



# St Nicholas Primary School, Broxburn

*information for parents*

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**The information contained within this section relates to the day-to-day running of our school and is pertinent to St Nicholas and our pupils.**

**It dovetails with the guidance provided by West Lothian Council, which can be found in the next section of the handbook.**

## **Contents**

<b>1</b>	<b>General Information</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Nursery Class</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Aims</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Behaviour/Discipline</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Support for Learning</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Homework</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Composite Classes</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>School Clothing</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Transport</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Meals and Milk</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Parking</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>P7 to S1 Transfer Arrangements</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Emergency Arrangements</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Useful Information</b>

## Introduction

A warm and very genuine welcome to St. Nicholas Primary School. As a parent of a pupil in OUR school, you will have a major role to play in our children's education.

Like you, we want the best for your child. Your active involvement in his/her education is not only desirable, but essential. We ask that you, like your child, become part of our school.

**K Brown, Headteacher**

## School Address:

St. Nicholas Primary School  
(Off) West Main Street  
Broxburn  
West Lothian  
EH52 5RH

Tel: 01506 853509  
Fax: 01506 852496  
email: karen.brown@wled.org.uk

## Staffing

St. Nicholas Primary School is staffed by a non-teaching Headteacher, a Depute Headteacher, a Principal Teacher, 12 class teachers, a part-time Support for Learning Teacher, visiting teachers and a brass tutor.

We also have a secretary, janitor, auxiliary, classroom assistants, support assistants and playground supervisors.

St. Nicholas is a Roman Catholic Co-Educational Primary.

## The School Day

### **Primary 1 and 2**

8.40am - 12 noon: 12.40pm - 3pm

### **Primary 3 to 7**

8.40am - 12.20pm: 1pm - 3pm

except Friday when all children leave at 12.15pm

## Nursery Class

St Nicholas Primary School also has a 40/40 Nursery Class which is staffed by a Nursery teacher and 3 Nursery Nurses. Children are allocated either a morning or an afternoon placement. Full details are available from our Nursery Teacher, Claire Kane, Tel: 01506 858907

## What do we try to achieve at St Nicholas?

We, as a staff, have worked out an agreed set of aims, both for our pupils and for the school in general. In short, we aim to create a caring, secure and happy environment in which every child feels happy, confident and valued as an individual. So too, we aim to develop co-operation between home and school and to involve parents directly in their children's education.

Our goal is to develop each pupil's skills and knowledge to the maximum, fostering a desire for learning in which each pupil sees a purpose to his/her education. We aim to ensure that, in the context of the 5-14 National Guidelines, each child attains to the maximum.

As a Catholic School promoting Christian values, we aim to develop caring children who have a sense of right and wrong. We want to lead the children to a knowledge of the Catholic Church and her teaching, and to foster their Catholic Faith. We want, too, to promote an awareness and an appreciation of other cultures and religions.

## Behaviour / Discipline

Children enjoy and need a safe, structured and happy environment in which to grow and learn. To establish such a learning environment, a fair and effective discipline framework is necessary.

Where possible, we try to encourage children by, eg appropriate praise, the use of stickers and certificates. Occasionally, sanctions are required for instances of inappropriate behaviour. These will include loss of 'Golden Time', extra home exercises, detention during intervals and withdrawal from some class activities. Parents will be involved at an early and appropriate stage, but especially in the case of persistent offenders or of extreme misbehaviour.

**PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES IS CRUCIAL.**

## The Curriculum

The Curriculum is, in short, all the learning experiences which your child will encounter during his/her time at school.

Briefly, the main areas of the curriculum come under five headings.

- 1 Language**
- 2 Maths**
- 3 Environmental Studies**
- 4 Expressive Arts**
- 5 Religious and Moral Education**

### Language

The development of each child's language is pursued through an integrated programme of language work involving listening, talking, writing and reading. Much emphasis will be laid on talking and discussion. Activities such as Drama will play a large part in this programme.

No one single 'scheme' or programme meets the learning needs of every individual child. However, our main resources are "The Oxford Reading Tree" and Heinemann Literacy World (P4-7). All of this is supported by much supplementary material, such as group novels.

### Mathematics

Children learn about all aspects of maths - number, money, measurement, shape, position, movement, time, graphs (information handling) and problem-solving. Increasingly, they will become aware of and skilled in the use of calculators and computers. So too, they will learn that maths is about 'problem-solving' and that maths does and must relate to everyday life.

Great emphasis is placed on practical work at all stages, while oral and mental work remain important. Our main resources centre on the Heinemann and IPM Maths programmes.

### Environmental Studies

This is a general term covering the study of history, geography and science. As in other areas of the curriculum the teaching of these separate subjects will be done through an integrated approach. These studies are usually first centred in the area of the child's immediate environment (school, home etc.) and slowly expanded to take in the wider concepts of community, village, city, country, world and so on.

## **Expressive Arts**

Work done in this broad area - Music, Art and Drama and P.E. - often enables children to build self-esteem and self-confidence through the expression of feelings and ideas.

## **Religious Education**

St. Nicholas is a Catholic school and, as such, we are concerned with your child's spiritual development. In recent years appreciation has grown of the fact that Religious Education is a work of partnership between home, school and parish. A religious programme can only be effective if parents, teachers and priests play their distinctive roles and co-operate with one another in the Religious Education and formation of the children in their charge.

Our principal RE programme is based on the 'Veritas'/ 'Alive O' programme which extends from P1 to P7 and is now being followed by schools throughout the Archdiocese.

During the course of Primary 3 & 4, children are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. Your role as a parent, and as the child's FIRST EDUCATOR, is vital. Meetings will be arranged at which a joint approach will be mapped out and your position made clear.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Learning is an active process in which children must participate if they are to develop their potential. We, as adults, all learn in different ways and at a different pace. Children are no different. For effective teaching and learning to take place teachers have to find out how children learn, as well as their various strengths and weaknesses. This process is, essentially, what teachers refer to as ASSESSMENT.

Assessment takes many forms. It will involve various forms of testing eg use of National Tests, reading tests, 'Progress Tests' in maths, as well as numerous informal teacher-devised test materials. However testing is only one part of assessment. Assessment also has many other dimensions, such as observing children, listening to them, talking with them and reading and analysing their daily classwork.

Your child will learn, and be taught, in various and varying ways. These will include investigating, discussion, trial-and-error, 'silent study', playing, watching and listening to TV and radio programmes.

Methods employed by the teacher will vary. Children, largely, are taught in ability groups. However teachers will also use class lessons, mixed-ability groups and individual tuition. Above all else, children will be taught according to need.

## Support for Learning

ALL children need support in their learning at some stage. Some children need more support than others. Support comes from many areas. These can include, for instance, extra Teacher-help, Head-Teacher in-put, the use of a Visiting Specialist and, with parental knowledge, advice from the Educational Psychologist.

Specifically, we have a Support for Learning teacher whose role is to support any child, or groups of children, who may need assistance. This may be in reading, number work or any other aspect of the curriculum. It may be for a short period or more long-term, and will usually take place in the child's classroom.

## Reporting

We, as a school, feel that it is crucial to keep you informed as to your child's progress at school. Formally, you will have two opportunities to consult with your child's teacher, one in October and one in March. These should not be considered your only chances to talk about your child's progress. Should you wish any further information, or have any concerns, you are encouraged to contact the school (853509) to make an immediate appointment.

An interim report is issued in February informing you of your child's progress prior to parent consultations in March. A more detailed end of term report will also be sent to you in June, informing you of your child's progress in all areas. To ensure that you are kept regularly informed of your child's progress, we also issue an Interim Report soon after Christmas.

## Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. In the early years in particular children need support and encouragement in their reading, and parents are asked to work with their child on a regular basis and in a positive manner.

Homework can take many forms - such as spelling, number work, researching a topic, asking questions etc. Again, work which ought to have been finished in class may be sent home to be completed. Each Class Teacher will ensure that parents know what to expect in terms of their child's homework. We would ask parents to co-operate by making sure that any form of homework is signed, as appropriate.

## **Composite Classes**

When pupil numbers make it impossible to have a straight 'year' class, it is often necessary to form composite classes. This will be done in keeping with West Lothian Council guidelines. (Copies available for parents)

Composite classes are very much a fact of educational life. As much learning takes place individually and in groups, composite classes are not necessarily disadvantageous. From a social point of view, opportunities will be taken to bring pupils of the same stage together eg Primary 4 pupils come together for much of their preparation for the reception of First Holy Communion.

## **School Clothing**

For many and varied reasons it is expected that school uniform should be worn at all times by all pupils. 'Uniform' consists of grey or black trousers/skirt, green sweatshirt or grey jumper. The school tie is available from the school secretary. School sweatshirts and polo shirts are also appropriate and similarly can be obtained through the school.

Children must dress appropriately for school. Jeans and/or football shirts are not considered suitable.

In the event of e.g. a playground accident there are occasions when we might have to change your child's skirt or trousers.

## **Assistance with provision of clothing and footwear**

The Authority operates a scheme of provision to ensure that a pupil is sufficiently and suitably clad to take full advantage of the education provided. Families in receipt of Income Support, or Job Seeker's Allowance could qualify for such a scheme. Other cases will be determined according to the personal circumstances of the family. Parents who wish to apply for the scheme should complete an application form which is available from this school or Education Services, Lindsay House, South Bridge Street, Bathgate, EH48 1TS.

## **Transport**

Many of our children travel to school by bus. The Authority's current policy is to pay the travelling expenses of those pupils attending the district school who live more than 1.5 miles from that school.

As with many schools, parental parking/driving can be a major issue. Children's safety should be the number one concern at all times.

## Meals and Milk

School lunches are offered in the form of a “three-tray” system in which children select one of the available trays. The menus are rotated and copies of these are issued to parents. The current cost is £1.45 per pupil.

If you wish to choose your child's meal then you should send a note with the child.  
**IT IS ADVISABLE TO SEND A NOTE WITH CHILDREN IN PRIMARY 1 AND 2.**

**FREE FRESH FRUIT** will be issued to all children in Primary 1 and Primary 2 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This is fresh fruit, which is prepared in our kitchen and delivered to children in class.

## Parking

**NO CARS, VANS OR LORRIES ARE ALLOWED IN THE PLAYGROUND.**

Parents bringing children to school by car should **park outside the school grounds** but **NOT** in the local Health Centre.

## Primary 7 to Secondary 1 transfer arrangements

Each secondary school catchment area is made up of a number of associated primary school catchment areas. St. Nicholas is associated with St Margaret's Academy. Children attending St Nicholas Primary School and living in the catchment area of the school would therefore normally transfer to either St Margaret's Academy or Broxburn Academy.

However, it is not possible to guarantee places at a secondary school for children from an associated primary school. Secondary schools have intake limits and where the applications for admission exceed this limit, it would be necessary to apply the 'Placing in Schools- Guidelines' and refer all applications to the Special Sub-Committee on Pupil/Student Support.

Enquiries should be made to:

**St. Margaret's Academy**  
**Howden South Road**  
**Livingston**  
**EH54 6AT**  
**Tel: 01506 497104**

or

**Broxburn Academy**  
**Cardross Road**  
**Broxburn**  
**EH52 6AG**  
**Tel: 01506 852521**

or

**Pupil Placement Section**  
**Education Services**  
**Lindsay House**  
**South Bridge Street**  
**Bathgate**  
**EH48 1TS**  
**Tel: 01506 776002**

## Occasional and Emergency arrangements

In the event of an early closure which is unplanned (eg school closure due to heating failure or severe weather) children will be sent home if parents are known to be at home. Otherwise they will be sent to the 'Emergency Contact.'

Parents are reminded of their responsibility to provide the school with **UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON PERSONS TO BE CONTACTED IN EMERGENCIES.**

**Some useful telephone numbers**

<b>Free School Meals/Clothing Grants</b>	<b>01506 776001</b>
<b>Transport Policy</b>	<b>01506 775291</b>
<b>Special Needs Policy and Provision</b>	<b>01506 776392</b>
<b>Customer Care and Communication</b>	<b>01506 776005</b>
<b>Emergency Closure Policy</b>	<b>01506 776005</b>
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<b>01506 777152</b>
<b>Outdoor Education Policy</b>	<b>01506 775390</b>

Parents are vital partners in our goal to achieve the best for all of OUR children.

We hope that you have found this booklet of some value.

Should you have any remaining queries, you are encouraged to contact the school (853509).

**and finally...**

**PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY AROUND THE SCHOOL**

**A CHILD’S LIFE CAN NEVER BE REPLACED!**

**Primary 5-14 Target Setting 2006-2008**

	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Maths</b>
St Nicholas Attainment 2005	88%	85%	92%
West Lothian Council Average	89%	84%	89%
National Average for 2004	86%	78%	86%

