



St Sophia's Primary School

**Usual Location: Nelville Drive
Galston
KA4 8BN**

**Temporary Location: Kirkstyle Campus
Carron Avenue
Kilmarnock
KA1 3NF**

Telephone No:	01563 820521
Email:	Elizabeth.Heron@eastayrshire.org.uk
School Blog:	
Twitter:	
School App:	Available on appropriate mobile devices
Denominational Status (if any):	Co-educational and Roman Catholic
School Roll:	Present Roll: 95
Further Information:	www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/schoolhandbooks

SECTION 1

On behalf of the school community of St. Sophia's Primary, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child. It is our aim to provide a stimulating but calm, secure and happy learning environment where each child may achieve their full potential. We do this by using the following:

- using a relationship based approach
- enhancing self-esteem and the self-efficacy of our children.
- developing a sense of responsibility and self-discipline within each child.
- striving to create mutual respect between each other, staff and learners.
- leading learners to take responsibility for their own actions.
- creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere for effective learning and teaching.

In St. Sophia's, we aim to create an atmosphere where children are cared for and valued in their own right. If staff, learners and parents work together to create positive, open and honest relationships, this will contribute greatly to good behaviour and successful learning. All children should feel safe, secure, and cared for as well as developing a caring attitude towards others. Our ethos and values is based around Gospel Values.

We encourage good learning and relationships through ensuring lessons and activities are well planned, interesting, engaging and motivating and that children are either appropriately challenged or supported with the tasks we set and by the use of a nurturing approach.

The staff, children and parents work in partnership to create a positive, stimulating teaching and learning environment where we strive to meet the intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional and creative needs of every child in our care.

As a Catholic school our Christian Faith permeates all aspects of school life where everyone is treated with equality, fairness, love and respect. We are committed to, and look forward to, working with you, the parents, to help our children become confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors and successful learners.

We are pleased to be undergoing a full and extensive school refurbishment to Enerphitt Standards. Whilst this work is carried out we are based in Kilmarnock and the sole occupants of the former Kirkstyle Primary School.

Beginning primary school is an exciting and important milestone in a child's life and we at St. Sophia's will do our utmost to ensure that it is a happy, welcoming and worry free time for both parents and children. The information in this handbook is intended to give an insight into the life of the school to all parents and new children. However, if you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. We hope that you and your child will soon feel at home in our school community.

Elizabeth Heron, Head Teacher

“Led by the headteacher, staff have created and embedded a positive nurturing ethos across the school. Children and their families are respected and valued by all staff. There are positive relationships across the school community, underpinned by Gospel values. Most children are happy and well-mannered in school. They are keen to learn and are motivated to do well.” HMle November 2019

“Children’s achievements are recognised and celebrated at gatherings and in displays around the school. The house group system provides all children with regular opportunities to work across stages to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. This is supporting them to become confident and develop organisational skills and teamwork. A range of committees and groups provide children with increased roles and responsibilities around the school. After-school clubs enhance children’s sporting, wellbeing and cultural experiences. Older children’s leadership skills are being developed through activities coordinated by Active Schools and a local college. Children develop knowledge as global citizens in fundraising activities and in working towards John Muir Award. Children in the upper stages develop skills through participation the Pope Francis Faith Awards.” HMle November 2019

St Sophia's is a small school with a big heart. The pupils all enjoy the friendly atmosphere it creates, they are very proud of their school and its links with the wider community.

The Parent Council are a team working closely together with the school, parents and pupils to make the children's time at St Sophia's the best it can be.

Ann Craigen, Chair of the Parent Council.

Loving the Learning: Learner Comments

I like the space, teachers and the playground. I don't think I'm ready to leave a school as good as this one. Murphy P7

We have a bully-free community where everyone is welcome. The school environment makes everyone feel safe, happy and welcome. Sarah-Cate P6

All the teachers are kind and loving. The staff and my friends make me feel happy. I feel at home at school. Eden P6

At St. Sophia's everyone works together as a team and we don't give up on each other. Harriet P7

The school listens to my opinion and is open to everyone. Caoihme P7

The staff help me with any problems that I have. Caprice P7

I love our school family, it is nice and welcoming. Holly P6

The teachers are kind and have good hearts and minds. Declan P7

Stages taught: P1-P7

At St Sophia's Primary we have an ethos that puts our children's learning and long-term development above all else. We have a culture of collaborative working within the staff and with our active and supportive parent body. We have high expectations of ourselves, our colleagues and the children. As a school we are committed to continuous improvement and enthusiastic about the opportunity to develop in new ways. As a whole school community we aim to have the energy and imagination to move the school forwards, but also the confidence and insight to nurture what is special about St Sophia's. St. Sophia's: growing in love and learning

Our love of self, others and learning encourages....happiness, creativity, teamwork, nurture, honesty, enterprise, skills for life, achievement, challenge, healthy lives, respect, fairness, inspiration, success, partnership and community.

Our philosophy is founded in the promotion of Gospel Values and based on equality of education.

In St. Sophia's, we encourage good behaviour through ensuring lessons and activities are well planned, interesting, engaging and motivating and that children are either appropriately challenged or supported with the tasks we set and by the use of a nurturing approach. We use both a whole school and/or a targeted approach. As reflective practitioners, we regularly monitor and review our curriculum and the learning experiences we provide for our learners.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally

In nurture staff respond to children not in terms of arbitrary expectations about 'attainment levels' but in terms of the children's developmental progress assessed through the Boxall Profile Handbook. The response to the individual child is 'as they are', underpinned by a non-judgemental and accepting attitude.

2. The classroom offers a safe base

The organisation of the environment and the way the children are managed contains anxiety. Our use of nurture offers a balance of educational and domestic experiences aimed at supporting the development of the children's relationship with each other and with the staff. It is organised around a structured day with predictable routines. Great attention is paid to detail; the adults are reliable and consistent in their approach to the children. Nurture is an educational provision making the important link between emotional containment and cognitive learning.

3. Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem

Nurture involves listening and responding. In nurture 'everything is verbalised' with an emphasis on the adults engaging with the children in shared activities e.g. play / meals / reading /talking about events and feelings. Children respond to being valued and thought

about as individuals, so in practice this involves noticing and praising small achievements; 'nothing is hurried in nurture'.

4. Language is understood as a vital means of communication

Language is more than a skill to be learnt, it is the way of putting feelings into words. Children often 'act out' their feelings as they lack the vocabulary to 'name' how they feel. In nurture the informal opportunities for talking and sharing, e.g. welcoming the children into the class or having breakfast together are as important as the more formal lessons teaching language skills. Words are used instead of actions to express feelings and opportunities are created for extended conversations or encouraging imaginative play to understand the feelings of others.

5. All behaviour is communication

This principle underlies the adult response to the children's often challenging or difficult behaviour. 'Given what I know about this child and their development what is this child trying to tell me?' Understanding what a child is communicating through behaviour helps staff to respond in a firm but non-punitive way by not being provoked or discouraged. If the child can sense that their feelings are understood this can help to diffuse difficult situations. The adult makes the link between the external / internal worlds of the child.

6. Transitions are significant in the lives of children

A nurture approach helps the children make the transition from home to school. On a daily basis there are numerous transitions the child makes, e.g. between sessions and classes and between different adults. Changes in routine can be difficult for some children and need to be carefully managed with preparation and support.

We value learning so in St. Sophia's we operate a NO Bell system. We do not line up outside. Children enter the building calmly and quietly.

Praise is always genuine and specific, identifying the observed respectful behaviour, positive relationships, attitude or work habit. Staff are vigilant in looking for, recognizing and acknowledging respectful behaviour in all areas of the school. Children are actively taught and shown how to behave and are given appropriate levels of responsibility. Children are not kept waiting for lengthy periods of time. As adults we display RESPECT and good manners at all times both verbally and in writing.

All staff, including support staff, are trained in the use of a variety of Behaviour/Relational Support techniques.

Staff may also consider using the following:

- Tootling
- Classroom Procedures and Transition Checklist

We try to develop respectful relationships through the use of nurture and nurture principles and practice:

- Recognition of effective learning or responsible citizenship by: comments, stickers, letter home, tootles, positive statement cards, Star Writer, Maths Magician, Super Scientist.
- Public praise in front of group, class or school as appropriate
- Use of PACE – playful, accepting, curiosity, empathy
- Certificates or stickers for certain achievements.
- Extra responsibility given within school e.g. Eco rep, buddy system, Pupil Council etc.
- Work displayed on the 'Good Work Board' achieves a special Headteacher award.
- Check-ins
- Worry Monster
- Restorative Approaches
- Massage in Schools
- PATHS – Star of the Day
- Weekly Award celebrating our God Given Talents.
- Nomination for 'Learner of the Month'
- Community Building Activities every two weeks
- Support as required
- Partnership working

SECTION 2

Transitions

St. Sophia's is the designated Catholic school for Galston, Newmilns, Darvel, Priestland, Moscow and outlying areas. It is an important aspect of our school that our pupils feel a sense of community and we are very fortunate that our children have a varied, and at the same time, common culture. The support of our communities strengthens a sense of belonging.

Transfer from Early Childhood Centre's to Primary 1

Throughout the session, opportunities are taken to make links between Early Years Centre's and St. Sophia's. Pre-school children are invited to attend a selection of school events and participate in competitions organized by the Parent Council. During the summer term a more focused series of visits is made to our associated Early Childhood Centre's by the Primary 1 Teacher/Head Teacher. Children are invited to visit St. Sophia's with their parents and to take part in a series of activities and events in the Primary 1 classroom. During these visits, children meet with their future classmates. Whilst children are enjoying activities in their classroom, the Head Teacher meets with Parents/Carers to be introduced to some of the routines and teaching methods used in the school. Children are provided with a summer holiday booklet and an activity to bring back to school in August.

Our Associated Early Years establishments are:

Darvel Early Childhood Centre:	01560 320785
Galston Early Childhood Centre	01563 820360
Newmilns Early Childhood Centre	07763 568 533

Transfer from Primary School to Secondary School

Children are normally transferred between ages 11 and 12, so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents will be informed of the arrangements no later than December of the year preceding the date of transfer at the start of the new session.

Throughout Primary 7, a range of visits and events are organised to ensure children make meaningful and useful links prior to transferring to secondary school. This involves visits to secondary schools, secondary staff visits to St. Sophia's, a Residential Experience, Parent's Information Evenings and Newsletters.

We provide enhanced transition for learners who are identified during our Transition Meetings which begin in the final term of Primary 6.

The associated secondary school is:	St. Joseph's Academy Grassyards Road, Kilmarnock Tel.No. 01563 526144
The Head of Establishment is:	Mr Joseph Kane

SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND PARENTS/CARERS

Staff

The Head of Establishment is:	Mrs E Heron	
The Depute Head Teacher is:	Mr P MacConnell	
The teaching staff comprises of:	Miss E O'Connell	Primary 1/2
	Miss A Aird and	
	Mrs M Ellison	Primary 2/3/4
	Miss L Hand	Primary 4/5/6
	Mrs E Palmer	Primary 6/7
	Mrs C Canning 0.4	Raising Attainment

Ms L McCrindle 0.3

EAST Core Support

Mrs N Pennycook

Home Link worker

We are also well supported by our school chaplain, **Fr. Gabriel Onoyima**

The invaluable support staff comprises:

Senior Clerical Assistant:

Mrs C Brown

Classroom Assistants:

Ms D Oliver, Mrs L Williams

Facilities Assistant:

Mr John Rae

Catering Assistants:

Mrs K McMillan and Mrs C Bracher

Cleaning Assistants:

Mrs S Young

Mrs A Bartraham

The school is further supported by a visiting keyboard specialist, a visiting brass instructor, an active Schools Co-ordinator, Speech and Language Therapist, School Nurse and an Educational Psychologist. The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the safe running of the school.

The majority of children and young people are able to access their curricular programme at school without the need of additional help other than that which any teacher will provide in any classroom. However, there may be a percentage of children/young people, who may, at some point in their education, have difficulties that will act as a barrier to their effective learning. In such circumstances the child or young person may require additional support in order to help them overcome barriers to their learning. Such children/young people will be considered to have 'additional support needs'.

In St. Sophia's the Head teacher is the Additional Support Needs Co-ordinator. We have a variety of procedures to assist in early identification of children and young people with additional support needs. Identification and support planning will take place at the earliest possible stage.

Children and young people who have been identified as having additional support needs will be supported through a Child's Plan, Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or in some cases a Coordinated Support Plan. In line with legislation, parents/carers/children and young people will be fully consulted at all stages.

All children added to the Additional Support Needs log will have a Child's Plan.

Regular reviews are held in school in order to monitor progress and to take account of the views of parents and carers and learners.

Further information can be obtained from various leaflets, that can be accessed through council website or individual copies are available in school.

At St. Sophia's we recognise that, for a variety of reasons, a child may experience difficulty in learning and may require additional support. Children's needs will normally be met within the daily class routine, working at their own levels. However, sometimes a child requires more attention than the class teacher can provide. In such cases, the East

Ayrshire Support staff or a classroom assistant will work co-operatively with the class teacher to support the child. It is our aim to provide provision so that every child is able to fulfil their potential.

We aim to identify difficulties quickly by constant monitoring and steps are in place to take forward concerns as they appear. Screening procedures include termly assessments and monitoring and tracking of attainment at all stages. There is targeted assessment at P1 – ELLAT at P3 using QUEST, P5/6/7 using WRAT.

The school has a variety of resources aimed at supporting learners. These include:

- Wolf Hill (reading)
- Learner Leader Boxes – Literacy/Numeracy
- Rapid Readers
- Rigby Navigator (reading)
- Cripps Hand for Spelling
- Phonological Awareness Programme
- Nessy and Lexia (ICT)
- The 5 Minute Box – Literacy and Numeracy
- Active Literacy Kit
- Cogmed
- Jump into Movement
- Memory Skills Training
- Buzzing About Learning (after School)
- Seasons for Growth
- L.I.A.M (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management) for children
- The Ex-change Counselling Service

The school has the support of colleagues from Health for pupils requiring Speech and Language Therapy and/or Occupational Therapy. They are very valued members of our team. The Head Teacher is responsible for co-ordinating the services of outside agencies required and parents are always consulted and kept informed.

It is our aim to provide appropriate education for every child, through an understanding of the wide range of barriers to children's learning

Additional Support Needs: East Ayrshire Psychological Service

Advice and support may be sought from other appropriate staff within the school and through consultancy with visiting professionals, including the educational psychologist.

The educational psychologist visits the school regularly to work with and, through the staff, to best support children and young people who are experiencing barriers to learning. Their role is often in giving advice to the school and in the sharing of expertise with staff. School staff may discuss the support needs of individual children with the psychologist in order to ensure that support plans are appropriate to the individual needs of the child. However, the psychologist would not observe or meet with a child without the prior consent of the parents.

The school is responsible for ensuring that parents are aware of their procedures and the psychologist's role within them. The school is also responsible for seeking parental approval, when necessary, for the psychologist to be directly involved with a child or young person.

If you believe your child has additional support needs East Ayrshire Council publishes a range of informative advice. Please contact the establishment or Educational & Social Services:

Telephone: 01563 576000

email: education@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Mediation

Mediation & advocacy services are also available and information about these can be obtained from the contact details below. Enquire - the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning. Operated by Children in Scotland, Enquire offer independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

- ☐ a telephone helpline - 0845 123 2303
- ☐ an email enquiry service - info@enquire.org.uk
- ☐ an online enquiry service
- ☐ two websites - www.enquire.org.uk (for parents/carers and practitioners) and www.enquire.org.uk/yp (for children and young people)

Enquire also provide a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets explaining everything from 'additional support in the early years' to 'what planning should take place for moving on from school'.

SECTION 3

Our school day for children is:

School opens: 9.00 am
Morning Interval: 10.45 am - 11.00 am
Lunchbreak: 12.30 pm - 1.15pm
School Closes: 3.00 pm

At the moment, all children are transported to school by private school coach or taxi. School staff travel to and from school on the coach from Galston. On arrival at school, all children are offered toast, for which there is no charge.



We offer a variety of after school clubs which generally operate from 3pm to 4pm, though some clubs operate until 4.15pm or 4.30pm. After school clubs operate in 6 week blocks and learners are invited to enroll for the clubs. Clubs are offered by a variety of staff, partner agencies and parent volunteers.



School holidays 2023/24

Please note that all dates are inclusive.

Should there be a General Election in 2024 one of the in-service days will be moved.

Date	Holiday
August	
Thursday 17 August 2023	In-service day
Friday 18 August 2023	In-service day
Monday 21 August 2023	Pupils return
September	
Friday 22 September to Monday 25 September 2023	Local holidays (Ayr Gold Cup weekend)
Tuesday 26 September 2023	Pupils return
October	
Monday 16 October to Friday 20 October 2023	October holidays
Monday 23 October 2023	In-service day
Tuesday 24 October 2023	Pupils return
December/January	
Monday 25 December 2023 to Friday 5 January 2024	Christmas and New Year
Monday 8 January 2024	Pupils return
February	
Friday 9 February to Monday 12 February 2024	Local holidays
Tuesday 13 February 2024	In-service day
Wednesday 14 February 2024	Pupils return
March/April	
Friday 29 March to Friday 12 April 2024	Easter holidays (Good Friday - 29 March 2024)
Monday 15 April 2024	Pupils return
May	
Monday 6 May 2024	Local holiday (May Day)
Tuesday 7 May 2024	Pupils return
Monday 27 May 2024	Local holiday
Tuesday 28 May 2024	In-service day
Wednesday 29 May 2024	Pupils return
July/August	
Monday 1 July to Friday 16 August 2024	Summer holidays
Monday 19 August 2024	In-service day
Tuesday 20 August 2024	In-service day
Wednesday 21 August 2024	Pupils return

Attendance and Timekeeping

If your child is going to be absent, please phone, text or e-mail before 9.15am on the first day of the absence, explaining the reasons for non-attendance. It is important that the school is notified to prevent unnecessary procedures being followed e.g. in extreme circumstances, there may be a need to involve social services or police.

Due to the avoidable disruption to children's education caused by family holidays in term time, the Scottish Government issued a new Circular on attendance and absence in 2003.

This national circular makes it clear that without the prior agreement of the school, family holidays will be classified as unauthorised absence. Schools will only give such agreement in exceptional circumstances related to the well-being of the family. Within the terms of the national circular reasons which are not acceptable include the availability of cheap holidays, the availability of desired accommodation, poor weather in school holidays, holidays overlapping the end of term, and parental difficulty in obtaining leave (except in specific circumstances).

The school and Authority seek your fullest co-operation in communicating to all young people the value of their time at school by ensuring that no learning and teaching is lost through unnecessary and avoidable absence.






Parents may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to make an extended visit to relatives. Only written requests detailing the destination, the duration and the provision that will be made for their continuing education will be granted and the pupil noted as an authorised absentee in the register.

Clearly with no explanation from the parent, the absence is unauthorised.

Attendance and timekeeping are very important and we encourage children to be in school and on time every day.

Percentage attendance	Days in school over the year	Days absent from school over the year	Weeks off (Approx)	For learning this means.....
100	190	0	0	You haven't missed anything
95	180.5	9.5	2	1 day every 4 weeks
90	171	19	4	1 day every 2 weeks
85	161.5	28.5	6	3 days every 4 weeks
80	152	38	7.5	1 day per week
75	142.5	47.5	9.5	1/4 of the teaching in 1 year
70	133	57	11.5	3 days out of every 2 weeks
65	123.5	66.5	13.5	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ days off per week
60	114	76	15	2 days off per week

For children we use the following poster:

100%- 98%	97% - 95%	94% - 90%	89% - 85%	Less than 85%
				
What we expect attendance to be	You will start to miss some important learning	This will risk your progress and learning	This will seriously risk your progress and learning	This will really affect your progress and learning

Behaviour and Anti-Bullying

In St. Sophia's, we encourage respectful behaviour through ensuring lessons and activities are well planned, interesting, engaging and motivating and that children are either appropriately challenged or supported with the tasks we set and by the use of a nurturing approach. We use both a whole school and/or a targeted approach. As reflective practitioners, we regularly monitor and review our curriculum and the learning experiences we provide for our learners.

In line with our nurturing approach, we acknowledge that all behaviour is communication. If children are struggling to manage their behaviour we view any discipline moment as opportunities for teaching.

Stage 1 Behaviours and Communication

These are dealt with by the adult responsible at the time. The procedures used are:

- Non-verbal cue.
- A general verbal reminder of desired behaviours.
- A one-to-one reminder of the desired behaviours.
- Restorative conversations.

If a child is not responding to the usual behaviour measures and their actions continue to cause concern, then a referral would be made to the Head Teacher

Stage 2 Behaviours and Communication

We aim to support children with their behaviour. Staff are fully aware of child development and behaviour needs. However, unacceptable/unsafe behaviour which could include some or all of the following: violence, bullying, (All incidents of bullying are reported to the

Head Teacher and are formally recorded using SEEMIS) harassment, vandalism and swearing, is dealt with in a more formal way and the follow up may result in the following:

- Referral to the Head Teacher
- Contacting parents/carers
- Supported playtimes
- Completion of Assessment Grid
- An Individual Learning Plan or Child's Plan
- Additional Adult Supervision
- Referral for nurture (small group)
- Referral to Home Link Worker
- Multi agency planning and support as outlined using SHANARRI and GIRFEC procedures
- Procedures outlined in Standard Circular 8.

There is flexibility in the application of these procedures to suit the individual circumstances. In the event of a child requiring further support and after consultation with parents an agreed form of home/school communication may be used between teacher and parent.

The SLT will monitor this communication.

Breaktimes

In St. Sophia's all staff and learners work together to promote respectful behaviour and relationships. There is an expectation that all staff and learners are treated with equal respect.

The playground/meal supervisors play a useful role by:

- Arriving promptly in the playground and assisting children in the distribution of toys and games.
- Interacting with the children and encouraging positive playground games/activities.
- Praising children for playing well etc.
- Issuing Positive Statement Cards and stating the reason.

Supervisors issue Positive Prompt Cards/Compliment Cards in recognition of good behaviour, consideration for others, special kindness, improvement, helpfulness etc. These prompt cards are then recorded for each house and celebrated during Community Building Activities. The cards/comments are displayed on the 'tootling' wall.

There will be occasions when there will be a breakdown in behaviour in some children and some of the following may be used:

- Give calming down time.
- Use 'planned ignoring'.
- Refer to 'Bounce Back'
- Restore the relationship: child/child or child/adult.
- Use restorative approaches/conversations as required.
- Child given further support in free or unstructured play situations.
- Serious matters are reported directly to the Head Teacher.

Stage 2 Behaviours and Communication: Unacceptable/Unsafe Behaviour

There is no place for violence, bullying of any kind (see Equalities Policy for protected characteristics), harassment, vandalism, or bad language in the school community and these are always discouraged. All occurrences of this type of behaviour are communicated to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will investigate the incident and appropriate action will be taken. This is recorded using our Seemis system.

Partnership with Parents

Through good communication, the positive and active involvement of parents is sought. Partnership is fostered through parents being informed, consulted and advised. The Head Teacher will make early contact with parents of children who are experiencing difficulty and the positive involvement of parents will be encouraged.

Parents will be made aware of the school's expectations and are asked to support the school in their efforts to promote positive, respectful behaviour, relationships and attitudes.

St. Sophia's has an open-door policy and welcomes parents into school, however they will always speak firstly with the head teacher who will make any further arrangements to meet with the class teacher. We are fortunate to have the option of referral to our Home Link worker.

Parents can help by:

- Encouraging your child to behave well at school.
- Encouraging your child to be responsible and behave safely.
- Upholding the schools ethos and values.
- Speaking positively about school and the staff.
- Taking an interest in learning.
- Encouraging your child to be honest and truthful.
- Ensuring your child has a bedtime routine and adequate sleep – take special care to avoid televisions and electronic devices in bedrooms.
- Alerting the school of any issues/events which might have an impact on your child's behaviour or relationships.

Parent Feedback

"We are both so very proud of our daughter. She is absolutely flourishing under the nurturing guidance of your amazing school! Her teacher has been the most incredible mentor and has been so very receptive of her needs. As a direct result, our daughter has grown academically and emotionally in the short time she has been at St. Sophia's and for that we are eternally grateful.

St. Sophia's has not only given her a voice but they have listened to her and believed in her and this has seen her grow in confidence. To see her at the cake and carols evening in the front row absolutely smashing it was proof if proof were needed!

For our daughter to choose to support the P1/2's rather than go to the Christmas party with her friends demonstrates the fact that she isn't afraid to challenge the norm and is just as happy carving her own path as she is following the flock. I couldn't be more proud!

Thank you for all you have done and all you continue to do to support these wonderful and unique children who I've no doubt will become trailblazers in the future!"

Other Agencies/Specialist Support

We recognize that children may experience significant events in their lives which can result in additional support in order for them to access school education. Should the occasion arise where a child needs further support provided by the school or another agency parental consent will be sought and given prior to any further action being taken.

Any of the following agencies may be called upon for help or support in dealing with a concern:

- Participation in 'Seasons for Growth'
- Referral for inclusion in our nurture group.
- Psychological Services is part of the Education Department and is a resource for children living with learning, emotional, social or behavioural difficulties.
- East Ayrshire support Team (EAST) provides support for children in school.
- School Nursing Service or GP may be called upon to investigate health problems e.g. hearing or sight difficulties.
- Barnardos
- Women's aid
- CAMHS
- Vibrant Communities e.g. play@home,
- Home Link Worker
- Children and Families Team
- Young Carers
- Families Outside

Our priority in St. Sophia's is to establish an appropriate climate of support for learning and to establish positive relationships in order to maximize good behaviour and relationships. We aim to create an atmosphere in which children, staff and parents feel valued and respected.

It is hoped that most support needs will be resolved by using strategies outlined above however, should suspension from school be warranted, the Head Teacher will follow the procedures outlined in Standard Circular 8.



Respect for All Anti-Bullying Policy

There may be times when your child feels that they are being bullied. It is most important that parents/carers who are concerned about possible bullying contact the school at the earliest opportunity to discuss the problem. This discussion will focus on the action that will be taken and how your child can be supported. Bullying is a problem which cannot be stopped by pupils, parents/carers or teachers acting alone and parents/carers should therefore not hesitate to seek the advice and support of the school, if the need arises.

East Ayrshire Council is committed to creating and sustaining a safe, positive and inclusive environment, where respect is shown to and is given by all of its children, young people, staff and parents/carers. A number of initiatives and policy documents are in place to support, protect and encourage children and young people to lead happy and successful lives. In East-Ayrshire we follow the ***Respect for All Anti-Bullying Policy February 2020***, which outlines guidance and procedures for schools.

Dress Code

We encourage the wearing of school uniform every day, including the last day of each term. (The exception to this is when we have a dress-down day for fundraising or a dress-up day e.g. to celebrate 'World Book Day'.) These events are publicised on our school app. The uniform comprises of a red polo shirt, grey sweatshirt and grey or black long or short trousers or skirt. Children are also able to wear a white shirt with a red school tie and a tartan skirt or pinafore. It is also permissible to wear any school badged items e.g. cardigans, jumpers or tank tops. Some children wear a black, badged blazer. Children should wear flat, comfortable shoes.

Unless the weather is very cold and wet, we like the children to be able to play outside therefore it is useful for children to bring a waterproof jacket to school every day. Unless you tell us otherwise, we will ask children to wear their jacket outside if staff deem the weather is cold or rain threatens.

For P.E. lessons, children keep their gym kit in school. The gym kit comprises of black shorts, red T-shirt and black plimsoles/sandshoes. All jewellery must be removed prior to

P.E. lessons. Trainers can be worn for outdoor P.E. Children are not permitted to wear football colours in school.

Security and Visitors

Public access to St. Sophia's can only be gained through the Main Entrance during the teaching day for security reasons. The security doors are released from inside the school allowing entry to the building. The door has a bell which when pressed alerts the office staff who can then release it to allow you to enter the building. Children are taught not to open the door, so please do not be offended if they leave you standing to go and find an adult member of staff: they are not being rude, just following the safety guidelines.

On arrival, please complete the log-in book located at the visitor's reception. You will be asked to provide your name, reason for visit and time entering and leaving the building. All members of school staff can be easily identified by their school badge, which is worn at all times.

No unauthorised photography or videoing is allowed within the school premises without the permission of the head of establishment.

Parents and carers are asked to comply with the requests on photography and videoing at school/establishment events which will be published in relation to each individual event. Such requests are made solely to protect the interests of individual children and families.

ENTRY/EXIT TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

Please note that pedestrian access to school is via the gate from Carron Avenue. The visitor's car park is on the right. There is a pathway leading from the visitor's car park to the main entrance.

Vehicle access is via the main gates on Carron Avenue. We want to keep children safe, therefore children should not access the school grounds from Annan Road. These gates are for school coaches only.

Homework and Study

Promoting children's learning and developing strong partnerships between home and school is the foundation of our homework policy. Learning happens both in and out of school and to ensure a breadth and balance of motivating homework activities our homework was developed in full partnership with children, parents and carers and staff. All Homework Tasks are posted on the school app. It was agreed that:

- Homework is valuable
- Homework should be given regularly
- Homework should be completed.
- Homework should provide an enjoyable shared experience.

This consultation process has resulted in the following agreement about the purpose of home learning:

Aims:

- To encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and become more independent learners.
- To consolidate and extend the work carried out in class and to practise new skills.
- To let parents know what children are learning in class.
- To encourage parents in supervising, checking and praising children for the work they do.
- To help children develop good study habits and promote a positive attitude towards learning.
- To provide homework that is achievable, appropriate to the child's level of ability and an enjoyable, shared experience.

Homework is monitored by class teachers and by the Head Teacher. Children and parents are encouraged to give their views on homework annually as part of our self-evaluation and school improvement process.

What homework should my child be doing?

This varies as children progress through the school but all children can access their homework via the school app and Learning Journals. A 'Termly Curriculum Information Sheet' describing ways to support your child with their learning is also posted on the app and on Learning Journals.

As a general rule all children will have homework every night from Monday to Thursday. We try not to issue homework over the weekend. Every child has a log-in for Education City. This online learning platform is often used to set homework tasks.

Children's work and achievements are regularly uploaded to Learning Journals. From August 2021 we will regularly use this platform to inform parents of classroom activities and events.

Resources to Support Parents and Carers

Every parent or carer receives the following Parent Guides/Support Packs:

- 'A Writing Guide for Parents'
- 'Ideas for Supporting your Child with Spelling'
- 'A Parent's Guide to Numeracy'
- Literacy Support Pack
- Numeracy Support Pack

What sort of activities will children be expected to do?

Our homework activities are related to the work children are doing at school but will not always be written work. All children have a log-in and passwords for online learning platforms and staff will advise of specific activities to complete. Children are welcome to use Education City for their own interest and enjoyment too. For younger children it will usually be:

- Reading with parents or carers
- Key words and sounds
- Number worksheet
- Games or activities to practise literacy, numeracy or other skills.
- Education City
- 'Big Writing' – talk/ note-making homework
- Find or bring

For older children, homework may also include:

- Reading with a follow up task card
- Preparing a presentation to the class
- Finding out information – personal research task
- Designing or making something
- 'Big Writing' – finding wow words, planning a story
- Planning for a task
- Literacy, numeracy or other topic work.
- Education City

Primary 4,5,6,7 Core Homework Tasks:

- Home Reader with guided reading task.
- Spelling – key words/common words with Active Literacy Task.
- Spelling card with various activities
- Big Writing – Wow word/story planner
- Numeracy – various tasks depending on class work.
- Education City

How much time should my child spend on homework?

Primary 1-3: around 15 minutes per night.

Primary 4-7: around 30 minutes per night, although many will spend more time enjoying reading for their own pleasure.

Feedback on your child's homework

The children need to know how well they have done and what they could do better. Sometimes work will be discussed in lessons, or teachers may give written comments on one or two aspects of a piece of work. Teachers will often post comments on Learning Journals.

What if my child gets ‘stuck’?

If your child is unsure about how to complete their homework, they should do the following:

- Ask the teacher to go over it again the next day.
- Ask you to contact the school using glowmail or by phoning the school office, explaining why it was not completed.

Parents and carers are welcome to phone to arrange an appointment with the class teacher or to discuss any problems.

Should I help my child with homework?

Our survey tells us that children get more out of an activity if parents and carers get involved and that parents and carers want to be involved. Please encourage your child and help them set aside a regular time for homework. Praise them for their efforts but don't be tempted to take over and do too much! Though please remember that younger children may need you to scribe or write their sentences for them.

What if my child does not complete their homework?

- The teacher will note this.
- The Head Teacher is alerted.
- An e-mail/text is sent home or a telephone call is made.

*Please note that there may be special circumstances preventing a child from completing their homework. In such cases arrangements can be made to support the child by contacting the Head Teacher.

Do's and Don'ts of Homework - A Quick Guide

Do – give lots of encouragement and praise and ensure your child gives of their best.

Do – show an interest and talk about their work.

Do – share stories, poems and books together.

Do – decide together where and when homework will be done.

Do – relax and enjoy this quality time and sharing of learning.

Don't – show anxiety or impatience.

Don't - do the work yourself.

Don't - hesitate to ask the school for help.

Don't - pressurise your child to overdo the session.

Some children may prefer to attend the after school homework/study club.

School Catering Service

The Catering Service provides a varied, healthy option of meals, however some children bring a packed lunch. All Primary 1-5 children are provided with a free school meal.

All school meals are pre-ordered and paid for using the Parentpay system. The school meals are prepared and freshly cooked each day in our working kitchen and they are delicious!

We offer every child free toast and a piece of fresh fruit every day. We prefer that additional snacks are not brought to school unless requested e.g. for out of school visits.

We usually operate a breakfast club but this is currently not operational.

Complaints Handling

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of provision made by the establishment, you should contact the establishment in the first instance. Our aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible at the first point of contact. The Head teacher, Mrs Heron, the DHT, Mr MacConnell, and the school team will do their best to resolve any problems or concerns.

Emergency Procedures/Medical and Healthcare

Emergency evacuation from school: in the highly unlikely event that all the children have to be evacuated from school, we will use our app and text messaging to inform parents and carers. We will retain children in a safe place until collected by parent or carer or their authorised person.

In the event of a child taking ill, or having an accident during school hours, the parents or emergency contact are informed immediately. It is vitally important that the school has an up - to - date emergency contact, change of address or telephone number. All children are forwarded an emergency contact list each August and Parents/Carers should forward at least two alternative contacts. The school has facilities to cope temporarily with minor ailments and accidents. The children will be cared for by our Classroom Assistant who is a qualified First - Aider. Parents should not send their children to school if they believe them to be unwell. Not only is it disadvantageous to the child but there is also the possibility of spreading infection throughout the school. Parents are asked to inform the

school of any particular medical requirements so that arrangements can be made to assist the child.

Should your child be prescribed medicine which requires to be taken at school then forms are available from the school office. These must be completed and signed by parents before any medicines can be administered in school.

Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 1998 currently regulates the way the Council handles and processes personal data that we hold. This will be replaced by a new data protection law on 25 May 2018 which will introduce new rules on how we collect and process personal data.

The link below will take you to the Council's information governance intranet pages where you can find further information including data protection/GDPR guidance and factsheets.

<http://eacintranet/Services/DemocraticServices/InformationGovernance/General-Data-Protection-Regulation-GDPR/General-Data-Protection-Regulation-GDPR.aspx>

Parent Council

As a parent of a child in attendance at the school, you are automatically part of the Parent Forum of the school.

As a member of the Parent Forum each parent can expect to:

- receive information about the school and its activities;
- hear about what partnership with parents means in the school;
- identify issues they want the Parent Council to work on with the school;
- be asked their opinion by the Parent Council on issues relating to the school and the education it provides;
- work in partnership with staff at the school;
- enjoy taking part in the wider life of the school in whatever way they can.

What is a Parent Council?

The Parent Council is the committee appointed by the Parent Forum to run matters on its behalf. A Parent Council is not run by the school or the local authority but by the parents in the school. Parent Council members work as volunteers on behalf of all parents on educational matters that are of importance to all.

Communication with parents is a key part of the Parent Council's role.

Parent Councils are designed to be flexible but their main functions are to:

- work in partnership with the school to decide on the key priorities to take forward;
- ensure that the school, and learning is the best it can be;
- provide a voice for parents on issues that are important to them;
- improve the school's understanding of how to engage parents in their children's learning and in the wider life of the school;

- support the school to develop strong home/school partnerships;
- communicate regularly with the parent forum to hear their views and keep them informed;
- help make links with the wider community;
- capture the unique and varied skills, interests and experience that parents can offer;
- promote contact between school, parents, pupils and the local community;
- fundraise in collaboration with the school for the benefit of all pupils and families;
- apply for grants and seek out funding sources;
- organise events;
- play an active role in the recruitment of Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher appointments;
- contribute to the annual update of the School Handbook;
- contribute to school inspections and the development of the School Improvement Plan
- help with or undertake setting or school consultations;
- conduct business efficiently in accordance with the Constitution.

We are extremely fortunate to have a very active Parent Council who do their utmost to help and support the work of St. Sophia's. They rely on the help and support of the wider parent body. Parent helpers are greatly appreciated on all school outings and are encouraged to be involved in many aspects of school life. Parents have opportunities to help in school on a daily basis.

The Parent Council and the school value the help given by parents by:

- Fundraising
- School outings
- School events
- Paired reading/maths projects
- Assisting at the lunchtime club
- Sharing their skills and talents
- Leading after-school clubs

Our school would be a much poorer place without their willing support. Our school endeavours to maintain a close relationship with parents. For this reason we operate an 'Open Door Policy' and encourage worried or concerned parents to contact the school to make arrangements to discuss their child. Information is regularly given in the form of newsletters highlighting forthcoming events, termly curriculum overviews, parent workshops, holidays, occasions etc. Please note that all information will be posted on GLOW and on the school app. Please check the app regularly using the 'messages' or 'new' tabs. We no longer issue paper copies of newsletters.

We look forward to many years working in partnership with our Parent Council. Our Chairperson is Mrs Ann Craigen,

SECTION 4

The Curriculum

St. Sophia's Primary School provides a full and varied curriculum which follows the Curriculum for Excellence framework and reflects the policies of East Ayrshire Education Authority.

Across the school, staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They make classrooms interesting places for learners and respond to children's ideas and interests when they plan lessons. Children are actively involved in planning the learning and identifying resources.

"Teachers use praise well to encourage and motivate learners. Teachers ensure children receive individual written feedback to extend their learning and inform next steps. Children at all stages engage in self and peer assessment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. For example, older children support each other to improve their imaginative writing. Staff have developed a range of strategies to help children understand their progress, including approaches that engage and inform parents. Children are proud to share the class 'big books". HMIe November 2019

Children are encouraged to respond to a variety of issues affecting them in school and through forums such as the Pupil Council, Eco Committee and JRSO, and have opportunities to contribute to a variety of school events and experiences.

We have Junior Road Safety Officers and are participating in Kerbcraft. Children take an active part in the day to day running of the school by being our photographers, dining hall monitors, music leaders, playLEADers and Get-Together Presenters. We have school ambassadors, Sacristans, Language Leaders, captains and vice captains, who are interviewed for on a yearly basis.

Parents and parishioners are regular visitors to our school to take part in Get-togethers and Monthly Mass. We have excellent links with St. Sophia's Parish.

Children, parents and the wider community actively contribute to the school by regularly attending fundraising events.

Children have worked collaboratively and creatively to raise significant amounts of money for SCIAF and provide practical support through 'Backpacks for Malawi'.

The Eco-Committee work hard to enhance our working environment. Among many other projects, children have developed a garden area to enhance the school grounds and grow edible plants. This involved working together with the school community including parents and carers who contributed and offered resources, skills and assistance. We have an excellent partnership with the Dean Park Ranger Service. We are proud to have achieved a Green Flag and an East-Ayrshire Clean Green Bronze Award.

Children have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and are making very good progress in physical education through the variety of opportunities provided by school staff and visiting specialists. We have taken part in the Sportshall Athletics Championships, Day of Dance, School's Cross Country, Jump Start, Massage in Schools and events organised by our Active Schools co-ordinator.

We offer a variety of after school clubs.

Children have also been involved in Loudoun Agricultural Show, Galston Gala Day, Darvel Horticultural Show, Darvel DIG, Newmilns Food Festival, Kilmarnock Light Switch On, Ecumenical Services with local Churches and many other local and national competitions.

Staff provide children with different ways to make progress by ensuring that they have a good balance of individual, group and class teaching. Well-planned tasks help teachers give clear feedback to help them build on their strengths and improve their work.

Children's engagement in their learning is actively encouraged. Children are aware of the high expectations of their class teachers and the school. The ethos within the school aims to promote success, confidence, responsibility and value as an individual and as a member of the school community.

We use East-Ayrshire Curriculum Planning Frameworks and Progressions Pathways for the learning and teaching of Literacy and Numeracy. These Planning and Progression Frameworks are being used for all curricular areas from August 2020.

Much of our Health and Wellbeing Learning and Teaching and Progression Pathway is based on 'This is our Faith' and 'God's Loving Plan'.

In all classes, children are involved in devising Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. We host regular 'Sharing the Learning' events and workshops for parents and carers.

Literacy

The initial approach to reading in St. Sophia's is varied in order to give as many children as possible the best chance of success. Materials used for building basic vocabulary and delivering required skills development are chosen for interest, presentation and enjoyment. Our children learn to read through a variety of activities which involve children's interaction with each other, their teacher and their parents. Many opportunities are planned for children to work in pairs, groups, with the teacher and other adults.

We worked closely with the Scottish Attainment Team in order to use the Active Literacy approach to the learning and teaching of reading, phonics and spelling. At early stages children learn to say, make/break, blend, read and write.



The reading scheme used in the early stages is Oxford Reading Tree and is heavily supported by the Phonics Readers Songbirds. Reading Comprehension begins in the

early stages by using the Find it, Prove it, Think About it strategies. This builds onto the six key comprehension strategies:

- Making connections
- Monitoring Comprehension
- Answering and asking questions
- Recognising story structure
- Visualising (using pictures and key word plans)
- Summarising

As children progress and they become fluent they transfer to a variety of resources e.g. Kingscourt, Winners, Sprints, Get Real, Wolf Hill and Rapid Readers to develop a wide variety of literacy skills. We have a range of high quality, whole class novels to provide the basis to teach a range of literacy skills.

The good practice of personal reading is encouraged throughout the school. We value the help of parents at all stages in enabling their child to read at home.

Listening and Talking: all classes encourage and teach four basic skills – sitting still, staying quiet, listening to all the words and looking at the person who is talking.

Our extensive range of literacy resources and 'Big Writing' are used in school to provide a structured and cohesive programme for the learning and teaching of writing skills. Children are taught to write for many purposes and learn to recognize the appropriate format for the task e.g. letter, report or instruction. We have a large selection of Big Books which are used to model good examples of the writers craft. We link 'Making Thinking Visible' to many writing tasks.

Spelling is a short daily activity. Children work collaboratively on the following processes:

- Listening to the sounds of words
- Identifying the number of syllables in words
- Looking at word shapes and patterns
- Using strategies to remember common words
- Thinking about and discussing tricky words

A variety of resources are used and children enjoy using the interactive white boards to 'have a go' and many other active spelling techniques. Spelling and phonics will be linked to the skills outlined in the Active Literacy Programme.

Numeracy

Daily interactive mental mathematics is an important feature of classroom routine and encourages a challenging, confident application of skills. From the earliest stages and throughout the school we use Numbertalks in order for children to use their numeracy skills and develop strategies. Much of the learning is play based. Problem solving skills are used on a regular basis with planned introduction and teaching of all strategies. Each stage has a folder of activities taken from a variety of resources and pupils are given regular opportunities to work individually, in pairs and in groups. We do not rely on one

resource but use a range of active approaches to the learning and teaching of numeracy skills.

Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools

The revised outcomes and experiences lay a firmer emphasis on the use of Scripture, Sacramental Preparation, Prayer, Reflection, Magisterium of the Church, Traditions and Practices, Ethics and Moral Issues, Personal Search and other World Religions. Where previously equal emphasis was placed on Christianity, Personal Search and other World Religions a sharper focus is now placed on Christianity in the catholic tradition. The revised guidelines are implemented through the use of 'This is our Faith' and we plan, deliver and assess Religious Education through the use of the revised Diocesan Planners. Again this subject may be promoted through an integrated approach and there are clear links between 'This is our Faith' and the Experiences and Outcomes of RERC and Health and Wellbeing.

We are very ably supported by our school Chaplain who regularly visits the school and assists with the preparation of candidates for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Currently children in Primary 3 undertake the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Children in Primary 4 undertake the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion. We have strong links with the parish of St Sophia's.

We have regular monthly masses and services in school to which parents and parishioners are invited.

Parents who do not wish their child to participate in religious instruction or observance should discuss this with the Head Teacher.

Interdisciplinary Planning

With the development of a Curriculum for Excellence we have introduced interdisciplinary topics. These are broad based, thematic projects that are planned to span all areas of Social Subjects and Expressive Arts, Literacy and Numeracy.

The curriculum aims to help every learner develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work; which are encapsulated in the four capacities – to enable each child and young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective learner.

Interdisciplinary topics which are based across the curriculum areas can provide relevant, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences and stimulating contexts to meet the varied needs of children and young people.

Examples of children's work is uploaded to Learning Journals as evidence of the progression of skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of curricular areas.

Social Subjects

This area of the curriculum is designed to help each child become aware of his/her place in society through relationships to the past, interaction with the present and in meeting the challenge of the future:

- Science: Living Things and The Processes of Life; Energy and Forces, Earth and Space
- Social Subjects: People in the Past; People in Society; People and Places
- Technology: Technological capability

Thematic and interdisciplinary themes encapsulate a broad balance of social subjects. We put a great deal of emphasis on STEM and use our links with KESS and Ayrshire College to enhance this area of the curriculum. We take part in Primary Engineering, K'Nex Challenge and Scottish Young Leaders Award in order to develop skills for learning, life and work.

“A focused whole school approach to learning and teaching in science is having a positive impact on children’s progress and confidence in this area.” HMle November 2019

Expressive Arts

Expressive arts are integrated within interdisciplinary projects whenever possible. Each area, *Drama, Music, Art and Design, Dance*, emphasizes different methods of self-expression and all build confidence and self-awareness as well as promoting co-operation and understanding. In addition every opportunity is taken to extend experience in these areas through outside agencies with particular expertise.

A variety of resources are used to supplement interdisciplinary topics these include:

- Charanga which gives children the opportunity to sing, listen to music and create music of their own.
- From Primary 5 onwards, children have the opportunity to learn to play piano or a brass instrument.
- The school has based P1-P7 developments on the Drama Resource pack and North Ayrshire Drama pack.
- The core programme for the teaching of Art and Design is Borders Art and this incorporates evaluation by children of their own and others work including that of famous artists.
- A great deal of our work in Expressive Arts is undertaken as part of our community involvement in Fayres, Shows, Church Events and local and National Competitions.

Health and Wellbeing

- Health and Wellbeing is a curricular area which comprises of the following modes of learning:
- Personal and Social Education
- Health Education
- Physical Education



This curricular area has been given co-equal status along with Literacy and Numeracy as a result of various directives and information from the Scottish Government. In common with Literacy and Numeracy every opportunity to further develop the key outcomes in Health and Wellbeing occurs across all areas of the curriculum.

The themes within Health and Wellbeing are:

- Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Planning choices and changes
- Physical education, physical activity and sport
- Food and Health
- Substance misuse
- Relationships, sexual health and parenthood, guided by 'God's Loving Plan'

We work very closely with all other health professionals, Vibrant Communities and our active schools co-ordinator to ensure children have a wide range of experiences relating

to their health and well-being. We participate in a range of activities to offer children a wide variety of experiences e.g. sporting events, Scottish country dancing, football coaching, residential visits for Primary 7 children, cycling proficiency etc.

Each week the whole school participates in activities to promote health and wellbeing, usually involving outdoor learning.

We are currently involved in the Barnardos PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Health and Wellbeing Programme'. This is a structured programme to help learners become resilient, manage challenge and raise attainment through a 'can do' attitude.

Parents are kept fully informed by letter about visits from specialists who support our Health and Wellbeing programme and are given notice of how and when we teach children about sexual health and relationships. Parents are advised that they may view and discuss any resources to be used in the teaching of sexual health prior to their use with their child. We are guided by 'God's Loving Plan' in the teaching of sexual health and relationships.

Physical Education ensures children are given regular opportunities to develop skills in games, dance, fitness and gymnastics. With the support of Vibrant Communities Primary 6/7 children also receive swimming lessons at some point throughout the year. East Ayrshire Activity Motivators work with each class during the year to promote active health and fitness programmes. Children also access ski-ing at Newmilns ski slope.

Information Communication Technology

The school is resourced with a wide variety of educational software. Activ Panels, ipads and chromebooks in all classrooms, enhance the learning and teaching taking place every day in St. Sophia's. Discrete skills are taught and then used by children across the curriculum to enhance learning and teaching. Children from Primary 1-7 use Learning Journals to plan their targets and gather evidence of learning and achievement.

Modern Foreign Languages

All staff use the East-Ayrshire Framework to deliver a progressive programme for the teaching of French from Primary 1 to Primary 7. We also use Collins Primary French and this is supplemented with a variety of teacher made resources. In Primary 1-3, the focus is on the listening and talking, with greater emphasis on reading and writing skills as children progress from Primary 4 through to Primary 7. We also introduce Spanish to all children throughout the school, with the emphasis being on listening and talking skills through a topic based approach.

We also take opportunities to deepen and extend languages learning by participating in short projects, or by partnership work with our school chaplains or parents and carers.

SECTION 5

Achievement and Improvement

- Across the school, staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They make classrooms interesting places for learners and respond to children's ideas and interests when they plan lessons. Learners are actively involved in planning the learning and identifying resources.
- All staff are using the Experiences and Outcomes of CFE in planning lessons and are skilled at involving learners in gathering evidence of learning, attainment and achievement.
- Learning Journals are updated weekly and are regularly used to gather evidence of learning. These have resulted in in-depth conversations with learners to identify areas of strength, next steps and support needs.
- In order to raise attainment in Numeracy, all staff have undertaken training and worked with the SAC team to ensure progression and consistency across learning and teaching.
- In order to raise attainment in Literacy, all staff have undertaken training in Active Literacy.
- Health and Wellbeing: all staff have engaged with colleagues from Educational Psychology and undertaken training in nurture and relationship based approaches. All staff have received training in the use of PATHS.
- All staff have engaged with 'Massage in Schools', embedding this across all stages, Restorative Approaches and 'Jump into Movement'. We also have a member of staff trained in the use of LIAM (Lets Introduce Anxiety Management) for children.
- Assessment data has been used to plan learning and support which has resulted in almost all children making significant gains in reading and spelling ages, with many children now achieving beyond their chronological age.
- Learners in P6/7 have undertaken the Scottish Engineering Special Leaders Award.
- We have continued to work closely with KESS to enhance learning and teaching of STEM.
- Staff provide children with different ways to make progress by ensuring that they have a good balance of individual, group and class teaching. Well-planned tasks help teachers give clear feedback to help them build on their strengths and improve

their work. Staff are skilled at using a range of assessment evidence in order to provide feedback to learners.

- Staff spend time weekly in quality discussions with learners about how much and how well they have learned in order to set targets for the coming week, thus allowing children opportunities to reflect on their learning and to identify next steps. These targets are shared with parents.
- Moderation—staff involved in useful professional dialogue at school and education group level. Staff are skilled at sharing standards and expectations to support their professional judgements in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff are using a Relationship Based approach across all stages of the school.
- Restorative approaches is understood and used by the majority of children across the school.
- All staff are using a range of IT to motivate, engage and involve learners and parents in learning and teaching.
- All staff are fully trained in using “Developing in Faith: Catholic School Evaluation.” This year the focus was on ‘Celebrating and Worshipping’. Children have undertaken a range of activities to promote Gospel values and more fully understand how they can help others in the community both at home and abroad.
- The school has worked very closely with partners in EAST, Health, Campus Cop, Active Schools, the Home Link Worker, Children and Families, the School Chaplain and with the Educational Psychologist, to ensure families and learners are supported. Almost all children on the ASN Log who have an Individual Action Plan or Individual Learning Plan have achieved or overtaken their targets.
- We have developed a Relationship Policy to promote positive behaviour based on our work to develop the use of nurturing techniques and relationship based approaches throughout the school.
- We are trained in the use of ‘Seasons for Growth’ and this has been used effectively to support children and families.
- We have achieved a Green Flag and EAClean Green Bronze Award.
- We have achieved RRS Bronze Status.

Our Areas for Improvement are:

Rights Respecting Schools Award: going for Silver will permeate all areas of learning and teaching.

- Q.I. 1.1/1.2/1.3/1.5 Leadership of Learning with the focus on differentiation, assessment and effective use of data.
- Q.I. 2.3/2.5/3.2 Literacy – Raise attainment in Literacy using Active Literacy (Yr.3)
Listening and Talking – raising attainment by embedding the skills in ‘Teaching Children to Listen in the Primary School’. (Yr. 3)
- Q.I. 2.3/2.5/3.2 Numeracy – Raise attainment in numeracy (Yr.3)
- Q.I. 1.2/2.7/3.1 Developing in Faith – Celebrating and Worshipping
- Q.I. 2.7/3.3 Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive destinations. Improvement in digital literacy skills.
- Q.I. 2.3/2.4/2.5/2.7/3.1 Improvements in children and young peoples health and wellbeing. Developing Healthy Eating through ‘Smarter Snackers’ Programme and ‘Eatwell Plate’.
Ski 2 Achieve: focus includes resilience, confidence, team work, risk taking, health and wellbeing outcomes and citizenship.

Maintenance Activities

- Curriculum for Excellence: Curriculum planning and classroom practice around the 4 capacities.
- Continue to develop and monitor effective systems of assessment, moderation and tracking in accordance with National and L.A. guidance, use of benchmarks and National Standardised Assessments.
- Further development of STEM throughout the school, through our partnership with Kilmarnock Engineering and Science Society and EA Stem Leader.
- Eco-schools and eaCleanGreen Awards.

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises that assessment is an integral part of day-to-day teaching and learning. Learners’ progress is closely monitored by staff, who reflect with them on their strengths, learning needs and next steps, and take action based on this. Learners themselves are increasingly involved in this process, as they develop the skills needed to be able to make effective judgments on their own learning; skills that will be

important to them throughout life. Testing will continue to be part of the framework of assessment, providing additional evidence of what learners know, understand and are able to do, and helping teachers plan learning experiences which are motivating and challenging. Teachers gather evidence of what learners say, write, make and do as part of the assessment process. Children are very much involved in this process, using a range of self and peer assessment approaches.

In St. Sophia's assessment is built into the learning and teaching process and is part of the teacher's daily practice. Children's progress is continuously being assessed by their teachers through questioning, the marking of written work and observation of their children at work. This continuous assessment means that the teacher can plan the next step in learning for each child and problems and difficulties can be detected as soon as they occur.

More formal assessments are carried out at the following stages:

Primary 1 – Highland Phonological Awareness Assessment.

Primary 3 - QUEST

Primary 4-7 WRAT (Spelling)

Primary 1,4,7 NSA

Assessment includes records kept of progress through the programmes of study in Literacy and Language and Numeracy and Mathematics to inform teachers of required next steps for the groups within the class. Group records are also kept e.g. reading, common words, and spelling/phonics. Evidence of learner achievement is gathered each session and passed on throughout the school P1-P7.

The Head Teacher has termly monitoring and tracking meetings with teachers in order to discuss assessment data and learner progress including next steps in learning. We use the East-Ayrshire Monitoring and Tracking Toolkit to record evidence of attainment in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Various other monitoring exercises occur throughout the session to ensure that all children are progressing within the various programmes of study in class. Children use a range of "Assessment is for Learning" techniques to assess their own learning and identify next steps.

Reporting to Parent meetings take place twice during the session. The Reporting to Parent meeting in October gives parents an oral report and a brief outline of how children are progressing, their strengths and areas for development. Prior to this meeting in October, teachers send a brief written report, describing how well children are learning in school. The second Reporting to Parent meeting takes place in March and includes the levels of achievement in all curricular areas as well as the recommendations for the child's future progress. These evenings give parents an opportunity to discuss their child's progress as well as allowing an opportunity to view their child's class work.

A written Annual Report is issued for all children just before the second Reporting to Parent meeting takes place, and provides evidence of pupil progress in the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Reports allow for children and parents to comment on progress or highlight areas of concern.

Throughout the session, learners will bring home evidence of learning via 'Star Writer's', 'Maths Magicians', 'Super Scientist' and 'God Given Talent' Awards.

Parents, however, do not need to wait until Parents' Evenings to discuss their child's progress. Parents are welcome to visit the Head Teacher at any time. Meetings with Class teachers can also be arranged through the Head Teacher.

School and Community

The school is an important feature of the local community and as such it aims to be actively engaged in fostering good relationships amongst the members of the wider community. We have close links with the parishioners of St Sophia's Parish Community. The Parish Community is made welcome at our school masses, celebrations and concerts. In collaboration with our school chaplain, we plan, prepare and lead a monthly children's Parish Mass. All children are welcome and take lead roles in the celebration.

Children, as part of their work, will be involved in exploring their environment and we are always keen for the people in the community to offer their expertise to enrich this work. All local organisations and groups are encouraged to advertise their activities in the school. We work closely with Vibrant Communities and Ayrshire College Students to facilitate further opportunities and experiences for our children.

The children are encouraged to get involved in the wider community by taking part in local projects and initiatives e.g. Newmilns Food Festival, Darvel DIG Day, pupils involved in Galston Community Fete, Darvel Horticultural Show, Loudoun Agricultural Show, Newmilns Ski Centre, local community tree planting initiatives and competitions organised by Galston Parish Church and Community Council and local businesses.

Through STEM we have excellent links with Kilmarnock Engineering and Science Society. Children across the school have been involved in many local and national design competitions.



Raising attainment in Literacy and Numeracy:

- All staff across all stages will use their training in Active Literacy Approaches in the teaching of phonics, spelling, reading and writing to ensure raised attainment and consistency of approach. (Yr.3)
- All staff across all stages will raise attainment in Listening and Talking through a planned, progressive and consistent approach linked to 'Teaching Children to Listen'. (Yr.3)
- SAC DEER: developing enjoyment in effective reading.
- Embed effective use of Numbertalks.
- Enhance the teaching of numeracy at Early Level through 'Playful Mathematics'
- Across all stages, ensure consistency of approach and a commonality of recording linked to Transitions at all stages, including into S1.
- Learning journals to record achievements and inform next steps for learners and parents. Increased engagement.



Restorative Approaches

Nurture

Learning Journals

Improving Pedagogy

Celebrating And Worshipping

Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap:

- PEF resources used to provide staffing for soft start/breakfast club and After School provision to provide additional support targeted to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged children.
- Continuation of our 'Buzzing about Learning Hub' and 'Friendship Hub'
- PEF resources used to enhance Classroom Assistant staffing to provide additional targeted support.
- Using robust self-evaluation and monitoring and tracking procedures ensure improvements in learning and teaching.
- PEF resources used to enhance staffing for outdoor learning/ IT and digital skills and Leaders of Learning.

Ensuring the Health and Wellbeing of all young people:

- We will continue to improve our Smart Snackers and Eatwell Plate Healthy Eating projects across all stages. (Yr. 3)
- We will engage in the PATHS Programme (Yr2)
- We will engage in the Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP) and Wellbeing Webs Small Test Of Change. (Yr.2)
- We will continue our links with Newmilns ski-club: resilience, confidence building, team work, risk taking and citizenship (Yr 3)
- We will refresh our MISP and our use of 'Seasons for Growth'.
- Rights Respecting Schools Award Silver

Increase in sustained positive destinations and employability Skills:

- Across P4 to P7, all learners will engage with 'My World of Work'
- We will develop our skills maps linked to employability skills.
- We will further our links with local employers in the Irvine Valley and Kilmarnock area.
- We will work collaboratively with local employers and host an improved 'Jobs Fair',
- Learners will undertake a range of Leadership Roles within school and participate in the Young Leaders Awards.
- Employability skills linked to school refurbishment project.
- Learners will increase and improve on their IT and digital learning skills.
- We will continue to improve skills and awareness of online safety.