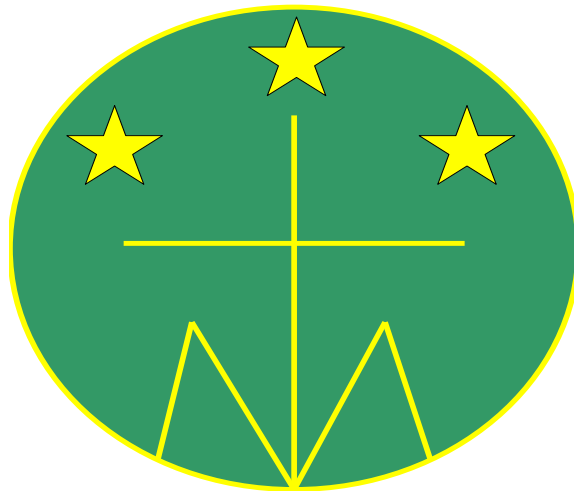


**WELCOME TO SAINT
MARY'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS AND CARERS**

Welcome to Saint Mary's Primary School

I'm sure you can't believe that your baby is going to school – how time flies!

Here is some information about our school, Primary 1 and the school curriculum. We hope you find it helpful!

This booklet has been created for a normal school year. Unfortunately, we don't know yet what schooling will look like in August and many of our procedures may have to change on a temporary basis in the light of social distancing.



Starting Date and Times

Further information will be sent out about starting dates, transport information etc.

Our normal school day looks like this:

9.00 a.m. – Day begins
10.30 a.m. – 10.45 a.m. – Morning interval
12.15 p.m. – 1.00 p.m. – Lunch
3.00 p.m. – Day ends

Please phone us if you know you are going to be late picking up your child. If someone else is collecting your child, please also let us know.

Absence

If your child is sick and cannot attend, we would ask you to phone the school between 8.30 and 9.30 a.m. giving the reason for the absence. Then, when your child returns, please send in a letter for the absence. The school will contact you if no call is received.

Inverclyde Council encourages parents not to take children out of school for holidays during school term.

Timekeeping

We understand that the weather and traffic problems can occasionally cause disruption but would ask that you make every effort to get your child to school on time each day.

It can be quite daunting for a little one to go into class late and it also disrupts other children's learning.



Medication

Please contact the school office if your child's medical needs change. If your child needs to take medication in school, we will ask you to complete an authorisation form.

Health Promoting School

Being a Health Promoting School, we try to encourage healthy eating at playtime. Please provide your child with one healthy snack to eat and a sugar free drink at playtime (no fizzy drinks, please!). We also encourage children to drink plain water in the class (not flavoured).

Please note, that we have children in school with nut allergies, therefore no snacks containing nuts should be brought to school.



School Lunches

School lunches are now free for P1-4. Children can choose from a snack (e.g. sandwiches/wraps/cold pastas etc.) or a hot meal. An up to date menu will be available to view on the school website.

P1 children also have their packed lunch in the dining hall, although the older children will take packed lunches in another area or outside (depending on the weather).

Playtime

For the first few days, those children who have relatives in Primary 1 normally come into the P1-3 playground so that your child sees a familiar face. Those who do not have any relatives in school will have a special friend assigned to help them.

After a few days, when they have settled, they will begin to make new friends in their own classes and will no longer need this.

There will always be an adult presence in the playground, as well as playground buddies.

Wet Plays

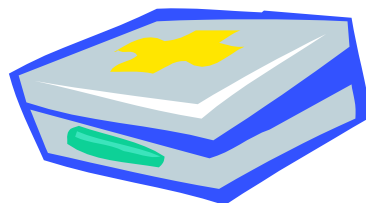
During wet plays, the children will sit with their friends in their own classroom. P7 monitors help to supervise the children and there are also classroom assistants on each floor.

First Aid

A trained first aider is on hand to help with cuts and bruises.

If a serious accident occurs, we will contact you using the emergency contact numbers you have given us.

It is really important that you keep these numbers up to date, so please contact us if you change your phone number.



School Trips

We try to provide as many opportunities as possible for the children to learn outwith the classroom. We will ask you to fill in a consent form for

this at the beginning of the year, which will cover all trips within Inverclyde (when we are able to enjoy them again).

Outdoor learning is a very important part of our school curriculum. However, we cannot do it without your help. Parent helpers are always needed for outings – please offer to help if you can!

Uniform

We are very proud of our uniform, which can be bought from Smith's in Greenock or from other High Street shops.

It consists of:

- Green blazer with school badge or green waterproof jacket
- Green shirt and school tie
- Grey pullover or cardigan
- Green polo shirt / sweatshirt - with or without school badge
- Grey trousers/grey or green pinafore/skirt – not tartan!
- Sensible black shoes - not trainers!

Please remember to label everything. We regularly put bags of clothes out for recycling because we can't find their owners!



P.E.

Your child will normally have two P.E. lessons each week. We will email with the P.E. timetable so you will know which days these will be.

Children will require black shorts, a white tee shirt and black sandshoes. The children should also bring in a pair of jogging trousers and old trainers for outside PE. They will leave their sandshoes in their gym bag in school, which will hang on their classroom peg. This ensures that they always have their sandshoes in school for each lesson.

When choosing black sandshoes, we would recommend velcro fastening or elasticated slip-on ones. Changing for P.E. can take up quite a bit of the lesson if 25 children need help with tying laces!

Children are not allowed to wear any jewellery during PE lessons. Please do not get your child's ears pierced during the school term. If earrings cannot be taken out, your child will not be able to take part in P.E.

Inverclyde Council has a policy that football colours are not allowed in school. This applies to school bags, pencil cases etc as well as clothing.

Parent Forum

When your child enters Primary 1, you, the parent or carer, become a member of the Parent Forum. You will hear about meetings of the Parent Partnership and are most welcome to come along and join in on the work for our children and school.



Keeping you Informed

We try to provide as many opportunities as possible for you to see how your child is learning in school e.g. school concerts, topic visits, prayer services and parents' evenings.

We also communicate through termly newsletters, Twitter, emails and texts. Please make sure you have given us your email address and check it regularly, so that you don't miss out on important information!

School Values

As you know, St. Mary's is a Catholic school and we believe very strongly in our values of Respect, Honesty, Tolerance and Faith. These values are reinforced regularly through assemblies and Religious Education lessons.

We have very strong links with St. Mary's Parish. Father Tom and Deacon Graham work extremely closely with the school to support the faith development of our children and ensure that we have regular opportunities to celebrate Mass and other religious services.

Behaviour

We are very proud of the behaviour of the children in our school and really value the support we have from parents to uphold this.

We promote positive behaviour in the school and use a "restorative" approach when children have been involved in incidents. This means that we encourage the children to think about how their actions have affected others and what they need to do to "repair the harm" if they have hurt someone.

There are many reasons why children may find it difficult to settle or behave in school. If we are concerned about your child in any way, we will get in touch so that we can work together to support him/her.



Homework

We know from research that support with homework has a huge impact on children's attainment in school. Reading to your child on a daily basis

will increase his/her vocabulary and imagination, both of which are very important in developing language skills.

Phonics Homework

Phonics is very important in helping your child learn to read and write. We will send home a key ring with the new sound taught that day. Please talk to your child about the sound and ask him/her to give you a word that begins with that sound. These letters will come out to you each day with a revision day at the end of each set of letters.

Look and Say Words

Later, your children will also get look and say words. These are for you to show the child and he/she should learn to recognise them. To keep them together, we would ask you to provide your child with a small tin with your child's name on the base of it.

As your child becomes secure in knowing these words, the teacher will build up the number of words until they have enough words to start reading a book.

Tips for Reading Homework

- Enjoy spending this time with your child
- Give your child lots of praise
- Choose a time when there are no distractions (even if that means putting off the T.V.)
- Don't take for granted that your child sees what you see or knows the words for what you see in the picture. Ask him/her lots of questions about the story, as this will increase understanding
- Discuss the pages to be covered (this will be written on the homework diary)
- Look at the pictures and talk about each one
- Let your child read the story to you
- Read the story again together
- Let your child hold the book and turn the pages
- If a passage is causing difficulty, just leave it and go back to it later
- Sign the marker and ask your child to put the homework in his/her bag. (It is important to train your child to take responsibility for his/her own homework. This will be in keeping with what the teacher is doing in school).

Writing

Developing the fine and gross muscles in your child's hand will give him/her an added advantage when beginning to write. Playing with plasticine, cutting with child friendly scissors, playing with a small ball and completing jig-saws will all help to develop his/her fine motor skills.

Encourage him/her to hold the pencil with two "nippy fingers" and one finger below the pencil to hold up the pencil using the tripod grip.



Tips for Maths Homework

In the course of each day, a child encounters many maths activities and maths problems. Initially, much of the teaching is about understanding the language of Maths e.g.

- The same as/different
- One more/one less
- Heavy/heavier
- Light/lighter
- Bigger/smaller
- Full/empty
- How many/how much?
- Match
- Tall/short

Things to do

- Point out numbers anywhere you see them
- Show your child a blue item and ask him/her to find another blue item etc.
- Ask her/him to sort things into different size/shape/colour
- Let him/her fill and pour from one container into another
- Draw round your hand and your child's hand and ask which is bigger
- Count the smarties/chews in a pack
- Play simple snap card games

- Give him/her coins to recognise (many children nowadays are given £1 coins and don't recognise other coins).
- Give your child pocket money in small denominations and get him/her to count it or buy something small from the shop.
- Show a clock and point out the big and small hand.



Finally, if you would like to speak to us about any matter, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Together, we hope that we can make your child's entry to school a happy occasion and that this is the beginning of an excellent home/school partnership.

