



# **Stirling Council Schools, Learning & Education**

## **St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery Handbook**

**2022/2023**



# Contents Page

Page	Contents
1	Front Cover
2	Contents Page
3	Welcome from the Head
4	Keeping Everyone Safe – Covid 19
5	Nursery Information
6	Values, Aims and Ethos
7	Starting your Journey
8	Arrival and Collection; when your child is unwell
9	Staff training and development; communication with parents / carers; promoting positive behaviour; fairness and equality.
10	Lunches and snacks; prescribed medication
11	Prescribed Medication; accidents or injuries; child's learning and keyworker system
12	Curriculum for Excellence; support for children
13	Child Protection; Zero Tolerance; Complaints
14	Care Inspectorate and Payment Methods
15	Nursery Holidays 2022-23

# Welcome from the Head

A very warm welcome to St Mary's Episcopal Primary and Nursery School. We hope you enjoy reading our nursery handbook and find it helpful.

At St Mary's we aim to build a strong community where everyone is encouraged and supported to achieve their academic and personal potential. We do this through encouraging everyone in the community to live by our school REACH values of Respect, Enthusiasm, Aspiration, Compassion and Honesty.

We ensure all our pupils have access to a lively, stimulating curriculum which reflects our local context and meets their needs. Through this we support every child to become a Successful Learner, Confident Individual, Responsible Citizen and Effective Contributor.

St Mary's is proud to be recognised as a Rights Respecting School. The philosophy and ethos of a Rights Respecting School is reflected in all aspects of our life and work here, with the children's voice central in all that we strive to achieve at St Mary's. All children in our school are members of one of our responsibility groups, as we work together to develop our learning environment and achieve some key Global Goals set out by the UN.

We aim to get it right for every child and in order to support our children we work in partnership with a range of services including Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Social Workers and Health Professionals. We are proud of our community links with Dunblane Library, Dunblane Centre, St Mary's Episcopal Rector and Central Scotland Police. We also collaborate with volunteers who work with our children to enrich their learning and widen their horizons; these include; Active Schools, Outdoor Learning and Forest Schools (Nursery), supporting the Dementia Friendly Café and linking with the Friends of Holmehill.

St Mary's Episcopal Primary recognises its unique status in the community that surrounds the school. Local residents are very much an integral part of life at St Mary's and take pleasure being part of the children's learning journey as well as celebrating children's successes. We continue to build valuable partnerships with parents and the community in order to provide the best possible educational experience we can for all children in our care.

Further information about the school is available on the school website, [www.stmarysepsdunblane.org.uk](http://www.stmarysepsdunblane.org.uk).

We are always happy to show prospective parents around our school and nursery. Should you wish to visit St Mary's Episcopal Primary School and Nursery please telephone 01786 822740 to arrange a suitable time.

Kindest regards,

Siobhan Hewitt, Head Teacher

## Keeping Everyone Safe – Covid-19

This nursery handbook provides helpful information for parents and outlines normal nursery practice and procedures. In June 2021, the point at which this handbook is updated, we are living in unprecedented times, due to the Coronavirus pandemic and normal procedures have had to change. Safety protocols and procedures have been put in place for a controlled, safe and positive environment in our nursery. Thorough risk assessments are in place and the nursery team continue to work to evaluate risks and minimise them as far as is possible; continually reviewing government and local advice to ensure a safe learning environment.

Although this handbook details 'normal' protocols and procedures, we will continue to inform our community of any changes as a result of the pandemic through our usual communication channels, such as nursery newsletters, emails and through our digital platforms, e.g. ClassDojo, Twitter, Google Classroom and school app. These differences may change throughout the session depending on national or local guidance around the procedures we need to follow for everyone's safety.

As at June 2021, our nursery meets the strict hygiene and social distancing standards required, with sanitiser stations installed and cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces taking place regularly throughout the day, these will be regularly reviewed.

Depending on the situation with the pandemic, changes could take place in the following areas during the school session

- Social distancing between staff and movement around nursery;
- 'bubbles';
- Arrangements for entrance and exit points;
- Parent access to the nursery building and open door policies;
- Procedures for external visitors to the nursery;

We will strive to be innovative in our approaches, and there may be some activities that have to be carried out differently, or following guidance may not be able to happen, for example

- Community events and Parent Council events e.g. discos, Christmas Fairs;
- Volunteers;
- School/ Nursery assemblies/nursery shows/information sessions for parents;
- Transition arrangements – nursery to P1
- Arrangements for reporting to parents;
- Personal belongings and bringing things in to nursery.

In the event of nursery closures, contingency plans are in place for blended learning, including Stirling Council's digital learning platform named SPEC 'Stirling's Platform for Education and Communities'.

Together, our nursery; our children, our families, our community and our staff, will get through this and come out the other side, stronger and even more resilient.

# Description of St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery

St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery is attached to St. Mary's Primary School and is a term time nursery. This means the nursery is open 5 days a week 9am-3pm during the school term only.

## Nursery Information

<b>Nursery address</b>	St Mary's Episcopal Nursery Smithy Loan Dunblane FK15 0HQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01786 822740
<b>E-mail address</b>	stmaryeps@stirling.gov.uk
<b>Twitter</b>	
<b>Head Teacher</b>	Mrs. S. Hewitt
<b>Senior Early Childhood Educator</b>	Mrs. A. Pearson
<b>Early Childhood Educator</b>	Mrs. J. Polatajko
<b>Support Worker Early Childhood Educator</b>	Mrs. F. Grant
<b>Administrator</b>	Mrs. N. Currie and Mrs. S. McCreath

## The Nursery Day

Daily session	9.00 am – 3.00 pm
---------------	-------------------

## Session Information

All 3 to 5 years olds are entitled to up to 30 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare per week at St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery. We are not open during the school holidays, nor for extended days.

# St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery Values and Aims

Our REACH Values are:

- Respect
- Enthusiasm
- Aspiration
- Compassion
- Honesty

We aim to:

- Put children and young people first and to provide a socially inclusive service for them and their families.
- Promote and deliver integrated education, health, care and support services of the highest quality.
- Raise achievement and reduce inequality.

Although attendance at Nursery does not guarantee a place in the main school, the nursery is very much part of the school and shares the school's aims and values.

We fully endorse the values embedded in the Scottish Government's *Curriculum for Excellence* which aims to enable all young people to become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Effective Contributors
- Responsible Citizens

## Ethos

Our ethos for St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery is that it should be a happy community where everyone is encouraged and supported to achieve their personal potential.

To achieve this, we will:

- Create an ethos where everyone is welcomed, treated fairly and with respect.
- Promote positive behaviour with the emphasis on encouragement and praise.
- Provide the best quality learning experience we can through a balanced curriculum which promotes academic achievement whilst recognising the importance of aesthetic, physical, moral and spiritual development.
- Promote partnership with parents, carers and the local community.
- Continue to build on the strong tradition of St. Mary's as an Episcopal School whilst welcoming people of all beliefs.
- Welcome individuality and diversity whilst ensuring that we promote equality of opportunity.
- Ensure that these aims and values are underpinned by a whole school commitment to self-evaluation, quality assurance and accountability.

# Starting your journey

## Applying for a Place

Application forms for a place at our nursery can be found on our website [stmaryeps@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:stmaryeps@stirling.gov.uk)

It is found in the section 'Our nursery'. The registration section is found right at the bottom of this page where there is a link to the application form which then needs to be emailed to St. Mary's Episcopal School and Nursery. Alternatively, we can email the application form to you from our school office. Please phone 01786 822740. We will need to see your child's birth certificate to verify your child's date of birth so will arrange a time for you to bring this to the office that is mutually convenient.

Children on the waiting list are considered for a place starting the term following their third birthday. An Admissions Panel considers the allocation of places and usually look for application forms for children eligible to begin in the Autumn term by end of February prior to that date. However late applications are considered.

## Bringing your child to Nursery

Parents / Carers of children offered a place in the autumn term will be invited to the Nursery for settling in visits in May or June. In August, children new to our nursery will start on different dates over the course of the first few weeks of term to allow your child to have individual time with their Keyworker and to settle into nursery. You will be informed of their start date by letter.

If your child starts during a term, there will be an opportunity for you and your child to visit the Nursery and meet with the Nursery staff prior to the start date.

All children settle into Nursery differently and it may be that your child's Keyworker speaks to you about shorter sessions to begin with until your child is feeling comfortable attending Nursery.

## What you might need to bring:

- Children should wear comfortable clothes to nursery and bring a change of clothes with them.
- Children should bring warm, waterproof jackets for outdoor play.
- Children should wear comfortable footwear, suitable for indoor play and that they can put on themselves.
- Children should bring wellies or similar and waterproof trousers for outdoor / forest play.

The children will have their own peg to hang up the bags that they bring into Nursery. Please label all items where appropriate as many children many have very similar clothing. We do offer the children aprons for messy play but they may opt not to wear them therefore we would ask that children are not wearing their best clothes. Nursery always has a small supply of spare clothes in the changing area.

## Arrival/Collection

St. Mary's is an Eco and Health Promoting establishment and walking or cycling to school is encouraged. Considerable time and effort has been put into making the area outside school as safe as possible with parking restrictions in place. To ensure the safety of children we would ask that you respect those parking restrictions. The India Gate, the Indian restaurant at the roundabout permits parents delivering or collecting their children to and from the school to use their car park for this purpose.

## Entrance to Nursery

Entrance to Nursery is via the back gate of the school, down the lane that leads to the church rectory. However, should you need to use the main door at any point you need to use the intercom to gain entry. Currently parents are not allowed into the school / nursery so you will be asked to wait until a member of staff comes to meet you at the door.

**To keep everyone safe please do not hold doors open for others and ensure all doors are closed after use.**

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the Nursery session as children can and do become anxious if you are even slightly late.

Children **MUST** be collected by an adult at the end of the session. If your arrangements for collecting your child are different from usual, please let Nursery staff know at the beginning of the session or phone the school office during the Nursery day if anything changes.

**Children under sixteen years of age are not permitted to collect a child from the nursery. Also, staff will not release a child to any adult who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**

## When Your Child is Unwell

It is important to contact the nursery to inform us if your child is unwell and unable to attend. We are required to phone you within the first hour of non-attendance at Nursery if we receive no notification from you. This is in alignment with Stirling Council Nursery Provision Guidelines.

We aim to provide a healthy environment for everyone: families and practitioners share this responsibility. If your child is unwell, they **should not be** brought to nursery. We appreciate that this is difficult for parents/carers who are studying or working; therefore, we suggest that back up child care arrangements are in place.

Please note that children should be kept off nursery for 48 hours **after** the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

## Emergency Closures

On occasions circumstances out with our control may arise which would require the nursery to close. If this does happen, we will contact you as soon as possible. Please ensure that we have the most up to date emergency contact details for your child.

In regard to adverse weather please check the Stirling council website for updates.



## Staff Training and Development

All staff working in the nursery undertake Staff Training to keep up-to-date with current research and developments which could impact upon or improve nursery provision. All staff are reviewed annually and also participate in regular professional development courses to ensure their knowledge and practice is of high quality and is up to date. All staff are also trained in food hygiene and a First Aider is available.

## Communication with Families/Parent Partnership

The importance of working in partnership with parents and carers is recognised and strongly encouraged at St. Mary's. It is hoped that families will be active participants in the life of St. Mary's Nursery (currently within the confines of Covid regulations) and be involved wherever possible in working with the Nursery team to enhance and promote the children's development and learning. Effective and genuine working relations between staff and parents are viewed as being crucial in supporting the children.

We communicate with parents and carers in a number of ways. These include regular newsletters, the School website, parents' evening, our home link wall, email and Class Dojo. Nursery policies are available on request and the Nursery holidays are available at the back of this handbook (and also on Stirling Council's website).

Please ensure that your email address is up to date with us so that we can send you out any communication that is required.

We also actively encourage feedback and comments to ensure we are providing the best possible experience for the children. Nursery staff regularly seek feedback from parents on their child's learning to inform future practice.

## Encouraging Positive Behaviour

We are committed to promoting positive behaviour. It is our policy to help children develop confidence in themselves and to respect other people and their environment. Children are helped to share, take turns and solve differences with other children without aggression.

A positive behaviour policy is available to read on request. This sets out expected levels of behaviour and how staff will encourage positive behaviour.

The Nursery Charter, which details expectations of behaviour proposed and agreed with the children, is displayed within the Nursery and uses the children's voices to convey their rights and how they want their nursery to be.

## Fairness and Equality

We at St Mary's School and Nursery believe in fairness and equality of opportunity. We undertake in our daily interactions to treat all our service users with respect and value the contributions of all. In addition to this we also plan activities designed to promote multi-cultural awareness and understanding the needs and rights of all members in our society. We are a Rights Respecting School and Nursery. Our Equality and Fairness policy is available on request.

## Lunches/Snacks

Children accessing their 1140 entitlement will be provided with a free lunch in Nursery. A termly lunch menu is shared with parents via Class Dojo, along with allergy information. We ask that orders are submitted during drop off to enable staff to process orders. Children can, and do, make their own lunch choices and nursery staff will ensure that children are making a choice consistent with any dietary requirements.

## Snacks

Due to allergies, nuts are **not** permitted in nursery. Children are given either milk or water to drink, therefore no juice should be put into packed lunches. Sweets are discouraged as we promote healthy eating for healthy bodies and minds.

In line with nutritional guidelines, healthy snacks are provided daily which will always include milk, water, fruit or vegetables as well as for example, breadsticks, rice cakes, toast, crackers, natural yoghurt, pasta, rice, bagels.

Snacks are prepared in nursery by our practitioners with the assistance of the children. A snack will be offered both during the morning and the afternoon should children want it. We accept and appreciate kind donations of fruit. Water is available at all times.

Children are encouraged to develop independence and skills for life, through the use of 'real' crockery and cutlery. Children are encouraged to help prepare the snack for example, cut up fruit/vegetables, filling up jugs, setting and clearing the table.

If your child requires a special diet, is vegetarian / vegan or is allergic to any particular food, it is imperative that you inform us. Staff will ensure that any special dietary requirements are adhered to. A notice detailing a child's allergies along with a photograph of the child is displayed in the kitchen area for the attention of Nursery staff.

## Packed Lunches

Children can bring a healthy packed lunch if they wish to do so. We ask that your child's packed lunch should consist of sandwiches (or other cold snack e.g. pasta, crackers and cheese, oatcakes etc.) a small yoghurt and a piece of fruit. We do not have the facilities to heat hot meals and would respectfully ask that parents adhere to the agreed items. There may however be occasions when alternative plans can be put in place to cater for medical and/or dietary requirements.

## Prescribed Medication

If your child needs prescribed medication whilst at nursery, please speak with your child's key-worker or a senior member of staff who will supply you with the appropriate medication administration form, which allows you to provide clear guidelines/instructions on medication and give your consent for nursery staff to administer.

All medication must be retained with the original packaging and clearly labelled by the pharmacy, with the **child's name and prescribed dose**. Medicine forms must be completed with written instructions from parent/carer regarding times/amounts of medicine to be administered **the first dose of medicine must be administered by the parent**.

## Accidents or Injuries

At times, children can become ill or injure themselves and we may need to contact you. We need to have an alternative emergency contact name and telephone number in case we are unable to get in touch with you. You are asked to provide these details on the application form. Please ensure that the person is aware that they may be contacted. All accidents are recorded and shared with parents / carers. **Please let the nursery staff know if the emergency contact for your child changes.**

## Child's Learning

The Nursery day is planned to offer a variety of learning experiences. Activities are organised around a learning focus, which provides activities aimed at developing the key curricular aspects outlined above. The planning process is responsive and evolving and is related as far as is possible to the interests of the children. Learning experiences are planned as a result of talking to, working with and observing the children, and also as a result of talking with parents and carers. We recognise that not all children learn in the same way or develop at the same rate and the individuality of each child is respected. Children will be encouraged to join in with all nursery activities and to follow nursery routines. Should any child require additional support to access the Nursery curriculum, we will work with parents and other agencies as required to provide this. If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's development, please do not hesitate to discuss this with your child's keyworker.

Nursery staff encourage and welcome comments and feedback from parents and carers about the learning focus and activities to enable us to continually review and improve our practice where possible.

## Keyworker System

Although the Nursery staff work with all the children during the normal course of the session, each child is assigned a Keyworker who will have responsibility for your child's care and development and for maintaining records of their achievements. Your child's Keyworker will be your main daily point of contact. However, should your child's Keyworker not be in nursery for whatever reason, then you can pass on information to any of the other Nursery staff.

On your child's first day at Nursery, you will have the opportunity to have short, informal chat with your child's Keyworker to exchange information. Keyworkers are also usually available at the end of the session to have a brief, informal chat regarding any concerns you may have. Should you have any concerns that you feel you need to speak to your child's Keyworker in more depth about, then you can phone the school office to have a mutually convenient time arranged to do this.

A learning journal is kept by your child's Keyworker. This is where your child's learning is recorded in the form of written observations, photographs, their own words and your child's drawings. It is a record of their interests, achievements and development during their time at Nursery. Your child's learning journal is also used to influence and inform our curriculum planning and that their learning is planned for in a responsive way. It also ensures that your child's thoughts and ideas are being actively listened to each day by their Keyworker. The learning journal is a document that you will then be able to take home when your child moves on to school.

## Curriculum for Excellence

The nursery offers opportunities for children to engage in all areas identified through our curriculum in Scotland: The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE 3-18). CfE includes indoor and outdoor opportunities which meets the different needs of each child and works in partnership with families to provide an environment in which children feel secure, happy and confident.

### **The curricular areas are:**

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

### **This guidance can help to:**

- Build confidence of those new to working with young children and allow time to think and not just do.
- Act as a tool for raising awareness and promoting collaboration across different sectors.
- Inform the ways in which children and their families are supported.

## Support for Children

The Staged Intervention process allows us to identify children's additional support needs at an early stage. The aim is to support and safeguard wellbeing and improve outcomes for them.

We have fully adopted the national GIRFEC model and have merged this with our existing Staged Intervention process across all stages. This enables us to look at improving outcomes for children in a multi-agency approach to pupil support and has proven to be a more focused way to address the needs of children. Parents are fully involved in this process. We actively encourage parents to communicate any concern that may affect their children's education and general wellbeing.

## Child Protection

St. Mary's Episcopal Nursery has a policy on Child Protection, with the aim of supporting all children.

Key points in the policy include:

- All staff have training and support to recognise the signs of abuse whether physical, sexual or emotional.
- All staff must pass any concerns to the Head Teacher who in turn must make a referral to the Social Work Department, if there is a concern regarding a Child Protection issue.
- Parents are asked to inform staff of any injuries, bumps and bruises that their child has already sustained before coming to Nursery.
- Staff will record bumps, bruises and minor injuries received during the child's time at Nursery in the Nursery Accident book.  
Parents are welcome to discuss the policy with Nursery. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times unless this jeopardises the health or welfare of the child.  
The public have an obligation to pass on information about child abuse and neglect to:

- Nursery: 01786 822740
- Police – call Police Scotland on 101 and state that your call is in relation to Keeping Children Safe / The Sex Offender Community Disclosure Scheme. You will then be transferred to a police officer with whom you can discuss your concerns. This is a 24 / 7 number.
- Care Inspectorate: 0845 600 9527
- Social Work: 01786 471177
- Childline: 0800 1111

In the interests of child safety, we require that no photos of children taken within Nursery will be posted on any social networking or social media site.

## Zero Tolerance

Nursery should provide a safe and stable environment for all children and staff. Please note that aggressive, violent and threatening behaviour, both physical and verbal, will not be tolerated. Any individuals displaying these behaviours will be reported to the police.

## Complaints

You can complain in person, by phone, email or by letter. We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

Complaints should be made in the first instance to the Nursery where a senior member of staff will look into the complaint. A decision should be given to you within 5 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you are dissatisfied with the decision that was made then you can email [info@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:info@stirling.gov.uk) or ask the Head Teacher to move the complaint to stage 2 on your behalf.

Once you have been given a decision by Stirling Council, if you find you are still dissatisfied you can then move your complaint on to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), <https://www.spsso.org.uk/>.

Complaints are not usually dealt with after a period of 1 year.

## Care Inspectorate

If you have a concern about a care service, in the first instance please raise this with the Head of Nursery / Head Teacher.

You can then raise a concern with the Care Inspectorate by email at [concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot](mailto:concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot) .

If you are unable to email or use the online complaints form, please call 0345 600 9527 between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday. This information is regularly updated and available at <https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/complaints> .

## Payment Methods

- Parentpay

Further information on ParentPay is available and will be discussed during the induction. Payments are issued via parent pay and payment should be made within 14 days. If payment has not been received this will be followed up via email and verbal communication. After 28 days this will be passed onto Stirling Council's Finance department.

# Stirling Council School Holiday Dates

**2022 - 2023**

<b>Autumn Term Starts</b>	<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>
<b>Autumn Term Ends</b>	<b>Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b>
<b>October Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup> – Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022</b>
<b>Winter Term Starts</b>	<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b>
<b>Winter Term Ends</b>	<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022</b>
<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022 – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>
<b>Spring Term Starts</b>	<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>
<b>Staff Development Days</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023</b>
<b>Local Holiday</b>	<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023</b>
<b>Spring Term Ends</b>	<b>Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b>
<b>Spring Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b>
<b>Summer Term Starts</b>	<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b>
<b>Bank Holidays</b>	<b>Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023</b>
<b>Nursery Returns</b>	<b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023</b>
<b>Summer Term Ends</b>	<b>Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>
<b>Summer Holiday Starts</b>	<b>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023</b>
<b>Autumn Term Begins</b>	<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023</b>