# 

**School Brochure**

2024 - 2025

**St. Margaret’s**

**Primary School**

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**A Foreword from the Director of Children’s Services**

Session 2024-25

This handbook contains a range of information about your child’s school which will be of interest to you and your child. It offers an insight into the life and ethos of the school and also offers advice and assistance which you may find helpful in supporting and getting involved in your child’s education.

Falkirk Council is keen to work with parents, not only to allow you a greater opportunity to contribute to your child’s education, but also to encourage you to play a greater role in the life of the school as a whole. We offer several opportunities when you will be able to make your voice heard in relation to your own child’s education, your local school, and Children’s Services as a whole.

Throughout each school year there will be opportunities for you to discuss your child’s progress with his/her teacher. There will also be Council-wide events for parents organised by Children’s Services. These events are spread across the school year, and each will focus on a particular theme. The events are open to all parents, and they are also attended, wherever possible, by the Education Portfolio Holder as well as members of the Service’s Management Team. Each session offers parents an opportunity to ask questions about aspects of their child’s education. Dates for these events will be issued by your child’s school and we hope you will be able to come along and hear about, and contribute to, our plans for Education in Falkirk.

We are pleased to introduce this handbook for session 2024/25 and trust it will provide you with all the relevant information you may need concerning your child’s school. If you have any queries regarding the contents of the handbook, please contact the Head Teacher of your child’s school in the first instance who will be happy to offer any clarification required.

Robert Naylor

Directors of Children’s Services

Falkirk Council

**Footnote:** If you want a printed copy of this handbook, please ask the school.

It may be possible to offer some assistance in helping to translate all or part of this handbook to parents whose first language is not English. Enquiries should be directed in to the Communications Officer for Children’s Services (tel: 01324 506657).

Disclaimer

The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of publication (Dec 2023), however, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the start of the school term in August 2024

**Curriculum for Excellence - Learning to Achieve**

**Learning Entitlements**

**In addition to the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence our education provisions will reflect local needs and circumstances. Therefore, at different stages of their education, our learners will have opportunities to:**

* Link aspects of their learning to the local environment and its heritage
* Participate on a residential experience where possible
* Participate in arts, sports and cultural events
* Participate in environmental projects
* Participate in a community project
* Participate in outdoor learning experiences
* Access appropriate technology
* Be consulted on and contribute to the decision making process in school
* Experience work based learning
* Develop collaborative, social, leadership and other life skills
* Access academic and vocational learning experiences
* Access learning experiences designed and / or delivered by relevant partners
* Reflect upon and be proactive in planning and making choices about their own learning
* Engage with learners in other countries and demonstrate knowledge of their culture.

**How can you help?**

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

As a parent, you can help your child by:

* making sure your child goes to school regularly and arrives to school on time (9.00am)
* encouraging and supporting your child with any homework given
* showing that you are interested in how your child is getting on at school
* engaging with our online platforms
* contacting the school if you are aware of any issues that we may not be
* keeping us informed of any major changes to your child’s life that may impact on their wellbeing and engagement in learning
* Encourage your child to follow our school values of being respectful, being safe and being the best you; and
* being involved in the life and work of the school, where possible.

Throughout this handbook the term ‘parent’ has the meaning attributed in the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. This includes grandparents, carer or anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child.

**Welcome from the Head Teacher**

Welcome to the St. Margaret’s Primary School Handbook.

This handbook offers an introduction to our school and a general overview of the education your child will be getting at school.

If you have any questions or would like any further information on any aspect of this handbook or the education of your child, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Senior Leadership Team, which comprises myself, the Depute Head Teacher and two Principal Teachers. Any of us will be happy to help you with any questions/concerns you may have.

To make our handbook easy to use I’ve divided the information into five different sections:

# Section One – Practical Information about the School

This section provides you with some background information on our school. It tells you how our school day and school year are made up and how to contact the school if, for example, your child is ill.

This section deals with the practical aspects of your child’s attendance at our school. It provides details on such things as:

* travelling to and from school
* school meals and milk
* financial assistance with school clothing, transport and school meals
* school closures in an emergency or unexpectedly for any reason
* general supervision available for your child in the morning and at lunchtime
* wet weather details
* how the school communicates with parents, although we also have separate, more detailed guidance on this and this can be found within section 2 of our school handbook and on our website
* how to complain if you are not happy about something.

As with any organisation, to ensure smooth running and appropriate maintenance of standards, a range of procedures and policies have to be implemented within our school.

If you would like to discuss any of our school policies, please contact me. These policies support Local and National Guidelines.

**Section Two – Parental Involvement in the School**

Parental involvement is very important as we know it helps children do better in school.

This section contains information about how parents can be involved in supporting learning at home as part of a home – school partnership.

You can also find out more about the ethos of the school, what our values are and our aspirations for our pupils including how we celebrate pupil success, and links we have with partner organisations and the wider local, national and international community.

Lastly, it includes information on Parent Fund Raising Committee, a sub-group of our Parent Council, and our Parent Council, how to contact them and how parents can get involved in the life and work of the school.

# Section Three – School Curriculum

This section describes how the curriculum is planned and delivered in the school including the range of subjects and subject areas your child will be learning. It also includes information on how pupils develop skills for learning, life and work, including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in and out of the classroom.

As well as giving you information about the statutory curriculum requirements we have included details on sports and outdoor activities available to pupils and the range of facilities available within the school.

Details of how parents will be informed about sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness are included as well as information about religious instruction and observance and arrangements for parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child.

This handbook also tells you how we will report on your child’s progress and what written reports may be sent out to parents.

# Section Four – Support for Pupils

This section gives information about how pupils’ additional support needs will be identified and addressed and the types of specialist services provided within our school. This handbook also explains who to contact for more information if you think your child has additional support needs.

This section also gives information about transition – from primary school to secondary school – what the arrangements are and contact details of the catchment high school to which our pupils normally transfer. There are also details about making a placing request to another school.

# Section Five – School Improvement

The section gives you an overview of the main achievements of the school within the last 12 months and performance information relating to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Whilst Falkirk Council is happy to provide this information we do have some reservations that the publication of raw statistics, without any kind of informed qualification, can be misleading to the reader. In particular, they should not be construed as offering an indication of the quality of education provided in any of our schools.

I hope you find all of the above information helpful and self-explanatory. If you have any queries about any of the information contained in this handbook, or indeed about any aspect of our school, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Helen Snedden

Head Teacher

St. Margaret’s Primary School

**Disclaimer**

The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of publication (Dec 2022), however, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the start of the school term in August 2023.

**Section One – Practical Information about the School –**

Contact Details

Name of Head Teacher - Helen Snedden

Name of School - St. Margaret’s Primary School

Address - Salmon Inn Road, Polmont

Telephone Number - 01324 506780

Website - [www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk](http://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)

E-mail Address - [stmargaretsprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:stmargaretsprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk)

**About the school**

Stages of Education provided for:- Primary 1 to Primary 7

Present Roll - 344 (P1-P7)

Denominational Status of the School (if any) - Non-denominational

French and Spanish delivered following the Government Guidelines 1+2 Programme.

**Single sex school - Mixed**

**Organisation of the School Day**

**Primary 1 pupils attend school on a full-time basis after the first week.**

**Start Time - 9:00 am**

**Morning Break - P1 – P7 10:00am – 10:30am**

**Lunch Time – P1- P3 12:00pm – 12.45pm / P4 – P7 12.45pm – 1.30pm**

**Finish Time - 3:15pm (Primaries 1-7)**

**FALKIRK COUNCIL: CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

**Agreed Term Dates for Session 2024-2025**

**School year**

Autumn Term begins (for pupils) Wednesday 14 August 2024

Autumn Term ends Friday 11 October 2024

Winter Term begins Monday 28 October 2024

Winter Term ends Friday 20 December 2024

Spring Term begins Monday 06 January 2025

Spring Term ends Friday 04 April 2025

Summer Term begins Tuesday 22 April 2025

Summer Term ends Friday 27 June 2025

**Term Time Public Holidays**

* Monday 9 September 2024
* Friday 14 February 2025
* Monday 17 February 2025
* Monday 05 May 2025

**Staff Development Days**

* Monday 12 August 2024
* Tuesday 13 August 2024
* Friday 29 November 2024
* Tuesday 18 February 2025
* Friday 4th April 2025

**Registration and enrolment**

The date for registration of new P1 school entrants is advertised in all local nurseries, schools, the local press and on the council’s website [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk). Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school, when they register their child.

Pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic are automatically entitled to enrol at the denominational catchment school. All other pupils must make a placing request to attend a denominational school.

Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request in addition to enrolling their child at their catchment school. Please refer to section four of this handbook for more information on placing requests.

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

Parents can also make a formal request for their child to attend Gaelic Medium Education. Falkirk does not currently have a school with Gaelic Medium Education, however if there is a request for 5 or more preschool children to attend Gaelic Medium Education the following year, we would do our upmost to accommodate this. Otherwise we can support parents in applying to a Gaelic Medium School in a neighbouring authority.

**Attendance and Absence**

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Percentage** | **Number of School Days Annually** | **Number of days missed** |
| 100% | 190 | 0 |
| 95% | 180.5 | 10 days (2 weeks) |
| 90% | 171 days | 19 days (3 weeks, 4 days) |
| 85% | 161 days | 28 days (5 weeks, 3 days) |

Absence from school is recorded as ‘authorised’ i.e. it has been approved by the education authority, or as ‘unauthorised’ i.e. the absence remaining unexplained by the parent.

Please let the school know by letter, email to the school’s generic address or phone if your child is likely to be absent. If there is no explanation from a child’s parents / carers, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised.

Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time as this disrupts your child’s education and reduces learning time. In certain extreme situations, the Head Teacher can approve absence from school for a family holiday for example, in exceptional circumstances where the holiday would improve the cohesion and wellbeing of the family. Please discuss your plans with the Head Teacher before the holiday. If the Head Teacher does not give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The Head Teacher may also exercise discretion when a parent can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by the Head Teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

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

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

**School Dress Code**

Parents are asked to co-operate with the school in encouraging their child to follow the school’s dress code.

All schools have a dress code, which includes the school’s policy on uniform. The wearing of uniform is encouraged as it helps to:

* develop a school community spirit
* improves school security by making non-pupils more easily identifiable
* allows pupils to be easily identified when out of the school, e.g. on trips
* enhances the school’s reputation within the community; and
* minimises rivalry and bullying amongst pupils that can arise from, for example, the wearing of designer clothing.

The school’s dress code has been agreed in consultation with parents, pupils, staff and the Parent Council. This consultation has ensured that the dress code meets the needs of the school community, allows pupils to participate in all aspects of school life and is age appropriate.

The appropriate clothing and footwear for PE is a T-shirt, shorts and gym shoes with non-marking soles. These are necessary for health and safety reasons and your co-operation is requested to ensure that pupils are equipped to participate in the PE lessons.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled, particularly ties, sweatshirts and PE equipment, which are often lost. A protective apron or an old shirt should be worn for art and craft activities. Please help the school and the education authority by making sure that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive items of clothing to school.

In certain circumstances, appropriate clothing will be necessary for school activities for safety reasons, e.g. in games areas, science laboratories and technical workshops; this extends to the wearing of suitable footwear and even, on occasion, the wearing of jewellery and earrings.

Offensive clothing such as T-shirts or other items featuring inappropriate language or illustrations is not permitted. Football colours are also inappropriate as they can lead to incidents of rivalry.

If you have any queries regarding the school’s dress code, please contact the Head Teacher.

**School Meals**

Primary and Secondary Menus offer healthy and tasty meal options whilst reflecting the Scottish Government food and drink legal requirements for School Lunches. Special diets and allergies are usually accommodated subject to consultation with the parent/guardian and the regional dietician. Primary School Menus provide 3 daily choices with 2 portions of veg and 1 portion of fruit included with every meal choice with High Schools providing a range of plated meals, pasta, meal deals and salad boxes. 2 portions of veg and 1 portion of fruit are included with every meal choice within the balanced core High School menu Meal prices are reviewed annually. Please contact the school to be advised of the current price.

All P1-5 pupils are entitled to a free school meal. In the case of P6-P7 and secondary aged pupils, some families may be eligible to apply to Falkirk Council for provision of free school meals. Further details can be obtained from your child’s school.

**Free School Meals and Clothing Grants**

Falkirk Council provide Free School Meals, and financial support towards the cost of School Clothing and Footwear for families that meet certain eligibility criteria.

**Do I qualify for an award?**

* To be eligible, you should normally be resident in the Falkirk Council area and your child(ren) must attend any [primary, special or secondary school](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/default.aspx) managed by Falkirk Council.

**What is the Current Value of Clothing Grants?**

* For 2024/25 the Clothing Grant is £125.00 per child/per year for primary school aged children and £155.00 per child/per year for secondary school aged children.

**Do I Need to Apply if My Children are in Primary 1 to Primary 5 and receive Universal Free School Meals?**

* Free School Meals – No you do not need to apply for Free School Meals if your child is in Primary 1-5.
* Clothing Grants – Yes, you still need to apply for Clothing Grant for these pupils.

**How is Eligibility Assessed?**

* Assessment of eligibility is generally based on your household income/circumstances.
* There are different qualifying thresholds for Free School Meals and Clothing Grant awards.
* The qualifying criteria can be found on our website here: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm).

**Will I need to submit an application form?**

* No - If you received an award during the 2023/2024 school year and you have already been contacted to advise you do not need to re-apply.
* Yes - If you have never applied before or if you did not receive an award during the 2023/2024 school year.

**How Do I Apply?**

* You should apply online: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm)

**When will I receive my award?**

* We aim to assess applications within 28 days of receiving them. Please make sure that you provide all of the necessary evidence with your application form in order for us to complete our assessment, otherwise any entitlement and awards may be delayed.

**Further Information**

* More information regarding Free School Meals and Clothing Grant can be found on our website and FAQ’s at [www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm).

**Other Support**

There are other sources of support which may be available to families, depending on your circumstances.

* [Best Start Grant: Pregnancy and Baby Payment](https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant/) – Payments for parents of new-borns, or those currently expecting.
* [Best Start Foods](https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/) – Payments for parents of children up to 3 years old.
* [Best Start Grant: Early Learning Payment](https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant/) – Payment for parents with children aged between 2 and 3 and half years old.
* [Best Start Grant: School Age Payment](https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-new/) – Payment for parents of children starting Primary School.
* [Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/ema) – Financial support for 16 -19 year olds continuing at high school.
* [Young Scot](https://young.scot/the-young-scot-card/) – The Young Scot National Entitlement Card is available free of charge to everyone aged 11-25 living in Scotland.   It can be used to receive discounts, for rewards, and also as proof of age.
* [Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/roads-parking-transport/transport/young-person-travel.aspx) - Young people aged between 5 and 21 years old are eligible for free bus travel from 31 January 2022.
* [Help with Welfare Benefits](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/benefits-support/help-with-welfare-benefits.aspx) – Find out if you are claiming all of the support you are entitled to and speak to an adviser for further advice.
* [Other support for families](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/covid19/support-for-people.aspx) - Any family facing financial insecurity can also contact our Support for people team for assistance or sign posting to other support. The team can be contacted on 0808 100 3161.
* [**Benefits & support - Cost of living support | Falkirk Council**](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/benefits-support/cost-of-living.aspx)

**Medically Prescribed Diets**

Parents/Carers with a child/ren on a medically prescribed diet should contact the School Office in order to obtain and complete a prescribed diet referral and declaration form. The Schools Meal Service will only accommodate a child/ren with a medical referral diagnosed by a medical professional.

**School Clothing Grant**

Falkirk Council can also provide assistance with the cost of school clothing and footwear.

Clothing grants are available for children who live in the Falkirk Council area and who are in compulsory education at any of our [**primary**](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/primary-schools/), [**special**](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/asl-schools/) or [**secondary**](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/secondary-schools/) schools. Pupils attending some special schools outside the area may also be eligible for this grant.

School clothing grants are not available to children attending [**nursery schools**](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/nursery-schools/), or other pre-5 centres.

The School Clothing Grant is means tested. To be eligible, parents or guardians must meet one of the following criteria:

* In receipt of Income Support, or
* In receipt of Income-based Job Seekers Allowance, or
* In receipt of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, or
* In receipt of Child Tax Credit only with a gross annual income below £16,105, or
* In receipt of Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with a gross annual income below £16,105

Payments are paid directly into the parent or guardian’s bank account.

# Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA is a weekly allowance of £30 which you may be able to get if you are:

* aged 16 to 19
* attend a Falkirk school (or attend Home Education)

You'll need to meet the terms of your Learning Agreement, and will usually only get EMA for a week where you have 100% attendance.

Check if you are eligible by visiting the [**EMA Scotland website**](https://www.mygov.scot/ema/can-i-get-an-ema/).

## How to apply

You can apply online at [Education Maintenance Allowance | Falkirk Council](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/education-benefits-support/education-maintenance-allowance/).

Make sure you read the guidance carefully and provide all the information that is asked, including any supporting evidence.

**Please Note**: You will need to complete the application with your parent/carer present as some of the questions relate to their circumstances, and they need to sign the declaration.

Make sure you submit your application even if you don't have all the information. The date that we receive your application can make a huge difference to the date we can pay you from (eg you miss the 30 September or 28 February deadlines).

## Deadlines

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Your age | Application date | Payment start date |
| 16-19 on or before 30 September | Apply on or before 30 September | Payments start from beginning of August term |
| Apply after 30 September | Payments start the week we receive your application |
| Turn 16 between 01 October and 28 February | Apply on or before 28 February | Payments start from beginning of January term |
| Apply after 28 February | Payments start the week we receive your application |

# Travel to and from School

Parents should remind their child(ren) that, in the interests of safety, good behaviour is expected from all pupils travelling on school transport.

If your child regularly travels buy bus but an alternative arrangement for pick up has been made, please let the school know.

The children are collected from the school bus in the morning, at the gate, by a school staff member and escorted to the bus at the end of the day from the school’s small hall, for their safety.

Some children attend Go Kids before or after school. Each August the lists of attending children are shared with all teachers and adjusted throughout the school year accordingly.

If there is a change to end of day arrangements please ensure that you make Go-Kids and school aware of this.

If a child states to their teacher or staff member that the arrangements have changed without parental notification we will contact you to check on this.

Children should be reminded by parents that, wherever possible, they should only cross the road where there is a crossing patrol and should exercise care on walking to and from school. There are times that the school is notified that there is no crossing patrol and when we are told this, we will notify parents via the school APP. It is a parent’s responsibility to ensure that their child gets to school safely.

Parents are requested, when dropping off/collecting children from school that they do not park near the pedestrian exit or in any location which causes an obstruction and they take care not to restrict the view of the school crossing patrol. This is a health and safety risk for children and also can cause the school bus being delayed in its departure, as well as traffic congestion.

Parents and carers are also not permitted to use the school car park. This is for school staff and is small in size. Using this car park poses a health and safety risk to your children and potential damage to staff cars.

**Transport for Primary and Secondary School Children (Excluding Placing Requests)**

Free school transport is provided to and from your home address to your child’s catchment school if they are distance entitled. Falkirk Council operate a more generous distance entitlement policy than required by law.

Distance entitled children are:

* All children under 8 years of age who live one mile or over from their catchment school by the nearest available safe walking route**\***.
* All children 8 years of age or over who live two miles or over from their catchment school by the nearest available safe walking route**\***.

**\***Note – a “safe walking route” assumes that the pupil is accompanied by a responsible adult.

Concessions, details of times of operation, criteria and application forms are available from the Transport Planning Unit within Falkirk Council. Tel: 01324 504724 / 504966.

From January 2022, 5–21-year-olds living in Scotland are eligible for free bus travel.  
Falkirk Council has worked with its delivery partners, Transport Scotland, Improvement Service, Young Scot, and the National Entitlement Card Programme Office (NECPO) to launch the scheme.

**This means all young people aged between 5-21 within the Falkirk Council area are now eligible for free bus travel.**

The Young Persons’ Free Bus Travel Scheme does not usually cover transport to and from school. However E&M Horsburgh currently accept these cards on our St Margaret’s school transport.

**How to Apply**

All young people aged 5-21 will need to apply for a new or replacement National Entitlement Card (NEC) or Young Scot NEC. There are several ways to apply:

Applying for a Young Scot/NEC Card online

To apply for a Young Scot National Entitlement Card online, please go to [getyournec.scot](https://getyournec.scot/).

Full application details can be found on the website including requirements to use the online application service.

Young people under 16 years old will need their parent/guardian to apply on their behalf and provide approval for free bus travel to be enabled on their card.

This allows parents or guardians to exercise their responsibility for their children’s safety.

**Pickup points**

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

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

Our local community has a **school transport service** which the general public can also access. The transport service is currently provided by First Bus. There are a variety of pick-up and drop-off points around Polmont. This service is widely used by our pupils but parents/carers should be made aware that children are unsupervised by an adult on the bus.

A member of school staff will meet the children at 08:51am and escort them from the bus stop to the school playground. Further to this, the children are escorted by a school member of staff from the school to the bus stop for the 15:15pm bus.

Our bus timetable can be viewed via the link [Primary schools - St Margaret's Primary School | Falkirk Council](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/schools-nurseries/primary-schools/st-margarets-primary-school.aspx)

**General Supervision**

Before school begins supervision is very limited, therefore pupils should not arrive at school until as near to the school start time as possible.

During intervals school helpers are employed to supervise the children. There is no statutory ratio (adult to child), however, at all times we ensure that there is a minimum of two supervising adults in the playground at lunch breaks and four when the whole school is out at break.

At break time the playground is zoned and this is managed by the playground staff who wear high visibility vests and all have basic first aid kits and radios to call for assistance.

At lunch time, children are only permitted in the grass playing field/muga side of the school where they are in sight of the adults.

When staffing allows we open up our ‘Fairy Garden’ which is on the other side of the school.

In addition the Senior Leadership Team and Janitor are on call to deal with any difficulties which may arise. There is always access to the building and the children are made aware of this. For further information on these arrangements, please contact the school.

**School security**

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

# Wet Weather Arrangements

In wet weather pupils are allowed into school during breaks and at lunchtime. However, as supervision during these periods is limited, it is especially important that they exercise good behaviour. Children having school lunches may remain in school during wet weather but, again, supervision is limited.

Parents Meetings

All of our schools offer opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers through arranged meetings. Although arrangements vary from school to school, all parents will be advised of at least once per session when these meetings take place. Over and above these set meetings, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for an interview. Please see section two of this handbook for more details on home / school partnership.

**Communication with Home**

From time to time you will receive important and routine communications from the school via variety of methods (School app, email, group call, social media etc.). We are, as much as possible, a paper free school and therefore most of our communication is via the school app. Parents are also encouraged to regularly check the school app for these communications. Enquiries of any kind should be addressed to the school email: [stmargaretprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:stmargaretprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk) or school office: 01324 506780, in the first instance. These enquiries will then be allocated to the best person placed to respond.

Our communications guidelines can be found on our website: [St Margaret's Primary School - School Policies (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/policies/school_policies.html)

**Unexpected Closures**

Most closures will be notified to you in writing, in advance, but there are occasions when the children may be dismissed early without warning, e.g. as a result of power cuts or severe weather. In the event of an early school closure please ensure that your child knows where to go if you are not usually at home during the day. To help us keep you informed it is important that you make sure we have the most up to date emergency contact information for your family. We will keep in touch using text messaging, via the Falkirk Council website or via information broadcast on Central FM.

**Mobile devices**

Parents provide their children with mobile devices for a variety of reasons, including supporting learning and for personal safety. It is the right of parents to allow their child to have a personal mobile device in school. However, if devices are brought to school there must be a clear understanding that the individual pupil is responsible for the care and usage of their device(s).

Our mobile phone and ipad policies are available on the school website.

[St Margaret's Primary School - School Policies (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/policies/school_policies.html)

**ICT Acceptable Use Policy**

Falkirk Council Children’s Services recognises that access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment and services helps young people to learn and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life and citizenship in the 21st Century.

To support this, we provide resources for pupils and staff to use. The Children’s Services ICT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP: available on our website) outlines the guidelines and behaviours that pupils are expected to follow when using school equipment or when using personally-owned mobile devices in Falkirk Council establishments. The purpose of this is to protect young people online and to protect the Council’s network and equipment. The ICT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is available on the school website and revisited with pupils regularly.

[St Margaret's Primary School - School Policies (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/policies/school_policies.html)

**Equality**

The council is required to work towards advancing equality of opportunity for all people and to foster good relations between people. The council is committed to eliminating discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, transgender status, pregnancy/maternity or poverty.

Children’s Services have a range of policies and procedures to address equalities issues specific to education to enable us to fulfil these duties. In addition to this all education establishments have a responsibility to report incidents of prejudice-based bullying in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy: *‘Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk’s Educational Establishments’.*

**English as an Additional Language**

As part of the Additional Support Needs Service, the Council provides a support service for children who have English as an additional language.  The service supports enrolment and provides staff training and visits to schools to work with those children and young people who require assistance in developing English language skills.

This service can be contacted via email: [EAL@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:EAL@falkirk.gov.uk)

**Compliments, Enquiries and Complaints Procedure**

Falkirk Council Children’s Services would like you to be completely satisfied with your child's education. As a Council of the Future, we are encouraged to view complaints positively as they help us to continually improve the service we provide. We welcome/encourage feedback on our services from parents, pupils, and members of the public whether it be compliments, enquiries, or complaints.

Please let your school know if you have a compliment, enquiry or a complaint about the service provided so they can investigate and resolve any issues you or your child are experiencing as quickly as possible.

**How do I complain?**

Complaints can be made to schools in writing, by email, on the telephone, or in person.

**Who do I complain to?**

Parents must contact the school in the first instance. Any complaints received by Education Headquarters that have not been initially referred to the school will be redirected back to school to respond.

**What happens with my complaint?**

Complaints are logged on our online complaints handling database (Customer First). Only Children’s Services staff responsible for logging, monitoring progress or responding to complaints have access to this part of the database.

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

* Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution
* Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 1 of our complaint’s procedure allows immediate action to be taken to resolve the problem with an on-the-spot apology or be given to a Principal Teacher or Deputy Headteacher to investigate and respond. If we can’t resolve your complaint at this stage, the next steps will be explained to you.

Complaints that have not been resolved at Stage 1 or are complex and require detailed investigation are investigated at stage 2 of our complaint’s procedure. If a complaint is escalated to Stage 2, it will be allocated to the Head Teacher or another senior member of staff to investigate and respond. Stage 2 is our final opportunity to address your complaint.

We will deal with your complaint confidentially and as quickly as possible. If we have made a mistake we will apologise and try to put things right.

**How long will it take until I get a reply?**

We aim to resolve stage 1 complaints within 5 working days and stage 2 complaints within 20 working days. Occasionally the school may need extra time to investigate when the complaint is complex. We endeavour to acknowledge your initial email as soon as we receive this into the school office.

If your stage 1 complaint is received in the final week of term or during a school holiday period, you will be advised that your complaint will resume when staff return.

If your stage 2 complaint is received within the last 2 weeks of term or during a holiday period, you will be advised that your complaint will resume when staff return.

**Who else can help?**

If you remain dissatisfied after the second investigation stage, you can raise the matter with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman <https://www.spso.org.uk/complain/form/start/>

You should also be aware that you have the right to raise concerns with your local Councillor, MSP, or MP.

**What else do I need to know?**

Schools can only respond to complaints about a service that they or Falkirk Council provides or a service we have contracted from a third party.

The Council’s complaints handling procedure sets a time limit for making a complaint of six months from when the customer first knew of the problem.

You can find out more about the Council’s Complaint Procedure from the Falkirk Council website - <http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/contact-us/complaints/>

**School Health Service**

NHS Forth valley has a statutory obligation to provide health services for all school age children. The aim is to make sure that all children and young people, throughout their school years, are in the best possible health to benefit from their education.

**School Nursing Service**

School Nurses are available **8.30am-4.30pm** all year round, excluding Public Holidays. School Nurses are not based in schools and are part of an integrated community team working from local health centres/clinics. The School Nurse Team offer health screening, health assessments and health reviews.

A health review is offered to all children in primary 1. This involves a parent questionnaire and the opportunity of an appointment with the school nurse to discuss any parental concerns and a review of the child’s growth.

The Falkirk School Nursing team comprises of

* **Registered** School Nurses
* Health care support staff

Children/young people, parents/carers can request a health appointment at any time by contacting the service on 01324 679129.

Referral to the School Nursing Service can be made by Education, Social Work, GP or other Health Care Professionals.

The **School Doctor** may also offer appointments to children with a significant medical or developmental condition which affects their education. School staff and parents can request a child be seen.

**The Public Dental Service** carries out dental inspections in Primary 1 and Primary 7 and can help access dental services for children not registered with a dentist.

**Infectious diseases**

Colds and tummy upsets are the most common infections affecting children at school. It is important to keep your child at home in the early stages of a cold or until at least 48 hours after an episode of diarrhoea/vomiting to prevent infecting others. For treatment of diseases such as chickenpox or mumps, please consult your GP practice or nurse.

**Head Lice**

Head lice are spread through head to head contact at home, whilst playing or in school. Regular wet combing of your child’s hair using a special comb is the best way to catch this problem early. Specific treatment lotions are available as shampoos are not effective. Two applications should be administered seven days apart. If this is not followed, re-infection is likely.

Further advice is available from leaflets about head lice which are available in all schools and health centres

**Clinics**

Some children are asked to attend clinics (eye clinics, dentist, doctor etc) Please let the school know as early as you possibly can and arrange for your child to be collected if they must leave school to attend. No child will be allowed away from school without a responsible adult or unless written permission has been received from a parent or carer.

**Immunisation**

**Primary Schools**

Flu vaccines are given every year from Primary 1 onwards by an immunisation team visiting the school. Any child who misses a session can be vaccinated by their GP. Pupils with chronic illnesses such as asthma can visit their GP at any time to receive the vaccine

.

**Secondary Schools**

Pupils are offered several vaccinations such as Meningitis ACWY, a catch-up for the MMR vaccine and a booster for diphtheria, polio and tetanus. From 2019 HPV vaccine will be offered to both boys and girls.

For more information: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>

**Medicines Administration**

Administration of medicines prescribed by a doctor or dentist is at the discretion of the head teacher but most schools are happy to co-operate. Parents who wish school staff to give medicines should take the medication to the school office and fill in the appropriate form (MED1). It is also possible to complete another form (MED4) which allows pupils to carry and administer medication themselves, for example inhalers. Prescribed medication should be clearly marked with your child’s name, date prescribed, how often it has to be taken and for how long.

**Pharmacies**

Community pharmacies are trained in providing advice on coughs and colds, high temperature, fever, nasal congestion, minor eye infections, constipation, stomach upsets, fungal infections such as athlete’s foot, and skin problems such as impetigo.

For more information: nhsforthvalley.com

**Insurance Cover for School Children**

Public Liability

**Personal Injury**

Falkirk Council has in place a Public Liability policy which operates in respect of claims for injury to any third party which includes a pupil whilst under the care of the Council or their employees. In order for liability to be accepted there is an onus to evidence the council was negligible in their acts and was responsible or partially responsible for the injury sustained

Pupil’s Property

It is inevitable that during each session, pupil’s property is lost, damaged or stolen from school. Parents are therefore discouraged from allowing their children to carry expensive items of personal belongings to the school and are reminded that a standard household policy can be extended to provide a degree of cover for personal items taken away from the home. Falkirk Council are not legally responsible for pupils property which is subsequently lost, damaged or stolen, unless specifically entrusted with a member of staff.

Any claim made for loss or damage to the property left in the care of the school or its employees will have to be submitted, in the first instance to Children’s Services. Following a thorough review of the claim, settlement will only be made if it can be shown that Falkirk Council are legally liable for the loss.

Travel and Personal Accident Cover – Educational Excursions

In order to provide necessary cover for educational excursions Falkirk Council has in place an insurance policy for travel and personal accident which specifically covers any pupil enrolled at a participating establishment. The policy provides compensation for each insured pupil should an incident occur, irrespective of legal liability. There are varying degrees of benefits within the policy, but the key compensation values are noted below.

1. Death £30,000

2. Permanent Total/Partial Disablement up to £30,000

The insurance policy provides accidental bodily injury cover whilst any insured person is undertaking an organised trip (including exchange visits and work experience placement) as long as it is with the authorisation of the school or council and the activities involve a journey outside the premises of the school. The policy also extends to cover overseas travel cover.

# Section Two – Parental Involvement in the School

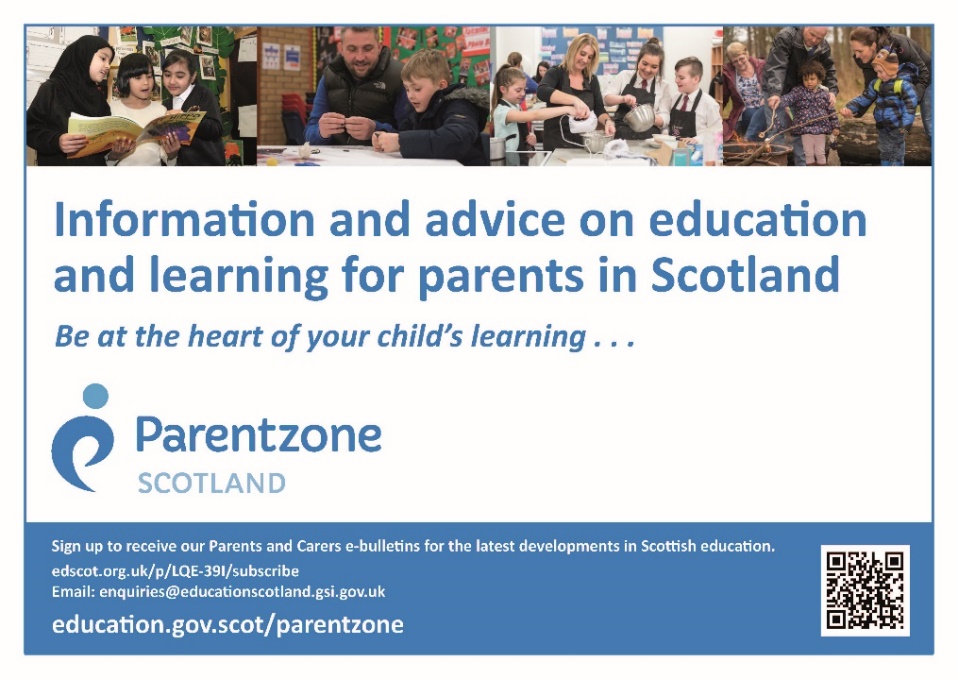
**Parents Welcome**

All Falkirk Council schools welcome and encourage parental involvement and engagement. Research has shown that when parents are involved children do better in school.

Falkirk Council Children’s Services recently updated our Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy in consultation with parents. This details a series of actions which we plan to take over a three year period to improve parental engagement with schools and the service and help to break down barriers which many parents experiencing when trying to become involved in the life and work of the school.

**Parental Involvement**

Parentzone Scotland is a unique website for parents and carers in Scotland, from early years to beyond school.  The website provides up-to-date information about learning in Scotland, and practical advice and ideas to support children’s learning at home in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and science.  Information is also available on Parentzone Scotland regarding additional support needs, how parents can get involved in their child’s school and education.  Furthermore, the website has details about schools including performance data for school leavers from S4-S6; and links to the national, and local authority and school level data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.  Parentzone Scotland can be accessed at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>.



Parents/carers are invited to attend Learning Events throughout the year in order to share in their child’s learning in a variety of curriculum areas.

Formal Parental Consultations take place in November with an additional, optional update in February/March.

Please also refer to our communications guidelines found on our website: [St Margaret's Primary School - School Policies (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/policies/school_policies.html)

There are a large number of parental presentations about how we support children’s wellbeing, relationships and anti-bullying, curriculum development on our website. Please refer to these a source of information.

**Parent and Family Wellbeing Group**

This session (23/24) we established our parent and families wellbeing improvement group. This is a group of parents who are passionate about supporting the wellbeing of the whole school community and are organising events such as group walks, monthly coffee mornings/afternoons & newsletters Yoga taster sessions along with other activities. The school is supporting and facilitating this by providing a safe space for parents and family members to come together and talk. The school is also facilitating ‘ask the expert’ sessions around issues raised by other parents which may impact on the wellbeing of the family.

This is something for parents to opt into and another opportunity to be part of the St Margaret’s wider community.

**Parent Councils**

Parents are welcomed to be:

* involved with their child’s education and learning;
* be active participants in the life of the school; and
* express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with the school.

All parents / carers are automatically members of the Parent Forum at this school. As a member of the Parent Forum all parents can expect to –

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

Parent Councils are the formal representative body for parents / carers with children attending school. Parent Councils are different in each school to enable them to meet the needs of parents / carers locally.

The Parent Forum decides how their representatives on the Parent Council are chosen and how the Parent Council operates. Parents / carers are encouraged to volunteer or put themselves forward to be chosen as representatives of the Parent Council if they wish.

The main aims of the Parent Council are:

* To support and work collaboratively with the school in its work with pupils
* To seek and represent the views of parents
* To promote contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
* To report to the Parent Forum
* To be involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff in the school.
* To raise funds for the school for the benefit of pupils (in some schools the PTA/PA fulfils this role).

Currently the Parent Council (The Voice) Chairperson is Mrs Lisa Duncan. Please contact the Parent Council, should you wish to raise any issue, in the form of a letter via the school. We will ensure your correspondence reaches Mrs Duncan.

For more information on parental involvement and engagement or to find out about parents as partners in their children’s learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at <https://www.education.gov.scot/parentzone/>

**Fund Raising Committee**

The fund raising committee is a sub group of the Parent Council and is mainly responsible for arranging events for parents and raising funds for the school. Volunteers are welcome - please contact the Parent Council if you want to join in.

Connect (formerly the SPTC) the national organisation for Parent Councils, runs an independent helpline service for all parents. They can be contacted by phone on 0131 474 6199, via website <https://connect.scot/>, email on [info@connect.scot](mailto:info@connect.scot) or write to Connect, Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BB.

**Pupil Parliament**

Our Pupil Parliament is one of the ways that we promote pupil voice and decision-making in St. Margaret’s Primary School. Our Pupil Parliament is run as a Pupil Group with the support of the Depute Head Teacher. You can find our rationale for our Pupil Parliament on our website:

[[918738]Pupil\_Parliament\_Rationale\_September\_2023.pdf (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/_documents/%5B918738%5DPupil_Parliament_Rationale_September_2023.pdf)

The children are given the opportunity to express views through a class Council meeting/discussion. A representative from the class is then selected to attend the Pupil Parliament discussion which convenes once a month.

We refer to ‘How good Is OUR school’, a Scottish Government publication to support children in evaluating aspects of school life:

[How good is OUR school? Part 2 (education.gov.scot)](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/HGIOURS-Part2.pdf)

**School Ethos**

To help us achieve our vision for the school, staff work closely with our Community partners. This includes our colleagues in Active Schools, Children’s Services and Educational Psychology, together with our Health Partners.

The school Chaplain from Polmont Old Parish Church is Deborah Van Welie. She is known to the children as Debbie. Our programmes of learning in Religious and moral education seek to develop knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, all dominant World Religions.

School life is supported by volunteers from the community, including volunteers from the RSVP service. We have an excellent working partnership with our local Business partners including Polmont Rotary as well as many of our smaller local businesses.

We are a nurturing and inclusive school that values children’s rights. We strive daily to ensure that children and their family’s needs are met through our relationships and interactions. Our vision, values and aims statement can be found on our website:

[St Margaret's Primary School - Vision, Values, Ethos (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/vision__values__aims/vision__values__ethos.html)

**Development of Pupils’ Mental, Social and Emotional Wellbeing**

The school is committed to supporting the development of its pupils as whole people and as a result, wishes to encourage their holistic wellbeing.

Mental, social and emotional wellbeing is supported in the following ways;

* Creating a school ethos which, in every way possible, gives value to these aspects of development, especially by providing an overall atmosphere that is both caring and challenging and which provides opportunities for exercising rights and responsibility
* Ensuring that staff and adults in the school act as positive models for pupils
* Focusing on our values of being respectful, being safe and being the best you
* Providing opportunities for members of the school community to come together as a whole to reinforce common values
* Providing rich opportunities across all areas of the curriculum to develop mental, social and emotional wellbeing
* Taking every opportunity within the curriculum and across the work of the school to celebrate diversity and promote equality
* Ensuring that children are aware of their rights as set out in the UNCRC
* Through our health and wellbeing curriculum: Emotion Works, Bounce Back
* Developing an understanding of inclusion and what it can mean for children who have an additional support need
* Our use of Pupil Equity Funding to support nurturing approaches for identified pupils
* Restorative approaches and practice to help children resolve conflict and repair harm
* Bespoke pieces of work with our support for learning team or other agencies with identified children.
* We are a Rights Respecting School and promote children’s rights throughout our teaching, learning and ethos of the school.

**Pupil Conduct**

A partnership between the school and family is necessary to ensure the best possible standards of pupil conduct. Without positive relationships between children and peers, staff and children, families and staff, it is very difficult to meet learner’s varying needs.

Pupils are expected to set themselves high standards in appearance and behaviour. School rules are devised to encourage the maximum amount of self-discipline. The rules make clear what is expected of pupils, and how they are required to behave. The general aim is to produce an atmosphere of friendly co-operation, encouraging respect and consideration for other persons and for property. At the start of every new session, the children develop a class charter which outlines the expected behaviours in class. Playground staff also work with children to create a playground and lunch hall charter. These are revisited throughout the school year. Staff are also required to share our Relationships/Anti-bullying Policy with children regularly so they have an understanding of what is expected of them and how we will support children who struggle with self-regulation.

All classes adhere to our positive behaviour management approach/relationship policy, available on our website. Our values of being respectful, being safe and being the best you are the premise for all expectations and discussion around behaviour.

In school we extensively use restorative conversations and celebrate the role modelling of positive behaviour choices.

Again to promote pupil voice, all classes negotiate their own Rights Respecting Class Charters which pupils are fully involved in. We also actively seek pupil voice through our Class Council discussions and our Pupil Parliament.

**Restorative Approach to Bullying Behaviour**

Whilst many believe that children who display bullying behaviour should be punished, it is widely accepted that this type of response can be ineffective, and, even make the situation worse.

The adoption of restorative approaches is evidenced to be a more effective response than traditional methods. Pupils are given the opportunity to accept responsibility for their actions, recognise the harm done and are supported to find restorative responses to the harm they have caused.

There are times where sanctions or consequences are deemed appropriate; exclusion is seen as a last resort and carried out when incidents fall within the legislative criteria. Exclusion will only ever be for a short, designated amount of time and will always be followed by a restorative, supportive discussion and agreement/support plan when returning to school. A single exclusion will not exceed ten days.

Falkirk Council has a responsibility to provide an education for all pupils and to challenge and address bullying behaviour. Whilst appropriate action will be taken by the school, it is also important that all parent/carers, work with the school to resolve any issues in the best interests of their child or young person.

Parents can access Falkirk Council’s Anti-Bullying Policy, ‘Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk’s Educational Establishments; on the Council website: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/policies-strategies/anti-bullying-policy.aspx](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/policies-strategies/anti-bullying-policy.aspx)

In addition please refer to our Relationships Policy and recorded information sessions available on our website. These outline how we approach relationship building and supporting children who experience additional needs or who require help with positive behaviour choices at St Margaret’s.

# [[894370]Relationship\_Policy\_update\_May\_23.pdf (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/_documents/%5B894370%5DRelationship_Policy_update_May_23.pdf)

# Section Three – School Curriculum

**Curriculum for Excellence**

Bringing **learning to life** and **life to learning**

Curriculum for Excellence has now been introduced across Scotland for all 3-18 year olds – wherever they learn. It aims to **raise standards**, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world.

Glow, Scotland’s unique, world leading, online network supports learners and teachers and plans are already in place for parents across the country to have access to Glow. Parents should ask the school how to arrange access to Glow and a user name and password will be issued.

Teachers and practitioners will share information to plan a child’s ‘learning journey’ from 3-18, helping their progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond, ensuring each transition is smooth. They’ll ensure children continue to work at a pace they can cope with and with challenge they can thrive on.

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of **knowledge** and **skills**.

Every child is entitled to a **broad and deep** general education, whatever their level and ability. Every single teacher and practitioner will be responsible for the development of **literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing** from Early Level through to Senior Phase.

It develops **skills** for learning, life and work, bringing real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links **knowledge** in one subject area to another helping make connections in their learning. It develops skills which can enable children to think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.

There are a variety of ways **assessing progress** and ensuring children and young people achieve their potential. This includes teachers’ professional judgement, Scottish National Assessment and national qualifications.

There is an entitlement to personal **support** to help young people fulfil their potential and make the most of their opportunities with **additional support** wherever that’s needed. There is an emphasis by all staff on looking after our children’s **health and wellbeing** – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure.

Ultimately, Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve our children’s life chances, to nurture **successful** learners, **confident** individuals, **effective** contributors, and **responsible** citizens, building on Scotland’s reputation for great education.

**Expressive arts**

This curriculum area encompasses Art and Design, Drama, Dance and Music. Children are encouraged to participate in all areas. This allows all pupils to show creativity and self-expression from the early stages to P7. Work in school will also build on the skills pupils bring from home and out of school activities. The emphasis is on enjoyment, expression and development, as well as the quality of the product. As part of this subject, individuals and groups are encouraged to present their own ideas and comment on their own work and the work of others. Preparing for, and participating in, performances and events provide opportunities for pupils to experience a real sense of achievement. We also take the opportunity of working with a wide range of artists and musicians who are able to enliven and enrich experiences and learning.

**Health and wellbeing**

This curriculum area encompasses Health, Physical Education, Physical Activity and cooking through Food and Health Education. As well as covering the specialist skills in physical education, this subject provides opportunities for pupils to develop their personal, social and life skills, such as taking responsibility for their own health and fitness, developing skills for independent living, decision making, working with other people and communication. There is an emphasis on participation in experiences as well as achievement of outcomes.

The development of the Health and wellbeing curriculum provides an opportunity for working across curricular areas. For example, successful participation in expressive arts activities contributes to a young person’s wellbeing. There are also clear connections between science and healthy eating and between learning about relationships and religious and moral education. Falkirk schools are able to achieve levels of accreditation in this curriculum area.

**Languages & Literacy**

This curriculum area incorporates learning through each child’s own language and learning an additional language. Scotland has a rich diversity of languages and dialects and we value and build upon the languages children bring to school.

From the early years, pupils will extend their skills in listening and talking and develop early reading and writing skills through appropriate play based contexts. They will spend time with stories, literature and texts which will enrich their learning, develop their language skills and enable them to find enjoyment.

Competence and confidence in literacy, including competence in grammar, spelling and the spoken word, is essential for progress in all areas of the curriculum. All pupils will be given opportunities to explain their thinking, debate their ideas and read and write at a level which will help them develop their language skills further.

There will be an emphasis on the implications and appropriate use of technologies and digital texts. Very strong connections between language and other curricular areas are essential. Inter-disciplinary themes are likely to involve both research and a strong element of presentation.

Within St. Margaret’s Primary School, we offer the children French from P1 to P7 and Spanish from P5 - 7. This is in support of the Scottish Government directive titled, “1+2”. English being the main mother tongue and children are given the opportunity to experience two additional languages.

**Mathematics & Numeracy**

In this curriculum area there is a strong emphasis on active approaches to learning and to real-life contexts. The school uses a Maths Mastery approach to support pupil’s developing mental agility and numerical concepts such as addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. In the early stages there will be opportunities to explore mathematics through purposeful play. The main areas for learning are information handling, number, money and measurement and shape, position and movement. A problem solving approach is encouraged in all contexts for learning, which will support learning in other areas of the curriculum.

**Religious and Moral Education**

In this curriculum area pupils will learn about Christianity and other world religions. RME supports pupils in developing responsible attitudes, values and moral judgement. It is important that time is given in class for reflection and discussion, promoting an ethos of inclusion and respect. We recognise that religious and moral education is wider than the experiences planned by teachers in schools, and actively promote links with the home, the child’s faith community and the local community in general. We ensure that young people know they are valued and respected whatever their faith background.

**Sciences/STEM**

In this curriculum area, pupils will learn about Our Living World, Our Material World, Our Physical World and developing Skills for Work. In our study of Science/STEM we take every opportunity to make use of our local environment. Pupils will be actively involved in their learning through involvement in a wide range of open ended experiences, challenges and investigations. Our partnerships with local industries also help us to make our learning and teaching in STEM meaningful.

**Technologies**

This curriculum area will encompass studies in craft, design, graphics, food, textile and information technologies. From their earliest years children use their natural curiosity and imagination to solve problems they encounter in their play. They quickly develop skills in using tools and processes, and become adept at using computers and digital media. Much of the learning in this area is therefore hands on and active.

**Social Studies**

This curriculum area encompasses History, Geography, Politics and Economics. We teach pupils about people in the past, people in place and people in society through an Interdisciplinary approach. Again we make full use of our local environment to enhance learning. Our learning in social studies is enriched and reinforced through linkages within social studies and with other areas of the curriculum. Drama, literature, art and music can all enrich learning in social studies, and there is scope for links with learning in languages, science and religious and moral education. An important focus is on understanding key periods and turning points in Scotland’s past and present, and on key elements of Scotland’s geography, as well as Scotland’s place in the United Kingdom, Europe and the world.

**Points to Note**

School excursions are often appropriate to the themes being studied in Social Studies. Letters are sent home giving details of proposed trips. Parental assistance is often appreciated to help with small groups on outings.

St. Margaret’s is also a Health Promoting school. Children are encouraged to exercise, eat healthily, behave appropriately and develop skills to promote good citizenship.

Thanks to the voluntary efforts of staff and parents, St. Margaret’s also provides a range of extra­curricular activities, including Basketball, Cross Country, Chess and Football. Our Active Schools co-ordinator supports the delivery of multi sports experiences for children across the school both at lunchtime and after school.

# Facilities for Physical Education and Outdoor Activities

We have a large well equipped games hall and an additional hall both of which offer opportunities for physical education activities.

Our Parent Council led an initiative which enabled us to secure funding in order to obtain a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), Trim-trail, climbing frame and chutes in the playground.

Senior pupils lead on supporting our Playground Zones including the Games zone, Quiet zone, Free play zone and Loose Parts zone. Pupils are given natural resources to stimulate play and creativity and develop imagination. Further to this pupils also develop their problem solving skills.

All our programmes of learning have skills for learning, life and work placed firmly at the centre. Learning experiences ensure that pupils see relevance in their learning in relation to their own contexts and to wider contexts they may become exposed to throughout their lives as learners.

**Learning to Achieve (Falkirk)** – is our core educational policy. Itdescribes in detail how Curriculum for Excellence will be delivered in our educational establishments. We use **Learning to Achieve** along with the national guidance to monitor, develop and improve outcomes for children and young people.

The curriculum is designed in order to ensure challenge & enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance. The learner should be at the centre of the learning process, where their own individual cultures, backgrounds, skills & interests are valued and developed.

Pupils learn about the range of subjects exemplified earlier in our handbook. Pupils learn about the discrete elements of these curriculum areas in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding, but also learn about links between curriculum areas and learning contexts i.e. the Ethos and life of the school as a community, Curriculum areas and subjects, Interdisciplinary learning and Opportunities for personal achievement.

Please contact the Head Teacher if you would like any further information about the curriculum within our school.

Parents can also access further information about Curriculum for Excellence, including specific experiences and outcomes for Early, First, Second and Third levels from a variety of on-line resources. Excellent sources of information can be found at:- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/>. Careers advice can be obtained from Skills Development Scotland at:- [www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)

**Play Pedagogy and Active Learning**

In line with Scottish Government document ’Realising the ambition- being me’ we use a Play Pedagogy, allowing our pupils flexibility to find their own learning, looking for solutions and engaging in meaningful activities. Which will in turn motivate them to learn and set their own goals in their learning. At St Margaret’s we use a variety of play types allowing pupils own voice, interests and direction as a focus, building their confidence. Our play is very child centred and embeds the four capacities, building resilience and communication skills in our learners.

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises the value of an active learning approach. Active learning is engagement of the brain whilst participating in learning experiences.

In the early years, children will have a range of learning experiences that include planned and purposeful play and stimulating learning which engages and challenges children’s thinking using real life and imaginary situations.

As children progress through school they continue to be involved in active learning experiences which give them ownership of their own learning, encourage co-operative working and utilise skills required for learning, life and work.

**Planning Children’s and Young People’s Learning**

Practitioners use a variety of approaches to make sure that pupils understand the purpose of their learning and are clear about how to be successful. A variety of planning approaches are used to ensure that experiences are progressive, skills – focused and meet pupils learning needs. Often individual’s targets help pupils to assess their own learning.

At the start of each programme of learning, pupils are asked about their existing knowledge based around a topic, what they would like to learn more about and how they would like to learn it. There remains a strong focus on core skills development within all areas with particular emphasis on Languages and literacy and Mathematics and numeracy.

**Learning at Home**

Practitioners provide home learning activities to support reinforcement of learning or to encourage pupils to apply learning in different ways, often in real life situations.

Parents are encouraged to get involved in home learning tasks. This helps parents keep up-to-date about learning in class and promote positive learning partnerships. We also share children’s learning through our Seesaw App and Microsoft Teams.

**Care of Books / Materials**

To enable us to provide the best possible education for your child, every care should be taken to look after the school’s resources and facilities. Parents are asked to remind their child(ren) that all school equipment and fitments should be used with care.

Books and learning resources which are lost or destroyed must be paid for, either wholly or in part, depending on the age of the resource. Any loss of school or Council property should be reported immediately to the school.

**Sensitive Aspects of Learning**

All pupils follow the Programmes of Learning inherent to the national resource for **relationships**, **sexual health** and **parenthood** (RSHP) education for children and young people. You can find more information on our Sexual Health and Relationships programme on the following link.

[Home - RSHP](https://rshp.scot/)

Substance Use and Misuse Education are taught as aspects of Personal Safety and dealt with in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner.

**Religious Instruction and Observance**

**Religious Instruction**

Schools have a statutory duty to provide Religious Instruction in the timetable. This aims to promote a knowledge of the Christian, and other faiths, and encourage children and young people to develop enquiring minds through investigating spiritual, moral and philosophical issues.

Religious Instruction may include visits to local places of worship, and/or visits from representatives of places of worship. This helps children and young people to develop knowledge and understanding of faiths, especially those with which they are less familiar. It provides opportunities to reflect on schools as communities of learners often from different cultural and social backgrounds with a wide range of beliefs. It recognises that individual, personal development is founded on respect for oneself and for everyone else.

Qualifications from National 3 to Advanced Higher are available to secondary school pupils in the study of Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies.

**Religious Observance/Time for Reflection**

Religious Observance, which may take the form of a Time for Reflection, is held at least six times a year, in addition to traditional celebrations central to the life of the school community. Religious Observance will often (but not necessarily) take the form of an assembly.

Roman Catholic schools follow the customs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church in order to nourish spirituality and faith and religious education is governed by separate church guidance.

**Withdrawal from Religious Instruction and Religious Observance/Time for Reflection**

Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious observance are encouraged to discuss their intention with the Headteacher in the first instance to enable them to make a fully informed decision. Thereafter parents who wish to proceed to withdraw their child(ren) should notify the Headteacher in writing. This is so that alternative educational activities can be planned for their child(ren) during times of Religious Instruction and/or Observance.

**Extra Curriculum Activities**

Every school is encouraged to offer as wide a range of sporting and cultural activities as possible. There are some extra-curriculum activities available for pupils during lunchtime. Parents will be informed about these by the school. In addition to in-school activities, classes also make regular educational visits and field studies. Wherever possible, these visits are linked to pupils’ class work.

**Facilities for Physical Education and Outdoor Activities**

The gym hall and MUGA has a variety of apparatus for physical education within the school. As part of the school’s physical education programme, pupils may also use the facilities of the local sports complex, swimming pool or athletics stadium.

Gym days for pupils are: Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays with a Visiting Specialist Teacher. Class teachers will advise pupils and their families of specific days and times.

We are proud to state that we deliver the Scottish Government recommendation of our pupils accessing two hours physical education a week. These two hours may be delivered in a variety of ways through active play, outdoor learning, walking in the local area as well as the traditional P.E. lessons delivered in the main gym hall.

**Active Schools**

The goal of Active Schools is to provide more high quality opportunities to participate in sport within schools. We also aim to ensure that these opportunities are well connected to and supported by other local, regional and national partners.

We work with Physical Education (PE) professionals to ensure better coordination between PE and school sports and also to encourage the development of more physically active children and young people.

While our focus is sport, our activities connect to the wider landscapes of play, dance, exercise and active living – we know that a joint effort is required to deliver the health and performance related fitness our children and young people deserve.

Within Falkirk Council we have an Active Schools Manager, nine Active Schools Coordinators (Primary) and nine Active Schools Coordinators (Secondary). The Coordinators work within their respective Primary and High Schools clusters to provide further opportunities for physical activity, sport and play. We also have a coordinator designated to disability sport.

[Active Schools Falkirk | Falkirk Council (falkirkleisureandculture.org)](https://www.falkirkleisureandculture.org/sport/active-schools/)

Follow us on @falkirksport

**Assessment and Reporting**

There are a variety of ways to assess progress and ensure that children and young people achieve their potential. Effective assessment practice within schools and establishments include:

* Learner involvement in setting personal targets and next steps
* On-going self-evaluation by learners, staff and school leaders
* Identification of strengths and next steps
* A range of approaches to assessment
* A variety of evidence gathered informally on a day-to-day basis or formally at certain points throughout the year (not exclusively - Teachers’ professional judgement, Scottish National Standardised Assessments, National Qualifications)
* Moderation of standards using Education Scotland Benchmarks
* Consideration of data analysis and performance information

Achievement of a Level & Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA):

Learner’s progress is defined within the following levels:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Level | Stage |
| Early | Pre-school and P1 however may be later for some |
| First | To the end of P4 however may be earlier or later for some |
| Second | To the end of P7 however may be earlier or later for some |
| Third & Fourth | S1 – S3 however this may be earlier for some |
| Senior Phase | S4-S6 and college or other means of study |

Achievement of a level means that the learner has achieved a breadth of learning across the curriculum area and has met the appropriate benchmarks; that they have responded consistently well to the level of challenge in their learning and can apply what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situation.

From August 2017, National standardised assessments have been introduced to all schools across Scotland in aspects of reading, writing and numeracy, for all learners in P1, P4, P7 and S3.

These assessments sit alongside a wide range of other evidence including ongoing classroom assessment of all aspects of literacy and numeracy. They cannot be used alone to confirm judgements of achievement of a level.

* Within schools and establishments, finding out about your child’s progress includes:
  + Attending parents’ information evenings
  + Discussing progress with teacher staff and school leaders by appointment
  + Attend open evenings/afternoons including “meet the teacher” events
  + Reading learning logs or diaries (which usually invite parents/carers to comment)
  + Summary Reports (sent home to parents/carers including an invite to make comments)
  + Social media updates from staff and/or the school

Further information about what data is collected about your child is given in section 5 of this handbook.

# Section Four – Support for Pupils

**Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)**

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC was produced in 1989 and contains 54 Articles specifically for children, recognising the special care and protection they need throughout childhood to experience the full range of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights.

The Scottish Government is committed to recognising, respecting, and promoting children’s rights as part of its wider commitment to improving life chances for all children and young people. The UNCRC lies at the heart of the Scottish Government’s policy and practice.

[UNCRC: the foundation of Getting it right for every child - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/uncrc-the-foundation-of-getting-it-right-for-every-child/)

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the Scottish Government’s approach to improving children’s services. The wellbeing of all children and young people is at the heart of GIRFEC. Services must work together with children, young people, their families, and those responsible for their care, to provide quick and effective support. To support the GIRFEC approach, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ensures key parts of GIRFEC are within law.

**Wellbeing**

The GIRFEC approach looks at eight areas of wellbeing. These are recognised as required areas which children and young people need to flourish both now and in the future.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The eight wellbeing indicators are: | |
| * Safe | * Active |
| * Healthy | * Responsible |
| * Achieving | * Respected |
| * Nurtured | * Included |

These enable the adults responsible for the care and wellbeing of children and young people to provide them with support. These areas help children and young people, families, those responsible for their care, and services, to identify any needs. Through a collaborative approach children and young people, families, those responsible for their care, and services will use these eight wellbeing indicators to identify any need and respond with appropriate planned solutions and supports.

This approach provides a common language and areas to focus on when gathering information about a child and young person’s world, to ensure they are growing and developing (UNCRC Article 6).

[Policies & strategies - Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) | Falkirk Council](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/children-families/policies-strategies/girfec.aspx#:~:text=Getting%20it%20Right%20for%20Every%20Child%20(GIRFEC)%20is%20the%20Scottish,support%20when%20it%20is%20needed.)

**Main Contact**

In 2019, the Scottish Government repealed the relevant sections of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 relating to the Named Person service. A named person was defined as a central point of contact for children, young people, and parents. This person had the responsibility for providing families with information for getting the support if, and when, they needed it. As a result of the Scottish Government’s decision, education authorities are no longer legally required to provide this service.

Every child and young person will still have a main contact within a school establishment to support and promote their wellbeing. The role of the main contact is to act as the first point of contact for children, young people, those responsible for their care, and families.

If the main contact is not available, please speak to another member of staff who will be able to help. During school holidays an officer from Children’s Services Headquarters will provide the advice and support you may require.

## Family Support Services

Family Support services work in partnership with families, schools, and other agencies to support young people’s wellbeing from early intervention to more intensive support.

Children, young people, and families may require additional support at different times in their life due to changing circumstances, such as: following a bereavement, trauma, illness, increased anxiety, and transition points in life. Support can be tailored to meet the individual needs of children, young people, and families, when they need it most and as locally as possible.

A request for support can be made through a member of school staff (main school contact) who will be able to talk with you, gather information and your family’s views. This helps identify the most appropriate service.

Support can be delivered in school, at home or in the community, on an individual or group basis.

**Protecting Children and Young People**

Article 19 of the UNCRC states that all children and young people have a right to be protected from violence, abuse and neglect. Children’s Services have an important role in identifying children and young people who are at risk of abuse or are being abused.

Falkirk Council has clear procedures for all staff to follow. Headteachers or designated members of staff are instructed to notify Falkirk Council and Children’s Services when a member of staff has a suspicion that a child might have been abused, are at risk of abuse or are likely to be exposed to significant harm due to neglect.

Children’s Services will make a decision on whether or not an investigation is necessary and will advise accordingly. In every situation, the welfare of the child overrides other considerations.

To support children and young people, Falkirk Council has a Child Protection Lead Officer and child protection guidelines, training, and policy guidance.

**Additional Support Needs**

As with all local authority schools in Scotland, this school operates under the terms of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (amended 2009) and its accompanying Code of Practice. This has been strengthened through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Further details of the policies and procedures can be found on the Falkirk Council website:

[www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/)

Children, young people, and families will work together with this school, other agencies and professionals to provide the best possible educational provision to meet their needs within the resources available. This may include working with Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, and the National Health Service.

## Support for Pupils

The school makes provision for pupils with additional support needs throughout their education (UNCRC Articles 23, 28 and 29)

* each teacher differentiates the Curriculum for Excellence within their class to provide educational targets and objectives suited to their age and stage of development
* the school has an experienced Support for Learning Teacher or Pupil Support Teacher to co-ordinate and organise support for children
* the school can utilise Support for Learning Assistant time for exceptional cases

For the children and young people who require further support, the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators, and other assessments, may be used to identify their additional support needs. Those involved in helping to complete a rounded picture of assessment are referred to as the Team Around the Child (TAC) (UNCRC Article 3).

Members of the TAC may include the following. Depending on the circumstances, others may be involved.

* the child or young person (UNCRC Article 12)
* parents or carers
* others responsible for the care of the child or young person
* school staff
* social work
* Children’s Rights Officer
* ASN Advisor

The Team will also draw up and review plans to meet the identified needs. Their activities are co-ordinated by the Lead Professional, who is responsible for ensuring plans are implemented and has an overall picture of the child or young person’s progress.

If you believe your child may have unrecognised additional support needs, your first point of contact should be the child’s class teacher (primary) or their Guidance teacher/Pastoral Head (secondary).

## Disputes and Resolution in Additional Support Needs

Schools and Early Learning Centres (ELC) do their best to support and respond to the needs of their children and young people. It is important for good communication between home and school so that should a problem arise, it can be identified and discussed as soon as possible.

In the first instance, the school or ELC should be contacted directly. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, services from centrally based staff may be called upon: the Additional Support for Learning Adviser, the Educational Psychologist or the school’s attached Team Manager. Children’s Services also commission independent mediation through Children in Scotland. This is a free service to parents, carers, and young people. It offers an independent mediation service by fully trained, experienced mediators in neutral venues and operates with a child- centred approach. Their services, called Resolve, may be arranged by the Additional Support for Learning Adviser, or accessed directly by parents and carers.

Parents, carers and children or young people with additional support needs can also seek independent advice and support through:

* **Enquire** – the Scottish advice and information Service for additional support for learning managed by Children in Scotland: [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk), info@enquire.org.uk 0345 123 2303
* **Resolve: ASL** - to contact the service, or to find out more: [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk), [info@childreninscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@childreninscotland.org.uk) Sandra Mitchell, Mediation Manager [smitchell@childreninscotland.org.uk](mailto:smitchell@childreninscotland.org.uk) Children in Scotland, Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR
* **Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance** - [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk), [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk) 0131 510 9410
* **Let’s Talk ASN Scotland** - is a Scottish Government funded service for the parents of children with additional support needs and run in partnership with Barnardo’s. The service provides legal representation in appropriate education law cases to parents or pupils. It also provides advocacy support for families with a right of reference to the ASN Tribunal for Scotland., c/o Govan Law Centre, [letstalkasn@edlaw-org.uk](mailto:letstalkasn@edlaw-org.uk) 0141 445 1955
* **Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland** - [www.cypcs.org.uk/about/](http://www.cypcs.org.uk/about/)

More detailed information about Falkirk Council’s ASN service can be found here:

[Falkirk Council Additional Support Needs | Supporting Children & Young People with Additional Support Needs Across Falkirk Council (glowscotland.org.uk)](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/asnfalkirk/)

**Support for Pupils**

Pupils’ additional support needs will be identified and addressed through the Getting It Right For Every Child processes. This involves close co-operation between the parent or carer, the child and the staff in school – they are the core part of the Team Around the Child. Others involved in your child’s education and well-being will also be part of the Team, and will help to complete a rounded picture of assessment where appropriate. The Team will also draw up and review plans to meet the needs identified. Their activities are co-ordinated by the Named Person, who is responsible for ensuring plans are implemented and has an overall picture of the pupil’s progress. You will be told who the Named Person is for your child when they start school. If you believe your child may have unrecognised additional support needs, your first point of contact should be the child’s EYO, class teacher or guidance teacher.

The school makes provision for pupils with additional support needs throughout their education:

* each teacher differentiates the Curriculum for Excellence within their class to provide educational targets and objectives suited to their age and stage of development
* the school has a Support for Learning Teacher to co-ordinate and organise support for children
* the school can allocate a Support for Learning Assistant on a basis of need for exceptional cases

**Disputes and Resolution in Additional Support Needs**

Schools and Early Years facilities do their best to support pupils, and are responsive to the needs of parents, carers and pupils. Nevertheless, problems may arise, and it is important to deal with these as soon as possible.

In the first instant it is usually wise to contact the school or nursery directly, and if the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, they may call on the services of some of centrally-based staff – the Additional Support for Learning Adviser, the Educational Psychologist or the school’s attached Team Manager. Children’s Services also commission independent mediation through Children in Scotland. Their services, called Resolve, may be arranged by the Additional Support for Learning Adviser, or accessed directly by parents on 0131‑222‑2456.

Parents, carers and children with additional support needs can also seek independent advice and support through:

* Enquire – the Scottish advice and information Service for additional support for learning: [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk), 0345 123 2303
* Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance; [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk), 0131‑260‑5380
* Take Note: National Advocacy Service for Additional Support Needs (Barnados in association with the Scottish Child Law Centre) [www.sclc.org.uk](http://www.sclc.org.uk), 0131‑667‑6633.
* Let’s Talk ASN, c/o Govan Law Centre, [letstalkasn@edlaw-org.uk](mailto:letstalkasn@edlaw-org.uk), 0141-445-1955.

**Educational Psychology Service**

The Educational Psychology Service is a statutory service with a role to provide advice to both the school and parents. Educational Psychologists work in collaboration with teachers, parents and other professionals to support children and young people with their learning and development, and to make the most of their lives.

Every school and pre-five establishment has a link Educational Psychologist who provides consultation, assessment, intervention, training and project work. The Service works within the Staged Intervention Approach of Children’s Services.

The school must obtain the agreement of parents and, where appropriate, the pupil before involving the Educational Psychology Service.  Further information is on the website <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/epservice> where there is helpful information for parents.

Parents can contact the service directly on Educational Psychology Service [educationalpsychologyservice@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:educationalpsychologyservice@falkirk.gov.uk) or 01324 506600. Please ask for the link psychologist for your child’s school or the Principal Educational Psychologist.

**Pastoral Support**

All members of staff are trained in Child Protection Procedures at the start of each session. We are all fully committed to keeping our children safe and happy in, and out, of school. The Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher share the Child Protection Co-ordinator role in St. Margaret’s Primary School. Any information regarding a child in our school is treated confidentially and with sensitivity for that child and their families. We do, however, have a duty to share some types of information with relevant partner agencies.

Our pupils can approach any adult they are comfortable with to discuss any concern they may have. This would be then shared with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Transitions**

We work very closely with staff from Graeme High School to ensure that our pupils make a smooth transition to S1. This involves staff from Graeme High working in our P7 classes throughout the session. This ensures that information regarding pupils’ attainment and achievement is gathered effectively through direct support, observation and dialogue with the class teacher. Where, required, individual meetings are held to ensure pupils’ needs will continue to be met when they enter S1.

We liaise closely with other Secondary colleagues, should you choose to have your child transfer to an alternative High School.

There is an extensive transition programme in place in school to support our Nursery pupils in transferring to P1. Nursery and P1 staff work very closely to ensure that information regarding pupils’ progress is shared to ensure progress in learning.

**Admission to Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) Establishments in Falkirk**

All ELC places are allocated according to the Early Learning and Childcare Admission Policy. A funded pre-school education place is available for every child aged 3 to 5 years who lives in Falkirk. A place can be provided in either a Falkirk Council ELC Centre, private nursery or childminder which is in partnership with Falkirk Council.

Children become eligible for pre-school education as follows:

* For children who reach 3 years of age between 1st March and 31st July the start date will be the beginning of the Autumn Term (August)
* For children reaching 3 years of age between 1st August and 29th February of the following year the start date will be a month after the child’s 3rd birthday.

Applications for the forthcoming academic session are accepted from 1st December to 28th February and can be submitted online through the Falkirk Council website at <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/children-families/early-learning-childcare/elc-admissions.aspx>

Only one application form should be completed. The application form asks for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice of ELC Class or Centre, the form should be submitted along with the child’s birth certificate and proof of address. Please note you will need to create a MyFalkirk account before applying.

Applications are then allocated according to the criteria detailed n the Admissions Policy - <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/children-families/early-learning-childcare/docs/nursery-admission-policy/Early%20Learning%20and%20Childcare%20Admission%20Policy.pdf?v=201507271206>

**Transition from Nursery to Primary**

Each establishment has a detailed approach to ensure a smooth transition for children to primary school. This involves nursery and primary staff working together to share information about children’s progress and achievements which will inform future planning.

**Nursery Class Provision**

The school’s nursery class provides places for children aged 3-5 years.

Nursery class provision is non-denominational, which allows children of parents from all religions and beliefs to attend the nursery. Attendance at the nursery class does not however guarantee a place in the school.

**Primary School Admissions**

Children’s Services must set a date each year for the commencement of children’s attendance at Primary school. This date is usually the 3rd or 4th week in August.

When commencing Primary 1 education, your child will normally attend the local denominational or non-denominational Primary school and transfer from it, after Primary 7, to its associated Secondary school. Details of the catchment areas and boundaries can be obtained from the Forward Planning Section – Tel. 01324 506608 in the Children’s Services, on the website - [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk) or the relevant school.

Pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic and who live within the catchment area of a denominational school are automatically entitled to enrol at the school.  All other pupils will require a placing request (see below).

Any movement between denominational and non-denominational schools at year stages other than Primary 1 will require a Placing Request Form to be completed.

The authority will place adverts in the local press and nurseries advertising the date(s) for enrolment.

Parents of pupils enrolling at a denominational school must also present their child’s RC baptismal certificate.  Parents of pupils that are not RC baptised will be required to submit a placing request (see below).

You are still required to enrol your child(ren) at your catchment denominational school (if RC baptised) or catchment non-denominational school (if not RC baptised) even if you do not wish him/her to attend that school.

Enrolment timetables will also be available through the Falkirk Council website at [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk).

Children eligible for enrolment are those whose 5th birthday falls between 1st March and the end of February the following year. Requests for enrolment will only be prioritised if Children’s Services receive more requests for enrolment than places available at the school.

**Class Composition**

The maximum number of children that we can have in particular stages is:

P1 P2 and P3 P4 – P7 Composite Classes

25 30 33 25

To assist us in forming and allocating classes we refer to Falkirk Councils guidelines of composite Classes;

[SC 08 Formation of Composite Classes.pdf (falkirk.gov.uk)](http://inside.falkirk.gov.uk/services/childrens/policies-circulars-procedures/docs/composite-classes/SC%2008%20Formation%20of%20Composite%20Classes.pdf?v=201708031535)

# Primary to Secondary Transfer

There are a range of activities that take place to ensure that all children are well supported as they move from Primary 7 to 1st year, and these are all decided by each secondary school and its associated primary schools.

Generally, visits take place in the summer term, with a programme of activities for pupils in classroom relating to their secondary subjects. Sporting and social activities may also be planned. Pupils, therefore, become familiar with the new school, their new teachers, and their new classmates.

Clusters also arrange for secondary school subject teachers to visit Primary 7 classes from time to time, with the cluster agreeing each year which subject areas should be the focus for these. Opportunities for senior pupils from secondary schools to visit classes in their associated primaries offer further reassurance and can help supportive peer relationships to be developed before S1 begins.

Most secondary schools also have an information evening for parents of Primary 7 children at which they can gain information about uniform, lunchtime arrangements, school clubs, etc.

Pupils with Additional Support Needs

Secondary school Pastoral and Support for Learning teachers make visits to the Primary 7 class to get to know the children and their needs, including any Additional Support for Learning needs. Visits by Support for Learning staff sometimes take place as early as Primary 6 to help with additional arrangements for those children for whom the move to secondary school may present challenges.

Moving to the denominational secondary school

*Children who are baptized Catholic*

With the exception of some pupils at St Patrick’s PS, pupils who are in Primary 7 in denominational primary schools (Sacred Heart PS, St Andrew’s PS, St Mary’s PS, St Francis Xavier’s PS and St Joseph’s PS) move to St Mungo’s HS.

Pupils in Primary 7 at St Patrick’s PS attend St Modan’s HS in Stirling.

*Children who are non-Catholic*

Parents of non-RC baptised pupils who were enrolled through a Placing Request at a denominational primary school must submit a further Placing Request if they wish them to transfer to St Mungo’s High School. These pupils are, otherwise, automatically entitled to transfer to their catchment non-denomination secondary school.

*Moving between denominational and non-denominational schools*

Parents who intend to send their children to St Mungo’s HS from a non-denominational primary school, or from a Catholic primary school to their catchment non-denominational high school, should make known their intentions both to the primary school and the secondary school as soon as possible. This enables the necessary transfer arrangements to be made.

###### Catchment Secondary School

Our Catchment Secondary School is Graeme High School. Contact details are as follows:-

Callendar Road, Falkirk FK1 1SY Telephone Number:- 01324 622576

The Head Teacher is Ms Kirsty Rennie. There is also the facility to submit an

on-line enquiry form from the Parentzone section of their website.

We have an excellent working relationship with our colleagues in Graeme High School, working closely to ensure our pupils make effective transitions from P7 to S1.Staff from Graeme High work within our P7 classes to get to know our pupils well and to identify any specific needs. Regular liaison meetings between Graeme High staff and our staff also make this process effective.

Pupils with additional support needs are identified early in their P7 year in order that

consideration may be given regarding additional support needed in specific subject areas in Graeme High. Our pupils’ emotional, mental and social health is also of paramount importance to us. We ensure that information regarding their levels of resilience, ability to embrace change, social friendships etc. are shared with Graeme High staff.

**Placing Requests**

As a parent, you have the right to make a Placing Request for your child(ren) to be educated in a school other than the local school. Applications for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 Placing Requests to commence school in August will only be accepted following the publication of an advert in the local press inviting applications in early December.

Every effort will be made to try to meet parental wishes, but you should note that it is not always possible to grant every Placing Request. You should also note that a successful Placing Request for one child does not guarantee a successful one for another child. A parent could, therefore, end up with children attending different schools.

Primary 1 children must also be enrolled at the catchment area school on the appropriate Enrolment Form whilst awaiting the outcome of their Placing Request Application. If the Placing Request is granted, the child’s enrolment at the catchment school will automatically be withdrawn by Children’s Services.

Placing Requests can only be approved when there are sufficient places remaining in the class after all catchment area children have enrolled and if staffing and accommodation at the school are able to meet the numbers of Placing Requests at that school. Children’s Services will also reserve places in a class for catchment pupils they expect to move into the area during the school year.

If more Placing Requests are made for admission to a particular school than places available, these Requests will be prioritised according to Falkirk Council’s Admissions Policy and requests accepted and refused accordingly.

Online placing request applications can be made via the Council’s website [www.falkirk.gov.uk/placingrequests](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/placingrequests). Written application forms are available from all schools and from Children’s Services. Written applications must be returned to the Director of Children’s Services, Sealock House, 2 Inchyra Road, Grangemouth, FK3 9XB. Placing request for Primary 1 and Secondary 1, commencing in the next school session, should be made by the 15th March each year. Reponses will be issued no later than 30th April.

Your Placing Request will be considered against a set of criteria which is set out in the Council’s priorities for admission.

Any Placing Requests received after the 15th March for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 will not be considered in the first round of Placing Requests. Parents / Carers will be notified of the outcome of their request within 8 weeks of receipt.

As soon as a decision has been made, you will be notified of the result. If your Placing Request is successful, you will be asked to contact the school to establish arrangements for enrolment.

**Mid-Session Transfers**

You may make a Placing Request at any time during a school session. If your child is experiencing problems at school, you are advised to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher prior to making a Placing Request. Completing the Application Form does not guarantee a place for your child at your chosen school.

**Transport for Placing Requests**

If a Placing Request is successful, parents will be responsible for the safety and transportation costs of their child to and from their chosen school.

# Section Five – School Improvement

**Raising Attainment**

Monitoring performance and using the resulting information to secure improvement is an important part of the work of head teachers, school staff and officers within Children’s Services. Head Teachers regularly track pupils’ progress at meetings with each teacher to ensure that progress is maintained and to identify effective strategies progress when necessary. In St Margaret’s this is done every term, alongside detailed progress meetings.

**Standards and Quality Report**

Every year each school publishes a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school’s major achievements.

**Standards and Quality Reports – Operational Guidance**

Schools and centres must provide an annual Standards and Quality Report (SQR) as a record of the progress made with the annual improvement plan. The SQR should be based on the results of on-going self-evaluation which is rigorous, effective and based on consideration of impact. This self-evaluation should be informed by How good is our school? 4th edition (HGIOS?4) and/or How good is our early learning and childcare? (HGIOELC?) and How good is OUR school? It should give a clear indication of where the school is now in relation to its process of continuous improvement.

It should state clearly and briefly the progress towards the National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities and drivers and Children's Services NIF Improvement Plan priorities. The report should be written using evaluative language.

**The National Improvement Framework key priorities are:**

* Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
* Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing
* Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
* Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
* Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

**The 6 drivers of improvement identified in the NIF are**:

* School and ELC leadership
* Teacher and practitioner professionalism
* Parent/career involvement and engagement
* Curriculum and Assessment
* School and ELC improvement
* Performance information

**School Improvement Plan**

In St. Margaret’s Primary School, we use the Model for Improvement; Plan, Do, Study, Act approach, to School Improvement planning. All of our identified priorities are based on self-evaluation processes where we gather views of staff, children and parents, analyse this data then discuss and explore best practice in school and beyond with a view to raising attainment for all.

For each main priority, a task brief is generated, with a member of staff assuming leadership of a particular priority or aspect of the plan. This person ensures the task is carried out and its success evaluated in terms of positive outcomes for learners.

Our most recent school improvement plan and standards and quality report can be found on our website.

[St Margaret's Primary School - School Improvement Planning 23/24 (st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk)](https://www.st-margarets.falkirk.sch.uk/parental_information/school_improvement_planning/school_improvement_planning_23_24.html)

#### Transferring Educational Data About Pupils

The Scottish Government and its partners collect and use information about pupils in schools (e.g. the number and characteristics of pupils, their attendance, absence and exclusions, their attainment and their destination when leaving school) to help to improve education across Scotland.

Information on how this data is used and what the Scottish Government and its partners do to protect the information supplied to them can be found via the link below:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed/PrivacyInformation>

For more information on why we transfer educational data to the Scottish Government and third parties, please see the Primary page on the Falkirk Council website : [www.falkirk.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/privacy)

**Concerns**

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Head of Schools Analysis at [**ScotXed@gov.scot**](mailto:ScotXed@gov.scot) or write to Education Analytical Services, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.

We have achieved Gold Level 2 Rights Respecting Schools Accreditation Award and are the **first school in Falkirk Council to do so**. This award means that all stakeholders (pupils, staff and parents/carers) promote the positive language of Rights and Responsibilities throughout our school vision and ethos. The children are aware of their Rights in accordance with the United Nations Children’s Rights Charter and that of children across the world.

Pupil attainment data is gathered by Falkirk Council from the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) and end of year Teacher Judgement Survey.

### Websites

You may find the following websites useful.

* <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/> - parents can find out about everything from school term dates to exam results. This site also offers information for pre-5 and post school. It also lists relevant publications for parents and provides hyper-links to other useful organisations.
* <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports> - parents can access school and local authority inspection reports and find out more about the work of Education Scotland.
* <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/> - parents can find out about individual schools. They can choose a school and select what type of information they need such as Education Scotland reports, exam results, stay on rates and free school meal entitlement.
* [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk)- contains information for parents and information on Falkirk schools.
* <http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx> - contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying.
* <http://www.respectme.org.uk/> - Scotland’s anti-bullying service. Contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying
* <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/> - provides information and advice for parents as well as support and resources for education in Scotland
* <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/> - contains information for everyone on equality laws within the government and local authorities.
* Scottish Attainment Challenge: [1. Introduction - Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-attainment-challenge-framework-recovery-accelerating-progress/pages/3/), [Scottish Attainment Challenge | Learning in Scotland | Parent Zone (education.gov.scot)](https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/scottish-attainment-challenge/) and [Scottish Attainment Challenge | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub (education.gov.scot)](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/scottish-attainment-challenge/)
* Curriculum for Excellence: [What is Curriculum for Excellence? | Curriculum for Excellence | Policy drivers | Policy for Scottish education | Scottish education system | Education Scotland](https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/)
* National Improvement Framework 2022: [Education - Achieving Excellence and Equity: national improvement framework and improvement plan 2022 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-excellence-equity-2022-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/) and [National Improvement Framework | Learning in Scotland | Parent Zone (education.gov.scot)](https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/national-improvement-framework/)

# Glossary

ASL – Additional Support for Learning

ASN – Additional Support Needs

CFE - Curriculum for Excellence

CLD – Community Learning and Development

DHT - Depute Headteacher

EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance

FFB - For Falkirk's Bairns - Integrated Children's Service Plan

FOI – Freedom of Information

FVNHS - Forth Valley National Health Service

GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child

Glow - Scottish Schools National Intranet (Glow doesn’t stand for anything)

HT - Headteacher

LIPs - Local Improvement Priorities

LTA - Learning to Achieve

MFiF - My Future's in Falkirk

NPFS - National Parent Forum of Scotland

PC - Parent Council

PLPs - Personal Learning Plans (personal learning planning)

PT - Principal Teacher

PTA/PA - Parent/Teacher Association/Parents Association

SEEMiS - Management Information Systems (SEEMiS is the pupil database)

SIP - School Improvement Plan

SPTC - Scottish Parent Teacher Council

SQA – Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Disclaimer**

Whilst the information provided is considered to be correct at the time of publication, it is possible that there may be inaccuracies by the time the document is posted onto the school and Falkirk Council website.