

Faith Respect Responsibility Trust Team Work Success

St. Fillan's Primary School



Beginner's Handbook

2025 - 2026



Be Brave Unleash Creativity Demonstrate Excellence Show/Radiate Enthusiasm
'In Learning, we are growing and succeeding Together.'



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Family
like branches on a tree

we may grow in different directions
yet our roots remain as one

Welcome





Welcome to St. Fillan's Primary School



Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to St. Fillan's Primary School! Starting Primary 1 is an exciting time for children and parents alike. In this booklet we aim to give you all the information you need to make your child's transition from nursery to school as smooth as possible.

Please keep this booklet in a safe place as it contains important information about arrangements for the first few days and weeks of Primary 1.

We don't expect you to read it immediately from cover to cover, but you will find it helpful to dip in and out of. Do remember that you can contact the school at any time should you have any questions or concerns.

We look forward to you and your child joining our school community and family of St. Fillan's Primary.

Mrs Jaqueline McPherson
Head Teacher

Our Vision, Values and Aims:

Here in St. Fillan's our job is to 'Get it Right for Every Child,' and we endeavour to do this from the moment we meet your child in Primary 1 until the day they leave in Primary 7.

We aim to do this by having a team of caring adults and partners who are responsible for the physical, social, emotional and academic progress of each child in our care.

Our school vision is ambitious and we set high expectations and standards to enable every child to reach their full potential.

Our shared vision, values and aims are the beating heart of our school and our Gospel Values underpin everything that we do.

Our Vision:

In learning, we are growing and succeeding together.

Our Shared Values:

R - Respect **R** - Responsibility **T** - Team work **F** - Faith **T** - Trust

S - Success

Our Aims:

Be brave

Unleash Creativity

Demonstrate Excellence

Show/Radiate Enthusiasm



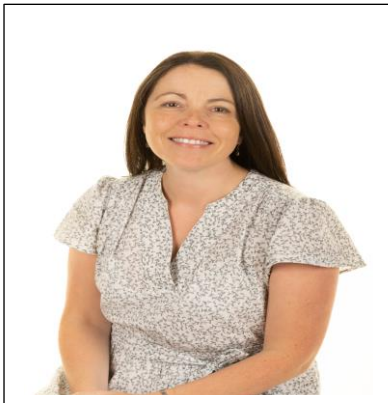
Who is who in St. Fillan's Primary School?



Mrs J. McPherson
Head Teacher



Angela McWilliams
Principal Teacher



Mrs J Kaney
Primary 1 Class
Teacher



Mrs S Sim
Primary 1 Class
Teacher



Mrs J. Kelly
Classroom Assistant

Mrs Kelly is the
Classroom Assistant
who provides support
to all of our teachers
and children. Mrs
Kelly is also the
school First Aider.



Who is who in St. Fillan's Primary School?



Mrs D Sutherland
Office Staff



Mrs S Edmiston
Office Staff



John
SFO



Karen
SFO





Health & Safety



Parking:

In the interests of health and safety, parents/families are asked not to park on the zig zag lines outside the school or in the Staff carpark as staff need access to leave the building for meetings etc. Instead, parking although limited, is available in the surrounding areas.

Please note that there are two disabled parking spaces for those who hold badge permits to use.

The 'Travel Plan Committee' are actively involved in teaching children the safest ways in and out of the playground. Please ensure that you support us with this in ensuring that children are careful not to cross across the Staff carpark when exiting the building. Safety is far more important than convenience and leads to potential accidents from occurring.

The School Patrol Crossing Officers are available from 8.30pm and 2.45pm daily, to assist the children in crossing the road safely.

Please note that the St. Fillan Church carpark is **not** available to use at 9.00am and 3.00pm.

Security:

In the interests of safety for all of our children and staff, we now ask that any person arriving at the school between 9.00 and 3.00pm should use the Main door and report to the School Office. We have many visitors and specialist visiting throughout the school day and it is vital that we know who is in the school building and why they are there.

Child Protection:

The care, safety and protection of children is the responsibility of every member of staff in our school.

Mrs J McPherson (Head Teacher) is the Child Protection Co-ordinator and all concerns must be reported to her in the first instance. We also have an additional Staff Member who have been fully trained in the Leadership of Child Protection and this is Mrs A McWilliams (Principal Teacher).

GIRFEC Policy:

Renfrewshire's GIRFEC policy ensures that children, young people and their families receive the help they need when they need it. As children and young people progress on their journey through life, some may have temporary difficulties, some may live with challenges and some may experience more complex issues. Sometimes they - and their families - are going to need help and support.

The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach ensures that when we provide support, it is based on the level of need for each child.

For schools in Renfrewshire the GIRFEC approach is implemented via the getting it Right for Every Learner policy which gives more detail of additional support needs and help children receive from schools and other services.





Pre 5 - Primary Transition



Links with Nursery/Pre 5 Centres:

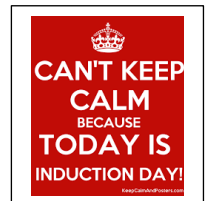
We receive information from the Nursery your child has attended which tells us about his or her interests, aptitudes and progress. One of your child's Class Teacher's will visit each of the nurseries to have an informal discussion with your child's key worker and, where possible, meet the children who will be starting school. In addition, Nurseries will make contact with us to arrange a visit or to prepare children who will require 'Enhanced Transition.'

Induction Days:

Our induction sessions in May/June allow children to meet their classmates, spend time in their new classroom environment and see around the school building. It is also an opportunity for you to find out a bit more about what to expect when your child starts school and ways in which you can support their learning. We have two induction sessions, both of which take place in the school and this year the dates are as follows:

Tuesday 6th May 2025 - 1.30pm

Tuesday 13th May 2025 - 1.30pm



It is ideal if you can come along to both sessions but even if you can only manage to one it will still be beneficial for your child. If you are unable to attend it would be helpful if you can arrange for someone else to bring your child along.

When you arrive on the first day, please report to the School Office where you will be warmly welcomed and asked to sign our Day Book. Your child will be escorted to the Primary 1 classroom and will remain here for the remainder of the session. Parents will be able to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee whilst Mrs Mackenzie and Mrs McPherson run through some information about school routines and ways in which you can help your child to settle in quickly at school.

Meet the Teacher:

This date has yet to be confirmed.

This session is offered to all of our classes and it provides an opportunity for parents/carers to meet with their child's Class Teacher. This session will take place in your child's new classroom and the Class Teacher will be able to provide you with information about: homework, expectations and standards, how you can support your child etc. This session is bespoke to you child and their classroom environment.

Evaluation:

At the end of the Primary one induction programme you will be asked to complete an evaluation form. The information which this provides is invaluable and feedback which parents have given us in the past has led to us making several changes to improve our programme. Please let us know what you think went well and if there is anything which could make it even better.



General Information?



School begins on: **MONDAY 18th AUGUST 2025.**

To ensure a happy and settled beginning to the term, we have arranged a 'Soft Start on the first day.'

DAY	DATE	TIMINGS
DAY 1	Monday 18th August 2025	Arrive by 9.15am Collect at 3.00pm
DAY 2	Tuesday 19 th August 2025	Arrive by 9.00am Collect at 3.00pm

The typical 'School Day' is as follows:

Event	Time
Entry into the building.	9.00 am
Playtime	10.40am - 10.55am
Lunchtime	12.35 pm - 1.20pm
Hometime	3.00pm

Arrival at School - Soft Start:

The school bell will ring for all children at 9.00am bell rings for the children at 8.50am and the children will be encouraged to line up in their designated 'line order' outside the building as they wait for their teacher to collect them. This promotes a sense of order and independence in children. Mrs Kelly will be at the Infant doors and Mr McDermott will be at the Main Entrance to welcome the children.

In the interests of health and safety, we would ask that adults leave their children at the Primary 1 entrance door after the first day. We also encourage a quick 'goodbye' from parents as children can become unsettled if their parents appear anxious or upset.

At 3.00pm, the children will exit from their classroom door. In order to ensure that each child is picked up safely by their known adult, we kindly ask that all adults stand around the perimeter of the playground to allow staff and children a clear view of the playground. Children who attend after care will be collected from the Lunch Hall and children who will travel to and from school on the bus will be escorted by an older, responsible child, known as a 'Bus Buddy.'

The First Day:

You are more than welcome to accompany your child into the classroom, take photographs etc but we would ask that there are no more than two adults per child.

Lunch:

All P1-3 pupils in Scotland are entitled to a free school lunch and your child will be able to have lunch from the first day. We will provide you with more information about arrangements for this at our induction afternoons.

Playtimes:

There will be an adult presence in the playground. During wet plays and lunchtimes, your child will be supervised in their class by older 'Wet Play Monitors' and staff will supervise the corridors and classroom areas at this time. You may wish to provide your child with a book or colouring materials to use during wet intervals, however, this is not a requirement.

Toilets:

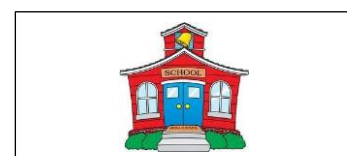
Children can go to the toilet whenever they ask but should be encouraged to get into the habit of always going before school, at playtime and at lunchtime. If your child had an issue in this area, then the Class Teacher should be informed at your earliest convenience.



Helping prepare your child for school:



- ✚ Encourage your child to be as independent as possible. Practise buttoning jackets, putting up zips, taking on and off shoes etc - even although we know it is often quicker to do it for them!
- ✚ Make sure that he/she is confident using the toilet and that boys are familiar with a urinal.
- ✚ Help your child to use a knife and fork for cutting up food as well as eating.
- ✚ Social skills are really important - learning to share and take turns, helping to tidy up at the end of an activity and understanding what is/is not acceptable behaviour.
- ✚ Activities which strengthen fingers such as rolling dough, threading beads onto laces and making patterns in salt, sand or shaving foam are great preparation for writing - and good fun too!
- ✚ Picking up small objects such as dried peas or using peg boards also encourage the "pincer" movement which is needed for a correct pencil grip. If your child is using a pencil they should hold it between the thumb and index finger with other fingers underneath and their hand resting on the paper like this:
Triangular pencils can help with this (these can be purchased at WH Smith).
- ✚ Don't worry about teaching your child how to write letters before they start school. It's much better to trace or make patterns such as wavy lines, zig-zags, curls and loops. Remember you can do this with chalk, crayons or paint on easels or blackboards too.
- ✚ Many children *will* know how to write their own name before they start school but again, please don't worry if your child is not ready to do this yet. **We would ask that if this is something your child is keen to do that you encourage them to only use a capital for the first letter of their name.**
- ✚ Play "I Spy", rhyming and memory games - these are really important in helping to develop pre-reading skills.
- ✚ Let them help with weighing and measuring if you are cooking or baking - use words like lighter/heavier, more than/less than.
- ✚ Counting games like snakes and ladders or any game that uses a dice help develop an understanding of number.
- ✚ Setting the table encourages children to look at sets of things as well as one-to-one correspondence, patterns and sequencing.
- ✚ Talk about how much things cost when you go shopping.

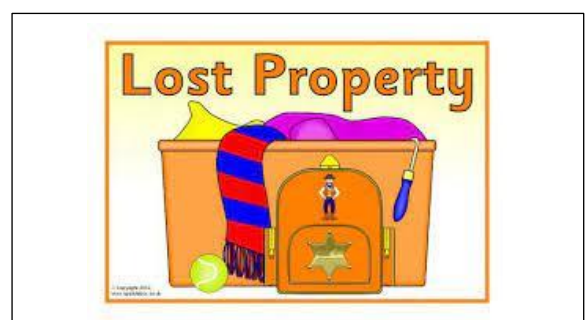




What should your child bring to school?



- ✚ A schoolbag which is big enough to carry a book.
- ✚ A pencil case containing at least three sharp pencils, a rubber, colouring pens or pencils and a glue stick, labelled with your child's name.
- ✚ The homework folder that has been gifted to your child on their Induction day.
- ✚ A painting apron or old shirt, labelled with your child's name.
- ✚ PE Kit - St. Fillan's t-shirt (in the appropriate house colour) dark coloured shorts and soft-shoes. Rain jacket and joggers for outdoor learning. Due to lack of space, we request that PE kits are only brought to school on gym days. All children should have soft shoes or trainers for changing. All items of clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum, if at all, and **must be removed** before PE for health and safety reasons.
- ✚ A water bottle - we have two water fountains in school with clean, fresh drinking water and classes are timetabled throughout the day to refill their bottles.
- ✚ Lost Property - We have a well organised lost property storage unit in our Central Area. To avoid your child's clothes and personal belongings finding a home in this area, we would recommend that all property is clearly labelled with your child's name.





A Day in the Life...



A Day in the Life of Primary One:

Parents often ask what pupils actually do once they start school. In reality each day is a little bit different but the following outline describes a fairly typical day at the beginning of Primary 1:

9.00am - The school bell rings - children finish their games and line up in their 'Line Order' as advised by their teacher. The children will then be greeted by their teacher and enter into the building where they will hang their coats and bags up in the cloakroom and make their way to class.

9.00 - 9.30am - Active Starts - learning stations are set up for the children to engage in active play. The children 'check' in using a self-registration system and they select their preferred lunch choice on the computer or I pad.

9.30 - 9.50am - Numeracy lesson on counting to 10 using large flashcards and Interactive Whiteboard.

9.50 - 10.20am - Small group activities - games, activities and written work reinforcing counting to 10.

10.20 - 10.40am - Tidy up, go to toilet, coats on and snacks organised.

10.40 - 10.55am - Morning Interval.

10.55 - 11.30am - Phonics lesson - learning the sound "t" - games, songs and activities with teacher; workbook activity completed independently.

11.30- 12.00pm - Writing lesson - 'The Garden.'

Pupils go outside to visit the Eco Garden and then complete detailed black line drawing of what they have been doing. Class teacher and/or classroom assistant scribe what each pupil wants to say about his/her picture.

12.00 - 12.15pm - Music - singing.

12.15 - 12.25pm - Tidy up, go to toilet, coats on.

12.25 - 1.20pm - Lunch followed by outside play.

1.20 - 2.00pm - PE lesson in gym hall.

2.00 - 2.30pm - Drama.

2.30 - 2.50pm - Story.

2.50 - 2.55pm - Coats on, bags packed, line up, P7 buddies collect pupils travelling by bus or after care provision.

3.00pm - Children escorted outside to be collected.





Getting Ready for School...



'All About Me':

During the Induction afternoon, the children will be issued with an 'All About Me,' booklet within their gifted homework folders.

The booklet is designed to be completed by parents and children prior to starting school. This will then form the first part of your child's 'Personal Learning Plan.'

The booklet is not intended to be a test as the abilities, skills and talents of all children vary.

The information that you provide will be used by the Class Teacher to build on your child's existing skills and provide the best possible start to school.

This information will be used in addition to the 'Transfer of Information' formed that we receive from your child's Nursery.

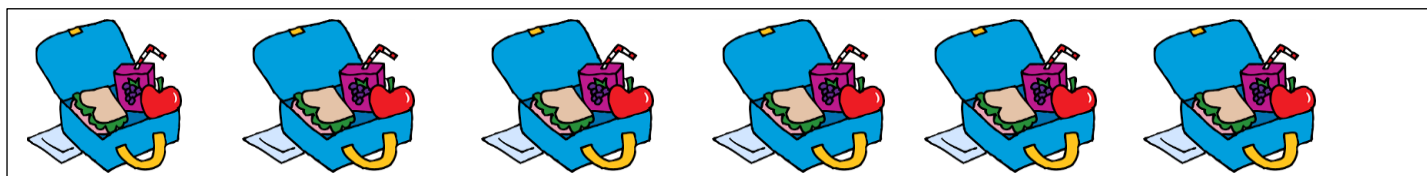
House Family System:

Pupils will join the rest of the school for our weekly assembly. We operate a house system in the school and have four houses based on influential and inspiring Saints - **Margaret**, **Columba**, **Ninian** and **Ogilvie**. Children will be allocated a specific House Family and pupils will be provided with a 'House Badge' to wear in their House Family Colour. During Assembly pupils in the same house all sit together and they are awarded points for good behaviour etc. At the end of each term the house with the most points is given a reward such as an extra 10 minutes play time or a treat that the pupils have chosen, such as a PJ Day. Pupils can earn points on a daily basis for their House and also earn points for their house on Sports Day when the winning house is awarded the school sports trophy.

Lunch Arrangements:

All Primary pupils in Primaries 1-5 are entitled to a free school lunch. A lunch menu will be issued to you and it is rotated over a four week cycle. Please note that the menu can also be found on the School Website and there are weekly Facebook reminders provided on a Sunday evening. This will enable you to discuss in advance, the option that your child wishes to select. Over the course of a week there are two 'Dine in Days' and three 'Grab and Go' days and all lunches are served with a choice of drinks. The Dinner lady will visit every class each day and the children will select their choice and be issued with a coloured wristband to wear. This wristband indicates your child's choice and prevents any confusion at lunchtime.

While our Dining Room Supervisor tries to encourage everyone to eat up their lunch, they allow children to take as long as required to finish it. They refrain from making anyone eat something from their lunchbox that they do not like. Instead, this will return home to you.





Additional Information:



Extra-Curricular Clubs:

Here in St. Fillan's Primary, we have a very full programme of Active Schools Activity Clubs. These clubs feature a wide range of activities that can be enjoyed at lunchtime and after school. Clubs usually cost £1.00 per club and can be purchased in termly blocks using our online registering system: 'Class 4 Kids.' Once the clubs have been confirmed, you will receive a letter explaining all the details.

School Transport:

Following an application to Renfrewshire Council, certain children are entitled to school transport to and from school. We have a 'Houston' bus and a 'Bridge of Weir' bus. A member of the SLT or Support Staff is responsible for escorting the children as a group to the school bus at 2.55pm.

Parents are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure their child behaves in an appropriate manner on the bus as is expected during the school day. All children are required to sign the 'Bus Code of Conduct' at the beginning of the school term. Parents/carers must confirm in writing the days that their child will be using this service.

After School Care:

An after school service and arrangements are in place at 3.00pm to facilitate the collection and care of children. Please note:

- Parents of children attending after school care should inform the Class Teacher's in writing of which days their child attends this provision. This enables us to create a register.
- At 3.00pm, the staff wait for the children in the playground and escort the children from here as a group.
- It is imperative that Parents inform teachers in writing of any changes to after school arrangements to ensure the health and safety of all.



School Website/Facebook and Twitter:

Social Media provides us with a fantastic forum to communicate about day to day events that take place in school.

We effectively use our pages to send reminders, share information and video clips related to our ethos and vision/values and aims and to 'Showcase' the learning, talents and achievements of our children, classes and wider school community. Please note that we share photographs of children, events and learning across the school in accordance with our GDPR policy.

We believe that the use of these sites is beneficial in keeping parents and carers up to date with what is happening in school.

Social media is also fundamental in helping us to continue to raise the profile of our school within the St. Fillan's family, our local community and beyond.

We know that many of our families follow our sites with interest and are appreciative of this forum as an effective means of communication between home and school.

To keep everyone safe on Facebook and Twitter, we have an 'Appropriate Use of Social Media' Policy which was created in March 2019 and you can find a paper copy in your packs or an electronic version on our school website. It is important that we have and follow clear guidance around the appropriate use of these forums and we appreciate your co-operation with this.



Additional Information:



Parish Links:

As we are a Catholic School, we work in close partnership with our School Chaplain, Monsignor Andrew McFadden and Sister Mary Frances, who serve the Parish Community of St. Fillan's. Being situated in close proximity to the Church, we enjoy regular visits and we attend First Friday of the Month Masses to which you are more than welcome to attend. The Sacrament of First Holy Communion is celebrated in Primary 4 at St. Fillan's, while the Primary 7 children celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Mirin's Cathedral, Paisley.

Parent Council:

We have an active Parent Council who are involved in School Improvement and Fundraising activities. They plan and facilitate exciting events such as: the Christmas/ Summer Fayre, Halloween Disco, Quiz Nights and many more to help raise funds for the essential extras that benefit the children. For example: outdoor learning, ICT, Library areas etc. If you would like to help, or have any fundraising ideas, you would be more than welcome. Our Chairperson is: Julie Shields. Please contact the School Office should you wish to contact Julie.

Baseline Assessment:

For the last few years, Renfrewshire Council has endorsed an online assessment for our Primary 1 pupils (SNSA). Each pupil will complete a baseline assessment on an iPad with his or her teacher. The information collected will help us identify your child's strengths in Language, Literacy and Numeracy and allow us to target support where required. The assessment will be repeated at the end of Primary 1 and this is standard practice across schools in Scotland.

Homework:

Pupils begin learning letter sounds and names right away and will be given some homework tasks within the first few weeks. Whenever your child is taught a new letter they should practise saying it and finding objects that begin with this letter. A reading book will be issued and there will be more formal homework on a weekly basis. You will be able to receive further information about this during the 'Meet the Teacher' session.

Parent Pay:

St. Fillan's is a cashless school which means that payments for school excursions and lunches (Primary 4 and above) will be managed online. Each child has an account which is set up in their parents name and we will provide you with further information on the Induction days in relation to this system.

Parent Helpers:

We couldn't do all of the exciting things that we do without asking for some help from time to time! We often ask for Parents to help us within school or by accompanying the children on a school outing and we would love for you to consider volunteering to support us.

School Uniform:

The supplier that we tend to use for school uniform is: 'School Wear Made Easy and they can be contacted on: 0141 889 7206 or they have an online shop. Please note that the following items are required for school uniform:

- Navy skirt/trousers (smart/tailored) and **dark outdoor shoes.**
- Navy blazer or navy school fleece jacket (and navy shower proof jacket).
- Blue shirt and tie, school sweatshirt or navy jumper/cardigan, or
- School polo shirt and school sweatshirt.
- The wearing of trainers to and from school is actively discouraged and we ask that they be kept for indoor use only.
- Please note shirt and tie (formal school uniform) will be required by all children. This will be requested for formal school events and Masses.





Top Ten Tips!



The following Top Ten Tips for parents and families of children starting primary school comes from the www.parentingacrossscotland.org website:

1) Starting school:

Going to school for the first time is a big event for children. Visit the school before your child starts, schools often provide opportunities for parents and children to visit. Even though your child may not remember where everything is, at least the journey and teachers will be more familiar on their first day.

2) Have patience:

Sometimes children's behaviour becomes babyish when they start school. They can swing from being dependent one minute to independent the next. Be patient with them, give them a cuddle and show a genuine interest in their worries.

3) Establish a routine:

Mornings can be especially stressful for both of you. Establish a morning routine and make sure your child has breakfast. Give yourself and your child enough time to get ready in the morning especially if they are beginning to dress themselves.

4) Show interest:

Show a genuine interest in everything your child does, both in school and at home, encourage them to talk to you about how they are feeling, but beware of turning interest into pressure.

5) Encourage them:

You don't need to go over the top with praise - it is often better to show interest and encouragement. This will help them to feel confident and secure. Don't be afraid to constantly tell them you love them.

6) Time to relax:

When children start school the day can be very long and tiring for them - allow them time to relax when they get home. Children have a continuing need for love, support and encouragement from those who love them most.

7) Spend time together:

Try to spend even a small amount of time doing something together each day, even if this is just watching their favourite TV programme with them and talking to them about it.

8) Have fun:

Starting school is an anxious time for all children. Having fun and playing with your child helps to alleviate some of the anxiety, and play helps children to manage new situations and develop social skills.

9) Talk to the teacher:

Make a point of talking to your child's teacher if you are worried about anything at all. It's best to voice concerns early on even if you think that it's just a small thing. Regularly attend parents' evenings and school meetings - it shows your child and the school that you are interested in how everything is going.

10) Look after yourself:

Parents today have a difficult and complex job to do but parents don't need to be perfect. Make sure you look after yourself and have people to talk to when you need to. Try to spend some time thinking about your own life and priorities.





St. Fillan's Primary - School Staff:



Welcome into the St. Fillan's family! Our ethos is a welcoming and caring one and there are many members of the team who will be happy to assist you over the years to come:

Head Teacher	Mrs J McPherson
Principal Teacher	Mrs A McWilliams
Service Delivery Officer	Mr K McPhee
Class Teachers	Mrs J Smith
	Mrs J Kaney
	Mrs M McKay
	Miss L McGarry
	Mrs N McNeil
	Mrs C McAlaney
	Mrs L McVicker
	Mrs J McKay
Clerical Assistants	Mrs L Rennie
	Mrs D Sutherland
Classroom Assistant	Mrs S Edmiston
	Mrs J Kelly
Additional Support Needs (ASNA)	Mrs A Bruce
	Mrs R Barr-Roan
	Mr R Fabiani
Senior Facilities Operatives - Janitor, Cleaning and Catering	Mrs H Hughes
	Mr McDermott
	Ms Karen McBride
	Ms Naomi Chappell
Pastoral Care	Monsignor Andrew McFadden
	Sister Mary Frances
Catering	Naomi
Crossing Patrol Officers	Maria Carey
Visiting Specialists	Ms W O'Neill - Educational Psychologist
	TBC - Active Schools Co-ordinator
	Mr K Bowes - Chanter Tuition
	Mrs Tennant - Music Tuition



Curriculum for Excellence



The Curriculum:

"Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18..... The curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future."
Education Scotland.

Over the last few years there has been a review of what we teach in schools and also how we teach it. Curriculum for Excellence forms the basis of pupils' experiences in Nursery, Primary and Secondary schools across Scotland and aims to equip young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Here in St. Fillan's Primary School we have worked hard to develop plans, activities and programmes of study which help pupils fulfil these aims and encourage them to achieve their potential.

If your child has attended nursery you will probably be aware that the Early Level begins when children are 3 and continues for most children to the end of Primary 1. They then progress through levels until the end of S3 when they move on to the Senior Phase. Curriculum for Excellence lays great emphasis on making learning relevant, helping pupils make connections and equipping them for their role in society in the future. There are eight curricular areas:

-  Expressive arts
-  Health and wellbeing
-  Languages
-  Mathematics
-  Religious and moral education
-  Sciences
-  Social studies
-  Technologies

Teachers carefully plan age appropriate activities in all curricular areas with a particular focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

The Class Teacher will be able to provide you with further information about what your child will be learning by issuing a 'Term in a Nutshell Newsletter' and during the 'Meet the Teacher' session.

curriculum for excellence

