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## Letter from the Director of Education and Leisure Services



December 2014

Dear Parent

Each year our schools make available a copy of the handbook which outlines the current policies and practices of the council and of the school. Renfrewshire Council is committed to becoming a high performing public sector organisation and we will work to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive.

To create a better future, Renfrewshire Council will focus on achieving the following outcomes:

- Increased, sustainable investment in our economy;
- Improved health, wellbeing and life chances for children and families;
- Improved support to vulnerable adults;
- Reduction in the causes and impact of poverty; and
- A safer and strong Renfrewshire.

It gives me great pleasure, as the director of education and leisure services, to commend the school handbook to you as a source of helpful information not only on day to day matters of school procedures, but as an interesting insight into the school itself.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R Naylor".

Robert Naylor  
Director of Education and Leisure Services

## **Welcome from the head teacher**

Dear Parents

Thank you for enrolling your child in St. Mary's Primary School.

Starting school is usually a very exciting time for children and their families. It can also be an anxious time for parents. Here at St. Mary's we are committed to supporting you and your child, both now and as you continue your relationship with us.

The school community of St. Mary's is a welcoming, happy and friendly community - a community that I hope you will quickly feel part of and will contribute positively to over the years to come.

St. Mary's Primary School supports its children to develop as:

- successful learners;
- effective contributors;
- confident individuals; and
- responsible citizens.

St. Mary's Primary School is committed to the promotion of:

- healthy, active lifestyles;
- sustainable communities; and
- lifelong learning.

The school has been recognised as a Health Promoting School and has earned a green flag as an Eco-School.

This handbook is designed to provide you with important information about the school and the service you can expect from Renfrewshire Council. Further information will be provided during the Induction Programme which includes an afternoon visit to the school in May. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

I look forward to many happy years of working together.

Yours sincerely

Helen Friel

Head Teacher

## **School aims**

The aims of the school are:

- to ensure that each pupil achieves his or her potential, in as many ways as possible;
- to provide learning and teaching of the highest standard throughout the school;
- to provide each pupil with a broad, high-quality curriculum in line with the values, purposes and principles of A Curriculum for Excellence;
- to ensure that there is effective support and guidance for all pupils, and that support and progress are monitored to ensure a high level of achievement;
- to ensure that resources in the school are used effectively to benefit learning and teaching;
- to ensure that there are effective links between the school and the parent forum;
- to use self-evaluation procedures effectively to monitor and improve the service we provide;
- to ensure that our Catholic values permeates everything that we do, creating a welcoming and caring ethos where there is respect for all.

## **Service Pledges**

### **Standards and expectations**

**We will:**

- offer all children and young people a free school place;
- provide school premises which meet health and safety standards;
- provide information on your child's progress;
- provide religious and moral education for your child;
- give support and encouragement to parental involvement in schools;
- provide regular information on school activities; and
- provide 25 hours of class contact time in each normal school week for pupils of primary-school age.

**Pupils will have opportunities for:**

- personal and social development;
- music, cultural activities and creativity;
- access to healthier lifestyles and sports activities; and
- community involvement.

**You can also expect:**

- a formal written report on your child's progress;
- an annual report on progress within the school improvement plan;
- an opportunity to have a formal meeting with your child's class teacher or teachers;
- us to strive to meet your child's needs; and
- regular reports on the quality of the school.

**How can you help?**

By law, you must make sure your child receives education.

As a parent, you can help your child by:

- making sure your child goes to school regularly;
- encouraging and supporting your child with any homework given;
- showing that you are interested in how your child is getting on at school;
- encouraging your child to respect the school and the whole school community; and
- being involved in the school.
- Throughout this handbook the term 'parent' has the meaning attributed in the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. This includes grandparents, carer or anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child.



## **About our school**

### **School staff**

#### **Head Teacher and Depute Head Teachers**

Head Teacher: Mrs Helen Friel

Responsible for:

- overall leadership and management of the primary school, nursery class and Pre-school Assessment and Development Unit (PSADU);
- school improvement
- Child Protection
- school discipline
- strategic overview of A Curriculum for Excellence;
- parental involvement
- monitoring attendance
- health and safety
- P1 – P3

Depute Head Teacher: Mrs Lynsey Mothersole

Responsible for:

- additional support needs
- religious life of the school
- temporary staff and student/work experience placements
- probationer support
- citizenship
- P4 – P7
- equalities

**Principal Teachers**

Mrs Anne McGarrigle Nursery and PSADU

Mrs Gillian Brownlie / Miss Jennifer Hendry (Acting) Curriculum

**Teachers**

Mrs Alison Brady

Mrs Helen Coulthard

Mrs Claire Crumlish

Mrs Leigh Devlin

Mrs Terri Goodall

Mrs Angela Howie

Mrs Stephanie O'Neil (Temp Teacher)

Mrs Laura Rennie

Mr Stephen Young (Temp Teacher)

Mrs Nicola McGill (Temp Teacher)

**Nursery Officers**

Miss Carolyn McPake Senior Nursery Officer - Nursery Class

Miss Tracy Newlands Nursery Officer - Nursery Class

Mrs Cheryl Kelly Nursery Officer - PSADU (Tues-Fri)

Mrs Alison Johnston Nursery Officer – PSADU (afternoons & all day Fri)

**Support Staff**

Mr Tony Tobin Janitor

Vacancy Crossing Patrol

Mrs Catherine McWilliam Classroom Assistant

## School Handbook 2015-16

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Mrs Fiona Ritchie	Classroom Assistant (Tue-Thur)
Mrs Debbie McAuley	Classroom Assistant (Wed-Fri)
Vacancy	Dining Hall Assistant
Mrs Susan Scott	Additional Support Needs Assistant (Mon-Thu)
Mrs Susanne McDowall	Additional Support Needs Assistant
Mrs Ellen Walker	Additional Support Needs Assistant (PSADU)
Mrs Lesley McGuigan	Additional Support Needs Assistant (PSADU) (Tue-Fri)
Mrs Janet Geddes	Senior Clerical Assistant (afternoons)
Mrs Elaine Strang	Clerical Assistant (mornings)
Mrs Janet Elliott	Clerical Assistant
Mrs Catherine Howell	PSADU Bus Escort
Mrs Linda Bell	Catering Manager
Mrs Janice Muir	Catering Assistant
Mrs Liz Quinn	Catering Assistant
Miss Susan Lupton	Catering Assistant
Mrs Lisa Markie	Catering Assistant
Mrs Liz Henry	Janitor Cleaner
Ms Pauline Shirley	Cleaner
Ms Angela Evans	Cleaner

### **Visiting Staff**

Mrs Karen Hill	Service Delivery Officer
Ms Tracy Robertson	Early Years Teacher
Mrs Anne Conway	English as an Additional Language Teacher
Mrs Karen Fraser	Home Link Worker
Mrs Garry McDonald	Educational Psychologist (Primary and Nursery Classes)

Ms Amy Nolan	Educational Psychologist (PSADU) (AM)
Miss Kirsty Nicol	Educational Psychologist (PSADU) (PM)
Mrs Laura McInnes	Speech and Language Therapist (PSADU)
Mr Michael Howie	Music Instructor (Brass)
Ms Michelle Sloan	Active Schools Co-ordinator

## School information

### School contact details

- phone number: 0141 889 3960
- email address: [stmarysenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:stmarysenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk)
- website: [www.st-marys.renfrewshire.sch.uk](http://www.st-marys.renfrewshire.sch.uk)
- write to or visit us at: St. Mary's Primary School  
Maxwellton Road  
Paisley  
PA1 2RJ

### Parent Council contact details

Parents can contact the Parent Council via the school email address (see above). The Parent Council AGM is usually held at the start of the school year. New members are welcome to attend.

### Accommodation

The accommodation in St. Mary's comprises a welcoming reception area with direct access to a gym hall and separate dining hall. Two wings lead off from the reception area. One is a single storey wing currently housing the school's pre-school assessment and development unit and nursery class. The other wing is formed over two floors and houses the primary 1-7 classrooms and the Music and Drama Room. Access to the building and toilet facilities have also been adapted for use by pupils/visitors and disabilities. The school is also fortunate to have access to the community Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).

### Car parking

A dedicated parking space has been created to ease access for people with disabilities. Only those with Blue Badges are entitled to use this space.

Please note, other than authorised use of the designated parking space above, parents are **not** permitted to make use of the staff car park. This is for reasons of safety and security and includes: parents dropping off/collecting pupils attending clubs, school discos and other events; dropping off/collecting at the start/end of the school day as well as parents whose children have appointments during the school day.

### School roll

In session 2014/2015, the school roll was 304.

### Parental involvement

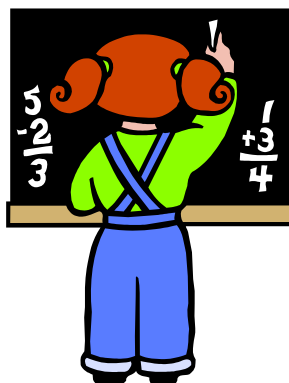
[Parents can be involved](#) in their child's learning by:

- supporting learning at home, eg homework:
- developing strong partnerships between home and school; and
- engaging with the school, especially with A Curriculum for Excellence

### School day

Pupil day begins	9.00am
Morning interval	10.30-10.45am
Lunch break	12.15-1.15pm
Pupil day ends	3.15pm

Primary 1 pupils attend school on a full-time basis from the first Monday in September.



**Renfrewshire Council**  
**School Holiday Arrangements**  
 Session 2015/2016

Term	Break	Dates of Attendance	
First		In-Service Day	Tuesday 11 August 2015 (IS)
		In-Service Day	Wednesday 12 August 2015 (IS)
		Schools Re-Open	Thursday 13 August 2015
	Local Holiday/Closed	Schools Closed	Friday 25 September 2015
		Schools Re-Open	Tuesday 29 September 2015
Mid Term		In-Service Day	Friday 9 October 2015
		Schools Closed	Monday 12 October 2015
		Schools Re-open	Monday 19 October 2015
St Andrew's Day		Schools Closed	Monday 30 November 2015
		Schools Re-Open	Tuesday 1 December 2015
Christmas		Last day of term	Tuesday 22 December 2015
		First day of break	Wednesday 23 December 2015
Second		Schools Re-Open	Thursday 7 January 2016
	Mid Term	In-Service Day	Friday 12 February 2016 (IS)
		School Closed	Monday 15 February 2016
		Schools Re-Open	Wednesday 17 February 2016
Good Friday /	Schools Closed	Friday 25 March 2016	
	Schools Re-Open	Tuesday 29 March 2016	
Spring	Schools Closed	Monday 4 April 2016	
	Schools Re-Open	Monday 18 April 2016	
Third	May Day	Schools Closed	Monday 2 May 2016
		Schools Re-Open	Tuesday 3 May 2016
	Local Holiday/Closed	In-Service Day	Thursday 26 May 2016 (IS)
		Schools Closed	Friday 27 May 2016
		Schools Re-Open	Tuesday 31 May 2016
	Last day of session	Tuesday 28 June 2016	

Teachers Return – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2016

### School dress

Renfrewshire Council encourages each school to adopt a dress code after discussion with parents, pupils and the parent council. The council supports an agreed dress code because of the benefits it brings, including improvements in safety, security, discipline, ethos and community spirit, and a decrease in bullying and expense for parents.

Some types of clothing will not be allowed in school for reasons of safety, decency or indiscipline. Types of clothing which will not be allowed include:

- clothes which are a health or safety risk;
- clothes which may damage the school building;
- clothes which may provoke other pupils;
- clothes which are offensive or indecent; and
- clothes which encourage the use of alcohol or tobacco, or other inappropriate substances.

Pupils will not be deprived of education, any benefit or access to examinations because of not wearing school uniform.

In the interests of health and safety, of both individual and others present, all jewellery, including body jewellery, must be removed before taking part in physical education lessons or physical activities.

Grants for footwear and clothing for children are available to parents receiving:

- income support;
- income based job seeker's allowance;
- pension credit;
- housing benefit;
- council tax benefit; or
- depending on annual income, child tax credit or working tax credit.

Information and application forms for free school meals are available from schools, registration offices and customer service centres. A form can be downloaded from the council's website: [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk).

Please help the school and the education authority by making sure that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive items of clothing to school. The council has no insurance to cover the loss of valuable items.



The uniform for pupils of St. Mary's Primary School is as follows:

- **white** shirt with school tie (referred to as dress uniform)
- **white** polo shirt with or without school logo (can be worn on PE days)
- **navy** sweater/cardigan/sweatshirt (**not grey**)
- **grey** or **navy** skirt/trousers
- please note black is **not** and school colour other than for shoes/jackets
- no unnecessary items of jewellery, etc. (watches, signet type rings and small, flat earrings are acceptable)
- no make-up

For PE lessons pupils should wear:

- **navy** sports shorts
- **white** sports t-shirt or school polo shirt
- **white** socks (grey, blue and black are also acceptable)
- gym shoes

Each pupil is required to keep a pair of gym shoes in the shoe bag provided.

No items of jewellery can be worn during PE lessons or other sporting/physical activities and, for reasons of hygiene,

net, tights are not permitted from P2 onwards.

Pupils are not permitted to wear football colours at any time in school or during school activities taking place out with school.

### Registration and Enrolment

The date for registration of new school entrants is advertised in all local nurseries, national and local press and on the council's website [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk). It is normally in January each year. Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school, when they register their child.

Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request. Information on this procedure is contained in the leaflet 'Sending your child to school.' The leaflet is available from any school, by phoning our customer contact centre on 0300 300 0170, or on our website [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk). It is important to note that a successful placing request into a primary school does not guarantee a successful placing request when a child is transferring to secondary school.

Parents of pupils who have moved into the catchment area or, who wish their child to transfer to the school, should contact the school office for information.

### **Induction procedures for pupils starting at the school and their parents**

The induction programme for new entrants begins with registration in January. Soon after this, there is liaison between the school and nurseries regarding the children transferring. Later in the year, the induction programme includes the following:

- involvement of the early years teacher to support curricular and pastoral transitions
- primary school staff visiting nurseries\*;
- nursery staff bringing children to the school for an informal visit\*;
- parents and children attending an induction afternoon in May
- Home Visits from primary school staff around May/June;
- Transfer of Information Booklets are completed by nursery staff and passed to the school early in June; and
- Nursery staff on-hand during the first few days of Primary 1\*.

\*These activities take place when staffing allows.

Arrangements for meetings with parents and induction days for pupils will be notified during the spring or summer terms.

### **Class organisation (primary school)**

Present roll: 240

Planning Capacity: 290

At the beginning of session 2014/2015 the roll for each year group was:

P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
35	40	32	38	36	27	32

The classes for session 2014/2015 are as follow:

P1 P1/2 P2 P2/3 P3/4 P4 P5a P5b P6 P7

The organisation of classes each year is dependent upon the school roll and the number of pupils at each stage. Our intake each year over the next three years is anticipated to be approximately 30 children per year.

The maximum working capacity of the school may vary according to the number of pupils at each stage and the way in which classes are organised.

## **Assessment and reporting**

[Assessment](#) is an integral part of learning and teaching. It helps provide a picture of the learner's progress and achievements, and identifies the next steps in learning.

Assessment includes supporting learning, learner engagement and ensuring appropriate support.

### **Tracking learners' progress**

Information on learners' progress is gathered through planned assessments and this information is recorded. This allows teachers to have a clear picture of how learners are progressing. It will also allow teachers to identify next steps in learning and inform reporting on progress and achievement.

### **Reporting**

Regular reports to parents provide clear, positive and constructive information about their child's learning and progress, reflecting on what has been achieved against standards and expectations.

### Profiles

Profiles will be used to recognise [pupils' progress in learning and achievement](#), while supporting and informing transitions. As children reach the end of primary school (primary 7) and young people their broad general education at the end of S3, they will record their most recent and relevant learning and achievements in a personal profile which will also incorporate a reflective statement by the learner.

### Summary of the School Improvement Plan

#### Planning for Improvement

Each year the school produces an Improvement Plan which sets out our improvement priorities for the coming year. Over the course of the year, work is undertaken to address these priorities and, at the end of the year, the school reviews its progress. New priorities are then identified and the cycle continues.

Our priorities for this school year are:

- Provide an annual update for all staff in relation to Child Protection issues
- Implement Renfrewshire Council's GIRFEL policy
- Implement GIRFEC in relation to the introduction of the 'named person' and Child's Plan
- Develop the use of Makaton and ICT within the Unit
- Implement revised Standard Circular 5 - School Attendance
- Implement increased provision of early education and childcare
- Develop nursery provision for 2 year olds for intake August 2015
- Introduce staff to 'Recognising and Realising Children's Rights' a pack to support rights based learning across the school
- Develop the Forest Kindergarten approach within the nursery class
- Further develop The Learning Cycle and the use of assessment
- Implement the actions outlined in the 'Tackling Bureaucracy' document
- Raise awareness of the 'reciprocal reading' approach
- Introduce God's Loving Plan, the new Diocesan programme for relationships education
- Explore options in relations to improving curricular transitions
- Extend Spanish across the school, N-P7

A full copy of the school improvement plan is available on the school website. The quality indicators linked to each priority is highlighted on the full plan.

## **Transfer to secondary school**

Pupils normally transfer to secondary school between the ages of eleven and a half and twelve and a half years, so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents will be informed of the arrangements no later than December of the year before the date of transfer.

Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request. Information on this procedure is contained in the leaflet 'Sending your child to school.' It is important to note that a successful placing request into a primary school does not guarantee a successful placing request when a child is transferring to secondary school.

St Mary's Primary School is an associated primary school of St Andrew's Academy.

Head teacher: Mr Kevin Hendry

Telephone: 0141 887 5201

## **Nursery class of St Mary's Primary School**

### **Nursery Class Provision**

The school's nursery class provides 20 morning and 20 afternoon places for children aged 3 - 5 years.

Children are eligible for entry to the nursery class from the month after their third birthday for birthdays between September and February. Children with birthdays between March and August will be eligible for entry to the nursery class in August. Application forms for a nursery place are available from the school office, and should be returned there on completion. Parents may register an application for their child from the age of 2 years.

### **Admission to Nursery**

Nursery class provision is non-denominational. Placement in the nursery class does not guarantee a place in the primary school if a placing request is necessary. All Renfrewshire nursery classes adhere to the [council's early year's admission policy](#) and all applications are dealt with in line with its guidelines.

All applications are discussed at the central admissions panel and agreement about the allocation of places is made by the members. Parents will receive notification when their child is allocated a place and information will accompany this about starting dates and times.

In some circumstances children awarded a priority ranking within the early years admissions policy may start once they become 3 years of age.

### **Transfer from Nursery to Primary**

Before leaving nursery, a transfer of information record for each child will be prepared by nursery staff to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of education for the child transferring to primary.

Your child will be supported in the transition from nursery to primary school. This will include processes such as sharing of information on your child through the transfer of information document, joint curricular experiences with the primary school, visits to the primary which help to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of learning for the child transferring to primary.

### **Pre-school Assessment and Development Unit**

The Pre-School Assessment and Development Unit, sometimes referred to as the PSADU, provides support for pre-school children with specific language and/or communication difficulties. Children usually attend the PSADU on a part-time basis while continuing to attend their mainstream nursery. The PSADU liaises closely with parents and nursery staff to ensure each child is supported appropriately. Referrals to the PSADU are made via the local authority's Educational Prioritisation Group.

### **The religious life of the school**

#### **Ethos**

St. Mary's is a Catholic primary school. Staff, pupils and parents are proud of the Catholic ethos of the school which is based on the principles of respect for all, equality, inclusion and social justice. All members of the school community are valued and work in partnership to make St. Mary's a welcoming, happy and successful school.

St. Mary's Primary School welcomes families of other faiths.

#### **Religious Education**

St. Mary's Primary School follows a programme of religious education which aims to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of their Faith; develop the spiritual, social, moral and cultural values of pupils; and teach pupils about other world religions.

Pupils from Primary 1 to Primary 7 make use of the "This is Our Faith" programme. Pupils also learn about relationships through the God's Loving Plan programme devised by the Catholic Church in Scotland. Prayers are said daily in each class and special focus given at important times in the Church's year such as Lent, Advent and the months of May and October.

Spiritual, social, moral and cultural values are further developed through the school's programmes for Health and Wellbeing.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

Pupils whose parents wish them to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist, do so in Primary 4. Preparation for this starts when the children are in Primary 3. Pupils whose parents wish them to receive the sacrament of Confirmation do so in Primary 7. Sacramental preparation requires a formal commitment from parents and partnership between home, school and parish.

### **St. Mary's Parish**

St. Mary's Primary School is a special and important member of the local parish community. As such, the school has close ties with St. Mary's Church. Father Maurice Callaghan, the Parish Priest, often visits the school to talk to classes, help with preparation for the Sacraments, hear Confession and lead school Masses and Services. Classes also visit the church for Mass each First Friday of the month, on religious Feast Days and on other special occasions.

### **Supporting Charities**

The children and families of St. Mary's are very generous. The school's special charity, which it supports throughout the year, is MISSIO. MISSIO is a charity that provides aid for needy children in various parts of the world. Each class has a MISSIO box and pupils are encouraged to contribute a few pennies saved from their tuck money each day/week.

Throughout each session pupils also raise money for other charities (local and national). Some examples of charities the school has supported in past years are:

SCIAF	Scottish International Relief
ACCORD Hospice	Ronald McDonald House (Yorkhill Hospital)
Cash for Kids	The Uganda Project (St. Andrew's Academy)
Special Baby Care Unit (RAH)	Children In Need

### **Religious Observance**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education. Here, in St. Mary's, we hope that parents who elect to send their children to this school do so with the expectation that they will receive religious education and develop the spiritual, social, moral and cultural values which are intrinsic to the ethos of the Catholic school. Parents who wish their children to be withdrawn from religious education and observance should inform the Head Teacher in writing as early as

possible.

In addition, parents and carers from religions other than Christianity may request that their children may be permitted to be absent from school in order to celebrate recognised religious events. Only written requests detailing the proposed

## Religious observance in the Catholic school

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 imposes a statutory duty on local authorities to provide "Religious Observance" in Scottish schools. This is defined in a national R.O. Review Group report published in 2004 as comprising: *"community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school's community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community"*.

In a letter of guidance issued by the Scottish Government in February 2011, it is acknowledged that Catholic schools take a distinctive approach to the provision of Religious Observance:

*Scottish Government Ministers welcome the tradition that, in Roman Catholic denominational schools, Catholic Liturgy will largely shape the nature and frequency of religious observance activities in the classroom and in the wider school community. So, at times, children and young people will be invited to participate in, and sometimes to lead, prayer and reflection in classrooms and at assemblies. At other times, to honour particular occasions or feasts, chaplains will lead school communities in the celebration of Mass and other forms of liturgical celebration.<sup>1</sup>*

Catholic schools follow the customs and practices of the Church in order to nourish the spirituality and faith of pupils and staff. Our Catholic tradition is enriched by ancient rites, prayers and devotions which help young people to become aware of, and show reverence to, the sacred presence of the living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Guided by this tradition, we celebrate various seasons and special feast days to honour God, Mary his Mother and the Saints.

Pupils are invited to pray with their teachers at times in classrooms and assemblies, as well as in liturgical services. Usually a classroom will display a Crucifix on the wall; in some classrooms and other areas of the school, a sacred space will feature a copy of the Bible and will be decorated with signs and symbols that reflect the changing seasons of the Church Calendar Year i.e., Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost.

This regular practice of Prayer is complemented by religious services conducted,

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<sup>1</sup> Curriculum For Excellence - Provision of Religious Observance in Schools, Scottish Government, 17 February 2011



sometimes as part of an Assembly, to mark special occasions - e.g., the distribution of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, the seasons of Advent or Lent. To mark special Feast Days and Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Mass will be celebrated by the school chaplain, with the school community, in school buildings or in local parishes. Some pupils, at certain stages, may be able to participate in retreats and pilgrimages to places of special significance within the Catholic tradition.

While Religious Education is governed by separate Church guidance, it is complemented by Religious Observance practices and, together, these experiences help pupils to develop their understanding of the Catholic faith, to experience opportunities for spiritual growth and to commit to beliefs, values and actions in a positive response to God's invitation to faith.

In terms of pupil participation in R.O. Scottish Government guidance makes it clear that it makes an important contribution to pupils' development and that it promotes the ethos of a school by bringing pupils together and creating a sense of community. However, it also makes clear that parents have the right to withdraw children from participation in religious observance and that this right should always be made known to parents and their wishes respected. The Scottish Government also 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.*

### **Equal Opportunities and Social Justice**

St. Mary's Primary School is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and social justice. This is reflected in all aspects of school life, policies and practice. The school's belief in respect for all underpins everything that the school does. All pupils have the opportunity to express their views and contribute to decision-making through the Pupil Council and other pupil groups within the school. The school operates an 'open door' policy so that parents are able to come in to the school at any time to discuss issues with the Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher. The school also communicates regularly with all parents and actively seeks feedback about the many aspects of school life. The Senior Management Team of the school monitors closely the implementation and effectiveness of school and council policies in relation to equality. More information on the council's policies follows.

### **Care and welfare**

Your child's welfare is central to the ethos of the school. Please contact the school to

share any concerns you have about your child's welfare or wellbeing. The staff will work with you as parents or carers of our pupils, to make sure they are safe, happy and able to benefit for the educational opportunities we offer. This handbook gives details of how we deal with bullying, homework, additional support needs and many other areas that may impact on your child's wellbeing.

### **School security**

Renfrewshire Council has introduced procedures to ensure the safety and security of pupils and staff when attending or working in a school. We use a number of security measures including a visitors' book, badges and escorts, while visitors are within the school building. Normally, anyone calling at a school for any reason, will be asked to report to the school office. The school staff then can make the necessary arrangements for the visit.

### **Attendance and absence**

It is the responsibility of parents of a child of school age to make sure that their child is educated. Most do this by sending their child to school regularly. Attendance is recorded twice a day, morning and afternoon.

Absence from school is recorded as authorised, that is approved by the education authority, or as unauthorised, that is unexplained by the parent (truancy).

### **Contact procedures**

If a child is absent from school, parents are required to phone or email the school office as early as possible from 8.30 onwards and certainly by **9.30 am** on the first day. If no telephone call or email is received, parents will automatically receive a text message asking them to phone the school immediately.

If an absence is planned, please inform the head teacher in writing. If a child requires to depart early for any reason the school office must be notified in advance. No child will be permitted to leave early unless collected by an authorised adult. If at the end of the school day, for any reason, a child is not collected at his/her usual meeting place he/she must return to the building and report to the office immediately. Please ensure that your child understands this arrangement.

Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time as this disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. The head teacher can approve absence from school for a family holiday in certain extreme situations, for example, in traumatic domestic circumstances where the holiday would improve the cohesion and wellbeing of the family. Please discuss your plans with the head teacher before the holiday. If the head teacher does not give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The head teacher may also exercise discretion

when a parent can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by the head teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

Parents from minority ethnic religious communities may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to celebrate recognised religious events. Absence approved by the head teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence. Extended leave can also be granted on request for families returning to their country of origin for cultural or care reasons.

A supportive approach is taken to unexplained absence. However the education authority has legal powers to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or refer pupils to the Reporter to the Children's Panel, if necessary.

The school monitors pupil attendance on a monthly basis. The school may take any of the following actions should a pupil's attendance rate fall below expected levels:

- 'early warning' letter issued by school;
- 'concerning attendance' letter issued by school;
- request to attend meeting with the Head Teacher;
- request to attend an Extended Support Team meeting;
- referral to the Home Link Service; and/or
- referral to the Children's Reporter.

Pupils whose attendance continues to be an ongoing concern will have their attendance at school monitored on a daily basis by the school.

### **Attendance and absence data**

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 each afternoon of each school day is considered as a separate possible attendance.

### **Bullying**

"Tackling Bullying in Renfrewshire" is the authority's policy on preventing and dealing with bullying in our school. The policy stresses the importance of involving the whole school community - pupils, parents and all the staff in the school.

You can view the anti-bullying policy by asking the school office for a copy of the document or by accessing the policy online at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk).

[Respectme](#), Scotland's national anti-bullying organisation provided a very favourable assessment of the policy Tackling Bullying in Renfrewshire, stating;

'Overall this is an excellent example of a thorough policy and strategy to combat bullying in Renfrewshire Schools and the guidance is head and shoulders above other local authority guidance that has been reviewed to date.'

The school policy on bullying focuses on 2 areas:

- the promotion of positive behaviour and raising awareness of the negative effects of bullying;
- providing opportunities for pupils to disclose incidents of bullying if they do occur.

The school's anti-bullying approach is developed through the following:

- positive school ethos;
- caring relationships between and among staff and pupils;
- Religious Education programme;
- Health and Wellbeing programme;
- Circle Time;
- Assemblies; and
- 'I Would Like to Say' boxes.

It is vital that parents and school staff work together to make the school's anti-bullying approach work.

Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which an individual or groups of individuals feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual. Bullying is behaviour which can be defined as a repeated attack of a physical, psychological, social or verbal nature by those who are able to exert influence over others.

The parents of all pupils involved in incidents of bullying will be informed.

Any parent with a concern about bullying should speak to the Head Teacher as soon as possible.

### **Child protection**

All children have a right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. The vision of the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee is that "It's everyone's job to make sure that children in Renfrewshire are safe."

Renfrewshire Council has a [child protection policy](#) and guidelines are in place to make sure that all council staff are alert to the welfare of children they come into contact with. Our staff work closely with other agencies to protect children and keep them safe. All school staff receive training each year and must report any concerns they have about the welfare of children. In every situation, the welfare of the child overrides other considerations.

## **Mobile phones**

The benefits of mobile phones are recognised. Many young people and their parents regard them as an essential means of communication. Mobile phones can continue to be brought into schools however the following limitations will apply in Renfrewshire schools and establishments:

- All phones should be turned off and kept out of sight during the school day within the school campus.
- Photographing or recording of sound or images of staff, other pupils or visitors to the school is not allowed at any time within the school campus or on school transport.
- Mobile phones may be confiscated where these rules are broken.
- Any recordings made on school premises or school transport found on confiscated phones will have to be deleted on their return.
- Any photographs or recordings of staff in any situation, whether taken on school premises or elsewhere, found on confiscated phones will have to be deleted from phones on their return.
- Education and leisure services expects that schools will, through normal collegiate procedures, develop or review existing policies on the use of mobiles phones that take account of the views of all staff, parents and pupils.
- Schools should ensure that pupils, parents and staff are aware that should a pupil breach the policy they will be disciplined in line with the school's positive behaviour/discipline policy.
- Individual school policies should clearly state for the benefit of staff, pupils, parent and visitors any variations from the restrictions on use of mobile phones set out below.
- Pupils and parents should be notified that mobile phones will be confiscated where these limitations are breached.
- An increasing range and variety of mobile phones possess the ability to access the Internet and to use Bluetooth technology to communicate. These technologies provide unparalleled sophistication and complexity which can provide access to a wealth of online resources and possibilities. Pupils and parents should be aware that this also leaves pupils open to dangers such as Cyberbullying, grooming and access to inappropriate material. Reference should be made to Renfrewshire's anti-bullying policy for further guidance in this area.
- Staff should not delete photographs or recordings from confiscated mobile phones.
- When staff confiscate mobile phones or other devices they should ensure that

these are retained in a safe place that cannot be accessed by others. This may be a lockable drawer or cupboard, a base area or a delegated area in the school office. Confiscated mobile phones should normally be passed to the school office or senior member of staff as soon as possible after confiscation.

### Legal aspects

- There are a number of aspects of the law that may apply to mobile phone misuse and the responses to that misuse. In the most serious cases there may be a crime involved – an incident that is being filmed might be an assault or breach of the peace. The misuse of a mobile phone might be an offence under the Communications Act 2003, if it involves a call or message that is grossly offensive or is of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; and, the distribution of certain pornography might be an offence under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.
- In situations which are so serious that a school might call in the police it is for the police, not the school, to consider what, if any, criminal offence may apply.

These restrictions on use apply equally during any school activity that takes place off campus.

Pupils breaking the rules will be disciplined in line with the school's positive behaviour or discipline policy.

Here, at St. Mary's Primary School, we ask that pupils do not bring mobile phones or electronic games, etc. to school. This is in the interest of safety, security and the smooth running of the school. However, our policy is that, should it be necessary for pupils to have these items with them when they come to school, pupils hand these items in to the school office at 9.00am and collect them at 3.15pm.

Please support the school by ensuring that your child is not bringing such items to school unless absolutely necessary.

### School meals

Children of parents receiving income support or income based job seekers allowance and in some cases child tax credit, are entitled to a free midday meal. Information and application forms for free school meals are available from schools, registration offices, customer service centres or may be downloaded from the council's website: [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

Remember, from January 2015, children in Primary 1 to 3 across Renfrewshire will have the option of receiving a FREE school meal every day. Parents do not have to do anything to claim this, pupils in the appropriate age group will have automatic entitlement.

Children who are also entitled to free school meals are entitled to free milk at lunchtime. Milk may also be available for sale in the school during the lunch period.

All schools in Renfrewshire offer a nutritionally balanced, healthy meal for your child each school day. Many studies have shown a strong link between a healthy diet and concentration.

The Renfrewshire Council school meals website provides details of these daily choices. The website also offers delicious recipes of some of the pupil's favourites, and provides information on upcoming events and theme days.

### **Healthy eating**

As part of the school's programme to promote healthy lifestyles, children are encouraged to eat balanced diets. School staff encourage pupils to bring a healthy snack for playtime, perhaps a piece of fruit. Staff also encourage pupils to drink water or milk instead of sugary, fizzy juice.

### **School meals**

The school's catering manager and kitchen staff also promote healthy lifestyles by serving healthy, balanced meals at lunchtime. School meals are served in the school dining room and are paid for daily by the pupils. Pupils have the option of purchasing a hot meal served on a plate at a cost of £2.00 or a snack lunch at a cost of £1.80.

There are four options daily, one of which is vegetarian.

### **Specialised diets**

Children who, for medical or religious reasons, require a specialised diet can be provided with appropriate meals and when this provision is required. Parents should inform the school of the necessity to make this arrangement.

### **Packed lunches**

Children may also bring a packed lunch to school. Packed lunches are taken in the dining room at the same time as the others are having school meals. Pupils can choose to eat their packed lunches outside. Pupils purchasing snack type meals in the dining hall are also able to eat outside at the picnic tables provided by the Parent Partnership, the school's parent council.



The school requests that pupils do not bring cans or glass bottles to school.

### **Pupils going home for lunch**

Parents are able to take pupils home for lunch. Parents wishing to arrange this should speak to a member of the clerical team.

### **School transport**

Renfrewshire Council's current policy is to provide home to school transport to all primary school pupils who live more than 1.609 kilometres (1 mile) from their catchment school by the recognised shortest safe walking route. Parents who think they are eligible can get an application form from the school or education and leisure services in Renfrewshire House, Paisley or online at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk). These forms should be completed and returned before the end of February for those pupils beginning school in August to allow the appropriate arrangements to be made. However parents may make an application at any time.

In special circumstances, the director of education and leisure services has discretion to grant permission for pupils to travel in transport provided by the education authority, where spare places are available, at no additional cost to the authority.

### **Pickup Points**

Where home to school transport is provided, some pupils will require to walk a reasonable distance from home to the transport pick-up point but this should not exceed the authority's agreed limit of 1.6 kilometres (1 mile).

It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that their child arrives at the pickup point on time and behaves in a safe and acceptable manner while boarding, travelling in and leaving the vehicle. Children who misbehave can lose their right to home to school transport.

The current pick up points are:-

- Ferguslie Park Avenue
- Fulbar Road
- Peacock Drive

### **Placing Requests**

You should be aware that if we grant your placing request, we do not have to provide a school bus pass or any other help with transport.



### **Additional support needs**

Renfrewshire Council may provide home to school transport for children assessed to attend any school because of their additional support needs. If transport is required an appropriate vehicle to meet the child's need will be provided.

### **Playground supervision**

An adult presence is provided in playgrounds at break times, as required by law.

### **Pupils leaving school premises at breaks**

Schools have a duty to look after the welfare of their pupils. This means that the staff should take the same care of pupils as a sensible parent would take, and includes taking reasonable care of pupils' safety during intervals and lunchtimes, where they are engaged with them.

Renfrewshire Council recommends that pupils should not leave school grounds at intervals. Primary pupils should only leave at lunch times when they are going home for lunch, with their parents' agreement. Parents should encourage their children to follow these rules in the interests of safety.

At St Mary's, the school should be notified in advance when pupils are going home for lunch. Such pupils must be collected from the school reception area.

### **Equalities**

Renfrewshire Council is committed to ensuring that all employees, customers and partners are treated fairly and with respect at all times. We are committed to [promoting equality](#) and tackling discrimination through the way services are planned, delivered and purchased. The council promotes and encourages a culture whereby equality of opportunity exists across all the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity; religion and belief; marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation.

School education is open to all pupils and all reasonable measures will be taken to make sure that the curriculum is available to every child. The Equality Act 2010 introduced a new public sector general equality duty which requires Scottish public authorities to pay 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not; and

- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The council supports the right of each citizen to a quality of life which is free from violence, discrimination and harassment. The council will take steps to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, social background, marital status, gender, disability, age or sexuality have full access to its services, taking all possible measures to prevent discrimination in the way its services are delivered.

Parents can help to monitor our success in promoting equality of opportunity for all by providing equalities related information when asked.

### **Medical and health care**

Medical inspections are carried out at various times during a child's primary school years. As parents you will be given notice of these and encouraged to attend, except for vision and hearing tests and dental examinations. The head teacher will assume that your child will attend all inspections unless told otherwise. Parents are told about any recommended action or treatment. All examinations are carried out by Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board staff.

Parents should notify the school of any medical requirements or allergies that their child may have. If medication is required it is better if this can be provided outwith school hours but, in cases where it is necessary that during the child's time in school, parents should contact the school to make appropriate arrangements. Staff are not obliged to give medicine to pupils.

Minor accidents are dealt with by the school's qualified first aider. If a pupil takes ill or has an accident at school which requires that they be sent home or for treatment, the school will provide first aid and contact parents or carers. So it is very important that the school has up to date contact details for all parents or carers and an additional contact person in case parents or carers can't be reached. This information should be current and the school notified of any changes. We will not send children home from school unaccompanied.

In the event of a serious illness or accident, a member of staff will accompany the child to a doctor or hospital and parents or carers will be notified immediately.

### **Behaviour and discipline**

St. Mary's Primary School is a caring school with a welcoming and inclusive ethos. The school is a happy, friendly and safe place where learning and teaching takes place without disruption. We recognise how important this is for all members of the school community, but particularly for our pupils.

Standards of behaviour in the school are high and this is down to a combination of the high standards of behaviour set at home and the hard work of staff to maintain these high standards around the school. Staff and pupils show each other mutual respect. Staff and senior pupils are role models for our younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be polite, mannerly and do their best at all times.

Our school rule is: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated. We know the best way to maintain high standards of behaviour is through promoting positive behaviour and recognising the achievements of our pupils (no matter how small). Encouraging pupils to be proud of themselves, their school and of each other; ensuring the school is bright and welcoming; and the wearing of school uniform, all contribute much to standards of behaviour.

We look for parents to support the school in all discipline matters.

Further information on how the school promotes positive behaviour is available from the Head Teacher.

### **Wet weather arrangements**

At St Mary's our pupils continue to have outdoor breaks even on showery days. At times of very inclement weather, where staffing allows, the school allows pupils to remain in class at break times. On these occasions an adult presence is provided in both the upper and lower corridors. Senior pupils are assigned to classes as monitors to assist with supervision. For the health and safety of pupils and staff, the school has clear, well-established codes of conduct for wet breaks. Pupils who do not follow these codes of conduct will not be allowed to remain in class.

Although not obliged to do so, the school endeavours to give pupils early access to the school building (around 8.45am) on days of inclement weather. Unfortunately, this courtesy cannot be guaranteed as it is dependent upon there being sufficient support staff available to provide a basic level of safety and security.

### **Curriculum matters**

#### **Curriculum for Excellence**

[Curriculum for Excellence](#) (CfE) is the curriculum followed in all Scottish establishments and is built on the values of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. All children and young people should develop skills for life, skills for learning and skills for work which will prepare them for a world that is changing very fast. The curriculum in our schools will continue to develop over coming years to ensure that all our children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The curriculum follows two phases – the broad general education (BGE) and the

senior phase.

### **Broad General Education**

One of the key entitlements of CfE is that all children should receive a rounded education, known as the broad general education (BGE), from early years to the end of S3, before moving to a senior phase in S4 to S6 which will include studying for qualifications. This BGE should provide young people with a wide range of knowledge, skills and experiences that they can draw on as their lives, careers and job opportunities continue to change.

The BGE phase of CfE is closely connected to the senior phase with the learning undertaken until the end of S3 providing a strong foundation for choosing and specialising in a range of subjects. In the senior phase, young people will have the opportunity to take qualifications and courses that suit their ability and interests.

The curricular areas which will be followed within the BGE are:

Literacy, numeracy and health and well-being – responsibility of all; and

English, mathematics, modern languages, sciences, social studies, expressive arts and religious and moral education/religious education in Roman Catholic schools.

### **The Learner's Journey**

#### **Assessment is for Learning**

Assessment is at the heart of the learning and teaching process. It serves a number of purposes:

- encourages pupils to learn
- helps pupils identify ways of improving their work
- provides an indication of overall ability
- helps staff and pupils determine next steps
- measures the effectiveness of teaching methods and resources

The staff of St.Mary's Primary School recognises that for assessment to impact positively on pupil progress, pupils themselves must be actively involved in the assessment process. For this reason the school has built its assessment procedures around the Assessment is for Learning programme; a programme designed to increase the effectiveness of assessment.

The levels of attainment for pupils are divided into:-

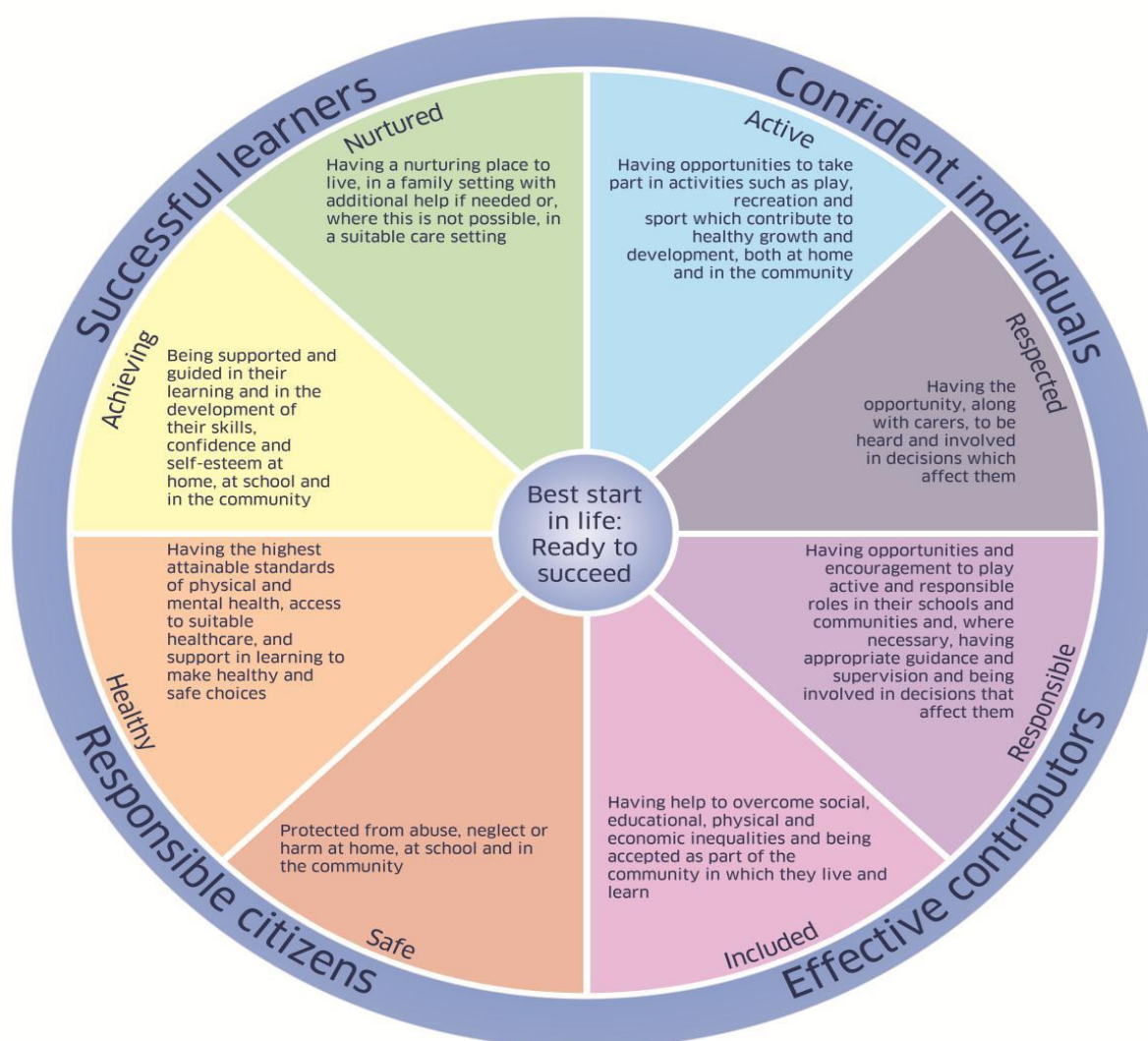
- EARLY LEVEL which generally relates to Nursery – P1
- FIRST LEVEL which generally relates to P2 – P4
- SECOND LEVEL which generally relates to P5 – P7, and
- THIRD LEVEL which generally relates to S1 – S3

### **Additional support for learning**

#### **Getting it Right for Children and Young People in Renfrewshire**

We want all our children and young people to be fully supported as they grow and develop. There are 8 areas of wellbeing which they need to progress to do well now and in the future.

Children's well-being is important at every stage of childhood. Every child needs to be **healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible, and, above all, safe**. These are the eight indicators of well-being (SHANARRI) which are set within the 'four capacities' which are at the heart of the Curriculum for excellence.



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.

For children, young people and their families, the GIRFEC approach will mean:

- They will feel confident about the help they are getting
- They understand what is happening and why
- They have been listened to carefully and their wishes have been heard and understood
- They are appropriately involved in discussions and decisions that affect them
- They can rely on appropriate help being available as soon as possible
- They will have experienced a more streamlined and co-ordinated response from practitioners

The Children and Young People Act (2014) has introduced new duties in relation to GIRFEC which will be enacted in 2016. More information will be provided about this in due course.

### **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009**

The above Act commenced on November 14th 2010 and is a revision of and replaces the 2004 Act of the same name.

Under the Act, children or young people have additional support needs where they are unable to benefit from school education without the provision of additional support.

In the Act, 'additional support' means provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children or young people of the same age in a local authority's schools, or as is appropriate to the circumstances, in early years establishments or any other education provision.

The Act aims to ensure that all children or young people are provided with the necessary support to reach their potential.

### **Getting it Right for Every Learner (GIRFEL)**

The GIRFEL policy sets out how we discharge our responsibilities under the Education (Additional Support for Learning)(Scotland) Act 2009 and links to the wider GIRFEC agenda to make sure that children and young people get the help they need when they need it.

This policy sets out how we will support all children and young people. It applies to all mainstream schools, specialist provision, and all early years establishments

including partner nurseries.

Further information is available by contacting your school directly or by visiting the [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk) website.

Independent sources of information and advice nationally include -

[Enquire](#) – the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning

Telephone – 0845 123 2303

Email – [info@enquire.org.uk](mailto:info@enquire.org.uk)

[Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance Ltd](#) - a national organisation which promotes and supports advocacy

Telephone – 0131 260 5380

Email – [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk)

## **Educational Psychology Service**

Educational psychologists provide a specialist service to schools and pre five establishments. They work in collaboration with teachers, parents and other professionals to help children and young people make the most of their lives, particularly in educational settings.

This school has a system in place for monitoring and reviewing the progress of all children. As part of this system, we have a named educational psychologist who visits the school on a regular basis and who is part of the school's extended support team.

When concerns arise about a particular pupil, the school plans action to address these concerns. Parents are kept informed throughout this process. When those working with your child would like the help of the educational psychologist, they will discuss this with you and arrange a meeting involving the psychologist.

Through this process the educational psychologist can contribute to the ongoing assessment of your child, where appropriate.

## **Health and Wellbeing Education**

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Learning through health and wellbeing enables children and young people to:



- make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing;
- experience challenge and enjoyment;
- experience positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle;
- make a successful move to the next stage of education or work;
- establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help to promote the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Scottish children; and
- for some, perform at high levels in sport or prepare for careers within the health and leisure industries.
- Health and Wellbeing in schools covers:
  - Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing;
  - Planning for choices and changes;
  - Physical education, physical activity and sport;
  - Food and health;
  - Substance misuse; and
  - Relationships, sexual health and parenthood.

Health and wellbeing cannot exist in a vacuum. It requires exchange of information, mutual support and collaboration with community partners, schools and parents.

### **Specialist support service – teachers teaching in more than one school**

The specialist support service makes provision for children and young people who have a range of additional support needs. The service comprises of teachers who work in the pre-5, special, primary and secondary sectors. Staff in the service work in partnership with staff in the school to plan and deliver an appropriate curriculum. The service also provides staff development and advice on resources.

The teams support the additional needs of:

- children with a significant hearing and or visual impairment;
- bilingual learners who are at early stages of learning spoken English;
- looked after and accommodated children and young people who are experiencing difficulties in school;
- children at early stages of primary school who have a developmental coordination disorder along with attention difficulties;
- young people who attend the extended new directions provision; and
- pre-5 children who have been identified as having significant support needs.

### Homework

Homework is an integral part of learning and teaching. It provides the opportunity for the development of self reliance, self discipline, self confidence and participation in taking responsibility for learning by your child. It also strengthens the link between home and school in providing an opportunity for parents and carers to share in the learning process. Homework can take many forms and will reflect the age, stage and area of learning currently being undertaken by your child. It will be issued on a regular basis and will be varied, meaningful and interesting.

St Mary's Primary School has a homework policy based on Renfrewshire Council's policy and guidance. You can request a copy of this policy from the school office.

At St. Mary's Primary School, we give homework because we think it is helpful to your child:

- homework is a valuable link between home and school. It gives parents the opportunity to be involved with their children's schoolwork;
- homework can be used to consolidate classwork or to prepare for future work;
- homework helps children to develop good work habits, self-discipline and time management;
- homework can help children to 'catch up' after an illness.

Pupils in P1-3 will usually be given around 15-20 minutes of homework. Pupils in P4-7 will usually be given around 30 minutes of homework.

Homework tasks may include:

- reading preparation/practice;
- phonic/spelling tasks;
- maths activities;
- research;
- collecting items;
- preparing a talk; and or
- undertaking work on a personal project.

Homework will be recorded on a homework sheet (P1-2) and in a homework diary (P3-7). Parents are asked to sign the sheet/diary having supervised/discussed the homework with their child.

Parents can help their child with homework by:

- providing somewhere with as few distractions as possible where homework can be done;
- being supportive and talking about the homework without actually doing it; and
- asking your child to re-do tasks you think could be done better.

### **Enterprise in education**

Enterprise in education is an excellent strategy to develop the enterprise and employability skills of our young people.

It lies at the centre of curriculum for excellence and promotes a wide range of opportunities, including cross curricular work ,for our children and young people from 3-18 to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The four main areas of enterprise in education are:

- Enterprising learning and teaching;
- Entrepreneurial learning;
- Work based vocational learning; and
- Careers education.

Five inter-related themes are built around the main areas:

- Supporting the development of skills for life, skills for work;
- Engaging employers;
- Embedding enterprise in the curriculum;
- Building capacity; and
- Enhancing our international profile.

Enterprising activities will be organised to reflect the age and interests of our pupils.

The range of activities could include:

- Links and partnerships with businesses, colleges , schools abroad;
- Fundraising events organised and run by pupils;
- Fairtrade activities;
- Joint school and community initiatives; and
- Work experience placements and speakers.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

St. Mary's Primary School recognises the value of extra curricular activities. The wide and varied programme of extra-curricular activities on offer reflects the school's commitment to the promotion of active, healthy lifestyles.

The school tries to ensure the programme of activities offered is balanced and, where possible, gives pupils at all stages access to activities at different points throughout the school year.

Below are examples of the variety of extra-curricular activities that were offered to pupils in previous sessions.

#### Lunchtime Clubs

Multisport	Running Club	Boys Football	Girls Football
Athletics	Netball		

#### After School Clubs

Dance	Basketball	Netball	Hockey
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### **Home school community links**

#### **Parent council**

By law schools have a duty to promote parents' involvement in children's education. Parents are welcomed to be:

- involved with their child's education and learning;
- be active participants in the life of the school; and

- express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with their children's schools.

Every parent who has a child at our school is a member of the Parent Forum. The parent council is a group of parents chosen to represent the parent forum. As a member of the Parent Forum, each parent can expect to:

- receive information about the school and its activities;
- hear about what partnership with parents means in our school;
- be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you;
- identify issues you want the parent council, to work on with the school;
- be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and the education it provides;
- work in partnership with staff; and
- enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way possible.

The type of things the parent council may get involved in include:

- supporting the work of the school;
- gathering and representing parents' views to the Headteacher, education authority and Education Scotland;
- promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, and the local community;
- fundraising;
- organising events;
- reporting to the parent forum; and
- being involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.

For more information on parental involvement or to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk).

### **St Mary's Parent Partnership**

St. Mary's Primary School has a very active parent council, known as St. Mary's Parent Partnership. The Parent Partnership meets monthly and supports the school in a variety of ways, including: planning, organising and running fun activities for pupils and their families; buying gifts for pupils at various times of the school year; paying for special events; contributing towards the cost of coaches for outings; contributing towards the cost of special activities; assisting with the purchase of

special one-off items. As you can imagine, in order to do this, the Parent Partnership is involved in a considerable amount of fundraising throughout the year. Parents are asked to support this and, if possible, come along to meetings to support the Parent Partnership. Any member of the Parent Forum can come along to meetings of the Parent Partnership and are encouraged to do so. We look forward to seeing you.

### **Home school links**

The Home Link Service is one of the services working to support children and families in Renfrewshire. We are a multi disciplinary team based in different areas across Renfrewshire and appointed in teams linked to the school clusters in each area.

The main aim of the service is to increase the educational attainment of young people by developing links between home and school thus ensuring that pupils identified through the school's Extended Support Framework as facing issues at home, or in school, which are proving to be barriers to learning are offered additional support.

Support offered to pupils can be given individually or in a group setting. Parents are kept fully involved and initially a home visit will be offered to discuss the referral, and thereafter progress will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis keeping parents and pupils fully informed.

Support is also offered to pupils having been identified as being anxious at times of change. Moving from pre 5 to primary, primary to secondary school and from secondary to further education or employment. As this can be a stressful time to both pupils and parents we can work with you and your child's school to ensure a smooth transition, and help them learn how to cope with change.

Home Link service is a non statutory service and staff work in partnership with parents or carers and school staff. We also work in partnership with other agencies including Counselling and support services, Health, Social Work and Community Learning and Development and other identified local voluntary and government agencies.

### **Pupil council**

The pupils of St. Mary's Primary School are highly motivated and extremely enterprising. We encourage this in our pupils as we want them to be active members of the school community and to contribute to, and very often take leading roles in, enhancing school life. Pupils regularly have good ideas which, with a little bit of support, they turn into reality: talent shows; lunchtime clubs; fundraising activities; school newspaper, to name but a few! The Pupil Council is another means of engaging our pupils.

The Pupil Council consists of pupil representatives. The Council meets monthly to discuss, and take forward, issues raised by their peers at class meetings. Members of the Pupil Council take turns to chair meetings and all Pupil Council representatives are expected to provide regular updates to their classmates. The present Pupil Council is particularly active.

### **Community links**

Schools are special and important members of local communities. St. Mary's Primary School is well thought of in the local community and has, over the years, established good relationships within the community.

Some examples of how the school is involved with the community, to enhance learning and teaching across the curriculum, are:

- educational outings to places of interest;
- members of the local community visiting the school and talking to classes;
- working closely with the parish community of St. Mary's Church;
- visits to the local library;
- participation in community projects;
- inviting community groups/local businesses to support school projects;
- service activities within the community, such as carol singing for the elderly; and
- raising money for different charities.

However, the school is always keen to further develop and broaden its links with the community. Parents who are able to assist the school with this should contact the Head Teacher.

### **School lets**

To apply to use school facilities contact the Community Facilities Section at St. Catherine's Primary School. Contact details are in the important contacts section at the end of this handbook.

## Other useful information

### Listening to learn - Complaints, Comments and suggestions

Renfrewshire Council encourages feedback on its services from parents and pupils as part of our overall commitment to giving the best possible service and to working in partnership. We are, therefore, interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be compliments, suggestions or complaints.

If you want to register a comment of any type about the school you can do this by writing, telephoning or making an appointment to see someone. All feedback is welcome and keeps us in touch.

If, in particular, you have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that these things are shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than being allowed to damage the relationship between the family and the school. There will be no negative consequences arising from making a complaint and we will deal with the issue as confidentially as possible. If we have made a mistake we will apologise quickly and clearly and try to put things right.

There are some things which you should take note of in relation to making a complaint:

- It is helpful if complaints are made initially to the Headteacher. This makes sure that the school knows what is going on and has an opportunity to respond and resolve the issue.
- It is helpful if you can give some details of the issue and ask for an early appointment to discuss it.
- We will try to respond as quickly as possible, but often issues are complex and we need time to investigate.
- If you are still unhappy with the service or with our response then you will have the right to take up the matter further. You can put your complaint in writing or fill in a complaint form, available in the school or any council office. We can help if you have difficulty with this. Completed forms should be sent to: Renfrewshire Council, Education and Leisure Services, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley PA1 1LE. Telephone 0141 618 7201.
- If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, our reply will include the contact details.
- You should also note that you have the right to raise unresolved concerns with your local councillor, MSP or MP.



## **Data protection**

Information on pupils, parents and guardians is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative purposes. The information is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998 and may only be disclosed in accordance with the law. For more information please contact the school.

## **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 will do all we can to let you know about the details of closure or reopening. We will keep in touch using letters, e-mail and text messaging, and on the school and council's websites, announcements in the press and on local radio.

To help us keep you informed it is important that you make sure we have the most up to date emergency contact information for your family.

## Important Contacts

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### Director of Education and Leisure

Robert Naylor	Renfrewshire House Cotton Street Paisley PA1 1LE	Email <a href="mailto:els@renfrewshire.gov.uk">els@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0141 618 7195
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### Homelink Service Staff

Paisley Team 1 / Renfrew & Erskine Team	St Fergus Primary School Blackstoun Road Paisley PA3 1NB	Email <a href="mailto:louise.mccrory@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk">louise.mccrory@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0141 848 1344
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and  
Paisley Team 2 /  
Johnstone &  
Linwood Team

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### Community Learning & Development

Community Facilities Section	St. Catherine's Primary School Brabloch Crescent Paisley PA3 4RG	Email <a href="mailto:comfac.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk">comfac.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 01505 335 550
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Adult Learning Services	West Johnstone Shared Campus Beith Road Johnstone PA5 OBB	Email <a href="mailto:als.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk">als.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 01505 335 873
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Youth Services	West Primary School Newton Street Paisley PA1 2RL	Email <a href="mailto:youthservices.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk">youthservices.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0141 889 1110
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### Registration Area Offices

Paisley Area	Paisley Office 1 Cotton Street Paisley PA1 1AN	Registry	Email <a href="mailto:registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk">registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0300 3000 310 Fax: 0141 618 7060
Renfrew Area	Renfrew Office Town Hall Renfrew PA4 8PF	Registry	Email <a href="mailto:registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk">registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0141 885 4179 Fax: 0141 886 3589
Johnstone Area	Johnstone Office 16/18 Street Johnstone PA5 8QL	Registry McDowall	Email <a href="mailto:registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk">registrar.cs@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 01505 320 012 Fax: 01505 382 130

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### Customer Service Centre

Customer Service Centre	Renfrewshire House Cotton Street Paisley PA1 1AN	Email <a href="mailto:customerservices.contact@renfrewshire.gov.uk">customerservices.contact@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> Phone: 0141 840 3477
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### Websites

You may find the following websites useful.

- [ParentZone](#) - parents can find information, relevant publications and links to other useful organisations.
- [Education Scotland](#) - parents can access school and local authority inspection reports and find out more about the work of Education Scotland.
- [Scottish schools online](#)- parents can find out about individual schools. They can choose a school and select what type of information they need such as Education Scotland reports, exam results, stay on rates and free school meal entitlement.

- [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk) - contains information for parents and information on Renfrewshire schools.
- [ChildLine Bullying information](#) - contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying.
- <http://www.respectme.org.uk/> - Scotland's anti-bullying service. Contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying
- <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/> - contains information for everyone on equality laws within the government and local authorities.

## **Glossary**

CFE - Curriculum for Excellence

ASN – Additional Support Needs

BGE – Broad General Education

EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance

DDA – Disability Discrimination Act

EHRC – Equality Human Rights Commission

IA – Impact Assessment

SIP – Service Improvement Plan

ASL – Additional Support for Learning

LTS – Learning and Teaching Scotland

SQA – Scottish Qualifications Authority

FOI – Freedom of Information

HGIOS/AifL – How Good is our School/Assessment is for Learning

S1 – 1<sup>st</sup> year of secondary school

HT/PT/GT – Head Teacher/Principal Teacher/Guidance Teacher

CLAD – Community Learning and Development

RLL – Renfrewshire Leisure Ltd

GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child

Although this information is correct at time of printing in December 2012, there could be changes affecting any of the contents before or during the course, of the school year or in future school years.

Parent feedback

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the questionnaire on the next page. Your feedback will help us improve the hand book next year.



## **Parent feedback**

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the questionnaire on the next page. Your feedback will help us improve the hand book next year.

## Tell us what you think

Your feedback will help us to improve our handbook.

Did you find

Please tick

- |                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. the handbook useful?          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. the information you expected? | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. the handbook easy to use?     | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Please tell us how we can improve the handbook next year.

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire. Your views are appreciated. Please return this questionnaire to:

Gayle Fitzpatrick

Management Information Officer

Renfrewshire Council

Education and Leisure Services

Renfrewshire House

Cotton Street

Paisley

PA1 1LE

email address: [gayle.fitzpatrick@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:gayle.fitzpatrick@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk)