

# Bellsquarry Primary School



## School Handbook for Parents 2013-2014



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# Bellsquarry Primary School



## School Motto

Learn, believe and you will succeed.

## Vision Statement

To provide educational experiences of the highest quality and of widest variety, in partnership with parents, pupils and colleagues. To develop a rich understanding of ourselves, our world and our relationships, which we can confidently express and communicate.

Bellsquarry Primary School  
52 Calder Road  
Bellsquarry  
Livingston  
EH54 9AE

Dear Parents

I would like to warmly welcome you to Bellsquarry Primary School. I am pleased that you have chosen our school to continue your child's education and hope that your child will be very happy with us. We are very proud of all that our school community has to offer within an ethos of achievement.

We believe high quality learning and teaching are at the heart of our school, contributing to continuous improvement and raising attainment. We are very committed to ensuring that *all* our pupils achieve their potential and develop a passion and enjoyment for learning that will continue throughout their time with us and beyond. We wish all Bellsquarry pupils to leave as confident, successful, responsible individuals, ready to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There are many opportunities for parents to offer help and support in the work and life of the school, including our very active Parent Council, which is always happy to welcome new members.

We look forward to working in a successful, strong partnership with you and your child.

Yours sincerely

Shameem Ali.  
Head Teacher

December 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians

The Parent Council would like to join with Mrs Ali in welcoming you and your child to Bellsquarry Primary School & Nursery. We are sure that you and your child will have a very enjoyable and fulfilling time at our school.

These are very exciting time in Scottish Education. Your child is entering a stage of learning where he/she will be challenged on a daily basis. The curriculum that your child will follow is designed to maximise his/her potential and be personalised to your child.

Children often adapt to changes better than parents, but if there is anything that concerns you please contact the school or if it something you feel the Parent Council should know then contact me on 07703 186618.

The Scottish Government have renewed their focus on raising attainment in Scottish schools. We should not underestimate the influence that parents and families have on the attainment of our children through supporting learning, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The Parent Council work with and support the Head Teacher and staff of our school in helping all pupils to fulfil their potential.

The Parent Council works alongside and supports the school in a number of respects. We help develop the school improvement plan, liaise with the Head Teacher in matters of concern to parents and have been asked to review school policies. Fund-raising is also an important role for the Parent Council and it is through the work of the Parent Council that every classroom and the nursery have electronic whiteboards, which help provide a stimulating environment for the teaching of our children.

I am sure the school will provide every opportunity to your child to develop in a positive way (and have lots of fun at the same time). We would be delighted if you have the time to support the work of the Parent Council in any way.

Best Wishes  
Eric R Lumsden  
Chair, Parent Council

December 2012

Dear new P1 parent

### **Preparing for the First Day at School**

Mrs Ali asked me to write down a few thoughts that may be useful when preparing you and your child for the first day at school. Having been through this twice Mrs Ali thought I may have some helpful hints to share with you. Many of you may already have a child at school and will know exactly what to expect so this is really for first time parents.

### **Preparing for the Big Day**

I think the school does a good job in preparing the children for the transition to P1, including visits to the P1 class and meeting their buddies in June before they are due to start school in August.

There is also a lot we as parents can do to help by talking through what your child can expect and answering their question.

One of the most helpful hints I obtained from the Head Teacher when my first child went to school was make sure your child can go to toilet by himself/herself, can dress himself/herself, put his/her shoes and coat on etc. I know a lot of the time it is quicker to do it for your child but it will be easier for him/her and the teacher if he/she can do it independently.

Labels - I have come to understand the importance of labeling everything and I mean everything! The obvious ones are clothes and shoes, as you can imagine twenty blue jumpers coming off for PE in P1. Say no more, however it is amazing how many Peppa Pig or Spiderman school bags, pencil cases, erasers, water bottles etc could be in P1. So to stop any confusion or more importantly upset please label them all. The school does however have a large lost property bin where unlabelled items sometimes end up!

### **On the First Day**

The big day has arrived. Make sure the camera is charged up and take lots of pictures. They are unlikely to look as cute, tidy and neat in their uniform ever again.

No one can prepare you for how emotional the day can be, whether it's your first time or your last time as it was with me last year. My main piece of advice is DON'T CRY, not until you're around the corner anyway. Remember the tissues and waterproof mascara!

I was actually amazed last year how excited the children were at going into the class with their buddies and felt reassured that my child was going to be fine. Even if you do have a child, who gets upset, be rest assured that the teachers deal with this very well and the minute you leave he/she is usually fine.

### **Buddies**

Buddies are brilliant !!!!!!!!!!!!!!! They really are. The P7s take this role very seriously and make the transition to P1 a lot smoother and less stressful for everyone. Your child will meet his/her buddy and spend time with him/her before school starts and the buddy will be there on the first day to meet your child and take him/her to the classroom. The buddies will show the children where to put coats/shoes etc and help them with this. This will continue for quite a few weeks until the children are confident to do this by themselves. The buddies will also play with P1 children at playtime and I understand are currently extending their role by learning about suitable playtime activities, which are fun but also more active. I did say they take this very seriously. They are also very good at ensuring your child has someone to play with, which is one less worry for parents.

### **Lunch**

Due to the size of the lunch hall and staggered lunch breaks your child will be encouraged to have lunch in around 20 minutes. I'm sure your priority will be that your child has a nutritious lunch. However his/her priority is to eat as quickly as possible so that he/she can go out and play. If your child takes a packed lunch it needs to be quick and easy for him/her. Make sure he/she can open any packets and drink bottles. You will have the chance to eat a school dinner with your child during his/her first week at school.

I hope you find this useful however if you have any concerns and questions then please ask. The staff are all very helpful. Enjoy this very special time!

Yours sincerely

**Angela Whisker**  
**Mum of Rosie (P5) and Rebecca (P1)**

## School Aims

### 1. Learning and Teaching

- To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that provides young people with the best possible learning opportunities and experiences.
- To ensure that all learners are able to realise their potential through the promotion and recognition of achievement and excellence.
- To provide the highest quality of learning and teaching experiences that enable young people to enjoy their education and develop positive attitudes towards learning.

### 2. Culture and Ethos

- To provide a welcoming, safe, caring and healthy environment in which each learner is valued and supported.
- To improve the quality of educational experiences for learners through a programme of continuing professional development for all staff.
- To ensure that all learners are able to experience a calm, positive and safe environment that promotes good behaviour, self-discipline and respect for others.
- To provide effective support systems for all learners which promote personal and social development and underpin academic achievement.

### 3. People

- To provide pupils with opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding in relation to their duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.
- To promote an ethos of self-evaluation for all leading to whole school improvement.

### 4. Vision and Leadership

- To ensure a clear direction for the school which is shared by and involves all stakeholders.
- To promote, encourage and provide opportunities for leadership at all levels.

## Statement of shared values

### **WE VALUE RESPECT**

We aim to be kind.

We aim to share.

We aim to remember everyone.

We aim to care.

We aim to listen.

We aim to respect property.

### **WE VALUE HONESTY**

We aim to be truthful

even when it is difficult to do so.

We aim to be fair.

We aim to own up when we have done something wrong.

### **WE VALUE LEARNING**

We aim to do our best.

We aim to be confident and independent in all we do.

We aim to let other people learn alongside us.

### **WE VALUE OUR ENVIRONMENT**

We aim to be aware and responsible for our community and the wider world around us.

We aim not to drop litter.

We aim to recycle when we can.

We aim to walk or cycle to school when we can.

### **WE VALUE YOU!**

Bellsquarry Primary School has achieved Level 1 accreditation as a Rights Respecting School. At Bellsquarry we promote the values, which support the ethos of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children learn about their own rights through the UNCRC, are taught that everybody has rights and that therefore children learn to appreciate and uphold the rights of others by developing positive, respectful relationships with staff and peers.

## General information

### SCHOOL ADDRESS

Bellsquarry PS and Nursery Class  
52 Calder Rd  
Bellsquarry  
Livingston EH54 9AE

**Head Teacher:** Mrs Shameem Ali

**Tel:** 01506 410777

**Website:** <http://www.bellsquarry-pri.westlothian.sch.uk/>

**Council webpage:** <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/schools/Bellsquarry>

**Email:** [Bellsquarry.ps@wled.org.uk](mailto:Bellsquarry.ps@wled.org.uk)

**Present roll:** 46 Nursery and 190 Primary

### School Context

Bellsquarry Primary School is a small, rural non-denominational school associated with the James Young High School cluster and serves the west side of Murieston and the village of Bellsquarry. The school has a nursery class for 60 pupils aged three and four years and eight classes from Primary 1 through to Primary 7. Children's attendance is above the national average. The free meal entitlement is 4.2% and we are decile band 10.

Bellsquarry admits pupils of both sexes. The catchment non-denominational secondary school is The James Young High School. The catchment denominational school is St Ninian's R C Primary and its feeder is St. Margaret's R C Academy.

The school does not provide teaching by means of the Gaelic language as spoken in Scotland. A primary aged pupil whose parent wishes him/her to be taught by means of the Gaelic language will be educated at Tollcross Primary School in Edinburgh. A secondary aged pupil whose parent wishes him/her to be taught by means of the Gaelic language will be educated at James Gillespies High School in Edinburgh.

The school is arranged into a nine class structure including the nursery. Staffing is in line with authority guidelines, currently the Head Teacher, two part-time PTs, ten class teachers (two job share/a P.E specialist), a part time Additional Support Needs Teacher and visiting Technology, music and brass specialists.

A team of three Pupil Support Workers and three Nursery Nurses (two part-time work directly with children). An Administrative Assistant, a part-time Clerical Assistant, a Facilities Management Assistant, Kitchen and Cleaning staff complete the team, who provide vital services to the children at Bellsquarry.

### **The School Day**

|                |              |               |             |  |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--|
| <b>P1-P3</b>   |              |               |             |  |
| Mon – Thursday | 8.50 – 10.30 | 10.45 – 12.15 | 1.00 – 3.15 |  |
| Friday         | 8.50 – 10.30 | 10.45 – 12.25 |             |  |
| <b>P4-P7</b>   |              |               |             |  |
| Mon – Thursday | 8.50 – 10.30 | 10.45 – 12.35 | 1.20 – 3.15 |  |
| Friday         | 8.50 – 10.30 | 10.45 – 12.25 |             |  |

School term dates and holidays can be accessed online at:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/education/schoolrelateditems/893/860>

### **Visiting the school**

West Lothian Council has installed security systems in schools. It is important for the security of the children that all visitors to the school use the main entrance and report immediately to the school office. On leaving the school it is equally important that you return to the school office to let the staff know you are leaving. There is a signing in/out book.

The school operates an “Open Door” policy and you are welcome to visit the school to discuss any enquiries you may have. The Head Teacher and the Principal Teacher can see you during the school day. However, a prior appointment is most helpful.

### **Procedures for reporting your child’s absence**

Should your child require to be absent from school you must contact the school office by 9.30am to inform staff of the reason for absence. This practice must be repeated each day that your child is absent. We will follow up any unreported absence and should we fail to contact parents/carers, information will be passed on to the appropriate authorities, who will then pursue the reasons for absence. Please refer to the Attendance at School Policy for further information:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/AttendanceatSchoolwithGuidelines>.

### **Emergency Contacts**

It is very important that the school has a note of an Emergency Contact Person and that we are informed immediately if this arrangement has been changed. This person will only be contacted if your child needs to leave school during school hours and the parent or carer is not contactable. Every year, during September, you will receive a printout from our admin staff giving details of the information we hold on your child. Any amendments should be made and returned to the school.

### **Closure and Emergency Arrangements**

If the school has to close in an emergency e.g. lack of heating, severe weather, it may be necessary to send children home without prior warning. Parents or the Emergency Contact Person will be contacted by telephone and/or Group Call and asked to collect their child or give permission for their child to be collected by another adult.

### **Medical Care**

If you child becomes ill or is injured at school, he/she will receive basic first aid. In these instances, unless the injury is minor, we will contact the parents, or your child's Emergency Contact, to arrange for the child to be collected from school.

It is vitally important that we know of any medical condition or requirements affecting your child.

If your child requires prescribed medication to be administered in school then medicine must be handed into the school by an adult and the appropriate form completed.

### **Holidays during term time**

Any parent wishing to take his/her child on holiday during term time should notify the school in writing.

Holidays during term time are regarded as "Unauthorised Absence" and recorded as such on the pupil's records. West Lothian Council operates this policy in line with Scottish Government Guidelines.

### **Composite Classes**

When pupil numbers make it impossible to have a single year class, it is often necessary to form composite classes. Class size legislation now dictates that all P1 classes should be

a maximum of 25 pupils, P2 and P3 should be a maximum of 30 and P4 – P7 should be a maximum of 33 pupils.

Composite classes should have no more than 25 pupils. The academic and social needs of pupils within composite classes are well planned for and no parent should have any reservations about their child being a part of such a class. The creation of composite classes is in keeping within West Lothian guidelines. Copies for parents are available from the school or can be downloaded from the West Lothian website.

### **Breakfast Club**

The breakfast club provides pupils with a health breakfast and offers the opportunity for them to sample and develop preferences for health options. The club aims to establish positive relationships at the start of the school day, helping to reduce lateness or poor attendance and improve attitude, behaviour and motivation to learn. Pupils also benefit from physical activities, time to do homework and tooth brushing after they eat.

Pupils entitled to free school meals are also entitled to free breakfasts.

Many children are enjoying coming along to our breakfast club, which is held in school from 8.00 – 8.30 a.m. Monday to Friday. At 8.30am playground supervisors are on duty and this allows the children to go into the playground to join their peers. The price is currently £1.25.

If you would like your child to attend, please contact the school office.

### **School Milk**

Parents wishing their child to have school milk on a daily basis can purchase this at the price of 17p per carton. A letter is sent out by the school office when payment is due, normally once a term.

All nursery children, all P1 – P3 pupils and P4-7 pupils, whose parents are in receipt of a qualifying benefit are entitled to 0.25 litre of milk daily free of charge.

### **School Lunches**

Pupils in Primary schools are offered a two course meal with a choice of main course, supplemented by salads and bread, and which meet the new Scottish Nutrient Guidelines for School Meals. The price is currently £1.75.

Pupils are entitled to free school meals Pupils with parents in receipt of either: Income Support Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance Any Income Related element of Employment & Support Allowance Child Tax Credit (with no working tax credit) and

whose annual income is £15,860 or less Working Tax Credit and whose annual income is £6,420 or less are entitled to a free mid-day meal.

Special dietary requirements will be catered for. Please contact the school 01506 41077 to discuss your child's requirements.  
Please also advise the school immediately should your child have any allergies.

Meals are ordered by 9.30am each day. If your child is late, please ensure they have a packed lunch with him/her as meals cannot be ordered later in the day.

For further information please refer to the School Meals and Milk Policy:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/schmealsmilkpol> or by contacting Stuart Isbister, Pupil/Student Benefits Officer either by phone on 01506 281952 or by emailing [stuart.isbister@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.isbister@westlothian.gov.uk).

### Mobile Phones

If a child brings a mobile phone to school, this should be switched off during the day and handed to the teacher for safekeeping.

Electronic games and MP3 players should not be brought to school. Children become distressed if these are lost or damaged.

The school is not responsible for any damage to or the loss of these items.

### School Uniform

We strongly encourage the wearing of school uniform in our school. The uniform we recommend is as follows:-

|                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Shirt/blouse/polo shirt | white (available from school)      |
| sweatshirt              | royal blue (available from school) |
| trousers/skirt          | black/grey/navy                    |
| shoes                   | black and indoor gym shoes         |

We expect the children to come to school clean, tidy and suitably dressed. Please do not send your child to school in expensive clothes or designer sports wear as it causes the child unnecessary distress when accidents happen. The wearing of jeans is discouraged as they can be difficult for younger children to fasten and unfasten. If they get wet, they hold water and can remain sodden and uncomfortable for a long time.

Please note that the Council's dress code policy applies to all schools in West Lothian and children are expected to wear uniform every day. *Please note that no football colours are allowed in the school in line with West Lothian Council policy.*

Any item of clothing your child is likely to take off in school, should be clearly marked with your child's name. This is important with all clothing – one sweatshirt looks like every other sweatshirt!

#### P.E. Kit

1. Shorts, t-shirt (with short sleeves) and gym shoes.
2. A track suit and training shoes for outdoor games.

A drawstring bag or plastic carrier with your child's name is useful for holding P.E. kit.

We like the children to have their gym kit with them every day as they are often in the gym or participating in outdoor games outwith the normal gym days. If your child is unable to tie laces please buy slip-on gym shoes, but try to teach this skill as soon as possible. Velcro-fastening gym shoes/school shoes are a great asset!

For safety reasons pupil are not permitted to wear jewellery during any PE lesson.

The school's dress code is based on The Dress Code for Schools Policy:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/documentlist/educationpolicy/dresscodeforschools>

#### Communication

We aim to communicate regularly and in a timely fashion with parents. Our monthly newsletter and school blog provide detailed, up to date information about the life of the school. Each year group updates parents on their activities, successes and items of information on the school blog at least once a month. Staff, the Parent Council and various representative groups use this as a vehicle to publicise their activities. Important dates are also published in each newsletter so that parents can have plenty notice of events. Parents are encouraged to make comment so that we can use parental opinion to help us to continuously improve.

Group Call is a text messaging facility, which enables us to make quick and easy contact should we require to. Please ensure that your emergency contact details are up-dated as required.

Our plasma screen in the front entrance also provides information about the school with photos of recent activities providing further evidence of the vibrant life of the school.

Should you require to contact us in writing, by telephone or by e-mail, you will find contact details on the school blog and on school documentation and communication.

**Our aim is to:**

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for your child, by ensuring health and safety standards are maintained and policies such as our anti-bullying policy provide a clear outline of how these issues will be dealt with.
- Provide a variety of learning opportunities for your child by using current teaching methods, incorporating all aspects of life skills tailored to meet an individual child's social, educational, and health needs.

**When you contact the school we will provide the highest professional standards of service. We will do this by:**

- Treating you fairly and with respect
- Respecting your confidentiality at all times
- Ensuring the provision of professional, well-qualified staff

**We will keep you informed of the wider developments and achievements within the school by:**

- Giving you comprehensive and accurate information in a way that meets your needs. We will measure the effectiveness of our information sharing by conducting a survey annually.
- Keeping you up to date with whole school and individual issues, through monthly newsletters, updating the school website and at curriculum and parent evenings.
- Being actively involved in and supporting the Parent Council and the Parent and Staff Association in their role of involving the Parent Forum in the daily aspects of school life.

**We will be responsive to your needs when you contact the school for any reason by:**

- Addressing concerns within *three* working days either giving a direct response or a clear indication of when to expect one.
- Providing a telephone answering service, if due to priorities, the telephone is unmanned, during published opening hours. Return calls, responding to messages left, will be made within two hours.
- Responding effectively and fully to letters received within *five* working days.
- Answering e-mails within *two* days, with a comprehensive and direct response.
- Ensuring polite, friendly, approachable, responsive staff at all time

- Ensuring you will be met by a member of staff within 5-10 minutes of your appointment.
- Ensuring that when you make contact with the school, the member of staff you first speak to will pass your message on to the appropriate staff member, who will then deal with your enquiry promptly and effectively, by finding out the information you have asked for, investigate any concerns you have presented and respond to you the same working day.

### **Concerns/Complaints Procedure**

There may be occasions throughout your child's time at Williamston Primary when you need to raise a concern or make a complaint about the service we offer. We aim to deal efficiently and effectively with all concerns and complaints and resolve those to your satisfaction.

Office staff will be able to direct you to the member of staff, most able to deal with your concern or complaint in the first instance or alternately you can contact any of the teaching staff or management team directly. Contact can be made in writing, by telephone, through the school e-mail address or in person via the school office.

If you have any continuing concerns or complaints regarding the service you are receiving these can be addressed by contacting Mrs Ali, the Head Teacher.

Should you continue to be dissatisfied with that response you should contact:  
Customer Services Manager Education Services

Customer Care  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF  
Telephone Number: 01506 280000

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint to Education Services Customer care, you can write to the Council's Chief Executive, who will look at the outcome and decide if more action is needed. You can contact the Chief Executive at:  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF  
Tel: 01506 280000

If, in exceptional circumstances, it is felt that the case has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you should contact:  
Local Authority Ombudsman

4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7NX  
Telephone: 0131 225 5300

The Complaints Policy and Procedures for Education Services is available in booklet form on request or can be downloaded from the West Lothian Council website. For further advice please refer to the Comments and Complaints Procedure for Education:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/ComplaintsEducationPolicy>

### **Parental Involvement**

Good working relationships with parents are very important to us and we continue to work hard to build up strong partnerships and links with both parents and the wider community.

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's learning as this maximises each child's potential to achieve success. A number of opportunities are planned to share information relevant to each child's learning and these will include, formal and informal meetings with staff, curricular evenings, open afternoons, performances, written advice/guidance, information in monthly newsletters, advice about homework, opportunities to be involved in the planning of learning annual reports.

We are currently developing a profiling system so that information about learning and progress can be shared more frequently with parents.

Parents are encouraged to come into school and offer their help in a variety of ways to support the learning of our children. This could include working with individuals or small groups of children, helping teachers and pupils with classroom display, art activities, educational outings or becoming members of one of our parent groups. In addition parents are encouraged to share individual talents they may have with the children. This support is invaluable, is very much appreciated by the staff and has a positive impact on our pupils. Any parent wishing to offer help in any way is requested to contact the school.

In the interests of child protection and safety, all regular parent helpers must be PVG checked before being permitted to assist in class or on outings. PVG forms are available from the school office. New guidance for parents is currently being developed in school.

Please refer to the council's Parental Involvement Strategy for further information:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/parentalinvolvementstrategy.pdf>

### **Bellsquarry Primary School Parent Council**

The Parent Council consists of parent and co-opted members. All parents of pupils at Bellsquarry Primary School are members of the Parent Forum. Parent Council members are elected from this forum. Each year an Annual General Meeting is held when the Parent Council members are elected.

The Parent Council meets on a regular basis and exists to allow parents an input into the running of their child's school. The Parent Council can help the school management team resolve general problems and the development of new initiatives. It can also assist in the exchange of information between the parents and the school.

The Parent Council represents parents' views on general matters of interest and/or concern. The Parent Council, however, does not discuss matters on an individual basis. The Parent Council is required to deliver an annual report on its activities. In order to ensure that the Parent Council addresses the needs of the Parent Forum, they seek and encourage parents' thoughts, suggestions and opinions. The Parent Council is accountable to the Parent Forum.

More information can be found by visiting the school blog.

### **Child Protection**

'Everyone has a responsibility to protect children from harm.' West Lothian Council has developed an inter-agency approach to Child Protection. Consequently the school works together with police, health and social work on child protection issues. Nursery and school staff are in a unique position to contribute to the protection of children and must share concerns or suspicion of child abuse with appropriate colleagues and agencies. These procedures make it clear that any allegation or suspicion of child abuse must be investigated.

Every school has at least one Designated Officer, who has been specially trained to listen to concerns and act on them as necessary. The Designated Officers at Bellsquarry are:

Mrs Ali, Head Teacher  
Ms McMaster, Principal Teacher.

### **Working Together to Promote Positive Behaviour**

We have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning. At Bellsquarry Primary School we promote positive aspects of learning and behaviour in school and in the playground. Consistent procedures are used throughout the school to promote a positive ethos based on respect, fairness and equality. We actively encourage our pupils to work

towards being successful, confident, effective and responsible individuals in all that they do.

We believe that everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from victimisation and fear. Staff will manage incidents of indiscipline in a sensitive, professional manner and will apply sanctions as appropriate. We have both a behaviour policy and anti-bullying policies in school. These can be obtained by contacting the school office or viewed on our school blog under 'policies'.

We have a clear code of behaviour called the Golden Rules, which is consistently applied by staff and understood by children. We encourage the understanding of the Golden Rules.

**Do** be gentle, **don't** hurt anyone.

**Do** be kind and helpful, **don't** hurt people's feelings.

**Do** be honest, **don't** cover up the truth.

**Do** look after property, **don't** waste and damage things.

**Do** listen to people, **don't** interrupt.

To promote positive behaviour, every pupil has 30 minutes Golden Time each week. There are a range of activities, which pupils can choose from. Loss of Golden Time is used as a sanction if the Golden Rules are not followed.

### Extra Curricular Activities

Pupils are encouraged to take part in extra curricular activities, which take place throughout the session. These after school clubs are largely led by specialists but can also be led by school staff. We are always open to suggestions from the children for new clubs to ensure a wide and varied provision.

### The School in the Community

Bellsquarry has established many links within the community to enhance the learning experiences of the children and to enable the children to share their learning and further develop as effective citizens.

We have strong links with other schools within the James Young High School cluster and plan many joint activities, particularly at the point of transition to High School.

Our Active Schools Co-ordinator's role is to get pupils 'more active, more often'. This includes organising sports festivals and events that schools are able to participate in, offering taster sessions to schools such as rugby and cricket as well as providing activities that children can participate in out with school and during holidays. The information below details the clubs currently running.

### *Gymnastics*

P1 – P3 Saturday mornings 10.00 – 11.00am  
P1 – P7 Tuesdays 4.00 – 6.00pm

### *Tennis*

5 -9 yrs Mondays 4.00 – 5.00pm  
10 – 14 yrs Mondays 5.00 – 6.00pm

### *Athletics*

P4 – P7 Fridays 2.00 – 3.00pm

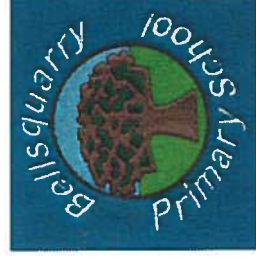
Costs of clubs vary. If you require information on area clubs etc. contact Kim at [kim.o'connor@wled.org.uk](mailto:kim.o'connor@wled.org.uk) or 07917 078

We continue to establish business links and have participated in activities, in partnerships with various businesses and individuals within a variety of professions

We also work with the Chaplaincy Team, who enhance Religious Education and Observance opportunities available to the children and work in partnership with staff.

These links are constantly evolving and being further developed to reflect the ever changing nature of learning across the school.

## A Positive Ethos



At Bellsquarry Primary School we pride ourselves on an ethos of achievement for all. We aim to build self confident children with good self esteem. We aim to empower pupils and value their contributions at all times.

Below are some examples of activities and initiatives within school, that we believe help develop the skills and attitudes above.

- ❖ Enterprise in Education (nursery – P7)
- ❖ School Committees involving P3 –P7 pupils:  
Health and Wellbeing includes Healthy Tuck Shop – P6 pupils, Junior Road Safety Officers  
Pupil Council  
Events and Fundraising  
Eco, which has attained Level 3  
Rights Respecting/ Global Citizenship, which recently achieved Level 1  
Finance
- ❖ Whole School Assemblies – nursery children also attend these when appropriate
- ❖ P7/P1 “buddy” scheme
- ❖ Curriculum Evenings/Afternoons
- ❖ School concerts
- ❖ Cluster events
- ❖ Assisting at Parents’ Consultations
- ❖ Burns Supper for P7
- ❖ After School Clubs
- ❖ Curriculum for Excellence Awards
- ❖ Fund raising events (for example Red Nose Day, McMillan coffee mornings, Golden Time
- ❖ P5 and P7 residential camp

## Curriculum for Excellence

### Bringing learning to life and life to learning

Curriculum for Excellence is being implemented across Scotland for all 3-18 year olds – wherever they learn. It aims to **raise standards**, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world.

Curriculum for Excellence enables professionals to teach subjects creatively, to **work together** across the school and with other schools, to share **best practice** and explore learning together. Glow, Scotland's unique, world-leading, online network supports learners and teachers in this and plans are already in place for parents across the country to have access to Glow.

Teachers and practitioners will share information to plan a child's 'learning journey' from 3-18, helping their progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond, ensuring the change is smooth. They'll ensure children continue to work at a pace they can cope with and with challenge they can thrive on.

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of **knowledge and skills**.

Every child is entitled to a **broad and deep** general education, whatever their level and ability. Every single teacher and practitioner will be responsible for **literacy and numeracy** – the language and numbers skills that unlock other subjects and are vital to everyday life.

CfE develops **skills** for learning, life and work to help young people go on to further study, secure work and navigate life. It brings real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helps young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links **knowledge** in one subject area to another helping children understand the world and make connections. It develops skills so that children can think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.

There will be new ways of **assessing progress** and ensuring children achieve their potential. There will be new **qualifications** for literacy and numeracy and new National 4 and 5 qualifications from 2013/14 in secondary schools.

There's personal **support** to help young people fulfil their potential and to make the most of their opportunities with **additional support** wherever needed. There will be a new emphasis by all staff on looking after our children's **health and wellbeing** – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe, valued and secure.

Ultimately, Curriculum for Excellence aims is to improve our children's life chances, to nurture **successful** learners, **confident** individuals, **effective** contributors, and **responsible** citizens, building on Scotland's reputation for great education.

The curriculum is organised into four levels.

| Level            | Stage                                           |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Early            | Pre-school years and P1 or later for some.      |
| First            | To the end of P4 but earlier or later for some. |
| Second           | To the end of P7 but earlier or later for some. |
| Third and Fourth | S1 – S3 but earlier or later for some.          |
| Senior Phase     | S4 – S6 and college or other means of study.    |

Further information for parents can be found on the following web sites:

[www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)  
[www.curriculumforexcellence.gov.uk](http://www.curriculumforexcellence.gov.uk)

### Expressive Arts

Teachers plan and deliver lessons and projects in all four areas of the Expressive Arts – Art and Design, Dance, Drama and Music. We have a visiting specialist in Art and Design, who enhance the learning experiences on offer to the children. Classes have timetabled blocks of specialist teaching various times throughout the year.

Performances are a key feature of life at Bellsquarry with children putting on productions for parents/carers. Bellsquarry has also a successful brass group and guitar group. The brass group has performed at various school functions e.g. Christmas Carol concert, Bellsquarry Musical Morning, and competitions, where they have met with individual success.

We have a very successful school choir, which is run by Mr Platt.

We also have a number of clubs on offer for different stages of the school - guitar, French and choir.

### Instrumental Tuition

From session 2012-2013 all pupils will be entitled to a block of free music tuition before they enter into P6.

The Council has instructors for brass and strings. Instructors will assess children in P4 and P5, who have expressed an interest in learning to play an instrument. Successful children are given a place if one is available or placed on a waiting list. At Bellsquarry we have brass instruction only. Parents are asked to sign a contract to ensure regular practice and proper care of the instrument. Tuition for brass is free of charge but children, who make progress, will be encouraged to acquire their own instrument and join local bands and orchestras.

### *Health and Wellbeing*

A holistic approach is taken to promote health and wellbeing in Bellsquarry Primary. Account is taken of the stage of growth, development and maturity of each individual as well as the social and community context. Within a progressive framework, children are provided opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes, which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

Promoting health and wellbeing at school is embedded in the variety of activities offered during the day and in extra-curricular activities. Class teachers plan and deliver lessons in Physical Education. Classes have timetabled blocks of the P.E. throughout the year. Opportunities also lie within the context of Religious and Moral Education, Social Studies or as stand-alone topics. Health Week is an annual focus. Bellsquarry Primary has been awarded Accreditation Stage 2 of Healthy Schools+ initiative and has recently achieved the silver award of the Active Schools Charter.

### *Walking to school*

Bellsquarry Primary encourages children to walk to school to promote physical activity and to ease traffic congestion around the school.

### *Cycling to school*

Bellsquarry Primary encourages children to cycle to school and cycle racks are available for the securing of bicycles. Please remember that bicycles are left at your own risk. Cycle safety must be adhered to at all times and all cyclists must wear helmets. No cycling is permitted within the boundaries of the school.

## *Languages*

The development of literacy and language skills play important roles in all learning. Staff build on the foundation, which has been started at home and help children to use literacy skills for a variety of purposes. Literacy skills are regarded as essential life skills.

The four main outcomes are Listening, Talking, Reading and Writing.

Literacy and language skills are developed using all curricular areas and can be stimulated by a topic being undertaken, an item of interest or a child's personal curiosity. Staff exploit interdisciplinary learning opportunities to promote literacy and language development, to help children see connections across the curriculum and to make learning meaningful. It is considered very important that children have a context and a purpose to motivate and stimulate them using language interestingly, imaginatively, appropriately and precisely.

French and German are taught from P1 through to P7 and lessons are taught in a stimulating and active manner. In P1 to P4 there is a focus on talking and listening with the pupils being encouraged to take an active part in role-play, games and songs. To ensure correct pronunciation and intonation the 'Early Start' packs in both languages are used. These packs use native French / German speakers and allow children to gain knowledge about the culture and customs of other European nations.

P5 to P7 children are encouraged to consolidate and further develop the listening alongside the more formal skills of reading and writing in the appropriate language. All schools within the cluster use West Lothian plans of work and assessment packs.

Through presenting Modern Languages in an enjoyable and inclusive manner, we hope that our pupils will be able to make use of their increasing knowledge of a modern language successfully and confidently in a real international context.

We have a French club after school, which has recently been awarded 'La Jolie Ronde licensee of the year award' in 2012.

## *Mathematics*

Mathematics involves the knowledge and understanding of processes and concepts, making connections and applying these in a range of contexts. Numeracy skills are regarded as essential life skills. Children come to school as active mathematical thinkers having, through trial and error, solved problems naturally in play and family life. At school children are provided with structure through which they can further develop skills, understand concepts and learn facts and techniques.

Mathematical activities are planned for the children through which they further develop their understanding of number, money, measure, shape, position and movement and information handling.

Children will enjoy exploring, applying their thinking and presenting solutions to others in a variety of ways. At all stages collaborative learning encourages children to reason logically and creatively through discussion of mathematical ideas and concepts. Mental maths is a daily activity in all classes to develop quick recall, reinforce learning and apply to real life contexts.

### ***Religious and Moral Education***

Children learn about and from the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and other world religions, as well as other traditions and viewpoints independent of religious belief.

Religious observance involves an assembly, personal reflection and response by pupils in the classroom, which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community. The purpose of religious observance is that it should contribute to the development of the four capacities within Curriculum for Excellence: *Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors*. Ten whole school assemblies (religious observance) take place throughout the session.

All pupils and staff can participate without compromise to their personal faith stances. As with Religious Education and Moral Education, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this area of the curriculum. A meeting with the Head Teacher is advised, if this option is being considered.

Weekly assemblies are also led by each class in turn and aim to increase children's understanding of themselves by reflection on their own lives and the multicultural dimension. Parents are welcome to attend one class assembly in the session.

Small-scale celebrations are held in school at various times throughout the year to mark festivals, ceremonies and traditions.

The Chaplaincy Team further enhances the children's experiences in this area.

### ***Sciences***

Through our science programmes children develop their interest in and understanding of our living, material and the physical world.

There are five main learning outcomes:

- Planet Earth
- Forces, electricity and waves

- Biological systems
- Materials
- Topical science.

Every opportunity is taken to make connections to other curricular areas. Children engage in a wide range of collaborative investigative tasks, which allow them to further their knowledge and understanding.

### *Social Studies*

Programmes of study are planned to ensure continuity, depth and progression throughout the levels in Curriculum for Excellence and will include social studies topics relating to people, past events and societies; people, place and environment, people in society, economy and business.

Some studies may last several weeks; others will have a short-term focus. Educational outings are often linked to social studies topics and enhance the learning experiences of the children. Parents/carers are asked to give a written consent and pay towards the cost of the outing. Details regarding specific cost and various methods of payment will be detailed on communication distributed to parents/carers in advance of the outing / educational experience.

### *Technologies*

The technologies framework includes creative, practical and work-related experiences and outcomes in business, computing science, food, textiles, craft, design, engineering, graphics and applied technologies. As children play and learn, they develop an interest, confidence and enjoyment in technologies. Children also develop an understanding of the role and impact of technologies in Scotland and the global community.

ICT is a tool to support learning. However skills can also be taught discreetly, if required. These skills can then be transferred and applied in different learning contexts. Interactive whiteboards are installed in all classrooms. They are successful in

- Motivating and engaging pupils in their learning
- Aiding concentration and focus
- Encouraging a higher level of pupil interaction in both teacher-directed and group-based lessons
- Enhancing knowledge retention
- Accommodating different learning styles.

Managed by Learning and Teaching Scotland and delivered by Research Machines (RM), Glow is the world's first national intranet for education. Children are issued login details that allow them to access Glow from school and from home.

What Glow provides:

- A trusted and safe environment for pupils, teachers and parents.
- An area to create personalised programmes of work and share curricular resources.
- A variety of online tools to enhance pupils' learning experiences in a way that suits them best.
- Virtual learning to share information and take part in a lesson.
- Tools to enable you to communicate and collaborate across the network.
- An environment to ensure they are equipped for the challenges, which lie ahead.

Use of the Internet

Computer equipment is used to support effective Learning Teaching. This is an integral part of the curriculum, which enables pupils to access information and resources on local and worldwide networks.

West Lothian Education Services implements software to provide protection from inappropriate material on the Internet. It must be recognised, however, that no protection can absolutely guaranteed and, to this end, pupils must not actively seek inappropriate material and should report any items that make them feel uncomfortable.

The authority has set out the following Internet rules for pupils to minimise the possibility of accessing inappropriate material and communications.

When using the Internet, we expect children:

- Not to swear, use rude or threatening words
- Not to reveal their address or phone number or those of others
- To remember that electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private
- Not to use the Internet in such a way that would disrupt its use by others
- Not to try to find inappropriate material
- To tell a member of staff if a page, picture or message is found that makes the child feel uncomfortable.

If these rules are not followed, the child will not be allowed to use the Internet and the school may take further action.

Further information on safe use of the Internet is available at:

<http://www.besafeonline.org>.

## School blog

You can find out about the life and work of the school on our school blog. The blog is updated **at least once a month** by class teachers.

The blog can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/wl/bellsquarrypsblog/>

## Espresso

Espresso digital learning service providing visual media and interactive resources is used in school. The benefit of the licence is that parents can access espresso from home to enable them to be involved in their child's learning and development.

To access the website visit [www.espresso.co.uk](http://www.espresso.co.uk)

Click 'log in' at top right hand side of page.

Click 'Espresso Online Service' (child on cloud icon)

**Username:** Student21968

**Password:** BQPS123

## Homework

The main aims of setting homework are to reinforce learning, establish positive study habits, promote independent learning and give parents further information about their child's learning at any particular time. The nature of homework tasks is left to the discretion of the teacher but may consist of a piece of reading, spelling, some personal research or a short extension of learning previously undertaken. Time spent on homework will vary according to the age of the child. Please ensure that your child undertakes his/her homework tasks in an appropriate environment away from distractions.

## Assessment and achievement

Assessment meets children's needs and enables all children to achieve goals and maximise their potential. Therefore assessment practices serve the following purposes:

- Support learning.
- Give assurance to parents and others about learners' progress.
- Provide a summary of what learners have achieved.
- Inform future improvements.
- Assist pupils to identify their own next steps in their learning.

Teachers assess children's progress constantly as part of daily learning and teaching. In line with the Curriculum for Excellence, progress is now defined in terms of 'how much' and 'how well' as well as the learner's rate of progress, with a greater focus on *skills* and *knowledge*. Teachers use a range of assessment approaches at different stages and in different areas of learning e.g. giving quality feedback on the quality of children's work and how to make it better, self and peer assessment.

Teachers have access to a new online National Assessment Resource (NAR). This further supports teachers' professional judgements. Reporting to parents will reflect the new approaches to assessment in line with Curriculum for Excellence.

Achievement is defined as volunteering, hobbies and interests, projects which children undertake across the curriculum and their participation in school life, caring for a relative at home etc., resulting in the development of skills for learning, life and work. Teachers support children to understand, describe, demonstrate and build on the skills, which they have been developing through these activities. This may involve partnerships with others beyond the school that can contribute fully to the development and delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence.

We celebrate success and pupils' achievements in a variety of ways e.g. praise stickers, recognition at assemblies with certificates, in newsletters, on the school blog, display of photographs in school etc. We also encourage parents to let us know about achievements outside school so that we can use these in school to support learning.

Parents can find further information on the Curriculum for Excellence on [www.ltsotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/engagingwithparents](http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/engagingwithparents) and <http://www.educationssotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/>

## Personal Learning Planning

All children are encouraged to become active participants in their own learning and as such, help to set their own targets and regularly discuss progress towards those targets. Children are aware of the learning outcomes of each learning experience and use them to assess their own understanding and that of their peers. The children are encouraged to reflect on their learning, identifying their strengths and development needs and dependent on the age of the children, there are a number of ways in which they are encouraged and supported through this process. Parents are an important part of this process and we are currently developing ways in which we can meaningfully involve parents further in their own child's learning.

## Pupil Leadership

Pupils are actively encouraged to be involved in the wider life of the school and they have many opportunities to be involved in the decision making process. There are a number of groups within school which have pupil representation, for example, the Pupil Council, Eco Committee, Health and Wellbeing Committee, Global Citizenship/ Rights Respecting Committee. Older pupils are offered roles of responsibility including, House Captains and Junior Road Safety Officers etc. We are planning to extend meaningful leadership opportunities for the children and will be working in partnership with parents

to further develop this. For further information please refer to the Developing a Pupil Voice Policy:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/pupilvoice>

## **Reporting to Parents**

At the beginning of the session parents have the opportunity to attend the “Meet the Teacher” evening in September. Twice year, October and March, parents are invited to discuss their child’s progress with the class teacher. This year parents of P4 –P7 children were invited to bring their children to the parents’ consultations to contribute to a part of the meeting. Feedback from both parents and pupils has been very positive. During the final term parents receive a written report of their child’s progress during the academic year. Teachers are willing to discuss individual progress at any time should there be concerns or issues surrounding the child. Arrangements for this can be made by appointment.

## **Transitions**

### **Nursery / P1 Transition**

Every opportunity is taken to familiarise our nursery pupils with the life of the primary school. They attend assemblies, undertake whole school activities such as enterprise, fund raising, eco-school activities and they quickly become familiar with school staff and the school building. Towards the summer term additional opportunities are planned when nursery children will spend more time in the P1 classroom and playground and will meet other children in their class. An induction meeting for new P1 parents takes place in June. A buddy system is in place, which allows older pupils to support younger peers. P1 teachers will have detailed knowledge of each child in order to ensure a smooth and seamless transition.

### **P7 /S1 Transition**

Each secondary school admits pupils from a number of associated primaries. Bellsquarry Primary School is an associated with the James Young High School and the children living in the catchment area of the school would therefore normally transfer there for secondary education.

The James Young Cluster has excellent transition arrangements with a programmes starting early in the P7 year. Children have many opportunities to visit the High School and become familiar with a number of staff. Additional support is available to pupils, who require this during the transition period.

Parents’ consultations are arranged by The James Young High School, early in the new school session of P7 pupils, to provide parents with the necessary information about transition. Contact details are as follows:  
The James Young High School

Quentin Rise  
 Dedridge  
 Livingston  
 EH54 6NE  
 Tel no 01506 414244  
 Head Teacher – Mrs Catrina Hatch.

### Support for Pupils

Our Additional Support Needs Teacher works alongside class teachers to give extra support to children where appropriate. On occasions children work in a small group with the Additional Support Needs Teacher or a Pupil Support Worker. Our Additional Support Needs Teacher, Mrs Robinson, provides:

- Liaison with class teachers and parents
- Resources
- Extra teaching time for some children.

We also have an informal Bellsquarry Additional Support Needs parents' group *by* parents and *for* parents, which meets once a month. *All* parents in the nursery and school are welcome to attend. The group can be contacted [bellsquarryasn@gmail.com](mailto:bellsquarryasn@gmail.com) or on 07944 353753.

### School Improvement

Bellsquarry Primary School continuously strives to improve the educational provision for the children in its care and service it offers to parents and children. An annual Standards and Quality Report is produced, which details progress made towards identified targets. An annual School Improvement Plan is also produced, which outlines key areas for development for the school session, including plans to ensure continuous whole school improvement over the next three years. These documents are available from school and can be accessed electronically through the school blog and West Lothian Council website.

In June 2011 Bellsquarry Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected by HMIE and the report was published in August 2011. A copy of this report is available in school or can be accessed on the Education Scotland website at: <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/schools/primsec/Bellsquarry/PrimarySchoolWestLothian.asp>.

Information regarding Bellsquarry Primary School's performance at local level can be found by visiting:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/education/schoolrelateditems/SchoolPerformanceData1>

Information regarding the school's performance at national level can be obtained by accessing:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scottishschoolsonline/>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/index.asp>

### **School Policies and Practical Information**

- A Curriculum for Excellence – position statement
- Additional Support Needs
- Assessment
- Enterprise Education
- Equal Opportunities
- Guidelines for Effective Planning
- Health and Wellbeing overview and programme
- Homework
- ICT to enhance learning programme
- Languages – Reading, Handwriting and presentation
- Learning and Teaching
- Mathematics
- Modern Languages
- Nursery/ P1 Transition
- Positive Discipline
- Pupil Voice
- P7 /S1 Transition
- Religious and Moral Education
- Road Safety
- Sciences – position statement
- Social Studies - position statement

Copies of Bellsquarry Primary School policies will be made available on request. In the absence of a school policy, we are following West Lothian policies.

## West Lothian Council

### WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

“Striving for excellence...working with and for our communities.”

### WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL VALUES

- Focusing on customers’ needs
- Being honest, open and accountable
- Providing equality of opportunities
- Developing employees
- Making best use of resources
- Working in partnership

### NATIONAL PRIORITIES

#### ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

To raise standards of educational attainment for all in school, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.

#### FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING

To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning.

#### INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages.

#### VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP

To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society, and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.

#### LEARNING FOR LIFE

To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society, and to encourage creativity and ambition

We hope you find all of the information provided by West Lothian Council helpful. All of the information is correct at the time of publishing but changes can occur at any time.

**Section 1** Standards

**Section 2** Ethos

**Section 3** The Curriculum

**Section 4** Council Policies

**Section 5** Admission Procedures

**Section 6** Health & Safety and Pupil Welfare

## Section 1: Standards

### 1.1 Attendance

The school enters pupil absence electronically using codes for particular reasons for absence. To ensure an accurate record is kept it is important that, should your child be absent, you provide an explanation for that absence either by letter or by telephone. A Group Call System which sends out an automated text message to a mobile telephone in cases of unexplained absence has been introduced in all schools. The call is repeated regularly until answered. Parents/carers and schools must work in partnership in order to benefit from early notification of unexplained absence from school. Parents are urged to opt into this system.

Please avoid keeping your child absent for reasons other than illness. Work missed is not easily made up and allowing casual absences encourages a casual attitude towards work, and this applies equally in the case of frequent late-coming. Please help us develop in your child a regular habit of good time keeping. If circumstances arise when your child will be unavoidably late please provide a note of explanation.

The Scottish government has issued a directive informing local authorities that, due to the impact absences during term-time have on children's learning, any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised. Family holidays should therefore be taken out-with term times. If, in exceptional circumstances, you wish to take your children out of school, you must make your request to the Head Teacher in writing.

Parents or carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. In cases of unsatisfactory attendance, the Head Teacher will ask a Family Support Worker to visit the home and discuss the problem with the parent or carer. If such unsatisfactory attendance persists, the Head Teacher, following discussion with the Family Support Worker and other agencies, will decide whether the case should be referred to the Local Area Attendance Advisory Group. This group has been formed to make recommendations to the Director on the statutory responsibilities of the Authority with regard to defaulting parents.

If you become aware that your child may be absent from school for a considerable length of time, due to illness or admission to hospital, you are requested to inform the school as soon as possible. Notification from the hospital will also be sent to the school.

Please refer to the Attendance at School Policy for further information:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/AttendanceatSchoolwithGuidelines>.

### 1.2 Behaviour

We promote and expect a high standard of responsible behaviour from pupils towards staff, other pupils and towards their surroundings. Self-discipline is the key to good

behaviour and we depend on your support in reinforcing the discipline guidelines of the school.

These guidelines are based on mutual consideration, good manners and respect and are in place to ensure the safety and well being of all pupils and staff in school.

We ask your child to:

- Be honest
- Be kind and helpful
- Care for others
- Be hard working
- Look after property
- Listen to people
- Cross the road safely, using the crossing patrol wherever available.

We ask your child not to:

- Cover up the truth
- Hurt others
- Hurt others' feelings
- Waste time or others' time
- Damage property or drop litter
- Interrupt
- Leave the school without permission.

### 1.3 Punctuality

It is good manners to be punctual and our children are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival embarrasses them and also disrupts the class work already begun. However, in the event of the occasional 'sleep-in' please send your child to school no matter what time.

Better late than never!

### 1.4 School Dress Code

In 1999 West Lothian adopted a policy on school dress.

Some forms of dress are unacceptable in school for health and safety reasons or for moral or other reasons.

Schools will not allow clothing, jewellery or makeup which:

- could encourage rivalry (such as football colours)
- could cause offence (such as anti-religious symbols or slogans which might be regarded as political or carrying a questionable moral message)

- could damage flooring
- could promote a message contrary to the values of the school and Council (such as support for a drugs culture)
- carry advertising, particularly for alcohol or tobacco
- could be used as a weapon.

The Council considers that the introduction of school dress codes:

- improve security by making it easier to identify intruders
- give pupils a pride in, and a sense of belonging to, their school
- reduce truancy by identifying school pupils as belonging to a particular school
- improve a school's reputation in the community
- discourage competition among pupils
- make it cheaper for parents to buy school clothing
- encourage discipline among pupils.

Each school has its own dress code, for the whole school, based on the Council's policy which all pupils will be expected to keep to.

The Council will not be responsible for loss of or damage to pupils' clothing and personal belongings including mobile phones. Valuable items, including jewellery and unnecessarily expensive articles of clothing, should not be brought to school.

### 1.5 Clothing Grants

Families in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance - Income Related or Working Tax Credit (WTC) or Child Tax Credit (CTC) (with an annual income of £15,860 or less) who submit a completed application form automatically receive a clothing grant for each pupil of school age. The current grants are £94 for each primary school aged pupil.

Families not in receipt of these specific benefits but in financial hardship may also be assisted depending upon their situation. On receipt of an application in such cases, a report is called for from the Children and Young People Team regarding the families' circumstances. Alternatively, pupils will have the opportunity to be appropriately clothed by being able to access school and sports clothing through a school clothing store. For information from the school please contact the office on 01506 410777.

For further information please refer to the School Clothing Grants Policy:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/schoolclothingpolicy>

## Section 2: Ethos

### 2.1 Equality and Fairness

All pupils have the right to enjoy opportunities and activities, regardless of their background, race, gender or religion, so that they will be given the freedom to develop their full potential without constraint.

Our aim is promote self-esteem and a positive self-image in every pupil. Self respect and respect for others is a priority. We treat boys and girls equally and offer the same opportunities to all pupils by offering a diverse curriculum, which addresses the needs and opinions of all. We aim to maintain an environment which is free from bullying, racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour. We value your support in maintaining this ethos.

### 2.2 Partnership and Communication with Parents

West Lothian Schools operate an open, responsive policy with regard to questions or concerns that parents may have. Should you have concerns or complaints regarding the service provided you should raise these with the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Newsletters are issued frequently and curricular evenings and Parents' Meetings are held regularly. Your comments and suggestions on the work done in school and the service provided for you and your child are welcomed.

Evaluation forms will be sent to you from time to time so that we can be sure that we are listening to what you say about the service provided for you and your child.

All West Lothian schools are committed to the process of personal learning planning. This process is an on-going discussion between teacher and pupils about how the next steps in learning are to be achieved. There is often a simple record of the discussion and schools are developing ways of sharing these with parents and involving parents in the process.

### 2.3 Parent Councils

A Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents at a school on a voluntary basis. All parents/carers in a school are automatically members of the Parent Forum of that School.

The purpose of a Parent Council is to:

- support the school in its work with parents
- represent the views of all parents

- encourage links between school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community.

Every parent can expect to:

- receive information about what their child is learning along with information about events and activities at the school
- receive advice/help on how they can support their child's learning
- be told about opportunities to become involved in school
- have a say in electing a Parent Council to work on behalf of all parents.

Parent Councils operate in accordance with a local constitution. Parents can put themselves forward to be members of the Parent Council in accordance with that constitution.

Further information can be found at [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

## Section 3: The Curriculum

### 3.1 Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18.

The 3-18 curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.

The knowledge, skills and attributes learners will develop will allow them to demonstrate four key capacities – to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The children will be more independent and successful in their learning by having greater knowledge and more secure understanding and by being able to use the knowledge that they have more effectively.

They will be able to process new information more easily and apply knowledge in different contexts from those in which knowledge was acquired. They will be able to learn more independently.

They will be more confident in tackling new and more challenging tasks and dealing with new situations and will have a better understanding of their responsibilities within society.

They will be able to control their own lives and to be active in society, particularly in contributing to the economy but also their awareness of wider issues that affect them.

The seven underpinning principles of Curriculum for Excellence are – challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance.

Please refer to the front of the handbook for further information on the Curriculum for Excellence from page to .

### 3.2 Support for Pupils

Delivering appropriate provision for pupils with additional learning needs is central to the national commitment to inclusion and is underpinned by legislation. West Lothian Council believes that all children and young people are entitled to learn together. This

will help develop a culture of acceptance within which all children have a presumptive entitlement to mainstream education and services provided to facilitate this goal.

Focus on Inclusion is designed to help schools in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and partner agencies to evaluate effectiveness of provision in improving educational outcomes and opportunities for pupils with additional learning needs. The policy can be accessed online at:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/focusoninclusion>

If you feel that your child needs additional support, information and advice is available from your school in the first instance.

Enquire is the Scottish Advice Service for Additional Support for Learning. Operated by Children in Scotland, Enquire offers independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

- a telephone helpline - 0845 123 2303
- an email enquiry service - [info@enquire.org.uk](mailto:info@enquire.org.uk)
- an online enquiry service two websites - [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk) (for parents/carers and practitioners) and [www.enquire.org.uk/yp](http://www.enquire.org.uk/yp) (for children and young people)
- Enquire also provide a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets explaining everything from 'additional support in the early years' to 'what planning should take place for moving on from school'

The Parents' Guide to Additional Support for Learning is now available to download at <http://enquire.org.uk/publications/parents-guide>.

## Section 4: Council Policies

### 4.1 Council Policies

Education Services policies can be accessed online at:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/?key=1778580>

Hard copies of council policies are available from the school, West Lothian libraries and from the Civic Centre upon request.

## Section 5: Admission Procedures

### 5.1 Admission Procedures

West Lothian is divided into catchment areas for primary and secondary schools. Each home address has a catchment denominational school and a catchment non-denominational school, for both primary and secondary education. Although the Council aims to provide enough places for all children in the catchment area at a catchment school, living within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at a catchment school. Parents can request a school other than one of their catchment schools. This is known as a 'placing request'. Parents can request that their child go to any primary school in West Lothian regardless of their religion. The council must grant these requests unless there is a legal reason not to. Further details of the policy and procedure for admission to primary and secondary schools

- Primary School Admission Policy:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/pupilplacementadmissionprimary>
- Secondary School Admission Policy:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/pupilplacementadmissionsecondary>

Applications for admission to West Lothian Council primary or infant schools at all stages (P1-P7) are made by completion of an Application for Admission to Primary or Infant School Form. Application Forms are part of an application pack. Please read all the details carefully, particularly the pupil placement guidelines in the Information for Parents Booklet.

Application Packs can be collected from the school and forms completed with assistance from school staff or by reference to guidance notes.

Application Packs are also available from:

Education Service  
Pupil Placement Section  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF

### 5.2 New Entrants to P1

Application for admission of pupils to P1 for the August intake normally takes place in November and December of the preceding year. Details appear in local papers, Council Information Centres, in nursery schools and playgroups. Children will be invited to spend

some time in school, usually in June, to meet their teacher and see their classroom. Primary 1 pupils will commence a full day session from no later than the third Monday of term.

Transport assistance may be provided for children who cannot be placed in the catchment school.

### **5.3 Transfer from P7 to Secondary School**

Each home address has a denominational (Roman Catholic) and a nondenominational secondary school in their catchment area.

In November and December, parents of P7 pupils will receive a letter from the Pupil Placement Section indicating the catchment area secondary schools for their home address. The letter, which will be sent home with the child, asks parents to confirm their transfer intentions. It is generally assumed that P7 pupils transfer to their associated secondary school providing that their associated secondary school for the primary school they attend is also a catchment secondary school. The letter also advises parents of their right to make a placing request and how to do this. Information on placement requests is available from the Pupil Placement Section.

Transport assistance may be provided for children who cannot be placed in the catchment school. Information on this can be obtained from School Transport (telephone 01506 775291), Pupil Placement (telephone 01506 776002) or from the Council website – [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk).

### **5.4 Applying for a Place at a Non-Catchment School**

The deadline for an application for a placing request to a non-catchment primary or secondary school is 31 December, prior to the transfer in August.

### **5.5 Acknowledgment**

All applications will be acknowledged within 14 days. Admission will be confirmed as soon as possible on or before 30 April by letter from Pupil Placement. Where a school is over-subscribed, parents will be informed in writing, and asked to provide, if they wish, further supporting information for their application which will be considered in determining their application. Enquiries may be made either to the individual school or Pupil Placement Section.

### **5.6 Extra Curricular Activities**

Participation in extra curricular activities, for example Instrumental Tuition, Drama or P.E., which take place at a school other than that attended by the pupil, should not be construed as an entitlement to a place at that particular school. These activities are offered without prejudice to placement decisions which may be made.

## Section 6: Health & Safety and Pupil Welfare

### 6.1 West Lothian School Health Service

Children's well being depends on meeting their emotional, physical and intellectual needs. Children do better at school when they are both healthy and happy. The School Health Service is here to help children achieve their full potential. Every school in West Lothian has a named Community Paediatrician and a fully qualified School Nurse with relevant training to meet the needs of the child. Nursery Schools also have a named Health Visitor. The Nurse and Doctor visit the school regularly.

### 6.2 What does the School Health Service do?

- We work as part of the integrated community school, multidisciplinary team along with other agencies promoting children's welfare. We are working closely with schools to encourage and assist those becoming new Health Promoting Schools.
- In Primary 1, Primary 7 and Secondary 2/3 you will be sent a Health Questionnaire to complete to alert us to any concerns you may have about your child.
- Children with health related problems will be offered an appointment with the School Nurse or Doctor.
- Children can also be offered an appointment at the request of parents, school staff or other health professionals.
- The School Nurse is also involved in Health Education classes and events at your child's school.
- We provide advice on health issues to parents, teachers, and children and where appropriate assist in planning the curriculum for Health Education.

### 6.3 Primary Schools

- Parents/Carers of children in Primary 1 may be offered an opportunity to attend with their child for a health/ development check by the School Nurse.
- In Primary 7 your child's health will be reviewed before moving to secondary school.
- Children with health related problems may be reviewed at intervals by the School Nurse or Doctor.

### 6.4 Secondary Schools

- In Secondary Schools we continue to review pupils with health related problems.
- We are also available for pupils seeking individual advice via staff or drop-in clinics.

- In Secondary 2/3 pupils will be given a Health Questionnaire to complete and offered an appointment with the School Nurse or Doctor if appropriate.

## 6.5 Immunisations

- BCG vaccination will be offered to children who are felt to be at high risk.
- From the age of fourteen years, pupils are offered booster immunisation against Tetanus, Diphtheria and Polio if their GP has not already done these.

The School Nurse and Doctor are based in:

Community Child Health  
St Johns Hospital  
Howden Road West  
Livingston EH54 6PP  
Telephone: 01506 524404

At any time, parents and pupils can ask to meet with the School Nurse or Doctor to discuss health or personal problems.

## 6.6 General Responsibilities for Health

Within the general policy laid down by West Lothian Council, Education Service has prepared a series of statements of safety policy for all areas of its responsibility in accordance with Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Members of school staff are fully instructed in their responsibilities in this respect and safety regulations apply to all aspects of school life, both on and off the premises.

It is expected that pupils will behave responsibly and comply with all safety requirements. The support of parents in promoting good practice in health and safety matters is of importance to the school.

Head teachers of school establishments have a duty to ensure that all Health & Safety requirements are fully complied with, within the school grounds. These duties include a responsibility to make sure that the appropriate member of staff records and logs details of-

- termly fire drills
- annual fire extinguisher checks
- weekly fire siren/bell checks
- administration of medication to pupils
- annual risk assessment of buildings and structures.

## 6.7 Medication in Schools

Most pupils will at some time have a medical condition that may affect their participation in school activities. For many this will be short-term; perhaps finishing prescribed medication even though the child's doctor regards the child as fit to attend school. Others have medical conditions which, without help, could limit their access to education.

Parents have prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide schools with information about their child's medical condition. Forms for any child requiring medicine to be taken during school time are available from the school office or can be downloaded from [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

Parents are requested to complete these forms to allow medicine to be administered. Preventative inhalers (blue) are kept in a First Aid box in the classroom.

If your child uses an inhaler, it is important that it is labelled. It is parents' responsibility to ensure these are renewed as necessary. Each class teacher has a list of children requiring these. Any child who requires other medication on a regular basis may require a health care plan. Please contact the Head Teacher to discuss this.

## 6.8 Emergency Contacts and Arrangements

It is essential that the school has the name, address and telephone number of an adult to be contacted in case of an accident or your child feeling ill. Please ensure records are kept up to date by notifying the school of any change of address and telephone number of your child's emergency contact.

Only in special circumstances (e.g. no heating), will children be sent home early. The school will make every effort to contact you in such situations. Where there is no adult to receive the child, they will be supervised in school until such time as suitable arrangements are made. In the event of extreme weather conditions it would be helpful to listen to local radio stations, where updates on school closures will be broadcast.

All schools have a means of contacting parents and carers via the Group Call System.

## 6.9 Meals and Milk

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended, gives the education authority:

- powers to provide milk, meals or other refreshment for pupils at its schools;
- a duty to provide meals free of charge to pupils. Pupils with parents in receipt of either:

Income Support Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance Any Income Related element of Employment & Support Allowance Child Tax Credit (with no working

- tax credit) and whose annual income is £15,860 or less Working Tax Credit and whose annual income is £6,420 or less are entitled to a free mid-day meal
- a duty to accommodate the consumption of packed lunches.

All pupils of nursery schools and classes, all P1-3 pupils, P4-7 pupils whose parents are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and pupils at Beattie and Pinewood Schools where consumption of milk is part of the educational programme as agreed with Psychological Services are entitled to 0.25 litres of milk daily free of charge. Milk is available to other primary pupils at a reduced cost.

For further information please refer to the School Meals and Milk Policy:

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/schmealsmilkpol> or by contacting Stuart Isbister, Pupil/Student Benefits Officer either by phone on 01506 281952 or by emailing [stuart.isbister@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.isbister@westlothian.gov.uk).

Children may have school meals regularly or on odd days when necessary. The school dining area is organised as a self-service cafeteria. This area is supervised by members of staff. Children choose from three options each day. This usually includes a non-meat meal. A 3 coloured tray system is used – green - usually a packed lunch, red - a hot two-course meal and blue - a snack type meal. These are on display to allow the children to see the choices.

If a child loses or forgets lunch money, we will provide a meal and inform parents of the cost. This amount must be paid the following day.

Some parents prefer their children to have a packed lunch and facilities are provided in the school for the eating of packed lunches.

## **6.10 Employment of Children**

Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the byelaws on the Employment of Children. These regulations do not permit the employment of children under 13 years of age.

## **6.11 Security**

The school has a security system which allows all doors to be locked electronically once the children are in school. The locking system is released automatically if the fire alarm goes off. All visitors should report to the school office via the front entrance of the school, sign in and collect a visitor's badge. It is extremely important to the security of the school that no adult is on the premises unless they have signed in at the school office.

## 6.12 Photography

West Lothian schools have a photography policy which is in accordance with data protection and human rights legislation. Photographs taken for curricular assessment, security, registration, training and development or travel reasons will not be used for any other purpose.

Photography is helpful in publicising the success of the school and in promoting educational initiatives. From time to time members of the press and media are invited into schools to cover events celebrating success. However, the views of parents who, for any reason, do not wish their children to appear in such photographs will be respected at all times, as will the views of the senior students, themselves, in secondary schools.

Photography by staff on school trips and visits may be used in the curriculum and displayed within the school or at parents' evenings to illustrate the work of the school. Parents may be allowed to purchase a copy of a photograph of their individual child, or as part of a group, if the parents of the other children in the group are in agreement.

If photography is permitted, parents and guests should take care to avoid distracting pupils and the audience. They should observe any constraints imposed by school staff. Video or sound recording of a copyright musical or theatrical performance is normally forbidden and photography may also be restricted for reasons of child protection or out of respect for the rights and privacy of individuals. If so, photo-opportunities will, instead, be arranged before or after a performance or an event, if possible.

If unsure whether or not permission has been given by staff to record a particular performance or event, parents should ask the Head Teacher.

Class and individual or group photographs are annual school events. Parents are asked in advance whether or not they wish their children to be included in these events. Reputable commercial photographers are involved and the law allows them to retain the copyright in the photographs.

The use of mobile phone cameras is prohibited in view of the risks inherent in such use, which include the existence and/or distribution of photographs contrary to the wishes, welfare and privacy of young people and adults.

## 6.13 Child Protection Guidelines

The safety of your child at school is a priority for the authority. All West Lothian schools follow the Lothian Child Protection guidelines. A copy can be found on [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

#### **6.14 Wet Weather Arrangements**

During spells of bad weather, children are normally supervised in a classroom or open area.

#### **6.15 Playground Supervision**

Supervision is provided in the school grounds 20 minutes prior to the school opening, during intervals and the lunch hour. If children have an accident or any other problem in the playground they report initially to the supervisor, who will take the necessary action. When pupils are at school, the responsibility for their safety rests with the Local Authority. The Head Teacher and staff undertake this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority.

#### **6.16 Transport**

West Lothian Council will provide transport assistance for all primary pupils living more than 1.5 miles from their designated school. The provision of transport for pupils attending special schools and classes is not subject to these limitations, but is based on individual pupil need. Further information can be obtained from School Transport (telephone 01506 775291) or from the School Transport policy on [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

Parents, who choose to send their children to a school outwith their catchment area, will be responsible for any extra travelling expenses incurred.

#### **6.17 Car Park**

In the interests of safety parents must not use the car park to access the school. At no time should children be in the car park.

#### **6.18 Requested Early Release of Pupil**

There are occasions when parents wish their children to be released from school at other than normal closing times, to enable them to keep a dental or medical appointment outside school, or for other reasons. In all cases, a written request must be made for early release. Parents must then call at the school office and their child will be brought to them.

On no account should a child leave school premises on their own.

#### **6.19 Transferring Educational Data About Pupils**

Data is transferred electronically to the Scottish govern

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## 6.21 Use of data by the Council and the Scottish Government

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, the Scottish government and education authorities need accurate, up to-date data about pupils. The Council may also cross-reference pupil data with population data. The Council is keen to help all pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better exam results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows the Scottish government, education authorities and schools to:

- plan and deliver school provision,
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils,
- better understand some of the factors that influence pupil attainment and achievement, target resources better.

## 6.22 Your data protection rights

On occasion, schools will make data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, schools will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities.

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

## 6.23 Concerns/Complaints

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.

If you are dissatisfied with that response you should contact:  
Customer Services Manager

Education Service  
Customer Care  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF  
Telephone number: 01506 280000.

If, in exceptional circumstances, it is felt that the case has not been properly administered, you should contact:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman  
4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh EH3 7NS  
Tel: 0800 377 7330

For further advice please refer to the Comments and Complaints Procedure for Education:  
<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/sitecontent/documentlist/educationpolicy/ComplaintsEducationPolicy>

- tax credit) and whose annual income is £15,860 or less Working Tax Credit and whose annual income is £6,420 or less are entitled to a free mid-day meal
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Scottish Public Services Ombudsman  
4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh EH3 7NS  
Tel: 0800 377 7330

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