

St John's RC Academy



School Handbook Academic Session 2025/26



Education and Learning
Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



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Introduction

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to St John's RC Academy handbook. St John's RC Academy is at the heart of the North Inch Community Campus, providing education for children and young people from ages 2 to 18, with excellent school and community facilities. Our handbook provides information about important aspects of school life: our aims, our people, and our expectations. It contains lots of practical details about our school routines and procedures.

Starting with nursery and moving through the stages of childhood into adult life can be challenging and enjoyable times for children and young people – but on occasion anxious times for parents. I hope this handbook will reassure you and help you understand the key features and important transitions which you and your child will experience in St John's RC Academy. I also hope that it will answer some of the questions about how the school is organised, our curriculum and, most importantly, about how we place our pupils at the centre of all we do as an educational institute and place of learning. However, if there is anything that is not touched on that you would like further information, or greater clarification, then please contact the school and this will be followed up by the most relevant member of staff available.

As parents and carers, you are invaluable partners in your child's education and important members of our school community. The partnership between pupils, staff, parents, and Parish, represented by school chaplains, is at the very heart of our school. Of course, a handbook such as this cannot reproduce the atmosphere or ethos of a school as a lived experience. In St John's RC Academy, we celebrate being a Catholic and caring school and aim to provide a Christian atmosphere based on the teachings of Jesus and His church; a place in which pupils feel secure and able to seek help and advice. Our state-of-the-art building with a beautiful backdrop of the North Inch helps us in this endeavour.

We have a strong ethos, and our values are encapsulated in the four words of Fairness, Achievement, Respect, and Love. As a comprehensive school we aim to assist pupils of all abilities and all backgrounds, to maximise their potential in a happy and safe environment, no matter what their start in life is. We foster a caring, inclusive atmosphere in which respect and tolerance for others are promoted. With all staff committed to the best possible outcomes for all our pupils, we encourage our pupils to aim high and achieve the very best they can be.

Our school is supported by Perth and Kinross Council, led by Executive Director of Education and Learning, Sheena Devlin. The council provides a range of services to support our pupils' learning and to improve their achievements.

We look forward to welcoming you as parents and carers to our school community and want your child to have the best start possible, to feel safe and supported, as they progress through their education at St Johns' RC Academy.

Ms M Futamata
Head Teacher & Campus Leader

Delineated Area

St John's RC Academy Cluster includes:

St John's RC Academy Nursery, Primary and Secondary, Perth

Our Lady's RC Primary School, Perth

St Dominic's RC Primary School, Crieff

St Stephen's RC Primary School, Blairgowrie

Although most of our S1 pupils transfer from these schools, a significant number of pupils come from other primary schools within Perthshire as a result of parental choice.

Our Roll

The school roll for the current session 2024-25 is

The current roll for each year group is in our school is:

P1	50	S1	118
P2	57	S2	120
P3	58	S3	119
P4	60	S4	118
P5	63	S5	84
P6	66	S6	55
P7	66		
Primary total	420	Secondary total	614

Nursery - Our nursery currently has capacity for 85 children and we currently have 75 pupils enrolled.

You can find further information on enrolment and our catchment area here:

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/21194/School-enrolment>

Contact Information

Location

St John's RC Academy – which came into existence in 2009 with the merger of St John's Primary and St Columba's High School – is a Catholic, 2-18 all through school.

The Academy is situated on the site of the former St Columba's High School within a purpose build community campus, which was funded via the Investment in Learning programme. The secondary part of the school opened with North Inch Community Campus in March 2010; the primary and nursery opened in November 2011. The official opening of the whole campus took place in December 2011.

The facilities include 3 and 4 court games halls, 2 all weather playing fields, a dance studio, fitness suite, drama facilities, a recording studio and a full public library, as well as state of the art teaching areas and an integrated support base to support pupils and families. The school has a peaceful setting, close to the banks of the River Tay, at the top of the North Inch, with outstanding views to Highland Perthshire.

Communication with the School

The continuing success and development of our school is built on the partnership which exists between parents, staff and pupils. This relies on good two-way communication between parents and school. We ask all parents to provide us with home and mobile

telephone numbers, at least one email address and emergency contact details.

We welcome contact from parents. The education of our pupils is the central task of all who work in St John's RC Academy. You are asked to bear in mind the pressures on the school office and the teaching commitments of staff in considering the best way to contact the school. If in doubt, telephone the school and ask for advice.

Address: Ms Futamata, Headteacher
St John's RC Academy
North Inch Community Campus
Gowans Terrace
Perth, PH1 5BF

Telephone: 01738 454300
School Absentee Line: 01738 454444

e-mail: St-JohnsAcademy@pkc.gov.uk
website: st-johnsacademy.pkc.sch.uk
twitter: @st_johnsacademy

Parents of St John's RC Academy – formally Parent Council

Chairperson: Mr Andrew Woodward
Vice Chairperson: Mr Nick Ward
Treasurer: Mrs Karen Johnston

The objectives of the group are:

- to promote partnership between the school, its pupils, all parents/ carers, the Catholic Church and Education and Learning to enable all pupils to develop their full potential so that their lifelong activities are guided by the Holy Spirit and the presence of Christ in the service of God and others in line with our school aims;
- to work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming community which is fully inclusive;
- to develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of all pupils;
- to identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils;
- to work in partnership with councils of associated schools.

The Parent Council is open to all parents and guardians of pupils at St John's RC Academy, and everyone is most welcome. The opportunity to become part of the school community is easiest through helping at a number of Parent Council events. You can contact the Parent Council via email at the addresses provided above.

Raising Concerns

If you have a concern your first point of contact should be your child's Class Teacher (Primary), Tutor Group Teacher or Guidance Teacher (Secondary).

The Senior Leadership Team has responsibility for the following year groups:

Mrs Robertson – Nursery and P1
Mrs Jack/Miss Martin – P2, P3 and P4
Mrs Rees – P5 to P7
Mrs Smith – S1, S2 and S3
Mr Hynes – S4, S5 and S6

The school deals with complaints as part of Perth & Kinross Council's Complaints Handling Procedure. More information is available on the Council's website as follows:

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/complaints>

You will also find our School Parental Communication Policy on our website: <https://www.st-johnsacademy.pkc.sch.uk/Policies/>

The Staff of our School

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

NAME	POST
Ms Futamata	Headteacher & Campus Leader
Mr Hynes	Depute Headteacher (Secondary)
Mrs Smith	Depute Headteacher (Secondary) - Acting
Mrs Jack	Depute Headteacher (Primary)
Miss Martin	Depute Headteacher (Primary) - Acting
Mrs Robertson	Depute Headteacher (Primary)
Mrs Rees	Depute Headteacher (Primary) – Acting
Mrs Gahan	Business Manager & Deputy Campus Leader

NURSERY STAFF

Mrs Blain	Nursery Class Teacher
Mrs Shilliday	Principal Early Childhood Practitioner
Ms Taylor	Equity and Excellence Lead Principal
Mrs Laing	Acting Senior Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Herd	Senior Early Childhood Practitioner
Vacancy	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Woolley	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Sutherland	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Mathison	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Maciver	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss McCall	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Ward	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Young	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Brown	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Brodlo	Early Childhood Practitioner
Vacancy	Early Childhood Practitioner
Vacancy	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Davidson	Early Childhood Practitioner
Vacancy	Pupil Support Assistant
Miss Fleming	Pupil Support Assistant
Miss Donaldson	Play Assistant
Miss Spark	Play Assistant
Mrs Miskufova	Play Assistant
Mrs Ward	Family Learning Practitioner
Vacancy	Family Learning Practitioner (part-time)

PRIMARY STAFF

TEACHING STAFF

NAME	POST	STAGE
Miss Honer	Class Teacher	P1H
Miss McEachen	Class Teacher	P1M
Miss MacDuff	Class Teacher	P2K
Miss Maryniak	Class Teacher	P2J
Miss Muncey	Class Teacher	P3M
Mrs Beck	Class Teacher	P3B
Miss Gallacher	Class Teacher	P4G
Miss Monaghan	Class Teacher	P4M
Miss White	Class Teacher	P5W
Miss Martin	Class Teacher	P5M
Miss MacLeod	Class Teacher	P6R
Mrs Hunter	Class Teacher	P6H
Mrs McGaffney/Miss Reid	Class Teacher	P7G
Mr McCluskey	Class Teacher	P7M
Ms Black	Pupil Support Teacher	All
Mr Boddy	Peripatetic Support Teacher	All

SUPPORT STAFF

Mrs Gordon	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Turzyniecka	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Netherington	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Ronald	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Littlejohn	Pupil Support Assistant
Miss Lulkowska	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Kula	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs MacDonald	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Filipoaia	Pupil Support Assistant
Miss Paterson	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Ward	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Chatila	ECP

SECONDARY STAFF

ART AND DESIGN

NAME	POST
Mr Jessop	Principal Teacher
Mrs Banks	Teacher
Mrs Seward	Teacher

BUSINESS AND COMPUTER EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Mrs Sandilands	Principal Teacher
Miss Parr	Teacher
Mrs Winwood	Teacher

DESIGN, ENGINEERING & HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

NAME	POST
Mr Smith	Principal Teacher
Mr Clark	Teacher
Mrs Packer	Teacher
Mr McCracken	Teacher
Mrs Martin	Principal Teacher
Mrs Findlay	Teacher

ENGLISH

NAME	POST
Mrs Bremner	Principal Teacher
Mr Blair	Teacher
Mrs Halliburton	Teacher
Miss McCombie	Teacher
Mrs Reilly	Teacher

MATHEMATICS

NAME	POST
Mrs Foley	Principal Teacher (Acting)
Mrs Simmons	Teacher
Mr McLachlan	Teacher
Mr Wain	Teacher
Miss Mackie	Teacher

MODERN LANGUAGES

NAME	POST
Ms Miller	Principal Teacher
Miss Del Rio	Teacher

MUSIC/DRAMA

NAME	POST
Ms Hossick	Principal Teacher
Mrs McIntosh	Teacher
Mrs Melville	Drama Teacher

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Mr Robinson	Principal Teacher
Miss Cafferty	Teacher
Mr Simpson	Teacher
Mr Flynn	Teacher
Mrs Tomb	Teacher (Tues - Fri)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Dr Staines	Principal Teacher
Mrs Adlam	Teacher
Mrs Carroll	Teacher (Mon/Wed/Fri)

SCIENCE

NAME	POST
Mrs Kettle	Principal Teacher Chemistry/Physics Teacher
Dr Stewart	Biology Teacher
Dr Luchoomun	Physics Teacher
Dr Templeton	Chemistry Teacher
Mr Thompson	Biology Teacher

SOCIAL SUBJECTS

NAME	POST
Mrs Downie	Principal Teacher (Social Subjects)/Modern Studies and History (Mon-Thurs)
Miss Bonthron	Modern Studies/Geography Teacher
Mrs Gordon	Geography/Modern Studies Teacher (Mon/Tues/Fri)
Miss Senkel	History Teacher and Principal Teacher (Fri)

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS – GROUND FLOOR

NAME	POST
Mrs Murray	Principal Teacher - Support for Learning
Mr McGuire	Principal Teacher - Pastoral
Mrs McKeag	Principal Teacher - Pastoral
Miss Mills	Principal Teacher - Pastoral
Mrs McKenzie	Teacher of Support
Mrs Simpson	Teacher of Support
Ms Hood	Teacher of Support (Wed)
Ms Cook	Teacher of Support
Ms Seward	Teacher of Inclusion – Thursday and Friday

WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT – MAIN OFFICE AND RECEPTION

NAME	POST
Mrs Young	Campus Management Officer
Mrs Lewis	Assistant Campus Management Officer
Mr Woodcock	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Summers	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Hill	Campus Management Assistant
Ms Rothney	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Smiech	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Jarret	Campus Management Assistant
Mr Forber	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Smith	Clerical Assistant (Tuesday)
Mrs Mackriell	General Assistant

SENIOR TECHNICIAN

NAME	POST
Ms Golder	Senior Technician
Mr Cunningham	Technician

LIBRARY

NAME	POST
Mr Davidson	Library Supervisor
Mrs Harrow	Library Assistant
Mr Parsons	Library Assistant
Mrs Dodson	Library Assistant

FIRST AID

NAME	POST
Mrs Geraldine Scott	First Aider

PUPIL SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

NAME	POST
Mrs Storer	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Alsamaan	Pupil Support Assistant
Ms Lawson	Pupil Support Assistant
Ms Manners	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Reid	Pupil Support Assistant
Miss MacDonald	Pupil Support Assistant

EALSERVICE

NAME	POST
Mrs Davenport	Principal Teacher
Mrs Anderson	Teacher
Ms Marciniac	Polish Community Link Worker
Mrs Mann	Community Learning Assistant
Mrs Malon	Polish Community Link Worker

PUPIL WELFARE

NAME	POST
Mrs Sinclair	Pupil Care and Welfare Officer
Miss Low	Pupil Care and Welfare Officer
Mrs Wiggan	Pupil Care and Welfare Officer

COMMUNITY LINK

NAME	POST
Karen Reid	Community Link Worker
Ashley King	Community Link Worker
Amelia Bradford	Community Learning Assistant (Primary)

TAYSIDE CONTRACTS – KITCHEN

NAME	POST
Jane Turver	Campus Catering Supervisor
Lillias Stibbles	Assistant Cook
Melanie Urquhart	Assistant Cook
Frances Lumsden	Catering Assistant
Cara Meldrum	Catering Assistant

Arlene Nicholson	Catering Assistant
Leigh Ann Taylor	Catering Assistant
Anna Szczepaniak	Catering Assistant
Jo McCrickard	Catering Assistant
Louise McCrickard	Catering Assistant
Izabella Wichrowska	Catering Assistant
Katherine Munroe	Catering Assistant

MITIE

NAME	POST
Steven Brandon	Facilities Manager
Graham Moffat	Senior Service Support Officer
Harry Wilson	Service Support Officer
David Ferguson	Service Support Officer
Alan Burn	Service Support Officer

Health Care

If a child becomes unwell during class time, the teacher will give him/her a slip to report to the medical room. Pupils who become unwell during intervals or lunch breaks should report directly to the school office. For minor complaints first aid is offered and the pupil is allowed to rest in the medical room. Parents or relatives will be informed as quickly as possible and arrangements made for you or a representative to collect your child from the school. More serious accidents or illnesses may be referred directly to the Accident and Emergency Department at Perth Royal Infirmary and parents will be informed.

It is extremely important that you provide the following information for the school:

- an address and telephone number (including a mobile number) where you may be contacted quickly, should an emergency arise;
- the name, address and telephone number (including a mobile number) of another adult, perhaps a neighbour or relative, who is trusted to assume responsibility when you cannot be contacted and a child has to be taken home or referred to hospital; and
- an e-mail address.

You will be given a form to provide this information when your child transfers to St John's RC Academy. You should inform us immediately of any changes to the details which you provide. In an emergency, this can be vital.

If you wish your child to leave school to consult his/her own doctor/dentist, a letter giving the date, time and place of the appointment should be sent to the school, addressed to the appropriate member of staff, in advance of the appointment: in primary this would be the class teacher and in secondary this would be the tutor group teacher. All pupils must report to the school office to sign out/in when leaving or returning.

Communication with Parents

The school communicates in the following ways:

- Parent Council
- Parents' evenings
- Drop-in sessions with SLT
- School Assemblies
- E-mail
- Website
- Groupcall
- Letters
- Termly Newsletters

- Twitter
- SEESAW (Primary only)
- Primary Soft Starts
- Nursery Stay and Play and Nibble & Natter sessions
- Open evenings and coffee mornings
- Achievement ceremonies
- School shows
- Annual parents' survey
- Focus Groups

School Ethos

The Vision

The vision of the North Inch Community Campus is consistent with the vision of Perth and Kinross Council and its Community Planning Partners.

Our vision is of a confident campus to which everyone can contribute and in which we can all share.

Our campus is vibrant and successful; a safe and healthy environment and a place where people and communities are nurtured and supported.

The North Inch Community Campus seeks to achieve excellent outcomes in promoting and supporting the learning, development and well-being of all members of its community, including staff, in an inclusive, welcoming and safe environment.

Staff from a wide range of backgrounds strive to provide high quality services; this involves working in partnership with others and being responsive to the needs and views of the users of the services.

St John's RC Academy's Mission Statement

St John's RC Academy is at the heart of the North Inch Community Campus.

In St John's RC Academy, we seek to grow together as a community of faith and learning in which every member feels welcomed, valued and safe. Guided by the gospel values of Jesus Christ, our staff will work to provide the highest quality of education for the young people in our care. In doing so, we will help them to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to our school and to society.

The work of everyone associated with our school is directed by the following aims:

- we will help each other to grow in faith and to develop our values and spiritual lives;
- we will inspire in each other a lifelong love of learning with a positive culture of achievement;
- we will encourage our pupils to take responsibility for their learning and lifestyle;
- we will support our families and the life of the wider community;
- we will promote self-respect and show consideration for others; and
- we will develop our gifts in the service of others promoting a spirit of peace and forgiveness.

Pupil Statement

I belong to the community of St John's RC Academy. I will do my best to behave well, to work hard, to tell the truth, to care for others and to achieve to the best of my ability.

Our school motto is **SEEK THE GOOD**. This is taken from our school's morning offering prayer:

St John's RC Academy Secondary Morning Offering

Father, whatever this day may bring
Help me to seek the good within
To act in a spirit of generous love
And to grow in wisdom and in grace
In the footsteps of Saint John the Baptist
Patron of our School
Amen

St John's RC Academy Primary Prayer

O God Bless our school
that in working together
and playing together
we may learn to serve you
and to serve one another
St John the Baptist pray for us

We encourage our pupils and our staff to seek the good in ourselves and in each other so that we may help each other to flourish in our school community.

Religious Tradition

The Catholic nature of St John's RC Academy is an integral feature of the school. Parents who choose to send their children should expect them to participate fully in all aspects of school life. In addition to timetabled lessons in religious education, there are assemblies and regular liturgical celebrations. Mass is celebrated on feast days, during Lent and Advent and on special occasions.

Under Section 9 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, parents may withdraw a pupil from religious instruction and observance. If you anticipate difficulties in this area you are advised to consult the Headteacher. However, having chosen St John's for your child, we do not anticipate any difficulties. Further information from the Scottish Catholic Education Service can be found in the School Policies and Practical Information section of this handbook.

We hope that at the end of their school career Catholic pupils will approach their faith in a spirit of commitment, and that pupils who are not Catholic will have developed a deeper awareness of religious belief.

Development of Pupils' Values

In our school we are committed to providing appropriate opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural values. This will be undertaken in partnership with parents and will take account of the individual needs of pupils, the views of parents and the religious character of the school.

Whole school events contribute to the development and formation of pupils' values.

A range of liturgical services and activities beyond the classroom, such as our many cultural outings, sporting and recreational opportunities along with the many social and cultural events, all have a role to play in encouraging our pupils to consider their understanding of their place in their school, community and beyond.

Our school welcomes and celebrates diversity and individuality while emphasising our common commitment to moral values such as honesty, respect for others, compassion and justice. It is a fundamental principle of our school that all who are involved in the life of our school have the right to be respected as individuals. With this right, comes the responsibility to act in a considerate and respectful manner towards others.

We implement the education authority's policy for equal opportunities and seek to ensure that all pupils have access to the full range of educational experiences available within the resources of the school. We are firmly committed to the elimination of any form of discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender and disability.

Religious Observance

As a Catholic school, St John's RC Academy has the responsibility of giving its pupils the experience of belonging to a Christian community and of developing spiritually.

Throughout their time at St John's RC Academy, pupils receive the opportunity to grow in their faith, to become more knowledgeable about it and to develop a willingness to express it through practical activities.

The partnership between the school, the home and local parishes is central to this process. The Deanery of St Fillan's covers an area of the Diocese of Dunkeld which is almost the same as the school's secondary catchment area. The priests who visit St John's RC Academy are Canon Steven Mulholland, and Canon Tom Shields. Canon Tom Shields is the Diocese's representative on Perth & Kinross Lifelong Learning Committee.

St John's RC Academy is a caring community. It attempts to show what it means to live as a Christian with one's fellow human beings. We seek to do this through the relationships which are formed, by the justice and integrity which prevail, by the care shown for the individual, by shared beliefs expressed in liturgical services and by the courses which make up the formal RE curriculum.

In primary, during most weeks there are school assemblies led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We feel that our assemblies are important occasions for the whole community of our primary to come together, to pray, to sing and to deepen our relationships with God. There are strong links with the local Parish Church, St John the Baptist RC Church. The pupils take part in the celebration of Mass once every two weeks as well as on important feast days. Parents are invited to join our assemblies throughout the school year.

In secondary, the work of the religious education department is organised by the Principal Teacher of Religious Education, Mr D O'Brien. He co-ordinates and guides the work of members of staff in teaching religious education. He is also a member of the school's chaplaincy team which comprises of our chaplains, school staff and pupil representatives. The team takes a lead in organising liturgy throughout the school year.

Further information from the Scottish Catholic Education Service can be found at the end of this handbook.

Parish Contact Details

St. John the Baptist (Perth)
V. Rev. Steven Canon Mulholland
20 Melville Street
Perth and Kinross
PH1 5PY
Tel: 01738 259371

Our Lady of Lourdes (Perth)
Father Martin Pletts
Struan Road
Perth
PH1 2JP
Tel: 01738 626979

St Mary Magdalene's RC Church
Glenearn Road
Perth and Kinross
PH2 0HP
Tel: 01738 336141

St Stephen's RC Church
Father Gregory E Umunna
John Street
Blairgowrie
PH10 6DE
Tel: 01250 872171

St Fillan's RC Church
Rev. Dr. Thomas Canon Shields
Ford Road
Crieff
PH7 3HN
Tel: 01764 653269

St James' RC Church
Father Martin Pletts
5 High Street
Kinross KY13 8AW
Tel: 01577 863329

St Bride's RC Church
St Columba's RC Church (served from St
Bride's, Pitlochry)
Rev Emmanuel Adindu

St Bride's RC Church
Rie-Achan Road
Pitlochry
PH16 5AL
Tel: 01796 472174
St Columba's RC Church
St Mary's Road
Birnam
Dunkeld PH8 0BJ
Tel: 01796 472174

Active Schools

Active Schools is a national initiative which aims to promote physical activity in children and young people which will continue into adulthood.

There is an Active Schools Coordinator linked to every primary and secondary school in Scotland. The role of each Coordinator is to create more opportunities for young people out with the school day. They work with the PE Department, school staff, parents, senior pupils, coaches and local clubs to create these opportunities. Active Schools Coordinators also have a specific remit to focus on the following groups:

- girls and young women;
- young people from ethnic minority backgrounds;
- young people with physical and learning disabilities;
- young people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

The Benefits of Being Active

There are so many benefits for young people if they are active. It can:

- raise their confidence, self-esteem, skills and abilities;
- teach key social and life skills;
- improve sleep quality and energy levels;
- reduce the risk of stress and depression;
- contribute to educational attainment and
- reduce the risk of major illnesses in later life (e.g. heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer).

How Much Exercise Should My Child Do?

It is recommended that children and young people (5-18 years) engage in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day.

Active Schools at St John's RC Academy

Active Schools is a national programme which aims to provide school aged children with quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school. The programme also aims to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community.

It is recommended by the NHS that children and young people aged 5-18 years should aim for an average of at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity a day. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to be active at St John's Academy. Extra curricular clubs (lunchtime & after school) for secondary pupils currently include: volleyball, basketball, fitness suite, football, dance, netball, hockey, badminton and trampolining. Extra curricular clubs for primary pupils currently include: table tennis, Epic kids (movement and mindfulness), netball and football. There are also many opportunities throughout the school year for pupils to compete in sport against other schools.

All clubs are free of charge and run by members of staff and/or volunteers. We also have many senior pupils who support the clubs.

We are always looking to expand our extra-curricular programme and welcome any parents/carers who would like to volunteer their time and skills. Training is provided.

If you would like to find out more information about physical activity opportunities for your child and/or are interested in volunteering, please contact Mrs Joy Cameron, Active Schools Coordinator (JCameron@liveactive.co.uk).

North Inch Community Library

This bright and welcoming library has an impressive range of resources for pupils and staff of St John's Academy and members of the public, pupils can access the library during morning break, lunchtime and after school. In addition to a great selection of fiction and non-fiction books, there is also a fantastic range of e-Resources on our website, www.culturepk.org.uk/library that pupils can access for free with their library membership.

Pupils automatically become library members at the start of S1 when they receive their Young Scot/NEC cards. The library space offers an ideal quiet location for individual and small group study. Pupils who attend after school study support/homework clubs in school (including the Library) can access free bus travel home. The teacher in charge of the class will provide a form which can be exchanged for a pass at Reception.

Library staff also organise a range of activities for all pupils throughout the academic year; in addition to regular class visits, the library hosts author talks and other literature based activities linked to national events, such as, World Book Day, World Book Night, Summer Reading Challenge, National Poetry Day and Book Week Scotland.

Relationships and Promoting Positive Behaviour

In our whole school charter, we emphasise the need for all our pupils to have a sense of respect and responsibility. We make clear our expectations with regard to pupil behaviour which link to our school aims and faith values.

We aim to establish an atmosphere in St John's RC Academy in which pupils can operate as reasonable, responsible members of the community. In doing so, we hope to develop an environment which is conducive to sound learning, good citizenship and good behaviour.

At St John's RC Academy we promote a 'can do' attitude, set high expectations, and encourage pupil attainment and achievement to be consistently recognised, recorded and celebrated. Our Relationships' Policy is explicitly designed to promote these aims.

A staged, restorative and solution focused approach is used at St John's RC Academy in addressing all challenging situations relating to discipline. These values are underpinned by our promotion of the Rights of the Child as a UNICEF Rights Respecting School.

The standard of behaviour we expect of our pupils is very high and our pupils' good manners are frequently commented on by visitors to the school and community campus.

Parental Involvement

We know from national research that children do better at school and achieve more in life when parents and schools work together. Only 15% of a child's life is spent at school and so it is very clear that parents have the most influential role in a child's education. It is important that we respect that we each have a role to play, but in working together we will aim to ensure that every child does the best they can at school and beyond.

At St John's RC Academy we aim to promote communication between home and school. We do this through a wide variety of means such as the school website, natter groups, parents' information evenings, parents' reporting evenings, newsletters, twitter, drop-ins, and groupcalls. Pupils are asked to share their learning through homework diaries, reading records, portfolios and profiles. We also encourage parents to make an appointment and come into the school if they have any comments or concerns, and we aim to be responsive to comments and concerns within 5 days.

The St John's RC Academy Parents' Council is very active in many areas of the life of the school, supporting our work through volunteering time, raising funds, participating in school improvement groups and hosting information evenings.

The Parent Council is open to all parents and guardians of pupils at St John's RC Academy, and everyone is most welcome. The opportunity to become part of the school community is easiest through helping at a number of Parent Council events.

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/parentalinvolvement>

Transitions

As with all new experiences, a child's transition at any stage in their learning can often seem a daunting and anxious time for both pupils and parents.

At St John's RC Academy we have developed effective and comprehensive transition arrangements which aim to ensure continuity and progression in our children and young people's learning. Through our structures, physical resources and programmes we have enhanced arrangements to ensure our pupils are known, feel valued and are prepared for challenge and change.

Primary 1 Enrolment

Each year, during an allocated week in January, parents are invited to enrol their child using the Perth and Kinross Council online system for children who will be starting primary one the following August. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is available to answer questions and discuss any matter with parents and is contactable via the school office.

Nursery and Primary 1 follow the same Early Level Curriculum throughout the year. Primary 1 pupils visit nursery regularly and in turn nursery pupils visit primary 1. This is called 'play swap' and allows children in both settings to have access to a much wider range of experiences. This, along with a number of other strategies, helps to create a fluid and seamless transition from nursery to primary 1. When your child is due to transfer to primary school, their pupil profile and any other report will be forwarded to the appropriate school. Nursery staff will liaise with school staff wherever possible to make the transition as easy as possible for the children.

For those children transferring to St John's RC Academy Primary, there are many links established between nursery and Primary 1 classes.

- A parent information evening;
- Children visit the Primary 1 class accompanied by parents, and then as a small group;
- Children participate in the whole school transition morning;
- Primary 1 staff will visit children in the nursery;
- Children are taken on a tour of the school to familiarise them with the school office, the dining hall etc;
- Children are taken on a visit to the playground;
- Children have the opportunity to visit for lunch with parents and members of school staff.

Parents who wish further information, or who wish to discuss their child's education before deciding to enrol, should contact the Depute Headteacher.

Primary 7 – S1 Transition

Arrangements for the transfer of pupils from our associated primary schools are carefully planned and involve detailed discussion between primary and secondary staff. The main aim of our program is to help pupils integrate successfully into St John's RC Academy. Our Depute Headteacher, Community Link Worker, Support for Pupils Team and a range of teaching staff are involved in all aspects of our extensive transition program. Our P7-S1 transition program is both universal (for all children) and targeted (for identified individual children).

Transition Timelines:

Universal – Learning, Social and Pastoral

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| September/October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P7 pupils have the opportunity to participate in a day's field trip to the outdoor activity centre at Lendrick Muir. |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and open evening for P7 parents and prospective new intake with tours of the school. |
| January – June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHT, Support for Pupils Staff and the Community Link Worker start to visit primary schools to meet the new S1 introducing the secondary school and specific topics such as travel & pastoral support, extra-curricular. • DHT, Support for Pupils Staff and the Community Link Worker drop into P7 Parents' Evenings across our cluster schools. |
| March – April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHT and Support for Pupils visit Primary schools to gather information to assist in transition between primary and secondary on pupils learning, achievements, ASN and pastoral concerns. |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our smaller primaries and targeted pupils visit for an additional transition morning workshop with school tours led by the Community Link Worker and school partners. • The St John's RC Academy cluster schools transition day is held with various pupil workshops and experiences |
| June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P7 profiles issued to all secondary school teachers to allow them to familiarise themselves with their new S1 pupils. • The Business Education and Computing Department hold an Inventors Challenge Day for P7 pupils. • The Perth and Kinross school induction days allow pupils to experience their timetables for two full days. • DHT holds an P7 new intake parental meeting prior to the summer holidays to address any last-minute concerns. |

- August –**
 - The SLT and Support staff hold an informal parental drop-in for all new S1 to ensure a smooth transition is achieved and to address any further concerns. Our Community Link Worker follows up with individual parental meetings for some enhanced transition pupils.
- September**
 - Support for Pupils start their S1 interview using your child's P7 profiles.
- October**
 - Early S1 reports are sent home and followed up with a parental 'drop in' with the Senior Leadership Team and Support for Pupils staff.

Targeted – Learning, Social and Pastoral

- P6 December – June**
 - Early ASN transition/partnership meetings are held in primary schools with secondary school representation
- P7 August – December**
 - Specific ASN Meetings are held to discuss transition planning and to identify a secondary school link
- P7 May**
 - Additional transition visits take place with smaller schools, non-feeder schools and all pupils with identified additional support needs
 - Enhanced transition classes are held which focus on additional visits, environmental familiarisation and learning experiences
- S1 September – December**
 - Post placement Additional Support Meetings take place
 - Pupils are selected to take part in experiences recognised through National Achievement Awards with our schools Outdoor Education Team

The Curriculum

Curriculum for Excellence forms the basis of learning, teaching and assessment from **Nursery to S6**.

Pupils from Nursery to S6 will experience learning derived from the 'experiences and outcomes' of Curriculum for Excellence with S4-6 pupils undertaking the new national qualifications, with a small number of subjects running the older form of qualifications. The purpose of Curriculum for Excellence is to ensure that all children in our school develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. The aims of Curriculum for Excellence are that every child should know they are valued and that they will be supported to become a successful learner, an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible citizen.

In order to achieve this for every pupil, we provide a wide range of challenging and enjoyable learning experiences. We aim to ensure active involvement of the learner through learning and teaching which:

- engages and is active;
- sets challenging goals;
- shares expectations and standards;
- provides timely and accurate feedback;
- involves sharing learning intentions and success criteria;
- is cooperative and collaborative; and
- reflects the ways different learners progress.

During this time of developing new learning experiences within the curriculum, a focus for our school has been to further enhance learning and teaching throughout the school via:

- assessment is for learning;
- cooperative learning;
- play and learning (early years); and
- learning within a context.

Nursery to Secondary 3: The broad general education

The curriculum encompasses all planned learning experiences both within and outwith the School. This includes opportunities to contribute to the ethos and life of the school, interdisciplinary learning and the recognition of achievements in the broadest sense. In addition, the curriculum encompasses eight curriculum areas, detailed below.

Expressive Arts

All children in our school experience a wide range of experiences in:

- Art and Design
- Dance
- Drama
- Music.

These are provided by class teachers and at times by visiting specialists. In addition, some music and drama lessons in the primary are led by specialist teachers from the secondary.

Languages and Literacy

This includes English Language: listening, talking, reading and writing. It also includes French for pupils from P6 – S2, and a choice of languages in S3. Curriculum for Excellence also ensures that literacy skills are promoted across all other areas of the curriculum.

The development of literacy is of great importance in the school with activities leading to reading and writing beginning in nursery and primary one.

Children are encouraged to develop a love of reading from the earliest stage. We use core reading and writing schemes which extend through the primary school allowing children to progress from year to year. These are supplemented by a wide range of planned language activities which contribute to a child's continuing development.

Early reading is taught by building up sounds and this leads to an emphasis on reading for understanding as children become proficient.

Children are also given many opportunities to produce writing of all kinds and most children become proficient writers as they reach upper primary and secondary classes.

Health and wellbeing

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Curriculum for Excellence also ensures that health and wellbeing is developed across all other areas of the curriculum with all teachers sharing the responsibility of ensuring that pupils have the best start to life and are ready to succeed. We aim to ensure that pupils are achieving, responsible, included, nurtured, safe, respected, active and healthy. In the secondary, registration and personal support classes help us to ensure that every young person is known well.

Mathematics and Numeracy

Mathematics and numeracy are important in our everyday life, allowing us to make sense of the world around us and to manage our lives. Using mathematics and numeracy enables us to model real life situations and make connections and informed predictions. The skills acquired equip us to interpret and analyse information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions. Mathematics and numeracy are key skills which help us to develop other necessary skills required for life, learning and work. Understanding the part that mathematics and numeracy play in all aspects of life is crucial.

Mathematics and numeracy are sometimes taught through practical activities; for example, the school has recently made more use of the playground to facilitate active learning through the introduction of outdoor maths.

The core mathematics scheme continues through the school. It is supplemented by many other experiences to provide a broad mathematical education. There is an emphasis on how maths applies to real life. Multiplication tables and mental arithmetic are practised frequently and calculators and computers are used as appropriate.

From P5 we use a system of “setting”, or grouping by ability, in teaching maths. Children will find that they are in a class with others of a similar maths level and many of them will be taught by someone other than their normal class teacher.

Religious Education

Religious Education in Catholic schools takes place within the context of the wider Catholic faith community, in partnership with home and parish. It is an integral part of the Catholic School, which is in itself, a community of faith as well as a community of learning.

St John’s RC Academy is proud to be a Catholic school and religious education is an integral and important part of our school life.

Children learn about Christianity, and particularly about the Catholic Faith, through an exploration and understanding of the life of Jesus Christ, the Old and New Testament of the Bible, Liturgy and Prayer. In this way we wish to help children grow in their relationships with other people and with God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, His Son. Children are also taught about other world religions. The Academy draws on the experiences and outcomes for Roman Catholic RE, together with the advice from the Scottish Catholic Education Service’s document, ‘This is Our Faith’.

At P4, P6 and P7 children who are Catholics are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Parents are invited to school to hear more about our preparations and what they can do to help.

In the secondary school, RE continues to be an essential element of the curriculum for every pupil. Some aspects of pupils’ personal and social education is delivered via the RE department. Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from RE lessons. However, this is not easy to organise as matters of religion are liable to appear at any time of the day, just as any other subject can, and this can prove impossible if RE is part of an interdisciplinary topic. Should parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw a pupil from religious education or from observance, they should discuss it with the Head Teacher.

Sciences

Through learning in the sciences, children develop their interest in, and understanding of, the living, material and physical world. Teaching approaches allow children to collaborate, investigate and develop skills to become more creative, inventive and enterprising.

The main areas of sciences are:

- planet Earth;
- forces, electricity and waves;
- biological systems;
- materials; and
- topical science

Social Studies

In this area children develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances; they also develop their understanding of their environment and how it has been shaped.

The main areas of social studies are:

- people, past events and societies;
- people, place and environment; and
- people in society, economy and business.

Technologies

This area of the curriculum offers a rich context for developing life skills which are recognised as being important for success in the world of work. This includes activities involving research, problem solving and the exploration of new concepts, skills and materials. The learning experiences provide pupils with opportunities to create products which have real applications allowing for creativity and entrepreneurial skills.

Technologies are organised under the following headings:

- Technological developments in society;
- ICT to enhance learning;
- Business;
- Computing science;
- Food and textiles; and
- Craft, design, engineering and graphics.

More information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found on Education Scotland's Parentzone website – <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> and on our school website

Third Year

The end of S3 marks the end of the **broad general education**. During S3 pupils will continue to follow a curriculum based on the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence by choosing subjects from curricular areas. From these, pupils will make a choice of six/seven to take into the **Senior Phase (S4-S6)**.

Fourth Year

Pupils entering S4 in 2024-25 will undertake the SQA qualifications called 'Nationals'. Most pupils will undertake Nationals at levels 3, 4 or 5 during S4.

Pupils in S4 will all study core subjects – English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, religious education, physical education. English and mathematics are SQA subjects, with literacy and numeracy as SQA units within these subjects. PE can also be studied at National 3-5 levels. Pupils will also study a further 5 subjects for qualifications across a wide range of choices.

All courses will allow pupils to develop at an appropriate and challenging level. In some departments this will involve all pupils working within the same room. In other departments, the principal teacher may decide to 'set' the classes.

Fifth and Sixth Year

We are pleased that increasing numbers of our pupils return to school after S4. In S5 pupils will reduce their 6/7 qualification subjects to 5. The choices form for S5/6 is based on maximising pathways for pupils from S4 going into S5 so they can choose their 'best 5' from S4 and progress in those throughout S5. To maximise achievement, it is best if pupils do not start new subjects in S5. If they do, this should be at National 3-5 levels.

In S6 there is a much wider choice of subjects. Pupils can choose a combination of courses which may include 'crash' courses, for example. a pupil may choose to take a Higher without having taken the subject before. Course choices in S6 are also greatly enhanced through the Perth City Campus initiative. Perth City Campus is made up of the four city schools and the college. This means that a greater number of Advanced Higher and other courses are available to pupils across the city. More information on this initiative can be found at: <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17342/Perth-City-Campus>

The courses chosen are monitored by members of the senior leadership and support for pupils teams. We expect our pupils to build on the successes already achieved in S4 and we seek to ensure that the pupils link their course choices to their future plans.

It is customary for pupils at this stage to contribute to the ethos and life of the school through giving some of their time to volunteering to help others, either in school or in the local community. We promote the Caritas Award which encourages our S6 to become involved in their faith communities. We emphasise the importance of developing an expertise in study skills and independent learning.

All pupils in S5/S6 follow courses in at least one of the following levels of National Qualifications:

- National 3-5
- Higher
- Advanced Higher

Alternative courses now include National Progression Awards and Foundation Apprenticeships. Information on these will be found in the course choice handbook.

Homework

All of our pupils are given homework on most nights of the week. Homework should be seen as an integral part of the learning process. Homework offers pupils an opportunity to consolidate and develop work done in the classroom and raises achievement. Homework is an integral part of our courses and is used to encourage pupils to:

- develop a sense of personal responsibility for their own progress;
- develop skills in independent study.

The type of work and its frequency is a decision for the class teacher who knows the child best.

In primary, the work will usually involve the preparation of some reading, revising maths or spelling or producing some written work for one subject or another.

At P1 - P3, homework will often be practising reading and/or completing number work.

At P4 and P5, homework should not take any longer than 2 to 2 ½ hours per week.

At P6 and P7, work may take a little longer but not more than 3 to 4 hours per week.

In primary, work will have been prepared in school or will be something with which the child is familiar, so serious difficulties should not arise. If there are genuine signs of distress, please stop immediately; no homework is worth lots of tears. Please also let us know if these issues arise so we can address any difficulty.

At S1 and S2, it is desirable that pupils spend up to 3 to 4 hours per week on homework.

At S3 and S4, pupils should spend between 5 to 7 hours per week on homework and revision.

At S5 and S6, pupils are expected to spend between 6 to 8 hours on homework and revision.

In secondary, if no formal homework is set by a subject department, please encourage your child to use the time to do revision work or to complete further reading. Homework, however, is not intended to take up most of an evening. If you feel we have not got the balance right for your child, please let us know. Where a pupil fails to complete homework, a note should be sent to the appropriate teacher explaining the reasons for this. We are grateful to parents who encourage their children to work independently at home by stressing the good reasons for completing homework.

How parents can help

We recognise and believe that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. Although you will have many commitments in your evenings, please try to have a look at the homework. It will let you see your child is doing and your interest is an essential encouragement. Indeed, there is a substantial body of educational research which suggests that parent interest and involvement in their child's education makes a huge difference to achievement. The school – and of course your child – relies on the support and encouragement you continually give to your child throughout their education, so please:

- **Listen, talk, and encourage** – this can have a big influence on children's learning
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their learning, what learning is happening at school and do what you can at home to build on that
- **Talk** to your child about their strengths and interests and how they are progressing
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their next steps in learning and find out how you can work with the school to support this
- **Help your child** to recognise that getting things wrong is always an opportunity to learn
- **Ask for help** if you think your child needs it for any reason
- **Praise and reward** your child if he/she is working hard at something - effort is the key to success
- **Recognise and reward** occasions when your child has achieved something significant within or out of school (and recognise the effort involved)
- **Encourage any reading**
- **Look for opportunities at home** to develop literacy and numeracy skills: money, number problems, time, measuring, matching, size, reading, writing, understanding instructions, questioning information
- **Help them work on tasks on their own** and then talk about it with you afterwards
- **Provide** a suitable environment for study – a quiet place (with a table) with the television off and with no distractions
- **Do things together where appropriate** – learn together e.g. if your child has a project or task to do, take an interest and discuss with them what he/she is doing or offer support if this is needed
- **Help prepare for change** particularly at key transitions – talk about it together
- **Talk** to them about how they are feeling
- **Work together with the school** by taking part in discussions about your child's learning and progress e.g. at parents nights, reviews, signing or commenting in homework diaries and profiles
- **Encourage** your child to have other interests. A balance of leisure activities, time with friends and family as well as school work is important

Helping your child prepare for exams

Regular attendance throughout the year will help to ensure that your child keeps up with course work and homework. If they do fall behind, through illness perhaps, do speak to us about any support we can offer to help them catch up.

Talking to your child to reassure and encourage them and taking an interest in what they are doing will help them get through what can be a stressful time and will help them to do their best.

Managing time

- Encourage your child to start revision in good time to avoid cramming and panic.
- Help your child to plan a realistic timetable of study for each subject. Encourage your child to use the planner provided by the school to organise their time. A weekly revision planner is also available on the BBC Bitesize website. (<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/zn3497h>)

Getting organised

- Talk to your child and help them decide on a fixed area at home where they can study with the least distractions. Make sure that the materials and equipment they need, eg pens, pencils, paper, notebooks and past papers, are at hand in this study area. (Past papers are available **free** from the SQA website). www.sqa.org.uk
- Ensure that snacks and water are close by to prevent any unnecessary distractions and make sure the study area is warm and well lit.
- Speak to the rest of the family, particularly younger members, about respecting this study area and as far as possible avoiding interruptions.
- If it is difficult to study at home, perhaps your child could make use of the school/local library. We also provide a range of study support classes to help.
- Encourage your child to get their notes in order for each subject before starting. Having notes organised into topic areas for each subject may be helpful.
- Check the dates of each exam and keep a record of them somewhere you can see them easily. You can access the full exam timetable on the SQA website. Your child can also use the SQA Personal Timetable Builder facility to create their own timetable. The mobile timetable builder is now available for most Java-based mobile phones along with those using Google Android and iPhone. Remember, sometimes an exam is on a public holiday. The exam will definitely take place on that day and there will be no opportunity to sit it on another day.

Tips to encourage studying

- Exam times can be stressful so encourage your child to take breaks. Hour long revision sessions with short regular breaks of 10 minutes are effective.
- Your child may prefer to complete each task and then build in a break rather than stick to definite time slots. It's the quality of work that is important.
- Young people often focus best earlier in the day or early evening so encouraging them to study at these times may be beneficial.
- Your child might find it useful for you to read through revision notes with them. Asking them about what they have learned in their revision may also be useful.

Keeping well

- Encourage your child to get plenty of sleep. This is particularly important the night before an exam as it will help them perform better.
- Encourage your child to eat well. On the morning of an exam encourage them to have a breakfast, or lunch if the exam is in the afternoon. Avoid sugar and caffeine drinks and drink water.

- Help your child to build in time for relaxation. Help them to recognise that nerves and anxiety are normal around exam time.
- Help your child to avoid any unnecessary anxiety or panic by making sure they are in plenty of time for each exam and have everything they need for it, eg. pens, pencils.
- Encourage regular exercise.

Assessment & Reporting

Assessment of children's and young people's progress is central to the day-to-day learning and teaching which takes place in lessons and extended curriculum activities.

The purposes of assessment include:

- supporting learning;
- recognising strengths and helping to plan next steps;
- informing learners and their parents of their progress;
- summarising achievements (sometimes through qualifications);
- monitoring the education system and influencing future developments.

Assessment within St John's RC Academy has an emphasis on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, ICT and higher-order skills across the whole curriculum.

Assessment should support children and young people in developing the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and the characteristics associated with them. These include a range of personal qualities and skills that in the past may not always have been actively assessed, such as thinking creatively and independently, working in partnership and in teams, making informed decisions and evaluating environmental, scientific and technological issues. These skills and attributes are embedded in the experiences and outcomes which form the basis of the new curriculum.

Assessment focuses on these, as well as on measuring factual recall and routine procedures. Teachers in St John's RC Academy are encouraged to use the key features of the Assessment is for Learning programme which encourage diagnostic and formative approaches to assessment that directly support learning.

As it is important that assessments should be reliable with shared standards and expectations being applied across the country, arrangements are in place for moderation of learning. St John's RC Academy is working closely with St Dominic's, St Stephen's, Our Lady's Primary School and with colleagues from across Perth and Kinross, to assure the quality of our own assessment procedures. One key way we do this is through discussing evidence of learning from the children and young people. We capture what they say, write, make and do and discuss this in relation to the experiences and outcomes, ensuring that the planned learning experiences provide valid evidence. The school is supported by the National Assessment Resource which allows us to share assessment materials and helps teachers develop a shared understanding of standards.

Reporting

We try to keep parents well informed about school life, of changes in policy, of curriculum matters and of any factors related to the progress or development of their own children. In addition to regular letters about special events and activities, we publish regular whole school newsletters. Group Call, our text based messaging service, is often used to communicate urgent information to parents such as absences or reminders for school activities and events. Our school website www.st-johnsacademy.pkc.sch.uk is also a useful source of school related information.

Reports and Formal Meetings

We try to ensure that parents receive information at times which are useful to their children and that they have every opportunity to discuss progress with us. Our school reporting system also allows parents an opportunity to make their own comments on the progress of their children and parents nights are another important opportunity for reporting on attainment.

In secondary reporting has moved away from several tracking reports or ratings reports, culminating in on full report a year (consisting of a narrative), in favour of shorter reports with greater frequency. This is currently balanced as two tracking, or rating reports, and two more which include an action plan for each year group.

Nursery - P7: A written report on your child's progress will be sent home in June of each school year. Twice in the year, in November and February/March, meetings are arranged for parents and teachers to discuss your child's progress. Regular information evenings take place to promote pupil work and activities and there is an extensive program for Nursery – P1 and P7 – S1 transition involving information evenings and visits.

S1: A progress (ratings) report is issued in October & February indicating how well your child has settled into secondary school is issued in time for the S1 parents 'drop in' evening with the senior management and support for pupils teams. A more detailed report on progress with action points is issued in May.

S2: S2 pupils also have a ratings report in December with a fuller report with next steps in March and the opportunity for a 'drop in' evening. A detailed report will be issued in time to prepare for course choice as well as the parental course choice information evening.

S3: S3 pupils have a ratings in October and May (with profile) and a fuller progress report with comments and action points in November.

S4/S5/S6: A ratings report is issued in October with initial target grades for SQA subjects and a final ratings report in March showing working grade that is used by SQA for estimates. A more detailed report with action plan is issued February.

Course choice information evenings take place as part of the preparations for senior school course choice.

Support for Pupils

Education and Learning within Perth and Kinross Council has a duty to make adequate and efficient provision for the additional support of each child and young person with additional support needs for whose education they are responsible. The key principles which underpin the Additional Support for Learning position statement are:

- All children and young people should receive the additional support required to meet their individual needs and to help them make the most of their education
- Effective coordination of planning and support
- An emphasis on early identification of need
- The need to ensure assessment takes account of the needs of the whole child and is conducted in an integrated way
- The development of flexible curriculum and learning approaches to meet the needs of all children and young people more effectively
- The continued development of integrated working and multi-agency partnerships
- Partnership with parents; central to ensuring that children and young people with additional support needs benefit fully from school education

- Taking account of the views of children and young people in decisions which affect them
- Emphasis on early resolution of disagreements at local level, as well as access to more formal processes where agreement cannot be reached
- The development of greater continuity and progression between stages or after breaks in education, through more effective arrangements for transitions

Any parent who has a child who may have additional support needs should discuss this matter further with the Depute Headteacher Support or the Principal Teacher Support for Learning. It is important that everyone involved in supporting the child works together to ensure the child's needs are met.

Pupils identified as having additional support needs will be supported in school in line with the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act (Scotland).

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17278/Schools-additional-support->

Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN. These organisations are identified under The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as:

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

Enquire offers independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

Telephone Helpline: 0345 123 2303

Email Enquiry service: info@enquire.org.uk

Advice and information is also available at www.enquire.org.uk

Enquire provides a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets including The parents' guide to additional support for learning.

- b) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- c) Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO12741.”

English as an Additional Language - EAL

The EAL provision for St John's RC Academy consists of two teachers, Trisha Davenport, Fiona Anderson, and Dorota Marciniac, our Polish Community Link worker. The EAL team supports our school with the delivery of ESOL courses, assists with new enrolments and provides support for all EAL pupils and their families. In addition, the EAL team is involved in twilight and awareness-raising sessions for staff and other professionals working within our schools.

The Integrated Team

The school has an Integrated Team involving outside agencies and partners which meets every 3/4 weeks. This allows us as a school to pursue any additional support for pupils. Pupils discussed at the Integrated Team Meeting (ITM) are those who have been referred by support staff or by concerned staff or parents. The school works in partnership with parents to support any action to be taken as a result of the ITM discussion.

Contact with Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers who wish to contact the school to discuss the progress of their children are encouraged to do so. Parents' Evenings are held in order that parents and teachers can discuss pupils on an individual basis. On these occasions, parents are invited to make appointments with the appropriate teachers.

Various contact evenings are scheduled throughout the year to allow parents, especially parents who are new to the community of St John's RC Academy, to view the school's facilities and to talk to teachers.

Education research indicates that pupils are more likely to achieve at high levels when parents take a close and continuing interest in their progress.

It is the responsibility of the Support for Pupils Department to ensure that all pupils in St John's RC Academy are given as much assistance as possible to achieve their potential during their school career.

The curriculum itself may need to be adjusted so that appropriate materials and methodology allow pupils, from the most gifted to the less able, to study at their own level. **Support for Pupils staff are there to help all pupils to achieve the highest standards they are capable of in all aspects of school life - academic attainment, wider achievement, confidence, self-esteem and behaviour.**

In line with the policy of Perth and Kinross Education and Children's Services, pupils with additional support needs are educated with their peers as far as possible. Their progress is monitored by Support for Pupils staff and support is given as necessary. Reviews, to which all partners are invited, take place regularly and close contact between home and school is encouraged.

If you would like further information or want to discuss your child's progress, you are invited to contact the school to arrange a meeting with a member of the support staff. The list below is correct as of 8 December 2021. For an up to date contact list, please go to the Contact Us page on our website: <https://www.st-johnsacademy.pkc.sch.uk/Contact-Us/>

Secondary

Mr Hynes	Depute Headteacher
Mrs Smith	Depute Headteacher
Mrs Murray	Principal Teacher – Support for Pupils,
Mr McGuire	Principal Teacher, Guidance
Mrs McKeag	Principal Teacher, Guidance
Miss Mills	Principal Teacher Guidance
Mrs McKenzie	Teacher of Support for Pupils
Mrs Simpson	Teacher of Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing
Ms Hood	Teacher of Support for Pupils
Ms Cook	Teacher of Support for Pupils

Primary

Mrs Robertson	(Nursery-P1) Depute Headteacher
Mrs Jack/Miss Martin	(P2-P4) Depute Headteacher
Mrs Rees	(P5-7) Depute Headteacher
Mrs Black	Teacher of Support for Pupils

School Improvement

Standards and Quality

This handbook should be read in conjunction with our annual Standards and Quality Report. This can be found on our website at: <https://www.st-johnsacademy.pkc.sch.uk/standards-quality/>

School Leavers' Destinations

Skills Development Scotland

There are more options open to young people on leaving school than ever before. Most people going into work will make a number of career changes throughout their lives.

Skills Development Scotland works in partnership with the school. Erni Hamilton is the school's careers coach for St Margaret, St Ninian and St Andrew houses; Patricia Wood is the career coach for St Columba.

During the year, staff from Skills Development Scotland will talk with S2, S3, S4, S5 and S6 pupils about the career planning process. Good career planning involves knowing about yourself and knowing about what jobs and courses demand.

Skills Development Scotland has a range of resources to help young people and a good starting point is their careers websites www.myworldofwork.co.uk and www.mykidscareer.com which have lots of careers information and plenty of useful links. There is also a section of the website specifically for parents and carers. Self-help features include:

- discovering strengths;
- how to plan your career;
- applying for work and training;
- finding out about careers;
- going to college;
- going to university;
- taking a year out;
- creating a CV; and
- interview tips.

In the school's careers library, young people can also access university and college prospectuses.

The Career Advisor is also available for individual appointments for S4, S5 and S6 pupils who wish to discuss their career plans. All S2 pupils will meet with the Careers Advisor around course choice time. The Career Advisor is also available for appointments at Parents Evenings. Pupils can simply contact their Guidance Teacher and an appointment will be arranged.

School Policies & Practical Information

School Policies

The following policies are available to parents. If you wish a copy of any of the policies please contact the school.

- Curriculum overview
- Literacy and English
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Health and well-being
- Learning and Teaching
- Assessment, recording and reporting
- Transitions
- Homework

- Religious observance
- Support for pupils: Interagency working/inclusion/LAC/EAL
- Relationships
- Child protection
- Internet safety
- Mobile phones

Uniform/Dress Code

St John's RC Academy firmly believes that the wearing of school uniform helps set a positive tone and ethos in the school, as well as improving our public image.

Uniform is important in helping our pupils share a sense of belonging to our school community. Our school uniform has been highly praised by many people, including the Director of Education. We believe that our pupils and our school are the very best and we want them to wear their uniform with pride.

We believe that it removes the competition to have the latest fashion item or the most trendy or acceptable pair of trainers. Therefore, it promotes equality and fairness, helping all our pupils to feel proud to be a member of our school community and certainly it removes pressure from parents to buy these items. When pupils arrive in school casually dressed, it does not create the impression that they are 'serious about learning'.

Our Community Campus is open to members of the public during the school day. From a security perspective it is absolutely vital that we can recognise our pupils at any time during the school day. If pupils are casually dressed this will be very difficult to achieve.

We are delighted by the numbers of pupils who wear our school uniform and with the numbers of parents who support our St John's RC Academy dress code.

Primary

- Black dress trousers/shorts or skirt/culottes
- White school shirt
- Grey jumper/cardigan (with or without the school badge) which allows the school tie to be seen
- School tie
- Black shoes/trainers with black laces (plain black only)
- Purple and white summer dress during the summer months (optional)
- Black /purple outdoor jacket (school versions in both black and purple are available)
- White t/polo shirt, black shorts and trainers for PE Indoor black shoes can be used

Secondary

- Black dress trousers or skirt
- A white school shirt (polo shirts for PE only)
- A black school V-neck jumper or cardigan or plain black V-neck jumper which allows the school tie to be seen
- A school tie (the knot of the tie should be no lower than the second button of the school shirt)
- Plain black shoes or trainers (laces should also be black)
- A braided school blazer and a senior tie school are compulsory for S4-S6 pupils
- School blazers are optional for pupils in S1-S3
- Plain dark coloured school jacket

For clarity, the following are NOT part of the school uniform:

Denim/leather/PVC clothing, any clothing or bags with football logos, clothing with offensive slogans or prominent branding, low-cut tops, large hooped earrings or dangling earrings, facial piercing (including nose or lip piercing), large necklaces, scarves (other than black),

brightly coloured or white shoes/trainers (except in PE), tracksuits or joggers (except in PE), basketball/converse trainers, leggings, lace jumpers/ tops/tights.

Fortunately, our building is equipped with lockers and therefore outside jackets, winter footwear, coloured scarves etc. can be safely deposited in the lockers during the school day.

Senior pupils have a very special role in our school. We want to offer more leadership opportunities for our seniors, give them more responsibilities around the school and of course allow them to represent our school on important occasions. We believe that, like all other Perth & Kinross schools, our senior pupils should be distinctive by the wearing of a senior school blazer. It helps them to stand out and to be very clearly identifiable from our younger pupils; this helps with our buddy and mentoring schemes which support younger pupils as they move through our school.

Transport

Free school transport is only available to pupils attending their catchment school and living more than two miles (primary) or three miles (secondary) from the school measured by the shortest available walking route.

Transport will be provided from a suitable point on the public highway. Please note that this can be up to two miles (primary) or three miles (secondary) from the pupil's home.

Parents of pupils who are refused school transport only have the right to appeal to the Review Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee where transport is withdrawn, or on the grounds of safety where there is no public service bus operating.

Where appropriate, the Authority may provide free transport for pupils who attend a special school or specialist unit.

Parents who have made successful placing requests for their children at other schools of their choice have to make their own transport arrangements and meet the costs thereof.

Application forms downloadable from the internet at the following link:

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17284/Schools-transport-and-trips>

Service/Contract Buses

Secondary

Service no	Serving	Contractor /	Tel no
Secondary			
XPH/013	Bridge of Earn / Craigie	Stagecoach (Perth)	01738 629339
XBG/005	Blairgowrie/ Rattray/ Alyth	Stagecoach (Blairgowrie)	01250 872772
XST/004	Luncarty / Stanley	Stagecoach (Perth)	01738 629339
AST/001	Bankfoot	D & J Taxis Ltd	01738 446688
BPH/056	Abernethy & Perth	P J Pendlebury Taxis	01738 444360
XCS/004	Leetown	Perth Radio Taxis Ltd	01738 580058
XCS/018	Glencarse	Inchtire Travel	07814 626300
XSB/011	Scone / Gannochy	Stagecoach (Blairgowrie)	01250 872772
XST/006	Stanley	WEGO Minibus Hire Ltd	01738 313202
AAU/003	Auchterarder	Perth Radio Taxis	01738 580058
APH/001	Balgowan	LUX Executive Travel	07766 032424
615	Crieff / Methven / Almondbank	Stagecoach (Perth)	01738 629339
ACS/004	Errol/Longforgan/Inchtire	Inchtire Travel	07814 626300
ABG/009	Wolfhill/Guildtown	Perth Radio Taxis Ltd	01738 580058

Primary			
XPH/013	Bridge of Earn / Cragie	Stagecoach (Perth)	01738 629339
XBG/005	Blairgowrie/ Rattray/ Alyth	Stagecoach (Blairgowrie)	01250 872772
XST/004	Luncarty / Stanley	Stagecoach (Perth)	01738 629339
XCS/004	Leetown	Perth Radio Taxis Ltd	01738 580058
XCS/018	Glencarse	Inchture Travel	07814 626300
ABG/009	Wolfhill/Guildtown	Perth Radio Taxis Ltd	01738 580058
XBS/011	Scone / Gannochy	Stagecoach (Blairgowrie)	01250 872772

Inclement Weather Arrangements – Emergency Closures

The fundamental consideration when considering a school closure will always be the safety of pupils.

In the event of a poor forecast the night before and severe conditions at the time, a decision may be taken early on a school day to close the school to all pupils. It is also possible that a decision may be taken to open the school only partially i.e. for those pupils who live locally, but not for those on school transport.

In the event of a bad weather forecast or conditions worsening significantly during a school day, a decision may be taken to send pupils home early. In many cases this will be because the bus companies have contacted the school to inform us that they require to transport pupils to rural locations. Pupils who are transported to school by contract bus, will be sent home first, then, if necessary, pupils who live locally. If it is unlikely that there would be someone at home at such an earlier time, we would encourage you, over the forthcoming cold period, to make alternative care arrangements, and ensure your child is aware of these arrangements eg alternative contact telephone numbers.

Should severe weather conditions continue, the school may remain closed for more than one day. However, a separate decision will be taken each morning, and you should therefore re-check the sources below on any subsequent days.

In the event of an extended school closure, appropriate work for your child will be accessible from the Microsoft Teams site on Glow. You should also refer to the official twitter school site - @st_johnsacademy for updates.

Any decisions/updates will be communicated via the following sources:

Local Radio Stations - Radio Tay will be used in all instances and is the main source of information.

Groupcall - We will endeavour to advise you of developing or actual situations via a "Groupcall" message to your mobile telephone (or home telephone if you do not have a mobile).

Perth and Kinross Council Website - You can find closure updates on the Perth and Kinross Council website. Log onto www.pkc.gov.uk and go into the link 'Information for you' listed at the bottom of the page, and then into the link 'school closures'.

Perth and Kinross Council Customer Service Centre - (Available from 08:45 hours to 17:00 hours). Dial 01738 475000.

PKC Twitter and Facebook – You can also find information on Twitter and Facebook

Wider Achievement

One of the aims of the school is to contribute towards the development of the whole person. It has been a tradition for staff to promote a variety of activities; the dedication and commitment of both staff and our campus partners in this aspect of school life has been recognised both within and beyond the school. Organised activities have included visits to foreign countries, religious events, musical performances, art displays, sports training and theatrical performances. In S3 we have a wider achievement column where for two periods a week pupils are introduced to a more varied curriculum experience delivered by staff or outside agencies e.g. Cyber security, Dance, Engineering, Hairdressing, Photography, Rural skills, Tourism, Mental health & wellbeing.

Such activities establish close relationships between staff and pupils and help to develop the community spirit of St John's RC Academy. As well as academic achievement, we are proud of our pupils' wider achievements both in and out of school and fully recognise the benefits from the opportunities available to our pupils in helping them to become confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors and successful learners.

Below are just some examples of our extended curriculum.

Primary 7 Residential Outdoor Experience

Each year, primary 7 pupils are given the opportunity to attend a residential outdoor experience. This is often the first time children have been away from home for a period of time and it develops a sense of independence in pupils. They take part in a variety of individual and team activities where they can set challenges for themselves or learn valuable group working skills. Pupils who participate thoroughly enjoy the experience and demonstrate an increased confidence.

S1 Trip

During Term1, we offer an trip for our new S1 classes. Feedback has shown that this is a successful way of helping the S1 pupils integrate into Secondary school whilst developing friendships and team spirit with their new classmates.

Italy Ski Trip

The established 9 day annual ski trip to Pila, in Italy, takes place every year, for S2 pupils. This is a wonderful and exciting opportunity to travel to the beautiful Aosta valley, in the heart of the Italian Alps.

As well as learning to ski in a beautiful mountain environment with 6 days of ski instruction, pupils also experience foreign travel and different cultures. Pupils also take part in an extensive 'après-ski' programme in the evenings bringing together staff and pupils.

World War I Battlefield Tour

The History Department of St John's RC Academy offers our pupils the opportunity to visit the battlefields of World War 1 in France and Belgium. During the trip pupils visit the battlefields of World War 1 where some of the worst fighting took place. The tour is structured around three main areas, allowing our pupils to gain a deeper understanding of the period.

Music and Drama

The Music and Drama department provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their creative, social and performing skills. Every year we have a Christmas Show and biannually we put on a musical production. Pupils can get involved on the stage through acting, singing and dancing, behind the scenes as backstage crew, organising lighting and sound, or front of house dealing with publicity, ticket sales and programme design. Pupils may also contribute through scenery design and set construction. In addition, our pupils participate in a wide range of activities, both in and out of school, such as a Festival of the Arts Concert in St John's Kirk, Perform in Perth, an annual Instrumental Evening, and school masses and services. There are opportunities for pupils to get involved in singing and performing groups at lunchtimes.

Pupil Voice

Our Pupil Parliament represents the pupils' voice within the school. The membership consists of representatives from all year groups who regularly visit tutor groups to speak to pupils and ask if they wish any issues to be raised at the next meeting. Meetings normally are held every four weeks and are always well attended with plenty of good ideas discussed and issues put forward. There are also a large number of pupil voice groups throughout the school, including the Department Ambassadors, Rights Respecting School Committee, the Eco Committee, the Fairtrade Group, the Charities Committee, and groups made up of Prefects, House Captains and others. Having access to so many groups allows all members of the community to voice their views. A variety of issues, ideas and opinions can then be raised by pupils with senior staff.

In the Primary School, the principles behind the Pupil Learning Council are much the same, with all year groups from Primary Three upwards electing two members of their class to represent them. Meetings are held regularly so that pupils can discuss concerns and voice ideas for improvement. Ideas are then taken forward and shared with appropriate members of staff or children. Children in all classes are given opportunities to raise issues at various times throughout the year, either directly with Pupil Learning Council Representatives or through Pupil Learning Council Suggestion Boards in classrooms.

Organisation of School Day

Primary

Start of School Day	0900
P1 to P4 Morning Break	1015 – 1035
P5 to P7 Morning Break	1040 – 1100
P1 & P2 Lunch	1210 – 1300
P3 & P4 Lunch	1200 – 1300
P4 to P7 Lunch	1230 – 1330
End of School Day	
P1 & P2	1510
P3 to P7	1520

Secondary

Start of School Day	0850
Reg	0850-0905
Period 1	0905-0950
Period 2	0950-1035
Interval	1035-1055
Period 3	1055-1140
Period 4	1140-1225
Period 5	1225-1310
Lunch	1310-1400
Period 6	1400-1445
Period 7	1445-1530
End of School Day	1530

We encourage all pupils to remain on the school premises during the morning interval and lunch break. Pupils who wish to go home at lunchtime should bring a note to that effect from their parent or carer and give it to their classroom or tutor group teacher.

St John's Kids Club

St John's Kids Club is run by Perth and Kinross Council and offers after school childcare, term time only, from 3pm until 6pm and is registered with the Care Inspectorate. This is open to children from St John's and other local primary schools.

The Kids Club is based in the noisy/quiet room and offers a wide range of play activities, both indoors and outdoors to suit the individual needs of the children attending.

Opening Times

3pm – 6pm Monday to Friday Term Time only

Prices

Annual Registration fee £13.00 per child or £20.00 per family

£9.70 per session per child and £9.20 per sibling

For further information please contact St John's Kids Club 01738 454291

Child Protection/Looked After Children

GIRFEC

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is the Scottish Government's approach to promoting the wellbeing of children and young people. Wellbeing is described by 8 'indicators':

Safe	Healthy	Achieving	Nurtured	Active	Respected
Responsible	Included				

These eight words help everyone to understand wellbeing in the same way and use the same language to talk about it. Sometimes the initials of the words are used, and the wellbeing indicators are referred to as SHANARRI.

The vast majority of Scotland's children and young people get all the help and support they need from within their families and their wider, local communities. But at times a child, young person or family might need extra help or support. The GIRFEC approach aims to make it as easy as possible for any child or young person (and their parents) to get the help or support that they need. Within schools, key staff are available to children, young people and their parents/carers to provide help, advice or support should they choose to make use of it.

The Child or Young Person's Plan is one single plan which coordinates all the services and agencies involved in supporting a child/young person, will help ensure that everyone works together to deliver better outcomes for the child or young person who needs additional support and their family.

Should you wish to talk further about child protection and the safety of children please feel free to contact:

- your child/children's school
- the Child Protection Duty Team 01738 476768 (24 hour service)
- the council's website on www.pkc.gov.uk.

Name of Child Protection Officer

Designated child protection officers for Primary are: Mrs Jack, Mrs Robertson and Mrs Philp (Depute Headteachers), Mrs Taylor, Mrs Shilliday, Ms Herd and Ms Ronald.

In secondary Mrs Futamata, Dr Staines, Mr Hynes, Mrs McKeag, Miss Mills, Mr McGuire are designated Child Protection Officers.

Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC) Children

Each school has a designated LAAC Teacher who deals with all matters relating to children who are 'looked after' eg. accommodated in foster or residential care, or who are subject to a supervision order through the Children's Hearing.

This designated teacher will be responsible for monitoring the progress of looked after children in the school and will provide a source of advice if your child is looked after.

Further information on Looked After Services can be found on:

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/fosteringadoption>

Nursery

Nursery is the first step for your child on the road to independence. At St John's RC Academy Nursery we try to make the transition from home to nursery as easy as possible. We recognise the importance of creating a caring, nurturing environment in which your child will feel relaxed and secure. Children learn best by 'doing' - being involved in a broad range of challenging activities, making learning more valuable and fun. We aim to provide a stimulating, well balanced programme of learning, catering for every child's individual needs and interests. Each child is allocated a key worker when they start nursery. Nursery operates from 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday 45 weeks of the year. A variety of options are available to deliver 1140 hours for your child which can be assessed at

<https://my.pkc.gov.uk/>

Our Vision

Together we will continue to deliver high quality learning and teaching, so that each one of our children moves successfully into a positive and sustained destination.

Our Aims

- St John's RC Academy Nursery is a community of love and of learning where every member is valued and respected. #LOVE
- Together we will ensure the very best experiences for our children, to prepare them well for the challenges that lie beyond nursery. #ACHIEVEMENT
- Together we will empower our children and each other to use talents to the best of our ability, to enable our children and each other to contribute positively to our community and wider society. # RESPECT
- We will continue to improve attainment and achievement and ensure that all our children have equal opportunities to be successful #FAIRNESS

Active Learning in the Nursery

We provide a range of activities and resources within each learning context to cater for individual interests and needs as well as ongoing learning and development.

There is daily provision for:

- Outdoor Play
- Painting, Drawing & Art/Craft Activities
- Sand
- Water
- Role Play
- Small World Play – doll's house, garage, farm & animals etc.
- Construction Toys
- Games, jigsaws
- Books
- Musical Activities
- ICT – computer, interactive smart boards, digital camera
- Loose parts

With all activities, the learning processes which the children go through and the skills developed are more important than the end product. It is, however, important for children to be happy with the results of their efforts and that we in turn recognise this and give praise readily.

When children come into nursery each day, they have the opportunity to work in whichever area they choose for most of the session. Children then have a short time together in groups led by their key worker to focus on a specific learning activity. Throughout the session, children are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for tidying resources before moving to another activity.

Learning Through Play

The early years of children's lives are ones of rapid growth and development. All children play, compelled by their natural curiosity to explore, experiment, imitate, discover and learn. Play makes a powerful contribution to children's learning, allowing them to explore, to follow their interests and to learn at their own pace. The role of nursery staff is central in supporting and extending children's learning through play. Many of a child's most valuable experiences will take place in the home and community. Parents are the main educators of their child as growth, learning and development occur mainly at home. Nursery staff recognise the importance of working together with parents in developing children's learning.

Curriculum

In line with national guidelines, the nursery follows the Curriculum for Excellence: Early Level. Learning in the nursery takes place through a wide range of planned experiences and outcomes. These are organised within the following curriculum areas:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Literacy
- Maths
- Science
- Social Studies
- Expressive Arts
- Technologies
- Religious and Moral Education

Children learn through day to day experiences of life in the school community. They also learn from out of school activities, events and celebrations. Together these experiences provide a motivating and enriching blend. Children are encouraged to be active in their learning and have opportunities to develop their creativity. Individual needs are recognised and particular talents and skills supported and developed. Children are encouraged to be involved in their own learning; they recognise what they are learning and what they might learn next. Each child has an individual learning journal on Seesaw that, most importantly, encourages ownership of their learning but which also provides a record of progress and forms part of the assessment process.

Parental Involvement

The nursery team recognises the importance of effective communication between parents and staff. The following strategies are in place to develop a partnership with parents:

- effort is made to create a welcoming environment;
- notice boards inform parent/carers of matters of interest;
- open days and Information Sessions are used to explain the work of the nursery;
- progress of individual children is discussed with parents informally and formally at various times throughout the year; and
- a written report is provided at the end of the year.

What You Can Do To Support Your Child

- We ask parents to complete an All about Me booklet each year with their child when he/she starts nursery. It helps to give staff important information about each child's interests, stage of development, family and health.
- Please ensure your child wears suitable clothing for play activities. Clothes should be easy for them to cope with at the toilet. Refer to toileting guidelines for guidance on what will happen if a child has an accident. It would be helpful if a change of clothes could be brought to nursery. Please provide suitable footwear – slip on gym shoes or soft shoes with Velcro fastenings are ideal. Children must change out of their outdoor shoes on coming into Nursery.
- Remember that children go outdoors daily, so children should have appropriate outdoor clothing on their peg.
- Please do not allow your child to bring their own toys into the nursery.
- Children must be collected by an adult who is known to staff. If a different adult is to collect a child the staff must be told in advance. We expect prompt arrival and collection of children by adults. This avoids any upset to your child and allows staff to attend daily meetings to review the session and plan for the next day.

Absence Policy

In order to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all children it is essential that parents/carers exercise responsibility to: -

- Keep the nursery/school up to date with telephone numbers and emergency contacts.
- Inform the nursery/school of any pre-arranged absence.
- Inform the nursery/school of their child's absence no later than 15 minutes after the start of the session.
- Respond promptly to contacts from nursery/school asking why their child is not in nursery.
- Share any concerns they have around their family with nursery staff to help ensure sensitive support for the child; and/or share those concerns with the child's key person.

The nursery staff will:

- Keep a regular and accurate record of attendance for all children.
- Encourage good attendance by providing a welcoming atmosphere for children and parents.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any adult/child concerns.
- Ensure the name and contact details of each child's key person are easily accessible.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the range of communication methods they can use to notify nursery staff about their child's absence from nursery (e.g. face-to-face, phone call, text etc.).
- Share any concerns they have about a child's wellbeing with the child's key person.
- Take account of known vulnerabilities, including any referred to on the child's Nursery Registration Form, when following up on any child's unplanned absence from nursery.
- Explore parents/carers' concerns and / or difficulties and make sound judgements as how to best support the parent/carer.
- Provide regular reminders to parents/carers about the importance of following the nursery absence procedure.
- Recognise there will be occasions when a parent/carer will consider staff concerns to be unjustified. However the health, safety and wellbeing of children is of paramount importance and will be the staff's key consideration.

Should a child be absent from nursery without explanation the following procedure will be followed:

- On the first day of absence the school will make efforts to contact parents, carers or listed emergency contact(s) to establish a reason for absence and that the child is safe.
- If no contact can be made, school management will take appropriate action to ensure the child is safe. This will always include notifying the child's key person and Lead Professional if appropriate. For nursery children the key person is usually the Health Visitor.
- As the health, safety and wellbeing of all children is of paramount importance, the school will further implement Child Protection procedures when that is thought to be appropriate.

Toileting Guidelines

It is not a requirement for children to be toilet trained when they start Nursery, but it would help staff greatly if they are.

Please discuss with Nursery Staff any problems your child may have with toilet training. They will support and offer advice if you wish it.

All Nurseries are equipped with resources for changing children but you can help by:

- providing a contact number to be called if your child has an accident;
- ensuring a change of clothes is kept at the Nursery to be used in the event of an accident;
- advising staff of any medical condition your child has which could affect his/her toileting behaviour;
- working with Nursery Staff to help your child with any toileting problems; e.g. attend your regular meetings at the Nursery, if this is thought to be necessary.

Please do not worry if there is a problem, as this will only upset your child. The Nursery Staff are here to help.

Nursery Outings

Children are continually learning by exploring their surroundings. Outings widen their horizons, making them more aware of other people and what makes up their community.

Parental consent is necessary for any visit. A consent form is issued to all parents in August which covers regular excursions. For all other school trips, you will be required to complete a specific consent form.

We are lucky enough to have the North Inch nearby with a play park and we often have spontaneous outings there. Please ensure that your child has suitable shoes and appropriate clothing on his/her peg.

Snack

Each day children help to prepare a snack and take responsibility for doing their own washing up. We offer a variety of foods including fruit, yoghurt, toast, cereal, raw vegetables and dip, crackers & cheese etc. Staff and children plan for snack and notice of what is on offer is posted on the notice board in the nursery cloakroom.

Should your child have special dietary requirements or allergies, it is vital parents make staff aware of these.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

It is the policy of the school that all children behave in a pleasant and co-operative manner. This will ensure agreeable surroundings for everyone and will allow all children and staff to concentrate their energies on effective learning and teaching.

In the Nursery, staff must promote positive behaviour by:

- recognising and valuing the individual and unique characteristics of children;
- praising and valuing effort as well as achievement;
- creating a positive, challenging and stimulating environment;
- behaving calmly and consistently;
- having realistic demands geared to individual children's capabilities;
- allowing time for children to take on board new arrangements or routines;
- providing consistent limits and guidance for appropriate behaviour;
- use of restorative approaches; and
- praising behaviour that is appropriate for the situation.

In Nursery we try to:

- be friendly and kind to other children
- share and take turns;
- use listening ears;
- use walking feet;
- be careful; and
- use gentle hands.

Staff may use a Fix-it folder, with an explanation and discussion with the child. Staff will evaluate each situation using the prompts in the folder and deal with it appropriately. Any on-going concerns will be discussed with parents.

If there is a further problem with inappropriate behaviour, children will be monitored over a period of time. If the situation does not improve, further meetings with parents would be held in order to address the areas of difficulty and the involvement of other agencies would be considered.

Resolving Difficulties in Nursery

Members of staff do their utmost to ensure your child is happy and secure at all times. If, however, you have any concerns about your child please feel free to come and raise these with any member of the nursery team.

If staff cannot address the issue immediately, they will be more than happy to arrange an appointment at a more convenient time.

There may be occasions when members of staff are unable to satisfy your concern and in this case you may wish to take the matter further and speak to the Depute Headteacher.

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.*¹

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, 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.

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