

# St John's RC Academy



## HANDBOOK 2021/2022



## School Handbook Academic Session 2021/2022

## Introduction

In accordance with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 1982, Perth & Kinross Council Education & Children's Services' schools produce handbooks covering the following categories of information:

- 1 School Information
- 2 Local Authority Information

Whilst the information contained in this school handbook was accurate at the time of publication (December 2020), further changes may have occurred since then.

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## Introduction

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our school community. St John's RC Academy is at the heart of the North Inch Community Campus, providing education for children and young people from Nursery through to Secondary, from ages 2 to 18, in excellent school and community facilities.

Our handbook provides information about important aspects of school life: our aims, our people, our achievements and our expectations. It contains lots of practical details about school routines and procedures. *Please note that this Handbook describes the school in normal times. Changes in procedures due to COVID-19 are not covered here but will be communicated to parents/carers as necessary.*

Starting nursery and school and moving through the stages of childhood into adult life are challenging and enjoyable times for children and young people – and anxious times for parents. I hope this booklet will help you to understand the changes which you and your child will experience in St John's RC Academy. I hope too that it will answer some of the questions you may have about how the school is organised, about our curriculum and, most importantly, about how we care for the pupils entrusted to us. If, however, we have missed out anything that you need to know, please take the chance to ask me or one of my colleagues during any of our meetings or by contacting us directly by letter, telephone or email.

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

As parents and carers, you are our key partners in your child's education and important members of our school community. The partnership between pupils, staff, parents and chaplains is at the heart of our school community. Of course, a booklet such as this cannot reproduce the atmosphere of a school. In St John's RC Academy, we pride ourselves on being a Catholic, comprehensive and caring school. We aim to provide a Christian atmosphere of love and care in which pupils feel secure and able to seek help and advice. As a comprehensive school we aim to assist pupils of all abilities to maximise their potential in a happy and safe environment. We foster a caring atmosphere in which respect and tolerance for others are promoted. With everyone working positively together, we encourage our pupils to aim high and achieve their very best.

We look forward to welcoming all new pupils who join our school community in 2021 and I look forward to welcoming you as parents/carers to St John's RC Academy and trust that your child will enjoy a happy and challenging education here.

**Mr SP Hagney**  
Headteacher and Campus Leader

## Delineated Area

St John's RC Academy Cluster includes:

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

**Our Lady's RC Primary School, Perth**

**St Dominic's RC Primary School, Crieff**

**St Stephen's RC Primary School, Blairgowrie**

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

### Our Roll

The school roll for the current session 2020-2021 is 1050

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

P1	50	S1	120
P2	57	S2	120
P3	59	S3	114
P4	55	S4	119
P5	65	S5	96
P6	66	S6	66
P7	63		
<b>Primary total</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>Secondary total</b>	<b>635</b>

### Nursery

Our nursery currently has capacity for 85 children.

For further information on enrolment and our catchment area, you should contact the school office by telephoning 01738 454300.

## Contact Details

### Location

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

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

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

### Communication with the School

The continuing success and development of our school is built on the partnership which

exists between parents, staff and pupils. This relies on good two-way communication between parents and school. We ask all parents to provide us with home and mobile telephone numbers, at least one email address and emergency contact details.

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

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

Telephone: 01738 454300  
Fax: 01738 451163

School Absentee Line: 01738 454444

e-mail: [St-JohnsAcademy@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:St-JohnsAcademy@pkc.gov.uk)

website: [www.st-johnsacademy.org.uk](http://www.st-johnsacademy.org.uk)

twitter: @st\_johnsacademy

## Parent Council

Chairperson: Mrs Donna Ploetner [donnatp76@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:donnatp76@yahoo.co.uk)

Secretary: Lynn Cameron [rite2thecamerons@yahoo.com](mailto:rite2thecamerons@yahoo.com)

Vice Chairperson: Nikki Tolmie [nicksmct@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nicksmct@yahoo.co.uk)

Treasurer: Nikki McNaughton [NMcNaughton@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:NMcNaughton@pkc.gov.uk)

The objectives of the Parent Council are:

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

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

## Raising Concerns

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

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

**Mrs Jan Jack** – Nursery, P1 to P2

**Mrs Joanne Philp** – P3 to P4

**Mrs Christine Robertson** – P5 to P7

**Mrs Lora Burgess** – S1, S2 and S6

**Dr Robert Staines** – S3 to S5

## **The Staff of our School**

### **SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POST</b>
Mr Seán P Hagney	Headteacher
Dr Robert Staines	Depute Headteacher
Mrs Joanne Philp	Depute Headteacher
Mrs Lora Burgess	Depute Headteacher
Mrs Christine Robertson	Acting Depute Headteacher
Mrs Jan Jack	Depute Headteacher
Mr Steve McIntosh	Business Manager

### **NURSERY STAFF**

Mrs Andrea Blain	Nursery Class Teacher
Ms Natasha Taylor	Principal Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Jenny Whyte	Senior Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Susan Herd	Senior Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Susan Megaughin	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Jacqui Woolley	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Amanda Sutherland	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Mary Golden	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Sarah Ross	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Kirsty Miller	Early Childhood Practitioner
Ms Claire Iwanio	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Gabi Short	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Claire Young	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Rachel Brown	Early Childhood Practitioner
Mrs Agnieszka Brodlo	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Susan Erskine	Early Childhood Practitioner
Miss Dorota Miskufoba	Play Assistant
Mrs Louise Edwards	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Beth Beazley	Graduate Apprentice
Miss Megan Dickson	Play Assistant
Mrs Claire Laing	Play Assistant

## PRIMARY STAFF

### TEACHING STAFF

NAME	POST	STAGE
Mrs Anna McIlroy	Class Teacher	P1A
Miss Megan Martin	Class Teacher	P1M
Mrs Patricia Crines	Class Teacher	P2C
Mrs Bieke Sevens	Class Teacher	P2C
Miss Gemma McEachan	Class Teacher	P2M
Miss Lynn Graham	Class Teacher	P3V
Ms Emma Byrne	Class Teacher	P3B
Miss Heather Martin	Class Teacher	P4M
Miss Laura Begley	Class Teacher	P4B
Mrs Susan McLagan	Class Teacher	P5M
Miss Ceri-Anne Hill	Class Teacher	P5H
Vacancy	Class Teacher	P6G
Mr Paul McClusky	Class Teacher	P6M
Miss Claire Monaghan	Class Teacher	P7M
Mrs Sinead Rees	Class Teacher	P7R
Mrs Jacqui Clarke	Nurture Teacher	Various
Mrs Susan Black	Pupil Support Teacher (Thur,Fri)	All
Mrs Mags Gibson	Pupil Support Teacher (Mon, Tues)	All

### SUPPORT STAFF

Mrs Paula Gordon	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Dorota Turzyniecka	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Fiona Netherington	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Karen Ronald	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Karen Carlon	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Shirley Littlejohn	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Fiona Wiggan	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Jacqueline Simpson	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Denise Rattray	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Carolann MacDonald	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Donna Graham	Pupil Support Assistant

## SECONDARY STAFF

### ART AND DESIGN

NAME	POST
Mr Neil Jessop	Principal Teacher
Mrs Marlene Banks	Teacher
Miss Marie Foy	Teacher

### BUSINESS AND COMPUTER EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Mrs Amanda Sandilands	Principal Teacher



Ms Val Hannam	Teacher
Ms Isabel Morrison	Teacher

## DESIGN, ENGINEERING & HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

NAME	POST
Mr Craig Smith	Principal Teacher
Mr Colin Clark	Teacher
Mrs Johann Packer	Teacher
Mrs Sue Martin	Principal Teacher
Miss Laura Mills	Teacher

## ENGLISH

NAME	POST
Mrs Michaela Bremner	Principal Teacher
Mr Kenny Blair	Teacher
Mrs Rebecca Halliburton	Teacher
Mrs Clare Reilly	Teacher
Miss Bethany McCombie	Teacher

## MATHEMATICS

NAME	POST
Mr Paul Barker	Principal Teacher
Ms Cath Bodrell	Teacher
Mr James MacBeth	Probationary Teacher
Mr Graham McLachlan	Teacher
Mrs Stella Foley	Teacher

## MODERN LANGUAGES

NAME	POST
Ms Gillian Miller	Principal Teacher
Ms Nadine Fearn	Teacher (Mon, Tues))
Mrs Claire McKeag	Teacher

## MUSIC/DRAMA

NAME	POST
Ms Jennifer Hossick	Principal Teacher
Mrs Helen McIntosh	Teacher
Mrs Leona Melville	Drama Teacher
Music Instrumental Staff	Mr Liam O'Hare - Piano – Wednesday am Mrs Fran Barker - Woodwind – Wednesday Miss Iona Crosby - Cello/Double Bass – Friday Mr Scott Barker - Brass – Thursday Miss Esther Jack - Strings – Friday in Secondary, Wednesday in Primary Miss Lynsey Paterson - Percussion – Friday Mr Owen Nicholson - Guitar – Thursday am Ms Zoe Perman – Voice - Tuesday pm

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Mr David Taylor	Principal Teacher
Mrs Lorraine Tomb	Teacher (Mon-Wed)
Miss Katie Martin	Teacher
Mr Will Simpson	Teacher
Mr Caelan Flynn	Teacher

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

NAME	POST
Mr David O'Brien	Principal Teacher
Mrs Fiona Carroll	Teacher
Miss Marie Foy	Teacher

## SCIENCE

NAME	POST
Mrs Jennifer Kettle	Principal Teacher Chemistry/Physics Teacher
Mrs Audrey McAuley	Principal Teacher/Biology Teacher
Mr Keith Thompson	Biology Teacher
Miss Adriana Jurgea	Probationary Chemistry Teacher
Dr Alan Templeton	Chemistry Teacher
Dr Dharma Luchoomun	Physics Teacher

## SOCIAL SUBJECTS

NAME	POST
Mrs Amy Downie	Principal Teacher (Social Subjects)/Modern Studies and History
Miss Kiera Senkel	History Teacher
Miss Rachel Bonthron	Modern Studies/Geography Teacher
Miss Rebecca Hepburn	Geography/Modern Studies Teacher

## SUPPORT FOR PUPILS – GROUND FLOOR

NAME	POST
Mrs Christine Robertson	Principal Teacher - Support for Learning
Mrs Lesley McGillivray	Acting Principal Teacher - Support for Learning
Mr Frankie McGuire	Acting Principal Teacher - Support for Pupils
Mrs Margaret Sinclair	Principal Teacher - Support for Pupils
Mr Steven McLaughlin	Principal Teacher of Support for DYW (Developing the Young Workforce)
Mrs Norah McKenzie	Teacher of Support for Learning
Mrs Shirley Simpson	Teacher of Literacy, Numeracy, HWB
Ms Pauline Hood	Teacher of Support (Wed)

## WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF

### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT – MAIN OFFICE

NAME	POST
Mrs Cheryl Gahan	Campus Management Officer
Mrs Anne Thom	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Dawn Falconer	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Lesley Young	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Louise Summers	Campus Management Assistant
Mrs Jackie Smith	Clerical Assistant (Tuesday)
Mrs Christine Collis	General Assistant (Mon-Thu)

### SENIOR TECHNICIAN

NAME	POST
Ms Krista Golder	Senior Technician
Mr David Thomson	Technician
Mr Gordon Sime	Technician

### LIBRARY

NAME	POST
Mr Vince Davidson	Library Supervisor
Mrs Kathy Harrow	Library Assistant
Mr Gregg Parsons	Library Assistant
Mrs Kirsty Dodson	Library Assistant

### SCHOOL AUXILIARIES

NAME	POST
Ms Christeen Stratton	Auxiliary
Mrs Geraldine Scott	Auxiliary

### PUPIL SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

NAME	POST
Ms Susan Young	Pupil Support Assistant
Mr Harry Wilson	Pupil Support Assistant
Mrs Zabieh Alsaman	Pupil Support Assistant
Ms Hazel Lawson	Pupil Support Assistant
Mr Blaine Duncan	Pupil Support Assistant
Ms Corinne Manners	Pupil Support Assistant

### EALSERVICE – INTEGRATED TEAM BASE – GROUND FLOOR

NAME	POST
Mrs Tricia Davenport	Principal Teacher
Mrs Fiona Anderson	Teacher
Ms Dorota Marciniac	Polish Community Link Worker
Mrs Ullas Mann	Community Learning Assistant
Mrs Violetta Malon	Polish Community Link Worker

## PUPIL WELFARE

NAME	POST
Mrs Sandra Sinclair	Pupil Care and Welfare Officer

## COMMUNITY LINK

NAME	POST
Ms Anne Bell	Community Link Worker

## TAYSIDE CONTRACTS – KITCHEN

NAME	POST
Jane Turver	Campus Catering Supervisor
Theresa Bell	Assistant Cook
Arlene Nicholson	Function Assistant Cook
Anne Croal	Catering Assistant
Yvonne O'Connor	Catering Assistant
Frances Lumsden	Catering Assistant
Cara Meldrum	Catering Assistant
Danielle Fitzpatrick	Catering Assistant
Leigh Ann Taylor	Catering Assistant
Anna Szczepaniak	Catering Assistant
Jo McCrikard	Catering Assistant
Louise McRikard	Catering Assistant
Selina Peebles	Catering Assistant
Louise McCrikard	Catering Assistant
Fay Moffat	Catering Assistant
Alex Kajzer	Catering Assistant
Catherine Racey	Catering Assistant

## LIVE ACTIVE LEISURE – MAIN OFFICE

NAME	POST
Fiona Melloy	Operations Manager
Steven Buttrick	Senior Leisure Assistant
Mark Smith	Senior Leisure Assistant
Maggie Fletcher	Senior Leisure Assistant
Rachael Gardner	Activity Instructor/Senior Leisure Assistant

## ACTIVE SCHOOLS – GROUND FLOOR

NAME	POST
Michelle Bruce	Active Schools Coordinator

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION – GROUND FLOOR

NAME	POST
John McManamon	Outdoor Education

## Health Care

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

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

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

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

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

## Communication with Parents

The school communicates in the following ways:

- Parent Council
- Parents' evenings
- Drop-in sessions with SLT
- School Assemblies
- E-mail
- Website (including the weekly Headteacher blog)
- Groupcall
- Letters
- Termly Newsletters
- Twitter
- SEESAW (Primary only)
- Primary Soft Starts
- Nursery Stay and Play and Nibble & Natter sessions
- Open evenings and coffee mornings
- Achievement ceremonies
- School shows
- Annual parents' survey
- Focus Groups

## School Ethos

### The Vision

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

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

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

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

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

### St John's RC Academy's Mission Statement

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

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

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

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

### Pupil Statement

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

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

#### **St John's RC Academy Secondary Morning Offering**

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

## **St John's RC Academy Primary Prayer**

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

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

## **Religious Tradition**

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

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

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

## **Development of Pupils' Values**

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

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

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

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

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

## Religious Observance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Parish Contact Details

**St. John the Baptist (Perth)**  
**V. Rev. Steven Canon Mulholland**  
**Rev. Bogdan Palka SDS**

St John the Baptist  
20 Melville Street  
Perth  
PH1 5PY  
tel: (01738) 622241  
tel: (01738) 564182

**Our Lady of Lourdes (Perth)**  
**Rev. Colin Golden**  
Our Lady of Lourdes

Struan Road  
Perth  
PH1 2JP  
tel: (01738) 626979



**St Mary Magdalene's (Perth)**  
**Very Rev. Steven Canon Mulholland**  
St Mary Magdalene's  
7 Glenearn Road  
Perth  
PH2 0HP  
tel: (01738) 643418

**St Stephen's (Blairgowrie)**  
**St Mary's (Coupar Angus)**  
**St Luan's (Alyth)**  
**Rev. Dr. Gregory Umunna**  
St Stephen's  
8 Bank Street  
Blairgowrie  
PH10 6DE

tel: (01250 872171)

**St Fillan's (Crieff)**  
**Rev. Dr. Thomas Canon Shields**  
St Fillan's  
Ford Road  
Crieff  
PH7 3HN  
PH16 5AL  
tel: (01764 653269)  
email: [st\\_filans\\_crieff@btinternet.com](mailto:st_filans_crieff@btinternet.com)

**St Bride's (Pitlochry)**  
**St Columba's (Birnam)**  
**Rt. Rev. Mgr. Neil Canon Gallagher**  
St Bride's  
Rie-Achan Road  
Pitlochry,  
tel: (01796 472174)  
email: [stbrides630@btinternet.com](mailto:stbrides630@btinternet.com)

## **Sports Comprehensive**

St John's RC Academy, together with our neighbouring school Perth Grammar, won the Sunday Mail/Sports Scotland Scottish Sports Award 2011. The winning category was 'School Sports Award'.

This award recognised the tremendous work done over many years, developing successful partnerships to create the Sports Comprehensive. The partnership between St John's RC Academy and Perth Grammar saw the first inter-denominational Sports Comprehensive in Scotland under the banner, 'Everyone Active'.

The Sports Comprehensive

- uses sport and PE as a vehicle for raising achievement, developing citizenship, improving ethos, increasing social inclusion and building positive healthy lifestyles;
- reaches out to associated primaries and develops links between schools and clubs;
- uses sport to create cross curricular links across the school community.

St John's RC Academy and Perth Grammar School are the first schools in Scotland to attain Joint Sports Comprehensive status. This is the first time that the denominational and non-denominational sectors have co-operated in a project of this prestigious nature.

As well as our joint basketball team at senior level, St John's RC Academy continues to support thriving Basketball clubs producing teams at all age groups and provides great links with Perth Phoenix basketball club. The club is a great means of breaking down social and cultural barriers with no less than three nationalities making up all teams. All abilities and experiences are encouraged to come along and improve their confidence, form friendships and learn skills to allow them to be active for life.

Our well established Rugby, Netball and Basketball teams are great examples of collaboration through our Sports Comprehensive. Regularly training and competing together, continues to build robust relationships, strengthening the bond with the wider community.

Pathways to Perth Phoenix basketball club, Perthshire Rugby club and the Women's Netball League are strong due to the initiative. All abilities and experiences are encouraged and welcomed at these clubs. Improved confidence, forming new friendships and learning the skills to be active for life, are all impacts our former pupils have noted as benefits through the

initiative.

Building upon the success of sporting teams, we are also using the Sports Comprehensive to broaden our wider achievement experiences. Joint Dance leader's courses have given our young people the skills to lead within the Primary school. Then actively applying these skills to create aspirational role models for our Primary pupils and strengthening our transition process from P7-S1.

This is a continuing project and we are very proud to be part of it.

## **Active Schools**

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

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

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

## **The Benefits of Being Active**

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

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

## **How Much Exercise Should My Child Do?**

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

## **Active Schools at St John's RC Academy**

There are many extended curriculum opportunities available at St John's RC Academy (primary and secondary). They currently include: fitness, basketball, baton twirling, volleyball, table tennis, tennis, gymnastics, girls' basketball, badminton, dance, football, netball, cheerleading and hockey. There are also opportunities to take part in activities at Perth Grammar School. They include climbing, ju-jitsu and cricket. For those pupils taking part in after school activities, we offer free bus travel home (return journey on weekends). This also applies to those undertaking study support classes.

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

We are very lucky to have so many very capable and motivated senior pupils at St John's who help with the extended curriculum programme. We offer them lots of training opportunities and on-going support.

The Active Schools Coordinator for St John's RC Academy (primary and secondary) is Mrs Joy Cameron. Joy works in the school on Mondays and Wednesdays and can be contacted as follows:

e-mail: [JCameron@liveactive.co.uk](mailto:JCameron@liveactive.co.uk)

## **North Inch Community Library**

This bright and welcoming library has an impressive range of resources for pupils and staff of St John's Academy and members of the public. In addition to a great selection of fiction and non-fiction books, pupils have access to school network laptops that can be used for study and homework. The library space offers an ideal location for individual and small group study. Pupils who attend after school study support in school (including the Library) can access free bus travel home. The teacher in charge of the class, or the Librarian, will provide a form which can be exchanged for a pass at Reception.

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

## **Relationships and Promoting Positive Behaviour**

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

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

At St John's RC Academy we promote a 'can do' attitude, set high expectations, and encourage pupil attainment and achievement to be consistently recognised, recorded and celebrated.

Our Relationships' Policy is explicitly designed to promote these aims.

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

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

## **Parental Involvement**

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

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

come into the school if they have any comments or concerns, and we aim to be responsive to comments and concerns within 24 hours.

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

The Parent Council is open to all parents and guardians of pupils at St John's RC Academy, and everyone is most welcome. The opportunity to become part of the school community is easiest through helping at a number of Parent Council events. Contact us at [donnatp76@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:donnatp76@yahoo.co.uk)

## Transitions

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

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

### Primary 1 Enrolment

Each year, during January, some days are set aside for the enrolment of children who will be starting primary one the following August. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is available to answer questions and discuss any matter with parents.

Nursery and Primary 1 follow the same Early Level Curriculum throughout the year. Primary 1 pupils visit nursery regularly and in turn nursery pupils visit primary 1. This is called 'play swap' and allows children in both settings to have access to a much wider range of experiences.

Nursery and Primary 1 share topics and plan together. This, along with a number of other strategies, helps to create a fluid and seamless transition from nursery to primary 1. When your child is due to transfer to primary school, their pupil profile and any other report will be forwarded to the appropriate school. Nursery staff will liaise with school staff wherever possible to make the transition as easy as possible for the children.

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

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

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

## Primary 7 – S1 Transition

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

### Transition Timelines:

#### Universal – Learning, Social and Pastoral

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>September/October</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• P7 pupils have the opportunity to attend the 'Dalguise' cluster schools outdoor residential experience</li></ul>  |
| <b>November</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• St John's RC Academy hold the P7 to S1 Parents' Information Open Afternoon/Evening and opportunities for school tours</li></ul>   |
| <b>January – June</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transition DHT, Support for Pupils Staff and the Community Link Worker start to visit primary schools to meet the new S1 covering general secondary school topics and some more specific topics such as travel, dining, personal support, pastoral support</li><li>• Transition DHT, Support for Pupils Staff and the Community Link Worker drop into P7 Parents' Evenings across our cluster schools</li></ul>   |
| <b>March – April</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depute Headteacher and Support for Pupils visit Primary schools to discuss pastoral information and achievement in order to build a learning picture of your child which covers skills for life and learning, leadership, curriculum and wider achievements</li></ul>   |
| <b>May</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our smaller primaries and targeted pupils visit for an additional transition morning workshop with school tours led by the Community Link Worker and school partners</li><li>• The St John's RC Academy cluster schools transition day is held with various pupil workshops and experiences</li></ul>   |
| <b>June</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• P7 profiles issued to all secondary school teachers to allow them to familiarise themselves with their new S1</li><li>• The Business Education and Computing Department hold an Inventors Challenge Day for P7 pupils</li><li>• The Perth and Kinross school induction days allow pupils to experience their timetables for two full days</li><li>• Transition DHT holds an informal parental meeting prior to the summer holidays to help with any last minute details</li></ul> |
| <b>August – September</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Community Link Worker holds a number of parental drop in sessions to help out in the early days. The Senior Leadership Team and Support for Pupils join some of the parental drop in sessions and host some useful secondary presentations</li></ul>  |
| <b>September</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for Pupils start their S1 interview using your child's P7 profiles.</li></ul>   |
| <b>October</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early S1 reports are sent home and followed up with a parental 'drop in' with the Senior Leadership Team and Support for Pupils</li></ul>   |

## Targeted – Learning, Social and Pastoral

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

## The Curriculum

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Nursery to Secondary 3: The broad general education

The curriculum encompasses all planned learning experiences both within and outwith the School. This includes opportunities to contribute to the ethos and life of the school,

interdisciplinary learning and the recognition of achievements in the broadest sense. In addition, the curriculum encompasses eight curriculum areas, detailed below.

## **Expressive Arts**

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

- Art and Design
- Dance
- Drama
- Music.

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

## **Languages and Literacy**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Health and wellbeing**

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

## **Mathematics and Numeracy**

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

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

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

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

## **Religious Education**

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

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

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

At P3 and P4 children who are Catholics are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Parents are invited to school to hear more about our preparations and what they can do to help.

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

## **Sciences**

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

The main areas of sciences are:

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

## **Social Studies**

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

The main areas of social studies are:

- people, past events and societies;



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

## Technologies

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

Technologies are organised under the following headings:

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

More information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found on Education Scotland's Parentzone website – <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> and on our school website ([www.st-johnsacademy.org.uk](http://www.st-johnsacademy.org.uk)).

## Third Year

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

## Fourth Year

Pupils entering S4 in 2021-22 will undertake the revised SQA qualifications called 'Nationals'. Most pupils will undertake Nationals at levels 3, 4 or 5 during S4.

Pupils in S4 will all study core subjects – English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, religious education, physical education. English and mathematics are SQA subjects, with literacy and numeracy as SQA units within these subjects. PE can also be studied at National 3-5 levels. Pupils will also study a further 4 subjects for qualifications across a wide range of choices.

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

For more information on Nationals, please see the National Parent Forum of Scotland's useful guides: <https://www.npfs.org.uk/>

## Fifth and Sixth Year

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

In S6 there is a much wider choice of subjects. Pupils can choose a combination of courses

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

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

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

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

- National 3-5
- Higher
- Advanced Higher

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

## Homework

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

revision.

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

### **How parents can help**

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

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

### ***Helping your child prepare for exams***

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

Talking to your child to reassure and encourage them and taking an interest in what they are

doing will help them get through what can be a stressful time and will help them to do their best.

### ***Managing time***

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

### ***Getting organised***

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

### ***Tips to encourage studying***

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

### ***Keeping well***

- Encourage your child to get plenty of sleep. This is particularly important the night before an exam as it will help them perform better.
- Encourage your child to eat well. On the morning of an exam encourage them to have a breakfast, or lunch if the exam is in the afternoon. Avoid sugar and caffeine drinks and drink water.
- Help your child to build in time for relaxation. Help them to recognise that nerves and anxiety are normal around exam time.
- Help your child to avoid any unnecessary anxiety or panic by making sure they are in plenty of time for each exam and have everything they need for it, eg. pens, pencils.
- Encourage regular exercise.

## Assessment & Reporting

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

The purposes of assessment include:

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

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

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

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

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

## Reporting

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

## Reports and Formal Meetings

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

In secondary reporting has moved away from several tracking reports or ratings reports, culminating in on full report a year (consisting of a narrative), in favour of shorter reports with

greater frequency. This is currently balanced as two tracking, or rating reports, and two more which include an action plan for each year group.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A senior parents' evening is held for S4/S5/6 with two possible dates for attendance at the end of October and the beginning of November with a targeted parents evening in early January, providing an opportunity to meet teachers and discuss your child's progress before the prelim exams.

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

- All children and young people should receive the additional support required to meet their individual needs and to help them make the most of their education
- Effective coordination of planning and support
- An emphasis on early identification of need
- The need to ensure assessment takes account of the needs of the whole child and is conducted in an integrated way
- The development of flexible curriculum and learning approaches to meet the needs of all children and young people more effectively
- The continued development of integrated working and multi-agency partnerships
- Partnership with parents; central to ensuring that children and young people with additional support needs benefit fully from school education
- Taking account of the views of children and young people in decisions which affect them
- Emphasis on early resolution of disagreements at local level, as well as access to more formal processes where agreement cannot be reached

- The development of greater continuity and progression between stages or after breaks in education, through more effective arrangements for transitions

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

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

## **English as an Additional Language - EAL**

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

## **The Integrated Team**

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

## **Primary Nurture Provision**

Additional support is also available for small groups of children within 'The Wee Room' class. This class provides a carefully structured day with a balance of learning, teaching and routine within a home-like setting.

## **Contact with Parents/Carers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you would like further information or want to discuss your child's progress, you are invited to contact the school to arrange a meeting with a member of the support staff. The list below is correct as of 8 December 2020. For an up to date contact list, please go to the [Contact us](#) page on our website.

### **Secondary**

Mrs L Burgess	Depute Headteacher
Dr RG Staines	Depute Headteacher
Mrs L McGillivray	Principal Teacher – Support for Pupils, Learning
Mr F McGuire	Principal Teacher – Support for Pupils, Guidance
Mrs M Sinclair	Principal Teacher – Support for Pupils, Guidance
Mr S McLaughlin	Principal Teacher of Support for DYW (Developing the Young Workforce)
Mrs N McKenzie	Teacher of Support for Pupils
Mrs S Simpson	Teacher of Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing
Ms P Hood	Teacher of Support for Pupils

### **Primary**

Mrs J Jack (Nursery-P2)	Depute Headteacher
Mrs J Philp (P3-P4)	Depute Headteacher
Mrs C Robertson (P5-7)	Acting Depute Headteacher
Mrs M Gibson	Teacher of Support for Pupils
Mrs S Black	Teacher of Support for Pupils
Mrs J Clarke	Nurture Teacher

## **School Improvement**

### **Standards and Quality**

This handbook should be read in conjunction with our annual Standards and Quality Report. This can be found on our website at:

<https://www.st-johnsacademy.org.uk/standards-and-quality-report/>



# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Education Authority: Perth & Kinross

## School Leavers' Destinations

### Skills Development Scotland

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Career Coach is also available for individual appointments for S4, S5 and S6 pupils who wish to discuss their career plans.

All S2 pupils will meet with Career Coach around course choice time

The Career Coach is also available for appointments at Parents Evenings

Pupils can simply contact their Guidance Teacher and an appointment will be arranged.

**The Perth Careers Centre 31 – 33 South Street, Perth PH2 8PD.** Tel 01738 637639. It is open all year round Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm (10.00 am on Wednesdays, closed for lunch 12.30pm – 1.30pm).

## School Policies & Practical Information

### School Policies

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

- Curriculum overview
- Literacy and English
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Health and well-being
- Learning and Teaching
- Assessment, recording and reporting
- Transitions
- Homework
- Religious observance
- Support for pupils: Interagency working/inclusion/LAC/EAL
- Relationships
- Child protection
- Internet safety
- Mobile phones

### Uniform/Dress Code

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

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

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

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

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

#### Primary

- Black dress trousers or skirt/culottes
- White school shirt
- School tie
- Grey school jumper or cardigan or plain grey jumper
- Purple gingham dress during summer months
- Plain black shoes or trainers (laces should also be black)
- School Jacket
- PE kit: white t-shirt and black shorts

#### Secondary

- Black dress trousers or skirt
- A white school shirt (polo shirts for PE only)

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

We would also like to remind parents that the following items of clothing are NOT acceptable to our dress code and so should not be worn to school: denim jeans, black jeans, leather jackets, shorts, combats, cargo trousers, tracksuit bottoms (except for PE), white trainers (except for PE), baseball boots, football tops, tops with logos, designer names, offensive slogans, low-cut tops, large hoop earrings, large necklaces, facial piercing jewellery, brightly coloured shoes. Hairbands or bobbles should be discreet and functional and not worn as a fashion accessory.

Outdoor jackets that are black can be worn in school and should be removed for class. Outdoor jackets of any colour should be removed as pupils enter the building and can be stored in lockers. For S1-S3, hooded jumpers which are black can be worn. Pupils in S4-S6 should not wear hooded tops. Hooded tops should not be worn with blazers.

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

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

## **Transport**

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

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

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

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

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

Application forms may be obtained from Headteachers or Education & Children's Services, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, PERTH, PH1 5GD. They are also downloadable from the internet at the following link:

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

## Service/Contract Buses

### Secondary

Service no	Serving	Contractor /	Tel no
<b>Secondary</b>			
<b>614</b>	Almondbank / Pticairngreen	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>647</b>	Crieff / Methven	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>AAU/006</b>	Auchterarder /Dunning	Ford Private Hire	01764 664050
<b>834</b>	Stanley/ Luncarty	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>ABG/019</b>	Ballintuim / Bridge of Cally	Angela Mackie	07733894765 a.m. 07733894764 p.m.
<b>ABG/020</b>	Kinloch	Rabs Cabs	01250 873447
<b>ABG/022</b>	Meigle	Coupar Cabs	01828 628188
<b>BPB/035</b>	Abernethy	Peter Pendlebury	01738 444360
<b>CITY</b>	Perth City	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>XBG/009</b>	Blairgowrie / Rattray / Alyth	Stagecoach Strathtay	01250 872772
<b>XCS/020</b>	St Madoes/Kinfauns	Nevis Coach Hire	01382 220099
<b>XSB/003</b>	Scone / Balbeggie/ Burrelton / Coupar Angus	Stagecoach Strathtay	01250 872772
<b>XSB/015</b>	Guildtown	M & J Minibuses	01738 445060
<b>XPB/006</b>	Craigie	Docherty's Midland Coaches	01764 662218
<b>BPB/027</b>	Methven	D & J Taxis	01738 446688
<b>BPB/050</b>	Coupar Angus	Shaun Geddes	01738 630323
<b>XCM/001</b>	Crieff	Docherty's Midland Coaches	01764 662218
<b>XST/005</b>	Bankfoot	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>XST/010</b>	Redgorton / Harrietfield	Burnbrae Garage	01764 683241
<b>155</b>	Huntingtower / Ruthvenfield	Docherty's Midland Coaches	01764 662218
<b>Primary</b>			
<b>834</b>	Stanley/ Luncarty	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>BPB/035</b>	Abernethy / Bridge of Earn	PJ Pendlebury Taxis	01738 444360
<b>CITY</b>	Perth City	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339
<b>XBG/009</b>	Blairgowrie / Rattray / Alyth	Stagecoach Strathtay	01250 872772
<b>XPB/006</b>	Craigie	Docherty's Midland Coaches	01764 662218
<b>XSB/003</b>	Scone / Balbeggie/ Burrelton / Coupar Angus	Stagecoach Strathtay	01250 872772
<b>XST/005</b>	Bankfoot	Stagecoach Perth	01738 629339

## **Inclement Weather Arrangements – Emergency Closures**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Local Radio Stations** - Radio Tay will be used in all instances and is the main source of information. The other stations will only be updated in the event that the severe weather is widespread and is not a localised situation:

- **Radio Tay AM**                      **1584 and 1161**
- **Radio Tay FM**                      **96.4 and 102.8**
- **Radio Heartland FM**              **97.5 and 106.6**
- **Radio Central FM**                 **103.1**

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

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

**Perth and Kinross Council Customer Service Centre** - (Available from 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours) However this line may operate from 07:00 hours in exceptional circumstances. Dial 0845 3011100. Calls are charged at the local rate.

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

## **Wider Achievement**

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

Such activities establish close relationships between staff and pupils and help to develop the community spirit of St John's RC Academy. As well as academic achievement, we are proud of our pupils' wider achievements both in and out of school and fully recognise the benefits

from the opportunities available to our pupils in helping them to become confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors and successful learners.

Using Pupil Equity Funding, and in partnership with Stagecoach, we are able to provide free after school transport on public buses. This allows all our young people to access after school clubs and study.

Below are just some examples of our extended curriculum.

### **Primary 7 Residential Outdoor Experience**

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

### **S1 Residential Trip**

During Term 1, we offer an overnight trip for our new S1 classes. Feedback has shown that this is a successful way of helping the S1 pupils integrate into Secondary school whilst developing friendships and team spirit with their new classmates.

### **Italy Ski Trip**

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

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

### **World War I Battlefield Tour**

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

### **Music and Drama**

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

### **Pupil Voice**

Our Pupil Learning Council represents the pupils' voice within the school. The membership consists of representatives from all year groups who regularly visit tutor groups to speak to pupils and ask if they wish any issues to be raised at the next meeting. Meetings normally are held every four weeks and are always well attended with plenty of good ideas discussed and issues put forward. There are also a large number of pupil voice groups throughout the school, including the Rights Respecting School Committee, the Eco Committee, the Fairtrade

Group, the Charities Committee, and groups made up of Prefects, House Captains and others. Having access to so many groups allows all members of the community to voice their views. A variety of issues, ideas and opinions can then be raised by pupils with senior staff.

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

## **Organisation of School Day**

### **Primary**

Start of School Day	<b>0900</b>
P1 to P4 Morning Break	<b>1030 – 1050</b>
P5 to P7 Morning Break	<b>1050 – 1110</b>
P1 & P2 Lunch	<b>1200 – 1300</b>
P3 & P4 Lunch	<b>1210 – 1310</b>
P4 to P7 Lunch	<b>1220 – 1320</b>
End of School Day	<b>1520</b>

### **Secondary**

Start of School Day	<b>0850</b>
Period 1	<b>0850 - 0940</b>
Period 2	<b>0940 - 1030</b>
Tutor Group	<b>1030 - 1100</b>
Interval	<b>1100 - 1120</b>
Period 3	<b>1120 - 1210</b>
Period 4	<b>1210 - 1300</b>
Lunch	<b>1300 - 1350</b>
Period 5	<b>1350 - 1440</b>
Period 6	<b>1440 - 1530</b>
End of School Day	<b>1530</b>

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

## **St John's Kids Club**

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

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

### **Opening Times**

3pm – 6pm Monday to Friday Term Time only

Prices

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

£9.70 per session per child and £9.20 per sibling

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

## **Child Protection/Looked After Children**

### **GIRFEC**

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

Safe                      Healthy                      Achieving                      Nurtured                      Active                      Respected  
Responsible              Included

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

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

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

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

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

### **Name of Child Protection Officer**

Designated child protection officers for Primary are: Mrs J Jack, Mrs C Robertson and Mrs J Philp (Depute Headteachers), Mrs N Taylor, Ms J Whyte and Ms K Ronald.

In secondary Mrs L Burgess, Mrs M Sinclair, Mrs F Carroll, Mr S McLaughlin, Mr F McGuire & Dr Staines are designated Child Protection Officers.

### **Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC) Children**

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

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

Further information on Looked After Services can be found on:



## Nursery

Nursery is the first step for your child on the road to independence. At St John's RC Academy Nursery we try to make the transition from home to nursery as easy as possible. We recognise the importance of creating a caring, nurturing environment in which your child will feel relaxed and secure. Children learn best by 'doing' - being involved in a broad range of challenging activities, making learning more valuable and fun. We aim to provide a stimulating, well balanced programme of learning, catering for every child's individual needs and interests. Each child is allocated a key worker when they start nursery. Nursery operates from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

### Nursery Aims

- To ensure each child's unique needs and interests are at the centre of the curriculum
- To promote good self-esteem and confidence by valuing and respecting each child
- To provide a safe, nurturing, stimulating, happy environment which is challenging and where children are encouraged to be active in their learning
- To promote equal opportunities
- To create a variety of play opportunities which develop children's individual skills, knowledge and understanding
- To value parents as the main educators and work in close partnership with them and the local community

### Active Learning in the Nursery

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

There is daily provision for:

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

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

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

## **Learning Through Play**

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

## **Curriculum**

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

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

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

## **Parental Involvement**

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

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

## **What You Can Do To Support Your Child**

- We ask parents to complete a little booklet with their child when he/ she starts nursery. It helps to give staff important information about each child's interests, stage of development, family and health.
- Please ensure your child wears suitable clothing for play activities. Clothes should be easy for them to cope with at the toilet. Refer to toileting guidelines for guidance on

what will happen if a child has an accident. It would be helpful if a change of clothes could be brought to nursery. Please provide suitable footwear – slip on gym shoes or soft shoes with Velcro fastenings are ideal. Children must change out of their outdoor shoes on coming into Nursery.

- Remember that children go outdoors daily, so children should have appropriate outdoor clothing on their peg.
- Please do not allow your child to bring their own toys into the nursery.
- Children must be collected by an adult who is known to staff. If a different adult is to collect a child the staff must be told in advance. We expect prompt arrival and collection of children by adults. This avoids any upset to your child and allows staff to attend daily meetings to review the session and plan for the next day.

## **Absence Policy**

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

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

### **The nursery staff will:**

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

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

- On the first day of absence the school will make efforts to contact parents, carers or listed emergency contact(s) to establish a reason for absence and that the child is safe.
- If no contact can be made, school management will take appropriate action to ensure the child is safe. This will always include notifying the child's key person and Lead

Professional if appropriate. For nursery children the key person is usually the Health Visitor.

- As the health, safety and wellbeing of all children is of paramount importance, the school will further implement Child Protection procedures when that is thought to be appropriate.

## **Toileting Guidelines**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Nursery Outings**

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

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

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

## **Snack**

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

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

## **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

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

concentrate their energies on effective learning and teaching.

In the Nursery, staff must promote positive behaviour by:

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

In Nursery we try to:

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

Staff may use 'time out' occasionally, with an explanation and discussion with the child. Staff will evaluate each situation and deal with it appropriately. Any on-going concerns will be discussed with parents.

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

## **Resolving Difficulties in Nursery**

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

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

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

## RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Where a parent chooses a denominational school for their child's education, they choose to opt in to the school's ethos and practice which is imbued with religious faith and religious observance. In denominational schools, it is therefore more difficult to extricate a pupil from all experiences which are influenced by the school's faith character.*

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