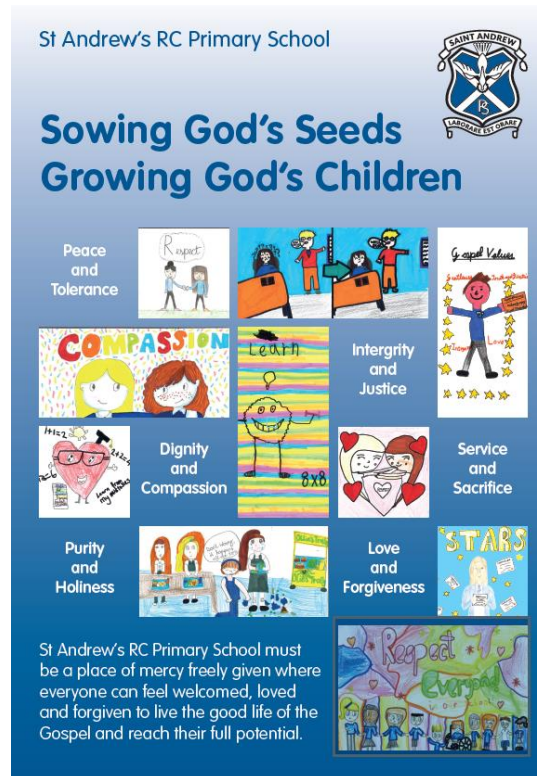


St Andrew's RC Primary School Newsletter

October 2024



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 the month of September, children have been learning in assembly, and in class, about the Gospel Value of 'Peace & Tolerance'. 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 this value in action.

Peace & Tolerance

P1M – Daisy Holmes

P1H/S- Conor McLaughlin

P2C – Aria McGlynn

P2M –Lillith McManus

P3G – Melissa Reid

P3S – Unique Ajileye

P4S – Ruth Chapotera

P4G – Jemima Ogunleye

P5W/G – Chizzy Muomah

P6/5B – Artur Jasinskis

P6A –Rowan Coulter

P7G – Ivy Fergusan

P7L – Jorgie Donnelly

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



Fairtrade Fortnight – 9th Sept-22nd Sept

We recently celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight in our school. This year was extra special because we are celebrating thirty years of the Fairtrade movement in the UK. As a FairAchiever school we demonstrated our commitment to embed Fairtrade into daily learning through the Fairtrade Committee delivering lessons to children across the classes. Teachers also delivered lessons to children linked to Fairtrade as P1 learners created a Fairtrade snack using Fairtrade chocolate and bananas. In P3 pupils were exploring where in the world different foods come from and the lives of Fairtrade farmers.

We also held a Fairtrade tuck shop during the first week at break and lunch time selling a range of Fairtrade goods. This was a huge success as we made £270 which helped support Fairtrade in our local community. P1 classes also had an exciting visit from a manager at the Co-op in Carronshore who spoke about what Fairtrade is, the logo and Fairtrade products that are sold in the shop.

Thank you to Mrs Mason and the Fairtrade Committee for all your hard work!



United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

This year we are showing our commitment to being a Rights Aware school by achieving the Rights Respecting award through UNICEF. The Rights Respecting Schools initiative is based on teaching about rights throughout the curriculum, using the articles from the UN Convention. The aim of both the Rights Respecting Schools initiative and the school is to help children to achieve their potential and become responsible, global citizens. Through learning about the articles in the UN Convention, children learn respect for self and others, critical thinking skills, and how to make informed decisions about both local and global issues.

Evidence shows that when children are taught in school about their rights under the UN Convention, they are more respecting of the rights of others and demonstrate:

- A better understanding of what it means to have rights and responsibilities.
- More positive attitudes to school.
- Better relationships with their classmates and teachers.
- Higher self-esteem.

Our Rights Respecting Schools journey has involved:

- Every class creating a charter using the articles from the UN convention to promote respect within the classroom.
- Forming a Pupils Rights Committee (StAR) group where children across the school will lead the learning linked to rights and be role models to other children.
- The Pupil Rights Committee (StAR) will focus on different articles at monthly Assemblies and the articles linked to theme days e.g World Children Day.
- We will update our Relationships and Behaviour policy to reflect our Rights based approach.

Thank you to Mr Morton, Mrs Baird, Mrs Mason and the StAR Committee who are leading this improvement throughout our 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 move towards the winter term, it would be greatly appreciated if you could make sure your child wears a warm jacket each day. Outdoor learning is an important part of our curriculum and we would like to make sure the children are comfortable.

Achievements

It has been a real joy to celebrate the out of school achievements with the children this year. Not that it is a surprise to 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.

I would like to make a special mention to the children who represented our school at the Scottish Schools Ski Associate regional championships who have now qualified for the national final. We are so incredibly proud of you! Everyone in St. Andrew's will be cheering you on at the final.



Communication

You may recall that I wrote to you in August to share that, following parental feedback, we were looking to change how we share daily updates to you as parents. As you know, previously we used 'X' (formally Twitter). Our Parent Council shared that some parents found this tricky to navigate.

After exploring this as a staff team, we will now be communicating class updates using the SeeSaw system. We have used this system in Primary 1 for many years and it provides a secure platform that allows access for information pertaining for your individual child(ren).

On return from the October break, you will receive a log-in code for your child's page. Whole school information will continue to be published via our School App.



Staffing

Later in the month we bid a fond farewell to two of our Support for Learning Assistants, Mrs Shirra and Mr Boyle who will be retiring at the end of October.

I would like to thank them for all their hard work over their time at St. Andrew's. All of the pupils and staff are going to miss them. I am sure you will join me in wishing Mr Boyle and Mrs Shirra a long, happy, healthy retirement.

As soon as I have information regarding the recruitment of staffing, I will communicate this to all parents.

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.

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. 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.

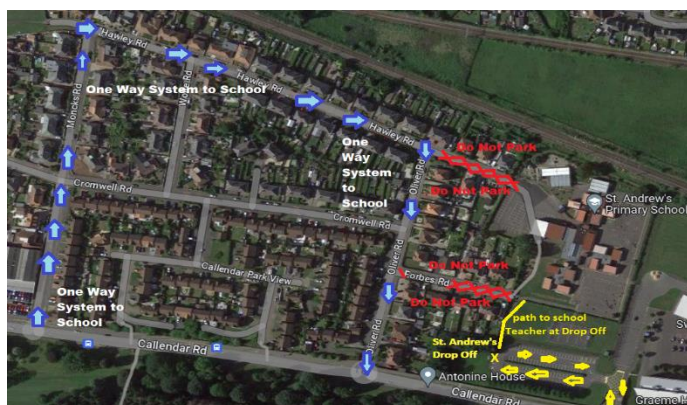
After crossing the car park, I am aware that people are using the gate, opposite the nursery entrance, to gain access the school playground. On frequent occasions this gate is left open which puts our youngest learners in the nursery at risk. This gate should not be opened unless by a member of staff.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

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.

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.

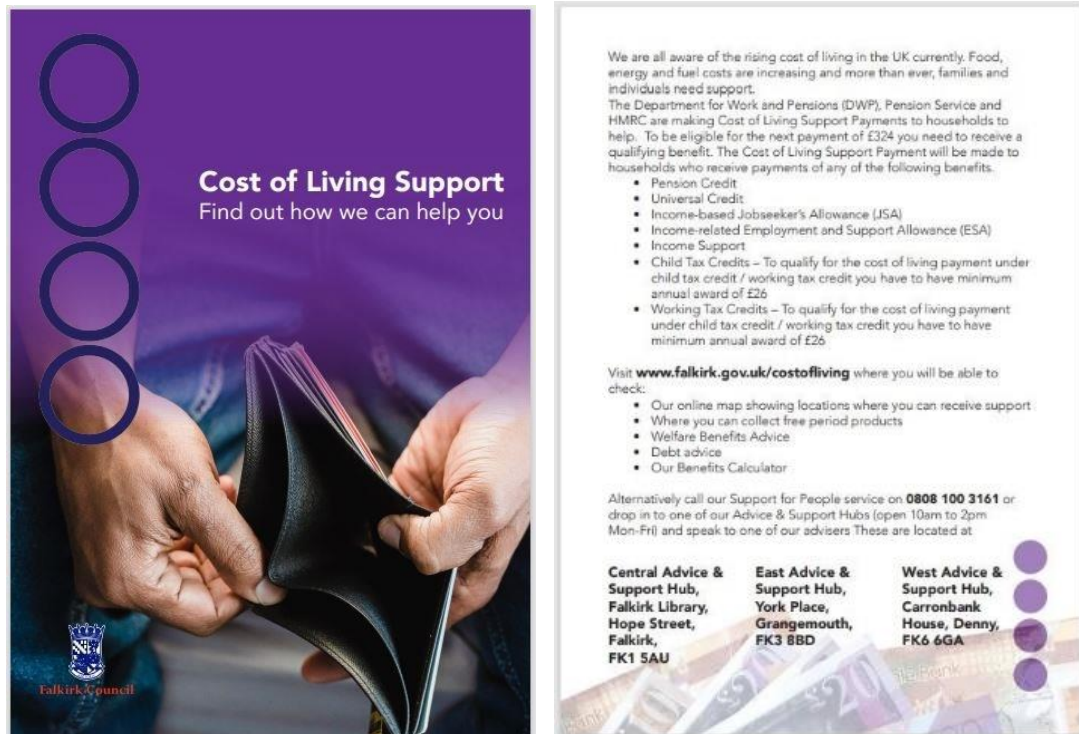
We have had several very positive stories of the experiences of St Andrew's parents working with ETU.



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 titled "Cost of Living Support" and "Find out how we can help you". It features a purple background with a close-up image of hands holding an open, empty black wallet. On the left side, there are four white circles arranged vertically. The Falkirk Council logo is in the bottom left corner. The right side of the flyer contains text explaining the support, a list of eligible benefits, and contact information for advice hubs.

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

Parent Partnership

At St. Andrew's we firmly believe that we are here to serve the community. Each year, we look closely at the feedback parents, pupils, partners and staff provide to continue to improve. This forms the basis of our School Improvement Plan.

If you would like to find out more about this, please come along to our School Improvement Journey workshop on Wednesday 13th November at 6pm. During this session, you will hear about the work taking place, have the opportunity to have your voice heard and enjoy light refreshments.

I hope you can make it!

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.



25th Oct – PTA Hallowe'en Disco

28th Oct – School Re-Open for pupils

13th Nov – School Improvement Journey 6pm

28th Nov – St. Andrew's Day Mass for pupils (am)

28th Nov – P6 & P7 St. Andrew's Performance for parents (pm)

29th Nov – In-Service Day – ***school closed for pupils***

7th Dec – PTA Christmas Fayre

11th Dec – P1-P3 Nativity (1.30pm)

12th Dec – P1-P3 Nativity (9.30am)

Information relating to the purchase of tickets for the Nativity will be released shortly. In addition, our annual Christmas parties will take place in December. Dates/times for these events will be communicated to you on the return from the October holidays.

Happy Holidays

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 October holiday and hope that you all enjoy the break.

God bless,

David Short
Headteacher

