



St Mary's Newsletter Jan 2025

Our Curriculum Rationale

St Mary's RC Primary School, Polbeth



At St Mary's RC Primary School and Polbeth Nursery we aim to create an inclusive learning community where we are #Building for Success

Our Vision

We aim to provide high quality education that meets the needs of all learners, based on Gospel values, enabling them to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and able to make an effective contribution to society, now and in the future.

Our Values:

Trust & Honesty, Respect, Friendship, Safety & Perseverance



#buildingforsuccess

Our Aims

Successful Learners

To provide the highest quality learning and teaching experiences which meet the needs of all learners in an inclusive, safe and nurturing environment.

Confident Individuals

To encourage success, promoting confidence, independence and creativity in our learners to build resilience and develop a growth mind-set.

Effective Contributors

To equip every pupil with skills for life by investing in them as individuals, creating a foundation to build skills for learning in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

Responsible Citizens

To build and maintain effective partnerships between the school, the home, the parish, partner agencies and the wider community ensuring we are Getting It Right For Every Child.

Our Curriculum Drivers



Diary Dates

3rd February - Parent Council Meeting 7pm (All Welcome)

6th February - Primary 5 Scots Showcase and Burns Supper (alternative date for Sharing our Learning as Mrs Sinclair doesn't work on a Friday - for P5 only)

7th February - First Friday Mass (led by P5)

7th March - Big Family Breakfast & Sharing Our Learning (not Primary 5 mainstream although all families welcome to attend the breakfast)

12th March - Parent Consultations 5-7.30pm

14th March - Parent Consultations 1-2.30pm

28th March - Bunny Bingo 6pm (BYOB) Parent Council Fundraiser

Class Assemblies



We welcome parents and families to join us for our Class Assemblies on the following dates at 10.50am unless otherwise stated :

Friday 21st February 2025 - P6R

Friday 7th March 2025 - P3

Friday 21st March 2025 - P4

Friday 25th April - P6M

Thursday 8th May 2025 - P5 (2pm)

Friday 30th May 2025 - P2

Friday 13th June 2025 - P1

Thursday 26th June 2025 - P7 Leavers Assembly (1.30pm)

Mass Dates

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| 7th February 2025 | First Friday Mass | Primary 5 |
| 5th March 2025 | Ash Wednesday | Primary 6M |
| 2nd May 2025 | First Friday Mass | Primary 4 |
| 29th May 2025 | Feast of the Ascension | Primary 6R |
| 25th June 2025 | Leavers' Mass (<i>in Church</i>) | Primary 7 |

A reminder of all Mass dates for the remainder of the 2024/25 school session. All Masses will begin at 9.30am in the dinner hall, with the exception of the Leavers' Mass which will take place in Our Lady & St. Bridget's, West Calder.

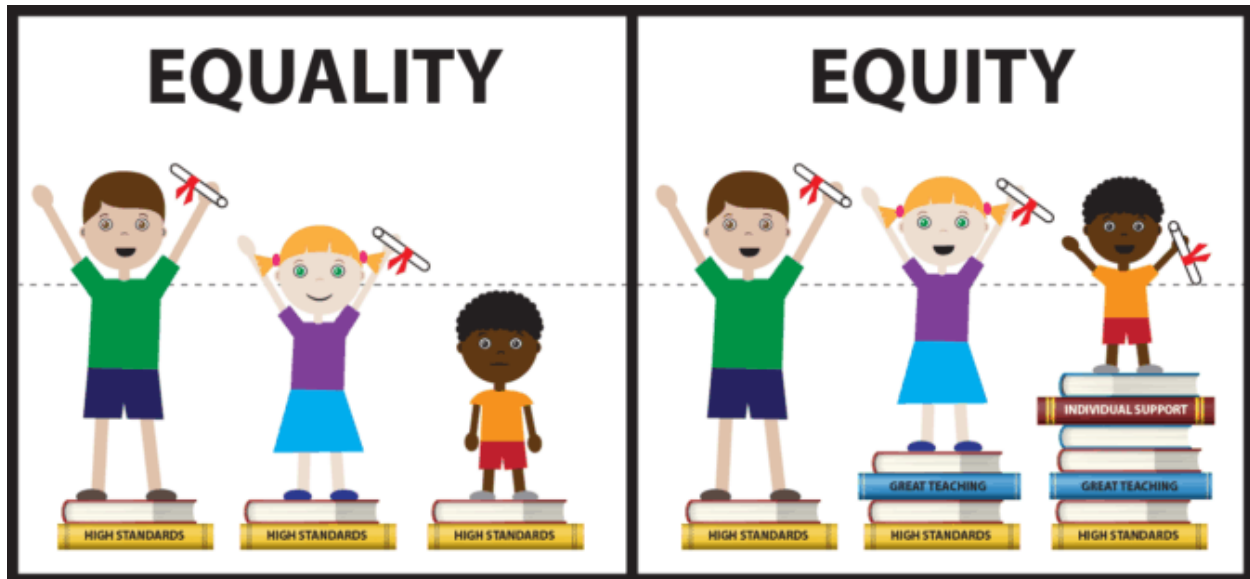
Have your say...



We are always looking at ways to improve our service and we always appreciate any feedback from parents/carers. Please can you take a few moments to add any thoughts you have to the following survey. The theme is Learning, Teaching and Assessment. We have a staff version and a pupil version too so that stakeholders can work together to make St Mary's even better!

Parent Voice Opportunity

Striving for Equity



We are constantly striving for Equity at St Mary's and Polbeth Nursery. Times are tough at present and we want all families to know that we are here to support through challenging times so that barriers to learning and thriving are reduced and even removed. Shannon, our Family Link Worker, has been networking and has accessed many supports for families. Some supports have been financial, such as clothing, food, toys and vouchers. Other supports include signposting families depending on requests/circumstances.

All families can approach either the Senior Leadership Team or Shannon at any time for support, advice and information sharing.

Please call or text 07355740692. Calls are treated sensitively and without judgement. We would rather help than have anyone going without!

Thank you so much for the lovely feedback from the support that was offered at Christmas. Vouchers from the Saint Vincent De Paul, food from the Hub and gifts from River Kids and Mission Christmas made a huge difference to many of our families. Also, a huge thank you to our Parent Council for helping Santa to deliver his books/gifts to all our pupils, creating wonderful memories for our pupils. Here is a snippet of the lovely feedback received:

'Took stress of being able to give kids a decent Christmas and be able to pay bills'

'This helped my family massively and also enabled me to help another family who didn't ask the school for help (I shared the voucher with them)'

'There has been no worrying about my child not having much on Christmas it's helps a lot and puts your mind at ease'

'I'm a single mum, I'm working part time and studying. This year passed was quite tough I never started work until November, so trying to save for gifts with the electric and gas rise in price made it tough. I was so grateful for the Asda vouchers it gave us a fantastic Christmas and new years meal. Thank you so much.'

'If it wasn't for the vouchers I genuinely would not have had any finances at all to provide myself and 2 children with food over the festive period. Changed my insight into humanity x'

Curriculum Corner



What will my child be learning this term?

Please use the links below to find out information about what your child is learning this term.

Primary 1 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 2 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 3 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 4 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 5 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 6 - [Learning Overview](#)

Primary 7 - [Learning Overview](#)

Ness - [Learning Overview](#)

Rannoch - [Learning Overview](#)

Tay - [Learning Overview](#)

Supporting Wellbeing

Are you concerned about your child's wellbeing? If so, please follow this link to information and supports available - [West Space](#)

Attendance



Attendance Matters

Aim: To improve wellbeing, inclusion & attendance for all children and young people

The Benefits of Attendance at School

Through regularly attending school your child will develop:

- social skills - making friends, co-operating, resolving conflict, confidence

- life skills such as resilience and responsibility

- a sense of belonging
- positive habits for their future

Children who attend regularly are shown to:

- have improved physical and mental health in adulthood

- be less engaged in risk taking behaviours such as drug and alcohol use; and are less likely to be involved in criminal activity

- have greater economic opportunities in adulthood

- be significantly less likely to suffer premature mortality

The Impact of Absence

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 97% attendance | 5 days off per year | Approximately 25 lessons missed |
| 95% attendance | 10 days off a year | Approximately 50 lessons missed |
| 90% attendance | 20 days off a year | Approximately 100 lessons missed |
| 85% attendance | 30 days off a year | Approximately 150 lessons missed |
| 80% attendance | 40 days off a year | Approximately 200 lessons missed |
| 70% attendance | 58 days off a year | Approximately 290 lessons missed |
| 60% attendance | 77 days off a year | Approximately 385 lessons missed |
| 50% attendance | 95 days off a year | Approximately 475 lessons missed |

West Lothian Council is committed to working with parents, children and other agencies to ensure that, wherever possible, all children enrolled at its schools receive an education that maximises the opportunity for every child to achieve their full potential. Staff in schools, the Authority and in school support services will work with pupils and families to ensure that each pupil attends regularly and punctually. Good attendance and engagement are linked to higher levels of participation, attainment and ultimately future opportunities. The impact of non-

attendance and non-engagement significantly increases gaps in knowledge and understanding and the likelihood of young people leaving school without securing a positive destination.

The diagram above highlights the impact of absence and some of the numbers are surprising.

We are working hard as a team to ensure continuity of learning when staff are absent. Teachers follow the same curriculum and progression pathways to ensure that disruption to learning is minimal but we understand that the uncertainty around this can be worrying as a parent. The SLT team are meeting with any supply staff regularly to offer guidance and support. Winter always brings extra challenges!

Pupil Absence

*If your child is absent from school, please contact the school as early as possible, **before 9.00am** on the first day of absence. First and foremostly, this allows us to know that the child is safe. I am sure you are aware of the recent heartbreaking news within the West Calder Community and this highlights the importance of morning registration at school as a safeguarding measure.*

When a pupil has been recorded as absent, and no prior notification has been given of the absence by the parent/carer, the school shall attempt to contact the parent/carer, using the Group Call system. Parents/carers are responsible for providing and updating emergency contact information for use by the Group Call system. Parents/carers are responsible for responding promptly to contact from the school if contacted via group call.

*Please access the Attendance at School policy for West Lothian Schools using the following link:
[Attendance at School West Lothian](#)*

This policy also gives information regarding family holidays during the school term. Please notify the school in advance of any family holidays via email or letter.

Is your child winter ready?

Please click the following link to find out information that may be of use in the event of inclement weather.

Communication

A reminder that all communication should come via the school's email account: wlstmaryspol-ps@westlothian.org.uk or via phone on 01506 280170. Please refrain from approaching your child's teacher when they are collecting their class line in the morning. Appointments can be made via the school office if you wish to speak to your child's teacher or with a member of the leadership team. We appreciate your support with this.

Gymnastics Update from Local Club

As many of you are aware, there was a significant fire at Brucefield Industrial Estate in December. Astro gymnastics burnt down, on 6th January. On the back of this, some of the coaches and parents have got together to set up a new Gymnastics club.

Please see attached link to one news article about the new gym:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/plan-new-west-lothian-acro-34479905>

If anyone is interested, they can contact the club either via our social media platforms or by emailing info@elevateacro.co.uk.

General Information/Reminders

Free School Meals

Free School Meals are available to all pupils in Primaries 1-5.

Breakfast Club

A reminder that pupils can have breakfast at the start of the school day in the dining hall between 8.15am and 8.45am. Children who attend will be directed to their lines for the start of the school day. Please do not drop your child off before 8.15am as there will be no supervision in place until then.

Car Park Safety

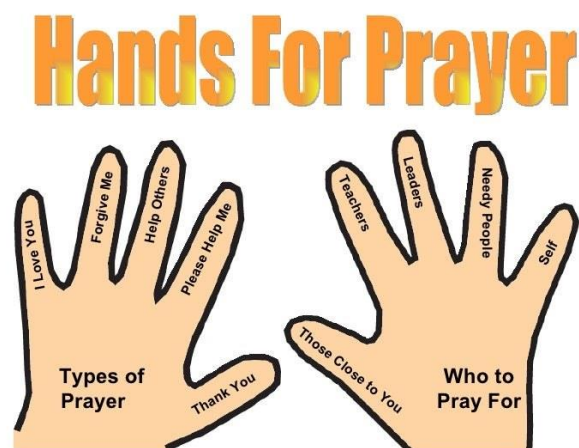
Please do not drop off/pick up your child from the school car park and avoid walking through the car park. For safety reasons, it would be greatly appreciated if all children/parents use the 3 pedestrian access points. We appreciate your understanding with this as I know parking around the school area can be challenging and frustrating.

Please note though that there are periods of the day/week when the office is not manned and we encourage use of our answering machine at these times.

Clothing

A gentle reminder to put names on your child's clothing as we are accumulating items that have been left behind by pupils and we are aware of the expense involved in purchasing replacement items. If there is a name on the label then it is far easier for us to identify and return.

Prayer for our School Community



Dear God,

Show us how we can serve others in our community. If anyone is sad or hurting, help us to show them love. If anyone is in physical need, show us how we can help. If anyone needs to know You, give us the words to tell them about You. Fill our hearts with a spirit of generosity and an attitude of service. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to get it right for our wonderful children and our community.

#building for success

Yours sincerely,

Helen Pritchard

Head Teacher
