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A Foreword from the Director of Children’s Services

Session 2019-20

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 a number of 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 focuses 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 2019/20 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).
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 in 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;
- encouraging and supporting your child with any homework given;
- showing that you are interested in how your child is getting on at school;
- encouraging your child to respect the school and the whole school community; and
- being involved in the life and work of the school.

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

Welcome to the St. Mary’s 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.

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 and our nursery. 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
- 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.

This section gives an overview of the policies the school has in place. If you would like to see a full copy of these policies or to discuss them in more detail, please contact me. Most of these policies are available on the school website – www.st-marys.falkirk.sch.uk

- Homework Policy
- Clothing or uniform (PE Clothing)
- Health Statement / medicines
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 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.

We have also shown where you can get further information about our plans for the next three years to improve our performance and how the school will involve parents in that improvement.

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.

Mr Stephen McPeake
Head Teacher
St Mary’s RC Primary School

Disclaimer
The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of publication (Dec 2018), however, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the start of the school term in August 2019.
Section One

Practical Information about the School
Contact Details
Name of Head Teacher – Mr Stephen McPeake
Name of School – St Mary’s RC Primary School
Address – Gauze Road, Bo’ness EH51 9QB
Telephone Number – (01506) 778380
Website - www.st-marys.falkirk.sch.uk
E-mail Address - stmarysprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk

About the school
Stages of Education provided for - Nursery to P7
Present Roll 147 + Nursery (32 children)
Denominational Status of the School – Roman Catholic
Gaelic Medium Education No
Single sex school No

Organisation of the School Day
Start Time 9.00 am
Morning Break 10.30 am – 10.45 am
Lunch Time (Nursery) 11.30- 12.00 noon
Lunch Time (P1-3) 12.00 noon – 12.45 pm
Lunch Time (P4-7) 12.15 pm – 1.00 pm
Finish Time 3.00 pm
Primary 1 pupils attend school on a full-time basis after the first week.

Nursery children also start at 9.00 am and finish at 3.00 pm
## Agreed Term Dates for Session 2019-2020

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Term Dates</th>
<th>Days</th>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn Term Begins (Staff Only - Dev Day)</td>
<td>Monday 19 August 2019</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn Term Begins (Staff Only - Dev Day)</td>
<td>Tuesday 20 August 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn Term Ends</td>
<td>Wednesday 21 August 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Friday 11 October 2019</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Term Begins (Staff Only - Dev Day)</td>
<td>Monday 21 October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Term Begins (Pupils)</td>
<td>Tuesday 22 October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Term Ends</td>
<td>Friday 20 December 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Term Begins</td>
<td>Monday 06 January 2020</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Term Ends</td>
<td>Friday 03 April 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Term Begins</td>
<td>Monday 20 April 2020</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Term Ends</td>
<td>Thursday 25 June 2020</td>
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<td>195</td>
<td>190</td>
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### Term Time Public Holidays (4)

- Monday 09 September 2019
- Friday 14 February 2020
- Monday 17 February 2020
- Monday 04 May 2020

### Staff Development Days (5)

- Monday 19 August 2019
- Tuesday 20 August 2019
- Monday 21 October 2019
- Tuesday 18 February 2020
- Friday 01 May 2020
Registration and enrolment
The date for registration of new school entrants is advertised in all local nurseries, the local press and on the council’s website www.falkirk.gov.uk. It is normally in January each year. Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school, when they register their child.

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. 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.

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

Absence from school is recorded as ‘authorised’ 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 traumatic domestic circumstances where the holiday would improve the cohesion and wellbeing of the family. Please discuss your plans with the head teacher before the holiday. If the head teacher does not give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The head teacher may also exercise discretion when a parent can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by the head teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

Parents from minority ethnic 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.

St Mary’s school uniform consists of black/grey trousers or skirt, white shirt and school tie and a black school jumper (either plain or with embroidered badge). Parents also have the option of purchasing a badged black school blazer or waterproof fleece jacket.

Supplier details and order forms are available on the school website to download.

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, sweat shirts 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, to the length of pupils’ hair and 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 Headteacher.

**Free School Meals and Clothing Grants**
Some families may be eligible to apply to Falkirk Council for free school meals and / or a payment towards the cost of footwear and clothing.

You can get more information, and apply online at www.falkirk.gov.uk/fsm. You can also contact 01324 506999, or visit our One Stop Shops or the Advice and Support Hub.

| Orders are placed each morning and children can select and pay for meals either on a weekly or daily basis. Please ensure your child has sufficient money for their school dinner each day. School dinners and packed lunches will be eaten in the school dinner hall. |

**Medically Prescribed Diets**
Parents/Carers with a child/ren on a medically prescribed diet should contact the Headteacher in order to obtain and complete a prescribed diet referral form. The Schools Meals Service will only accommodate a child/ren with a medical referral supplied by their G.P.

**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**, **special** or **secondary** 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**, nursery classes 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.
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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

School Transport Service 135 (Bomains to Grange & St. Mary’s Primary Schools) is currently operated by Adamson (01506 510607). Further information regarding school transport can be found on the Falkirk Council website.

**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 supervise the children. In addition the Headteacher and Janitor are on call to cope 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. Normally, anyone calling at a school for any reason, will be asked to report to the school office. The school staff then can make the necessary arrangements for the visit.

**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. Arrangements vary from school to school but all parents will be advised of when these meetings will take place. In addition to these set dates, parents are able to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for a meeting. 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 (email, group call, social media etc.). Parents are also encouraged to check their child’s schoolbag for these communications. Enquiries of any kind should be addressed to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

**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).
Education establishments develop their own mobile device policies in consultation with pupils, parents and staff. For more information on this topic, please contact your child’s school.

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) 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) will be issued by the school for both parent(s) and pupil(s) to sign.

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 has 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.

English as an Additional Language
The Council provides a support service of teachers of English as an additional language. The teachers visit schools to work with those bilingual pupils who require assistance in developing English language skills.

Compliments, Enquiries and Complaints Procedure
Falkirk Council Children’s Services would like you to be completely satisfied with your child’s education. We encourage feedback on our services from parents, pupils and members of the public. We are interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be compliments, enquiries or complaints.
Sometimes, parents/carers may feel that the services provided are not what they wished for and they may wish to complain. If you have a complaint about the service provided by the school, please let us know.

**How do I complain?**
Complaints can be made to schools in writing, by email, on the telephone, in person or by using the Falkirk Council online complaints form on the website.

**Who do I complain to?**
Parents must first consult the school regarding their complaint.

**What happens with my complaint?**
All complaints will now be logged confidentially on our Customer First online complaints handling system. They will be monitored exclusively by each school and Children’s Services staff at Sealock House to ensure any response is within the timescales. This system will enable us to learn from complaints to prevent similar issues arising in future. 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?**
Our aim is to respond within 5 working days to front line complaints, (Stage 1) although issues can sometimes be complex and the school may need time to investigate them.

**What happens next?**
If your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved by the school, it may be eligible for consideration at the second, investigation stage by Children’s Services headquarters at Sealock House. Complaints will not be considered by Children’s Services unless they have been first reported to the school – unless there are exceptional circumstances. Our aim is to respond to second stage complaints within 20 working days.

**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/](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?**
Please note that 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/](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/contact-us/complaints/)
School Health Service

NHS Forth Valley has a statutory obligation to provide a health service for all school age children in Falkirk District. The aim of the service is to make sure that all children, throughout their school years, are in the best possible health to benefit from their education.

The Public Health Nursing Team for Schools offer health assessments and reviews, health screening and deliver school based immunisation programmes. The team comprises of Public Health Nurses (Specialist Practitioner), Registered Nurses and Healthcare Assistants who are based in a local Health Centre and work over a number of schools in the area.

Pupils, parents/carers can request a health appointment at any time. Other health professionals and teaching staff can also request a health appointment for the child or young person with parental and or young person’s consent.

Health reviews will take place as necessary involving a parent questionnaire, a check of health records and if required screening of growth and vision.

- Health screening – All children in primary one and at other selected stages will be seen to have their growth and vision checked
- Immunisations – Secondary school pupils are offered immunisations. At the appropriate time information booklets and consent forms will be issued.
- Health Education – The Public Health Nursing Team has an important role in encouraging health lifestyles, working closely with teaching staff, pupils, parents/carers and the community.

The School Doctor (Community Paediatrician) may also offer appointments to children who have a significant ongoing medical or developmental condition affecting their education. School staff and parents can request a consultation with the School Doctor at any time.

The School Health Service can be contacted on – 01786 434059

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

Infectious Diseases

Colds, flu and gastroenteritis are the most common infections affecting children of school age. It is important that you keep your child off school in the early stages of flu and while they still have diarrhoea.

It is also important that your child understands how to prevent picking up and spreading such infections. You will be able to get further advice about good health from staff in your Health Centre or GP Practice.

For advice about early detection and treatment for other infectious diseases e.g. chickenpox and mumps, please consult your GP or Nurse.
**Head Lice**

Head lice are spread through head to head contact at home, while playing or in school.

Regular wet combing of your child’s hair using a head lice detection comb is the best way to catch this possible problem at an early stage.

The only way to be sure that your child has head lice is to find a live louse. If you find live lice, get the correct lotion from your doctor, health visitor or pharmacist. Shampoos and other treatments are not effective.

One treatment is two applications of the treatment lotion, seven days apart. If this is not followed then re-infection is likely.

Advise family members and close friends that your child has head lice and that they should check their own hair. Only treat if live lice are found. Don’t be shy about advising others of this possible problem because you would likely tell family and friends about other infections which might affect them.

Regular wet combing of your child’s hair with the head lice detector comb is the best protection as it allows you to detect the condition and treat it speedily.

Further advice can be obtained from the Health Board head lice leaflet which is available in all schools and health centres. Children’s Services leaflet ‘Frequently Asked Questions’, which is also available in schools.

If you would like to discuss your particular concerns, you could speak to:  
Infection Control Service  
Forth Valley Royal Hospital  
Stirling Road  
Larbert  
FK5 4WR  
01324 567490 / 01324 567679

**Clinics**

From time to time some children are asked to attend clinics (eye clinics, dentist, doctor, etc). Please inform the school of these visits and arrange for your child to be collected if he/she must leave school to attend the clinic.

No child will be allowed away from school during school hours unless accompanied by a responsible adult or unless written permission to do so has been given by the parent.

**Medicine administration**

The administration of medicines prescribed by a family doctor is undertaken at the discretion of the Headteacher but schools are generally happy to co-operate with parents in doing so. In order to safeguard the health and safety of children, procedures
are drawn up by Falkirk Council Children's Services.

When a child is prescribed medication by a doctor or a dentist and parents require the school to administer this, the relevant request Form should be completed. The MED 1 Form requires parents to deliver the medication to schools for administration by school staff. MED 4 Form permits pupils to carry and administer medication themselves e.g. inhalers. Prescribed medication should be clearly marked with your child’s name, the date prescribed, how often it has to be taken and for how long.
Falkirk Council liability insurance does not provide indemnity to employees for administering non-prescribed medicines.

For medical appointments during school hours, please notify the school by letter and collect your child from the school.
Insurance Cover for School Children

Public Liability

Personal Injury

Falkirk Council has in force a Public Liability policy which operates in respect of claims for injury to any school child whilst in the control of the Council or employees, however the onus is on the claimant to prove that the Council have been legally negligent.

Pupil's Property

Each session, unfortunately but inevitably, 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 lost, damaged or stolen items unless specifically entrusted to a staff member.

Any claim made for loss or damage to the property left in the care of the school will have to be submitted, in the first instance to Children’s Services, and the claim will only be settled if it is shown that the Council can be held legally liable for the loss.

Personal Accident Cover – Educational Excursions

The Council has in force personal accident cover for school children under which compensation is payable in the circumstances below, irrespective of legal liability.

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

The insurance applies to any activities involving a journey outside the premises of the School – both in the UK and overseas – organised by the school/Council.
Section Two
Parental Involvement in the School
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.

Within St. Mary’s we recognise that parents and carers are an integral part of our learning community. We try to provide a variety of opportunities for parents to share in their child’s learning experiences.

As part of our P1 transition programme all parents are invited for individual visits to meet our staff and pupils, take part in a ‘Come Dine with Me’ experience to sample our school meals and are encouraged to attend a Parents’ Breakfast event in the first week. This provides the opportunity to meet with other parents and be made to feel welcome in our school community.

Throughout the school year we have many events where parents are encouraged to engage with their child’s learning environment such as Meet the Teacher and Meet the Headteacher in September. Throughout the course of the school year you will also have the opportunity to take part in curricular information workshops, class assemblies and prayer services. We also have Parents’ Evening in February to update you on your child’s progress with a written summary issued at the end of the school year. If you have any concerns about your child’s progress we would encourage you to contact the school where we will be happy to arrange a suitable appointment.

We appreciate and value the importance of good communication between school and home. All information will now be provided to you via email so it is important that we have an up-to-date email address to allow us to communicate effectively with you. Each child will also have their Homework Diary and staff will use this to pass on class based information. Parents should also use the diary as a home/school link. We also have a school twitter account - @stmarysbones where each class will give regular updates on the learning that is taking place.

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.

**Parental Involvement**

We value the support parents, grandparents and others carers provide within our school. Many of our parents have skills that can help us to deliver an engaging curriculum and we encourage you to become involved if possible. Some of our parents have also been involved in the development of the school curriculum and we would like to ensure that parents continue to be an important part of the decision-making process.

We regularly seek the views of parents on a variety of issues, either through drop-in sessions, information evenings or via the Parent Council (questionnaires, on-line surveys). We have a planned programme of self-evaluation which involves seeking feedback from parents, pupils and other key representatives on a range of subjects.

**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 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).

We have a very active Parent Council who support the school in many ways. They have their own Facebook page where contact details and copies of minutes from earlier meetings can be found. Please contact the school for more information.

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/

**Pupil Council**

St Mary’s has an enthusiastic Pupil Council. They help to make many positive changes in the life of the school. Each year pupils are nominated by their classmates to represent their views at the meetings. Issues that are most relevant to the children
are discussed and their feedback is valued and taken into consideration in any decision making.

**School Ethos**

We want every child within St Mary’s to be the best they can be. Our school motto “SINE ME NIHIL” reminds us that without God we are nothing. The following page summarises how our aims and values fit together to create the supportive, positive environment where we aim to encourage ALL children to set high expectations for themselves and work hard to reach them.

Children’s achievements are recognised in many different ways within our school and each class teacher has their own class motivational goals and rewards. Our weekly school assemblies provide an opportunity for any awards and notable achievements to be highlighted.

St Mary’s is a Catholic school and an integral part of our school is the development of our Faith. Our local Parish of St Mary’s of the Assumption is essential in supporting our children’s Faith Journey through the Sacraments. We regularly attend mass as a school within the church and Fr Forrest is always a welcome visitor to our school. [http://stmaryschurch.wordpress.com/](http://stmaryschurch.wordpress.com/)

The school works alongside The Community Trust which provides our Active Schools Coordinator. We work together with Active Schools to plan a range of outdoor activities and lunchtime/after school sports activities. We also work closely with The Fair Committee to support the Bo’ness Fair Day activities.
Vision Statement
Our school aspires to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship and through service to the common good.

Successful Learners
• Be an enthusiastic and motivated learner
• Aim high and be the best I can be
• Welcome challenge in my learning

Confident Individuals
• Self respect
• Feel good about myself everyday
• Pursue a healthy and active lifestyle

Responsible Citizens
• Respect and value each other
• Know how to look after the environment around us
• Contribute to the school community
• Accept responsibility and make the right choices

Effective Contributors
• Work independently and as a member of a team
• Solve problems
• Become actively involved
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 acts as positive models for pupils.

- 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 under work of the school to celebrate diversity and promote equality.

Pupil Conduct

A partnership between the school and family is necessary to ensure the best possible standards of pupil conduct.

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. A behavioural agreement is included in the School Enrolment Form that parents complete when enrolling their child(ren).
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 at times be ineffective, and 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 are appropriate; exclusion is seen as a last resort and carried out when incidents fall within the legislation criteria.

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.

At St Mary’s we expect high standards of behaviour at all times. Children should feel proud that they represent our school and feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Where behaviour falls short of our expectations we aim to deal with issues swiftly in a caring but authoritative manner. Relationships within the school are key in encouraging good behaviour. All staff are trained in Restorative Practices and aim to provide a consistent whole school approach to behaviour management. For further information about Restorative Approaches please see the following link http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/behaviour-development.aspx

Children were involved in creating our Anti-Bullying Policy and are rewarded for their
good behaviour through individual class reward systems and reward time based on our ‘Steps to Success’ (displayed earlier). These are the key steps that the children understand they need to follow.
Section Three
School Curriculum
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.

Through Curriculum for Excellence, teachers will continue to develop a wide and varied range of learning approaches with an emphasis on methods which help to motivate children and young people to learn.
Please find below a few key strategies in relation to Numeracy, Literacy and Health & Wellbeing. Throughout the year there will be opportunities to visit the school and learn more about these strategies.

**Numeracy**
In order to improve mental maths skills the Big Maths programme is used to build up confidence and speed in basic calculations in a structured manner. When learning in this way the children are very motivated and engaged in their maths work.

**Literacy**
The Active Literacy programme is now well embedded for spelling and phonics up to primary seven. We are also continuing to develop new Active Reading strategies for the whole school. Children will continue to develop their writing skills through Big Writing. This will focus on key skills of punctuation and extend and develop vocabulary with WOW words.

**Health & Well Being**
We are building partnerships with the local community that allow us to engage the children in outdoor learning. We also have an orienteering course that provides many experiences for literacy and numeracy to be delivered in a creative context outdoors. We encourage children to be leaders through our P1 buddy system, paired reading and leading lunchtime clubs for younger children. This has a positive impact on self-confidence.

We will continue to develop opportunities for children to engage with technology effectively to enhance the learning experience across the curriculum.

**Learning to Achieve** – is our core educational policy. It describes 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**
The curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work. This is encapsulated in the four capacities – to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor. The curriculum at St Mary’s is designed around the following key principles:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance.
These principals are at the heart of teachers planning, review and evaluation of learning opportunities. The curriculum areas ensure that learning takes place across a broad range of contexts. The experiences and outcomes describe the expectations for learning. Taken together, experiences and outcomes across the curriculum areas sum up national aspirations for every young person: the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes we hope they will develop. We will continue to think imaginatively about how the experiences and outcomes might be organised and planned for in creative ways which encourage deep, sustained learning and which meet the needs of their children and young people. The eight curriculum areas are:

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

The experiences and outcomes describe the expectations for learning and progression in all areas of the curriculum. The teachers use progression pathways in each area of the curriculum. They set out clear lines of progression and their purpose is to make clear what learners need to know and be able to do to progress through the levels. At St Mary’s we want to focus on the quality and nature of the learning experience in developing attributes and capabilities and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning. Revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding, and can also make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful from the learner's point of view. We will continue to develop important themes such as enterprise, citizenship, sustainable development, international education and creativity in a range of contexts.

The curriculum should include space for learning beyond subject boundaries, so that children and young people can make connections between different areas of learning. Interdisciplinary studies can provide relevant, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences and stimulating contexts to meet the varied needs of children and young people. They also can provide opportunities to work with partners who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people's wider involvement in society.

Effective interdisciplinary learning:

- can take the form of individual one-off projects or longer courses of study
- is planned around clear purposes
- is based upon experiences and outcomes drawn from different curriculum areas or subjects within them
- ensures progression in skills and in knowledge and understanding
can provide opportunities for mixed-stage learning which is interest-based.

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

http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/


http://www.education.gov.scot/parentzone/

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

Facilities for Physical Education and Outdoor Activities
The gym hall 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.

School grounds are used for Outdoor Learning. Each class participates in two sessions of P.E. per week ensuring they have two hours of quality P.E. Class teachers inform parents of these sessions.

Planning Children’s and Young People’s Learning
Practitioners use a variety of approaches to make use 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.

Pupil choice is encouraged within St Mary’s. Children will be involved in the early planning stages of Interdisciplinary Topic work. They will help direct the teacher to an appropriate starting point and highlight key areas of interest that they wish to explore further. Pupils will work in collaboration with the teacher to set key learning goals and success criteria in their day to day work. Within nursery, children will
explore individual interests and this feeds into future planning within the nursery environment.

Learning at Home
The school’s homework policy can be found here https://www.st-marys.falkirk.sch.uk/
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. The school encourages parents to sign each homework task.

At St Mary’s Primary School, we believe the main purpose of Home Learning is to provide children with a range of activities to challenge and inspire them about new learning, to consolidate existing skills and to develop independence. Home Learning also provides an opportunity for positive relationships between parents, carers and the school to develop.

We believe that a carefully balanced Home Learning programme is beneficial for children for the following reasons:
- To give parents opportunities to be directly involved in their child’s learning;
- To reinforce the partnership between home and school;
- To consolidate skills learned in school and give opportunities to extend learning.

We expect all children to work hard throughout the school day and therefore their time outside school should principally be for extra-curricular activities, rest and relaxation. Going to, for example, Brownies, Beavers, swimming, dance and football clubs are valuable activities. Equally valuable is family time spent at home, playing, talking and seeing friends.

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

God’s Loving Plan is our relationship and sexual health programme. Parents will be given the opportunity to learn about this resource prior to it being introduced to the children.

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.

Ultimately, pupils in the upper secondary school can gain a qualification through the study of Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at Higher and Advanced Higher Levels. These courses further develop young people’s skills in logical thinking, methodical enquiry and ways of expressing ideas effectively.

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.

Withdrawal from Religious Instruction and Religious Observance/Time for Reflection
Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious instruction and/or observance are encouraged to discuss initially their intention with the Headteacher to enable them to make a fully informed decision. Parents who wish to proceed thereafter 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-Curricular Activities
Every school is encouraged to offer as wide a range of sporting and cultural activities as possible. In this context, the Authority provides a degree of financial and administrative support for leagues, competitions, festivals and similar events but it is recognised that, again, the help of parents and the community is irreplaceable. Quite separately, the Council and / or Falkirk Community Trust and other partner
organisations also undertake to organise and administer certain events and many
schools take part in these.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils during lunchtime and
after school. 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.

All activities are supervised by members of staff/volunteers and many schools have
a study support co-ordinator whose job it is to plan and oversee the extra-curricular
programme of activities. Where participation involves children travelling or staying
late after school, written permission for children taking part is required from parents.

Facilities for Physical Education and Outdoor Activities
The gym hall 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.

Active Schools
Active Schools are now part of Falkirk Community Trust. Active Schools aims to
provide more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical
activity before, during lunchtime and after school, to develop effective pathways
between schools and sports clubs in the local community. Active School co-ordinators
work with primary, secondary and additional support needs schools to increase the number and diversity of children and young people
participating in Active Schools activities. In Falkirk there are 8 cluster schools that
coop-ordinators work with to provide clubs, events and coach education training. For
further information please contact 01324 590952.

Assessment and Reporting

• Effective assessment practice within schools and establishments includes:
  o Learner involvement in setting personal targets and next steps
  o On-going self-evaluation by learners, staff and school leaders
  o Identification of strengths and next steps
  o A range of approaches to assessment
  o A variety of evidence gathered informally on a day to day basis or
    formally at certain points throughout the school year
  o Consideration of data analysis and performance information
  o Moderation of standards using Education Scotland Benchmarks

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

Learner’s progress is defined within the following levels:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Pre-school and P1 however may be later for some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>To the end of P4 however may be earlier or later for some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>To the end of P7 however may be earlier or later for some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third &amp; Fourth</td>
<td>S1 – S3 however this may be earlier for some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Phase</td>
<td>S4-S6 and college or other means of study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Pupil reports are sent home to parents in June. This report currently covers a summary of all curricular areas highlighting strengths and development areas for your child. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback on the reporting process via the short questionnaire. A shorter, interim report is also sent home to parents in November.
P7, with support from their teacher, will also produce their own personal Pupil Profile. This enables them to review their progress and highlight their personal strengths and development areas. Meetings with parents will be held in February to discuss progress. Nursery parents will have two meetings with nursery staff throughout the session.
Section Four
Support for Pupils
Section Four – Support for Pupils

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

Taking care of our children’s well-being and making sure they are alright - even before they are born - helps us ensure the most positive outcomes for them later in life. It gives them the potential to grow up ready to succeed and play their part in society.

Getting it Right for Every Children (GIRFEC) is the Scottish Government’s approach to improve 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 and their families to provide quick and effective support when it is needed.

Wellbeing

The Getting it Right approach looks at eight areas of 'well-being'. These are recognised as areas in which children and young people need to progress in order to do well now and in the future. They allow those responsible for the care and support of children - including members of their own families - to look at a situation in a structured way that will help them identify any needs and concerns and plan with the child and family any action they need to take. The eight well-being indicators are:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Responsible
- Respected
- Included

The approach gives them a common language and a way to gather information about a child's world, making sure the child is growing and developing, and has everything they need from the people who look after them both at home and in the wider community. It also encourages practitioners to think about who else might need to be involved (for example a teacher might need to contact other professionals to make sure that an education plan with the child and family is meeting all the child's needs).

Role of Named Person

All children and young people are entitled to access help or support from the Named Person no matter where they live or how old they are (up to eighteen years). It ensures they have the confidence to know that information, advice or support is there if and when they need it. The Named Person is therefore the identified point of contact.
The role is generally carried out by a Health Visitor for pre-school children or a promoted teacher for children and young people enrolled at school. It is an integral part of existing roles and responsibilities, working within universal services.

The Named Person is also available to other practitioners who may have concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person which cannot be addressed within their own services. Consent to share information, whether being shared with or by the Named Person, will always be obtained and meaningful discussion will take place with families to ensure the right support is offered. The exception to this would be if child protection concern is identified and there is a risk to the child or young person.

When the Named Person is not available, another member of staff in school will be able to help. During school holidays an officer from Children’s Services Headquarters will provide the required advice and support.

**Family Support Service**

Across Falkirk there are a number of services who can support children. Young people and their families from early intervention to more intensive support.

The main aim of these services is to increase the wellbeing of young people and their families.

Children, young people and their parents may require additional support at different times in their life e.g. following a bereavement, illness, transition, when experiencing anxiety, behaviour issues, during or after changes in family circumstances.

Support is tailored to meet the individual needs of children & families, when they need it and as locally as possible.

Individual or group work can be delivered in school, home or in the community.

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

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

**Protecting Children and Young People**

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

Children’s Services have an important role in identifying children who have been abused or are at risk of being abused.

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

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.

**Additional Support Needs**

As with all local authority schools in Scotland, this school operates under the terms of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2009) and its accompanying Code of Practice. Further details of the policies and procedures can be found on the Falkirk Council website: [http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/) These procedures have been strengthened through the Children and Young People Act (2014).

Working with other agencies and professionals – for example, Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, National Health Service and parents – decisions are made jointly with parents, children and young people with regards to the best possible education to meet the needs of the child within the resources available.

**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 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, 0345 123 2303
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance; 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, 0131-667-6633.
- Let’s Talk ASN, c/o Govan Law Centre, letstalkasn@edlaw-org.uk, 0141-445-1955.

Educational Psychology Service

Educational Psychologists work in collaboration with teachers, parents and other professionals to support children and young people with their learning and general development, and to make the most of their lives, particularly in educational settings.

Every school and pre-five establishment has a link Educational Psychologist who provides consultation, assessment intervention, training and project work.

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

Pastoral Support

Pastoral support is key to the ethos of our school. Our aim is to support families and children throughout their school life, from nursery through to transition to high school. We believe that every member of staff has an equal role to play in supporting our children. We work in partnership with parents and other support agencies to ensure that children reach their full
potential. Any families seeking support, guidance or advice are welcome to meet with the Head Teacher for a confidential discussion.

Transitions

Within St. Mary’s there are planned programmes organised for transitions at all stages.

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.

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 or in a private nursery which is in partnership with Falkirk Council.

From August 2018, 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.

Application forms are available from all primary schools and ELC Centres and can also be downloaded from the Falkirk Council web-site at [www.falkirk.gov.uk](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk).

Only one application form should be completed. The application form asks for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice of ELC Centre, the form should be returned to any school, ELC Centre, One Stop Shop or can be sent directly to ELC Admissions Team, Sealock House, 2 Inchyra Road, Grangemouth, FK3 9XB.

You will also be asked to provide the child’s birth certificate and proof of address.

Transition from Nursery to Primary

Before leaving nursery, a transfer of information record for each child will be prepared by nursery staff to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of education for the child transferring to primary. All nurseries and primary schools have a variety of systems which support the transition process for children. This ensures that children’s strengths and development needs are addressed.

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 506621/506608 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.

Enrolment dates will be set by each school and the enrolment should be completed in January prior to the start of term in August. The school may place adverts in the local press and nurseries advertising the date(s) for enrolment. Enrolment Forms should be completed on enrolment day at your catchment school. Parents are asked to bring the relevant birth certificate(s) proof of residency when enrolling their child(ren).

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.

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.

**Primary to Secondary Transfer**

Children visit their secondary school in preparation for the move from Primary 7 to 1st Year.

Each cluster of schools (i.e. the secondary school and its associated primary schools) makes its own transition arrangements.

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. Secondary teachers of PE and Music regularly visit primary schools to support the teaching of these subjects.

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 particular challenges.

**Moving to the denominational secondary school**

*Children who are baptised 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:

St. Mungo’s High School  
Merchiston Avenue  
Falkirk  
FK2 7JT  
Tel (01324) 614614  
Email: info@stmungoshighschool.co.uk  
Rector Mr S. Phee

Staff from St Mungo’s begin the transition process in January of P6. There are regular meetings involving staff from both schools and pupils to establish a holistic picture of the child. In P7 the children are involved in transition projects and staff from St Mungo’s continue to visit. In the summer term children will have the opportunity to participate in induction visits to St. Mungo’s and meet children from other feeder schools. There are a series of planned meetings for parents/carers to attend. Additional visits to support pupils may be arranged as required.

**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. 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. Your Placing Request will only be granted if there are surplus places available at the 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
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.

Standards and Quality Report

Every year each school publishes a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school’s major achievements. Our Standards and Quality Report is available on our School Website http://www.st-marys.falkirk.sch.uk under the section Parental Information.

School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan will be available on our School website under the Parental Information section. www.st-marys.falkirk.sch.uk

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. This note explains why we need this information, how we use it and what we do to protect the information supplied to us.

For more information on the Scottish Government privacy notice see the link below

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Head of Schools Analysis, Mick Wilson, at mick.wilson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to Education Analytical Services, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.

The most recent inspection report for St Mary’s Primary can be found at:
https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/falkirk/5758823
Websites
You may find the following websites useful.

- [https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/](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/](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/](https://education.gov.scot/) - 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](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.ltscotland.org.uk/](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/) - provides information and advice for parents as well as support and resources for education in Scotland.

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