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Welcome from the Head of Prep

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted you have chosen St Columba’s College Prep School and on behalf of all the Staff and Governors we wish you a very warm welcome to the Columban Community.

We hope our Parents’ Handbook will help you to find out about the day-to-day life and ethos of the school but if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to ask. We would also recommend that you look at our school website, www.stcolumbascollege.org and Twitter accounts: @StColumbasHerts and @StColumbasPrep where you will find further information, news and images about the life of St Columba’s College school community.

St Columba’s College is a Foundation school of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. Their heritage and work in the Catholic education of young people and their service to the Church continues through the many dedicated and caring professionals whom you will meet during your association with the St Columba’s College school community. Whilst we are proud to proclaim our Catholic heritage, we are an inclusive school community and welcome families of all faiths and none.

St Columba’s College Prep School is happy and industrious with a real sense of team spirit and community. We take great pride in our reputation for academic achievement, pastoral care and extra-curricular activities. Our experienced, highly motivated staff work hard to provide rich and varied educational experiences for every pupil. We value and respect the individuality of our children and strive to provide opportunities for them to use their unique gifts and talents and become responsible, confident individuals.

We will help your child fulfil their potential, we will push and encourage them, but without ever losing sight of the bigger picture. We feel that a happy and safe child is more likely to flourish.

We look forward to a successful partnership between home and school, as together we share in the education of your child.

With warmest wishes,

Mr Richard McCann
Head of Prep
St Columba’s College
Aims of St Columba’s Prep School

- To challenge each pupil to reach their own best academic standards and enjoy academic success.
- To provide a caring environment in which each child can fulfil their potential.
- To develop an awareness of the needs and values of others and to work co-operatively.
- To encourage the child’s spiritual and moral development.
- To promote the child’s physical development.
- To encourage and focus curiosity and creativity.
- To foster the child’s sense of pride in self and in their work.
- To encourage self-respect, self discipline and independence.
- To broaden the child’s perspective of the world around them.
- To provide opportunities for children to direct their own learning and to make choices encouraging a love of learning for its own sake.

“Spread love everywhere you go, First of all in your own house... let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.”
Teresa of Calcutta.
Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to inform you of the Prep School’s key policies and procedures to help maintain the highest standards in an atmosphere of respect for God, self and others.

Our mission

St Columba’s College is committed to promoting and realising Gospel values in an environment of academic endeavour and personal discipline. We work in partnership with pupils and parents and in accordance with the traditions of the Catholic Church and the educational tradition (‘Charism’) of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

We seek to provide a Christian education in which each student is personally valued and challenged to pursue the highest standards in spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development. We aim to share an experience of Christian community in which all may grow in faith through worship and by responding to the needs of the community at large.

We expect each pupil to develop their own particular talent in pursuit of their God-given vocation. Academic success, confidence, good relationships, loyalty, sporting prowess, aesthetic interest and readiness to be of service to society will all be qualities of the Columban.

Brothers of the Sacred Heart

The Brothers of the Sacred Heart is an international Roman Catholic Institute of Religious Brothers which has been dedicated to the Christian education of youth for more than 175 years. The Order was founded in Lyon, France, in 1821 by Fr André Coindre.

The Brothers of the Sacred Heart came from their American New England Province at the invitation of the Archdiocese of Westminster and established St Columba’s College in 1955.

Today, with its motherhouse in Rome, there are more than 1,100 Brothers throughout the world: England, France, Italy, Spain, the United States, Canada, Central America, South America, Asia, the Pacific and Africa. The Dean of the College is Brother Joseph Holthaus, who can be contacted on bjh@stcolumbascollege.org.

British values and respect for cultures and faiths

As required by Government statute, we include the teaching of ‘British values’ in our curriculum as outlined below:

The College and therefore all its members seek to actively promote the fundamental British values of:

a. democracy  
b. the rule of law  
c. individual liberty  
d. mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

At St Columba’s, we do this in an environment of respect and equality in which all cultures, faiths and ethnicities are equally valued.

Refer to the College Pastoral Policy SMSC available on the website for full details.
St Columba’s College

St Columba’s College is an independent Catholic day school for ages 4 to 18 in the heart of St Albans. We are an inclusive community and warmly welcome families of all faiths and none.

The Prep School has approximately 250 pupils, aged 4 to 11. From 2021 we are welcoming girls into the Lower Prep ahead of a phased transition to full co-education throughout St Columba’s.

The College stands on a seven-acre elevated site overlooking St Albans Abbey. The main body of the Senior School was completed in 1961. The Prep was built in 1967 and opened as Sacred Heart Junior School, the name under which it existed until 1995 when it gained IAPS accreditation as a preparatory school. In September 1996 the Lower Prep Department was opened. From September 2004, it became known as St Columba’s College Preparatory School to reflect the one school, 4 to 18 community. The Prep underwent a successful ISI inspection in December 2017. The last time the Early Years Foundation Stage was Ofsted inspected it was judged as outstanding. Our most recent ISI Inspection in November 2017, judged the Early Years along with the rest of the College to be excellent.

In the Prep School, we plan and offer regular opportunities for the pupils to experience and be involved in assemblies, liturgies and worship. Whole school assemblies occur twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays. The Friday assembly gives an opportunity for each class, on a regular basis, to produce and share an assembly with the rest of the school. House point awards, academic achievements and demonstrations of the school ethos are also celebrated.

During the school year, a number of liturgies and masses are held to celebrate key events such as Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Lent as well as school feast days. Masses are held either in our school hall, the studio or in the College chapel. We have also had the opportunity of holding one mass per year, in our parish church, St Bartholomew’s, as well as the annual College mass in St Albans Abbey.
Pastoral Care

At St Columba's College Prep School, we pride ourselves in providing a very high standard of pastoral care for all pupils entrusted into our hands. In partnership with the parents, we seek to provide a Christian education which not only values each pupil personally but also challenges them to reach the highest standards in spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development. It is in this pursuit that we endeavour to begin to nurture all the qualities of a true Columban ready to serve society as and when they leave the College.

The Form Tutor

The Form Tutor takes responsibility for the general welfare of the pupils including the monitoring of academic and social progress, offering guidance and support where necessary. In the Lower Prep, the Form Tutor, together with the Teaching Assistant, will be with your child for over 70% of the school day.

The Form Tutor is the person who will best get to know your child and you during the year. When parents require information or advice about anything pertaining to their children, the Form Tutor is the person to whom the inquiry should be communicated in the first instance. An approach by telephone can be made to ask for the Form Tutor to get in touch; it can, however, be helpful for the Form Tutor to have details of a question or problem set out in a letter/email in order to research his/her response. Parents are welcome to come to school to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise, but we would ask that parents seek to arrange a mutually convenient appointment through the School Office.

Individual teachers may contact you concerning academic progress but the Form Tutor deals with most communications about school concerns.

Form staff and pupils are also supported by the Assistant Head (Pastoral), who is available to meet parents regarding pastoral matters when required. There is a tutor period every day in the Upper Prep, which gives both the pupils and tutors an opportunity to sort out issues of concern when needed, discuss and debate current affairs and chat about events going on in the pupils’ lives. This time helps build the bond and understanding between the Form Tutor and his/her pupils. As your child progresses through the school, some tutor periods will be timetabled to be used for personal, social and Health education, developing independent learning skills and to discuss the day ahead, as well as improving speaking and listening skills. At times, individual pupils will be expected to prepare and deliver presentations on a variety of topics.

Designated Senior Leader (DSL) for Safeguarding

Any school has a responsibility to exercise its duty of care in terms of safeguarding children and the College has two such officers trained in managing matters which may be forwarded to them. They are the Prep Deputy Head, Mr K Boland and the Senior School Deputy Head, Mrs K Marson and they will deputise for one another whenever necessary and called upon to do so. Their official training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance; however, they also undertake other training and courses which support their roles.

The staff more widely are all trained in Safeguarding matters and how these should be managed and referred to the DSL. This training is undertaken according to Government stipulation and all new staff in the College undergo induction training in Safeguarding and Counter-Bullying.

Parents do need to be aware that there are practices in place to protect children from any form of neglect or abuse which means that when these are brought to light, they will be referred to agencies who are better able to address the needs of the individual. The College will take guidance from the Local Children Services Officer in such instances.
Safeguarding
Responsibility is placed on the school and staff for safeguarding. These obligations are detailed in the St Columba’s College Safeguarding Policies which are available on the College website under Policies. Any parental queries relating to safeguarding procedures in the Prep School should be directed to Mr Kevin Boland, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for safeguarding in the Prep School (including the Early Years).

Specific Guidance
To guide staff in dealing with the sensitive matters surrounding your child’s care, there are a suite of policies which are under annual and on-going review in order to guide them through their dealings, many of which are available on the website (under ‘Policies’) and these include Safeguarding, Safeguarding Recruitment, Safeguarding: Anti Bullying, Image Use and so on.

SHAPE
Preparation for academic success is important but in addition to this St Columba’s aims to develop well rounded young people so that they will be positive citizens who leave education ready to make a life, rather than just a living. We therefore also place importance in developing pupils throughout all areas of school life, using the acronym ‘SHAPE’ to guide us. Each half term, pupils will review their SHAPE profile and target areas where they may able to develop further. Through all aspects working together, pupils develop a range of skills crucial to success in later years as well as develop their own independence and self-esteem.

S – Service. We demonstrate God’s love by serving each other. Throughout the year pupils have opportunities to take upon positions of responsibility that help them serve their peers and the school. Charity initiatives also focus upon how the pupil’s own efforts can support those in need, not simply by raising money.

H – House. The House system develops friendly competition throughout all areas of school, teaching the pupils important skills when working in teams and using the varying skills of the group to achieve.

A – Academic. In addition to the classroom setting, we provide a wide range of opportunities to demonstrate academic excellence and endeavour, encouraging challenge and celebrating success.

P – Practical. Our music, arts and sports programmes are extensive and give the opportunity for every pupil to develop their own interests and excel in any area they have an interest in.

E – Extra Curricular. A full variety of clubs are offered each term, providing pupils the chance to try something new or focus upon an area of interest.

House System
Every pupil is a member of one of four Houses: ALBAN, BECKET, FISHER or MORE. The House system gives pupils a strong link with children from other Forms throughout the School. In every Form, there will be a number of children from each House. Although there may not be the same number of children in a Form from each House, numbers are balanced across the year group.

House Colours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House</th>
<th>Colour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alban</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becket</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The House system provides an opportunity to establish healthy competition between the pupils. In the Upper Prep, this takes place in all areas of school life, including academics, music, sporting and service.
House Points
Teachers award House points for academic work and for general activities around the school. In the Lower Prep, the pupil with the most House points in their class each week wears a badge of their House colour. In the Upper Prep, when pupils gain a House point they are given a sticker, which is placed in their diary for record purposes. Certificates to mark fixed numbers of House points earned (25 = bronze, 50 = silver, 75 = gold, 100 = platinum, 125 = diamond, 150 = titanium) are presented at Award Assemblies.

The Super Student Award
On the recommendation of Prep teachers, pupils who show great academic effort and progress will be awarded a Super Student award. This is presented by the Assistant Head (Academic) at awards assemblies. Parents will be informed in advance when a pupil receives an award so that they can celebrate the achievement with the rest of the school community.

Coindre Qualities
These will be awarded with a teacher’s recommendation for exceptional achievement, responsibility, care or good example, as a good Columban. These awards are made by the Deputy Head of the Prep School.

Head of Prep Award
The Head of Prep Award is given to children who have been recommended by their class teacher, or another teacher in the school or indeed by the Head of Prep via daily observations. These awards can be given for achievement, progress, and effort in learning and to children who most noticeably demonstrate our values on a consistent basis or excel in a skill in or outside of school.

Head of School, Deputy Head of School, Head Chorister, Sacristan and Prefects
The Prep Leadership Team, in collaboration with the rest of the staff, select a number of pupils who are given positions of responsibility for the duration of the academic year. These pupils will be given special duties and leadership roles. They will help staff to monitor pupils in and out of the building during break times. There will be other duties during school events such as Open Days, masses and assemblies.

The Head of Prep and Deputy Head have special roles in helping organising the Prefect system. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is the teacher directly responsible for organising their duties. They will be responsible for ensuring that the whole team of Prefects is carrying out the prefect duties.

The Head Chorister is given special duties in music as well as general prefect duties. There is also a Sacristan who helps the RE Liturgist with the organisation of altar servers at masses and other duties as required in association with the Prep school’s various other liturgies and acts of worship. The Service Prefect supports the Pastoral Deputy in the delivery of events and service throughout the year. The remaining Prefects will be House Captains and House Vice-Captains. As well as the Prefects, there are Monitors for a range of areas of school life.

The Prep School operates a Buddying programme. All new pupils to the school, as well as all those starting Prep 3, are assigned a pupil as a buddy (special friend). It is their responsibility to help the new pupil to settle into the life of the Prep School. Activities are organised to help build the bond between the Buddies. In the Trinity (Summer) Term, Prep 3 students become buddies to the children in Reception. This gives them the opportunity to develop new leadership qualities through modelling good behaviour to their younger friends.
**Code of Conduct**

The broad aim of the school’s Code of Conduct is to develop a whole school behaviour policy supported by the whole school community, which creates a caring atmosphere in which teaching and learning can take place in a safe and happy environment.

The underlying principle is that we treat others as we would like to be treated and that, at all times, pupils show respect for themselves, for other people and for property.

There is a clear behavioural policy in place which has been shared with all pupils.

Pupils should remember that, in all circumstances, they will be held responsible for the effects or results of their actions, not just for their intentions.

What follows are the eight school rules. For Upper Prep pupils these can be found in the diaries, as well as in the school's full Code of Conduct, which can be accessed via the school website.

**Rule 1**
Pupils must learn the rules and regulations of the Prep School and understand the rewards and sanctions which can apply.

**Rule 2**
Pupils must treat others as they would expect to be treated – other pupils, staff, and public alike. Good manners should prevail in all circumstances.

**Rule 3**
Pupils must respect others and their property; this includes respect for the property and buildings.

**Rule 4**
Pupils must wear their uniform correctly at all times. In all modes of dress, pupils must be neat, clean and tidy.

**Rule 5**
Pupils must respect boundaries and rules of access to school buildings. All absences must conform to agreed practice.

**Rule 6**
Pupils must be punctual for all scheduled classes and associated activities, including sporting fixtures, cultural and religious events.

**Rule 7**
Pupils must complete all written exercises and assignments to a standard appropriate to their ability and such as to meet deadlines set.

**Rule 8**
Pupils must adhere to the rules of the school governing matters of health and safety.
Starting School

If your child is starting in Reception, these are some of the ways in which you can help your child feel more confident about starting school.

It is important that your child should:

• Be able to dress themselves
• Be able to take themselves to the toilet and cope on their own
• Realise the need for flushing the toilet and washing hands
• Be able to blow their nose
• Be able to tidy up and put away after an activity
• Have had experience of using a knife and fork

Starting full time school is a big change in a child’s life and requires a lot of energy! We do find that the children can get very tired and it is essential that they obtain plenty of sleep. On the first day of school, bring your child into the classroom, help them to find the correct peg and hang up their coat. Introduce your child to the teacher, say goodbye and leave without hesitating.

If your child is starting in any other year, we will arrange a mutually convenient day for your child to spend a day in school, sometime in the half term before they are due to start. They will not need to bring anything with them, and lunch will be provided. This will give your child a chance to meet their Form Teacher and get to know some of the children. We will also provide you with the name and number of the class rep who will have been informed of a new pupil starting. The class rep will then give you an updated form list which will enable you to arrange some play dates if you so wish.

For children starting in Prep 2 or above, they will need a pencil case containing HB pencils, colouring pencils, ruler, rubber, glue stick and pencil sharpener with a case. A detailed equipment list for Prep children can be found on page 12. This will be sent home every week to be checked and if necessary restocked and then to be returned on Monday morning.

Once you have handed over your child, go home and have a cup of tea or coffee. Your child will be fine!

Or go to work – your child has begun their work too!
Academic Information

Home/School Partnership
After accepting an offer of a place in St Columba’s College Prep School, parents accept the Terms & Conditions of their acceptance form and the ethos of the school. As a school community we expect parents to support the school in educating their children. (Please refer to our Policies section on our website regarding Data Protection)

The partnership between home and school is crucial and any concerns regarding any aspect of a pupil’s progress in school, will be communicated to parents and opportunities offered for parents to discuss their child’s education with staff in school.

Pupil Diary
The pupil diary is an important tool for learning. As soon as a teacher gives an assignment, the details should be written into the space for that day, so that the correct information is taken home and is available that night when the pupil is doing their home learning.

Parent and Form Teacher sign the Home Learning Diary each week. If there are any questions or problems with any aspects of your child’s education, academic or pastoral, parents may write these into the relevant space in the diary. More sensitive concerns should be communicated by email or by letter in a sealed envelope.

Home Learning

In the Lower Prep, pupils will go home with a reading book every night except Wednesday and there will be two books at a weekend. Prep 1 and Prep 2 have a small amount of Home Learning in addition to reading. These specific arrangements may vary according to individual need in Reception. In the Lower Prep, pupils will also be given individual spellings to learn.

In the Upper Prep, all pupils will be set English or Maths each night from Monday to Thursday. Pupils in Prep 5 and Prep 6 will also be set an additional task in a second study area such as RE, Science or Social Studies each week. Whilst English and Maths are due in the next day, there will be an extended deadline for the second study subject.

All pupils are also expected to read for 15 minutes each night. Parents are asked to sign their child’s diary to confirm that reading has been completed. Younger pupils or struggling readers should read aloud and discuss the text with an adult.

In the Upper Prep, all of your child’s home learning will be posted on Show My Homework. This means that you will know what homework has been set and you can support your child with obtaining resources should they accidentally leave these at school.

If a piece of home learning cannot be completed to the deadline set and there is a valid reason, it is expected that the pupil will bring a note of explanation from their parent. If there is no note the appropriate sanctions will be enforced.

It is expected that parents will check the quality and quantity of the home learning completed by their child in order to maintain standards. In the Lower Prep, a reading book will only be changed if a parent has noted that the previous book was read at home. Parents are invited to use the pupil diary to give brief feedback or to ask questions.
Equipment

Writing Instruments:

Reception to Prep 3
HB pencil for all work.

Prep 4
The use of a Berol pen is at the discretion of the Form Teacher.

Prep 5 to Prep 6
Roller-ball pen for all written work in study subjects. We recommend a ‘Parker’ or ‘Uniball’ Vision Elite roller ball (or a fountain pen in Prep 6). Pencils, rubber and ruler for maths and diagrams in other subjects. Blue ink only. Biros are not permitted.

Pens and glue sticks may be purchased from the school office. Items sold will be added to your consumables bill.

For Upper Prep pupils we would recommend a zipped pencil case containing the following:
• an eraser
• a 30 cm ruler
• 3 x sharpened HB pencils
• a roller ball pen (Please note comments above)
• a small glue stick
• 2 different highlighter pens
• colouring pencils
• a sharpener with attached shavings container
• protractor, set square (no compasses)
• a pair of rounded end scissors.
• No gel pens or felt tip pens. We prefer pupils to use coloured pencils.

We recommend that as far as possible these items be labelled. Please note that where pen is used, all written work should be in blue ink and that pupils may not write with biro.

Textbooks
Pupils are provided with some school textbooks. Each textbook should be returned in good condition at the end of the year. Each textbook has a number on it. Missing/lost textbooks will be charged for.

Exercise Books/Files
Exercise books or files are where most of the work throughout the year is kept and pupils must keep them in good order. Labels will be provided for every pupil to name their exercise pads. Pupils must not write on any part of the cover. Pupils must follow the guidelines given by Teachers for setting out work.

Desks/Tables
Each pupil is assigned a desk or table and tray for the year in which they store textbooks, exercise pads and pencil case. These things should be neatly organised inside the desk or tray. Desks and tables must be kept clean and tidy at all times. Pupils should not write on the desk or table or stick any posters or cards of any description to any part of it.
Educational Programme

Lower Prep

Personal and Social Development
Reception children sometimes play alone or side by side, watching and learning from each other. During their first year at school as they mature, they will be encouraged to interact and collaborate, to share and to take turns. We aim to develop social skills such as respecting other pupil's work, ideas and opinions, and the building of effective relationships with other pupils and adults.

The pupils will work both independently and as part of a group and will begin to understand the need for concentration and perseverance and will feel able to seek help when required.

Pupils need to have the self-confidence to try without the fear of failure - we work to achieve this by the positive approach of praise.

Discipline in class is attained through praise and encouragement. The pupils are given very clear guidelines and soon learn our expectations regarding acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour. We work together with parents, liaising frequently after school to form effective partnerships. Thus, school and home share responsibility and understanding, and achieve mutual respect.

Parents are also important as partners with regard to home activities. Throughout the first years, but especially in Reception, the sharing and discussion of books, reading, working together on simple workbooks and phonic packs is very important. We do value parents' involvement – it is wonderful when families contribute artefacts relevant to our topics or share languages and special areas of interest. Further discussion about topics will depend upon your child's interest and understanding.

The Value of Play
Child-initiated play is central to the Early Years curriculum, as it is essential for children's development. Play is 'memory in action' (Vygotsky) and also helps form and secure social relationships. Play has been proven to develop higher order thinking as children can challenge themselves and take risks without fear of failure. At St Columba's we therefore carefully balance intellectual and academic focus with child-initiated play opportunities, seeing them as two inseparable strands of a young child’s learning.

In our Reception and Prep One Classes, we are also lucky to have specialist teachers for French, Music, Computing & IT, Physical Education and additionally in Prep Two for Art and Science.

Although we are not formally part of the National Curriculum Early Years Foundation Stage, during your child’s Reception year, we aim to include and exceed the learning milestones set out in the National Early Learning Goals and to foster excellent learning dispositions in our pupils. We achieve this by offering a broad, creative curriculum encompassing everything from formal classroom learning to outdoor investigations.

For all pupils, our curriculum pays regard to the National Curriculum, however, we move beyond it to enhance and deepen children's learning. This is achieved through well planned lessons, varied activities, visitors in school and trips out, all of which provide a rich stimulating environment, taking the individual child forward from their starting place. For further information, please talk to your child’s Form Teacher.
Academic Progress

In the Upper Prep, the pupils continue their learning journey started in the Lower Prep or another school. Our aim is to educate the whole child, developing the many skills and talents that the individual offers, preparing them for Senior School and ultimately for success in adult life. The academic curriculum includes a wide range of subjects taught by experienced primary practitioners. The use of many specialist teachers ensures a high standard of subject knowledge and skills to be shared with the pupils. The curriculum is varied and interesting, and although the National Curriculum provides a sound base, Teachers have the freedom to explore other areas and ideas that are of interest to the pupils allowing for adaptation to individual needs.

An invaluable part of the Prep curriculum is the opportunity to enrich the teaching and learning through visitors to the school and visits out to a range of places of interest. At other times, where appropriate, the timetable is relaxed to allow for special topic days or longer cross-curricular projects which develop knowledge and skills. In all, the teachers have at the core of their teaching, a regard to the individuality of each pupil and will do their best to respond to their pupil’s needs and interests working in partnership with the parents. We are concerned that all pupils make academic progress. The rate of progress will vary from child to child and from year to year. Our priority is to view the individual’s progress against their own best standard and not as a comparison with their peer group. We aim to communicate this progress as fully as possible with parents. This is done in a number of ways.

Curriculum Information
Details of the skills and knowledge to be taught across the various subject areas, for your child’s year group, are outlined on the College website. This offers the parents the opportunity to support the teaching and learning. We advise you to take the opportunity to read this at the start of each term. A printed copy of this information may also be obtained from the school office.

Reports
Each year, parents in all year groups will receive three reports, a profile report in the Michaelmas (Autumn) term and the Lent (Spring) term and a longer, written report at the end of the Trinity (Summer) term. The profile reports will include either grades or a descriptor to indicate progress, attainment and effort in the subjects taught as well as a brief target in some cases.

The Trinity report includes a more detailed comment for each subject. These will also include a longer statement from the Form Tutor covering the core curriculum subjects indicating progress so far and areas to work on. Reports will indicate academic progress and success. Parents may have access to their child’s records, but a written request must be made for personal files.

Parent Consultation Evenings
There are two planned opportunities to meet with your child’s teachers. These evenings are mid way through the first and second terms. The first meeting offers the opportunity to see how your child is settling into the new year group and coping with the work set. Individual targets for improvement will be discussed. A second parents’ evening allows for a review of attainment so far, including that recorded in the December report. Areas to work on and strategies for further progress will be highlighted. These are usually in relation to academic success but will also consider social and behavioural achievements. There is also an open evening during the Trinity term when we celebrate the work of staff and pupils and open the school to families, friends and prospective pupils.
Gifted and Talented
We recognise that some of our pupils will exhibit skills and knowledge beyond that of their peers. These children will usually be catered for within the curriculum through extension and enrichment activities. We also offer a number of clubs such as Brainiac and Chess Club which allow able pupils to develop a new skill or extend their existing knowledge.

Learning Support
Through our Admissions procedures we aim to select pupils who will proceed to the Senior School. It is nevertheless the case that we admit a small number of pupils who, whilst having adequate academic potential, experience barriers to learning. In all cases, it is our aim that, with intervention and appropriate help, the problems may be overcome with support through Lower Prep or during the early years in the Upper Prep and pupils may function successfully in accessing the curricular demands. However, there may be some pupils whose needs cannot be met by our curriculum and so another environment may be recommended by the Head of the Prep School. This would only happen in rare circumstances and our aim would then be to help parents to find another school, which would better suit the needs of their child.

Assessment
A range of assessment procedures, both formal and informal are used to assess the attainment and progression of individual children. BASE (Reception Baseline Assessment) will be used in Reception (from September 2018) and INCAS (Interactive Computerised Assessment System) from Prep 1 upwards. BASE and INCAS are standardised computerised tests designed to give an indication of a child's on-going performance in English and maths. They are used to monitor progress and achievement and will also indicate value-added over time.

There are also start and end of year formal tests from Prep 1 to Prep 6 and periodic check-ups by the teachers to assess the progress of the pupils that they teach. These will usually be end of unit assessments; for example, at the end of a history topic or a unit of maths work. Some of these tests will be timed and carry increasing weight as pupils get older. The purpose of testing is not only to assess attainment but also to inform teachers’ planning so as to ensure that the curriculum taught is appropriate to the needs of the children.

Remote Learning
Here at St Columba’s Prep, we nurture each pupil’s skills and talents and support them in striving to become the best version of themselves. We are proud of the rich and diverse range of opportunities that we provide the students to ensure that they are prepared, not only for their transition to Senior School, but also for the wider world beyond the sphere of education. This vision has remained steadfast in the exceptional circumstances we have found ourselves in this year. We want to assure you that, even in stages of remote learning, we will continue to foster the development of intellect, character, spiritual awareness and imagination. As our 2019-20 Head Boy commented ‘Columba’s is not a place, it is a feeling and you can be a Columban no matter where you are’.

Library
Pupils visit the Lower Prep library weekly and children are encouraged to borrow a mixture of fiction and non-fiction books. The Upper Prep library has a stock of fiction and non-fiction books that can be borrowed using the computerised issue system and is open every lunchtime and also during the day when the librarian is present. There are also computers, internet access, talking books and educational games. The library is used for personal and teacher-led research tasks as well as for reading for pleasure. Every pupil is encouraged to read and to use the library. In addition, younger pupils follow a structured reading scheme.
In Reception your child will be sent home with a book to share with you and this is changed daily. Once your child is reading, they will then be sent home with a book which they will be able to read out loud to you. Please take 15 minutes each night to listen to your child and talk about what they have read. The expectation for pupils to read every night continues right through their time in the Prep School. The librarian compiles a list of recommended reads and it is hoped that each pupil will read at least three books from the library each term. In addition, Prep 5 and 6 pupils are also expected to complete a minimum of three book reviews each term. A summer reading list is issued to all pupils at the end of Prep 2, 3, 4 and 5. Pupils are expected to continue reading over holiday periods.

Writing

Correct letter formation is vital. If your child has already started to write, please encourage him/her to show you how he/she forms each letter. Please remember we start to teach the letters using the lower-case alphabet.

We use the Read Write Inc Phonics Scheme which encompasses correct letter formation. A rhyme is associated with each letter to help children remember how to write the letter correctly. Please see a copy of the rhymes on page 17. As children progress through the Prep School, we continue to place importance on neat handwriting and care with presentation.

We use the Letter-join Cursive Handwriting Scheme to support the introduction of handwriting. Once your child is at school you will receive a class log in so that you can support this at home.

Free writing may at first be only intelligible to the child. This emergent style of writing is the early stage of learning how to write. We encourage it and your child will soon progress as they hear and use the sounds in words and incorporates the bank of known words. In addition to reading books, Reception pupils bring home a sound or high frequency word to practice each day. Once again please help your child learn these.

The Home Learning diary goes home every day stating the name of the book and if necessary, what page your child should read from. Please initial every day, stating if the book is finished or what page your child has read up to. There is also space for you to make a comment if you should so wish. Weekly spelling or vocabulary tests will be set within year groups to help improve technical accuracy and broaden understanding of word meanings.
**Phonics**
The Read Write Inc Phonics Scheme is used to support our Phonics teaching and learning. Each day there is a dedicated phonics lesson where we teach the children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. Children learn to form each letter, spell correctly and compose their ideas step-by-step. They learn to spell words phonetically and learn to read by sight those words that cannot be sounded out.

Regular assessments ensure that the children are all making progress and are working at the correct level.

**Rhymes for letter formation** Taken from Read Write Inc.
Additional Information

The School Day

All Prep pupils should arrive before 8.20am in full school uniform. Reception pupils wear PE kit to school on PE days, with their uniform in their kit bags. Pupils may be dropped off after 8am, unless they are attending Breakfast Club. From 8am Upper Prep pupils can enter the playground to wait there and the teacher on duty will blow the whistle and direct the pupils into school for registration at 8.20am. Lower Prep pupils go to their classrooms and the Studio for early morning care from 8am – 8.20am. Pupils who arrive before a Duty Teacher is on the playground will not be supervised and must wait with parents or guardians until a teacher arrives. Our policy is that pupils on the playground should be supervised at all times.

Breakfast Club

We have a Breakfast Club which starts at 7.30am, you need to book and pay for this on School Gateway a week in advance.

Late Arrival

If a pupil arrives late (i.e., after 8:20am), they must first report to the School Office to ensure that they are registered.

School Gates

The School gates at the top and bottom of the site will be closed from 9am and access is via an intercom buzzer at the top of the school or via a padlock code at the gates to Westminster Lodge Car Park.

Registration

During the morning registration, information about mode of travel home and after-school activities for Upper Prep pupils is recorded.

Departure

At the end of the school day Lower Prep pupils are picked up from the classroom door. Upper Prep pupils leave the school and wait in the playground, wearing full school uniform. The coach pupils congregate in the Studio before proceeding, under supervision, to their Coaches at Westminster Lodge Coach Park. All car pupils are to be picked up no later than 3:55pm from the school playground. When pupils arrive on the lower playground at the end of the day they may go straight to their car as parents arrive so that parents are not delayed. If parents have not arrived by 3:55pm the pupils will be taken back into the school building and wait in the foyer to be collected. Phone calls to parents will be made if necessary. Those on extended day activities also report to the playground prior to being collected by the teacher in charge of their activity. Please do not ask your child to meet you at the top of the drive or on the school’s roadways as this is against school policy. Pupils must be collected from the lower playground. All children must be collected by their parents /guardians unless permission has been obtained.

On Fridays, to help ease traffic congestion, Lower Prep pupils leave at 3.15pm. Prep 3 and 4 at 3.30pm and Prep 5 and 6 at 3.45pm.

Parking

The school site is very constrained. We encourage parents who collect pupils by car before 4pm to use the Westminster Lodge car park at the bottom of the sports field. Pupils can then walk down with our coach pupils and the Duty Teacher and be picked up from the school grounds by the car park. All spaces on the school site are allocated as numbered staff car parking spaces. Parents are asked to exercise caution and courtesy when driving onto and off the school site. Between 8.00am and 8.20am and 3.10pm and 3.45pm the Upper playground is to be used only by parents dropping off Lower Prep pupils in the morning and picking them up again in the evening. There are stickers to identify Prep parents which are in your pack and available at the School Office.
Coach pupils
Coach pupils line up in the Studio at the appointed time and wait for the Duty Teacher. When everyone is ready all coach pupils move calmly and in an orderly fashion behind the Duty Teacher down to the coach park at Westminster Lodge.

On arrival at the coach point, pupils immediately board their coach. On board the coach pupils sit in their allocated seat at all times, talking quietly to the person next to them. All coaches are fitted with seat belts and our pupils are instructed to wear them at all times. The observance of College discipline is encouraged whilst our pupils travel to and from school by coach.

Mobile Phones
We only allow pupils who are travelling by coach to have a mobile phone, which MUST be handed into the Prep Office on arrival at school. Written permission must be sought from the Head of Prep for a pupil to bring in a mobile phone to school.

Peripatetic Music Lessons in the Upper Prep

In addition to the timetabled class Music lessons pupils can also apply for individual instrumental or vocal lessons with our Visiting Music Teachers (VMTs).

Pupils who have individual tuition in a particular musical instrument have lessons with VMTs in music practice rooms and are timetabled on rotation.

Pupils are expected to be aware of the VMT timetables and to attend their lessons on time. However, if they occasionally forget, the VMTs will collect them from their normal class lessons. They may be asked to catch up on any work missed in their subject lesson.

Pupils who learn a musical instrument either in school or outside of school will be invited to join the appropriate Music groups, which rehearse and perform regularly throughout the year. Many of them will also perform solos in class assemblies and at Evening Recital Concerts.
**Timetable**

- 8.20  Registration
- 10.30  Break - Upper Prep
- 10.45  Break - Lower Prep
- 12.15  Lunch - Upper Prep
- 12.30  Lunch - Lower Prep
- 3.15   End of Day - Lower Prep
- 3.30   End of Day - Upper Prep

Assembly is on Monday and Friday at 8:30am, alternating class assembly and Awards assembly.

For morning playtime, pupils may bring fruit or vegetables, yoghurt and cheese. Please ensure your child brings a named plastic water (non-metal) bottle to school. Please label all foodstuffs. As there are a number of pupils in the Prep School who suffer from food allergies, may we please remind you that it is very important that all foods brought in from home are nut free.

**Extended Day Activities**

**Extended Day Activities**
Most activities between 3:45 and 4:45pm Monday to Friday are included in the fees. Some activities such as Chess, LAMDA, Rugby Tots, Tennis, Golf, Football and Fencing are run by external agencies and are chargeable.

**Procedure**
All of the information regarding the clubs is sent out at the end of the previous term. At the start of the following term, if you would like your child to be in an after-school activity then you will need to log in to School Gateway (our online payment facility) and make your selections. Your child will be expected to attend on a regular basis for that term. School Gateway can be accessed via the App, or from the Parent Hub page on our website. The Finance Department will send information to new parents about downloading the School Gateway App.

**After School Care**
After School care will run from 3.45pm to 5:30pm Monday to Friday and will cost £10. You must book and pay for After School Care in advance via School Gateway (our online payment facility). Emergency on-the-day bookings can be made via the School Office before 3pm. For pupils attending part of the session, the cost will be £5 per hour, or part of an hour. There are two different classrooms each term, one for Lower Prep and one for Upper Prep pupils. School Gateway can be accessed via the App, or from the Parent Hub page on our website. The Finance Department will send information to new parents about downloading the School Gateway App.

We do not provide any food, and so we would encourage pupils to bring in a snack from home to have during the session (nut free, please).
Upper Prep pupils can attend an after school activity/club, then join after school care or they can attend the full session. This must be booked via School Gateway.

**Late Pick-up**
If pupils are staying behind for Extended Day activities, parents’ punctuality with regard to pick up is very important. A member of staff is on duty at 4:50-5pm to ensure all pupils have been collected. If your child is playing in a school fixture, they must also be collected promptly at the designated pick-up time displayed on the teams sheet or updated on Twitter. The duty teacher will hold the pupils in the playground, school lobby or hall until the collecting adult arrives. For their safety, pupils are not allowed to go looking for the adult who is collecting them. If pupils have not been collected, parents will be contacted and if necessary pupils will be sent to After School Care which will be chargeable.

**School Site**
Parents are asked to exercise caution and courtesy when driving onto and off the school site. The Prep School top playground is to be used only by parents dropping off Lower Prep pupils in the morning and for pick up at the end of the school day. (Please see note on Parking on page 18).

**Child missing and non-collection response**
For details regarding the procedure in the event that a parent/carer fails to collect a child and the procedure for dealing with the circumstance of a child going missing at, or away from, the setting, please refer to our Child Missing & Non Collection Response Policy, which is available on request from the Prep School Office.
**Absence**

On the first day of an absence please make sure that you telephone the school to inform us of the absence. We have a dedicated absence line where a message can be left. This should be done first thing in the morning before 9:30am. We must know if a pupil is not expected. This should be followed up by a letter/email on the pupil’s return to school.

**Unauthorised Absence**

By law a Head Teacher is only permitted to authorise absence under ‘exceptional circumstances’. Beyond these times the absence becomes unauthorised. In the event of an occasional absence it is up to the judgement of the Head whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. The DfE (Department for Education) and Their Majesty’s Inspectorate of Schools give clear guidelines stating that if, in the opinion of the Head, the parents could have avoided the cause of the absence then that absence must be recorded as unauthorised. The following are some examples of what would be considered as avoidable and therefore unauthorised:

- A parent who works decides to keep a pupil at home to buy new shoes because it is their only day off.
- An uncle is visiting from Australia and is only in town for a day.

The DfE states that school days missed may interfere with a pupil’s progress and right to education.

**Advance Warning of Absence**

If it is known that a pupil is going to be absent from school for a dental or doctor’s appointment a note/email sent must be brought/sent to their Form Teacher. This will allow Teachers to set some home learning, where appropriate, to make up for time lost.

**Pupils Leaving School during the Day**

Parents who take their child out of school during the school day for medical appointments, music exams etc. must notify the school in advance in writing. On the day of the appointment they must sign the pupil out using the Inventry system in the school reception. It is very important that we know where all pupils are in the event of a fire drill/evacuation of the building.

**Holidays in Term Time** (please refer to the note on Unauthorised Absence above)

The school has long holiday periods and it is expected that parents will arrange all vacations during this time. Please check the calendar for term dates. Please note that it is not school policy to offer make-up work to pupils who miss school for family holidays in term time. The dates of all the examinations weeks are communicated to parents via the school calendar and it is an expectation that pupils attend during these periods.

**Attendance at School Events**

There are a few key events during the school year that pupils are expected to attend. These include Nativity plays for Lower Prep and Preps 3 and 4, the Abbey Carol Service (choir, Prep 5 and 6 only), Upper Prep swimming gala (Prep 3-6), the Prep School musical (Prep 5-6) and the Prize Giving (Prep 6 only). Parents must give prior notice if their child is unable to attend these events, which are indicated in the school calendar.
Trips/Contact With Parents

Trips
In the Prep School we run various educational trips and workshops throughout the year. In the summer term we run a fun outing for all year groups. There is a charge for external trips and this will be added to the parents’ termly account for payment.

These trips arrive back in school at various times, sometimes outside the school day. Where a trip returns out of school hours, parents should meet their child as normal in the school playground, unless advised otherwise by letter. Where the school coach is the normal mode of transport home, parents will be expected to make alternative pick up arrangements, once again from the school playground.

Obviously arrival times back in school are traffic dependent and we will, where possible, keep parents informed of a change in timing via our text messaging service or school Twitter accounts.

Email/Mobile Phone Texting Service/Twitter
For communication with parents, we regularly use an email and mobile phone texting service. All letters home are sent in this way. The text message system allows the school to send messages to a large number of parents at the same time and get a message out to parents at short notice. This is particularly useful if a rugby team is returning late or a party of pupils is delayed back from a school trip.

In order to run this system, we need an up to date email and mobile telephone number to input onto our system. Should you not wish to take part in this service, please could you notify the school office.

Parents are requested to access the School Sports Website for Upper Prep sports fixtures regularly to keep abreast of developments in the Prep School.

Follow us on Social Media
We have various Twitter accounts in the Prep school including:
Head of Prep: @StColumbasPHead
Prep: @StColumbasPrep
Lower Prep: @StColumbasLPrep
Prep Sport: @StColumbasPSpo
Prep Library: @StColumbasPLib

Our main College accounts are:
Twitter: @StColumbasHerts
Facebook: @StColumbasCollege
Instagram: @stcolumbascollege
Break Times

Pupils must never be in a classroom unsupervised. If a teacher has arranged to meet a pupil at lunchtime, then they must wait on the playground until called by that teacher. If a pupil ever needs to leave the playground (e.g., to get a ball or see the nurse, etc.) they must first obtain permission from the Duty Teacher.

During a ‘wet break’ pupils will be in a classroom. They may move around the classroom, talk with friends, read a book or magazine, draw or play board games. Chase or tag type play is not allowed. **Play involving physical contact of any kind is forbidden.** They are supervised by their Form Teacher or the Duty Teacher. Except in the most extreme weather, Lower Prep pupils play outside every day. They should leave coats and wellington boots in school at all times.

Pupils are allowed healthy snacks during morning and afternoon break times, these include fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese or crackers. No sweets are allowed, and crisps may only be eaten as part of a school packed lunch and must be eaten in the canteen. **We ask that all snacks are nut free.** Depending on the weather, Prep pupils must eat their snack in the playground. Lower Prep Pupils eat their snack in the classroom or outside. We encourage pupils to drink water, and water bottles are allowed in school as are non-fizzy drinks in cartons. Metal cans or glass bottles are not allowed. Each pupil is responsible for the neatness of their classroom.
Uniform

Day school uniform is available from Stevensons: www.stevensons.co.uk / 01727 853262
School sportswear is available from: www.tylers-sportswear.co.uk / 01707 396900

Lower Prep

Day Uniform – Winter
- School sweatshirt, grey trousers/skirt, white polo shirt with crest, grey socks
- Black coat (with school crest)
- Black hat and black gloves (optional)
- Black leather shoes
- Wellington boots of any design
- Pair of red waterproof trousers available from various outlets (for example, muddyfaces.co.uk, and togz.co.uk)
- We issue a blue school bag for all pupils in Lower Prep

Please note: painting overalls are not required in Lower prep. Plastic aprons are kept in the classroom for Art and messy play.

Day Uniform – Summer
- Same as above, but grey shorts may be worn. White legionnaire’s hat with school crest (available from Tylers Sportswear)
- Black waterproof jacket

Upper Prep

Day Uniform - Winter
- School blazer, grey trousers, house school tie, white shirt, black V-neck jumper, black or grey socks
- Black leather shoes (all school shoes must be polishable; no boots)
- Black coat (with school crest) with hood, black woolly hat, scarf and gloves (optional)

Day Uniform - Summer
- Same as above, but short-sleeved white school shirt and grey uniform shorts may be worn with grey ankle socks
- Plain white baseball cap or legionnaire’s hat (optional)
- Black waterproof jacket

Overcoats must not carry motifs or printed brand names. All overcoats must be longer than the blazer. ‘Bomber’ type jackets and coats with fur collars are not allowed in school. If headwear is required in very cold weather, it must be plain black. In summer plain white hats or baseball caps may be worn. Tylers Sports supply appropriate headwear. No type of logo must be visible on clothing.

Upper Prep

A Home Learning bag is provided for pupils in Prep 3 and 4. In Prep 5 and 6 pupils will receive a Maths and English bag. Upper Prep pupils need a plain black rucksack where the weight can be distributed on both shoulders to carry these individual bags, pencil cases, music books and other academic materials. An appropriate bag is available from Stevensons, the school outfitters.

Lost Property

All property that is found around the school is placed in the Lost Property box in the changing room. If a pupil is missing something, this is the first place to look or in the changing room for sports kit.
ALL CLOTHING MUST BE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD’S NAME

Hair

**Boys’** hair must be kept short, tidy and be above collar length. It should not be shorter than ‘number 3’. Shaved or cropped styles and the use of hair gel are not acceptable.

**Girls’** hair should be neat and of an appropriate style, length and colour. Hairbands and hair bobbles should be plain in colour.

Jewellery

Simple gold or silver stud earrings may be worn, one in each lobe. Nail varnish and make up may not be worn.

Watches

A wristwatch may be worn, but not a Smart watch.
Health And Safety/College Nurse

To complete the essential team that looks after the welfare of each student, we have two College Nurses, Mrs Marie O’Connor and Mrs Liz Tomlinson.

Some hints to help your child in their first few months at St Columba’s College
The first few months can be quite tiring as your child settles in and is finding their way round the school. Some may have to get up early to get the coach and travel a long way. If they miss breakfast, the most important meal of the day, make sure they bring something to eat when they arrive at school. It is a good idea to bring some healthy snacks to eat at break times. Always provide some water for your child. Dehydration is a major cause of headaches in young people. If they have a lunchtime activity, they must make sure they have lunch as well, they must not skip meals! Ensure bedtimes are adhered to, particularly in the first term.

If your child feels unwell or has hurt themselves during the school day, what should they do?
If they are in a lesson tell the teacher. Try to finish the lesson if possible. If necessary, they will be sent accompanied to see the Nurse. The Nurse carries a mobile telephone so if at any point during the day she is not in her room, she will be contacted. If the Nurse feels your child should go home, she will ring and make arrangements with you. Do not arrange to collect your child without first speaking to the Nurse, as your child may be able to stay at school after treatment. If appropriate the Nurse will give an ‘off games’ note.

If pupils are unable to participate in games for whatever reason parents/guardians must write students a note to be excused from Games.
If pupils would like to see the Nurse wherever possible they should do so at their break times.

Can you carry your own inhaler and Automatic Adrenaline Injectors (AAI) (Epipen etc)?
AAIs are stored in the Prep Office which is accessible by all throughout the school day. If you would prefer your child to carry it with them, they can. Please let the Nurse know which you would like them to do. Inhalers must be carried at all times and clearly marked with your child’s name. A spare must be provided to keep in the Medical Room. A Care Plan for AAI use and an Asthma card if appropriate must be completed.

Food Allergies
Pupils with food allergies must check the menu carefully. If they have concerns about the ingredients of a dish or requires assistance with their selection, they must ask the catering staff, who will be happy to help. Please do not send foods containing nuts into school. Allergen notification letters are sent out by our catering firm, Chartwells. Please ensure you complete and return the form if your child has food allergies.

Diabetics
If your child has Diabetes they may carry their own testing equipment and Insulin. They will also need to carry food/drink/glucose in case of a hypo. Hypo supplies may also be kept in the Medical Room. They will need to take a supply out with them on games days to the pitches. Pupils must always tell a member of staff if they have a hypo.

Medication
You may bring medicines to school for your child to take as your Doctor instructed. It must be accompanied with written instruction from you in its original clearly named container and handed in to the Nurses Office. A medication consent form can be downloaded from the College website or obtained from the Prep Office. Liquid antibiotics need to be stored in the fridge and you will have to remember to collect them at the end of the day.
Colds, coughs and minor ailments
Encourage children to come to school unless they have a high temperature. Give simple medication such as Paracetamol before school. Ensure your child has water to keep themselves hydrated and their throat moist.

Can't come to school?
All absences must be reported to the Prep School Office as soon as possible on the first day of absence and on a daily basis after that. Please bring a letter explaining your child’s absence when they return to school. If appropriate, after 3-4 days’ absence, or frequent absence the Nurse may make contact with you. We will try to support you in any way we can. If your child has had to miss school for a prolonged period due to an operation, illness or injury, we can offer additional support. If pupils are injured and need to use crutches at school, they must report to the Nurse on their first day back in school for assessment.

Need to leave early for an appointment or arriving late for school?
A letter for routine absence for appointments should be given to the Prep School Office. Pupils must sign in with them if they arrive late and miss registration and sign out if they leave school earlier than normal for any reason.

Sickness and Diarrhoea
Children must remain at home for 48 hours following the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Infectious diseases
It is important if your child develops any infections illness e.g., Chickenpox, that the Prep Office is informed as soon as possible. For some groups of people, it is potentially serious if they are in contact with certain illnesses; this enables us to alert them as soon as possible. We also ask that your child is fully up to date with all immunisations.

If you find your child has head lice, nits or worms, please treat them before they return to the school and inform their Form Teacher.

Keep us informed
Please keep us informed of any changes to health, general wellbeing or parent contact details.

College Nurses
Mrs Marie O’Connor
Direct line: 01727 892022
Email: nurses@stcolumbascollege.org
School Lunches

The Prep School shares a pleasant dining room facility with the Senior School where pupils can either have a packed lunch brought in from home or purchase a cooked school meal, choosing from the three-week rolling menu. Weekly menus are on display inside the back entrance of the Prep School and on the College website. Any special dietary requirements can be catered for and there is always a vegetarian option available. With reference to packed lunches, we ask that no cans or glass bottles are brought in and that parents provide a healthy well-balanced meal with no confectionery.

Lunch payments

In the Prep School, our caterers, Chartwells, require lunches to be paid for on a termly basis in advance. Lunch payments should be made using School Gateway, our online payment facility, which can be accessed via the School Gateway App on the College website. Please go to ‘Portals – Parents’ on the Home page.

The Finance Department will send information to new parents about downloading the School Gateway App.

Lunches will then be deducted on a consumption basis, with the balance at the end of each term rolled forward to the following term.

To facilitate administration of school lunches on school trip days, where lunch is taken outside school grounds, parents will be asked to kindly provide a packed lunch. The school will notify you of the dates of these trips.

All Lower Prep children are escorted to the dining room and a member of staff sits with each class at lunchtime. Reception children sit in the staff dining room which is small and less overwhelming for the children. Prep 1 and Prep 2 are happy to be in the main dining room. All the children are expected to display good manners and consideration for others whilst eating, and to clear up at the end of their meal.

For Upper Prep pupils a member of staff is on duty at lunch times, both in the playground and in the dining room and pupils are sent into the dining room by year group. They are also expected to display good manners and consideration for others whilst eating, and to clear up at the end of their meal. Pupils go out to play afterwards.

The school encourages pupils to be properly hydrated during the school day. In addition to the available water fountains and water provision in the dining room, pupils are encouraged to bring water bottles into school so that they can ‘top up’ at appropriate times during their school day.
Contacts

The School Office
Tel 01727 862616/892044
Email prepadmin@stcolumbascollege.org

Mr D Buxton Headmaster

Prep Leadership Team
Mr R McCann Head of Prep
Mr K Boland Deputy Head of Prep
Miss C Maton Assistant Academic Head/SENCo/Form Teacher Prep 5S
Miss K Leahy Assistant Pastoral Deputy/Joint Form Teacher Prep 3K /
Link Co-ordinator, NQT & Teacher Mentor

Prep Staff
Mrs A Alexander-Fishwick Counsellor
Mrs P Allen Head of Music
Mr B Bailey Breakfast Club Leader/Learning Support Assistant
Mrs C Batten Joint Form Teacher Prep 2K/Lower Prep Lead
Mr N Batten Form Teacher, Prep 6S/Head of Prep Rugby/ PSTHEY Subject Leader
Mrs S Burgon ADT Subject Leader
Miss L Cancelliere School Secretary
Mrs A Cancelliere-Nash ADT Technician
Miss K Cowley ADT Technician
Mrs C Dobbyn Science Technician
Mrs A Elliott Science Subject Leader
Mrs S Edun Learning Support Assistant
Mrs E Freedman Joint Form Teacher Prep 2K
Mrs V Holland Learning Support Assistant
Mrs A Jeffery Form Teacher Prep 5K and RE Subject Leader
Mrs H Keating Form Teacher Prep 2D
Mrs P Knox Lower Prep Music Teacher
Mrs L Lavin Learning Needs Assistant
Mrs G Lewis Form Teacher Prep 4K/Maths Subject Leader
Mrs H Lorman Learning Support Assistant
Mr E Lowe Director of Sport 4-18
Mrs M Masters Learning Support Assistant
Mr T Malhotra Joint Form Teacher Prep 5D
Mrs E McConachie PA to Head of Prep School
Mr A McKenzie Music Assistant
Mrs L McLeod Form Teacher Prep 4D
Mrs G Muncer Form Teacher Reception
Mrs M O’Connor School Nurse
Mrs M Papesh Joint Form Teacher Prep 5D/Librarian
Mrs E Rigby Joint Form Teacher Prep 3K
Mrs M Scott Learning Support Assistant
Mrs H Stott Learning Support Assistant
Mrs D Sumpter Upper Prep Teacher
Mr M Turpin Head of PE & Games /Extra-Curricular Activities Co-ordinator
Br P Vaillancourt Teaching Assistant
Miss L Walsh Form Teacher Prep 3D
Mr P Warnes Form Teacher Prep 1/Early Years Transition Co-ordinator
Mr A Winchester Form Teacher Prep 6D /Social Studies & Computing, IT Subject Leader/
G & T Subject Leader
Mrs K York Form Teacher Prep 6K /English Subject Leader
## Calendar Academic Year 2021/22

### Michaelmas Term 2021

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<td>Thursday 2nd</td>
<td>Staff Inset</td>
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<td>Friday 3rd</td>
<td>New Senior School Students</td>
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<td>Open Morning</td>
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<td>Monday 18th October – Tuesday 2nd November</td>
<td>Half Term</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 9th</td>
<td>Carols in the Abbey (provisional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 17th</td>
<td>Last day of Term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lent Term 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 7th</td>
<td>Staff Inset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 10th</td>
<td>Whole School in Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 14th – Friday 18th</td>
<td>Half Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 21st</td>
<td>Whole School in Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 1st</td>
<td>Last day of Term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Trinity Term 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 25th</td>
<td>Staff Inset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 26th</td>
<td>Whole School in Session</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May</th>
<th>Bank Holiday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 2nd</td>
<td>Half Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 30th – Friday 3rd June</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 6th June</td>
<td>Whole School in Session</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 8th</td>
<td>Last Day of Term Ends 2.00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please note:** We hope that with this advance notification of term dates, parents will arrange family holidays within the school holiday periods if at all possible. Encroachment on term-time causes inevitable discontinuity in teaching and learning with increasing detriment to educational progress as students move up the school. It is expected that all boys will be present for assessments as communicated to parents in the School Calendar.
Instrumental Lessons

The school is able to provide instrumental tuition for Upper Prep boys in the following:

- Piano
- Violin, viola, cello, double bass
- Flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon
- Trumpet, trombone, French horn, tuba
- Guitar, percussion, drum kit
- Singing

At present the fees for 10 lessons per term are as follows:

**Individual Tuition** (30 mins) £210

Some school instruments (violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, French horn and guitar) are available to rent at the rate of £30 per term.

Fees are payable at the beginning of each term, and a half term's notice is necessary to cancel lessons.

Pupils will be put on a waiting list and notified as soon as a space becomes available.

Should you need any further information please contact the Director of Music, Mr S McCall. If you would like your child to have instrumental lessons, please email Mr McCall: mcall.s@stcolumbascollege.org.
Coaches

St Columba's College draws its pupils from a wide variety of areas including North London, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. We therefore offer a coach service. Please note: this service is only available to Upper Prep pupils, and not Lower Prep. The cost of the coach is £10.70 return. A single journey is £8.

In the interest of both the Prep School and the parents, it is important that the service functions in as safe, effective and regular manner as reasonably possible. What follows is a brief summary of the parents’ risks, the pupils’ responsibility and other matters pertaining to the coaches.

Parents’ Risk

• The coaches are provided by independent transport operators and thus the parents use this service at their own risk.
• The school does not provide adult supervision on the coaches. From time to time incidents of poor behaviour may occur. The school will investigate such incidents. All involved are given a fair hearing and whilst it is not possible to gain a totally clear picture, action may be taken where felt appropriate.
• Parents may, if they wish, communicate urgent concerns to the school. Where this is a matter of lateness or non-arrival, one of the Campus administration team should be contacted. For matters of discipline, please contact the Deputy Head in the Prep School.

Pupils’ Responsibility

• Pupils are allocated seats in which they must remain seated for the duration of the journey.
• Seat belts must be worn at all times.
• Pupils must obey the instructions of the driver in all matters relating to the safety and good order of the coach. They must deal with the coach drivers and other representatives of the coach company with respect.
• The school’s own rules apply on coach journeys.
• Pupils should be conscious of their own reputation and that of the school.

Further information about the policy and procedures for the coaches can be obtained from the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

A coach schedule detailing the different coach routes and various stops on the route and the times associated is available from the School Office. If you want to book a space on the coach please email coaches@stcolumbascollege.org

Late Minibus

The Senior and Prep Schools sometimes run a late minibus service for pupils attending after-school activities. For more information please email coaches@stcolumbascollege.org.
St Columba's Parents’ Association (SCPA)

The SCPA stands for the St Columba's Parents’ Association – it is often referred to as the PTA at other schools.

What do we do?

Our role is overwhelmingly social - organising social events for everyone to enjoy, including:

- Welcome Barbeque to kick off the year
- Informal coffee mornings
- Popcorn Evenings (movies for the children on a Friday evening) twice a year
- Family Picnic following the Fun Run
- July Summer BBQ
- Pantomime Tickets for the Alban Arena
- Annual Christmas Ball

We also arrange three or four fundraising activities involving the pupils including:

- Sponsored Bounce
- Fun Run

How we spend the funds raised

We purchase extra items for the school that enhance the educational environment for the pupils, and which they can enjoy.

The SCPA belongs to all the parents and it is always open to ideas and suggestions.

Get involved

There are many ways to become involved in the SCPA – you can attend the committee meetings (once a term). We are always looking for occasional helpers for events, either to make cakes, help set up, serve refreshments, or tidy up. Just look for regular announcements on the noticeboard or let one of the SCPA reps know if you can help. We are looking for class reps for the new Reception classes. We hope you can continue to attend events.
Fees

Tuition Fees

School fees cover all tuition and costs except public exam fees, trips, uniform, swimming lessons, music tuition and some extra-curricular activities.

Current school fees and other information on fees can be found at: www.stcolumbascollege.org/admissions.

Sibling discount

A discount of 3% of tuition fees will apply to a second child at the college, 4% for the third child and 5% for the fourth child.

Fees are invoiced termly in advance and are due in full by the first day of each term. A late payment charge of 1.25% per month will be added for payments received after the due date.

Termly invoices should be paid by bank transfer or via monthly instalments with the School Fees Plan, details of which are available on the Admissions page of our website.

Insurance

School fees include personal accident insurance throughout the year - all sporting/leisure activities are covered within UK.

Coaches

Coaches are hired to transport pupils to and from the school. Costs are calculated on a daily basis and invoiced termly in advance. Please check our website for the latest information on coach travel. We presume that the current coach users will carry on to the next academic year unless a term's notice is given to the Finance department in writing.
School Lunches
School lunches are managed by our caterers, Chartwells. Prep pupils who wish to take school lunches will be provided with daily fixed cost meals which are paid for on a termly basis in the Prep school.

Lunch payments should be made using School Gateway, our online payment facility which can be accessed via The School Gateway App, or from the Parent Hub page on our website.

The Finance Department will send information to new parents about downloading the School Gateway App.

Music Tuition/Instrument Rental
Music tuition (optional) is charged at the following rates, for 10 lessons per term:

- Individual Tuition (30 mins) £210

Musical Instruments are available for rent at a cost of £30 per term.

Brothers of the Sacred Heart Levy
An annual, voluntary, family donation of £10 to the work of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart will appear on your Lent Term bill. The funds generously given by Columban families through the levy are used to assist the work of the Brothers in developing countries. In recent years funds have been sent to schools in Africa, the Philippines and elsewhere where the Brothers identify a need. The donations made by the College on your behalf are gratefully received by the Brothers around the world and make a significant difference to those less fortunate than ourselves.

Extras – Prep School
Other extras will be charged termly as incurred. These include:

- Trips, Swimming etc.
  Pupils in certain year groups will attend swimming lessons at Westminster Lodge, and all pupils will take part in educational outings. These activities and optional extras such as Drama, Football, Tennis, other external club and sport/activity weeks will be notified to parents and billed as appropriate.

Please address any fee queries to the Accounts Department: fees@stcolumbascollege.org.
## Useful Contacts

### Prep Office
Mrs McConachie – PA to Head of Prep  
01727 892044/mcconachie.e@stcolumbascollege.org

Miss Cancelliere - Prep Secretary (After School Clubs)  
01727 862616/prepadmin@stcolumbascollege.org

### College Nurse
Mrs M O’Connor  
nurses@stcolumbascollege.org

### Finance Dept
finance@stcolumbascollege.org

### School Lunches
Chartwells  
cateringadmin@stcolumbascollege.org

Menus are on School Gateway

### School Uniform
Main School Uniform is available from Stevensons  
01727 853262/sales@stevensons.co.uk

School Sports wear is available from Tyler Sports  
www.tylers-sportswear.co.uk

### Second Hand Uniform
Please contact via the school office

### Lost Property
There is a box in the Prep Changing rooms where all lost property found is deposited. **Please clearly label all clothing and shoes with your child’s name.**

### Prep Parents’ Association
Please contact via the School Office

### Music Lessons
Mr McCall  
mccall.s@stcolumbascollege.org

### After School Activities
Miss Cancelliere in the Prep Office

### After School Care
Please book on School Gateway

### Breakfast Club
Please book on School Gateway

### Holiday Club
Please contact Mr Turpin via the Prep Office