

Low Port Primary School: Where you are given opportunities and leave with happy memories.

Newsletter August/September 2018

I would like to welcome everyone back after the summer break - where did the summer go?! I'd like to wish a special welcome to our new families joining us in P1 and across the school. Apologies for the long newsletter - there is a lot to share at the start of the new school session!

Staffing

We would like to welcome Miss Laura Davies working alongside Mrs Caroline Cameron in P2/1 this session. Miss Lucy Kilpatrick is a MA student with a placement mainly with P6 initially and then in the infant classes later on. She will be working with us for the whole school session. We will also be joined by other students over the course of the year. I will let you know as this happens so that you know who your children are working with and talking about. We also have a Hanban teacher, Mrs Fan, continuing her work with us this year in teaching all classes about Chinese language and culture.

A reminder of staffing is as follows -

P1 Miss Smith
P2/1 Miss Davies / Mrs Cameron
P3/2 Mrs McGilliard
P4 Miss Tully
P5 Miss Paton
P6CR Mrs Crawford
P6CU Miss Cuthbert
P7 Mrs Johnston

Senior Leadership Team - Jane Livingston, Head Teacher / Natalie McCartney, Acting Principal Teacher

Support for Learning - Mrs Henderson (Tuesday and Wednesday only)

Pupil Support Staff - Mrs Kerr, Mrs Morrice, Mrs Nicholls

Office staff - Mrs Golding and Mrs Miller

Communication with Parents and Carers and Contacting the school

We would like to remind all families that should they have any feedback or concerns to contact the office in the first instance. They can then direct your query appropriately. As the office team maintain records of communication, we would ask that parents/carers go via the office and do not contact staff directly.

I would direct you to the School Handbook for specific advice on Communication with Parents as well as the WLC Concerns/Complaints Procedure. The School Handbook is regularly reviewed and contains a wealth of information. You can find it on our school website.

Please find below the excerpt from the School Handbook on these topics:-

Communication with Parents

We use a range of ways to ensure that parents/carers are kept fully informed of the life of the school. We value parents' opinions and welcome you to contact us with any concerns, queries or suggestions.

- *Groupcall Electronic Mail - a group email system of communication with the primary parent/carer contact. This will be used to send out school information and newsletters and will also be used by the Parent Council and PTA. Paper copies will be issued to parents who have not opted for electronic mail.*
- *Newsletters will be produced monthly with essential information and school news for all parents, plus pupil friendly reading.*
- *Two parent contact meetings are held each school year to discuss pupil progress with class teachers. Outwith these times parents are asked to make an appointment should they have concerns e.g. pupil progress.*
- *Information about activities in school e.g. Shared Start/Finish times, extra-curricular clubs, curriculum events, permission letters for education visits etc., will be sent out to parents prior to the event.*
- *A 'Meet the Teacher' evening will be held at the beginning of the school year to give parents the opportunity to meet with their child's class teacher and hear about some of the work their child will be doing throughout the year.*
- *Regular opportunities for parents to see pupils engaged in learning will be provided throughout the year e.g. Shared Start/Finish Weeks, concerts, school shows, assemblies.*
- *School staff will share learning using Twitter on a regular basis for parents to access. This feeds to our school website, so you do not require a Twitter account.*
- *Updated Big Pictures will be sent home at regular intervals for parents to discuss with their child. These 'set the scene' for learning each term.*
- *The Head Teacher will report on school issues at Parent Council meetings.*
- *P1 - P7 Homework jotters are issued to all children. These are also used as a means of communication with parents.*
- *Learning Targets will be shared with parents/carers.*
- *Parents are supplied with a written progress report at the end of the school year. This will provide information about how each pupil is progressing across the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to respond to these reports.*

An Information Evening for parents of prospective P1 children will be held during November.

An intake meeting for families granted a place will be held in May with more detailed information about your child starting Primary 1.

Concerns / Complaints Procedure

We hope that you enjoy your association with the school and urge you to contact us with worries, concerns or complaints that you may have - remember we are only a phone call away.

If you have concerns or complaints regarding the service you are receiving, these can be addressed by contacting the Head Teacher in the first instance.

PTA, Parent Council and Education Trust Fund AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Parent/Carer groups is on **Wednesday 12 September at 7pm** in the school hall. A separate Groupcall email will be sent out with details about this. All are welcome and we would love to see any parent/carers interested.

Parent helpers in school

Parent helpers are required to have current PVG checks in place and school must keep a record of these so that any renewals are in place. It would be much appreciated if parent helpers could let the office know the date of their PVG when they get this to allow us to maintain appropriate records.

Meet the Teacher

Meet the teacher will be held on Wednesday 5 September 6pm - 7pm starting in the school hall and then moving to your child's classroom. This will offer families an opportunity to meet the new teacher working with their child(ren) as teachers set the scene for the year ahead. We look forward to seeing you there.

Health and Safety

Allergies

We have a number of children with severe allergies in school so it would be much appreciated if snacks containing nuts could be avoided at playtime or in packed lunches. It would also be helpful if you could remind your children at home, as we do in school, to avoid sharing snacks and lunch items due to allergies. Thank you for your help in keeping all of our children safe and healthy.

For these reasons, we are unable to distribute sweets, treats or cakes if it is a birthday. Please save these items for home.

Head Lice

May we please remind families to regularly check for head lice. Unfortunately these unwanted visitors often pass around easily in classes and regular checks are required.

Flu Immunisation

Our flu immunisation date allocated to us is Wednesday 14 October 2018.

Access to Sanitary Products in Schools

There is some evidence to suggest that more than a quarter of people in education have struggled at some point in the previous year to access sanitary products. We know, too, that some girls and young women have had to miss school or skip classes because they didn't have access to products. The Scottish Government, local authorities and the university and college sectors have therefore committed to providing free access to sanitary products in all schools, colleges and universities in Scotland beginning from the new academic term. Further information can be found at www.young.scot/periods

Car Park Safety

For the safety of your children, we would ask that you do NOT allow children in any of the staff car parks. The safest route for children coming into school is by using the path from the Rose Garden, or in front of Low Port Centre, bearing in mind crossing at the bottom of the road.

Health Care Plans and Medication In Schools

Our office team have been working extremely hard to ensure that the medication and permissions to administer are in place for your children. We would ask that you complete the paperwork ON THE DAY as we are unable to give any medication without written consent. The office regularly checks expiry dates and will let families know where an expiry date is looming. We are unable to store 'just in case' medication for periods of time and this kind of medication should only be for the duration of a particular illness. Thank you for your understanding.

Contacting Your Child's Class Teacher

If you wish to have a word with your child's class teacher, please contact the office in the first instance. In the morning, teachers are often dealing with the children coming into school and cannot spend quality time with parents sharing concerns or updates. We also must be able to account for all adults in the building for both fire and security reasons. May we please ask that you report to the office and do not go into class directly. Thank you for your understanding.

Playground Safety

In order to make our playground as safe as possible, all pupils have been asked to avoid slide tackles when playing football and have been reminded that football is a non-contact sport.

On a daily basis, Pupil Support Staff inspect the grassy areas to ensure that these are dry enough for all children to play on safely. This is communicated to the children by a red / green card system in the porch entrance and verbally.

May we please ask that any dogs brought to school be tethered to the fence before entering the playground. **Dogs should not be brought into the school grounds at all.**

Should there be bad weather in the morning before school starts, please note that the P1 porch entrance will be opened from 8.40am to allow the children to come in early. Please do not arrive earlier than that.

Breakfast Club in the hall starts at 8.15am. Breakfast club and the office are not manned until this time. Pupils arriving before this time may not be able to access the school building.

Parents are reminded to avoid using the staff car parks wherever possible for safety reasons. These staff car parks can be very busy with staff from both school and Low Port Centre, as well as minibuses and taxis. It is much safer for children to be dropped off at the Regent Centre Car Park and walked up via the Rose Garden. This includes the top staff car park for OOSC access in the mornings.

School Website

Our website link can be found at -

www.lowportprimary.westlothian.org.uk

We will continue to set the scene for termly learning by sending home Sharing the Big Picture information for each class and we will be using a Twitter feed to share learning in action on an ongoing basis. The Twitter feed can be seen on the website as well as following us.

Party invites

Whilst we appreciate that our younger pupils may need some assistance in handing out party invitations, this can take up quite a lot of teacher time and present challenges for staff to deal with if invites are being handed out to only some children in a class. We would welcome parents helping their children to hand these out in the playground to enable staff to focus on learning and teaching. Thank you for your understanding.

Photography Permissions

West Lothian Council are currently reviewing the agreements for photography permissions. In the interim period, we will only be using non identifying photographs for our Twitter feed. When the photography permission forms do come home via bag mail, we would appreciate your support in completing these.

Family Learning - P1 literacy and numeracy workshop

On Wednesday 19 September there will be a P1 literacy and numeracy workshop straight after school in the P1 classroom. A creche will be in operation while parents and carers attend this session should they wish. This short session will allow you to see some of the approaches we use to teach literacy at the Early level. We anticipate the session should run from 3.20/3.30pm (as soon as we can get started) to 4.15pm.

Vertical Learning Groups (VLG)

Vertical Learning Groups will begin after the October holiday. These groups are formed across stages and are linked to our school improvement and pupil leadership plans so that all children have an opportunity to have a say in making our school even better. Staff are in the process of agreeing their VLG and preparing a slide to promote this so that children may make an informed choice in their preferred VLG. Once the themes for VLG groups have been decided we would be delighted to hear from any parent helpers who wish to assist!

Opportunities for Wider Achievement

At Low Port Primary School, there may be some extra-curricular opportunities offered during the course of a session either through our Active Schools Coordinator, parents or by some staff. Details of these are sent out to specific stages via Groupcall and places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. The choir is run by parents for children in P4-7 and will start shortly. Our chess club for all children was run by a former parent. We are still seeking any parent helpers willing to take this forward - it was a very popular club with pupils! Details of any other clubs running will be issued as and when they arise.

Tuck Inn

P5 would like to remind children and that the Tuck shop is now open and has lots of different, healthy snacks for sale. These may include:-

- Banana chips
- panda bars
- fruit bars
- apples
- apple rings

School Photos

On Monday 10 September there will be school photos of siblings and preschool children, followed by individual photos. We would really appreciate two parent helpers for the morning if possible, from 8.50am until 12.15pm, or even part of this time. Should you be available and willing to assist, please contact the school office.

Upper School Arts and Crafts

In school, we have a number of painting overalls for arts and crafts. These tend to best fit our younger pupils. For arts and craft with our older pupils, it would be most helpful to have their own large fitting old t shirt or shirt that they can keep in school for wearing over school uniform. If this could be brought in by pupils as soon as possible that would be great.

Beyond the Panda

As part of our ongoing partnership work with Mrs Fan, all classes will have the opportunity to have a session with Beyond the Panda, a workshop delivered by Edinburgh Zoo and funded by the Confucius Hub and James Young High School.

Diary Dates

I will send out separately an annual calendar with key dates for the whole school session identified for longer term planning at home. I hope you may find this of use. Please note that some dates may be added in as the session progresses so keep checking the newsletter, class update through Twitter feeds and Sharing the Big Picture and website calendar for updates!

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| • Thursday 30 August | P2 and P3 author visit |
| • Wednesday 5 September | Meet the Teacher 6-7pm |
| | internet safety assembly for P3-7 |
| • Monday 10 September | Beyond the Panda sessions P1-4 |
| | Whole school photos |
| • Tuesday 11 September | Beyond the Panda sessions P5-7 |
| • Wednesday 12 September | PTA, FLPPS and Parent Council AGM 7pm all welcome |
| • Monday 17 September | Holiday |
| • Tuesday 18 September | In Service Day |
| • Wednesday 19 September | P1 literacy and numeracy workshop 3.20pm |
| • Friday 5 October | P7 assembly - P7 parents welcome |
| • Monday 8 October | Parent Consultations 4.30pm -7.30pm |
| • Tuesday 9 October | Parent Consultations 4.30pm -7.30pm |
| • Friday 12 October | END OF TERM - RETURN TO SCHOOL TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER |