

Childrens Services



## **Handbook 2024 - 2025**

St. Margaret's Early Learning & Childcare Centre

Quarrelton Road

Johnstone,

PA5 8RX

Tel: 0300 300 1482

**Contents**

**Introduction** Letter from Director of Children’s Services Page 1

Letter from Head Teacher Page 2

Names and job titles of our Staff Members Page 3

Holiday list Page 4

**Section One** Establishment Aims Page 5

**Section Two General Information** Page 6

* Admissions
* Hours of opening
* Daily sessions
* Age range and numbers of children  
  in the establishment
* Settling into the Early Learning & Childcare Centre
* Key worker
* Emergency contacts
* Arrival and collection of children
* Suitable clothing
* Early Learning & Childcare Centre sweatshirts
* Excursions and consent forms
* Meals
* Snacks and the promotion of healthy eating
* Transport
* Insurance
* Emergency closure arrangements
* Accommodation for parent/carer
* Statement on No Smoking Policy
* Early Learning & Childcare Centre charges
* Other general information

**Section Three Medical Information** Page 11

* Medication
* If your child becomes ill
* Minor accidents and upsets
* Visits to the establishment by medical staff

**Section Four Early Learning & Childcare Centre**

**Curriculum** Page 12

* The aims of our curriculum
* How we promote learning
* What we do
* Assessment
* Supporting children with difficulties
* Working together to support learning

##### Section Five Parental Partnership Page 16

* Establishment’s aims for the promotion  
  of partnership
* Working with you
* Working together to promote positive  
  behaviour
* Parents’ Council
* Fundraising

##### Section Six Wider Community Page 19

* The establishment and the community
* Links with primary schools

##### Section Seven Other Information Page 20

* Suggestions and complaints
* Useful addresses
* Childcare information
* Disclaimer on changes to information  
  given

*Telephone:*

*Fax:*

*Email:*

*My Ref:*

*Contact:*

*Date:*

Children’s Services

Dear Parent

Each year Early Learning & Childcare Centres issue copies of their handbooks which outline the current policies and practices of the Council and of the Early Learning & Childcare Centre. Renfrewshire Council Children’s Services is committed to the quality of service that is provided. This commitment is reflected in our vision and values which were developed after extensive consultation. Our vision is a learning Renfrewshire which empowers individuals to fulfil their potential and contributes to the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of communities.

Our values are those of the Council. Our service will:

* involve and empower
* listen and communicate
* aim to be the best
* treat our customers well
* value our employees
* tackle inequalities
* work in partnership
* represent the community

I commend the ELCC handbook to you as a source of helpful information, not only on day to day matters of Early Learning & Childcare Centre procedure, but as an interesting insight into the ELCC itself.

Yours sincerely

Janie O’Neill

Janie O’Neill

Director of Children’s Services

Director of Children’s Services : Janie O’Neill

-1-



**St. Margaret's ELCC**

Quarrelton Road, Johnstone PA5 8RX

Tel: 0300 300 1482

Head Teacher: Mrs Gillian Miller

Depute Head Teacher: Mrs Moira Hepburn

Depute Head of Centre: Julie Hinchliffe

Depute Head of Centre: Rhoda McAndrew

Childrens Services

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to St. Margaret’s.

I hope you will find this handbook interesting and useful. In it we have tried to give you a picture of life in St. Margaret’s.

I believe that together the staff, parent/carer and pupils of St. Margaret’s have created a happy, caring, and respectful community where all the children are helped and encouraged to achieve their full potential. We have high expectations of and for all the children and are rarely disappointed.

We try to prepare the children for the world they live in by helping them to develop emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually in the hope that they will be happy, well-adjusted members of society.

I am sure these are the same hopes you have for your child, and I look forward to working with you and your family in St. Margaret’s.

Yours sincerely

**Gillian Miller**

Gillian Miller

Head Teacher

-2-

# **Names and job titles of our staff members:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gillian Miller | Head Teacher |
| Moira Hepburn | Depute Head Teacher |
| Julie Hinchliffe | Depute Head of Centre |
| Rhoda McAndrew | Depute Head of Centre |
| Alison Taylor | Senior Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Yvonne McGrory | Early Years Graduate |
| Wajeha Afzal | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Jennifer Young | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Shelley Hart | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Gillian Larmour | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Gaynor McGiffen | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Ross Paterson | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Annie Ravenscroft | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Laura Shields | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Hazel Sinclair | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Amanda Dickson | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Angela Speirs | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Beth Thomson | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Pauline Walsh | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Lesley King | Early Learning Childcare Officer |
| Laura Black | Support Worker |
| Emma Burke | Support Worker |
| Uttara Mukhopadhyay | Support Worker |
| Ann Muir | Support Worker |
| Julie Devlin | Senior Clerical Officer |

###### 



-3-

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Nursery Holidays 2024-2025** | |
| **First Term 2024** | |
| **In-service Day- closed to all children** | **Wednesday 14 August 2024 (IS)** |
| **In-service Day -closed to all children** | **Thursday 15 August 2024 (IS)** |
| Pupils return | Friday 16 August 2024 |
| **September Weekend- closed to all children** | **Friday 27 September 2024 and Monday 30 September 2024** |
| Nursery re-opens | Tuesday 1 October 2024 |
| **In-service Day – closed to all children** | **Friday 11 October 2024 (IS)** |
| Nursery closed to term time children | Monday 14 October 2024 to Friday 18 October 2024 (Inclusive) |
| Nursery re-opens | Monday 21 October 2024 |
| St Andrew’s Day – closed to all term time children | Monday 2 December 2024 |
| Christmas/New Year  Closed to term time children  Closed to all children | Monday 23 December & Tuesday 24 December 2024  Wednesday 25 December 2024  to  Friday 3 January 2025 (inclusive) |
| **Second Term 2025** | |
| Nursery re-opens | Monday 6 January 2025 |
| **In-service Day – closed to all children** | **Friday 14 February 2025 (IS)** |
| Mid Term Break  Nursery closed to term time children | Monday 17 February 2025 – Tuesday 18 February 2025 (Inclusive) |
| Re-open to all children | Wednesday 19 February 2025 |
| Spring Holiday  Closed to all term time children | Monday 7 April 2024 to Monday 21 April 2025 (inclusive) |
| **Easter Weekend**  **closed to all children** | **Friday 18 April 2025 to Monday 21 April 2025** |
| **Third Term 2025** | |
| Nursery re-opens to all children | Tuesday 22 April 2025 |
| **May Day – closed to all children** | **Monday 5 May 2025** |
| Nursery re-opens | Tuesday 6 May 2025 |
| **In-service Day – closed to all children** | **Friday 23 May 2025** |
| **Local Holiday**  **Closed to all children** | **Monday 26 May 2025** |
| Nursery re-opens | Tuesday 27 May 2025 |
| Last day of session for term time children | Friday 27 June 2025 |

For children who have an all year-round placement the Early Learning & Childcare Centre will be closed on **public holidays, in-service days and over Christmas/New Year.**

-4-

**Section One: Establishment Aims**

At St. Margaret's ELCC we aim to offer the highest quality service.

We will seek to:

* provide a curriculum consistent with local and national guidelines which is broad, balanced and responsive to children’s needs, development and interests
* in consultation with parents/carers and through high quality play experiences, support children in reaching their full potential
* provide a flexible service which is responsive to the specific needs of children and their families
* develop positive partnerships with parents/carers, outside agencies and the wider community to support children’s development and learning
* promote a welcoming and positive ethos which reflects equality, fairness, inclusion, respecting and valuing all members of the ELCC.
* provide high quality resources to support effective development and learning
* establish an effective staff team, which continually strives to provide the highest quality of service

In particular we would like you to note the following:

#### Non-denominational policy of the Early Learning & Childcare Centre

The ELCC is non-denominational. We respect and welcome children and parents/carers of all religions, faiths and beliefs.

#### Our equal opportunities policy

All pre-five services should reflect the council’s equal opportunities policies and be anti-racist, anti-sexist, multi-cultural, and recognise the rights of both men and women to work or to care for children. Provision takes into account the needs of children with special needs. These principles are reflected in the criteria used to admit children to nursery and in the curriculum of all establishments.

#### Admissions policy

Renfrewshire Council has agreed that there are some family and geographical circumstances which will give children priority for admission.

All ELCC places are allocated in line with the council’s admissions policy and the ELCC staff will advise you how this policy operates when you apply for a place for your child.



-5-

**Section Two: General Information**

##### Admissions

All children are entitled to a funded ELCC place from the age of three. The date of eligibility depends on when your child becomes three (see table below). Some establishments offer places to children under the age of three. These places are allocated in accordance with Renfrewshire Council Pre-Five Admissions Policy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| If your child’s third  birthday is in: | They will be eligible for a funded pre-school place from: |
| March, April, May, June, July or August | August |
| September,October, November or December | January |
| January or February | April |

Limited free Early Learning & Childcare places are available for **two-year-olds** who live in Renfrewshire.

Children who are eligible will be offered either 23.45 hours per week for an all-year-round placement (48 weeks) or 30 hours per week for a term time placement. Term time placements are 9am-3pm and all year-round placements usually five mornings 8.15am–1pm / five afternoons 1pm – 5.45pm, or two and a half days a week. Some flexible places may be available.

**Who can get the free Early Learning & Childcare Centre places?**  
Eligible two-year olds residing in Renfrewshire whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits. Please follow the link to [www.mygov.scot/childcare-costs-help/funded-early-learning-and-childcare](http://www.mygov.scot/childcare-costs-help/funded-early-learning-and-childcare) to see if you qualify.

Proof of benefit is required in the form of written confirmation from the benefits office (appendix 18), full Universal Credit statement showing take home pay or current tax credit award letter from HM Revenue and Customs.

-6-

**When does your child become eligible for a free Early Learning & Childcare Centre place?**Children aged two are eligible to take up their funded place from the term after their birthday or from the term after their parents start receiving qualifying benefit:

* Term 1 - children born March to August will be eligible from August.
* Term 2 - children born September to December will be eligible from January
* Term 3 - children born January and February will be eligible from April.

Once a child becomes eligible to take up their Early Learning & Childcare Centre place, they stay entitled to a place even if their parent's circumstances change.

An admissions panel will meet at regular intervals throughout the year to discuss and band your applications and to decide how Early Learning & Childcare Centre places will be allocated. The panel will consist of the heads of St. Margaret's ELCC, Auchenlodment Nursery, Lochwinnoch, Mid Gavin, Spateston Pre-5, West Johnstone Pre-5 and Stepping Stones Nursery.

#### Register of applicants

A register of all applicants will be kept by the head teacher.

Please note that the length of time a child’s name has been on the register will not affect the child’s priority for admission. Parents/carers can ask to see their application form at any time.

If circumstances change which will affect the application, you should notify the head teacher.

#### Admissions procedures

Early Learning & Childcare Centre application forms are available from the ELCC,

St Margaret’s Primary website, Renfrewshire Council website, applications can also be made online at the following link [https://bit.ly/36n4Mkc](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2F36n4Mkc&data=04%7C01%7Cjulie.devlin%40renfrewshire.gov.uk%7C014f137f143d443299b908d8c441bf89%7Cca2953361aa64486b2b2cf7669625305%7C0%7C0%7C637475133949711022%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=ipZG%2FwbElpJnieDy7W%2BxbV6HeOL0pcHx14tL2vTSnbI%3D&reserved=0) Parents/carers will be required to show proof of their child’s date of birth and address prior to a place being offered. The address given on the application form must be that of the parent/carer or legal guardian, and proof of address will be requested.

Once you have submitted your application you will be given a receipt for it. Your application will then be banded at the admissions panel, and you will be sent a letter telling you that your application has been considered and whether or not a place is available at that time. If you are unsuccessful in securing a place immediately, your application will be held on the register of applicants until a place does become available.

If no place is available at your first choice ELCC you may be offered an alternative placement locally.

You will be informed by letter when a place is available. Once offered a place for your child you will be invited for a short introductory visit to the Centre. Again, if your circumstances change, it is vital that you inform the Centre.

Every effort is made to meet parents/carers preference, but this is not always possible.

##### Hours of opening

St Margaret’s Early Learning & Childcare Centre is open from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm. The places are as follows:

All-year-round placement

Morning placement (Monday to Friday) - 8.15 am – 1 pm

Afternoon placement (Monday to Friday) -1.00 pm - 5.45pm

Two and a half days placement

Two days - 8.15 am – 5.45 pm plus one morning or afternoon session.

Term Time placement

9.00am – 3.00pm Monday to Friday

#### Daily sessions

Children are entitled to 1140 hours over the year. Please let the centre know if you do not wish to use all the sessions you have been offered as there is a high demand for places and another child could be allocated the place.

Regular attendance is always encouraged, and it is appreciated if you would phone the centre when your child is absent.

Please find enclosed a holiday list for the coming academic year.

##### Age range of children in the establishment

St. Margaret's Early Learning & Childcare Centre caters for children from age two to five. There are currently 40 term time places, 16 all-year-round morning and 16 all-year-round afternoon places for 3-5. For two-year-olds, we have 8 term time places & 14 all-year-round places, which would be either five mornings/ five afternoons or two and a half days a week.

##### Settling in

As each child is an individual, the length of time to settle each one will vary. **The first day is always a short day, lasting approximately 1 hour.** This will gradually build up to a full session. Parents/carers are welcome to stay in family room where they can complete enrolment forms.



#### Key worker

Each child will be allocated a key worker who will formally report to you about your child’s progress. However, across our centre all staff will engage with and build relationships with all children.

#### Emergency contacts

Parents/carers of children attending the centre must provide, where possible, names, addresses and telephone numbers of two relatives/friends who may be contacted in the case of an emergency. It is essential that these people have been informed and are willing to collect your child should the need arise.

Please inform the nursery of any changes in this information.

#### Arrival and collection of children

It is expected that a responsible adult will bring a child to and from the centre.

In the interests of your child’s safety, you should make a point of telling the staff if your child is to be collected by someone not known to staff. This avoids difficult situations when a child will not be allowed to leave with an adult who is a stranger to the staff.



##### Suitable clothing

Children have the best fun when they are doing messy work! Please dress your child in suitable clothes. Please also make sure that your child has suitable outdoor clothing as we play outdoors. Wellies would also be a great help with names/initials written inside.

#### Sweatshirts

We have an Early Learning & Childcare Centre sweatshirt and polo shirt which have the logo on. These have proved to be very popular and any parents/carers wishing to order these items can do so at our online shop.

http://bit.ly/3B0yOJE



**Please put your child’s name on all sweaters, shoes and jackets.**

#### Excursions and consent forms

When outings or excursions for children are planned, you will be advised in advance. You will be asked to complete consent forms which give your permission for your child’s participation. Please note that children cannot take part in outings unless completed forms have been submitted by their parents/carers. Consent forms are completed on ParentPay.

#### Meals

Lunch will be provided for all children, in all placements.

#### Snacks and the promotion of healthy eating

The children are offered a snack each morning and afternoon. This consists of a choice of milk or water, and a snack such as seasonal fruits, cheese and biscuits, homemade bread daily, cereal, or other similar foods. Please let us know if your child requires a special diet.

#### 

#### Insurance

Sometimes children like to bring something special or new to Early Learning & Childcare Centre for their friends to see. However, parents/carers should be aware that the council cannot accept responsibility for personal belongings, including clothing, left in the centre. Submitted claims are likely to be met only in circumstances where the authority can be shown to have been negligent.

#### Emergency closure arrangements

The Early Learning & Childcare Centre will be opened on the times already outlined, but on some occasions, circumstances may arise which means the centre has to close.

Establishments may be affected by, for example, severe weather, transport problems, power failures, or difficulties with fuel supplies. If this happens, we will do all we can to let you know about the details of closure and re-opening. We may keep in touch by telephone, notices in local shops and community centres, announcements in local churches, in the press and on local radio.

[](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?q=emergency+closure+clipart&start=111&um=1&hl=en&safe=active&biw=1024&bih=587&tbm=isch&tbnid=_jxxVvDlPBJCnM:&imgrefurl=http://qpps.ca/newsletter/december-2012/&docid=BDpUyL6UO4XU4M&imgurl=http://qpps.ca/newsletter/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/stuck-in-snow-clipart.gif&w=490&h=330&ei=qMg9Ubb4L4uA7Qae94G4BQ&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=508&vpy=73&dur=1669&hovh=184&hovw=274&tx=117&ty=102&page=6&tbnh=150&tbnw=223&ndsp=25&ved=1t:429,r:15,s:100,i:49)

#### Accommodation for parent/carer

There is a family room where you are welcome. This is also an opportunity to meet and chat with other parents/carers.

#### No smoking policy

Renfrewshire Council does not permit smoking within its buildings and grounds. If you require to smoke, please do so out with the nursery gates. Thank you for your co-operation. **Please note that dogs are also not allowed within nursery grounds.**

#### Nursery charges

A funded full-time place is available for all pre-school and ante pre-school children from the term after their third birthday.

Please note that, if required, Renfrewshire Council has the right to introduce a charge for a nursery place which is allocated in addition to this.

[](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?q=voluntary+contributions+clipart&um=1&hl=en&safe=active&biw=1024&bih=587&tbm=isch&tbnid=RxHavGWTy_gyxM:&imgrefurl=http://rationallyspeaking.blogspot.com/2012_10_01_archive.html&docid=rypqwIA4tx7zzM&imgurl=http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-fzsSAbpNP4s/UIHEtetWIWI/AAAAAAAAFN0/Ekg4WGJgaZI/s1600/money-clipart71.jpg&w=630&h=575&ei=D8g9UerMI-b07Aaa9oAI&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=19&vpy=107&dur=6536&hovh=214&hovw=235&tx=126&ty=131&page=2&tbnh=137&tbnw=165&start=17&ndsp=23&ved=1t:429,r:29,s:0,i:168)

Other general information:

#### Resource fund

There is a donation of £2.00 per week paid via ParentPay. This enables us to provide snacks, baking ingredients, arrange small outings and trips, buy photographic and playroom equipment, plants for the garden and exciting resources to explore. Accounts are available on request.

**Section Three: Medical Information**

#### Medication

The administration of medication is at the discretion of the head of establishment.

If your child is in need of medication during his/her time at nursery, you must discuss his/her requirements with the head of the nursery. You will need to fill in a form which authorises nursery staff to administer medication.

If your child suffers from any condition which is likely to require emergency treatment, parents/carers must inform staff of likely triggers and what emergency treatment is required.

Please note that establishments must be informed and kept up to date of any medical conditions your child suffers from.



#### If your child becomes ill

The establishment would welcome a telephone call if your child

is not able to attend nursery on a particular day.

If your child becomes ill while at the centre, we will contact the parent/carer or emergency contact and ensure your child is comfortable and reassured. If the illness is of a serious nature and hospital treatment is required, your child will be taken to the local Accident and Emergency unit. You will be contacted and advised to join your child there.

#### Minor accidents and upsets

If your child has a minor accident at the centre, immediate First Aid will be administered. The accident/incident will be entered in our Accident Book and the parent/carer or person collecting the child will be informed.

**Sunscreen**

The children will be outside and enjoying their learning in the sun and there are areas for them to find shade. However, it is important that we remind ourselves about the guidelines given to us about sun protection. So, to help protect your child’s skin please can you do the following: Sun hat & sunglasses – please wear, Sun screen (Factor 50 is best) –please apply. If you don’t want your child to have sunscreen applied at the centre, please advise a member of staff.



#### Visits to the establishment by medical staff

On occasions, there will be visits made by

Health Board staff, e.g., dentist, optician.

Parents/carers will be given advance notice of any check-up and are welcome to attend. Parent/carer permission will always be sought.

-11-

**Section Four: The Nursery Curriculum**

**

Our aims

At St. Margaret's Early Learning & Childcare Class we aim to:

* value each child as an individual
* offer a broad and balanced curriculum
* develop successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors

*(A Curriculum for Excellence 2006)*

##### How we promote learning

Young children learn through play. At St. Margaret's staff work with the children to plan and implement a range of learning opportunities, building on the interests of the child and encouraging personalisation and choice.

#### How we do this

Staff work in partnership with children, their parents/carers and the wider community to develop skills and enhance learning opportunities. This is encouraged through:

* consultation and mind mapping
* children’s planning
* observation and assessment
* big book work
* topic led by children’s interests
* children’s choice

#### What we do

The centre is planned around the initiatives outlined within

‘A Curriculum for Excellence’

Within the curriculum there are 8 areas. These are:

* **Health and Wellbeing** - where children are encouraged to develop knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
* **Numeracy and Mathematics** - where children are encouraged to develop a secure understanding of mathematical concepts, including number, size, quantity, shape and measurement
* **Literacy and English** - where children are encouraged to communicate, work together and build relationships, through the diversity of language and enrich their vocabulary through listening, talking, watching and reading.
* **Expressive Arts** - where children are encouraged to communicate, collaborate and build relationships through art and design, music, drama and dance.
* **Religious and Moral** - where children are encouraged to learn about and from beliefs, values, practices and traditions of both Christian and world religions
* **Sciences** - where children are encouraged to develop a curiosity and understanding of their environment and their place within it

-12-

* **Social Studies** - where children are encouraged to develop their understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland and broaden their understanding of the world
* **Technologies** - where children are encouraged to develop understanding of the role and impact of technologies and gain the skills and confidence to use these to inform and extend their learning

**The outdoor learning environment**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiT1YiniMXMAhUMI8AKHcGLBJAQjRwIBw&url=https://www.123rf.com/photo_46283838_stock-vector-kids-in-raincoats-and-rubber-boots-playing-in-the-rain-children-jumping-and-splashing-through-the-pu.html&psig=AFQjCNErplwXzWo_C2OjaJ919mWgLXkJ4w&ust=1462610852241043)

Outdoor learning is an entitlement for your child. All children have the right to experience and enjoy the essential and special nature of being outdoors in all weathers. Young children thrive and their minds and bodies develop best when they have free access to stimulating outdoor play and real experiences. The outdoors offers challenge and risk within a framework of security and safety. The children learn how to be safe and to be aware of others.

Recent research has discovered the benefits of mud play:-

* Mud contains microscopic bacteria called mycobacterium vaccae. Allowing me to play in the mud helps to soothe me and relax as it increases serotonin levels in my brain.
* My immune system may be boosted. Let me get dirty and build my immunological army.
* Sensory play in the mud improves brain development, it can make me smarter.
* I have the opportunity to develop my literacy skills through writing the initial of my name in the mud.
* My numeracy and mathematical skills develop, judging measurements and counting how many dishes I need etc.
* My social skills develop, by learning to share, taking turns, communicating and playing co-operatively.
* My gross and fine motor skills are constantly tested.
* I explore through science and much much more.



**Let me play** 

**Water Play Outdoors**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiBytWxo8XMAhViIsAKHVBKDEoQjRwIBw&url=https://www.pinterest.com/pin/242350023669792120/&bvm=bv.121421273,d.ZGg&psig=AFQjCNH9Qd9uIOfcItH2r36yVzdM0UeuSg&ust=1462618139641095)

There will be a range of water-based activities with the potential for engaging young children in meaningful learning, where there is no right or wrong way to play. Water play outdoors is free and stimulates curiosity, imagination and experimentation.

Engaging in water play fosters development in all areas of the curriculum: -

* By experimenting with water, I learn about measurement, more/less, empty/full, heavy/light, same/different etc.
* As I talk to others I learn new vocabulary, developing social skills and make new friends by playing co-operatively.
* Water play strengthens my gross and fine motor skills by pouring, squeezing, stirring and squirting. It develops my hand and eye coordination and widens my sensory experiences.
* I develop my problem-solving skills as I learn how and why things happen, “Where does water come from”, “what sinks/floats” the effects of force and gravity and how water can change.
* It encourages me to use my imagination. I can be a chef, fire fighter, or just be washing the dishes etc.

Through all this water and mud play, I can get wet and dirty so please send me into nursery in old clothes. Please don’t see the muddy or wet jumper but see me. I have been experimenting and having fun with maths, science, language, social skills, and using my imagination. All of which provide me with skills for life.



###### **Assessment**

Initially, the best way of getting to know your child is by using the information only you can give us. You know so much about your child and we want to learn from you while you are getting to know us. One way we do this is through an individual Care Plan which you will be invited to complete twice each year.

You are welcome in the centre at all times. There will also be times set aside to discuss your child’s progress and achievements, but we are very keen to build up a relationship where you feel happy to discuss and share information in an ongoing manner.

Staff observe children at the centre on a daily basis. Notes from these observations are used to build up a profile of your child’s learning. This profile will be used to record milestones on your child’s learning across the Early level.

The staff will also complete a “Transfer of Information” which will give feeder primary schools a broad picture of your child’s development. This will only be sent with your permission and signature.



#### Supporting children with difficulties

When a child is having difficulty with an area of development or if you are concerned in any way about your child, there is always an opportunity to discuss any areas of concern either with your child’s key worker or the head teacher. These areas could include speech problems, behavioural problems, or learning difficulties.

Occasionally it is necessary to call on the expertise of others to advise on children’s difficulties. This could be a speech therapist, doctor, or educational psychologist. You may approach these agencies independently if you wish.

The centre will work with all parents/carers and the Additional Support for Learning Act in order to provide the best service for each individual.

#### Working together to support learning

You know your child best of all. St. Margaret's recognises this and that is why every child’s starting point in nursery is based on their home and family.

Your child’s key worker will be keen to find out their likes and dislikes and the things that they particularly enjoy doing. Similarly, we are eager to hear about your child’s achievements outside of the centre. All of this information will help staff plan for your child’s next steps in learning.

**Section Five: Parental Partnership**

#### Our aims are:

* to foster a common understanding between staff and parents/carers about the aims of the centre
* to advise you on how to help with your child’s learning and development
* to keep you in touch with your child’s progress and to give you the opportunity to discuss with us, especially concerning your child’s particular strengths and needs
* to encourage you to take part, if possible, in the life of the centre
* to inform you about ongoing centre matters
* to become sensitive to parents/carers needs

##### Working with you

We keep you informed with centre news, dates, and activities. This will be done through our staff, newsletters, and notice boards. (Twitter, Dojo, website).

Come share my learning – a time to come and join your child in a typical day at the centre.

Home Link Bags – An opportunity to share learning with your child.

There will be an opportunity to formally discuss your child’s progress twice a year.



The staff are always keen to have helpers in the playroom,

either on a regular or one-off basis. Please let us know if you wish

more information.

#### Working together to promote positive behaviour

The aim of the centre is to treat each child fairly and with respect. The staff aim to create an atmosphere which is warm, friendly and caring, but where simple playroom rules are observed.

Should your child have any difficulty in behaving appropriately, the staff will discuss this with you and together we will work out a strategy that best meets the needs of your child.

#### Building Resilience in Children [Image result for resilience in children](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj42u60jq_iAhUL-hQKHYqMBdAQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cyh.com%2FHealthTopics%2FHealthTopicDetailsKids.aspx%3Fp%3D335%26np%3D287%26id%3D1758&psig=AOvVaw08ePY4RP9E7iPXk8HRNw_x&ust=1558613636053572)

Resilience is the ability to approach challenges and change with positivity and confidence. Resilient children grow into resilient adults.

At St. Margaret’s we strive to build strong emotional connections to promote healthy risk taking. We resist trying to ‘fix it’ for them and encourage problem solving skills. We demonstrate coping skills, embrace mistakes, and promote resiliency in the great outdoors.

All children are capable of working through challenges and have the ability to bounce back from stress, adversity, failure, and challenges. Resilience is a skill that children develop as they grow.

Resilient children are likely to take healthy risks as they don’t fear falling short of expectations. They are curious about the world around them, they are brave and trust their own instincts. Knowing their own limits, they push themselves and meet their goals, solving problems independently.

-16-

**Strategies to Build Resilience**

Build a strong emotional relationship, allowing for one-to-one time with no mobile phones. This empowers your child as they know that they have your unconditional support.

Promote healthy risk taking: Try something that pushes your child out of their comfort zone. When children embrace risks, they learn to push themselves.

Resist the urge to fix it: ask questions instead supporting your child to think about the issue and find their own solutions.

Label Emotions: teach your child that all feelings are important. By labelling their feelings they learn to make sense of what they are experiencing.

Demonstrate coping skills: deep breathing exercises help your child to relax and calm themselves.

Embrace mistakes: theirs and yours. This helps to promote a growth mindset and they learn that mistakes are learned from.

Nurture optimism: always promote the bright side.

Go outside: exercise helps to strengthen the brain and make it more resilient to stress.

**Inclusion and Diversity at St. Margaret’s**

At St. Margaret’s we value all individuals, recognising their unique attributes, qualities, and ways of being. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines the right of good inclusive practice. Here at St. Margaret’s, we have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. Every child has the right to be included and not disadvantaged, they learn to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

The benefits of inclusive early years provision.

* by observing and interacting with others.
* Increased empathy for others.
* Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual needs.
* There is a sense of community, where everyone is valued as a unique individual.

**Parents’ Council**

“Because parents/carers have such a vital role to play in their children’s education, the Scottish Parliament has passed a new law called the Scottish Schools (Parent Involvement) Act 2006 - to encourage and support more parents/carers to become involved.”

The main aims of the Parental Involvement Act are to:

* help parents/carers become more involved with their child’s education and learning
* welcome parents/carers as active participants in the life of the school
* provide easier ways for parents/carers to express their views and wishes

To help achieve these aims, **all** parents/carers will automatically be members of the Parents/carers Forum at their child’s school and will be entitled to have a say in what happens at the school.”

*(Making the difference: A new law to support parent/carer)*

**Fundraising**

We have a Parents’ Fundraising Group which is active in raising funds for the nursery. They have organised a range of events and all of the money raised has gone towards equipment for the nursery, and entertainment and gifts for the children. The group meet on a regular basis (please see notice board for date and time of meetings). All parents/carers are welcome to come along.

The centre is extremely grateful to all the parents/carers who contribute.

Should you be interested in becoming involved with our Parents’ Fundraising Group, please notify the head teacher or a member of staff.

**Section Six: The Wider Community**

#### The establishment and the community

There are many links made between our nursery and the wider community. For example:

* nurses, doctors, health visitors, dentist, speech therapist and psychological services
* primary schools
* secondary schools
* colleges of education
* social work department

#### Links with primary schools

Children normally go to primary school between the ages of 4½ and 5½. The centre is part of St. Margaret's Primary School, but also has close links with its associated primary schools in order to ensure a smooth transfer to primary school.

Information on registration and enrolment procedures for schools will be given in the local press early in the calendar year. **Please note that children must be registered at their catchment school.**

**You must register your child in only one school (their catchment school),** either the denominational or non-denominational school for your area.

**If you want your child to go to a different school you are required to** **register at your catchment school** and thereafter make a placing request. Both registration and placing request applications are online.

-19-

**Section Seven: Other Information**

#### Suggestions and complaints

We are always anxious to maintain and improve our service. If you have any suggestions to make about the service, please contact the head teacher in the first instance.

Similarly, if you have a complaint about any aspect of the service, you should contact the head teacher who will advise you of the procedures.

If you feel your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved with the head teacher, please contact Kathleen McDonagh, the Education Officer (Improvement) - or the Care Commission, who can be contacted at the following addresses/telephone numbers:

Renfrewshire Council Care Commission

Education and Leisure Services Central West Region

Renfrewshire House 4th Floor

Cotton Street 1 Smithhills Street

Paisley Paisley

PA1 1LE PA1 1EB

Tel: 0300 300 0300 Tel: 0141 843 4230

#### Useful address

Janie O’Neill

Director of Childrens Services

Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire House

Cotton Street

Paisley

PA1 1LE

Tel: 0300 300 0300

-20-

Listed below are details of local Social Work Department, Health Care, associated primaries, and other pre-five establishments within the area:

Johnstone Social Work Department

Johnstone Town Hall

25 Church St,

Johnstone PA5 8FA

0300 300 1199

Primary Schools Contact No.

Auchenlodment 0300 300 0145

Cochrane Castle 0300 300 0198

Fordbank 0300 300 0153

Kilbarchan 0300 300 0163

Lochwinnoch 0300 300 0169

St. Anthony’s 0300 300 0178

St. David’s 0300 300 0198

St. Margaret's 0300 300 0185

Thorn 0300 300 0189

Wallace 0300 300 0194

Pre-5 Establishments Contact No.

Auchenlodment Nursery 0300 300 0145

Gleniffer Nursery 01505 342 053

St. Margaret's Nursery 0300 300 1482

Kilbarchan Community Nursery 01505 704 839

Lochwinnoch Nursery 0300 300 0169

Mid Gavin Nursery 01505 843 953

Spateston Pre-5 Centre 0300 300 1473

Stepping Stones Nursery 01505 325 226

Wallace Nursery 0300 300 0194

West Johnstone Pre-5 Centre 0300 300 1474

Renfrewshire Family Information Service 0300 300 0170

**Please note:**

Although the information in this handbook is correct at the time of printing, there could be changes affecting the details, either before your child’s placement begins or during the course of their placement. The head teacher will tell you of any important changes to the information.

