

Determination

Care



Respect

Honesty

2024 - 2025

# St Joseph's RC Primary School

*Together We Believe, Together We Achieve*

Mrs Carolyn Brown & Miss Hester McMillan  
Acting Head Teacher



King Street  
Inverness  
IV3 5DG  
(01463) 231837



Diocese of Aberdeen  
Scotland  
*Together in Christ*



**DYW** | Developing the  
Young Workforce

### **Purpose of the Handbook**

The purpose of the handbook is to:

- communicate the ethos of the school and provide a welcome for parents to the school
- help parents to choose a school
- prepare their child for school
- act as a reference tool while their child is at the St. Joseph's Primary.

The handbook should also communicate with parents about their child's learning journey and, in doing so, encourages parental involvement in the school, learning at home, home/school partnership, family learning and helps parents support their children.

### **Contact Details**

Address	St. Joseph's RC Primary King Street Inverness IV3 5DL
Telephone	01463 231837
Email	<a href="mailto:Stjosephsrc.primary@highland.gov.uk">Stjosephsrc.primary@highland.gov.uk</a>

### **Welcome from the Head Teacher**

Welcome to our school. The purpose of this handbook is to assist in your understanding of St. Joseph's RC Primary and provide you with essential information about our school. We hope that you will find it interesting and helpful.

At St. Joseph's we pride ourselves on striving for high standards in both learning and behaviour. We aim to provide a challenging curriculum, firmly rooted in the basics. At every stage, pupils are encouraged to be all they can be and to be motivated to reach their potential.

In St. Joseph's we value every child and aim to ensure that they are supported and challenged in achieving their full potential. Our curriculum provides coherence from nursery through to transfer to secondary education. Every child will have carefully planned and engaging learning experiences based upon sound pedagogical research. We aim to provide a broad, balanced experiential curriculum that meets the needs of our children and which develops core knowledge and understanding as well as skills for learning, life and work.

Here at St. Joseph's we believe in working together with all our partners to ensure the best experiences for our pupils and value parental involvement in both the life of the school and in the pupil's learning. Throughout the school year, various activities, events and meetings will be arranged in order to involve and consult parents and the community in the life of our school.

As a community of faith, all our staff and pupils greatly value the strong Catholic ethos at St. Joseph's. Our supportive Catholic community brings a real sense of belonging and togetherness. We value our faith and promote Gospel Values through our daily actions. We enjoy our prayer times in class, as a whole school at assembly and during hymn practise. We are fortunate to have a strong Parish – School partnership and endeavour to work together to promote Christian values in all we do.

If there is any matter on which you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to St. Joseph's.

A message from our Pupil Learning Council

We are the Pupil Learning Council for St Joseph's Primary and we would like to tell you how great it is to be a pupil at St. Joseph's. We know how important it is to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors and we all have a job to do to make our school a really special place.

We all work together to make sure that St. Joseph's is a calm and happy place to learn. From the youngest child to the oldest adult, we all work together to make our school the best place to learn.

It is really important for everyone to know that they are listened to and so we try to hear as many suggestions and good ideas as possible and then discuss them at the Pupil Learning Council meetings.

We are always happy to hear good ideas of how to make our school even better.



St. Joseph's Primary School and Nursery is situated on King Street, Inverness, close to the city centre.

Our current roll of the primary school is 142, with six classes and the Nursery can accommodate up to 21 children in flexible sessions from 9.00am until 3.00pm. There are 7 teaching staff, and 7 Pupil Support Assistants. Class sizes vary and in the current session the average class size is 23. Meeting children's needs for learning in the school is important and teachers are skilled in ensuring needs are considered at the planning stage. We work in partnership with other professionals to ensure a cross-sector approach to meeting the needs of pupils.

Our school serves the Catholic population of Inverness and beyond. A transport system exists to ensure that a bus service is available to most parts of the Inverness area. We are a Catholic school which aims to promote spiritual and religious formation for all, including the 30% of our pupils who are non-Catholic and join our learning community for the academic and Christian aspects permeating the life of our school.

We are committed to building real partnerships with parents, who are encouraged to visit the school whenever necessary. The Senior Management Team can be contacted by visiting the school office to make an appointment, via school email or by calling the school landline. We strive to work together with parent/carers of our pupils, family learning is hugely important to us. We value parent/carers as the first educators of children, and we work to include and consult parents at significant points across the school year. We welcome parent/carers into our school regularly for shared learning opportunities, workshops, assemblies and performances as well as on class trips and excursions where there is opportunity.



### **Catholic Education**

The mission of the Catholic school is to develop a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel Values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good.

In St. Joseph's we aim, through our ethos and practice that all our pupils understand how to behave, how to make the most of their abilities and strengths and to understand the gifts of prayer and faith. As a result, we pride ourselves on providing a small school, family atmosphere in a large town centre school where the atmosphere is warm and friendly and there is a real sense of community and belonging.

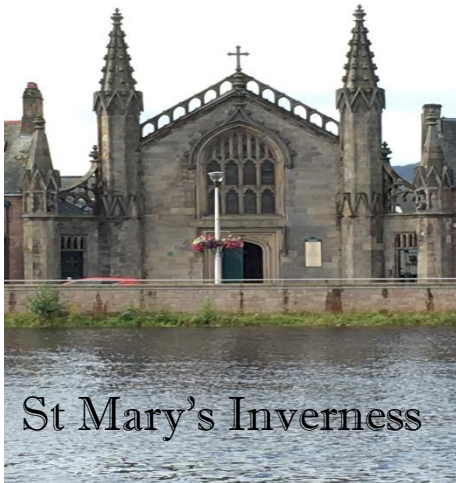
**Together We Believe, Together We Achieve.**

#### **A CHARTER for CATHOLIC SCHOOLS in SCOTLAND**

All Catholic schools in Scotland, in honouring Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, will feature the following characteristics:

- ❖ A commitment to the integrated education and formation of the whole person, in close partnership with parents as the first educators of their children;
- ❖ An inclusive ethos which aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person, made in the image of God;
- ❖ A commitment to the search for wisdom in life and to the pursuit of excellence, through the development of each person's unique God-given talents;
- ❖ A commitment to the spiritual formation of the school community, through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy, and in partnership with local parishes;
- ❖ The provision of religious education programmes which will enable young people to develop their understanding of Gospel values and of how to apply them to life;
- ❖ A commitment to uphold the moral teaching, faith tradition and sacramental life of the Catholic Church;
- ❖ A commitment to communicate Catholic social teaching and thereby to promote social justice and opportunity for all;
- ❖ A commitment to ecumenical action and the unity of Christians;
- ❖ The promotion of respect for different beliefs and cultures and for inter-faith dialogue;
- ❖ A commitment to support the continuing professional and spiritual development of staff.

All staff appointed to a Catholic school are expected to support and promote the aims, mission, values and ethos of the school, as illustrated in this Charter. Permanent staff members must have full Church approval from the Diocese.



As well as working in partnership with St.Mary's we also value our close links with St. Ninian's Inverness and St.Columba's in Culloden.



### *A day in St. Joseph's*

For many of our pupils, the school day starts with social time at the **Breakfast Club**. We offer this service from 8.00am – 8.50am, more details can be found further into the handbook.

Morning in St. Joseph's centre around the core foundations of **Literacy** and **Numeracy**. A careful balance of teacher led activities, active learning and reinforcement of core skills are delivered. **Outdoor learning** can be weaved into experiences (Scottish weather dependent).

Children enjoy **playtimes** in our playground, zoned with an Astro-turf football area, low level climbing play, basketball hoops, small climbing frame and a variety of play equipment, including loose parts play equipment. P1-3 use this space first, followed by our P4 – P7 to ensure enough space for all.

**Lunchtimes** are a social time in St. Joseph's and children use the dinner hall in the Annexe building. Both packed lunches and hot school meals are accommodated followed by playground time.

Afternoon learning hosts Social Studies, Science, Technology, Expressive Arts and RE, often delivered in a 'topic' or a context for learning. This may be a historical context, a science-based challenge or art or drama linked to a specific topic. **Interdisciplinary Learning** weaves aspects of different curricular areas together into a short - term programme of learning.

We value [extra-curricular activities](#) as an integral part of learning and wider achievement. It is therefore important to us at St. Joseph's to organise and offer pupils a range of experiences during and after the school day.

Activities on offer can change from term to term and are provided by teachers, PSA's, parent volunteers and Hi-life Highland. Our extra-curricular activities include,

- [Multi-Sports Club](#) in partnership with Caley Thistle Football Club
- [Basketball Club](#) in partnership with High-life Highland
- [Tennis and Squash Club](#) in partnership with High-life Highland
- [Homework Club](#) led by a primary 1-3 class teacher and primary 4-7 class teacher
- [Creativity Club](#) led by a class teacher and in partnership with Robertson's Group Trust
- [Badminton](#) led by a parent volunteer
- [Recorder](#) (lunchtime) led by a class teacher
- [Book Club](#) (lunchtime) led by a PSA
- [Games Club](#) (playtime) led by a PSA

We have lunchtime clubs that vary termly and are led by class teachers and supported by House and Vice House Captains.

Our official [Out of School Care Club](#) offers childcare between 2.45pm–5.30pm – more information can be found further on in the handbook.

*If you have a particular skillset and would like to lead a club, please get in touch with the school office. We work as a team to ensure our pupils can access these experiences and value and rely on our partnerships with businesses and parents.*

## [School Uniform](#)

St. Joseph's families and staff, take great pride in our school and our high standards. All children are required to wear the St. Joseph's school uniform. Our uniform colours are navy and white. Children may wear navy or black trousers or shorts, a navy skirts or pinafore with a white collared long sleeved or short sleeved shirt or white polo-shirt. Navy jumpers or cardigans.

Items with the St. Joseph's logo are available in sweatshirts, cardigans, jumpers, polo shirts and jackets and can be purchased from Schoolwear Made Easy, Harbour Road, Inverness, IV1 1UF or online from [www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com](http://www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com).

School ties can be purchased at reception and will soon be available in Velcro and we soon hope to offer iron -on logos for your convenience. All primary 1 pupils and new pupils to the school will be given a fee school tie.

Please note that leggings are not suitable school uniform. Children should not have dyed hair, fake nails or make-up when coming to school. We also encourage you to leave jewellery at home.

**PE Kit;** All pupils should bring a t-shirt, shorts, socks and gym shoes. No football shirts are permitted. Sometimes PE may be outdoor, so it is sensible to pack a zipper or jumper for your child.

All pupils should bring a school bag for their school belongings, snack, water bottle and PE Kit.

**Everything should be labelled with the child's name.**



### Lost Property

Every year we have many items of lost property unclaimed. If they are unnamed it is difficult to find the owner. Please check with the janitor between 9.00am and 9.15 am if your child has lost something, or contact the office to leave a message.

### St Joseph's Primary School General Administration

#### Staff List

**Acting Head Teacher**  
**Depute Head Teacher**  
**Principal Teacher**

Mrs Carolyn Brown & Miss Hester McMillan  
Mrs Carolyn Brown  
Miss Hester McMillan

#### **Class Teachers**

**Primary 2/1** Mrs S. Clarkson & Ms K Balfour  
**Primary 3/2** Mrs A. Davies  
**Primary 4/3** Miss J. Syta  
**Primary 5** Mrs O O'Hagan & Mrs J MacDonald  
**Primary 6** Mrs M Martin  
**Primary 7** Mrs J Gut

**PSA** Mrs Y. Wilson  
Mrs F. Campbell  
Mrs A. Macdonald  
Mrs G. Wright  
Mrs H. MacDonald  
Mrs L. Rowan

Mr D. Shanks

**Nursery**  
 Mrs A. Sugden, Senior EYP  
 Mrs S. Fraser, EYP  
 Mrs J. Stoddart, EYP  
 Mrs S. Watson, EYP  
 Mrs Machado-Perez, EYP

**Learning Support Teacher (0.3)** Mrs J. MacDonald

**School Clerical Assistant** Mrs M Gallie

**Breakfast Club Auxiliary** Mrs F. Campbell & Mrs H. MacDonald

**OOSC Auxiliary & Assistant** Mrs Julie Heatlie & Mr Daniel Shanks

**School Maintenance** Mr P. McDaid

**School Cook** Miss N. MacDonald

**Visiting Staff**

**P.E.** Miss S. Barclay

**Children's Services Worker** Mrs R. Broomfield

**School Times**

**Nursery** 9.00am – 3.00pm

**P1, 2 & 3**  
 9.05am - 10:30am class time  
 10:30am - 10:45am *break time*  
 10:45am - 12:05 class time  
 12:05 - 1:00pm *lunch time*  
 1:00pm – 2:45pm class time  
 2:45pm end of school day

**P4, 5, 6 & 7**  
 9.00am - 10:45am class time  
 10:45am – 11:00am *break-time*  
 11:00am – 12:30 class time  
 12:30pm - 1:15pm *lunch time*  
 1:15pm - 3:00pm class time  
 3:00pm end of school day



## SCHOOL YEAR 2024 ~ 2025

### **Autumn Term**

Teachers Return	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> August (In-Service Day)
Pupils Return	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> August
In-Service Day	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> September
Half Term	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 25 <sup>st</sup> October (inclusive)

### **Winter Term**

School Closes	Friday 20 <sup>nd</sup> December at 3:00pm
Christmas/New Year Break	Friday 20 <sup>rd</sup> December to Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January (inclusive)
School Returns	Monday 6th January

### **Spring Term**

Half Term Close	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 18th February
In-Service Day	Wednesday 19th February
School Closes	Friday 4th April 3.00pm
Easter Break	Monday 7th to Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> April (inclusive)
School returns	Tuesday 22nd April

### **Summer Term**

May Day	Monday 5 <sup>h</sup> May
In-Service Day	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June
School Close	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 12.00noon

Term dates can be found online at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

### **Entry into School**

Parents may choose to enrol their child to begin school in August if that child's fourth birthday falls before the last day in February of the following year. Enrolment of new Primary 1 pupils take place in February and notice of the exact enrolment dates are given in the Inverness Courier and announced in church.

Arrangements are made in late May for the new Primary 1 pupils to spend some time in school to get to know their new teacher and the school building. Those attending the Nursery make frequent visits to Primary 1 throughout the year to share their learning.

It is usually possible to find places for pupils wishing to enrol at other stages in the school. In the first instance parents should contact the Head Teacher for details of available places and how to apply. Priority for places at St Joseph's is given to Catholic pupils but parents can apply for a placing request through the Area Education Manager. Forms can be found at [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_school/2](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2)

### **Breakfast Club**

The breakfast club is open to school pupils from 8.00am until 8.50am every morning for families wishing to access this service. The cost is £1.00 per day and children can choose from fresh fruit, cereal, toast, bagels, milk and hot drinks. Breakfast Club is situated in the Dinner Hall and is run by Mrs Campbell and Mrs M who are both experienced Pupil Support Assistant's.



### **Out of School Care Club (OOSCC)**

At St. Josephs' we have an established Out of School Care Club, led by Mrs Heatlie and supported by Mr Shanks, to help working parents or those with commitments after school. The pupils who attend, enjoy a wide range of activities after school - full details are available separately in our OOSCC brochure.

### **Holidays in Term Time**

For children to reach their fullest potential during their primary education we strongly encourage full attendance.

Therefore, pupils should not miss school during term time except when ill, for medical appointment or major family difficulties. It is recognised that some parents may, on occasion, find it impossible to plan a holiday in the 12 weeks allocated for this purpose, but a very worrying trend is emerging whereby more and more parents seem to be willing to withdraw their children from school despite the educational consequences. A permission form should be requested from the Head Teacher for all absences within term time. Where a parent does not seek prior agreement from the Head Teacher the absence will automatically be classed as unauthorised.

When parents are considering whether or not to remove their children from school for a family holiday, they should be aware that such a decision:

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils;
- could result in pupils missing assessments with consequential impact on pupils and teachers;
- could result in the loss of curricular activities;
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance;
- under the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, we would ask parents to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. We have enclosed a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

### **Attendance**

To maximise the opportunities, we offer your child in school, it is essential that he/she attends school each day. Any absence from school no matter how short has an adverse effect on learning and teaching. Parents are asked to telephone the school on our dedicated absence line before 9.15am on the first day of their child's absence. The **absence line** number is **01463 257520**.

Failure to contact the school will result in an unauthorised absence. All unauthorised absences are actively pursued by the school.

### **Three Day Rule for Unexplained Absence of Pupils**

#### **Day 1; First day of unexplained absence of a pupil**

The school will endeavour to make contact by telephone or e-mail to parents, carers or emergency contacts informing them that the child is absent and requesting a reason for the absence. If no contact can be made with the parents/carers or emergency contacts on the first day of absence this will be noted by the school. If the family is known to other agencies, because of possible concerns about his/her wellbeing, then contact will be made with these agencies.

#### **Day 2; Second day of unexplained absence of a pupil**

The school will make vigorous attempts to contact a carer or family member by telephone, text or e-mail. If no contact can be made on the second day of absence, this will be noted by the school.

#### **Day 3; Third day of unexplained absence of pupil**

If no contact is established, schools with support staff will arrange a home visit to check the situation. If the child is not found and no satisfactory explanation is given for absence, the police will be notified of the child's non-attendance. The police will treat this as a missing persons alert. The police may be involved to conduct visits where it is not possible for the school to do so.

### **Steps for Parents**

- Keep the school up to date with your telephone number, including mobile phones if you have one, and other details for emergency contacts.
- Inform the school of any pre-arranged absence e.g., attendance at hospital appointment prior to the absence taking place
- Inform the school or pre-school of your child's absence by 10.00am on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Respond promptly to contacts from the school

## **School Ethos and Positive Behaviour Expectations**

As a Catholic school, we value each person and aim to promote Christian values each day. As such, respect for one another plays a huge role in our positive behaviour expectations. Our school values **Determination, Respect, Care** and **Honesty** underpin our daily interactions and are often referred to as positive reinforcement of expectations across our school.

- ❖ Be gentle – do not hurt anybody
- ❖ Be kind and helpful – do not hurt people's feelings
- ❖ Play well with others – do not spoil others' games
- ❖ Care for your playground – do not damage or spoil anything
- ❖ Listen to people – do not interrupt
- ❖ Be honest – do not cover up the truth
- ❖ Keep to the playground safety rules – do not break the playground safety rules

We value a joined-up approach to positive behaviour and we encourage parents to reinforce this message at home. All our children and staff have the right to work and learn in a safe environment.

We aim to let you know quickly if we have any concerns about your child's behaviour. If things have gone wrong, then you will be contacted and exactly what has occurred will be explained. We work in partnership with parents as a team and expect the school expectations to be reinforced at home. If, at any time, you are concerned about any issue, simply telephone the school office for an appointment and one will be provided the same day wherever possible.

### **Bullying**

The school adopts a zero tolerance policy to bullying. Like every school in Scotland occasionally we have incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Parents must inform the Head Teacher as soon as possible if they suspect their child is being unfairly treated. Any incidents will be carefully investigated. If we feel bullying has taken place, the parents of the pupil or pupils involved will be immediately notified.

Bullying at school can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on them into adulthood. It can undermine their self-esteem and self-confidence and often result in them becoming bullies themselves. The policy on Anti-Bullying has been drawn up within the school's ethos of promoting positive behaviour. Copies of the Positive Behaviour Policy and Equality Policy are available on the school website:

<https://stjosephsps.wordpress.com/parent-section/>

For further information, please visit:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)

### **Appointments with Staff**

Because staff are teaching during the day it is easiest if appointments to see teachers are booked for after school hours. They need to be booked in advance through the school office Teachers are also happy to have a chat at the end of school day if you wish to talk to them when you come to collect your child. The Head Teacher can be seen without an appointment at any time but telephoning in advance will ensure that she is available when you arrive. The Head Teacher is available between 8.30am and 9.30am daily for urgent appointments or telephone calls. Parents evenings are held twice yearly to discuss pupil progress and usually take place in November and March of each academic year.

### **Homework**

All classes are given regular homework. The purpose of homework is to involve you in your child's learning and to reinforce what has been learned at school. For our older pupils it is also an important part of transition into secondary school. We aim to equip our pupils with the skills needed to thrive in a busy and fast part environment when they enter secondary and a big part of this is self-study skills, good routines in the evening and determination.

Homework comes in many forms. It may be spelling, reading practice or numeracy reinforcement activities. It will frequently be issued on a Tuesday with small tasks to be completed within one week. Senior classes may have short pieces of research to complete. Pupils should also regularly practise tables and number bonds so even if no homework is set for any night these can be reinforced. Homework should always be checked with a parent and Homework Diaries include space for parents and pupils to provide feedback on the learning activities. [Homework Clubs](#) run throughout the school year on a Tuesday from 3.00pm – 4.00pm and are run by school staff. There is no charge.

### **School Meals**

A traditional two course hot meal costs £2.30 per day and this should be paid weekly on a Monday. The meals are balanced and well prepared and represent excellent value for money.

**All** pupils in P1 – P5 are entitled to free school meals. There are plans to extend the free school meal age to include all primary school aged children. At the moment, this stops when they reach P6 unless

parent/carers are in receipt of Income Support or other benefits. Claim forms and advice are available from the school office.

The School Cook is involved with the pupil groups which consult with pupils on choices of menu and healthy diet. Copies of the menus are sent home in school bags and are available to view on the school webpage.

Children with special dietary requirements should let the Cook-in-Charge know exactly what can be eaten. We will always try to accommodate wishes and needs.

All money brought into school on Mondays, should be taken in a purse or wallet and taken into class in the morning. Money or any other valuables must always be taken into class and not left in schoolbags.

Parents in receipt of Income Support and some other benefits may be entitled to free school meals. Claim forms and advice are available from the school office.

Packed lunches may, of course, be brought from home by pupils. We ask that parents make sure that lunches are safe by keeping to the following guidelines:

- ❖ Please put lunch in a strong container with a lid.
- ❖ Glass bottles or containers are not allowed anywhere in school.
- ❖ Cans of fizzy drinks are not suitable for school. Water is always available in the dining room.
- ❖ Packed lunches should be eaten in the dining room
- ❖ After lunch, boxes should be put away sensibly and never left lying on the ground
- ❖ The school cannot replace lost or damaged lunch boxes.

As a health promoting and Eco aware school we follow the schools' nutrition standards and encourage all children to eat healthily, avoid sweets and reduce waste.

### **Money, Valuables & Technology**

Unfortunately, there is little we can do if money or other valuables go missing during the school day. Pupils can help themselves by taking everything from their school bags into class at the beginning of the school day. Parents can help by clearly labelling everything. If anything goes missing, we will do our best to track it down, but ultimately everything brought into school remains the pupil's responsibility.

Recently, some pupils have been bringing mobile phones in order to communicate with parents after school. We understand this need but would remind you that this level of technology is expensive to replace if anything should go wrong. If your child brings a mobile phone into school, it **must be handed to the class teacher** during the school day. Pupils are **not permitted** to use the phone during school time since photographs can be taken and it is not permissible to upload photos onto social media without consent. In addition, unless a 'technology day' is occurring at school, pupils **may not** bring other devices to school or the breakfast club, such as i-pads, tablets, switches etc.

### **School Transport**

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Transport Development Officer, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX, or [public.transport@highland.gov.uk](mailto:public.transport@highland.gov.uk). Pupils attending St. Joseph's RC Primary eligible for free school transport if the following conditions apply:

- They are enrolled as a Catholic pupil and Baptismal Certificate has been presented.
- They live at least 2 miles away from the school and are under 8 years of age
- They live at least 3 miles from the school and are 8 years or over.

Parents can obtain an application form and any other information they may require from the school office or available online at the Highland Council web page. At the end of each school day pupils can be collected from the supervisor at the school gates. Pupils using school transport are collected by a PSA, and are supervised to their transport. It is very important that the school is informed of any changes for the end of the day, and that children are met at the school gates on time.

### **Illness at School and the Medical Services**

At the beginning of each year, we ask parents to complete a Data Update Form which gives us details of how to contact you or a family member or friend if your child is ill. **It is important that you inform us of any changes of address, telephone number etc in the event that we should need to contact you.**

If your child becomes ill during school time, we will make every attempt to contact you or your emergency contact. If a serious incident occurs, it will be dealt with immediately and this may mean that we take action before we are able to contact you. The safety and good health of your child will always be our main concern.

The school nurse and doctor are regular visitors to the school. A screening service is in place throughout the school but if you have any concerns about your child's health which you would like the school medical services to deal with then please simply get in touch with the school office. Advice on health matters is available from the school doctor or nurse on request.

Speech Therapy is available for those pupils who require it. Again, initial request should be made through the Head Teacher.

Other specialist educational services are occasionally needed for individual pupils. The provision of these services will always be discussed in detail with parents before any action is taken.

### **Early Dismissal due to Extreme Winter Conditions**

It may, on occasion, be necessary to dismiss pupils early from school owing to extreme winter conditions. Parents are requested to make sure that their emergency contact forms are up to date before the onset of winter and to discuss with their child exactly what to do if the weather is bad.

When conditions are bad at the time of pupils setting off for school it is your decision to allow you child to set off. The safety of the child is paramount and in the event of any doubt as to safety, children should remain at home.

In the event of school transport being held up because of the weather, pupils should not wait any longer than twenty minutes before returning home.

If the weather deteriorates during the day and you suspect that we may have to close the school early, please tune into Moray Firth Radio or Radio Highland. Both stations will be asked to carry information about St Joseph's school. St Joseph's school also has a HRC telephone messaging

service. To enquire using this number dial **0870 050 6222** enter the school's own pin number **04 30 20**. If you have any particular instruction for these occasions, please let us know in writing.

### **Road Safety**

In school we regularly cover road safety issues in class and at assembly. As a parent you need to continually reinforce our message. Pupils must know and be able to use the Green Cross Code. Around school they must pay particular attention to where they cross the road. There are many parked cars near the school, particularly at either end of the school day.

Parents can assist us by parking sensibly when they come to drop off or pick up pupils. **It is illegal to park on the yellow zigzag lines outside the school gates and you may be fined.**

When leaving or boarding the school bus pupils need to take extra care. They must never leave or board without adult supervision.

Some pupils may wish to cycle to and from school. There is a small bike shed within the school grounds, but it is not secure. Pupils will need to provide their own padlocks. In any case bikes are brought to school at pupil's own risk.

### **Parent Council**

Our Parent Council is very parent-friendly – it's a great opportunity to become more involved in the life of the school. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 has changed the arrangements for parental representation in all schools. Since August 2007, all parents are automatically members of the Parent Forum for their school, and they have a right to establish a Parent Council to represent them.

The Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents of children at the school. Parent Councils are very flexible groups, and the Parent Forum can decide on the type of group it wants to represent their views.

The role of Parent Council is to;

- ❖ Support the school in its work with pupils
- ❖ Represent the views of all parents
- ❖ Encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community
- ❖ Report back to all the parents

<b>Chairperson</b>	Karen Kean
<b>Advisor</b>	Mrs Brown and Miss McMillan
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>James Greig</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	Tara Harvey

<b>Members</b>	Andreanna McEwan Marcin Kubicki
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**Protection of Children from Abuse**  
**Highland Council Child Protection Committee**

It is a requirement of the Education Authority that the following statement be included in all school prospectuses:

*“In terms of its child protection guidelines the Authority imposes a duty on schools and all staff to report, by way of laid down referral procedures, any incidents which may give rise to a suspicion that a pupil has been subjected to abuse in any of its forms. This might involve information being passed to other agencies without immediate reference to a pupil’s parents or guardians.”*

At St Joseph’s Primary we take the care, welfare and protection of our children very seriously. We believe all children have a right to feel safe within the school, home and community.

Within our school we strive to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for our pupils, which promotes inclusion and achievement.

All staff in Education have a statutory and professional responsibility to take action if we have reason to believe a child is suffering, or is at risk of abuse.

Our child protection policy and procedure sets out what we will do if we have reason to believe a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse, either within the home or the community. These policies are designed to ensure that children get the help they need when they need it.

Every staff member undergoes a minimum of one child protection training activity every session. Many of our staff are more extensively trained in specific areas of child protection to support and identify potential child protection concerns.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator for the school is Miss Catherine Browne. If you wish any further information or a copy of the school policy, please contact the school office. If you wish to discuss this important matter further, please make an appointment to see Miss Bowne, the Head Teacher.



**Curriculum for Excellence**

Our aspiration for all our children is that they experience a wealth of learning opportunities, ensuring a balance of knowledge, skills and active experience to enhance learning. We aspire to make connections with our environment and with local partners, ensuring learning is relevant and



progressive through stages. At St. Josephs, children are involved in their learning, with support can set individual learning targets and can talk about skills across subject areas.

By providing structure, support and challenge, all children develop the knowledge, skills and attributes of Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens through the 4 contexts for learning:

- The *eight curricular areas* are planned for and taught discretely or through a context.
- The *ethos and life of the school* provides children from the earliest stages with a nurturing approach, instilling faith values and strong sense of belonging.
- *Interdisciplinary learning* allows for curricular areas to be weaved together within a context.
- *Recognising and celebrating wider achievements* are planned for and celebrated both in the classroom and beyond.



We value parents as the first educators of children and our curriculum should complement the important contributions of families and communities in ensuring all children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included.

The school day varies but every day all classes will spend time on the core areas of literacy and numeracy. Pupils are as a whole class, in a variety of group settings or as individuals. In order to meet the needs of learners, our additional support needs teacher works with individuals and groups where necessary.

The curriculum describes everything which is learned and taught in school. The curriculum is balanced to allow a child to develop his/her full potential, both educationally and socially.

The main areas of the curriculum are Languages, Mathematics, Social Studies, Technologies, Health and Well-Being, Science, Expressive Arts, Religious and Moral Education.

### **School Improvement**

This year, because of the different circumstances, all schools in Highland are focusing on certain key priorities as followings:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment

3. Attainment in session 2020/21 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)

In addition, at St. Joseph's we will continue to develop our Reading Comprehension Strategies Which is carried forward from last years' plan. This includes a whole school approach to reading and assessment.

We also we continue to focus on the faith formation of our pupils using This is Our Faith and God's Loving plan – as outlined above. Links to the schools [Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan](#) can be found on the [St Joseph's Primary School website](#) along with the latest information for parents and carers.

## Literacy

The Curriculum in Literacy is designed to allow all pupils to progress at their own pace. The components of the programme are Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking.

### **English Language**

Since language permeates the whole curriculum, it is impossible to view it in isolation. At all times, teachers are active in developing listening skills with children through; taking part in discussions, reporting back on experiences in oral and in written form and of course the teaching and reinforcement of reading skills. Our resources for teaching English Language skills are extensive thus ensuring that each aspect is adequately covered. National Guidelines are followed to ensure balance and progression for each individual child and pupils' learning is regularly assessed through formative and summative assessments.



We have excellent language schemes which help, reinforce or introduce reading to our youngest pupils. Reading books are given home and refreshed weekly. Parents are invited to share in the process of helping children to read, talking with them about the stories and encouraging them is particularly important at all stages of development.

**French** is taught from P1 throughout the school to P7. All classes enjoy learning this additional language and the aims are to encourage children to have confidence in expressing themselves in a second language and to increase their awareness of another culture.

## Numeracy and Mathematics



A carefully structured and balanced maths programme is followed by each child. This involves number, money and measurement, shape, position and movement, information handling and problem-solving and enquiry. Teachers adopt a balance between 'traditional' teaching, interactive maths and practical work with children taking an active role in their own learning. A wide range of resources are used so that mathematical skills and concepts can be developed. We use mathematical games, calculators, computer software and mathematical equipment to introduce and reinforce ideas and concepts. The children's learning is regularly assessed through formative and summative assessments. We use a wide variety of resource material to support learning in maths e.g., Big Maths, Maths in Action and Tee Jay materials.

## Social Studies

Through social studies our pupils develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values in different times, places and circumstances, and how their environment has been shaped. They learn about human achievements and how to make sense of changes in society, conflicts and human issues. With greater understanding come the opportunities to influence events by exercising informed and responsible citizenship.

The social studies experiences and outcomes are designed to stimulate the interest and motivation of all our learners through enjoyable learning and teaching activities. We are concerned not only with the factual content but also the development of skills, ideas and attitudes.

## Expressive Arts



At St Joseph's School we believe that the Expressive Arts play an important role in the education of all our pupils. The expressive arts encompass Art and Design, Drama and Music and ensure development in creativity, imagination and personal response in our children.

As in all areas of the curriculum pupils are encouraged to do their best but both class and specialist teachers adapt their teaching to match the abilities of the pupils. Experiences in the expressive arts presenting and are mainly practical have visiting specialists for music delivers Primary 4- Primary 7 Mr McKenzie on a Thursday who a rotational basis. Visits from musicians etc are encouraged and out of school. Assemblies arts as well annual events such as Scots Language Week and Book pupils display confidence and enjoyment during these times and we often invite families in to share in their achievements.



involve creating and in nature. Currently, we including Mr Horton who hymn practise as well as delivers music sessions on travelling theatre groups, our children perform in often showcase expressive Nativity performances, Week Scotland. Our

## Religious Education

Every school has to deliver a Religious Education programme taking up the same amount of time during the week. In St Joseph's we choose to deliver the RE programme in small daily lessons following This is Our Faith as our main resource. Prayers are said daily, especially at the beginning and end of each school day. The clergy comes into the school regularly and joins us, when they can, for our school assemblies.

We observe the major feasts of the Church year, usually by attending Mass as a school.

Children prepare for the Sacraments and in P3 it is the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They receive First Holy Communion at the Primary 4 stage and the Sacrament Confirmation in P7. They are prepared by the class teacher or a catechist, in partnership with home and the church. A meeting is held prior to preparation beginning, so that parents fully understand what is taking place.



We prepare in conjunction with local parishes and the priests from all three parishes visit the school regularly and support the children's spiritual formation.

Parents who send their children to St Joseph's understand that religious instruction and observance is an integral part of the Catholic ethos of our school. All pupils work through and benefit from This is Our Faith, pray and worship together and live up to our school motto Together We Believe, Together We Achieve.

## Health and Wellbeing



Every child and member of staff is part of a larger family here at St. Joseph's and we hold the wellbeing and support of all at the core. There are strong connections between effective, successful learning and health. Through this curriculum area, we take a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. Our pupils are given the opportunity to develop socially, morally, physically, mentally and emotionally. Our school community supports many charities throughout the year and our pupils are involved in leading and learning about the importance of serving others. Our relationships education is firmly rooted in God's Loving Plan, which is a relationship, growing and changing policy which all Scottish Catholic schools follow to promote positive relationships and themes of change and growth. In Primary 5, 6 and 7, more information is given to parents before sensitive topics are taught. This ensures parents can uphold their right to withdraw if they so choose, in an informed way.

We encourage as much activity during and after school as possible.

PE classes and sports clubs take place in the Church Hall and in the summer months the school has the use of the Northern Meeting Park.

## Sciences and Technologies

Within our Science programme of study children follow structured investigations in Energy & Forces; Earth and Space; Living Things and the Process of Life. They are presented with a range of different contexts for learning which draw on important aspects of everyday life and work. Children are encouraged to develop curiosity and understanding of the environment and their place in the living, material and physical world. Through practical, interesting and fun investigations children are made more aware of the impact the sciences make on their lives, the environment and on society. The school has a Science Champion, Miss Balfour, who works with staff and pupils to ensure our science experiences are challenging, enjoyable and most of all interesting.



## Assessment, Reporting & Profiling

Continuous on-going assessment takes place throughout the school. This continuous assessment of pupil's progress is perhaps the most important form of assessment which takes place in school. It influences the pace of lessons day to day and week to week. It allows the teacher to assess how well any individual pupil is coping with class work and allows the class teacher to challenge and support where appropriate.

We assess the children more formally in the main subject areas, such as Phonics, Reading, Mathematics and spoken and written language. As children progress through the school we use a combination of different assessment methods to get the best picture possible of a child and their progress. Standardised testing (SNSA) is carried out in P1, P4 and P7. These are implemented in an informal and well managed way. Children are encouraged to take their time, re-read questions and try their best. If a child is normally supported with reading, writing or maths – they will be supported in a similar way during the assessment.

The SNSA assessments are one piece of information used to report on pupil progress and to build a bigger picture of progress in learning – we value the professional judgement of our teachers which sit alongside the assessment, as well as specific pieces of learning gathered to support teacher judgement.

### Written Report

An end of the academic year a written report is issued to parents which summarises progress in relation to what is appropriate for their age and stage.

### Learning Profiles

Throughout the school, Nursery – P7, children learning to make connections across the curriculum, to take pride in their work, to know what they are learning and to be able to explain why they are learning certain things. All children have a Learning Profile in which their learning, their targets, their reflections and aspirations, teacher/parent comments and feedback are stored. The Learning Profiles are sent home for parents to be involved and aware and also are available for parents to discuss with their child before Parents' Meetings. We encourage you to take time to write in these records highlighting your thoughts about your child's progress.

### Parents Meetings

Parents are encouraged to come to our more formal parent meetings where teachers will share their on-going assessments and identify the next steps for an individual child.

Parents may also make an appointment outside of these times if they would like to discuss their child's welfare or progress with the class teacher.

Please be assured you are always welcome to visit the school at any time if you have any other matter you wish to discuss. Please contact the class teacher directly or phone the school office to make an appointment.

### [Additional Support Needs](#)

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow The Highland Practice Model staged approach to assessing, identifying and supporting additional support needs.

If you have a concern about your child in primary school, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance.

Sometimes a Child's Plan may be put in place to help organise, monitor and regularly review your child's progress. If you wish to find out more about The Highland Practice Model or the Child's Plan you can access more information at:



<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/generalguidance/planning/>

There are also information sheets available at: <https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>

Below are links with information on organisations specified by Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN.

(a) Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning

<http://enquire.org.uk/>

(b) My Rights, My Say – an advocacy and advice service for young people over 12 with additional support needs <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightsmysay/>

(c) [Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#), an advocacy service to support parents and children

(d) [Scottish Child Law Centre](#), an organisation providing free legal advice to young people

### [Communication with Parents](#)

It is our aim to provide parents with as much information and help as we can. We do this in a variety of ways:

- ❖ We regularly produce monthly newsletters detailing what's happening in the primary school, nursery and After School Care Club.
- ❖ Our school website [www.stjosephsrcprimary.com](http://www.stjosephsrcprimary.com) and Facebook page contains a wealth of information about the school and each class has its own page full of photos and details of what they have been learning and taking part in.
- ❖ Meet the Teacher takes place at the beginning of the new session in September. It is an opportunity to meet your child's class teacher, the support staff involved with the class and to find out what your child will be learning during the course of the year. There is a question and answer session after the Class teacher's presentation and a chance to chat to other parents.
- ❖ In all classes we use a 'Home from School Book' diary system that includes detailed homework tasks, learning targets and reminders. These go home every Tuesday and let

parents know what their child has been learning that week, how they have been coping and how they have been behaving. These have proved very popular with pupils, parents and staff and are seen as a very effective way of keeping in touch.

- ❖ Teacher's forward planning overviews for the term are issued to parents detailing what the class will be learning each term over all subject areas and how the children are contributing to the life of the school.
- ❖ Classes regularly take part in events out of school. Details of these are sent home separately to the classes involved.
- ❖ Our Positive Behaviour Policy states that we will let parents know immediately if we think that a problem exists. This information is usually delivered by phone and encourages parents to come into the school and discuss in more detail with staff.
- ❖ Twice a year we have formal parental appointments. These are held in November and March.
- ❖ Report cards are sent home once a year in May/June. Parents do not have to wait for these times before seeing any member of staff about their child. If, at any time, you wish to know how your child is doing all you need to do is to telephone the Head Teacher to make an appointment.
- ❖ The Head Teacher has an 'open-hour' first thing in the morning when parents can drop into the office without an appointment to discuss individual children or issues.

### **Complaints**

We hope you will enjoy a positive experience at St Joseph's Primary School and we welcome comment and suggestions which will improve our school. However, we are aware that difficulties can occur from time to time and if you feel you have a reason to complain then please follow the procedure outlined below.

In the first instance, contact the school office where an appointment will be arranged for you to speak to the Head Teacher.

From here, if necessary, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Area Education Office, who will decide what the next steps should be. Parents will be kept fully informed of each stage and will be invited to attend any meetings being held.

### **Data policy**

Information about pupils' education is collected through our statistical surveys in partnership between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the ScotXed Programme which aims to help schools and Local Authorities by supporting efficient collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. The Scottish Government then provides analysis of the data to support research, planning, management and monitoring of education services as well as to produce National Statistics publications.

Education data within Scottish Government is managed effectively by secure systems and is exploited as a valuable corporate resource, subject to confidentiality restraints. As part of its data policy, Scottish Government will not publish or make publicly available any information that

allows individual pupils to be identified, nor will data be used by Scottish Government to take any actions in respect of individuals. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be made publicly available by Scottish Government.

**The individual data collected by Scottish Government through the Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purposes only.**

Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/1095920/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_at\\_a\\_school](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school)

### **Why do we need your data?**

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the SQA and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland

### **Your data protection rights**

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with data protection legislation. We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. Data protection legislation gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This note can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed/SchoolEducation>

### **Concerns**

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Head of Schools Analysis at [ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, Braille and large print.

### **Finally...**

We have tried to make this handbook as comprehensive as possible and we trust that you have found it to be informative. As with everything it is a dynamic document and may change and develop, any updates will be posted on the school blog for your perusal. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to St Joseph's Primary and hope you all enjoy being part of our school community.





## Together We Believe, Together We Achieve

*The current health situation has affected the normal running of schools in many ways. This*

*Whilst the information in this handbook is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information.*



