are not made during the first three years of secondary school, pupils are given the opportunity to specialise in some areas.

All pupils in S1 – S3 cover the following subjects – English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Modern Studies, Science, ICT, Art & Design, Drama, Music, Technical subjects, Religious Education, Home Economics, PSHE, Skills for the Future and Physical Education.

Transition from the Broad General Education to the Senior Phase

At the beginning of S4 pupils enter their Senior Phase of secondary education. At this stage pupils will choose the subjects they want to specialise in, and this will lead to the opportunity for national qualifications from National 3, National 4, National 5 to Higher (and Advanced Higher in some subjects).

The subjects currently on offer to S5 / S6 pupils is given in an appendix at the back of this handbook.



No single school can normally offer its pupils the full range of different subjects and levels of courses that it would like. Schools therefore group themselves together, so that each pupil can take courses offered by other schools in the group. A group of schools operating in this way is called a consortium. Pupils taking courses in other schools are provided with free travel to and from the base school. St Columba's is closely linked with all other Inverclyde secondary schools. Additionally, students are able to follow some courses in West College Scotland.

Parents will be kept informed of any changes as Curriculum for Excellence continues to be implemented.

Transitions

From S4 onwards all young people begin to pursue different options. Many of them will stay at school to study for further qualifications, others may choose a blend of school and college learning or work placement; some will plan to move on to university, college or a training programme or to get a job.

In St Columba's regardless of which choice our young people take they are supported in finding the best option for them. Extensive support from the pupil support team and partnership working with Skills Development Scotland, Careers Coaches, More Choices More Chances Team ensures that our young people receive the guidance required.





Skills Development Scotland brings together the knowledge and expertise of what were the Careers Service, Adult Guidance Networks, the Education Business Partnership and Lifelong Learning Partnerships. The services previously offered by these agencies have now been brought together in an integrated way.



In St Columba's, young people and their parents can contact the Careers Adviser through the school or by visiting their local Careers Centre. Michelle Purdue is the Careers Adviser and is in the school Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. All pupils are given basic information about careers and interviews are organised for individual pupils.

Michelle works in partnership with other relevant agencies such as Social Work, Health Service, More Choices, More Chances (MCMC), etc so that all pupils can be given the best possible advice about the opportunities open to them.

More information can be obtained from the Skills Development Scotland website - www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/





Additional Support Needs (ASN)

All children and young people need support to help them learn. The main source of support in the school are the staff who, through their normal practice, are able to meet a diverse range of needs. With good quality teaching and learning and an appropriate curriculum most children and young people are able to benefit from education without the need for additional support.

The definition of additional support is a wide one and it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of all possible forms of additional support.

Every teacher has a responsibility to support the learning of all pupils in their class. The type of support offered will vary according to the needs of pupils. This includes consideration given to children who have a disability, children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, children with learning difficulties of a specific or general nature, children who are exceptionally able, those who demonstrate underachievement relating to gender issues, children whose learning has been interrupted through absence or illness, bilingual children who have English as an additional language, traveling children and those children whose family circumstances impact on attendance and learning.

All pupils with an Additional Support Need are supported in completing an Individual Education Programme. Pupils with Additional Support Needs also have regular progress meetings also involving their parents/carers.

There will be many other examples besides these. Some additional support needs will be long term while others will be short term. The effect they have will vary from person to person. In all cases though, it is how these factors impact on the individual persons' learning that is important and this will determine the level of support required.

Additional supports can take the form of close monitoring by guidance staff, provision of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), cooperative teaching or individual tutorial support provided by Support for Learning staff. In addition, some pupils who require "Time out" from the curriculum can be accommodated for a short time in the ASN (Additional Support Needs) Base.

Other, more specialised services are accessed in consultation with the educational psychologist.

If a parent considers that his or her child has additional support needs and wishes to make enquiries on this they should contact Mrs P Cormack, Principal Teacher of ASN.

Arrangements for free transport are made for pupils with recorded Additional Support Needs. Further information in relation to pupils support can be found at –
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>



Additional Support Needs (cont)

In addition to the information above, Inverclyde Council will provide:

- (a) the authority's policy in relation to provision for additional support needs

A child or young person's needs are identified at the earliest possible stage and can be met in a number of ways, for example by adaptations to the curriculum or learning environment, as well as input from the Support for Learning Teacher and on occasion support from visiting specialists. The appropriateness of the support is determined through a process of assessment, planning and monitoring, working jointly with parents and carers, and is regularly reviewed.

- (b) the arrangements made by the authority in making appropriate arrangement for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of each such child and young person and the particular additional support needs of the children and young persons so identified.

Learning outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs are set out in a plan and all educational establishments hold regular review meetings with parents and carers to determine needs and the most appropriate supports. Everyone's views are equally important in order to consider what is currently working and how to determine next steps.

- (c) the other opportunities available under this Act for the identification of children and young persons who –

- (i) have additional support needs

Children and young person's needs are identified in a number of ways, and the process of assessment is an on-going, shared process with partnerships with parents and carers at the forefront. On some occasions health service staff or other partner agencies make children known to Education Services. Other additional support needs may be notified to Education Services by parents themselves or identified by one of a range of staff working closely with the child.

- (ii) require, or would require, a co-ordinated support plan

Some children and young people will have additional support needs arising from complex or multiple factors which require a high degree of co-ordination of support from both education and other agencies in order that their needs can be met. In these cases, the school will hold a meeting to decide whether the child or young person meets the criteria for a co-ordinated support plan.

The coordinated support plan is a statutory document which ensures regular monitoring and review for those children and young people who have one.

- (iii) the role of parents, children and young persons in the arrangements referred to in paragraph (ii)



Additional Support Needs (cont)

You have the right to ask the education authority to establish whether your child needs a coordinated support plan. Your child can make this request themselves, if they are aged 16 or over. You and your child, if they want to, will attend a meeting with staff at their school. Other professionals from different agencies who may be involved in providing support for your child will also attend. If your child does not want to attend meetings or feels unable to, their views must still be sought and considered.

(d) the mediation services provided

Inverclyde's mediation service can be accessed by contacting Tony McEwan, Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources at the address below

(e) the officer or officers of the authority from whom parents of children having additional support needs, and young persons having such needs, can obtain advice and further information about provision for such needs.

For further advice please telephone 01475 712850

Or write to; Education Services
Wallace Place
GREENOCK
PA15 1JB

Advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN:

(a) Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as "Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning", a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527;

(b) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland

(c) Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC012741.

Useful Links – www.enquire.org.uk
www.siaa.org.uk
www.sclc.org.uk



Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service

Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service aims to improve the wellbeing and education of children and young people through the application of psychology in practice.

We do this by:

- providing training and coaching to educational staff with the goal of optimising the inclusion of all children and young people.
- using the latest research evidence in psychology to advise and consult with others. This helps to assess and plan for children and young people with Additional Support Needs.
- working with others to seek solutions that build on the existing strengths of children and families.
- ensuring that children and young people's views are heard and included in any planning.

There are many more roles of the Educational Psychologist, you may find these on our website <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/education-and-learning/inverclyde-educational-psychology-service>.

Equal Opportunities and Social Justice

As a Rights Respecting School we are determined to make sure that every pupil is supported throughout school, fairly and equally, regardless of circumstances. We call this social justice and it is about making sure that all pupils are given an equal chance to reach their potential.

In meeting the needs of all our pupils we will demonstrate no discrimination on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or belief. This encompasses curricular, extra-curricular and classroom activities and is foremost in the attitudes which we develop in our pupils.

In light of recent legislation on Human Rights, Race Equality and Disability, the authority and its establishments are reviewing policy and practice on equal opportunities and social justice.





Anti-bullying school charter

- ★ Help me to understand my rights and reassure me
- ★ Listen to me, include me and give me options
- ★ Help everyone to feel safe and in control
- ★ Take action with time scales and be consistent
- ★ Support everyone involved and help us to move forward
- ★ Feedback to me/us

Staff will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with children and young people to understand bullying and build trusting relationships• Listen and be aware• Take action on behalf of the school	Parents/carers will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remain calm and help me to feel safe• Work in partnership with schools to make things better for everyone involved• Respect my choices	Pupils will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat others with kindness and respect• Report bullying and encourage others to speak up• Be open to discussions and accept support
ARTICLE 1 ALL CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS	ARTICLE 3 ADULTS MUST DO WHAT'S BEST FOR ME	ARTICLE 12 I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE LISTENED TO AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY
		ARTICLE 19 I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM BEING HURT OR BADLY TREATED

Full policy available on: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswswebsite/policies/>



Pastoral Care

As part of the schools' GIRFEC agenda, the aim of the Pastoral Care staff is to provide a point of personal contact and support for pupils throughout his/her school career by monitoring his/her academic, personal, social and vocational development. Where necessary, the pupils' educational environment is adapted to allow him/her maximum opportunity to fulfil his/her potential. The objectives of the staff are -

- to know the pupil
- to establish a link between home and school
- to provide staff of the school and partner agencies with a known point of referral
- to participate in the various transition programmes for pupils
- to advise pupils, in conjunction with subject departments and parents, which courses are best suited to their talents and career aspirations
- to establish a Careers programme in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland
- to counsel and support pupils when required
- to provide an atmosphere in which pupils may develop socially
- to advise on the UCAS process

The Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care Team consists of -

Miss K McKay	(Principal Teacher – S1 Year Group & 6M&B)
Mr R Begley	(Acting Principal Teacher – S2 Year Group)
Mr J Stevenson	(Principal Teacher – S3 Year Group & 6C)
Mrs A Quinn	(Principal Teacher – S4 Year Group & 6O)
Mrs L Mitchell	(Principal Teacher – S5 Year group & 6L)

Pastoral Care staff, along with subject teachers, provide important support for pupils at transition times. This will help to ensure that pupils are following the appropriate courses taking into account the pupil's ability and career aspirations.

Pastoral Care staff are happy to discuss any aspect of a child's education with parents. Interviews can be arranged by contacting the school office.



Reporting to Parents

Parents can expect to receive progress reports on their children's performance at least once a year. Once the reports are sent home they are followed by a Parents' Meeting to allow parents to discuss their son/daughter's progress.

Currently the calendar of reports and Parents' Meetings is as follows -

First Year	Report to Parents Parents' Meeting	May December
Second Year	Report to Parents Parents' Meeting	March October
Third Year	Report to Parents Parents' Meeting	January February
Fourth Year	Report to Parents Parents' Meeting	November February
Fifth & Sixth Year	Report to Parents Parents' Meeting	November January

In addition to this an interim report is issued to the parents of First Year pupils in October as an initial indicator of how pupils have settled into the school.

Pastoral Care staff and departments are constantly monitoring pupil progress and when a problem is identified parents will be contacted if it is felt that this will be beneficial to the pupil.

Parents are always welcome to contact the school to obtain reports on their child's progress. Initial contact should be made with the appropriate Pastoral Care Teacher.



Home Learning

It is school policy that home learning is an integral part of a well-structured curriculum from S1 – S6. Together with parents the school wishes to develop in pupils a positive attitude towards study in school and at home.

Home learning tasks are set for all pupils at different stages for the following reasons:

- as a reinforcement for class lessons
- as an extension to class work when necessary
- as an opportunity to evaluate pupils progress
- as an opportunity to evaluate the success of a lesson
- as a means of motivating some pupils
- as an opportunity to communicate with parents

Valid home learning activities may include, as appropriate, writing, reading, research and investigation, problem solving, discussion with adults and revision of subject content. As pupils move through the school more encouragement and opportunity is given to develop regular, independent study. The amount of homework will vary according to various factors.



All pupils in St Columba's are issued with a Homework Planner to enable them to plan and organise their home learning tasks and develop planning and study skills from the beginning of their Secondary School career. The Planners contain important and helpful information for both pupils and parents.

Parents play an important role in ensuring the benefits of home learning. Your cooperation in helping to monitor your child's progress with home learning is highly valued by the teaching staff. Any parent who is concerned about any aspect of home learning is encouraged to contact the appropriate senior member of staff.

Supporting Pupils

The school currently runs sessions on study skills to support pupils in planning their personal study timetables and strategies for managing their time.

The advantage of this is:

- the opportunity to develop a regular study/homework scheme in preparation for National Qualifications.



Religious Education

STAFF

- Mrs K Miller (Principal Teacher)
- Mr J Wilson
- Mr R Begley
- Fr Gerry McNellis (Chaplain)

OUR AIMS

St Columba's High School is unequivocally a Catholic school. Our church recognises the responsibility of parents as the first and foremost educators of their children. Teachers at St Columba's work in partnership with parents to help young people grow in faith, also to enable this faith to develop into a mature and personal response to Christ – to convince them of the value and truth of Christian living. The syllabus fully meets the National Guidelines published by the Scottish Catholic Education Services (SCES).

The Department through the "This is our faith" programme will seek to enable pupils and staff to:

- Develop an appreciation of the love of God revealed through Jesus Christ, the wonders of God's creation, the dignity of the human person and a sense of eternal destiny;
- Promote growth in self-knowledge and in knowledge and love of the life, faith tradition and mission of the Catholic Church;
- Develop capacity to examine, evaluate and respond to the surrounding culture in the light of the Catholic faith and tradition;
- Develop skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act in accordance with an informed conscience in relation to matters of morality increase understanding of religion generally and of the ways in which different religions make send of human experience.
- Reflect the school mission statement based on Values for Life: Respect, Responsibility, Ambition and Service.



RE programme

Every class in the school follows a programme of religious education laid down by the Catholic Education commission. Every RE class received instruction from a Catholic teacher. Each class received two periods per week devoted to Religious Education. Students in S5 and S6 can progress to Higher Religious, Moral & Philosophical Studies (RMPS),

Our Sacramental and Liturgical Life

The school has strong links with each of our associated parishes. These are –

- St Andrew's, Greenock
- St Joseph's, Greenock
- St Ninian's, Greenock
- St Joseph's and St Patrick's, Wemyss Bay

On Holy Days of Obligation (and on the feast of St Columba) we celebrate Mass in St Andrew's Church, the closest to the school.

Priests of these parishes join with us to deliver the sacrament of Reconciliation. Mass takes place every Tuesday at lunchtime and on Thursdays during Advent and Lent, where students arrange and take part in the Liturgy.

Students also enjoy various activities including retreats, seminars, visits, specialist speakers, conferences, themed assemblies and fundraising.





The School Chaplain

The school is very fortunate to be served by a very supportive chaplain:

Rev. Gerry McNellis



The role of the chaplain is to support Religious Education within the school. This is done by visiting classes, supporting teachers and by being present around the school.

Mass is celebrated in the school at 12.50pm on a Thursday and this celebration is prepared by a different class each week. The Sacrament of Reconciliation can be available to the pupils at any time, however efforts are made during important times namely Advent and Lent of the Church's year to ensure that opportunities are available to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at set times for each year group.



Religious Education and Observance



St Columba's is Catholic in its aims and philosophy – we strive to promote a Catholic ethos at all times.

Religious Education has a place of particular significance in our curriculum and every class has two periods of RE each week, during which they study an appropriate syllabus for their year group. This syllabus fully meets requirements of National Guidelines published by the Scottish Catholic Education Service. All classes are taught by a fully qualified member of the school's extended Religious Education team.

The role of the Principal teacher of RE is to oversee the Religious Education programme "This is our faith" and to facilitate the smooth running of the RE syllabus by supporting the class RE teachers in each year group.

Holy Mass is celebrated regularly in the Oratory. Pupils are fully involved in the preparation for these Masses. Class and year group Masses are also held on a regular basis.

The Oratory is also used throughout the year to hold special religious services appropriate to the Church's calendar and it serves as a quiet place where pupils and staff can go to pray. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament each Friday from 8.40am – 3.00pm.

Provision is made for pupils to attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation in St Andrew's Church and to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.

It is recognised that the Education Act allows parents to withdraw their children from any instruction in religious subjects and from religious observance and such pupil will not be placed at a disadvantage with respect to secular education. Any parent who may wish to request the withdrawal of their children from such instruction or observance must, in the first instance, request a personal interview with the Head Teacher.

However, the Scottish Government recognises that '*where a parent chooses a denominational school for their child's education, they choose to opt in to the school's ethos and practice which is imbued with religious faith and religious observance. In denominational schools, it is therefore more difficult to extricate a pupil from all experiences which are influenced by the school's faith character.*'

Parents from ethnic minority religious communities may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school in order to celebrate recognised religious events. Only written requests detailing the proposed arrangements will be considered. Appropriate requests will be granted on not more than 3 occasions in any one school session and the pupil noted as an authorised absentee in the register.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Over many years St Columba's has been fortunate in having a wide range of extra-curricular activities organised by dedicated staff who have been willing to give up their own time at lunch break, after school or at weekends.

Activities available to the pupils include –

SPORTS

A wide range of sporting activities are on offer – fitness, athletics, cross-country running, football, netball, badminton, basketball, rugby and dance.



MUSIC

The music department provides opportunities for pupils to get involved in a range of activities. These include – choirs, brass ensemble, stage band, percussion ensemble, concert band, school show group. These various band, etc perform at the many school events during the year.

DRAMA

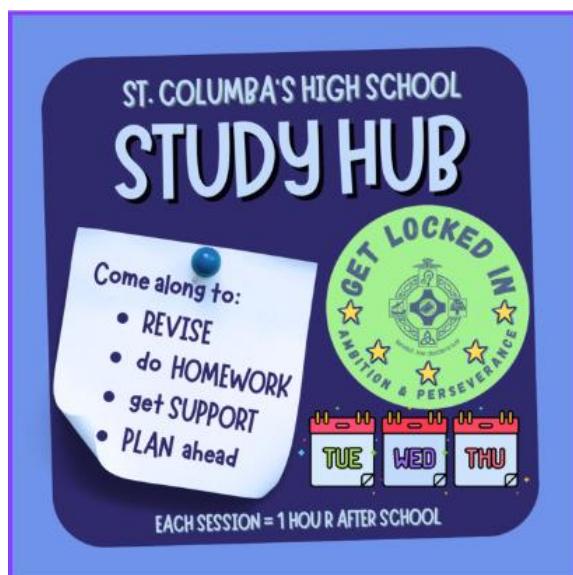
The drama club meet every week to prepare the Christmas pantomime and the Summer Show.





GENERAL

There are also a large number of other clubs that are open to pupils – Reading Group, Literacy/Numeracy Club, ICT Club, Craft/Woodturning, Chess/Board games, Art club, Public Speaking Club, Lunch Club, Film Club, Fair Trade



STUDY FACILITIES

Many departments run extra classes at lunchtimes to help support pupils in their classwork. This is especially helpful for pupils unable to attend Supported Study classes after school, Saturdays or on the Residential Study Weekend.



Other Achievements

For further information please see Standards and Quality Report 2024 – 2025

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/school-information/documentation/>



Promoting Positive Relationships

The standard of behaviour of our pupils has always been high and is invariably commented upon favourably by visitors to the school. While there are several reasons for this, a major factor is simply that the pupils see and respond to the very genuine interest staff take in them. Staff also have high expectations for pupils which they respond. Certainly, we are very fortunate in having an extremely good and happy relationship between pupils and staff, which makes for good tone or 'ethos' in the school, and created a strong moral pressure against misbehaviour.

This is not to say that all pupils are always well behaved or that cases of indiscipline never occur – cases of misbehaviour do occur and we try to deal with these effectively, promptly and positively. In St Columba's verbal reprimands and a lunchtime detention system is currently used to deal with incidents of indiscipline. We work to try to improve the behaviour of these pupils. Parents have an important role to play in ensuring their children behave properly in school. For more serious offenders other sanctions are open to the school.

The school also operates a Recognising Achievement programme so that pupils whose behaviour is consistently good are recognised in some way.



In order to ensure a safe, happy environment with the best conditions for learning all pupils are issued with a 'School Agreement' which outlines our shared expectations. Frequent reference is made to this by class teachers and by guidance staff and senior staff at assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for maintaining good order within the school community and treating all members of the community with respect.

Parents also have a vital role to play working in partnership with the school in ensuring their children are aware that high standards of behaviour are also expected of them in the community, out with the school day.





Attendance at School

Parents should inform the school by telephone or via ParentPortal on the first morning of an absence and provide a reason for the pupil's absence. The school will contact the pupil's family and thereafter other emergency contacts if no explanation is given for the pupil's absence. This contact will be made before 10am on the first morning of an absence by text or telephone and early after the restart after lunch in the case of an afternoon absence.

Other agencies may be contact if no contact with the pupil's family can be achieved and if there are continuing or emerging concerns about a pupil's safety or wellbeing.

Parents should keep the school informed of any changes of address or telephone numbers, both their own and those of the emergency contacts.

Section 30 of the 1980 Education Act lays a duty on every parent of a child of 'school age' to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Attendance must be recorded at least twice a day, morning and afternoon. The school now records attendance on a period-by-period basis.

The Scottish Government has provided guidance on the management of attendance and absence in Scottish schools in its publication 'Included, Engaged and Involved – Part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools'. Every effort should be made to avoid family holidays during term time as this both disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. It has been clarified that family holidays should not be recorded as authorised absence, except in exceptional domestic circumstances, where a family needs time together to recover from distress, or where a parent's employment is of a nature where school holiday leave cannot be accommodated (e.g. armed services or emergency services). It is for local authorities and school to judge when these circumstances apply and authorise absence accordingly.

The categorisation of most term-time holidays as unauthorised has been a contentious issue for some families, many of whom are concerned at the higher cost of holidays during school holiday periods. The Scottish Government has no control over the pricing decisions of holiday companies or flight operators. Our main focus is to encourage parents and pupils to recognise the value of learning and the pitfalls of disrupting learning for the pupil, the rest of the class and the teacher.

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

Schools investigate unexplained absence, and Education Services has the power to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or to refer pupils to the Children's Reporter if necessary.

Attendance at School (cont)

Where figures or percentages based on a number of pupils under any particular heading is between 1 and 4 no information is given and is inserted in place of the figures.

Adults attending day school classes are not subject to attendance regulations outlined above.

The authority's and Scotland's figures include all education authority and grant-aided secondary schools but exclude all special schools.

Please note



Absence rates are calculated as a percentage of the total number of possible attendances for all pupils of the school in the stage shown, each morning and afternoon of each school day being a separate possible attendance.

Further information available on: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswswebsite/attendance-and-latecoming/>

Education Maintenance Allowance

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a grant provided by the government to encourage students to stay on at school beyond their statutory leaving date. It is available to S5 and S6 students if –

- they have completed Fourth Year at school
- they have reached the legal date at which they could have left school, and have opted to return
- they started a Fifth Year course of study in the school session following their statutory leaving date

The grant is a means-tested allowance, based on parental income, but paid directly to the student. The award is up to £30 a week. The payment of allowances, and the payment of the bonus, is dependent upon students maintaining 100% attendance, adhering to the school's code of conduct and making good progress in their studies.



Clothing and Uniform

Given that there is substantial parental and public approval of uniform, schools in Inverclyde are free to encourage the wearing of school uniform. In encouraging the wearing of uniform, account must be taken to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race or gender. Any proposals will be subject of widespread consultation with parents and pupils. Against this background, it should be noted that it is the policy of the Education Lifelong Learning Committee not to insist on pupils wearing uniform or having specialist items of clothing as a prerequisite of their attending and engaging in all of the activities of the curriculum.

There are forms of dress which are unacceptable in school, such as items of clothing which:

- potentially encourage faction (such as football colours);
- could cause offence (such as anti-religious symbolism or political slogans);
- could cause health and safety difficulties, such as loose fitting clothing, dangling earrings or clothing made from flammable material, for example, shell suits in practical classes;
- could cause damage to flooring;
- carry advertising, particularly for alcohol or tobacco; and
- could be used to inflict damage on other pupils or be used by other to do so.

In addition jewellery such as dangling earrings and large rings could cause health and safety difficulties and are unacceptable to be worn in school.

Parents of children receiving one of the following benefits will normally be entitled to monetary grants for footwear and clothing for their children –

- Income Support (IS);
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA);
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) (ESA) ;
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit and where income is less than £16,105 (in 2019/20) as assessed by HMRC;
- Parent or Carer is in receipt of Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit with Annual Gross Earnings of no more than £11,288;
- Universal Credit, where your take home pay does not exceed £915, as shown on your monthly Universal Credit statement;
- An Asylum Seeker, receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Seekers Act 1999.

Pupils are eligible for a Clothing Grant in their own right if they are aged 16 – 18 and fall into any of the above categories.

Information and application forms for footwear and clothing grants may be obtained from schools and Customer Service Centre, Municipal Buildings, Clyde Square, Greenock PA15 1LY.



Clothing and Uniform (cont)

The council is concerned at the level of claims being received regarding the loss of pupils' clothing and/or personal belongings. Parents are asked to assist in this area by ensuring that valuable items and unnecessarily expensive items of clothing are not brought to school. Parents should note that the authority does not carry insurance to cover the loss of such items and any claims submitted are likely to be met only where the authority can be shown to have been negligent.

DETAILS OF ST COLUMBA'S SCHOOL UNIFORM

St Columba's, with the approval of parents and the School Board, strongly encourages the wearing of a uniform.

The recommended uniform is:

black trousers / black skirt
white shirt
school tie
black jumper / black cardigan
black shoes / all black trainers
S1-3: black blazer with school badge
S4-6: black blazer with blue braiding and school badge.



The recommended PE kit is:

blue school polo-shirt
black shorts / black leggings
trainers
change of socks

Please note that jewellery, watches, belts with metal buckles, etc may cause injury to the wearer or others taking part in PE and therefore must be removed. Jewellery as a result of body piercing causes a particular difficulty for a number of reasons. We would ask you to give careful consideration to the implications of body piercing and request that you first discuss this with the Head Teacher. Where a pupil is having body piercing we would encourage you to ensure that it is done in such a way that the jewellery can be removed and it is carried out during a school holiday period so that the healing process is complete and your child's participation in PE is not at risk.

We are glad to say that the vast majority of our pupils wear their school uniform with pride.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

All black shoes/trainers 

Black jumper or cardigan

Black trousers/skirt

White shirt

School tie

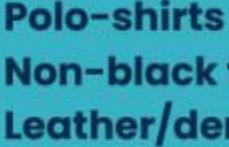
NOT SCHOOL UNIFORM

Hooded tops 

Sweatshirts with logos 

Jeans/leggings 

Tracksuit bottoms 

Polo-shirts 

Non-black trainers 

Leather/denim jackets 



Communication with Parents

The school has established strong links with the home over many years because we realise that the interest and support of parents is necessary for a complete and successful education. Although parents are always welcome to make an appointment to see their son/daughter's guidance teacher there are certain times during the school year when contact with parents is most advantageous. At these times parents may be requested to attend the school for meetings or for interview at the following stages of their child's school career –

- parents of Primary 7 pupils in associated primary schools
- S3 pupils considering choice of subject
- S4/5/6 pupils to discuss continuing courses of study
- S1/2/3 pupils after issue of progress reports
- Information Evening regarding a range of school issues

There are a number of other structures in place for providing parents with information:-

NEWSLETTER - regular newsletters are issued to pupils to take home to their parents. These contain information about school events, curricular and extra-curricular activities, etc. newsletters also include a section which parents on areas of educational interest.

TELEPHONE - it is often extremely helpful for teachers to make immediate contact with the home – either to seek parent advice or to pass on information about matters affecting their child. It may also be helpful for parents who have busy work schedules to pass on information in this way. Often by talking on the telephone good, regular liaison can be maintained between the home and the school.

It is important that the school has an emergency contact telephone number (along with a home number, where available) of a responsible adult (preferably a relative) who can take appropriate action if the parent cannot be contacted. Each child is supplied with a request form for this information at the beginning of each session.

WEBSITE/TWITTER/GROUDCALL/PARENT PORTAL – the school has a comprehensive website providing a wide range of information about the school. The website is regularly updated and has information about forthcoming events and a news section. The website address is – <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/>. This can also be accessed via a link from Inverclyde Council's website.

INTERVIEWS - in many instances there is no substitute for arranged meetings between parents and teachers, especially when the matter is confidential or requires greater understanding by either party.

Initial contact should be made by making an appointment to see your son/daughter's Pastoral Care teacher.



School Meals

There is a canteen system in operation for the serving of school meals. Hot meals, cooked on the premises by qualified staff, are available and a wide variety of snacks, sandwiches and filled rolls is also available. The provision of special diets e.g. for diabetics or those suffering from food allergies can also be arranged on receipt of a letter indicating the nature of the complaint. (As with all such information, these matters will be treated in strictest confidence). Snacks are also available at interval time in the morning.

Those who prefer to bring packed lunches will have accommodation set aside for them and they will be expected to keep such areas clean and tidy.

Children of parents in receipt of one of the following benefits are entitled to a free midday meal –

- Income Support (IS);
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA);
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) (ESA) ;
Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit and where income is less than £16,105 (in 2019/20) as assessed by HMRC;
- Parent or Carer is in receipt of Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit with Annual Gross Earnings of no more than £11,288;
- Universal Credit, where your take home pay does not exceed £915, as shown on your monthly Universal Credit statement;
- An Asylum Seeker, receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Seekers Act 1999.

Pupils are eligible for a free school meal in their own right if they are aged 16 – 18 and fall into any of the above categories.

Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained from schools and Customer Service Centre, Municipal Buildings, Clyde Square, Greenock, PA15 1LY. In addition such children will be entitled to free milk.

In line with Education Services Policies the school is moving towards 'Health Promoting School' status. This involves improved health awareness, greater opportunities for physical activity and healthier school meals.



General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018

Information on children, parents and guardian is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative duties. In processing personal information, Inverclyde Council must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. For further information please refer to <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/site-basics/privacy> or click on the following: [Privacy page link](#)

Transport

Please note that the transport policy for Inverclyde is currently subject to consultation.

The Education and Communities Committee agreed in September 2019, changes to the mainstream school transport policy. This was following a series of engagement events with parents.

In preparation for these changes, we wrote to parents of pupils affected providing them with advanced notice of one of the following:

that they will be unaffected by the changes;

due to consistent measuring of qualifying distances (over 2 miles from their catchment school) or the availability of an acceptable walking route, that they will no longer qualify for free school transport from August 2020;

in the case of St Columba's High School pupils, the arrangements which need to be made to reserve a place on a subsidised bus from August 2020;

the arrangements for pupils who are in receipt of free school meals / clothing grant who live over one mile away from their catchment secondary school, and the payment of a transport grant from August 2020.

In the coming weeks, we will work with schools to provide maps of acceptable walking routes to schools to assist those who will no longer receive free transport from August in order that they can plan their routes to and from school.

It is worth remembering that there is no change to the qualifying distances to school transport or to the ASN transport policy and Inverclyde's policy remains more generous than what is statutorily required of us. The policy will now be applied in a more consistent and equitable way which affects a number of pupils across our schools.

Parents in receipt of free school meals / clothing grant will be entitled to a transport grant from August 2020 if their child lives beyond 1 mile from their secondary catchment school, which is an enhancement to the current policy. Details of this will be provided to them when they apply in the summer.



PICK-UP POINTS

Where free transport is provided it may be necessary for pupils to walk a certain distance to the vehicle pick-up point. Walking distance in total, including the distance from home to the pick-up point and from drop-off point to the school in any one direction, will not exceed the authority's limits. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child arrives at the pick-up point in time. It is also the parents' responsibility to ensure that the child behaves in a safe and acceptable manner while boarding, travelling in and alighting from the vehicle. Misbehaviour could result in your child losing the right to free transport.

PLACING REQUESTS

The education authority does not provide transport for those pupils in receipt of a placing request other than in exceptional circumstances.

In the case of under-age placing request if the child is offered a place in his/her catchment area school, transport will be provided in accordance with council policy stated above.

Medical and Health Care

MEDICAL EXAMINATION

The routine medical examination of children is undertaken at the ages of 10/11 years and 13/14 years by staff if the Inverclyde Health Board and parents may refer their child at other times to the Clinical Medical Officer for examination or advice.

Parents are given prior notice of these examinations and are welcome to attend.

ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Please note that the school does not have the services of a qualified nurse although some teaching and auxiliary staff have been trained in first aid. It must be emphasised, therefore, that this service is for emergencies only and should your child show symptoms of illness or sustain cuts or bruises out with school he/she should be referred to his/her own doctor.

MEDICAL/EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM

Parents will be provided with a form on which they will be required to state any medical condition or physical disability affecting their child which might influence their education attainment. This also forewarns the school of medical provision or facilities which must be made available. Should parents wish to discuss health matters of a more confidential nature then it is recommended that an appointment be made with the appropriate Pastoral Care Teacher or DHT.

EMERGENCY CONTACT



You will also be asked to provide the name, address and telephone number of at least one person who will be available immediately in case of an emergency (preferably a relation) since he/she may be asked to collect your child from school. If transport cannot be provided arrangements may be made to send the child home by taxi if there is someone at home to receive them.

If it is thought necessary to send the pupils to hospital the parent will be notified and asked to meet the child at the Casualty Department, Inverclyde Royal. Often the consent and signature of parent is required before further medical treatment can be carried out.



MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Permission to release pupils from school for medical or dental appointments will only be given when written notice from the parent/carer is received. Notes should be presented to the Registration teacher on the morning of the appointment or at the Registration period of the preceding day of the appointment is early in the morning.

When a prolonged series of appointments is indicated parents are requested to contact the Guidance teacher to ensure provision is made for missed schoolwork.

MEDICATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

It is only on very rare occasions that children will require to take any form of medication during school hours. Most prescriptions allow for time adjustments so that parents can supervise the consumption/application of medicine at home.

In these cases where children need to take medicine in the school the parent must -

- advise the school of this;
- deposit the medication with the school office submitting administration of medication forms

Arrangements will then be made to ensure that the child is released from class to receive medication under supervision. On no account must any child be given any medicine to carry around the school or be allowed to regulate his/her own consumption or application of medicine at school.



Health and Safety

At St. Columba's High School we are fully committed to providing and maintaining a safe, healthy and supportive environment for all pupils, staff, visitors and partners. This commitment is made in line with **Inverclyde Council's Health and Safety Policy**, relevant legislation, and recognised best practice.

Health and safety is a shared responsibility and is integral to our school ethos, underpinning our values of **Faith, Ambition, Inclusion and Perseverance**.

- **Faith**

We value the dignity, wellbeing and worth of every individual. Our approach to health and safety reflects our moral responsibility to care for one another and to act with integrity, respect and compassion in all aspects of school life.

- **Ambition**

We strive for the highest standards of health and safety practice. Through effective risk assessment, clear procedures and ongoing training, we aim to create an environment where all learners and staff can achieve their full potential safely and confidently.

- **Inclusion**

We are committed to ensuring that health and safety arrangements are inclusive and equitable, taking account of additional support needs, medical conditions, disabilities and individual circumstances. We work proactively to remove barriers and ensure that everyone can participate fully and safely in school life.

- **Perseverance**

We recognise that maintaining a safe environment requires vigilance, reflection and continuous improvement. We are committed to learning from incidents, near misses and feedback, and to strengthening our systems and practices over time.

The school will:

- Comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and Inverclyde Council policies and guidance
- Maintain clear roles and responsibilities for health and safety
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are carried out, implemented and reviewed
- Provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision
- Encourage a positive health and safety culture where concerns can be raised openly and acted upon promptly

All members of the school community are expected to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others, and to work collaboratively to uphold this commitment.



Parental Engagement

In St Columba's we recognise that parents play an extremely important role in the education of their children. We believe that for the school to be successful we have to be committed to working in a genuine partnership with all parents.

This partnership is fostered in a number of ways –

- parents are involved regularly in stakeholder surveys about various aspects of the service provided by the school
- we provide parents with advice and support on how they can support their child's education
- we regularly update parents on all aspects of their child's progress
- we have a very active Parent Council that meet regularly to discuss any aspect of school provision
- we keep parents regularly informed of what is going on in the school

Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with the school to maintain and strengthen this partnership.

For further information please see: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/parental-engagement/>

Parentzone Scotland



[Parentzone Scotland](#) is a unique website for parents and carers in Scotland, from early years to beyond school. The website provides up-to-date information about learning in Scotland, and practical advice and ideas to support children's learning at home in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and science. Information is also available on Parentzone Scotland regarding additional support needs, how parents can get involved in their child's school and education. Parentzone Scotland also has details about schools, including performance data for school leavers from S4-S6 and links to the national, local authority and school level data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.

Bookbug

Bookbug is Scotland's universal early years book gifting programme which supports families to read, sing, and play with their little ones from birth to give them the best start in life. Starting school is an exciting and challenging time for your child and your support at home makes a real difference to their learning. Look out for your Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag, a free bag of books and activities your child will receive at school in November from Bookbug, to help support their reading, writing and counting skills. You will find films of the books being read aloud and more information about the P1 Bag [here](#).

Read Write Count

Read Write Count with the First Minister is a National gifting programme, aiming to build parents' confidence and encourage families to include easy and fun reading, writing and counting activities in their everyday lives. Every Primary 2 and Primary 3 child in Scotland will receive a free bag with books, educational games and writing materials to be gifted during Book Week Scotland, in November. Resources for schools and extra activities for families to use at home can be found [here](#).



Parent Forum and Parent Council

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 led to the establishment of Parent Councils in primary, secondary and special schools. The Act recognises the vital role that parents play in supporting their children's learning. It places a duty on authorities to promote the involvement of parents in children's education and the wider life of the school. It aims to help parents to be –

- Involved with their child's education and learning
- Welcomed as an active participant in the life of the school
- Encouraged to express their views on school education generally

The Parent Council, as a statutory body, has the right to information and advice on matters which affect children's education.

Parents who are involved on a regular basis in schools should undertake an enhanced disclosure through Disclosure Scotland.

All parents who have a child attending the school are automatically members of the Parent Forum for our school. Membership of the forum allows parents to have a say in the local arrangements to enable their collective view to be represented on matters such as the quality and standards of education at the school and other matters of interest to parents. These views can be represented, as appropriate, to the head teacher of the school, the Council and HMIe.

The Parent Council, as a statutory body, has the right to information and advice on matters which affect children's education.

Meetings of the Parent Council are held approximately every 6 weeks and minutes of these meetings are available from the school and are posted on the school website. Agendas are also available via the school website prior to the meeting.

The Parent Council is open to any parent or carer of pupils in St Columba's. Parents/carers are regularly invited to join the Parent Council via the school newsletter.

Details of the St Columba's High School Parent Council are included on the next page.

Parents who are involved on a regular basis in schools should undertake an enhanced disclosure through Disclosure Scotland.



St Columba's Parent Council – membership

PARENT MEMBERS

Stephen Regan
(Chairperson)
(Vice - Chairperson)

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE

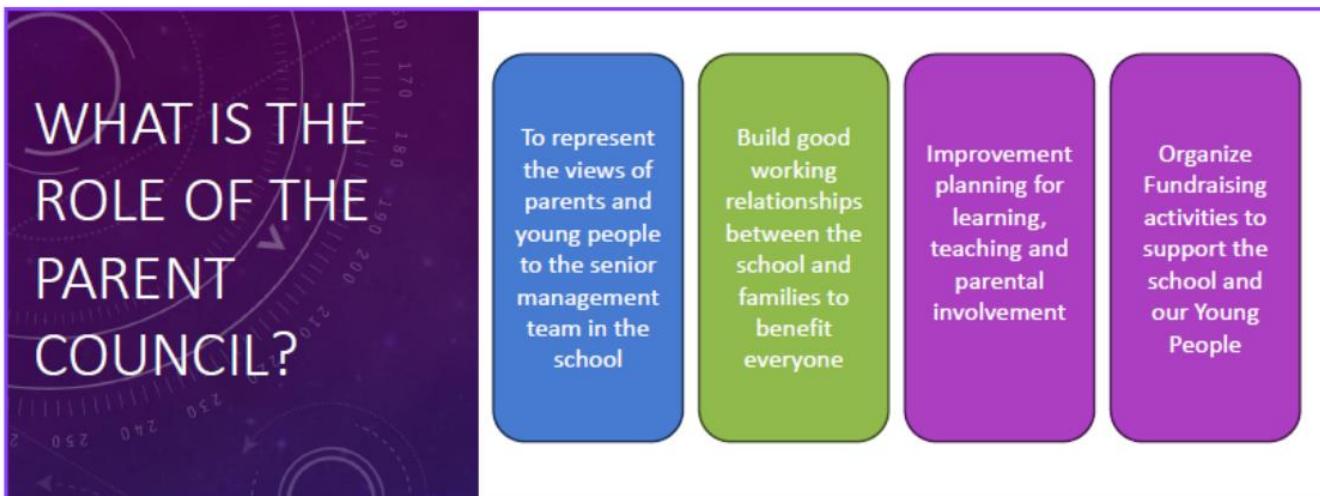
Mgr G Gallagher

STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs C McGeehan

ADVISERS TO PARENT COUNCIL

Mrs N Devine (Head Teacher)



You can contact the Parent Council on: stcolumbas.parentcouncil@gmail.com





Useful Addresses

Head of Education

Wallace Place
Greenock
PA15 1JB

01475 712850

Community Learning & Development

1 Aberfoyle Road
Greenock
PA15 3DE

01475 714250

Skills Development Scotland

112 West Blackhall Street
Greenock
PA15 1XR

01475 745903



Local Councillors

The elected representatives to Inverclyde Council who serve the catchment area of the school are –

Sandra Reynolds

Lynne Quinn

Ian Hellyer

Public Examinations

Schools in consultation with pupil / parents normally decide on presentation for examinations. However, in the final analysis the school will accede to the wishes of parents.



Appendix 1

First and Second Year Curriculum Model 2025-2026

Curriculum Area	Subject	First Year	Second Year
Languages	English	4 periods	4 periods
	French/Spanish	3 Periods	3 periods
Mathematics		4 periods	4 periods
Religious Education		2 periods	2 periods
Science		3 periods	3 periods
Social Studies	Integrated course Geography History Modern Studies	3 periods	3 periods
Technologies	Business and ICT	2 periods	2 periods
	Design & Technical	2 periods	2 periods
Expressive Arts	Art & Design	2 periods	2 periods
	Music / Drama	2 periods	2 periods
Health & Wellbeing	Home Economics / Drama	2 periods	2 periods
	Physical Education	2 periods	2 periods
	PSHE	1 Period	1 Period
Total periods			32



Appendix 2

Third Year Curriculum for Session 2025 – 2026

In third year courses continue to be planned using Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Courses are designed to support challenge for all pupils and to ensure transition into National Qualifications in fourth year.

Name:							Class:																																																																																														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please confirm option choices in columns 1-6 below. If any changes are requested please write below and we will do our best to accommodate these. Please choose at least one option from each curricular area. Where you have not selected a subject in a particular curricular area then you should should pick this curricular area/s as one of your options in column 7. No subject can be chosen twice In Column 7, please choose 3 options (plus two reserve options) to study for 2 periods on rotation throughout the year. Classes will only run where there are viable numbers All pupils in S3 will study English, Maths, RE, PSE and Core PE. 							<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="7">Curricular Areas</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Languages</td> <td colspan="2">Expressive Arts</td> <td colspan="3">Science</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Technology</td> <td colspan="4">Social Studies</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="7">  </td> </tr> </table>		Curricular Areas							Languages		Expressive Arts		Science			Technology			Social Studies																																																																											
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Appendix 3

Senior Phase Option form 2025-2026

SCHS - S5/6 Options 2025-26 August v6					
S5 must choose <u>one</u> subject in columns A, B, C, D & E (English is compulsory and can be selected in column A or B) S6 must choose 4 subjects - one subject from any four columns					
LEVEL / COLUMN	A	B	C	D	E
SCQF Level 7 / Adv Higher	English	Maths	Art & Design		Chemistry
			Music		
			Science Baccalaureate		
Higher SCQF Level 6	Business Management	English	Admin & IT	Chemistry	Chemistry
	English	Fashion & Textiles	Art & Design	College Course	Human Biology
	English - Comms & Lit	French	Chemistry	Computing	Mental Health & Wellbeing
	Spanish	Geography	Drama	Creative Thinking	Photography
		Maths	Drama NPA	Design & Man	Physics
		Music Tech	Graph Comm	History	Politics
		RMPS	Maths	Human Biology	
		Maths Applications	Music	Modern Studies	
				PE	
National 4/5 SCQF Levels 4/5	Biology	Admin & IT	Computing	Art & Design	Art & Design
	Barista & Bakery	Art & Design	Fashion & Textiles	Biology	Drama
	Chemistry	Biology	History	Business Management	Mental Health & Wellbeing
	Criminology	Cake Craft	Maths Applications	Creative Industries	Modern Studies
	Design & Man	Chemistry	Modern Studies	College Course	Photography NPA
	English	French	Physics	Chemistry	PE
	Geography	Graphics	Practical Cookery	History	Practical Cookery
	Physics	Lab Skills	PE	Metalwork	Sports Leader
	PE	Maths	Woodwork	Music	Travel & Tourism
	Woodwork	Music Tech		Spanish	Woodwork
				Web Design & Dev	
My Choices:					

Other options open to senior students include -

- Vocational courses at West College Scotland
- Foundation Apprenticeships
- Distance learning courses
- Open University courses (S6 only)
- Flexible Work Placements



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Standards and Quality Report

A copy of St Columba's High School's Standards and Quality Report is available on the school's website. <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/school-information/documentation/>

SQA Results

Details of the SQA performance in the New Qualifications are available from the school on request.

Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Well Being

Data for each of these areas will be made readily available and will be regularly updated on the school website.

Planning for Improvement

The following documents are available to view on the school's website:

- School Improvement Plan
- Curriculum Rationale

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/schswebsite/school-information/documentation/>



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

- (a) before the commencement or during the course of the school year in question.
- (b) in relation to subsequent years.