

St Andrew's RC Primary School Newsletter

October 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 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 and staff nominated one person from their class who they witnessed demonstrating this value in action.

Peace & Tolerance

P1H/S – Jathniel Gill

P5M – Darwin Jayme

P1M- Reeva Hunter

P5W/D – Aoife Ody

P2C – Alan Gill

P6A – Che Halon

P2/3G –Leon Hoisington

P6B – Helena Bennie

P3S – Evelyn Murch

P7G – Lewis MacSween

P4C – Matthew Rafferty

P7L – Gabby Radziszewska

P4G – Logan Macdonald

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



During the month of October, our focus value will be Gentleness. During the month, children will be learning in class and assembly about the actions to demonstrate this value at home and in school.

Fairtrade Fortnight – 22nd Sept – 5th Oct

We recently celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight with this year's theme: *Brew It Fair*. As a FairAchiever school, we focused on highlighting the people behind our tea—those who grow and pick it—and their right to a fair future while facing the challenges of climate change.

Our Fairtrade Committee did a fantastic job leading learning across the school, from helping at the tuck shop during break and lunch, to visiting classrooms and delivering engaging mini-lessons linked to the theme. They inspired their peers to keep supporting and choosing Fairtrade in their everyday lives.



Thank you to Mrs Mason and the Fairtrade Committee for leading this work across our school.

Sporting Success

A huge well done to the St. Andrew's Ski Team. The children represented our school at Regional Ski Championships and came in second place. They will now progress to the National Final in November. We are all very proud of you and wish you every success!



Another group of wonderful children recently took part in the Falkirk Council Cross Country event. They demonstrated resilience, perseverance and determination. Each one of you represented our school demonstrating our values throughout the day – we are so proud of you!



Congratulations to our Scottish Country Dancing club. The children have attended our lunch time club and have worked really hard. All of their hard work has achieved them official grading. Well done to you all!

A special thank you to Mrs Smilie who volunteers each week. Her dedication to the children is so very much appreciated.

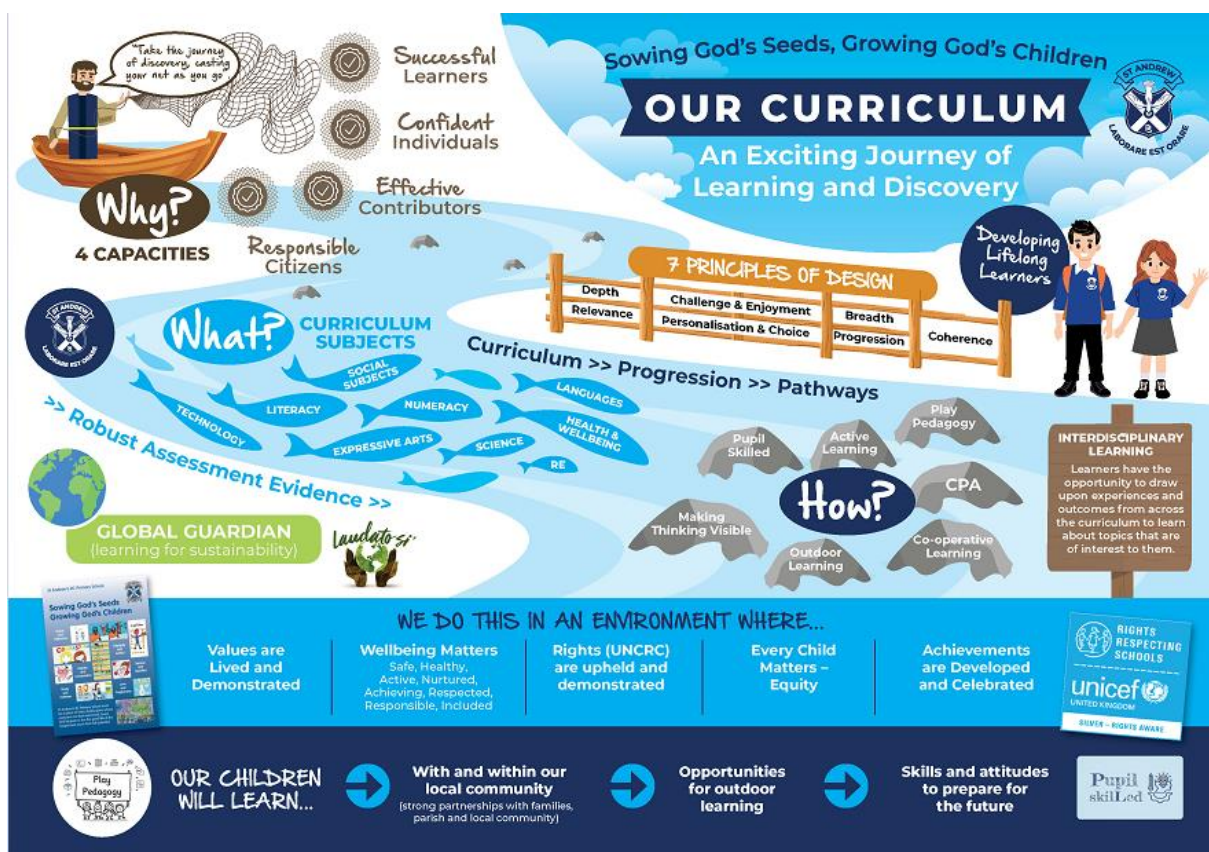


Our Curriculum

You may be aware that recently, Education Scotland have published a range of materials to support schools to revise their curriculum offer; ensuring it is fit for purpose. Last session, as a group of pupils, parents and teachers we used these materials to examine: **why** we learn, **what** we learn and **how** we learn.

We did this using academic research and thinking about what makes us unique as a community of faith and learning here at St. Andrew's.

Our children took all of the ideas from each of the groups and worked with a graphic designer to create our new Curriculum Rationale.



A larger image of this is now displayed when you enter into the school. Please ask us about this.

We will use this in-line with local and national policy to ensure that our children receive the very best experiences whilst at St. Andrew's.

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.

Medication & First Aid

Whilst your children are in school, their safety and wellbeing is our number one priority. When you enrolled your child in school, you may have indicated that they have a medical condition and require medication e.g. inhalers, epi-pens etc.

Following Falkirk Council policy, we must send this home at the end of each school year. Unfortunately, not all of this has been returned.

We cannot administer medication without medical forms completed and medication delivered to school. Should your child require medication, I ask for your support to complete medical forms that have been sent via email and letter to be returned to school as a matter of urgency.

When we have this information, our staff team will be able to carry out these tasks following the instruction of your GP and you as parents.



Allergies

We have a number of children in the school who have nut allergies. Exposure to nuts – even airborne – can be extremely dangerous. It is for this reason we have a Nut Free policy in school.

Items such as Nutella, hazelnut chocolate spreads etc. are not permitted in school. I ask for your support in ensuring **these items do not come in school** as part of a packed lunch or snack. This is to keep all children in the school safe.



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.



Faith in Action

As part of our Faith in Action work this year, the group are continuing to strengthen the links between our pupils and the local parish. We take part in termly visits to attend mass at St Francis Xavier's chapel. We then join the parishioners in the chapel hall after mass to chat and share our learning with them. We have a focus Saint each term, this term was, Saint Carlo Acutis. We shared our learning with the school at Assemblies and with the parishioners during our chapel visits.

We also invite the parishioners to attend our Wonderful café each term, to join in the celebration of our pupils' achievements. The café is a wonderful opportunity to share our pupil's skills and talents with our local community.



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/carers.

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.

The school is working with Police Scotland to support safe parking.
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-supports-parents-and-carers)



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.

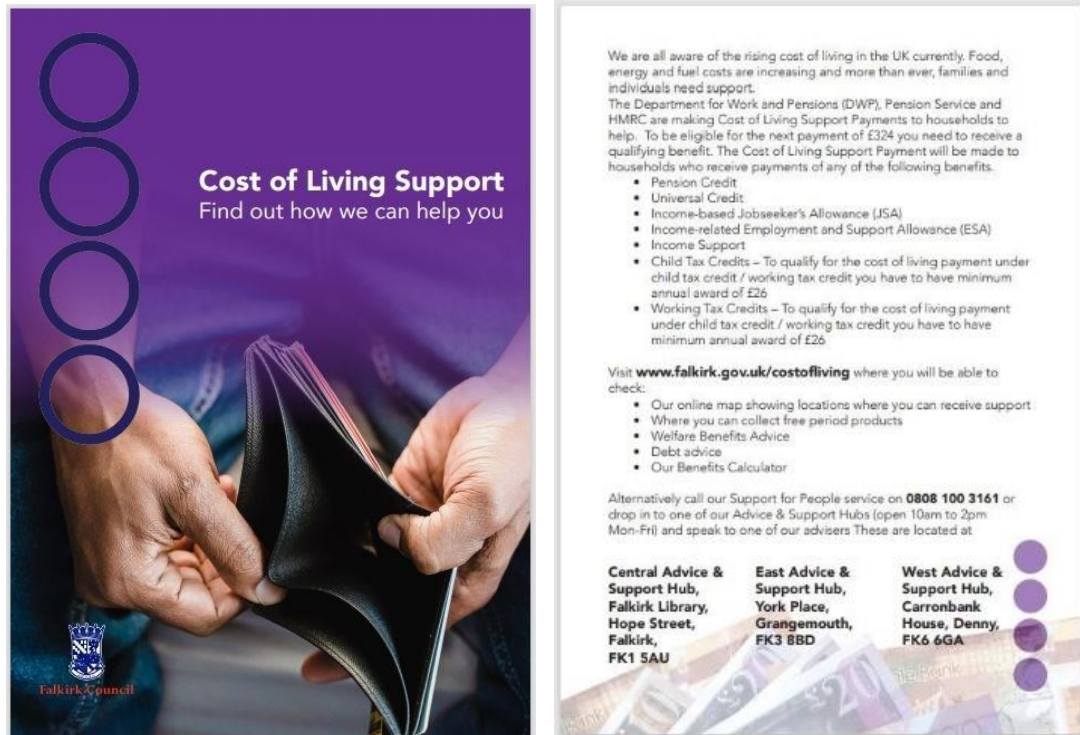
We have had several very positive stories of the experiences of St Andrew's parents working with ETU.



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. It features four white circles stacked vertically on the left and the text 'Cost of Living Support Find out how we can help you' in white. The Falkirk Council logo is at the bottom left. The right section has a white background with black text. It starts with a paragraph about the rising cost of living and the £324 support payment. This is followed by a bulleted list of eligible benefits: Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support, Child Tax Credits, and Working Tax Credits. It then provides the website www.falkirk.gov.uk/costofliving and a list of services available there. At the bottom, it lists three advice hubs: Central (Falkirk Library), East (York Place), and West (Carronbank House). The bottom right corner features a graphic of stacked banknotes and three purple circles.

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 **0800 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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Headies Headlines

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 'Headies Headlines' workshop on Wednesday 29th October at 6pm. During this session, you will hear about our developments in Learning & Teaching – Pupil Skilled. You will have the opportunity to have your voice heard and enjoy light refreshments.

Following feedback, we have purposefully arranged this at the same time as the disco to support with child care arrangements. 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.



- 27th Oct** – School Re-Opens for pupils
- 29th Oct** – PTA Hallowe'en Disco (P1-P3 6pm-7.15pm P4-& 7.45pm-9pm)
- 29th Oct** – Headies Headlines (6pm in Library)
- 27th Nov** – St. Andrew's Day Mass for pupils (am)
- 27th Nov** – P6 & P7 Scottish Performance (1.30pm)
- 28th Nov** – In-Service Day – ***school closed for pupils***
- 6th Dec** – PTA Christmas Fayre (more info. to follow from the PTA)
- 11th Dec** – P1-P3 Nativity (1.30pm)
- 12th Dec** – P1-P3 Nativity (9.30am)
- 19th Dec** – School closes at **1.30pm** for the Christmas holiday

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,

Mr Short
Headteacher

