



# Blackridge Primary School Handbook

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## 2.1 Attendance

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. Should your child require to be absent from school you must contact the school office by 9.30am to inform the staff of the reason for absence. This practice must be repeated each day that your child is absent. We will follow up an unreported absence and should we fail to be able to contact parent/carers, information will be passed to appropriate authorities who will then pursue the reasons for absence.

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. Our school has a system which sends out an automated text message to a mobile telephone in cases of unexplained absence. The text 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.

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.

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.

## 2.2 Ethos and Behaviour

Children learn to develop values and positive attitudes towards themselves and others in many aspects of the curriculum which in turn contribute to their personal and social development. Our schools work hard to build confidence and self-esteem and provide opportunities for children to contribute to the whole school community. Much of their development in these areas, helps to lay the foundations for becoming responsible citizens of the future.

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.

## 2.3 School Dress Code

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.

Blackridge Primary School Uniform:

**The school uniform is as follows:**

Blue Sweatshirt

White Polo Shirt

Black Trouser/Skirt

Black Footwear

**P.E .Wear**

Black shorts

White T-shirt

Black gym shoes

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

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.

School Clothing Grants are available to parents in receipt of a qualifying benefit, application forms are available from the school or online.

The Council's Dress Code for Schools Policy is available online at [westlothian.gov.uk](http://westlothian.gov.uk).

### **3.1 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.

### **3.2 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.

### 3.3 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.

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 on the Scottish Parent Teacher Council website <http://www.sptc.info>

## 4.1 General

Every child and young person in Scotland is entitled to experience a broad general education, as described by the Scottish Government's Curriculum for Excellence.

The curriculum is organised into eight broad categories.

### Expressive arts

Includes art and design, dance, drama and music. Your child will get the chance to find out about and express their feelings and emotions and those of others.

### Health and wellbeing

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, planning for choices and changes, PE, activity and sport, food and health, substance misuse and relationships, sexual health and parenthood.

### Languages

Includes learning about English as well as learning an additional language.

### Mathematics

Includes using real life experiences to make predictions, connect to other things, provide skills to understand and examine information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions.

### Religious and moral education

Includes exploring the world's major religions as well as views that are non-religious. Your child will think about their own beliefs and values.

Children learn about Christian practice in worship and the place of Christian action in the community. Children will also study other world religions in line with national guidelines.

This part of the curriculum operates through class teaching, assemblies, outside visits and visitors to school.

Any parent who wishes to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious education/observance should inform the Head Teacher.

## Sciences

Includes learning about the natural world and living things, forces, chemical changes and our senses.

## Social studies

Includes developing understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances.

## Technologies

Includes business, computing science, food, textiles, craft, engineering, graphics and applied technologies.

More information about Curriculum for Excellence is available on the Education Scotland website <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/thecurriculum>

Parents and Carers will be kept up to date with what your child will be learning through newsletters, meet the teacher events, open mornings, assemblies, pupil profiles and parent/carer consultations.

### **4.2 Instrumental Tuition**

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 the waiting list for either brass or strings. Parents are asked to sign a contract to ensure regular practice and proper care of the instrument. Tuition is free of charge, but children who make progress will be encouraged to acquire their own instrument and join local bands and orchestras.

### **4.3 Use of the Internet**

Children access information and resources on local and worldwide networks as part of their studies.

We teach children about internet safety and how to report any items that make them feel uncomfortable.

We ask parents to promote the responsible and safe use of the internet at home, including the use of social media if parents permit their children to access it.

We ask that you read our Internet Safety User agreement with your child, sign and return to school to allow your child access to the internet.

Further information on safe use of the Internet is available at: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

## 4.4 Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process and your child will be continually assessed during their school career. This assessment can be both formal and informal and takes many forms; observation, tests, pupil/teacher dialogue, written or spoken tasks and teacher judgement. The result of the assessment process allows teachers to form next steps in your child's learning.

It is the authority's policy to also carry out standardised testing in literacy and numeracy at P1-P7. These results form part of the overall assessment information about your child. Information about your child's progress will be shared between home and school throughout the session. This will include parents' nights and an annual report. The aim of the annual report is to provide details of your child's strengths, development needs and attainment within Curriculum for Excellence. Parents and children are welcome to comment on the annual report.

Parents are welcome to contact their child's school at any time if they have any questions or concerns regarding their child's progress.

## 4.5 Support for Learning

Class teachers are continuously assessing the needs of pupils in their class. The authority provides access to Support for Learning staff and resources for pupils requiring additional support.

Should your child require additional support in a particular area you are invited to discuss this with the class teacher. We consult with parents and carers to ensure the needs of children are met. Each school follows the principles of the Scottish Government's policy of "Getting it Right for Every Child", for more information see the Scottish Government website.

This authority has a policy of inclusion. This promotes the placement into primary and secondary schools of pupils with significant needs. We consult with parents and carers to ensure the needs of children are met. Each school follows the principles of the Scottish Government's policy of "Getting it Right for Every Child", for more information see the Scottish Government website.

## Admission procedures

### 5.1 Admission Procedures

West Lothian is divided into catchment areas for primary and secondary schools. The catchment areas for all West Lothian Council schools are available online at [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

Each school is either denominational (linked to a particular religion) or non-denominational (not linked to any particular religion). All the denominational schools in West Lothian are Roman Catholic. Each home address has a catchment denominational school and a catchment non-denominational school, for both primary and secondary education.

The Pupil Placement section deals with all applications for pre-school and wraparound, and deals with applications for the August primary one (P1) and secondary one (S1) intakes. Schools deal with applications for other stages and for P1 and S1 after the pupils start school. To apply for a school, pre-school or wraparound place you must fill in an application form. You can get application forms from schools, nursery schools, libraries, Council Information Service Offices and from the Pupil Placement Section.

To contact the Pupil Placement Section e-mail [pupilplacement@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:pupilplacement@westlothian.gov.uk) or phone 01506 280000. Information is also available on the Council website [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

### 5.2 New Entrants to P1

You can apply for a P1 place from the November of the year before your child is due to start school, and the places are allocated in March of the same year that your child is due to start school.

You will be kept informed about transition arrangements for your child through newsletters, transition events, coffee mornings, open mornings and meetings.

### 5.3 Transfer from P7 to Secondary School

You can apply for an S1 place from the November of the year before your child is due to start secondary school. For more information on admission arrangements please see our website [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk) or contact the Pupil Placement Section [pupilplacement@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:pupilplacement@westlothian.gov.uk) or phone 01506 280000.

You will be kept informed about transition arrangements for your child through newsletters, transition events, coffee mornings, open mornings and meetings both in school and at the Academy.

### 5.4 Extra-Curricular Activities

#### **Breakfast Club**

Our Breakfast Club operates daily from 8.00am for parents who wish to use it. Pupils are offered cereal, toast and juice. Breakfast Club is free to all pupils. The children are supervised while they eat.

#### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Pupils are encouraged to take part in extracurricular activities. These after school clubs can be led by school staff but can, at times be organised by parents, specialist tutors or the Active School's Coordinator based at Armadale Academy. We are open to suggestions from the children for new clubs, to ensure a wide and varied provision.

## 6.1 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.

Please tell the school if your child needs medication. 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)

## 6.2 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.

Children will only be sent home early in special circumstances. 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 you may check the council website for information on any school closures.

All schools have a means of contacting parents and carers via text message.

### 6.3 Meals and Milk

All pupils of nursery schools and classes are entitled to 0.25 litres of milk daily free of charge. Children whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits may also receive milk free of charge. Milk is available to other primary pupils at a reduced cost.

The school dining area is organised as a self-service cafeteria. This area is supervised by members of staff. Children may have school meals regularly or on odd days when necessary. 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. The menu is available on the Council website. If your child has special dietary requirements, please let the school know.

All P1-P3 children, and P4-P7 children whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits, are entitled to free school meals. Other children can buy a school lunch.

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.

Further information and application forms for free school meals and milk can be obtained from the school or from the Council's website [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk).

### 6.4 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. The school welcomes parents and carers but asks them to help to ensure the security of the school by reporting to the school office. Pupils are not permitted to access the school from the front entrance without being escorted to the door by an adult. Pupils must come to the back door where the door can be opened by a member of staff.

## 6.5 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. All parents are asked to sign a consent form before any photographs are taken.

If you have any concerns about photography, please tell the school.

## 6.6 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)

## 6.7 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.

## 6.8 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.

A school bus is available for all pupils to use. Ten journey tickets are sold from the school office. The children are supervised homeward bound until seated on the bus and seatbelts are checked. For more information please contact the school office.

## 6.9 Car Park

In the interest of safety parents must not use the car park to access the school or to collect or drop off pupils. At no time should children be in the car park.

## 6.10 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.

## 6.11 Data Sharing

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.

## 6.12 Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

If you have feedback, 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:

Education Services West Lothian Council  
West Lothian Civic Centre Howden South Road  
Livingston, EH54 6FF  
Tel: 01506 281952

Educationcustomerservices@westlothian.gov.uk

The Complaints Policy and Procedures for Education & Cultural Services is available in booklet form on request or can be downloaded from the web at [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk)

**Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages.  
Please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service on 0131 242 8181.**

هذه المعلومات متوفرة بلغة بريل وعلى شريط وبخط كبير وبلغات الجالية.  
الرجاء الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على الهاتف 0131 242 8181

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ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ (ਬ੍ਰੇਲ) ਨਿਤਰੀਨ ਏ ਪੜ੍ਹਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਲਿਖੀ, ਟੇਪ, ਵੱਡੇ ਫਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀਆਂ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਫ਼ਿਰਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਅਤੇ ਟਰਾਂਸਲੇਸ਼ਨ ਸਰਵਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ : 0131 242 8181

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براہ مریابی انٹر پرائیٹنگ اینڈ ٹرانسلیٹنگ سروس سے ٹیلیفون نمبر 0131 242 8181 پر رابطہ قائم کریں۔