



## Loretto RC Primary

August 2016



Dear Parents,

A sunny and warm welcome back to everyone and a special word of welcome to our new Primary 1 pupils and to all new pupils and staff in school. We are part of God's family here in this school and we welcome all our children.

### **School Office**

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Lynn Donohoe as our new School Business Support Administrator. It is a long title and we tend to say 'secretary' but that does not quite cover the full range of her job! Mrs Donohoe has considerable experience but of course, a new school and new people takes a little time to get to know. As always in the school office, we are here to help and provide support but it is a very busy job and we would appreciate your support in following the school systems for absence, monies etc. which avoids double work. We are encouraging the children to remember letters home and returns as part of their independent organisational life skills so please support by checking school bags and reminding children to have everything they need ready for the start of the day.

### **New staff**

**A lovely Loretto family welcome goes to, Miss Hannah in P2, Mrs Rice in P2/3, Miss Weir in P4 and Mrs Brotherston in nursery.**

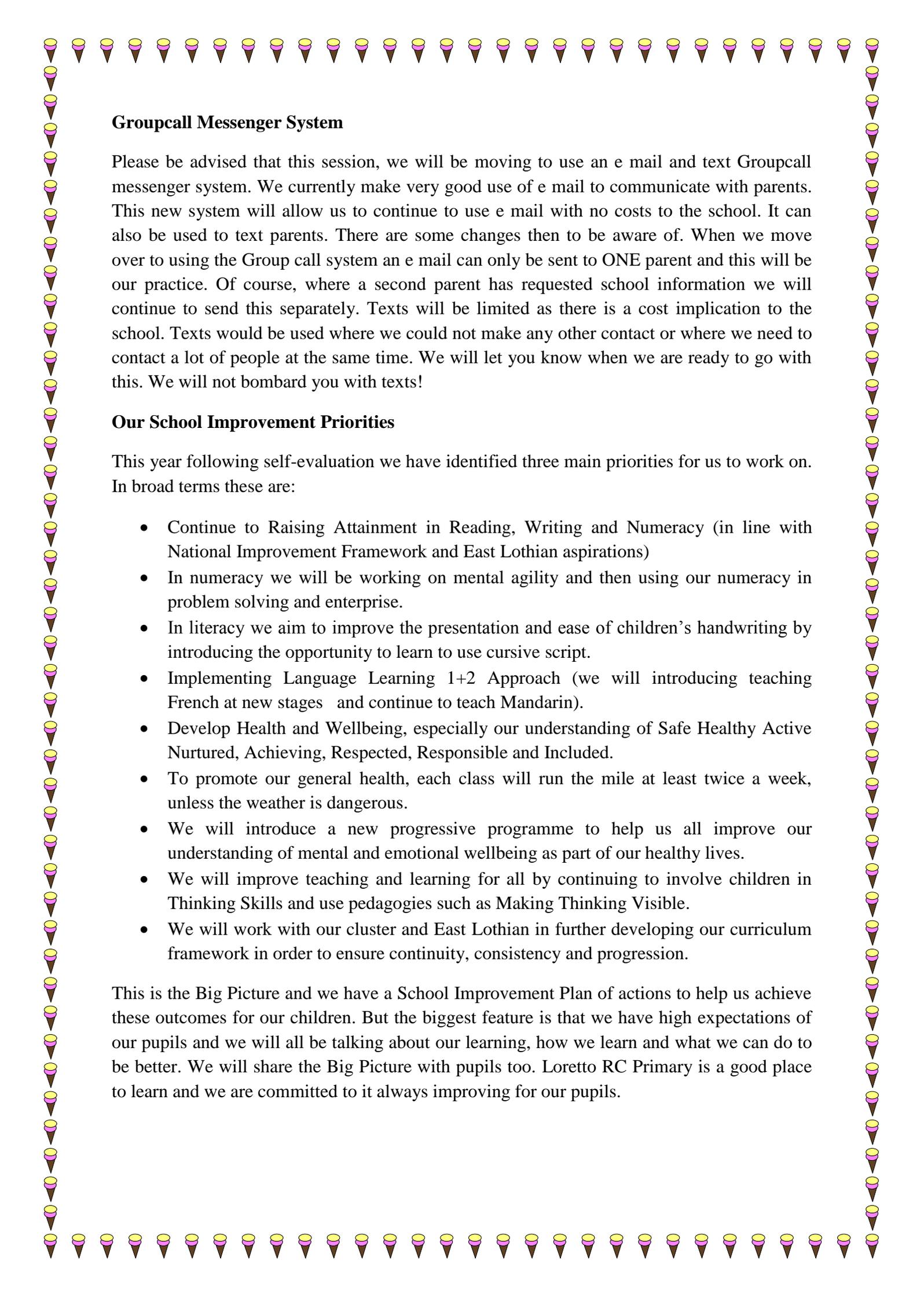
Thank you to you all for the super support in school uniform. The children are all back looking so smart and ready to work and learn. Please keep an eye on the weather and send your child appropriately dressed as we go out for breaks as much as we can.

In classes the children chose a new short topic as a context for their new learning and we are very excited to learn about Pets, Zoo, Dinosaurs, Inventors, Mythical Creatures, The Caribbean, My Superhero and Famous People. The teachers will share a little of this with you on our Welcome and Curriculum Evening on Monday 12th September at 7pm.

### **Class Newsletters and Parent Communications**

This year each teacher will send you a short class newsletter each term for your child's class with information for that class. Of course, we also have our school blog and school Twitter and would love for parents to add their encouraging and supportive comments here too. It really does make a difference to the family feeling and enthusiasm for learning.

Check us out at <http://www.edubuzz.org/lorettoprimary/>. Here you can also find a copy of the School Handbook with lots of important information.



## **Groupcall Messenger System**

Please be advised that this session, we will be moving to use an e mail and text Groupcall messenger system. We currently make very good use of e mail to communicate with parents. This new system will allow us to continue to use e mail with no costs to the school. It can also be used to text parents. There are some changes then to be aware of. When we move over to using the Group call system an e mail can only be sent to ONE parent and this will be our practice. Of course, where a second parent has requested school information we will continue to send this separately. Texts will be limited as there is a cost implication to the school. Texts would be used where we could not make any other contact or where we need to contact a lot of people at the same time. We will let you know when we are ready to go with this. We will not bombard you with texts!

## **Our School Improvement Priorities**

This year following self-evaluation we have identified three main priorities for us to work on. In broad terms these are:

- Continue to Raising Attainment in Reading, Writing and Numeracy (in line with National Improvement Framework and East Lothian aspirations)
- In numeracy we will be working on mental agility and then using our numeracy in problem solving and enterprise.
- In literacy we aim to improve the presentation and ease of children's handwriting by introducing the opportunity to learn to use cursive script.
- Implementing Language Learning 1+2 Approach (we will introducing teaching French at new stages and continue to teach Mandarin).
- Develop Health and Wellbeing, especially our understanding of Safe Healthy Active Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included.
- To promote our general health, each class will run the mile at least twice a week, unless the weather is dangerous.
- We will introduce a new progressive programme to help us all improve our understanding of mental and emotional wellbeing as part of our healthy lives.
- We will improve teaching and learning for all by continuing to involve children in Thinking Skills and use pedagogies such as Making Thinking Visible.
- We will work with our cluster and East Lothian in further developing our curriculum framework in order to ensure continuity, consistency and progression.

This is the Big Picture and we have a School Improvement Plan of actions to help us achieve these outcomes for our children. But the biggest feature is that we have high expectations of our pupils and we will all be talking about our learning, how we learn and what we can do to be better. We will share the Big Picture with pupils too. Loretto RC Primary is a good place to learn and we are committed to it always improving for our pupils.

*Please bear with me as the start of the year is a good time for a few practical reminders. These help the smooth running of the school making it a happy, relaxed place for your child.*

### **Attendance Matters**

It is surprising how only a few days missed can impact on a child's learning. I know our parents want to give their children the best possible start in life and a good education. Illness is unavoidable but please do give careful consideration to school absence in term time. Holidays in term time are recorded as unauthorised. We are closely monitoring this and hoping to see an overall improvement.

**Punctuality** Good timekeeping is a life skill. We have seen improvement here. Unfortunately lateness can become a habit for a few people so please do ask if you need a little support in this area. A child coming in late often means missing the start of the day's lessons and instructions and can make your child a bit anxious.

### **Money to school**

**If possible please pay money to school by using our online service. You can pay for most things online at [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/payforit](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/payforit).**

You can also pay by cheque made payable to East Lothian Council. Any cash should be exact money, in a sealed envelope with your child's name, class and reason for payment clearly marked on the front. Your child should give envelopes to their class teacher at the start of the day. Mrs Ross collects this money each morning. Also please ensure that the correct amount of cash is enclosed as we do not hold change.

### **School Lunches**

P1-P3 children are all entitled to free school lunches. Our P1s have been receiving a free packed lunch until they start all day sessions on Monday 29th August. They will then be offered a choice of lunch ordered for them each morning, as in the other classes.

P4-P7 school lunch money must be paid daily or in advance. Unfortunately this cannot yet be paid online. No child would ever be left hungry but chasing unpaid lunch money is taking a considerable part of our admin time. We may now telephone parents and ask them to bring lunch money along if it is forgotten. Please ask at the office if you would like a Free School Meals form-you may be entitled to this depending on your private circumstances. You can check this on East Lothian Council website or ask at the office.



**Water Bottles.** We know the benefits to our overall health of being properly hydrated and we welcome water bottles in school. Please provide a clean fresh bottle of water (no juice or flavoured waters) each day for your child. Unfortunately, we do not have time or facilities to wash these and keep them in school but do allow a child to fill up his/her bottle if needed.

## Playground Safety

Please keep a careful watch on your little ones-they are so quick. Everyone please ensure they close the gate after them even if you think the next person is just coming.

**Pupil Lines.** In the morning it can be quite tricky in the confined space for children to line up easily. Could we please ask parents to put their child in the lines and then stand well back away from the line or the line of the next class. This will help us see that everybody is ready to go and start the day briskly and safely.

**Safety Parking.** A reminder please that walking to school is a safe and healthy option for you and for our town. Please do not risk the safety of your child or another child by stopping outside the school. **This is not a drop off zone.** Please be considerate and safe whilst driving and parking around the school.

**Safety Bikes and Scooters.** Please do not cycle or scoot in the busy playground. Again we would respectfully ask that pupils cycling to school wear helmets.



**Healthy Snacks.** Following the success last year of High Five Fruits, P7s will again run a healthy tuck shop. Respectfully please no sweets and crisps for daily snacks.

## Riding of the Marches and Gelato GG



Many thanks to all our pupils, families and friends who participated in the Riding of the Marches. I have received lovely compliments about our children who were involved in the drama and events. We are looking forward to having our pony back with us in school. Gelato will have pride of place at the front of the school. If you would like to be involved next time contact Neil Wilson in 2037!

## Welcome Evening MONDAY 12th September 7pm -8pm

We are holding a welcome and curriculum evening for parents on this evening. Your child's teacher will give a short talk in the classroom about the year ahead for your child. You will get to see the classroom and the first work on the walls of the new topics the children have been working on. Each teacher will give the same class talk at 7pm, 7.20pm and 7.40pm for those with more than one child in nursery or school. You are also welcome to visit other classrooms, allowing you the chance to see how learning progresses through the school.

## **Personal Learning Targets**

We are continuing to set targets termly with the children in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Your child will shortly bring home the first targets to share with you. In October the children will bring home the reviewed and new targets. These important steps in learning will be kept in their personal learning portfolios along with the assessed work showing how well the children achieved their target. We all work to our next achievable step and we value these. The children will be closely involved in talking about planning and setting the learning in the class and we know this is an excellent way to improve learning outcomes for children. You will receive the new and reviewed targets each term.

## **Parent/grandparent friends of the school.**

We are always grateful to have adult helpers and indeed rely on you to help us take the children on outings as we need certain numbers for supervision ratios. We would also like to invite you in to our classrooms to help and become part of the life of the school. If you can offer any help at all-on a one off or occasional or regular basis please pop your head in to let us know.

## **Family Learning**

This year each class will invite a parent or family member into class to join them in a numeracy lesson and a writing lesson as well as a class assembly. We hope this will help you appreciate how and what the children are learning. Look out for dates to follow.

## **Sacraments**

**Fr Basil will advise us as soon as he can on the dates for First Confession ( P3), Confirmation (P4s) and First Communion (P4s)**

Many thanks for a great start to term and we look forward to a super year.

If you have a worry or a question please do not hesitate to pop in and ask the teacher in the first instance, or myself. We are here to help.

Regards Margaret Anne McBean and all at Loretto

## **Diary dates so far...**

<b>Mon 29 Aug</b>	<b>Drama production in school for pupils only-no charge</b>
<b>Tues 30 August</b>	<b>P4-P7 Book Festival Outing</b>
<b>Fri 2 Sep</b>	<b>JRSO event at Port Seton</b>
<b>Mon 12 Sep</b>	<b>7-8pm Welcome and Curriculum Evening</b>
<b>Thurs 15 Sep</b>	<b>SSPCA visit to classes</b>
<b>Fri 16 Sep/Mon 19 Sep</b>	<b>September weekend holiday</b>



<b>Mon 3 Oct</b>	<b>Maths Fun Week begins and Flu vaccinations in school</b>
<b>Thurs 6 Oct</b>	<b>School Photos for individual and family groups</b>
<b>TUES 11 Oct</b>	<b>5-8pm Parent Consultations</b>
<b>THURS 13 Oct</b>	<b>4-7pm Parent Consultations</b>
<b>Mon 17 Oct</b>	<b>School holiday</b>
<b>Tues 25 Oct</b>	<b>Pupils resume</b>
<b>Wed 14 Dec</b>	<b>Christmas Nativity</b>
<b>Thurs 15 Dec</b>	<b>School Outing to Brunton Pantomime</b>
<b>Thurs 22 Dec</b>	<i>provisional P1-3 Christmas Nativity to be confirmed</i>
<b>Fri 27 Jan</b>	<b>Burns Event in school</b>
<b>Fri 10 Feb</b>	<b>School Art Exhibition</b>
<b>Mon 13 Feb</b>	<b>February holidays</b>
<b>Tues 21 Feb</b>	<b>Pupils resume</b>
<b>Thurs 9 Mar</b>	<b>World Book Day</b>
<b>Frid 10 March</b>	<b>Reading Month</b>
<b>TUES 28 Mar</b>	<b>5-8pm Parent Consultations</b>
<b>THURS 30 Mar</b>	<b>4-7pm Parent Consultations</b>
<b>Mon 3 Apr Mar-18 Apr</b>	<b>Easter holidays begin</b>
<b>Mon 24 Apr</b>	<b>P7 School camp</b>
<b>Mon 1 May</b>	<b>May Holiday</b>
<b>Mon 22 May</b>	<b>Pupils Holiday-IS day for teachers .</b>
<b>Fri 16 June</b>	<b>provisional Sports Day tbc</b>
<b>Tues 27 June</b>	<b>P7 Assembly/Show and School Prizegiving</b>
<b>Thurs 29 June</b>	<b>End of Year Mass</b>