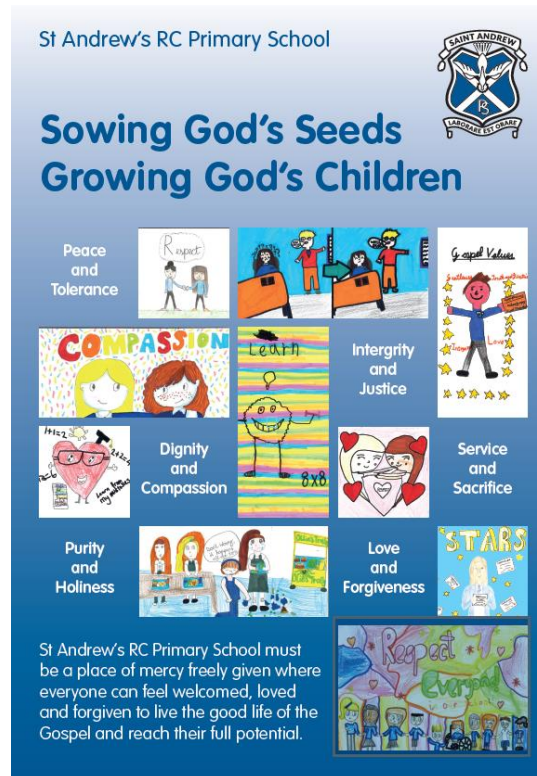


St Andrew's RC Primary School Newsletter

March 2025



It has been another busy term here at St Andrew's Primary School with pupils and staff continuing to work extremely hard.

Please enjoy reading our update for this term and learning about some of the exciting activities we have been involved in.



Gospel Values

During this term, children have been learning in assembly, and in class, about the Gospel Values of Dignity & Compassion, 'Truth & Justice' and 'Forgiveness & Mercy'. We discussed the actions required to live out this value in our daily lives. At the end of each month, the children nominated one person from their class who they witnessed demonstrating these Values.

January – Dignity & Compassion

P1M – Ivanna Kukushkinda

P4G – Georgia Keegan

P1HS- David Stanciu

P5WG – Callum Duffy

P2C – Wiktor Gorecki

P6/5B – Sam Parke

P2M – Noah Cumming

P6A – Krystian Matus

P3G – Amaris McGuigan

P7G – Erin Finnegan

P3S – Zach Gradwell

P7L – Leo Rostas

P4S – Estera Rostas

February – Truth & Justice

P1M – Finn McElroy

P4G – Blair Scott

P1HS- Robbie McQuade

P5WG – Remington Rongcham

P2C – Kaid Barker

P6/5B – Munashe Mushunje

P2M – Tymek Olejewski

P6A – Jack McKenna

P3G – Rodney Chimbata

P7G – Zeenat Bammeke

P3S – Donna Akhuemokhan

P7L – Pearl Moyo

P4S – Dravin Patel

March – Forgiveness & Mercy

P1M – Christin Melwin

P4G – James Hughes

P1HS- Lily-Jae McEachran

P5WG – Hannah Goracy

P2C – Linkin-Lee Syme

P6/5B – Christopher Melwin

P2M – Ishe Mushunje

P6A – Mustafa Iqbal

P3G – Aislin Ann Sam

P7G – Cassie Blair

P3S – Tinu Adesida

P7L – Ethan Hamilton

P4S – Darwin Jayme

Well done to all of the children who achieved certificates – you are role models to us all!

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Our Primary 3 pupils received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Monday 24th February. I would like to thank their teachers, Miss Grant and Miss Sloan, and Father Joshua, for all their hard work in preparing our pupils for this wonderful sacrament.

Please continue to keep them all in your prayers.



Sacramental Preparation

For the children of Primary 4 and Primary 7, who will be making the Sacraments of First Holy Communion & Confirmation, next term, preparation workshops for parents and carers are held at St. Francis Xavier's RC Church hall. Details of dates/times can be found in the Parish newsletter or through @FalkirkCatholics.

If it is your intention for your child to receive the Sacraments and you have not already informed your Parish Priest, please do so as a matter of urgency.



Lenten Fundraising

Throughout this period of Lent, our Pupil Council organised a series of fundraising activities to raise funds for the SCIAF Wee Box Appeal.

Pupils enjoyed participating in the sponsored Obstacle Course – this was great fun and hall was filled with excitement.

Thanks to your generosity and support, we have managed to raise an amazing £2100 – thank you!

Thank you to Miss Gallagher for supporting the Pupil Council with the planning for these events.



Easter Performance

Congratulations to the pupils of Primary 4 & 5 who presented a beautiful performance reminding us all of the joy of Easter.

I would like to thank Mrs Webster for preparing the children so well and to Miss Stafford, Miss Gallagher, Mrs Wright and Mrs Greig who supported the children during the performance.

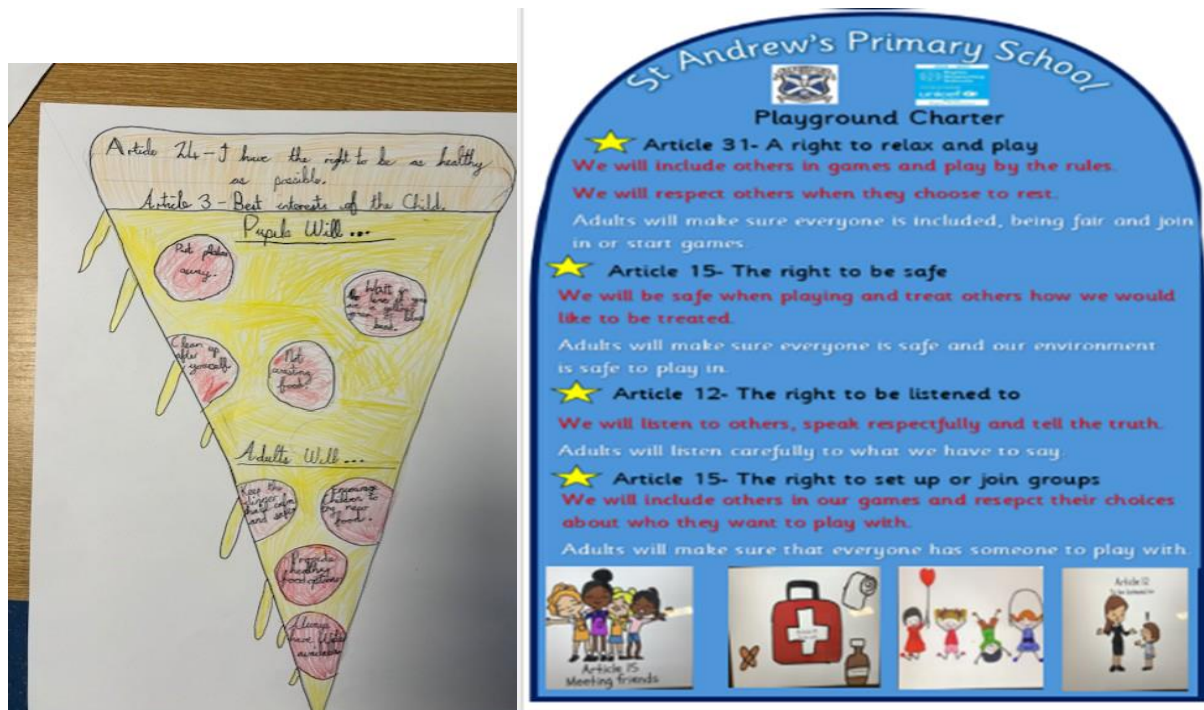


Children's Rights

This term there has been some exciting teaching and learning occurring about, through and for children's rights. The StAR Group (St Andrew's Rights Group) have presented at Assemblies about children's rights and made links with certain articles during theme days such as World Book Day.



They also created eye catching Playground and Lunch Hall Charters to support everyone understand how we can continue to create a rights respecting ethos and culture. These charters were shared at Assemblies and have been displayed at the playground doors and in our lunch hall area for everyone to see.



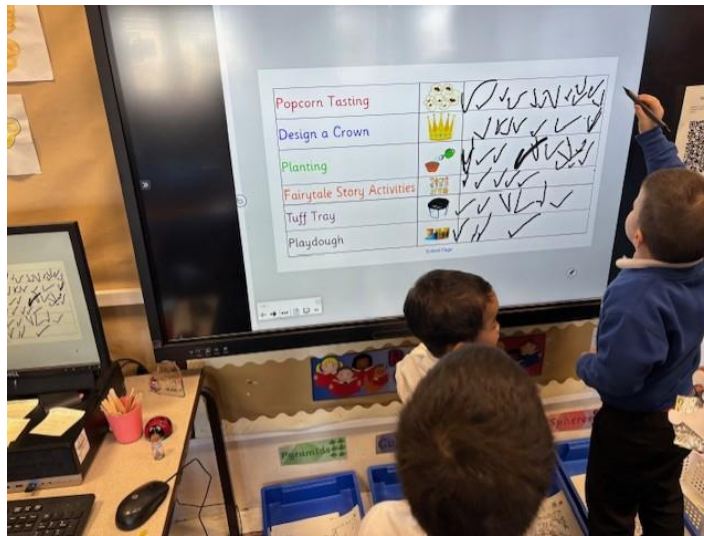
For our monthly Achievement Assemblies, the StAR group have issued The Rights Respecting Pupil of the Month certificate for children from P1-7. This certificate has been created to acknowledge the pupils across our school who have been striving to follow our new charters and respect the rights of everyone through their actions.



Teaching and learning about rights across all stages has occurred discreetly in lessons and part of IDL this term. All classes created wonderful UNCRC banners per stage focusing on certain articles and these banners are now proudly displayed in our Blue Area.



The success of our Open Afternoon demonstrated how children are enjoying exercising their rights and being actively engaged in their learning through our pupil skilled and play based approach to teaching and learning.



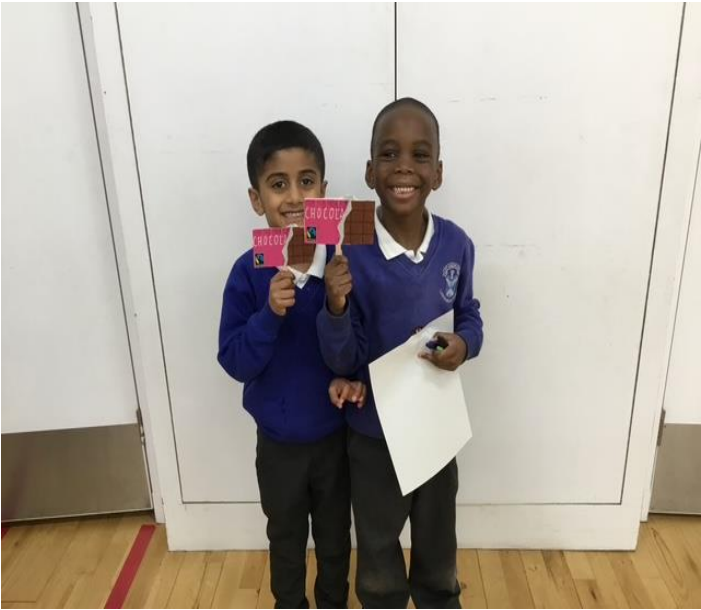
We recently engaged in a Silver Accreditation visit as part of the Rights Respecting Schools Award, which was a positive experience. I am delighted to share with you that the validation team were very impressed with the work of pupils and staff and have awarded St. Andrew's Silver Rights Respecting School Status. This is an update from our Bronze Award in October 2024. Well done everyone!

Fairtrade Education Week

Fairtrade Education Week took place between 3rd-7th March and the theme this year was 'Fair Trade for the Future'. During this week, the Fairtrade Committee and the StAR group worked in partnership to deliver lessons to all classes about this theme and made links with children's rights.



As a FairAchiever School, to further show our commitment to Fairtrade we held a Fairtrade Fayre on Thursday 6th March to fundraise for the Fairtrade Foundation. This was a successful event where children enjoyed accessing different fun Fairtrade activities such as a photobooth, arts and crafts, football challenge, guess the numbers of Fairtrade mini eggs and a throwing challenge. Pupils enjoyed the tasty Fairtrade orange juice refreshments that were served at the Fayre. Thank you to everyone who came along to the event and for your generous donations! We raised £158 for the Fairtrade Foundation.





Library

I am delighted to inform you that our newly refurbished library is now open! We worked with children who came up with the design and selected books that they would like to see. There is a huge variety of new materials so there are suitable texts of all children.

We had a Grand Opening where the children played orientation games and were treated to storytelling sessions. It was great fun!

There is a real excitement in school to start using our new resource.



Sporting Success

Our newly formed School Football Team have been working hard during training sessions with Mr Laird. The children have attended two tournaments this year and have come in First Place in both.

Of course winning a tournament is an exciting occasion for us as a school. However, I am most proud of these children for demonstrating resilience, compassion, dedication and a positive attitude to each other and the teams they have played against. Tournament organisers have contacted me directly to commend the team for their attitude.

This is Gospel Values in action and I am so incredibly proud of each one of you. Well done!

I'd also like to thank Mr Laird for his commitment to the team. This is a great experience for our children.



School Uniform

We are very proud of our school uniform at St. Andrew's and I am delighted to report that all children wear school uniform every day. Research on the benefits of school uniform suggest it adds value to our school ethos, supports safeguarding children from harm and avoids discrimination that can be caused by children not having access to particular items of expensive clothing.

However, we are aware that we are all living in challenging times at the moment and if you feel the uniform policy is adding to this, please speak with myself or the school management team who can provide supports.

As we draw closer to the Easter holidays, there has been an increase in the number of children wearing trainers to school. I understand families may be waiting until the new term to purchase replacement school shoes. However, I would like to remind you that trainers are not permitted in school and they do not form part of our uniform policy.

Summer Term Arrangements

I write in hope that this message may bring us a bit of sunshine. As we move into the final term of school, children are invited to wear summer clothing: summer dresses and shorts.

In the event of warm weather, the school follow NHS Sun Safe guidelines ([Sunscreen and sun safety - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sun-safety/)). To do this we ask that you provide:

- A sun hat
- Sun cream
- Water bottle

As learning can take place outside of the classroom, staff will pay due diligence to limit sun exposure during hot days. However, we ask that you also pay due caution to risks posed by the sun and ensure that your child is wearing sun cream before they come to school. Unfortunately, we are not in a position whereby we can provide this as a school or apply sun cream to individual children. However, staff will support your child in reapplying sun cream and direct children to shaded areas in the playground to ensure they are safe and comfortable.

Ice Poles

As always, our Pupil Council will sell Ice Poles in the playground on a Friday. However, as we are living in Scotland, we all know that we can have four seasons in a day. Therefore, if there is an alternative warm day of that week, ice poles will be sold then. Details of this will be provided on the School App closer to the time

Achievements

It has been a real joy to celebrate the out of school achievements with the children this year. Not that it is of any surprise to all of us but we really do have such talented children in the school. For this reason, we will continue to make the last Friday of each month our 'Achievements Assembly'. If your child has participated in an activity out of school, please encourage them to bring in any certificates/trophies/medals to share. As a whole school community we will continue to celebrate their endeavours together.



Drop Off/Pick Up

To ensure the safety of all of our pupils, the following arrangements are in place for drop off and pick up at school:

Travelling by bus

Children arriving by bus will access the school through 'Bus Gate' in our P4-P7 playground. Arrival to school is supervised by a Support for Learning Assistant. Departure from school is supervised by SMT and class teachers.

A reminder that this gate is used for children travelling by bus only.

Travelling by car

Arrival

We have a designated 'Drop Off' point at the front of our school. This is accessed by entering into Graeme High School car park. This space is to be used for drop off only and we ask that parents/carers do not park in this space.

Children will enter the school through the drop off gate which leads directly into the playground.

Alternatively, if parking on Oliver Road or Hawley Road we ask that:

P1-P3 – enter the school via Hawley Road into the infant playground

P4-P7 – enter the school via Forbes Road.

Departure

At the beginning of the school year, we will ask you complete an 'At Home' arrangements form. Teachers will adhere to the instructions you have given unless given written notice from a parent/carer.

If your child(ren) is to be collected from school, the following arrangements will be in place:

P1-P3 will exit via Hawley Road

P4-P7 will exit via Forbes Road

Children in P4-P7 who have younger siblings in P1-P3 will be allowed access to the infant playground to collect family members. These children will then be asked to leave the school grounds via Hawley Road.

Please be reminded that the Staff Car Park is for staff only. Blue Badge holders are eligible to park in the disabled spaces in the staff car park. **However, please telephone the school office to make an appointment to see me before doing so.**

It has come to my attention that at the beginning of the school day, a minority of parents are crossing the staff car park with children. This puts you and your child at risk as there are several blind spots when entering into the car park. Please use the path on the car park perimeter to ensure everyone is safe.

After crossing the car park, I am aware that people are using the gate, opposite the nursery entrance, to gain access the school playground. On frequent occasions this gate is left open which puts our youngest learners in the nursery at risk. This gate should not be opened unless by a member of staff. Instead, please follow allocated path to enter the through the entrance gates.

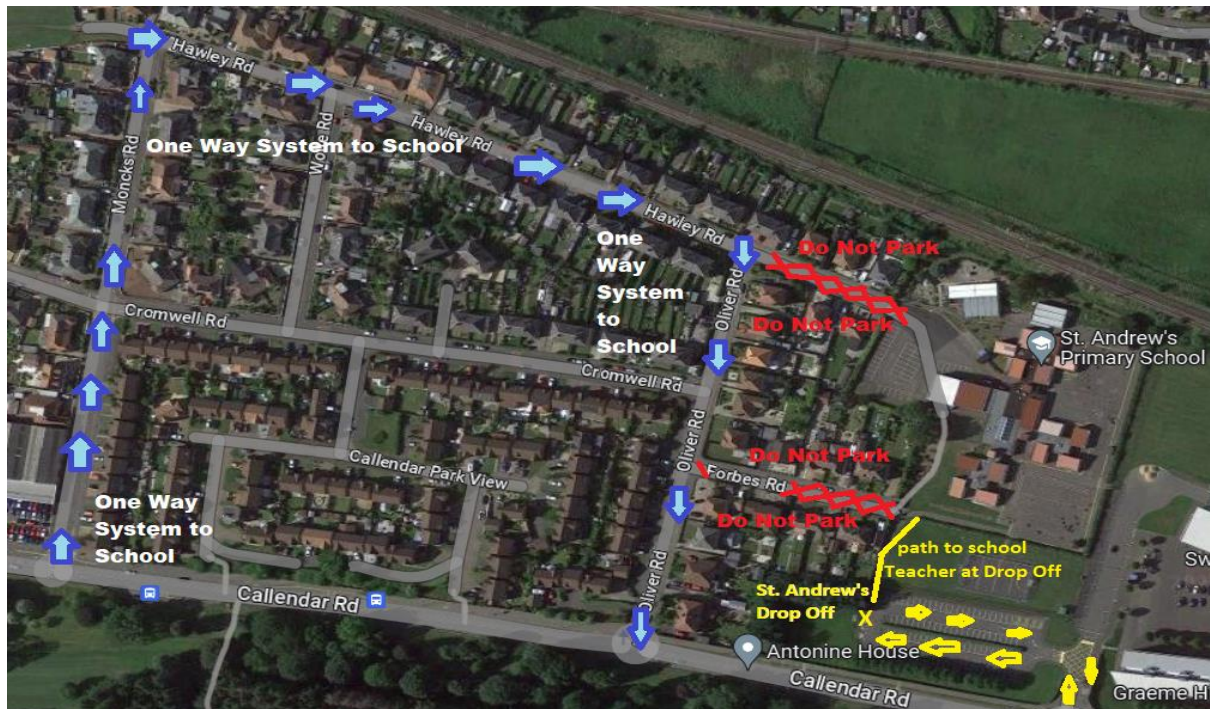
I appreciate your full support in this matter to ensure that all 400 children, staff and parents of our school are safe while on school grounds.

Parking

As you know, I have been working with Police Scotland, Falkirk Council Roads department, Local Councillors and our Parent Council to look at ways to improve the traffic during drop off/pick up times. You will be aware that the roads outside of the

school grounds become incredibly congested which increases the risk to our children when travelling to/from school safely.

For this reason, I strongly encourage you to use our suggested one-way system that was shared by our Parent Council and the Management Team when your child started school. I have included an annotated diagram below as a reminder of the one-way system.



We do understand that this is a change, for some, however if we all work together we can keep our children safe and make journeys to/from school more comfortable for everyone.

I am saddened to write to inform you that, despite regular reminders of safe driving and parking out with the school gates, we have had three incidents where children have almost been run over by cars. Each of these incidents have been a direct result of people parking close to the school gates or parking over junctions. I am sure you will agree this is really worrying for our children and parents and is completely avoidable. As well as the risk this poses for children entering and leaving the school gates, I am concerned that in the event of a serious incident, emergency services will not be able to access our school grounds.

It is for this reason that all incidents of unsafe parking will be reported directly to Police Scotland.

Communication

To ensure that you receive all communications from us, please keep us informed of any changes to your phone number or email address.

Sending communications via email is the quickest and cheapest method available to us. If you have not yet supplied us with your address, please do so as quickly as possible.

School App

Last session, we purchased our School App to support clear communication from school to home. Feedback from our parent body has been extremely positive and therefore we continue to use this again this year. To receive latest updates from school, we encourage you to download the app to your smart device. To download please scan the QR below.



Once downloaded, you will be asked to 'select your school.' Please choose, St. Andrew's Falkirk

Getting In Contact

Should you need to get in contact to discuss a matter relating to your child, your child's teacher is the first port of call. To do this, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

In the event that matters cannot be resolved then please telephone the school office to make an appointment to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Please note that the only email address that is manned regularly is standrewsprimaryschool@education.falkirk.sch.uk. To allow us to respond to you quickly and efficiently, please do not email school staff directly but use this address.

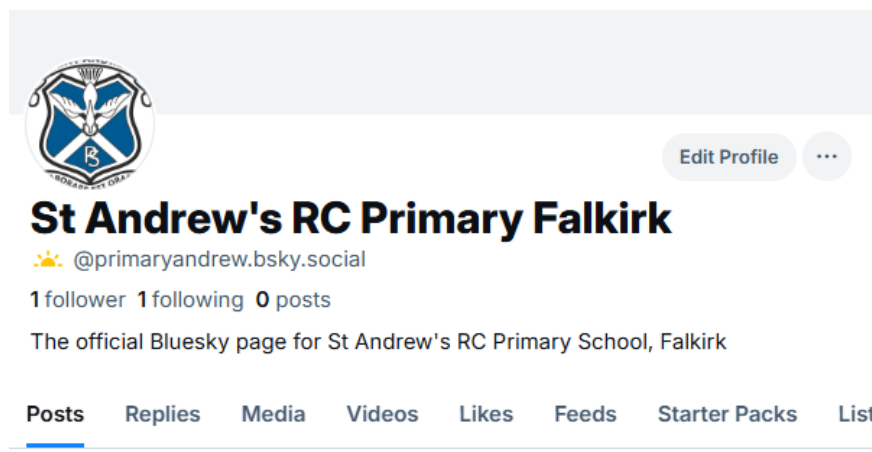
Twitter/X

Thank you to everyone who completed feedback questionnaires during this term. I have reviewed this information with the Senior Leadership and a number of people have mentioned that they miss seeing whole school updates that used to appear on Twitter/X.

You may recall that I wrote to you earlier in the year sharing the class updates would be posted on SeaSaw. However, to act on your feedback, we have made the decision to create a Blue Sky account which will share whole school updates/events.

Blue Sky has now been approved by Falkirk Council for use. We will comply with existing parent requests with regards to sharing photographs. However, if you wish to amend this information please contact the School Office to inform us of this.

Existing SeaSaw accounts will remain for class updates. However, if you would like to see whole school updates, please follow us on @primaryandrew on Blue Sky. The account will go live after the Easter holidays and I look forward to sharing information with you.



<https://bsky.app/profile/primaryandrew.bsky.social>

Recording of Absence

At St. Andrew's we value attendance. The impact of regular late coming or absence has a detrimental impact on your child's educational achievement. If you require support with getting your child to school please contact Mrs McQuade via the school office.

Please remember, if your child is absent from school, it is very important that you contact the school office before 9.30am to allow us to accurately record the absence.

Please also ensure that your child arrives on time for the start of the school day. Pupils arriving after the school bell at 9.00am, will be recorded as being late.

If you are finding it challenging to ensure your child maintains good attendance at school, please see the below link which has a range of supports:

[Attendance Supports- Parents and Carers \(thinglink.com\)](https://www.thinglink.com)



Attendance Matters



Falkirk Council Employment and Training Unit

Falkirk Council's Employment and Training Unit (ETU) offers personalised support for parents who need help progressing their careers or finding employment.

ETU can also help with debt advice, school clothing grant, benefit advice, and free school meals.

Contact 01324 504408 or etu@falkirk.gov.uk to arrange an appointment with one of their friendly team of staff.

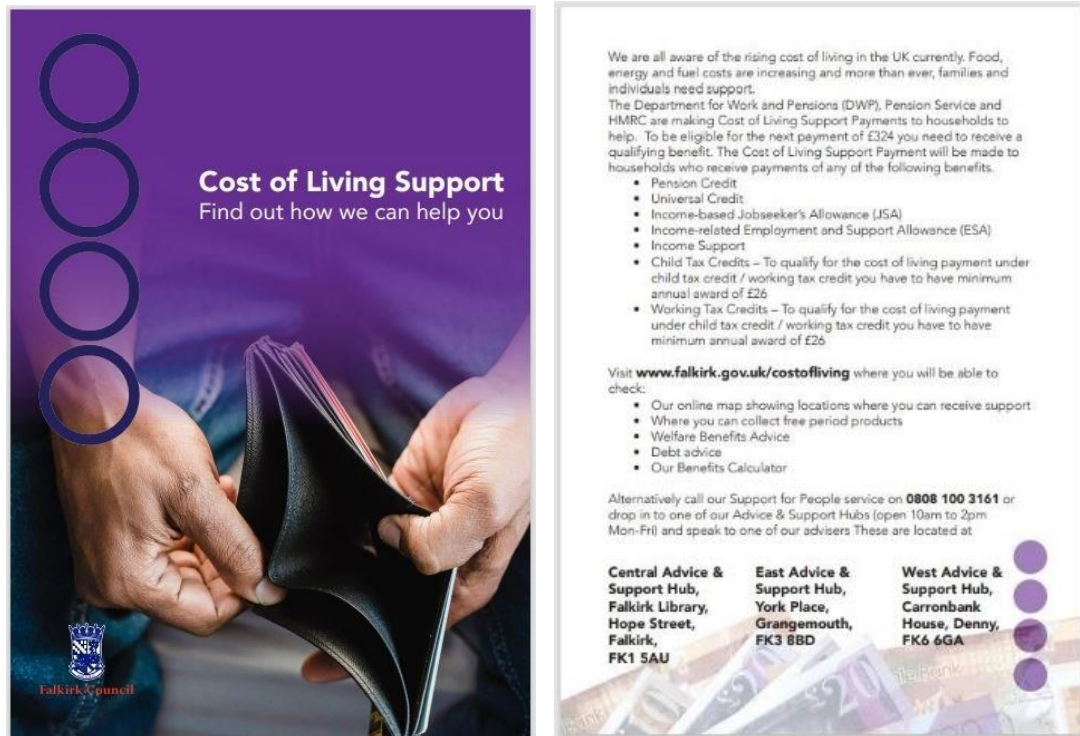
We have had several very positive stories of the experiences of St Andrew's parents working with ETU.



Cost of Living Support

The rising cost of living is impacting many families and individuals. Visit the link below for more information about available support

[News - Cost of living support - how we can help | Falkirk Council](#)



The flyer is divided into two main sections. The left section has a purple background with a photograph of hands holding an empty wallet. On the left side of this section are four white circles stacked vertically. The text 'Cost of Living Support' is in white, with 'Find out how we can help you' below it. The Falkirk Council logo is in the bottom left corner. The right section has a white background with black text. It starts with a paragraph about the rising cost of living and the support available. This is followed by a bulleted list of qualifying benefits. Below this is a paragraph about where to check for support, followed by another bulleted list. At the bottom, there is a paragraph about alternative contact methods and a table of three support hubs. The table has three columns: Central, East, and West. Each column lists the hub name, address, and postcode. To the right of the table are three purple circles stacked vertically.

Cost of Living Support
Find out how we can help you

We are all aware of the rising cost of living in the UK currently. Food, energy and fuel costs are increasing and more than ever, families and individuals need support.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Pension Service and HMRC are making Cost of Living Support Payments to households to help. To be eligible for the next payment of £324 you need to receive a qualifying benefit. The Cost of Living Support Payment will be made to households who receive payments of any of the following benefits.

- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credits – To qualify for the cost of living payment under child tax credit / working tax credit you have to have minimum annual award of £26
- Working Tax Credits – To qualify for the cost of living payment under child tax credit / working tax credit you have to have minimum annual award of £26

Visit www.falkirk.gov.uk/costofliving where you will be able to check:

- Our online map showing locations where you can receive support
- Where you can collect free period products
- Welfare Benefits Advice
- Debt advice
- Our Benefits Calculator

Alternatively call our Support for People service on **0808 100 3161** or drop in to one of our Advice & Support Hubs (open 10am to 2pm Mon-Fri) and speak to one of our advisers These are located at

Central Advice & Support Hub, Falkirk Library, Hope Street, Falkirk, FK1 5AU	East Advice & Support Hub, York Place, Grangemouth, FK3 8BD	West Advice & Support Hub, Carronbank House, Denny, FK6 6GA
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Diary Dates

Please find below a list of key dates for your diary. Should there be any changes, we will inform you as soon as possible. More information will be issued regarding arrangements/times etc. closer to the time of events.



- 4th April** – In-Service Day (closed to pupils)
- 22nd April** – School Opens
- 22nd April** – P1 & P7 Class Photographs
- 15th April** – P7 Residential Meeting (6pm)
- 22nd April** – Eco Week
- 25th April** – Go Green Day
- 29th April** – Easter Mass (in school)
- 1st May** – P7 Transition Day to St. Mungo's
- 5th May** - Public Holiday
- 16th May** – Languages Day – Dress Up as a Country
- 20th May** – P4 First Holy Communion rehearsal (children only)
- 23rd May** – Global Guardian Jotters due
- 24th May** – P4 First Holy Communion (10am – St. Anthony's & 12noon St. Francis Xavier's)
- 27th May** – P7 Confirmation rehearsal (children only)
- 29th May** – Feast of the Accession Mass (in school)
- 31st May** – P7 Confirmation – St Francis's Xavier's *(times to be confirmed by Parish)*
- 4th June** – Gospel Values Disco
- 9th June** – P7 Transition Day to St. Mungo's
- 10th June** – P7 Transition to St. Mungo's/P2-P6 Move Up Afternoon/P1 Induction
- 12th June** – Winning House Prize
- 13th June** – P7 Leavers' Mass (9.30am)
- 16th June** – P7 Residential to Inverclyde
- 24th June** – P1 Picnic
- 25th June** – Sports Day
- 27th June** – School closes at 1.30pm

Dates of more school events will be released very shortly.

Happy Easter

I hope you have found the above information useful in helping you prepare your child for school. I would like to thank you for your continued support; working together is how we will continue to provide high quality experiences for our children. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a happy and holy Easter and that you all enjoy the break.

God bless,

David Short
Headteacher

