



EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Resources and People Services

John Muir House Handbook

(Appendix to School Handbook)

November 2021

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Communication

School Communication with Parents

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 amended the definition of "parent" in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to "Parent includes guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities in relation to, or has care of, a child or young person". Communication with parents can take many forms and has many purposes. Schools are supported by East Lothian Council to use a range of ways to ensure that all parents have the information that they need to support their own child's learning and to help them become involved in the life of the school.

Parents who no longer live together – Information

Effective communication between the school and parents is vital. This can sometimes be difficult when parents separate or divorce. If parents separate or divorce, both parents will normally retain parental rights and responsibilities in respect of their child, unless the court has specifically removed some or all of these. This will mean that in relation to placing requests, appeals against certain educational decisions and access to pupils' records both parents will normally have an equal right to be involved. It also means that parents who don't have residence of the child do not necessarily lose all rights to information and involvement in decision-making relating to their child. Other people such as grandparents may also be awarded certain parental responsibilities or rights by virtue of a court order.

Schools will therefore request the names and addresses of both parents at the time of enrolment and at the annual update of data. The parent/s with whom the pupil resides will automatically receive all communications from the school. If a parent lives away from the family home they will, when the school is first informed of their address, receive a Recorded Delivery letter enquiring whether or not they wish to receive information about their child's education. If no reply is received it will be assumed they do not wish to be kept informed and there will be no further communication unless a request for information is subsequently received. If they wish to be kept informed they will receive copies of all communications regarding the pupil including copies of reports and notification of Parents' Meetings. The parent with whom the pupil resides will be informed that this is happening.

The school is dependent on the parent with whom the pupil resides supplying the appropriate information i.e. the address of the parent not living in the family home, details of Court proceedings prohibiting that parent's involvement in the child's education or any other relevant documentation. Parents/Carers should note that children can only be collected from school by the parent with whom they reside unless the parent/carers have authorised an alternative arrangement. If someone else is to collect the pupil the school should be informed in advance.

School Ethos

Creating a Positive Ethos

Developing a positive relationships ethos in the classroom, playground and wider community is essential for creating the right environment for effective learning and teaching. Robust policies and procedures ensure a consistent approach to improving relationships and behaviour across the whole community. Everyone involved in the school and community has a critical part to play in establishing open, positive and supportive relationships to ensure the wellbeing of all.

Schools use a range of approaches to promote a positive school ethos such as, restorative approaches, initiatives that promote the UN Convention of the Rights for the Child and broad approaches to creating a Nurturing Environment within schools.

More information can be found from the Scottish Government's website on "*Improving relationships and promoting positive behaviour in Scotland's schools*" at [Developing a positive whole school ethos and culture: relationships, learning and behaviour - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2015/06/Developing_a_positive_whole_school_ethos_and_culture_relationships_learning_and_behaviour_-_gov.scot.pdf)

Respect for All – Promoting Positive and Respectful Relationships in All our Schools

East Lothian is committed to creating and sustaining a safe and nurturing environment in its Education and Early learning and Childcare Settings where respect is shown to and is given by all of its children, young people, staff and parents/carers.

Respect for All - Promoting Positive and Respectful Relationships in All our Schools has a role to ensure a consistent approach across East Lothian in line with the Scottish Government's National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People. All schools adhere to this one policy in relation to Anti-bullying issues.

Respect me (Scotland's Anti-bullying Service) offer a range of support and advice on matters pertaining including the following:

- Respectme website [respectme | Scotland's anti-bullying service](http://www.respectme.org.uk)
- Respectme videos [respectme Awareness raising videos](http://www.respectme.org.uk)
- Respectme resources including: Bullying – Guide for parents and carers; Addressing Inclusion; For children and young people: Bullying – what are my options?; Responding to Bullying – What are my options? [respectme Publications](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

Recognising and realising children's rights

The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](http://www.unhcr.org/refugees/article/43c47dad.html) is a comprehensive and internationally binding agreement on the rights of children. It is based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. A rights respecting school is an environment where children's rights are taught, observed, respected, protected and promoted. Our ambition is to ensure that every child and young person in our learning communities experiences this. A number of our schools are part of the [Rights Respecting Schools Award](http://www.respectme.org.uk) programme which guides schools through a journey of recognising children's rights with levels of awards from Bronze to Gold.

Parent Forum and Parent Council

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 encourages and supports more parents/carers to become involved in their children's education. The main aims of the Act are to:

- Help parents/carers become more involved with their child's education and learning.
- Welcome parents/carers as active participants in the life of the school.
- Provide easier ways for parents/carers to express their views and wishes.

All parents/carers are automatically members of the Parent Forum at their child's school and will be entitled to have their views represented to the school, education authority and others, through a representative Parent Council for the school. As a member of the Parent Forum, parents/carers will have a say in selecting their Parent Council (the representative body) to work on behalf of all parents/carers at the school.

The role of the Parent Council is to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils
- Represent the views of all parents/carers
- Encourage links between the school, parents/carers, providers of nursery education and the community
- Consult with and report back to the Parent Forum.
- Be represented on the Appointment Panel to select a new Head Teacher or Depute Header Teacher

East Lothian Council's Parental Engagement Strategy 2017 aims to ensure that all parents and carers are encouraged and supported by all school staff to engage as partners in their children's learning and to become involved in the life of the school, with parents and young people being given the opportunity to influence and shape education policy. All schools and local authorities are required to report on its work to promote and improve Parental Engagement as part of the National Improvement Framework annual planning and reporting cycle. Parental engagement will also be a key focus of any Education Scotland Inspection/Care Inspectorate Inspection, School Review visits and East Lothian Annual Parental Engagement Consultation.

The Parental Engagement Strategy and further information on Parent Councils can be found at [Parental Involvement Act 2006 | Parental Involvement | East Lothian Council](#)

For more information on the Parental Involvement Act or to find out about Parents as Partners in their children's learning contact the school or e-mail parentcouncil@eastlothian.gov.uk or view the Parentzone website [Parentzone Scotland | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Head Teachers now have a legal obligation to consult with their Parent Council to establish what they would like included in the School Handbook and ensure it is incorporated. Discussions should take place at Parent Council meetings and any decisions taken must be reflected in the school handbook.

National Parent Forum of Scotland

Parent Councils across Scotland have nominated people to represent their local authority area as members of the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS). The NPFS was set up to give Parent Councils and parents an opportunity to discuss and raise educational issues of mutual interest or concerns at a national level. The Forum works in partnership with national and local government and other organisations involved in education and wellbeing issues to represent parents, with the aim of helping every pupil maximise his/her potential.

Connect

Connect is the national support organisation for Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Parent Councils (PCs) in Scotland and runs an independent helpline service for all parents. You can contact Connect via their website [Home :: Connect](#) or e-mail info@connect.scot. East Lothian Council takes out an annual membership with Connect for their Parent Councils and this membership provides public liability insurance.

East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members

This Association meets on line and have a question and answer briefing around once per term on topical education matters. A representative is invited to attend from every Parent Council. Local and national matters are discussed and views and feedback are sought on a range of issues from parents/carers. The Head of Education & Children's Services and the Parental Involvement Officer attend these meetings and other Education Managers are invited to attend if appropriate. The Convenor for Education or deputy also attend. Parent members also meet informally to share good practice and ideas for engaging and involving parents within the school communities.

Parentzone Scotland

Parentzone Scotland is a one-stop shop website for information and advice on education and learning in Scotland. The website continues to be updated and improved and can be accessed [here](#). Why not check out the website for ideas on how you can support your child's learning.

The Curriculum

Curriculum for Excellence

Schools follow the principles and practice of Curriculum for Excellence. This 3-18 curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils will be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. These four main aims are referred to as the Four Capacities and underpin the work that schools do. Curriculum for Excellence comprises 8 curricular areas consisting of: Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Languages (including English, Gaelic, Classic and Modern Languages), Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies and Technologies.

The curriculum is expressed in learning experiences and outcomes for learners. The principles of challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance inform the learning of all pupils. All pupils will be encouraged at all stages to think about why they are learning a particular topic and how associated skills can be used in real life and in other areas across the curriculum. All pupils are engaged with teachers in planning and assessing aspects of learning and often have the choice of topics and ways to present their learning. Whilst there are eight subject areas learning will often be linked across subject areas to help children apply their knowledge and skills in new and different situations.

Further information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found at:

[Parentzone Scotland | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](http://parentzone.scotland.nhs.uk)

Other areas which can facilitate enhanced learning opportunities for pupils include:

- Instrumental Music Tuition
- Drama provision/Theatre
- Educational visits in museums/projects
- Study Support and After School Activities
- Sport
- School Library Service

Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education is provided to schools through the East Lothian Outdoor Learning Service based in Musselburgh. The Outdoor Learning Service provides high quality, safe and sustainable outdoor learning opportunities. The service promotes progressive experiential learning and the benefits of healthy lifestyles. It responds to the needs of East Lothian schools and the wider community, delivering outdoor learning in an effective, inspirational and motivating manner.

Educational Excursions

Educational Excursions are designed and planned in accordance with the East Lothian Council's comprehensive Guidelines.

Religious Observance

Religious Observance provides opportunities for the school community to reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual, and their contribution to the school and wider communities.

There is, however, a statutory provision in section 9 of the 1980 Act for parents to withdraw their children from participation in religious observance. This right should always be made known to parents and their views respected. Parents should be provided with sufficient information on which to base a decision about exercising this right.

The Scottish Government considers that Religious Observance complements other aspects of a pupil's learning and is an important contribution to pupils' development. It has an important part to play in the development of the learner's four capacities: a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor. It should also have a role in promoting the ethos of a school by bringing pupils together and creating a sense of community. Schools are therefore encouraged to inform parents of this without applying pressure to change their minds.

There is no equivalent statutory right to withdraw afforded to children and young people. However schools should include children and young people in any discussions about aspects of their school experience, ensuring their views are taken into account. Doing so is in line with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and is especially relevant as children and young people become older and take more responsibility for their own learning.

Where a parent chooses a denominational school for their child's education, they choose to opt in to the school's ethos and practice which is imbued with religious faith and religious observance. In denominational schools, it is therefore more difficult to extricate a pupil from all experiences which are influenced by the school's faith character.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from religious observance, schools should make suitable arrangements for the pupil to participate in a worthwhile alternative activity. In no circumstances should a pupil be disadvantaged as a result of withdrawing from religious observance.

Read, Write, Count Programme

The Read, Write, Count Programme aims to support parental engagement in literacy and numeracy. Gift bags are distributed annually to all P2 and P3 pupils in Scotland by Scottish Book Trust. The gift bags contain essential literacy and numeracy materials to support children's learning, as well as advice and support to parents. Studies show a direct link between a strong family learning environment and progress in reading, writing and counting. In addition to the parent guide included in the gift bags, the Parent Club [website](#) offers a range of hints, tips and advice to help parents engage in their child's learning.

First Minister's Reading Challenge

The First Minister's Reading Challenge is an inclusive, exciting programme for all children – fostering a love of reading for pleasure. Research shows that reading for pleasure is crucially important for children's development. The Challenge is open to all local authority and independent primary and secondary schools across Scotland, as well as, libraries and community groups. You can find out more information on the Challenge and also how schools can register to take part [here](#). A reading app called Bookzilla, aimed at S1-S3 pupils, helps them find and recommend books and to set themselves reading challenges.

Instrumental Music Service

East Lothian Instrumental Music Service currently employs 19 highly qualified Instrumental Instructors and provides Instrumental tuition to pupils in both primary and secondary schools across the authority. Pupils are offered the opportunity to learn brass, woodwind, strings, percussion, piano, guitar and pipes with our experienced and inspiring Instructors. As it is not possible for us to offer every instrument in every school, we have carefully balanced our provision across the authority to ensure positive destinations for our young people within our musical ensembles.

Approximately 1250 pupils enjoy weekly lessons with the music service and all tuition is offered from Primary 4 onwards, with the exception of percussion tuition, which starts from S1. The service aims to:

- provide equal opportunities of access for all pupils to experience the expressive and creative qualities of music through learning to play an instrument
- to help as many pupils as possible to realise their full musical potential through the playing of an instrument

For further information and to register for lessons please visit

[Instrumental Music Service | Instrumental Music Service | East Lothian Council](#)

Assessment and Reporting

What is meant by assessment?

Assessment is carried out to see what children and young people know, understand and are able to do. Assessment is very important for tracking progress, planning next steps, reporting and involving parents, children and young people in learning.

Assessment covers:

- The ways teachers support and assess children's learning and monitor progress and identify next steps in learning.
- Reporting to parents/carers, in writing and in discussions, to help them understand their child's progress and what they can do to help their child's learning.
- Formal recognition of a child or young person's achievements through profiles and qualifications.
- Recognising our children's achievements through a range of new qualifications in the senior school, which build on everything they have accomplished throughout their schooling.

What is assessed?

Assessment is a way of supporting learning. It helps teachers, learners, parents and others to understand the depth and breadth of learning undertaken so that progress and next steps can be discussed and planned.

There are eight curriculum areas (containing a range of subjects). Each curriculum area is broken down into a set of experiences and outcomes (often referred to as Es and Os):

- The **Experience** describes the learning
- The **Outcome** represents what the learning will achieve. This is often explained, from the pupil's perspective as an 'I can....', 'I am able to....'

Teachers will assess what children know, understand and are able to do within the experiences and outcomes. Teachers will assess each learner's progress and achievements in:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Skills
- Attributes and capabilities

There are also three key areas which are covered by all teachers/practitioners:

- Literacy across learning
- Numeracy across learning
- Health and wellbeing across learning

Reporting across East Lothian Schools

East Lothian Council is committed to providing you with information about your child's progress and achievements, including their next steps in learning, to support your involvement in their education and learning. This information will include the latest Curriculum for Excellence level achieved in literacy and numeracy. Head Teachers and staff will include this information within the school's current arrangements for reporting on your child's progress and achievements in literacy and in numeracy.

How are we assessing?

Your child's progress is not only based on 'tests' but on the learning that takes place within the classroom and in different settings out with the classroom.

Evidence of children and young people's progress and achievements will come from day to day learning and through the things they may write, say, make or do. For example, evidence may emerge as a result of children and young people taking part in a presentation, discussion, performance or practical investigation. Evidence could also be a drawing, report, or piece of art work that they have produced. Evidence may be captured as a photograph, video or audio clip as part of a particular learning experience.

Gathering evidence

Evidence of progress and achievement can be gathered by:

- Children and young people through self-assessment. They will be encouraged and supported to look at and revisit their own work, to develop a better understanding of what they have learned, and what they need to work on.
- Fellow pupils (peers) through peer assessment. Children and young people will be encouraged and supported to work together with others to assess what is good about their work and what needs to be worked on.
- Teachers, parents and others who can help identify and support their next steps in learning.

How do teachers report on your child's progress?

Progress is now defined as "how much" and "how well" your child is learning, and not solely on "how fast" although pace is still important. The curriculum is designed to enable your child to achieve greater breadth and depth of learning whilst also securing the development of skills and knowledge.

There is a range of ways in which your child's teacher reports on his/her progress. Here are a few examples:

- "Learning Stories" are used to build a picture of progression for your child in each curricular area.
- Reporting is used to sum up your child's progress in learning across the curriculum. This can be done in a variety of ways including parent/pupil consultations, short regular reports, learning journals, end of year reports.
- E-portfolios are used to provide ongoing evidence of your child's progress.

All learning is a journey of progress, which is rarely linear and takes many routes and pathways. Your child may take longer to progress in some areas in order to ensure the security that will enable them to make progress confidently. Teachers will report also on your child's effort and also on the level of support given.

When do schools assess?

As part of ongoing learning - Children and young people's progress, strengths and needs are assessed as part of day-to-day learning and teaching. Teachers and others do this by, for example, watching and listening to learners carrying out tasks, by looking at what they write or make and by considering how they answer questions. Children and young people will be involved in planning their next steps in learning.

Time to time (periodically) - From time to time, teachers will assess children and young people's progress and achievements in order to be able to plan ahead and to record and report on progress. This will help to ensure that their progress is on track and that any necessary action is taken to support their learning.

At key points, transitions - Transitions are the moves children and young people make, from home to early learning and childcare settings, from stage to stage (and through Curriculum for Excellence levels) from primary to secondary, to further or higher education and employment. Sharing of assessment information with parents is important to ensure all learners are supported and have a positive experience. Information about a learner's progress and achievements will be passed on to make sure that their broad general education and senior phase continue uninterrupted at the correct level and at an appropriate pace for them.

Where can I find out more information about assessment and reporting? - Your child's school will be able to provide you with more information on how they carry out specific assessments and how they report on your child's progress.

Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA)

All our schools use Scottish National Standardised Assessment to support professional judgement about pupil's progress in literacy and numeracy. These assessments are used in conjunction with other assessment activities and the resulting data is not used in isolation to determine the pupil's knowledge, skills and ability. These assessments take place in P1, P4, P7 and S3.

Transitions

Enrolment

We have produced a booklet describing the procedures for enrolling children in primary and secondary schools in East Lothian.

The booklet is in four sections.

- general information (for example, the law, catchment areas, Catholic Education, children with additional support needs, transport)
- enrolling your child in a school
- placing requests
- what happens when you make a placing request

The booklet can be found at - [Enrolling your child in school | Enrolling your child in school | East Lothian Council](#)

School Catchment

Every school has a catchment area; each catchment area has clear boundaries. Children living in the catchment area are given priority for places in this school. Entitlement to a place in a school is based on home address and **not** on attendance at an associated school or nursery class. In some areas there are separate Catholic schools available for parents wishing their child to be educated in this type of school. Children living in the catchment area and baptised in the Catholic faith are given priority for places in this school. Each primary school in East Lothian feeds into a corresponding secondary school. The boundary lines for each primary and secondary school catchment area in East Lothian for the most remain so since circa 1980's, and were originally recorded on printed copies of A-Z street maps and Ordnance Survey Maps. To improve accessibility of information, each school catchment area map was re-digitised for public use on the East Lothian Council's website, as approved by Education Committee in May 2011. There are no catchment boundaries for nursery provision.

The catchment boundary lines are available to view via: [School Catchments | School Catchments | East Lothian Council](#)

Placing Requests

Parents have the right to express a preference for a particular school that they want their child to attend. This is normally done by completing a non-catchment placing request application form. Application forms are available via the East Lothian Council website: [Enrolling your child in school | Enrolling your child in school | East Lothian Council](#)

While most requests are granted, in certain cases this is not possible for various reasons. Any reason for refusal of the placing request will be explained at that stage. Once a pupil has been offered a place, the offer will not be withdrawn unless the place was obtained on the basis of false information.

Reserved Places/Roll Capping in Schools

The Education Service obtains information on the migration of pupils to inform where we may need to reserve places for incoming catchment pupils. Reserving places is crucial in areas where there are high levels of house build or high migration into catchment. This also informs whether it will be necessary to roll cap certain stages within a school or the whole school to maximum number.

The Senior Phase – Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce

The Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce was set up in January 2013 to provide recommendations to Scottish Ministers on how Scotland’s approach to vocational education and training could be improved, and how the Scottish Government could get more employers involved in all aspects of education and employing more young people.

In June 2014, the Commission published its final report entitled “Education Working for All” which sets out 39 recommendations.

Many of these recommendations are of relevance to school-age young people, including that:

- Preparing all young people for employment should form a core element of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Senior phase pathways should include industry-recognised vocational qualifications alongside academic qualifications.

Curriculum for Excellence, as a whole, is about providing learners with the range of learning pathways that meet their individual needs and aspirations and prepare them for learning, life and work. The Commission’s recommendations sit well with these aims and will be taken forward within the context of Curriculum for Excellence in schools, building on the wide range of work that schools and their partners are already doing in this area.

Support for Pupils

Inclusion and Equality

East Lothian Council will meet the needs of children and young people who experience barriers to learning as a result of additional support needs, disability or factors impacting on their wellbeing.

The legislative and policy landscape includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The *Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004* (and subsequent amendment in 2009) outlines the concept of Additional Support Needs and the functions and duties that are placed on education authorities to identify and support those needs.
- The *Children (Scotland) Act 1995* represented a fundamental shift in emphasis from parents having rights over children to the principle that parents have responsibilities towards their children. The Act also made it essential that local authorities, NHS Health Boards and all professionals and agencies work in collaboration to provide integrated services for children and families.
- The *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 2000* requires education authorities to provide education for all children in mainstream schools, except under certain circumstances. In addition, it placed a new duty: to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential and to involve them in decisions, which will affect them significantly.
- The *Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil Records) (Scotland) Act 2002* requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for the needs of disabled children and ensure they must not discriminate against disabled children. The Education Authority must prepare and implement an accessibility strategy to increase the access of its disabled pupils to the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, to school buildings and to information.
- *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice (third edition) 2017* explains the duties placed on Education Authorities and other agencies to support children and young people's learning. It provides guidance on the ASL Act's provisions as well as on the supporting framework of secondary legislation.
- The *Equality Act (2010)* simplified and strengthened previous protections for children and young people with 'protected characteristics' (e.g. age, race, disability and sexual orientation) from discrimination. This strengthened inclusion in education, including school trips and activities, for all children and young people regardless of their additional support needs or disability.
- The *Children and Young People Act (2014)* has wide reaching powers to promote the Scottish Government's aims to encourage effective and targeted services for children and families as well as the promotion of children's rights. Through the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) National Practice Model, the Act promotes cross-boundary models of service delivery to make best use of expertise and resources in an integrated way with the wellbeing of children

and young people being paramount. The wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included, collectively known as SHANARRI) ensures that a holistic approach is taken to ensure the wellbeing of all children and young people. The Act also introduced increased provision of early learning and childcare and a range of corporate parenting responsibilities to promote the wellbeing of children and young people in care.

- *The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016* (implemented in April 2018) states that each Local Authority has a duty to prepare an overarching young carer statement plus prepare for each young carer an individual statement which identifies personal outcomes, identified needs and any support to be provided to meet those needs.

Taken together these frameworks require Education Authorities to consider a wide range of issues facing children and young people and put in place processes and supports to:

- Identify and provide support to allow children and young people to overcome any barriers to learning and reach their full potential
- Prevent discrimination of pupils with disabilities/ protected characteristics and provide reasonable adjustments to ensure equality of opportunity in learning
- Plan for accessibility of the curriculum, school information and physical access
- Consider the wellbeing of children and young people

The following East Lothian Council policies and procedures outline the way in which the above legislative requirements are met:

- Child's Planning Framework guidance (2017)
- The Handbook of Procedures for the Management of Pupils with Healthcare Needs in Educational Establishments (2017)
- Admission to Specialist Educational Provision guidance (2017)
- Allocation of Resources to Support Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs (2017)
- Accessibility Strategy (2015-2020)
- Included Engaged – Positive Approach to preventing and managing school exclusions
- Included Engaged – Assessing and providing for ASN for children and young people
- Included Engaged – Managing distressed and challenging behaviour
- Supporting Transgender Pupils In Schools Guidance for Scottish Schools (August 2021)
- Respect for All - (ELC anti-bullying policy)

Information is available from Resources and People Services, Business Unit, John Muir House, Haddington, East Lothian, EH41 3HA.

Further information can be found at:

[Schools and learning | East Lothian Council](#)

East Lothian Educational Psychology Service

Educational Psychologists are part of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Service within Education. Educational Psychologists have a postgraduate qualification in Educational Psychology, either a Master's or a Doctorate. They follow professional standards as determined by the [British Psychological Society](#) and the [Health and Care Professionals Council](#). They use their knowledge of psychology, child development, learning and educational systems to remove barriers to learning and wellbeing for children and young people.

East Lothian Council schools and nurseries have a link Educational Psychologist who supports them in meeting the needs of a wide range of children and young people through regular visits of allocated time. The visit times are managed by the link Educational Psychologist and the school link person, ensuring prioritisation of need and efficient use of time.

If you have any concerns about how your child is getting on at school, the first thing to do is share them with school staff. If staff feel that an Educational Psychologist may be able to help, the school will work with you to make a request for assistance. Parents and carers will be asked to consent to this process. In most situations where a young person is aged 12 years or over their consent will be required before an Educational Psychologist would progress a request for assistance.

On receiving the request for assistance the Educational Psychologist will discuss this with the relevant member of staff and agree a timescale for a response. A consultation will then be offered to explore concerns and agree on immediate strategies to help improve things for your child or young person. If it is agreed that further work is required (such as observation in class, assessment of learning, longer term consultation or attendance at a meeting e.g. child planning meeting), this will be agreed as an outcome of the consultation process.

Educational Psychologists work collaboratively with other professionals, parents and carers, to help children and young people overcome barriers to learning. They support school staff to enhance learning environments, to ensure they are effective for all children and young people, whatever their learning needs.

You are also welcome to contact the Educational Psychology Service directly:
Educational Psychology Service, John Muir House, Haddington, East Lothian
EH41 3HA

Email: educationalpsychologyservice@eastlothian.gov.uk

Further information can be found at:

[The role of an educational psychologist | Educational Psychology Service | East Lothian Council](#)

Support for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Support for mental health and wellbeing can be accessed through the **Single Point of Access (SPA)**. This is an additional level of support and intervention for children and young people, where specific need has been identified, usually through the Child's Planning Process. The SPA is managed by the **Mental Health and Wellbeing Team**. Referrals to SPA are made through a **Request for Assistance**. Any professional

involved with a young person can make a referral. All referrals are considered by a multi-agency triage group, which meets regularly. The group can give advice and will match the young person with the most appropriate support. There is an expectation that universal supports through school should be put in place before referral for additional support is made.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Team comprises a Team Coordinator, Mental Health Youth Workers and Occupational Therapists. The team is able to offer flexible support to children and young people, using a range of approaches. The team is also available for consultation and can offer training for school staff. There is a Mental Health Youth Worker based in each of the secondary schools across the authority and they are the link worker for their school cluster.

Additional services available through Single Access Point

- Bereavement Support
- Onward referral to CAMHS or Social Work
- Art and Music Therapy
- Referral to linked third sector organisation, for services such as social support, befriending and outdoor activities.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Team have developed an excellent website which provides information and links to support for children, young people and families. We would suggest that schools use this as an initial form of advice and guidance. Please find the link below:

Long link - <https://sites.google.com/edubuzz.org/mhwb-information-point/home>

Short link – <http://links.edubuzz.org/mhwb-info>

Additional Support available

Sometimes a young person may require some help or support from staff out with the school environment. Schools can call on professionals from a number of different agencies/services for help and advice to meet the needs of individuals. This can be from within East Lothian Council or wider, and can include Educational Psychologists, officers with the Education Services, School Nursing Service, Skills Development Scotland careers advisers, Children and Family workers (social workers or Family Support workers), Third Sector agencies or NHS allied health professionals.

Information sharing with these services is necessary in certain circumstances in order for East Lothian Council to carry out duties related to its Public Task. In any circumstances where information sharing does not fall within the “Public Task” requirement, consent will be sought from parents/carers and the young person in compliance with procedures outlined in the Data Protection Act. If a young person is over the age of 12 and has the capacity to do so, they may give their consent without that of their parents. Where appropriate, the consent to share should be recorded by the professional. Additionally, there are situations where if consent to share has not been given and the professional believes that in not sharing the child could be at risk or further risk of harm, then information can be shared. The reason for sharing should be discussed with the parent/carer and child or young person and be recorded with the reasons for sharing. (See paragraph below). If parents are concerned about this they should contact the school for further information.

Exceptional circumstances in which information may be disclosed without consent

In addition to situations where information is required to be shared in order for East Lothian Council to satisfy its Public Task duties, disclosure of personal information without consent may be justified where failure to do so may expose the service-user or others to risk of serious harm. Staff should always make every effort to gain consent but the health and safety of the individual has primacy over the right to confidentiality.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Child Protection: staff should adhere to the Edinburgh and Lothians Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures.
- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Life threatening or dangerous situations, for example, where a young person:
 - shows signs of physical, emotional or sexual damage
 - is at risk of significant harm or threatening suicide.

Child Protection

The East and Midlothian Child Protection Committee (EMCPC) is the key group dealing with child protection work in East Lothian and Midlothian. Child abuse can happen to any child and in any family background. We all have a duty to protect children, whether we are professionals or private individuals.

If you think a child is being abused or neglected, speak to a member staff at the child's school, the Children's Services duty social worker by calling 01875-824090 (Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm and Fri 9am-4pm), the Emergency Social Work Service by calling 0800 7316969 at any time outside normal office hours. The contact details are Children's Wellbeing, Randall House, Macmerry, EH33 1RW, Tel 01875 824309 E-mail: childrenandfamilies@eastlothian.gov.uk The Procedures promote a high level of inter-agency co-operation when working with children who may be in need of protection. Training is available for all staff in East Lothian Council to ensure that their skill and commitment is used effectively in identifying and protecting children who have been abused or may be at risk of abuse. The Procedures will further encourage the partnership that exists between the Resources and People Services, Health and the Police in East Lothian and will help towards building a partnership with parents in carrying out our duties and responsibilities to East Lothian children and young people.

Further information can be found at: [Social care and health | East Lothian Council](#)

Children and Young People who are Care Experienced

There are some young people who are care experienced because they are the subject of a compulsory supervision order within the Children's Hearing system, sometimes known as 'Looked After young people'. These young people may have additional support needs as set out in the Education (Additional Support for Learning Act) (Scotland) 2004 (amended 2009). There are other young people who are care experienced because they are in kinship care, adopted or were previously 'Looked After'. East Lothian Council schools have a Designated Manager for Care Experience in each school, who is aware of the care experienced young people in their setting and the supports and strategies which may be required to meet their diverse needs.

School Improvement

The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act (2000) requires that every local authority aims to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them. As part of East Lothian Council's legislative duty to ensure that schools are supported in improving standards for pupils, a rolling programme of school reviews are carried out each year. These visits involve staff from across the service including Quality Improvement Officers, Head Teachers, Early Years Officers and Educational Psychologists. By focusing on improvements in performance during these visits, schools are supported in ensuring high standards are achieved and maintained.

The Role of Quality Improvement Service

At present three Quality Improvement Officers who have responsibility for support and challenge across all East Lothian schools. In addition, we have one Quality Improvement Officer who works across the South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC). Responsibilities to individual schools include:-

- Provide support pre, during and post Education Scotland Inspection
- Support and monitor development planning ensuring links to How Good Is Our School? How good is our Early Learning and Childcare, The National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare Providers and Service Improvement Framework outcomes
- Provide advice on staffing/finance/resources issues
- Support development/progression of Curriculum for Excellence
- Analyse and use data to challenge schools to raise attainment and achievement
- Participate in the appointment of senior members of school based staff
- Provide support in the resolution of disciplinary matters; complaints; and other school based issues
- Devise and promote strategies to address areas where performance should be improved; monitor and report on progress
- Undertake review visits to schools and provide reports as appropriate.

Two Quality Improvement Officers each have 3 clusters of schools within their remits

- 1) Dunbar, Tranent & Prestonpans
- 2) Haddington, Musselburgh & North Berwick

One other Quality Improvement Officer has the overall responsibility for Early Years across all Early Learning and Childcare provisions and partnership settings.

Other important elements within the Quality Improvement Service role include:

- Monitoring of children who are home educated
- Parental complaints and Freedom of Information Requests
- Reporting to Scottish Government, Education Scotland
- Managing Local Authority educational developments, e.g. Leadership Development, Assessment & Moderation
- Involved in the recruitment process at school level and Depute Head Teacher level.

Local Authority Policies and Practical Information

Composite Classes

Composite classes are formed in the majority of East Lothian primary schools. A composite class is one in which pupils from 2 or more year groups are taught together. The number of pupils in a composite class should be no more than 25. Composite classes are based primarily on pupil age. For example a P3/4 class would have the oldest pupils in P3 and the youngest pupils in P4. The only other factors considered are if a child has severe/ complex needs and the physical size of the classroom. All classes, whether composite or not, contain pupils of different abilities and levels of development. Teachers use a variety of methods, for example, small group teaching and individualised learning to ensure that the differing abilities of all children are met. Further information can be found at:

[School enrolment information | East Lothian Council](#)

Absence and Attendance

East Lothian Council recognise the cumulative impact that poor attendance has on a child or young person's learning and wellbeing. Poor attendance has been linked to lower levels of attainment; peer relationships; emotional and behavioural difficulties and poorer employment opportunities. Low levels of attendance can also be linked to how connected children and young people feel to their school community.

Absenteeism can cause children and young people to feel a greater sense of isolation from their peers, teachers and schools which may result in being more socially withdrawn when returning to school. East Lothian Council ensures early intervention and support when there are concerns about a child or young person's school attendance. When a child or young person's attendance falls below **90% in a four week period** and there are no mitigating factors schools, exercising professional judgement, should instigate a process of intervention and associated supports. Further information can be found at: [Schools and learning | East Lothian Council](#)

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is aimed at making sure every child and young person is able to access appropriate support in order ensure their wellbeing allows them to develop into healthy young adults. The principles and values of Getting It Right for Every Child are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ensuring each child is safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included ensures that a holistic approach is taken to ensure the wellbeing of all children and young people. The Act also introduced increased provision of early learning and childcare and a range of corporate parenting responsibilities to promote the wellbeing of children and young people in care.

East Lothian Council's use of Pupil Data

The personal information East Lothian Council needs to collect on your child/children is required to secure the safety and welfare of every child of school age and ensure that their education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential

The information is stored and processed electronically. The data is processed because we have a legal obligation to do so, and is done so in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For more information about how and why we use personal data, please visit [Education Privacy Notice - Education Management Information Data | East Lothian Council](#)

Scottish Government Statutory Returns

The Scottish Government have legal powers to request data with regards all children and young people being educated in Scotland's schools which schools, local authorities, awarding bodies (such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority) and other public bodies (such as Skills Development Scotland) hold for their own purposes.

The Scottish Government need this information in order to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils, or specific groups
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- conduct teacher workforce planning
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of people in Scotland
- provide a window on society, the economy and on the work and performance of government by publishing statistical publications and additional tables about School Education and providing school level information.

For more information on the collection and processing of your child's/children's personal data by the Scottish Government, please visit [Scottish Exchange of Data: privacy Information - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) and select the Privacy Notice titled "EAS Learning Analysis Unit - Privacy Notice for parents".

Consulting with pupils

Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 the views of children should be taken into account when major decisions are being made which will affect their lives. Generally children over 12 are presumed in law to have a view but younger children may also be mature enough to have a view and should be given the opportunity to express it. Children over 12 should be asked for consent to share confidential information. While the Local Authority and schools may not be bound by this they do consult with pupils and the methods used will be included in the School's handbook. This could include formal consultation through Pupil Councils, pupils co-opted to Parent Councils, questionnaires, suggestion boxes, review and planning meetings, as well as arrangements to consult with individual pupils at appropriate times subject choice, exclusions etc.

Exclusion of pupils

Exclusion from school is used on occasions when the safety of the pupil concerned or others is at risk if the pupil remains in school. Exclusion should be the last resort, it should be as short as possible and always have a positive, purposeful intention for the learning and wellbeing of the child or young person and should not be viewed as punitive. Schools will follow the 'Included Engaged – A positive approach to preventing and managing school exclusions policy'.

Assistance with Provision of School Clothing

East Lothian Council operates a scheme of provision to ensure that a pupil is sufficiently and suitably clad to take full advantage of the education provided. Families in receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseekers Allowance or

Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Child Tax Credit but NOT Working Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,105, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £7,550 or Universal Credits with a monthly take home pay below £625 will qualify for such a scheme. Other cases may be considered in the case of exceptional personal circumstances. Parents who wish to apply for the scheme should complete an online application form and further information is available at [Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants | East Lothian Council](#)

Free School Meals

Under the Education Committee policy, children in attendance at schools under the management of the Council are entitled to free school meals if their parents are in receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseekers Allowance or Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Child Tax Credit but NOT Working Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,105, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £7,550 or Universal Credits with a monthly take home pay below £625. No other children are eligible for free meals. Parents who wish to apply for Free School Meals should complete an online application form which is available at [Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants | East Lothian Council](#)

Free School Meal (Primary 1, 2, 3 and 4)

All pupils in Primary 1, 2, 3 and 4 are entitled to a free school meal (but not free school milk). People receiving the following benefits should continue to complete a Free School Meal Application Form to ensure they are not charged for school milk.

- Income support/Income based job seekers allowance
- Employment support allowance (income related)
- Child tax credit but NOT working tax credit with an annual income less than £16,105
- Child tax credit AND working tax credit with an annual income less than £7,550
- Universal Credit with a monthly take home pay below £625

Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs)

Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) have been available since August 2004 for young people aged between 16 and 19 who are considering remaining in education in school. It is a fortnightly payment of £30.00 per week paid directly to the pupil where the pupil's household income meets the qualifying criteria. Further information and Application Forms are available on line [Are you eligible for an Education Maintenance Allowance | Education Maintenance Allowance | East Lothian Council](#) or by emailing emas@eastlothian.gov.uk

Employment of Children

Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the bye-laws on the Employment of Children. These regulations do not permit the employment of children under 13 years of age, and for those over the age there are limits on the hours and type of employment which are allowed. Parents and employers **must** both complete an application form for an employment permit before the employment begins. Forms and information are available from the school office.

Home Education

Parents can choose to home educate their child if they can provide an efficient education suited to their age, abilities and aptitudes as laid out in the Scottish Government's [Home education guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

There are many reasons why parents may choose to home educate. These include:

- a wish to follow a particular educational or ideological philosophy
- religious or cultural beliefs
- dissatisfaction with the education system
- a child's reluctance to go to school
- a child's problems when at school (e.g. bullying)
- geographical - due to remoteness or needing mobility for work
- a wish to deal with a child's additional support needs in a particular way
- as a short-term intervention for a particular reason.

For information can be found at:

[Thinking about home educating your child? | Home education | East Lothian Council](#)

Transport: Policy of the Council and Local Arrangements

The Council's current policy is to provide home to school transport for those pupils attending the catchment school who live more than two miles from that school. Bus passes are issued where public transport exists and contract transport is arranged where there is no suitable public transport. Where there are vacant seats on contract buses, these may be made available to pupils who are not normally entitled to free transport on a "grace and favour basis" but must be applied for each session. These can be withdrawn should the seat be required for pupils who qualify for this provision. Parents who choose to send their children to a school other than the catchment school will not receive assistance in relation to travel to and from school. Further information can be found at:

[Home to school transport | Home to school transport | East Lothian Council](#)

Road Safety

East Lothian Council working with Police Scotland and other agencies are committed to reducing the numbers and severity of road casualties. They have identified a number of important initiatives to help reduce the number of road casualties. These will require a notable change of behaviour by everybody, particularly from drivers in built-up areas.

These initiatives aim to reduce the number of car journeys to and from school by pupils, parents and staff to:

- Encourage children to walk or cycle to school, thereby improving the safety for the pupil on the journey to school
- Provide pupils and parents with appropriate training to allow them and their children to journey to and from school safely
- Improve pedestrian safety in and around school
- Raise awareness amongst pupils, parents, and staff of the wider health and environmental problems associated with increase car use
- Improve the local environment for everyone by reducing pollution, congestion and addressing safety issues around the school.

Parents should always be reviewing their current or intended mode of travel to and from school and consider whether or not it should be changed or modified to help the school, pupils, staff and other parents to reduce the number of child casualties.

Health and Safety

Resources and People Services have prepared statements of safety policy for all areas of its responsibility in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. School staff are fully instructed in their responsibilities in this respect, and safety regulations apply to 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 great importance to the school.

Medical Care - Throughout their years at primary and secondary school, pupils will be seen from time to time by a team of specialists from the School Health Service to make sure they benefit as much as possible from all that school has to offer, and to help them prepare for life after leaving school. The School Health Service is part of the Community Child Health Service and has direct links with those who carry out health checks on children before they start school.

Administration of Medical Procedures - Apart from a few exceptions, all areas of the school curriculum, including school camps should be accessible to pupils with healthcare needs. Forward planning may be required to accommodate needs. Advice can be sought from the Head Teacher and the School Health Service. All members of staff should follow the East Lothian Handbook of Procedures for the Management of Pupils with Healthcare Needs in Educational Establishments and in doing so will be covered by East Lothian Council's Public Liability Policy.

Emergency Closure of Schools

The first priority of the Head Teacher must be to keep the school open if at all possible. However, the early closure (or part closure) of a school in an emergency may be required because of fire, flood, loss of building services, extreme weather conditions or some other event. When children have to return from school at a time earlier than normal, parents may not be able to arrange for them to be received at home by themselves or by an adult who will look after them. Head Teachers must be reasonably satisfied that there will be a responsible adult available to receive the child, and must be prepared to make arrangements for the supervision of certain children in school, until the normal closing time of the school. In these circumstances, the Head Teacher should consult with the Head of Education. The Head of Education will use all of the information available both centrally and locally to decide whether the school should be closed and whether this would be for pupils only or for the whole school community. It should be noted that close contact will be maintained with the Transport Officer at East Lothian Council.

The Head Teacher will prepare and send to the Head of Education the relevant information for notifying the media, through the Corporate Communications Team of East Lothian Council. This information should include the name of the school which is closing, whether it is a partial or whole school closure, i.e. to pupils; pupils and staff; community groups and the reason why the school is closing. Information will also be required on how long the closure will be and how the media, parents, carers and pupils will be informed when the school will be reopening. Once approval has been granted to close a school, Resources and People Services will notify the Corporate Communications Team to ask them to inform the media and upload messages to the Council's communications channels, such as its Twitter, the Council's Facebook page, and the Council's website [East Lothian Council Homepage](#). Whenever possible, schools will update their own school website with information.

Complaints Procedures

Most complaints can and should be resolved at school level. If you have cause for concern, the first person to approach will normally be the Head Teacher. If a meeting is required with the Class or Guidance Teacher, Head Teacher or another senior member of staff then this should be arranged as quickly as possible. If you still remain dissatisfied then the procedures contained within “How to make a comment, compliment or complaint about a Council service” should be followed.

Further information can be obtained at: [Comments, complaints and compliments | East Lothian Council](#)

Unacceptable Behaviour

East Lothian Council does not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour towards staff.

Schools within East Lothian

A list of all primary and secondary schools can be found at: [Schools and learning | East Lothian Council](#)

Useful Telephone Numbers

The undernoted staff are based within Resources and People Services, John Muir House, Haddington, EH41 3HA.

Executive Director Education & Children's Services	Lesley Brown	01620-827834
Head of Education	Nicola McDowell	01620-827834
Education Service Manager (Inclusion & Wellbeing)	Lynne Binnie	01620-827998
Education Service Manager (Strategy & Operations)	Richard Parker	01620-827494
Education Service Manager (Curriculum, Employability and Estate Development)	Neil Craik-Collins	01620-827392
Parental Involvement Act (Parent Councils/Forums)	Bev Skirrow	01620-827228
Free School Meals, Clothing Grants, Education Maintenance Allowance, Pupil Placement & Home-to-School Transport Policy	Fiona Brown	01620 827415

School Session Dates

School session dates are available on the Council's website [East Lothian Council Homepage](#)

Scottish Government can be contacted at:

Scottish Government Education Department
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH, EH6 6QQ

[The Scottish Government - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Accuracy of Information

The information contained in this booklet was accurate as at November 2021.

November 2021