

# John Paul Academy

## Preparing for S1

### Preparing for S1 - Welcome to JPA!



First of all, let me extend a warm welcome to all our families who are preparing their child for the exciting move to secondary school. Regrettably, we cannot welcome you in person this year, but hope that you will find the information in this leaflet helpful and of some reassurance in these challenging times. We are working hard with our primary colleagues to make sure that the move to secondary school is a positive and exciting experience for all. Our school website, Facebook page and Twitter account will continue to be up-dated throughout the session with information and news about transition arrangements as well as providing an insight into the many opportunities available in our school, events and achievements and above all the celebration of the talents and successes of our young people. I look forward to working with you closely as we progress through the spring and summer terms, Miss Macdonald (Depute Head, S1)

Our school is a vibrant and busy place to be with over 900 pupils and 80 teaching staff. Our facilities include a state of the art drama room, a photography studio, a fitness suite, 2 gym halls, a hairdressing salon as well as computing suites, home economics kitchens, technical workshops, and science laboratories.

John Paul Academy aims to provide opportunities that stretch far beyond the traditional curriculum, with pupils also achieving a range of awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, The Diana Award, John Muir Awards, Caritas Awards, Personal Development Awards and many more.

### Goodness and Knowledge

This is our school motto; we want our young people to learn lots of new things as they progress through secondary school but we especially want to help you to continue to support them to become good, kind and respectful young people, ready to contribute successfully in the wider world. This is very important to us.

### A Catholic School

Our Catholic faith teaches that each one of us has God given talents; the role of the Catholic teacher is to nurture and develop these talents, promoting the dignity of each individual person in our school community. Our values underpin all we do as we strive to build relationships founded upon mutual understanding, trust and respect.

# GETTING STARTED: THINGS TO KNOW

## Common Questions!

Following the decision to increase our S1 role to 180, we look forward to welcoming even more pupils to our school next session. Our P7s typically want to know.....

**Will I be in a class with my friends?** We try very hard to make sure that there is at least one friendly face from primary school in your child's class. Very occasionally this is not possible, but please reassure your child that they will be ok! They will definitely make lots of new friends at John Paul Academy. All our teachers will help make sure your child knows everyone in their class before the first day is even over.

**How will I find my way about?** Despite the size, it is impossible to get lost in our school. We have a one way system and signs on all the classrooms doors. When pupils first arrive they are taken from class to class by Support for Learning Workers and a team of enthusiastic guides! If anyone does need a bit more help pupils and teachers are always close by and can point pupils in the right direction. We have not lost anyone yet so no need to worry!

**Is the work really hard?** We want the work to be hard. This means your child is being challenged to learn new things - this is a good thing and we are grateful for the support of parents in helping

us to set high, but attainable, standards for all our young people. Teachers are on hand at break and lunchtimes or after school to clarify any particular issues, learning logs sent home after assessments will keep you informed of progress too, as well as the termly tracking report. We know you will have aspirations for your child; our job is to work with your and our pupils to make these aspirations a reality. Almost all of our pupils now move onto university, college or employment when they leave school and much of our work in secondary school is about preparing them for life beyond the school gates!

**What do I do at break and lunchtime?** S1 and S2 are not allowed out of school at all during the day. Our younger pupils can play outside in the playground, on the pitches or sit inside in the canteen. There are lots of clubs that run at lunchtime too, so they might like to join these.

**Do I need to wear a blazer?** Yes!! Every single day! We are really very proud of our school uniform; it is a very important part of our school, it shows we are all equal, all serious about learning and all dressed to impress. The blazer must be worn every single day and the shoes/trainers must be ALL BLACK. No swooshes/logos allowed! Our parents help us enormously by ensuring our pupils maintain the highest of standards in our dress code.

## THE HOUSE SYSTEM



Every pupil has a Pupil Support Teacher who will look after them, guide them and encourage them at school. Pupil Support Teachers are each in charge of a House Group (a group of pupils from S1-S6).

1A will be in Mackintosh House - Ms Beltran looks after this House.

1B are part of Kerrera House - Mrs Diver looks after this House.

1C will be in Hope House - Mr Devlin is in charge of Hope House.

1D are in Howson House - Mr Cassidy is their Pupil Support Teacher.

1E and 1F will be in Wallace House - Mrs Dick looks after Wallace House pupils. We have 2 more Pupil Support teachers, Mrs Allan and Mrs Serapiglia - they provide support to pupils with additional needs and who may require an enhanced level of support as they settle into secondary school.

# SUCCESS AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

## The school day

The day begins promptly at 8.43am when the first bell rings. This means it is time to go to class, ready for lesson 1 which begins at 8.45am. **All pupils should always be in school by 8.43am.**

On a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday pupils have 7 lessons and the day ends at 3.30pm.

On Tuesdays and Wednesdays there are just 6 lessons; we call these "early days" because pupils go home at 2.40pm.

If a pupil is late to school we text or phone home to make sure you are aware of our concerns and to seek your support in ensuring your child arrives on time the next day. In John Paul Academy we expect all our pupils to be on time every day,

Break is at 11.15am every day - this lasts for 15 minutes. It always comes right after period 3.

Lunch is always after period 5, every day - lunch starts at 1.10pm and ends at 1.48pm, ready for period 6 which starts at 1.50pm promptly.

## Attendance

Pupils who attend every day do best at school - sounds obvious, doesn't it? It is obvious. We expect pupils to come to school every single day - so even if your child has a bit of a sore head, or a sore tummy or if they tell you they are simply a bit tired, we ask to remind them of our expectation:

**GET UP!**

**DRESS UP!**

**SHOW UP!**

## CLUBS, TRIPS, ACTIVITIES!

Pupils will have many opportunities to try new things at John Paul Academy; art clubs, media clubs, debating clubs, ICT clubs, homework clubs, music clubs, drama clubs, every-sport-you-can-imagine clubs....there is really something for everyone! It is so important that we encourage our pupils to join in with everything that secondary school has to offer. We hope they will "have a go" and by doing so meet new people, try something new and hopefully discover something they really love to do.

Clubs take place at lunchtime and after school every single day - your child will have no excuse not to be very, very busy! There are always lots of exciting trips too, reward trips, special interest trips, curriculum trips - as a school we are lucky to have a rich diversity of culture and experience amongst our pupils and staff - our trips to Dubai, Trinidad and Tobago, Italy, as well as to places closer to home serve to reinforce the message that we are all part of and have something to offer to the global community.

## Relationships for Learning

Our school is a busy and diverse place to be; we need our pupils to be able to feel safe and happy every day when they come to school. The only way to do this is by asking pupils to remember and follow these simple rules:

- **Always be kind to others** . Always. Everyone can do this and we insist upon it, every single day.
- **Always be respectful**. Always. Everyone can do this and we insist upon it, every single day.

# Subject Information

Your child will be studying the following subjects in S1:

ENGLISH  
MATHS  
SCIENCE  
SPANISH  
RE  
PE  
SOCIAL SCIENCES (*history, geography, modern studies*)  
ART  
MUSIC  
DRAMA  
HOME ECONOMICS (*cooking!*)  
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMPUTING  
ADMIN AND IT  
IDL (*a subject about skills!*)



## Progression

As your child moves through secondary school, they will choose to study subjects that reflect their skills, strengths and future plans. By S3 their timetable will be more personalised, reflecting these choices and if appropriate by S4 pupils can begin to make use of other opportunities available to help develop skills and talents, such as First Steps Construction courses, Rangers Skills Academy, college link programmes and modern apprenticeships. They are supported in this decision making by colleagues from Skills Development Scotland, our partners in MCR Pathways and our own Pupil Support staff. You will also play a key role in supporting your child to make informed choices, that best suit their ambitions.

## Qualifications

In S4 pupils sit their first national examinations, being presented at either National 4 or National 5 level. In S5 pupils can progress to examinations at Higher level or broaden their experience with a diverse range of alternative qualifications and/or subjects. There is the opportunity to progress to Advanced Higher level in many subjects too. Our examination results continue to improve year on year, with our pupils most recently supported not only academically but also emotionally, to manage the impact of Covid-19. We are confident this trend of improvement will continue.

Please look out for information due to be shared soon on the school website/twitter related to the following areas:

- *Additional Support Needs - a guide to enhanced support available in the Well-Being Hub*
- *Co-located ALN unit - an overview of our ALN provision*
- *Virtual Tour - conducted by our enthusiastic and wonderful S1 pupils!*

Please contact the school office directly with any queries related to **placing requests** and/or the outcomes of these requests. We are happy to discuss these with you.

