



Firrhill High School School Handbook

2025/26

“Excellence for all, Excellence by all”

A Foreword from the Executive Director of Education, and Children's Services Session 2025-26

Dear Parents/Carers,

This brochure contains a range of information about your child's school which will be of interest to you and your child. It offers an insight into the life and ethos of the school and also offers advice and assistance which you may find helpful in supporting and getting involved in your child's education.

We are committed to working closely with parents and carers as equal partners in your child's education, in the life of your child's school and in city-wide developments in education.

Parental involvement in the decision making process and in performance monitoring are an integral part of school life. We look forward to developing that partnership with your support.

Throughout this handbook the term 'parent' has the meaning attributed in the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. This includes grandparents, carer or anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child.

I am pleased to introduce this brochure for session 2024-25 and hope that it will provide you with the information you need concerning your child's school.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of the brochure please contact the Head Teacher of your child's school in the first instance who will be happy to offer any clarification you may need.

Amanda Hatton
Executive Director of Children, Education & Justice Services

Education, and Children's Services Vision

Our vision is for all children and young people in Edinburgh to enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential.

We believe that children and young people do best when:

- they are able to live safely and happily within their own families with the right kind of support as needed
- they attend first class, inclusive schools and early years settings which meet their needs

We will do all we can to strengthen support for families, schools and communities to meet their children's needs.

Our mission is to place children, young people and families at the heart of our service and provide support when it is needed throughout childhood and the transition to adulthood.

In Edinburgh children and young people are at the heart of our vision for the future.

As an inclusive community we work with parents, carers and, where appropriate, partner agencies to support all children and young people.

By working together, we help children and young people to develop understanding about relationships, respect, teamwork, honesty, fairness, patience, and compassion. We do this by offering interesting and relevant learning experiences, by providing our staff with the training and resources they need, and by working with the whole community to accept and care for one another. This isn't always easy, but we believe it is essential so that our children and young people understand the people they meet and learn how to work together to handle setbacks and difficult situations throughout their lives.

When children and young people experience adverse events or as a response to their additional support need, they let us know by reacting in different ways. This presents difficulties for those around them. By working together, by understanding the cause and working out solutions, we can find a way to solve or deal with a problem. If it takes time to get over a problem we will work with a child, young person, and their family to work out the best way forward. This may involve making adaptations and providing additional support or in exceptional circumstances identifying a change of environment.

We recognise that we all experience difficult times, and that everyone deserves the best possible care and support. In Edinburgh we support children and young people to learn in different ways according to their needs. As children and young people learn to read, write, and count some require more support than others do. This need for support arises for a variety of reasons learning difficulties, challenges with emotional regulation and social communication issues. We must meet the needs of all our students in a fair, compassionate, and proportionate way.

In considering how to support all children and young people reach their full potential it may not always be possible to arrive at a resolution all parties agree. However, we will listen to any parent, young person, child or member of staff and work together to resolve difficulties.

We are committed to do all we can to make Edinburgh an inclusive place to live and learn.



Lorna French

Acting Head of Schools and Lifelong Learning and Chief Education Officer

Welcome from the Headteacher, Graham Hamilton

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to the Firrhill High School Handbook. This document will provide you with information on our school aims and values, our educational provision in its widest sense and important background information to help your child with the transition process from primary to secondary school.

Firrhill High School is a six year, non-denominational, comprehensive school situated in the south west of Edinburgh. The school has one of the best views in the city looking up to the Pentland Hills and has a roll of over 1300 pupils and over 140 staff. Our accommodation includes a purpose-built science, languages and social subjects block and outstanding PE facilities; a Games Hall, fitness suite, dance studio and two gymnasias. This provides an excellent learning environment for our pupils and teaching environment for our staff.

We have a strong record of academic achievement and provide a wide curriculum to meet the full range of pupils' needs while our programme of extra-curricular activities, trips and other events enhances learning and develops a range of skills including team-work, self-confidence and leadership. At Firrhill we are focused on developing the whole child and nurturing their interests, skills and abilities. Committed, highly able staff create a supportive and challenging learning environment to develop those new skills, interests and abilities.

Our success is built on a tradition of mutual respect between staff and pupils. We have high expectations of our pupils and we have high expectations of the adults who work with them. Within our wider school community we promote tolerance and understanding of one another and we value diversity.

For a child to be happy and successful at school there needs to be a strong partnership between home and school. We will report to you regularly and provide timely opportunities for you to meet with staff and to discuss your child's progress. Pupil Support Leaders will get to know your child very well and S1 parents/carers will be offered an early 1:1 meeting to begin building a strong home-school partnership. All parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to discuss their child.

Firrhill parents contribute a great deal to the school and this greatly enhances the experiences of all our pupils. I would strongly encourage you to get involved in the life of the school by joining the Parent Council or Fund Raising Group and attending the many school events that take place. There is information on the school website on getting involved.

We are proud of the achievements of all of our young people. We build on our successful past so we can continue to ensure that all our pupils move on from Firrhill fully equipped with the skills they will need for work, life and future learning. Our ambition can be summarised simply as **excellence for all, excellence by all**.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Hamilton
Headteacher

Information about the school is organised into the following five sections:

Section One	Practical Information about the School
Section Two	Parental Involvement in the School
Section Three	School Curriculum
Section Four	Support for Pupils
Section Five	School Improvement

Section One: Practical Information about the School

Contact Details

Head Teacher:	Graham Hamilton
Address:	Firrhill High School 9 Oxbgangs Road North Edinburgh EH14 1DP
Telephone Number:	0131 441 4501
Website:	http://www.firrhillhigh.org
E-mail Address:	admin@firrhill.edin.sch.uk

About the school

Stages of Education provided for: S1 – S6

Roll for each year

S1: 240

S2: 237

S3: 245

S4: 227

S5: 213

S6: 160

Present Roll: 1322

Non-denominational

Correct at time of going to press. The roll often changes significantly during the year mostly due to enrolments into the school.

Organisation of the School Day

Monday to Thursday

Start Time: 08:35

Morning Break: 10:25 – 10:40

Lunch Time: 12:20 – 13:05

Finish Time: 15:35

Friday

Start Time: 08:35

Morning Break: 10:25 – 10:40

Lunch/School Day end: 12:20

(There are extra-curricular activities which take place on the Friday afternoon.)

Agreed Term Dates for Session 2025/26

Autumn term

Monday 11 August 2025*	Staff resume
Tuesday 12 August 2025*	Staff only
Wednesday 13 August 2025	Pupils return
Monday 15 September 2025	Schools closed - Autumn Holiday
Tuesday 16 September 2025	All resume
Friday 10 October 2025	Mid-term, All break
Monday 20 October 2025*	Staff resume
Tuesday 21 October 2025	Pupils resume
Friday 19 December 2025	Term ends

Spring term

Monday 5 January 2026*	Staff resume
Tuesday 6 January 2026	Pupils resume
Friday 13 February 2026	Mid-term, All break
Monday 23 February 2026	All resume
Thursday 3 April 2026	Term ends
<i>The Easter break incorporates the following two holidays:</i>	
Friday 18 April 2026	Good Friday
Monday 21 April 2026	Easter Monday

Summer term

Tuesday 21 April 2026	All resume
Monday 4 May 2026	Schools closed – May Holiday
Tuesday 5 May 2026*	Staff only
Wednesday 6 May 2026	Pupils resume
Monday 18 May 2026	Schools closed - Victoria Day
Tuesday 19 May 2026	All resume
Friday 26 June 2026	Term ends

* five in-service days for all schools

Term dates for the coming years can be found at:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schools/term-dates>

Communicating with the School

This section provides you with some background information on our school. It tells you how our school day and school year are made up and how to contact the school if, for example, your child is ill.

Registration and enrolment

The date for registration of new school entrants is advertised in the local press and on the council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk. Registration for First Year Secondary takes place in November each year.

Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school when they register their child.

Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request. Please refer to section four of this handbook for more information on placing requests.

Parents of pupils who have moved into the catchment area or, who wish their child to transfer to the school, should contact the school office for information.

Attendance and absence

It is the responsibility of parents of a child of school age to make sure that their child is educated. Absence from school is recorded as authorised, when it is approved by Education and Children's Services, or as unauthorised when it does not meet the criteria set by the authority.

Please let the school know by letter, email or phone if your child is likely to be absent for some time, and give your child a note on his or her return to school, confirming the reason for absence. If there is no explanation from a child's parents, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised.

The school operates a Truancy Call System. Parents will receive a message if a pupil fails to attend period one when no prior notification of absence has been received by the school. It is extremely helpful if parents can inform office staff of the reason for any absence in advance by leaving a message on the school answer machine (0131 441 4501) or by writing a note in advance for your child's register teacher. If a pupil is late to school and fails to sign in parents will also receive a truancy message.

Parents should ensure they advise the school office of any changes to their contact details. Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time as this will disrupt your child's education and reduces learning time. The school can only approve absence from school for a family holiday in certain, very specific, situations. Please discuss your plans with me before the holiday. If I cannot give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. I can authorise a holiday if you can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by me on this basis is regarded as authorised absence. Any requests for extended absence over two weeks

will be referred to the Senior Education Manager: Inclusion who will decide if it will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised leave.

Parents may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to celebrate recognised religious events. Absence approved on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

Extended authorised absence may also be granted for families returning to their country of origin for cultural or care reasons.

A supportive approach is taken to unexplained absence. However Education and Children's Services has legal powers to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or refer pupils to the Reporter to the Children's Panel, if necessary.

School Uniform

We strongly encourage parents to support the wearing of our School Uniform. We want our pupils to take a pride in their appearance and by following the Dress Code to develop a strong sense of identity with the school.

S1 & S2

- Black top with the school logo
- White polo shirt with school logo
- White shirt with school tie*
- Black trousers/skirts
- Black footwear
- All pupils must wear a school logo either on their tie or black top

School sweatshirts, polo shirts and ties are available from the school office.

S3 – S6

- White shirt with school tie*
- Black trousers/skirts/footwear
- Black top
- Pupils may wear black leggings but must also wear a skirt

* The school tie was designed by pupils. There is a single design for pupils in S1 to S5 with an S6 'gold-stripe' tie for those in the final year of school.

We believe that the wearing of school uniform contributes to a positive school ethos and helps avoid discrimination and reduces peer pressure to wear expensive designer clothing. Uniform also assists in identifying everyone in the school and so improves the security and safety of everyone in school.

More details on school uniform can be found on our school website.

<http://firrhillhigh.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Dress-Code-Guidelines-May-2017-FINAL.pdf>

PE Kit

A complete change of clothing is required for PE.

Pupils must bring black tops, trainers, and navy/black tracksuit bottoms to PE. Pupils should bring their kit even if they are ill as PE staff will try to provide an alternative activity. The PE department provide kit which should be worn when pupils forget their own.

The appropriate clothing and footwear for PE is a T-shirt, shorts and gym shoes with non-marking soles. Proper PE kit is necessary to enable safe participation in activities, to protect specialised PE resources and to ensure good personal hygiene. Your co-operation is requested to ensure that pupils are properly equipped to participate in their PE lessons.

A school's reputation can also be enhanced in the local community by the wearing of school uniform and school security will be improved as it will be easier to identify intruders.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled, particularly ties, sweatshirts and PE equipment which are often lost. Every year we donate many items of unlabelled and unclaimed lost property to local charities including some expensive items of clothing and footwear.

Please help us by ensuring that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive items of clothing to school. If you have any queries regarding the school's dress code, please contact the school office.

School Meals

Menus offer healthy and tasty meal options while reflecting the Scottish Government food and drink legal requirements for school lunches. Meal prices are reviewed annually. Please contact the School to be advised of the current price.

Firrhill High School has a fully equipped kitchen which provides a wide range of hot and cold meals with cafeteria style service. There is also a snack bar for those who prefer a lighter meal at lunchtime. We operate a 'cashless' catering system. Pupil accounts have funds added to them using Parentpay and payment is authorised by the pupil using a PIN number or by scanning their finger.

- All our meat is either Quality Meat Scotland or Red Tractor Assured
- All our dairy comes from Scottish Farms
- All eggs used are Free Range
- All fish is MSC certified
- We believe in sourcing food with provenance and aim to increase our spend with Scottish suppliers every year

The catering service supplies meals for pupils by following the special diet policy – more information on menus/ special diets and prices can be found here;

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/food-clothing/lunch-menus-schools>

Children who prefer bringing a packed lunch to school can eat in the main assembly hall at lunchtime. The school cafeteria also provides snacks at morning interval.

Free School Meals & Clothing Grants

Families on low income can get school grants to help with the cost of lunches and school clothing.

All children in primary 1 to 5 receive free school meals, regardless of your income or benefit status. However, if you meet any of the following conditions you will be eligible to receive:

- free school meals for your children in P6, P7 and in secondary school
- payment for lunches during school holidays
- free milk
- a school clothing grant payment of £120 for each primary child and £150 for each secondary child, paid once a year into your bank account

You must receive one of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (where your monthly earned income is not more than £850)
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Your child might still get school grants if you're experiencing financial hardship. This could be because:

- your immigration status means you cannot get help from the government
- you're still waiting on your first Universal Credit notice

School grants are valid for **one school year**. The entitlement ends if your child leaves school before the end of the school year.

Information on school grants and how to apply is available on the website:

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolgrants

Travel to and from School

Access for vehicles into the school site is restricted. There are no designated visitor parking spaces on site. The residential streets around the school can become very busy around the start and end of school. To reduce congestion and improve safety for children coming to and from school I would encourage your child to use public transport or walk to school. There are bicycle storage facilities for those pupils who cycle to school.

Parents must not, when dropping off/collecting children from school, use the school car park or the area in front of the main entrance to drop off their children. The parking bays at the front entrance are for disabled badge holders only. Please do not park near the pedestrian exit or in any location which causes an obstruction and please take care not to restrict the view of any school crossing patrol.

Failure to follow this advice leads to congestion at the entrance and causes danger to pupils. If your child has a special reason why they need to be dropped off at the entrance you must contact Support for Pupils to discuss appropriate arrangements **in advance**.

Transport for Secondary School Children (Excluding Placing Requests)

Lothian Buses 4, 10, 27 & 45 stop close to the school. Stops for services 5 & 16 are a short walk from the school. The Skylink service 400 also stops close to the school.

General Supervision

Before school begins supervision is parental responsibility, therefore pupils should not arrive at school until as near to the school start time as possible.

Before school begins supervision is very limited therefore pupils should not arrive at school until as near to the school start time as possible. The entrance doors will not normally be opened for pupils before 8:25am.

School security

Whilst we wish to make Firrhill as welcoming as possible, we also have a duty to ensure pupils and staff are safe. One important reason for all pupils wearing full school uniform is that we can quickly identify anyone who is not a pupil.

The security of pupils and staff when attending or working in a school is very important to us. We use a number of security measures, including a visitors' book, badges and escorts while visitors are within the school building. Everyone calling at a school for any reason will be asked to report to the school office. School staff can then make the necessary arrangements for the visit, as appropriate.

Please do not turn up at school without an appointment. All staff have timetabled commitments throughout the day and it is highly unlikely they will be able to meet with parents who do not have an appointment. Please call the school in advance so a time can be arranged for you to come to the school.

Unexpected Closures

In the event of an emergency, such as a power cut or severe weather, that prevents schools from opening in the morning or results in an early closure a range of communications channels are used to let parents know.

Text alert messages will be sent out to advise parents of any early unexpected school closures. It is helpful if parents can discuss with their child where they wish them to go in the case of an unexpected closure.

In addition, announcements will be made on Radio Forth (Forth 1 and Forth 2) and via the Council's corporate Twitter account www.twitter.com/Edinburgh_CC and Facebook page www.facebook.com/edinburghcouncil.

If many schools are affected, or the situation is likely to be prolonged, then the Council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk will also be used.

Mobile Phones and Valuables

The school gives permission for pupils to bring mobile phones into school. This permission will remain in place as long as the mobile phone is used in accordance with the rules of the school.

We recognise that mobile phones can be a useful device for safety and communication with family but many pupils find it difficult to manage keeping such items secure. Many pupils do not bring a phone to school for this reason.

Pupils will always be allowed to make a call home in an emergency if they need to do so but they must speak to their Support for Pupils' teacher first.

Pupils must not take photographs, video or audio recordings on school grounds without staff permission. Taking photographs or video in school without permission is a breach of school rules. **Distributing any such images or video will be treated as a very serious breach of school discipline.**

Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones out in class unless the teacher gives permission as part of a learning experience. The standard procedure to follow is that the phone should be **'Off & Away'**.

If a phone interrupts the lesson or is being misused it will be confiscated. The phone will be returned, at the discretion of the teacher, at the end of the lesson or at the end of the school day. The phone may be passed to a Depute Headteacher who will meet with the pupil before it is returned.

Where there is repeated misuse of a mobile phone the phone will be retained by the Depute Headteacher until the parent/carer meets with the Depute Headteacher to ensure that the mobile phone will be used in accordance with school rules in future.

Where misuse of a mobile phone places other members of the school community at risk or repeatedly disrupts the learning of others permission to bring a mobile phone into school will be withdrawn.

The school does not accept any responsibility for the security of phones, or similar items, unless they are handed to a member of staff for safe-keeping.

There is no expectation that pupils should bring any of their personal information technology equipment to classes. All pupils are issued with an iPad for school use and this should be brought to school fully charged every day.

Pupils should not bring valuable items to school but if they choose to do so for an educational reason, they should check with teaching staff in advance so good security measures can be put in place.

The above expectations regarding mobile phones also apply to other mobile devices including, but not limited to, tablets and laptops.

Pupils are responsible for their own property and while the school may assist in tracing lost items the school is not liable for items brought to school and subsequently lost or damaged.

Complaints, Comments and Suggestions Procedure

We all hope that you will be completely satisfied about your child's education and we encourage feedback on our services from parents and pupils. We are, therefore, interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be compliments, suggestions or complaints.

If you want to register a comment of any type about our school you can do this by writing, e-mailing, telephoning or making an appointment to see someone. All feedback is welcome and keeps us in touch.

If, in particular, you have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that these things are shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than being allowed to damage the relationship between the family and the school. There will be no negative consequences arising from making a complaint and we will deal with the issue as confidentially as possible.

There are some things which you should take note of in relation to making a complaint:

- Please make any complaints initially to the Headteacher. This makes sure that the school knows what is going on and has an opportunity to respond and resolve the issue
- We will try to respond as quickly as possible, but often issues are complex and we need time to investigate
- If you are still unhappy with the service or with our response then you will have the right to take the matter further and contact Advice and Complaints Service (Schools and Lifelong Learning) email: cf.complaints@edinburgh.gov.uk or by telephone: 0131 469 3233.
- If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, our reply will include the contact details

Further information can be found here - <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/contact-us/comments-complaints/3>

Health and Safety

Within the general policy laid down by The City of Edinburgh Council, Education and Children's Services has prepared and has continuing development of, safety policy statements for all areas of its responsibility and accordingly manages health and safety and welfare in a way that complies with health and safety statutory and regulatory requirements, and all relevant approved codes of practice and guidance.

School staff are fully instructed in their responsibilities in this respect, and safety regulations apply to all aspects of school life, both on and off the premises. It is expected that pupils will behave responsibly and comply with all safety requirements. The support of parents/carers

in promoting good practice in health and safety matters is of great importance to the school.

Information about how we manage pupil data in schools/ELC settings

Firrhill High School has a legal responsibility to deliver an effective educational programme to its pupils. In order to do this, we need to collect personal data about our pupils/children and their families so that we can help them learn and keep them safe. The type of personal data we will collect include:

Data about our pupils/children and their families

This will include the name, address and contact details of the pupil/child and relevant family members. It will also include information about relevant medical conditions, any additional supports which are needed, and their family situation. We need this information to ensure we know our pupils/children and their families, and to ensure we are able to educate them appropriately and keep them safe.

We will also collect personal data relating to personal or protected characteristics, such as ethnic group to enable statistics to be reported. We need this information so the Council can ensure it is delivering education appropriately to all its citizens.

Data about pupils/children at school/within ELC setting

This will include data about progress, assessments, and exam results. It will also include records of attendance, absence, and any exclusions. We need this information to understand how our pupils/children are progressing, and to assess how we can help them to achieve their best.

Data about when and where they go after they leave us

This will include information about their next setting/school, career paths or intended destinations. We need this information to ensure we support our pupils/children in all their transitions and do all that we can to help their future be a success.

There will be times where we also receive information about them from other organisations, such as a pupils' previous school, the previous local authority where that school or ELC setting was based, NHS Lothian, Police Scotland, Social work, Additional Support Services, and sometimes other organisations or groups connected to a pupil's education. We use this data similarly to the above: to support our pupils' learning, monitor and report on their progress, provide appropriate pastoral care; and assess the quality of our services.

When we collect and use personal data within school/ELC setting, and for the reasons detailed above, we will normally be acting in accordance with our public task. Occasionally we are also required to process personal data because the law requires us to do so, or because it is necessary to protect someone's life.

We will also take photographs in school/ELC setting and display them on our walls, and in newsletters and other communications. We do this in order to celebrate and share what we have done, including individual achievements and successes. We consider this use of images

to be part of our public task as it helps us build an effective community which supports learning. We will not, however, publish these photographs on social media or in newspapers without permission. Consent for this use will be sought when a pupil/child joins Firrhill High School and will be kept on record while they are with us. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, please just let us know.

Sometimes we need to share pupil information with other organisations. We are required, by law, to pass certain information about our pupils to the Scottish Government and the Council. This data is for statistical purposes and will normally be anonymised. It is normally required to enable the Council, and the Government, to understand how education is being delivered and to help them plan for future provision. Further information about what the Scottish Government does with statistical data it receives is provided below.

If a pupil/child moves schools/ELC settings, we have a legal obligation to pass on information to their new school/education authority about their education at Firrhill High School.

When we record and use personal data, we will only collect and use what we need. We will keep it securely, and it will only be accessed by those that need to. We will not keep personal data for longer than is necessary and follow the Council's Record Retention Schedule and archival procedures when records are identified to be of historical value and require to be retained in the Edinburgh City Archives.

For more information on how the Council uses personal data, and to know more about your information rights including who to contact if you have a concern, see the [City Of Edinburgh's Privacy Notice](#).

Sharing personal data to support Wellbeing

In addition to the above, Firrhill High School has a legal duty to promote, support and safeguard the wellbeing of children in our care.

Wellbeing concerns can cover a range of issues depending on the needs of the child. Staff are trained to identify when children and families can be supported and records are kept when it is thought that a child could benefit from help available in the school/ELC setting, community or another professional. You can expect that we will tell you if we are concerned about your child's wellbeing and talk to you about what supports might help in the circumstances. Supports are optional and you will not be required to take them up.

If it would be helpful to share information with someone else, we will discuss this with you and seek your consent before we share it so that you know what is happening and why. The only time we will not seek consent to share information with another organisation is if we believe that a child may be at risk of harm. In these situations, we have a duty to protect children, which means we do not need consent. On these occasions, we will normally tell you that information is being shared, with whom, and why – unless we believe that doing so may put the child at risk of harm.

We will not give information about our pupils to anyone without your consent unless the law and our policies allow us to do so.

Sharing educational data with the Scottish Government

The following information has been provided by the Scottish Government – Education and Training Division to let you know why they collect statistical information from school and what they do with it:

Education authorities and the Scottish Government collected data about pupils on paper forms for many years. We now work together with schools to transfer data electronically through the ScotXed programme. Thus the Scottish Government has two functions: acting as a 'hub' for supporting data exchange within the education system in Scotland and the analysis of data for statistical purposes within the Scottish Government itself.

What pupil data is collected and transferred?

Data on each pupil is collected by schools, local authorities and the Scottish Government.

The data collected and transferred covers areas such as date of birth, Scottish Candidate Number (SCN), postcode, registration for free-school meals, whether a pupil is looked after by his/her local authority, additional support needs including disability and English as an Additional Language (EAL), and attendance, absence and exclusions from school.

The SCN acts as the unique pupil identifier. Pupil names and addresses are not passed to the Scottish Government. Your postcode is the only part of your address that is transferred for statistical purposes, and postcodes are grouped to identify 'localities' rather than specific addresses. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be published by the Scottish Government.

Providing national identity and ethnic background data is entirely voluntary. You can choose the 'not disclosed' option if you do not want to provide this data. However, we hope that the explanations contained in this message and on the ScotXed website will help you understand the importance of providing the data.

Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, the Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better.

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This message can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of the use of pupil data can be found on the ScotXed website (www.scotxed.net).

The Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, we will make individual data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, we will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of the Scottish Government, which will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with colleagues within and outwith the Scottish Government.

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Senior Statistician, scotxed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 1B, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, braille and large print.

School Nursing Team

The School Nursing team is made up of the:

- **School Nurse** (Specialist Qualified 3rd part Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registrant – now masters level 11 post graduate degree)
- **Community Staff Nurses** (Registered Nurse on Part 1 of NMC – undergraduate degree)
- **Community Health Assistants** (not a nurse, may have SVQ qualifications in care related field)

Services provided

Universal Services for All School Age Children:

Child Health Surveillance Programme

- P1 eye tests by Health Assistant - (only for those who did not receive this preschool in nursery)
- Growth Measurements by Health Assistant– currently at Primary 1 and Parent health Questionnaire (this may change in the future dependant on Scottish Government obesity strategy and the Health Visitor assessment at 4-5 years preschool)
- Primary 7 health questionnaire - growth measurement may be added in the future linked to Scottish Government obesity prevention work
- Drop in Services - a drop in health zone for High School Pupils (either in school or community facility) who are seeking advice or support on sexual health and health related issues

Education of Staff and Pupils

- Staff training – CPD in-service days on health actions plans, anaphylaxis etc – will be usually be delivered by the staff nurse
- Healthcare Plans for pupils - education staff will be supported by staff nurses on the planning and education

Healthcare Needs of Children with Moderate to Complex Physical Nursing Needs:

- For children in Complex Needs Schools, nursing care needs will be delivered by the nursing team who are based in these designated schools

School Nurse Services for Children/Young People with Increased Needs:

10 key areas specialist school nurses will focus on:

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Substance Misuse
- Child Protection
- Domestic Abuse
- Looked After Children
- Homelessness
- Youth Justice
- Young Carers
- Sexual Health
- Transitions

How to Refer

Children can be referred to the School Nurse by their school or their GP or other health care professional. Children and young people can also self-refer. They can do this by discussing this at drop ins or asking their teacher/ guidance teacher to refer them. Parents can refer by discussing with their GP or child's teacher/ guidance teacher.

Further information

Our NHS Lothian School Nursing Service web pages:

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/SchoolNursing>

Who Does What

- **GP** – all regular family health care
- **CAMHS** – Child and Adolescent Mental Health – Specialist service
- **Hospital Paediatric** – medical/surgical and other specialist services
- **Community Paediatrician** – doctors in community child health
- **CCN Team** – Community Children's Nurses - specialist paediatric trained nurses
- **AHPs** – Allied Health Professionals - speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, orthoptics – referral based service
- **CVT** – Community Vaccination Team - nurses who deliver vaccination services to all age groups
- **Learning Disability Services** – where there is LD diagnosis
- **Oral Health – Dental** – prevention and treatment service
- **LAC – Looked After Children** - nurses who work only with looked after children.

When notified by Social Work that a child has become looked after, the LAC nurses will undertake a health assessment. They may refer to school nursing for ongoing reviews and wider support.

Medicine administration

It is essential that parents bring to the attention of the school any special medical conditions of our pupils.

A medical suite is established in the Main Block of the school, staffed by a Welfare Assistant who holds a First Aid Certificate. In addition, a school nurse is regularly in school to organise the routine medical and other inspections. Collectively this team provides a most important and valuable service to the school.

All parents should supply an emergency contact address and telephone number, so that in the case of illness or accident during the school day, parents can be notified. Pupils are not allowed home during school hours until a parent or emergency contact is consulted. The nature of any emergency, of course, determines the action we take. Our first priority is the health of the child which means that we will ensure the most prompt possible medical attention where necessary even if there is difficulty in contacting a parent.

Medication of any kind, including over-the-counter medicines such as painkillers, cannot be administered to pupils at their request. Pupils who do have specific medical problems such as asthma or migraine, may keep their medication in the locked medical room at the request of their parents. The relevant consent forms are available from the Welfare Assistant in school. The same rule applies to pupils who are on prescribed and non-prescribed drugs which need to be taken during school hours. Please ensure that your child's medical records in school are kept up to date and contact the Welfare Assistant to notify any changes.

If your child is required to take medication during the school day please speak with their Pupil Support Leader to make the necessary arrangements.

It is anticipated that almost all pupils with long-standing conditions that require regular medication to be taken during school times will be self-medicating by the time they start secondary school. It is important to prepare your child to be able to do this as they approach the end of primary school. It is vital that any such medical conditions and medication are discussed as part of the transition from primary to secondary school.

Use of Social Media

Firrhill High School understands the benefits of using social media; however, if misused, our school community can be negatively affected, such as by damaging the school's reputation.

We advise parents, and carers to conduct themselves on social media using the following three common approaches to online behaviour:

- Common courtesy
- Common decency
- Common sense

Parental Requests for class lists

Information about your child is held securely and appropriate safeguards are in place. Due to these safeguards we are unable to provide parents and carers with the list of names your child is classmates with.

Staff List (Updated August 2023)

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Head Teacher	Mr G Hamilton
Depute Head Teacher Allermuir	Mr J Else
Depute Head Teacher Braidlaw & Darrach	Mr R Isdale
Depute Head Teacher Caerketton	Ms A Clegg
School Business Manager	Ms L Ewen

Expressive Arts Art

Ms T Graham (CL & Art)
Ms L Campbell
Ms A Gilbert
Mr J Kerr
Mr J Scoular

Music

Mr A Courtney
Mrs L Innes
Ms C Kedge
Ms M Pratt

Hairdressing

Ms J Lamont
Ms N Brown

Health and Wellbeing/PE

Ms M Carmichael (CL [Tu-Th])
Ms H Neilson (Acting CL [M&F])
Ms K Harkness
Mr K Leitch
Mr R Monaghan
Ms H Neilson
Ms K Polwart
Mr L Rahimian
Mr G Walkinshaw
Ms L Norman

Active Schools Coordinator

Languages (English)

Mr I Macfarlane (CL & English)
Ms E Brindley
Ms A Brown
Dr A Gorka
Ms M Healy
Dr J Lander
Ms C Lewis
Mr A Nagy
Ms H Rae
Ms D Bentley
Ms M Duffield
Ms R Williams

Drama

Languages (Modern)

Ms B Mariani (CL)
Ms S Barbara

	Mr G Baxter Ms A Chevrou Ms L McFall Ms H McKirdy
Mathematics	Ms C Watson (CL) Ms L Atkinson Ms S Brookes Ms L Harker Ms K Hogg Ms S McVey Mr M Pitman Ms L Sweeney Ms S Thomson Mr A Welford
Science	Mr M Ayers (CL & Physics [M-Th]) Mr M Rennie (Acting CL & Physics [F])
Biology	Mrs H Barnes Dr R Carloni Ms P Hewitson Mr S MacIntosh Ms R Osborne Ms E Williams
Chemistry	Ms L Anderson Dr M Easson Ms K Foote
Physics	Ms J Barbour Ms L Bunyan Mr M Rennie
Science Technicians	Ms A Runciman (Senior Technician) Ms E Anderson (Technician) Ms E Korankye (Technician)
Social Subjects (Geography & History) Geography	Mr J Edwards (CL [M, W-F] & History) Ms C Connolly (Acting CL [Tu] & RME) Mr B Magwood Mr L Smith Ms K Summers
History	Mr D Beard Ms L Brownlee (& RME) Mr G Cameron Ms C Mouat
Social Subjects (Modern Studies & RME) Modern Studies	Ms R Davidson (CL [M-Tu, Th-F] & Mod Studies) Ms C Connolly (Acting CL & RME) Mr C Brown

	Mr M Howe Ms L Thomas Ms A Wallace
Religious & Moral Education	Ms L Brownlee (& History) Ms Connolly Ms A Lynas
Technologies (Business/Computing)	Mr A Whyte (CL & Computing) Ms A Crawshaw Ms L Gray Mr A Sturgeon Ms F Whitecross
Business	
Computing	Mr K Reid
Technologies (D&T/HE)	Mr R Young (CL & D&T) Ms S Coombes Mr P Clohosey Mr J Coyle Mr C Owen
Design & Technology	
Home Economics	Ms E Byrne Ms F Duncan Mr J Tomlin Ms A Waszkiewicz
School Support Assistant (HE)	Ms A Bradford
Support for Learning	Mr A MacLeod (Support for Learning Leader) Ms J Flockhart Mr C McAlpine
Enhanced Support	Mr J Archibald Ms H Stirling
Wellbeing Team	Mr R Murray (CL) Ms A Brown (Pupil Support Officer) Ms R Glennie (Pupil Support Officer) Ms A Oliver (Pupil Support Assistant)
Pupil Support Assistants	Ms A Beruwien Ms S Cairns Mr L Leung Ms N Mayes Mr M Nowak Ms L Perrie Ms E Rensner
Support for Pupils	Mr L Smith (PSL – across all Houses) Mr E Brodie (PSL – Braidlaw)

	Ms S Dunn (PSL – Caerketton Tu-F) Ms S Kupisz (PSL – Caerketton M) Mr M Hollis (PSL – Allermuir) Ms S Kerr (PSL – Darrach)
Primary to Secondary Transition Teacher	Ms M Wilson
School Counsellors	Ms P Bye Ms J Newman
School Support Assistant (Welfare)	Ms F Hook
Librarian	Mr D McCann
SDS Careers Officers	Ms P Jack Ms M Welsh
DYW Officer	Ms E Hazley
Admin Officer	Ms D Bridges
Office Staff	Ms A Broomfield Ms M Edwards Ms L Finlayson Ms D Scott Ms L Turner Ms J Young
School Support Assistant	Mr R Mulligan
IT/AV Technician	Mr P Keenan
School Nurse	Ms A Crispin
Police Liaison Officer	PC G Serafin
Catering Team Leader	Ms L Wolff
Staff On Leave in 2025/26	
	Ms C Gilruth
	Ms A Hardie
	Ms A Ryan
	Ms A Stewart
	Ms A Wallace

Senior Management Remits

Role of the Headteacher

The role of the Headteacher is, within the resources available, to conduct the affairs of the school to the benefit of pupils and the community it serves, through implementing policies set by the education authority under the overall direction of the Director of Education.

The Headteacher is accountable to the education authority for the following list of duties and takes responsibility for:

- Leadership, good management and strategic direction of the school
- School policy on behaviour management of pupils
- Management of all staff, and the provision of professional advice and guidance to colleagues
- Management and development of the school curriculum
- Advisor to the Parent Council
- Participating in the selection and recruitment of staff
- Promoting the continual professional development of all staff and to ensure that all staff have an annual review of their development needs
- Working in partnership with parents, other professionals, agencies and schools
- Managing the health and safety of all within the school

Role of Depute Headteacher

The role of the Depute Headteacher is to assist and, where necessary, to deputise for the Headteacher in the conduct of school affairs. All DHTs at Firrhill have the following responsibilities:

- Strategic responsibility for National and CEC Priorities
- Overview of a House
- Faculty link to a group of departments
- Ethos of the school
- Line management of staff
- Deputising for the Headteacher

The table on the following page summarises the key responsibilities for each Depute Headteacher:

	Mr Else	Mr Isdale	Ms Clegg
House(s)	Allermuir	Braidlaw & Darrach	Caerketton
Strategic Responsibility	Pupil Support	Raising Attainment & Achievement	Learning, Teaching & Assessment
Other Responsibilities	• Activities Week • Assemblies • Attendance & Punctuality • Behaviour Management • Business Placements	• Assessment (incl. Assessment Fortnight and SNSA) • Calendar • Course Choice • Curriculum Development	• Career Long Prof. Learning • Christmas Concert • Commemoration Evening

	• Careers • Chaplaincy Link • Child Protection Co-ordinator • Cluster Link • DYW • Ethos S1-4 (oversight of Ethos S5/6) • GIRFEC • Literacy across the School • Personalised Support • PSE • Celebrating Wider Achievement (incl. Colours Awards) • Rights Respecting School • School/College Partnerships & 16+	• IT across the School • School Communications & Press Links • SEEMiS (with LE) • Self Evaluation for Self Improvement (incl. QA & SCE) • Reporting • SQA (with LE) • Timetable • Tracking, Monitoring & Mentoring • Whole School Challenge	• Depute Child Protection Co-ordinator • Family Learning • Learner Participation (incl. SSC) • Learning & Teaching • New Staff Induction • Numeracy across the School • PRD • School Excursions • Staff Handbook • Students and Probationers • UCAS
	Year Oversight S1 & 4	Year Oversight S2 & 5	Year Oversight S3 & 6
	Leadership, development and line management of: English Expressive Arts Modern Languages Support for Pupils Link with: Group Tutors/registration procedures	Leadership, development and line management of: Social Subjects: Geography & History Modern Studies & RME Technologies: FCT & D&T Technologies: Business & Computing Link with: Administrative Staff & Librarian	Leadership, development and line management of: Health and Wellbeing Mathematics Science Link with: Technicians & Dining Room

DHT remits are subject to regular review and revision.

School Business Manager

- SQA Coordinator
- SEEMIS/ICT including curriculum management & reporting system
- Health and Safety Manager
- Financial Management
- HR Management of Support Staff
- Support Staff recruitment
- Facilities management – liaison manager
- School administration
- Data Management / Archive

- External Lets management

Pastoral Care – Pupil Support Team

The school has a comprehensive system of pastoral care called Pupil Support, Support for Pupils (SfP), Support for Learning (SfL) and behaviour Support and are brought together to improve our ability to look after the individual needs of every pupil.

The school is divided into four Houses: Allermuir, Braidlaw, Caerketton and Darrach. Each House has an allocated Depute Headteacher and Pupil Support Leader. The Support for Learning Leader and SfL teachers work across all four houses.

Support for Learning Team

We recognize that all pupils are individuals and have different needs, The Support for Learning Department is responsible for ensuring that individual pupils' learning needs are met by working in the following ways:

- Liaising with primary schools about pupils who have had or who may require learning support in S1
- Communicating useful information about pupils to relevant subject teachers
- Regular contact with pupils themselves through in class support, one to one conversations or via small group direct tuition
- Setting up and administering Additional Support Plans and Individual Education Plans where appropriate
- With parental approval, seeking advice on meeting individual needs with relevant outside support agencies
- Consulting with staff on appropriate support strategies or materials

First Level Guidance

The school has a First Level Guidance system to further enhance the pastoral care of pupils. Tutors have contact with their class every morning during Registration. The Tutor will monitor attendance and ensure that pupils receive relevant notices or information from the bulletin and other sources as appropriate.

Support for Pupils Staff

Support for Pupils staff aim to ensure that each pupil is known well by his/her Support for Pupils teacher and feels secure and safe in Firrhill High School. The Support for Pupils teacher is someone to whom the pupil can turn when in need of personal, social, vocational or curricular support and is an important link between home and school for parents.

Personal and Social Education

Personal and Social Education (PSE) is a fundamental aspect of the education of the whole child. It is essentially concerned with the development of life skills. Our PSE Curriculum has been developed with extensive input from pupils to create a relevant and stimulating course. All aspects of a child's experience at home in school and outwith school contribute to personal and social development.

The Learning Centre

Sometimes, for a number of reasons, a pupil may find it difficult to access their learning in their normal classroom. The Learning Centre is a resource base within the school where pupils attend instead of going to their normal classroom. Usually this is for a short period of time but, when and if appropriate, a pupil may be timetabled for longer periods in the Learning Centre.

Working in the Learning Centre is not used as a sanction. Working in the Learning Centre enables support, often 1:1, to be provided to pupils to, for example, enable them to better understand work they are finding challenging, to catch up on work following a period of absence or to rebuild confidence in returning to the usual classroom. The Learning Centre is staffed mainly by Support for Learning staff but subject specialist staff are also timetabled to support pupils where necessary.

The Wellbeing Team

In common with all CEC Secondary Schools, Firrhill has a dedicated Wellbeing Team to work with young people who benefit from additional specialist teaching input to enable them to fully engage with the curriculum and the broad range of learning opportunities.

This approach involves small groups of pupils working with staff on confidence, literacy, numeracy and social and other skills necessary to participate fully in lessons. The programme forms part of the normal week of lessons for pupils and the aim is to reach a point where pupils attend all their timetabled lessons and do not need to attend the wellbeing group.

Behaviour Support

To address the issue of improving behaviour, Firrhill High school offers a Behaviour Support resource that consists primarily of the Pupil Support team offering in-class support and /or Support Base time to pupils who have experienced difficulties. The school is always pleased to welcome visitors to the Support for Pupils Department. Support for Pupils staff can be contacted by phone by dialling the school number. If the member of staff you are trying to contact is not available a message can be left with the school office.

Armed Forces Pupils

Firrhill is very proud of its long tradition in welcoming young people whose parents serve in the military or are veterans. Our close proximity to both Redford and Dregghorn Barracks means we are the catchment school for those young people who are living in the accommodation close to the barracks.

Armed Forces pupils face some additional challenges through changes of school and having to come to terms with new educational systems, including different kinds of examinations and qualifications. There is also the challenge, and opportunity, of starting in a new school and forming new friendships.

We use a variety of approaches to help Armed Forces young people settle quickly into Firrhill and we have a number of support mechanisms to provide the specific assistance that those young people may need throughout their time at school. We also indicate our thanks

and recognition of the service and sacrifice that those in our military forces give, especially during the Remembrance month of November.

Section Two: Parental Involvement in the School

Parental involvement is very important as we know children and young people do better on a wide range of measures. These positive effects include:

- Better behaviour
- More confidence and greater self-esteem
- Higher attendance rates
- A lower risk of exclusion
- More enthusiasm about learning
- Better results.

This section contains information about our Learning Together Framework and how parents and carers can get involved in their child's learning.

You can also find out more about the ethos of our school, what our values are and our aspirations for our pupils including how we celebrate pupil success, and links we have with partner organisations and the wider local, national and international community.

Lastly, it includes information on City of Edinburgh Council structures to support the voice of parents and carers. This includes your Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association/Parent Association, how to contact them and how parents and carers can get involved in the life and work of the school.

Connect <https://www.facebook.com/groups/connectingparentgroups> is the national organisation for Parent Teacher Associations and Parent Associations in Scotland, Parent Councils can join too, and it runs an independent helpline service for all parents.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland <https://www.npfs.org.uk> has been 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.

Equality

City of Edinburgh Council is committed to improving the quality of life for those who face inequality, harassment, discrimination and prejudice and to harness the talent and celebrate the difference of all who live in the city. This commitment is set out in the Equality, Diversity and Rights Framework which can be viewed on the council's website. As a school, we are committed to fulfilling our obligation of equity and excellence for all learners, with particular reference to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, transgender status or pregnancy/maternity) and other factors such as poverty.

Children's Rights

The rights of children and young people are at the heart of our code to practice. They are laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC ensures that children and young people grow up healthy and safe and that their views are taken into considerations in decisions that affect them.

We have, for many years, embedded Children's Rights in the ethos, culture and practices of our school. We are very proud to be a unicef **Gold: Rights Respecting School**. Originally accredited in 2019 we were accredited for a further three years in March 2022. This is a formal recognition of our outstanding work on the promotion, protection and practice of Children's Rights. We are only of only eight secondary schools to be twice accredited at Gold in Scotland since the award first began over 10 years ago.

Values and Vision

We are committed to supporting the development of the whole pupil and as a result, wish to encourage their development in spiritual, moral, social and cultural terms.

- We value ambition and effort
- We know that success only comes from hard work
- We are not afraid of failure and use our failures to learn from
- We respect ourselves and others
- We are a Rights Respecting School
- We encourage and support each other
- We value diversity and be inclusive
- We enable each individual to develop the knowledge and skills needed to reach their full potential
- We provide high quality, enriching learning experiences
- We foster lifelong learning, working in partnership with parents and a range of organisations
- We have high expectations of success within an inclusive and positive environment
- We encourage all pupils to make a positive contribution to their health and well-being, to society and to the community in which they live
- We are committed to supporting the in social, spiritual, moral and cultural development of every pupil

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Every child and young person has the right to a high quality education. Positive relationships are fundamental to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. All staff focus on positive relationships by looking for opportunities to encourage learner skills, recognise effort and build on strengths. Positive relationships form a foundation that minimises difficulties occurring.

We have adopted the following key principles to create a caring, supportive, learning environment:

- an ethos that values positive, restorative and respectful relationships and promotes shared values
- an inclusive and safe learning environment which supports children and develops their skills and resilience enabling them to become responsible for their own behaviour
- recognising that all behaviour is communication and that understanding what is being communicated and the underlying needs is crucial for assessing and meeting children's needs and finding solutions.

The school uses approaches and strategies which are designed to help prevent and de-escalate difficult situations and identify and support individual support needs.

Positive approaches to support behaviour focusses on relationships, skills building, restoration and when appropriate logical or natural consequences appropriate to the child.

We have a small number of easily remembered rules which everyone in our learning community knows. These are summarised in three words:

1. Ready
2. Respectful
3. Safe

These form the basis of all our conversations in relation to behavioural expectations. It is helpful if parents can also discuss these rules/values with their children if there has been an incident in school. The purpose of these conversations is to find solutions and develop skills that will prevent problems in the future.

We wish to encourage a partnership with you to ensure the best possible standards of pupil behaviour. We work to promote respectful relationships between all members of the school community and to ensure that pupils enjoy a focussed learning environment. We discuss our expectations of pupils with them regularly. These expectations are connected strongly to our school vision.

We expect pupils to:

- Come prepared
- Arrive on time
- Be safe and considerate
- Follow instructions
- Respect each other and their environment
- Work to the best of their ability

We want to ensure that pupils:

- Are treated fairly
- Can be successful
- Can achieve their potential
- Learn in a safe and productive environment

Most issues can be speedily resolved by the class teacher via advice, a change of position in class or sometimes different activities. If pupils have difficulties meeting these standards we have staff who can support them to develop these habits via group or one to one support. If a conflict arises this is usually resolved by establishing a shared understanding of what has happened and what needs to be done to resolve the situation so that learning can proceed.

We look to use restorative practice where a conflict has developed. This does not mean that there are not consequences to an action that may have affected others adversely but that

the pupil concerned will understand what has gone wrong and how best to avoid that same situation in the future.

Staff will only work with pupils after school to catch up missed work with parents' prior agreement. They may however speak with a pupil for up to 10 minutes after the end of the day to resolve a situation quickly.

Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice Behaviour Among Children and Young People

City of Edinburgh Council updated their anti-bullying guidance in session 2020-21.

As an authority, we are committed to equalities and the wellbeing and protection of children and young people from bullying and prejudice. We work to prevent bullying and prejudicial behaviours and attitudes, and to develop positive relationships with all members of our school communities and wider partners. This work is part of our approach to Getting it Right for Every Child, creating communities that allow children to be Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included.

To support and further improve the positive relationship within schools, equalities groups, which have a wide representation of all stakeholders and reflect the diversity of the school community, will work to take forward the key messages that are included in the guidelines and to ensure that all children have access to support, have their views listened and responded to and are involved in the decisions that will make continue to make their school a place to feel safe, happy and nurturing.

We are committed to equalities and the wellbeing and protection children and young people from bullying and prejudice by other children and young people. All schools have a procedure which is informed by the overarching 'Preventing and Responding to Bullying amongst Children and Young People' procedure. We recognise that policy and procedures alone will not address the prevention of bullying; through our core practices (Relationships, Rights Respecting, Resilience, Restorative) we aim to build positive relationships and a culture and ethos which ensure respect, equality and inclusion. We promote anti-bullying and anti-discriminatory attitudes and behaviours through preventative, pro-active and responsive approaches.

Bullying and prejudice-based behaviours are not tolerated. The school will put in place appropriate support for all children and young people involved in a bullying or prejudice-based incident. We will support children who display bullying or prejudiced behaviour to identify the feelings and views that have caused them to act in this way. We will challenge these views and support children, through education and learning, to develop alternative ways of behaving. Working together with parents is an essential part of our approach to preventing and responding to bullying. When bullying or prejudice happen it is important that all parents involved work with the school to resolve the problems in the best interests of their child.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Every member of the Firrhill school community has the right to feel happy, safe and included.

Our shared values of mutual respect between staff and pupils and our high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment form the basis of our positive school ethos. Within our wider school community we promote tolerance and understanding of one another and we value diversity.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination.

We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals.

We recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic status or any combination of these.

Definitions

Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects, regardless of whether these were the intended effects. People who are bullied are upset and hurt, physically or emotionally, by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying behaviour is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Bullying behaviours may include

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours
- Hitting, tripping, kicking
- Stealing and damaging belongings
- Sending an abusive text, image, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment or image on a social networking site (Cyberbullying)
- Making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be. (This may include racism, sexism, disability or homophobia, as well as differences in socio-economic background.)

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging, social networks and other electronic communication channels.

Equalities

We use the legal definition of 'equalities' which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics - for example being gay, lesbian or bisexual or from a minority ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those of particular faith groups. The Equality Act 2010 defines these as 'protected groups'. Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from less affluent backgrounds are also included as equalities groups.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and effective implementation maintenance of the policy.

Pupils are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that other children may be afraid to report
- Learn, understand and question what bullying behaviour is
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school
- Promote positive attitudes and good relationships

Teachers are expected to:

- Be proactive in implementing the policy
- Treat all allegations seriously, dealing with them appropriately and effectively
- Keep records
- Inform the equalities co-ordinator of any instances of bullying
- Promote positive attitudes and good relationships

Parents are expected to:

- Support our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Encourage their children to be positive members of the school community
- Discuss with their child's Pupil Support Leader any concerns that their child may be experiencing
- Help to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school
- Speak to the Headteacher if their concerns are serious and ongoing

Parents Welcome

We welcome parental involvement as research has shown that when parents are involved children do better in school. Firrhill is fortunate in having a very supportive and active parent body which works with pupils and staff to make the school a positive learning environment and to maximise opportunities for our cohort.

Parents are encouraged to actively engage with their children's education via the pupil planner where children set their own targets in consultation with staff. The school website is a valuable source of information for parents, as it has details of courses, celebrates our pupils' achievements and highlights the many opportunities for pupils.

Learning Together Framework



Parental involvement describes ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of their child's school. Parental engagement is about parents' interaction with their children's learning. Schools and partners can play a vital role in supporting families to do this effectively by:

- enabling ongoing, two-way communications between home and school;
- supporting parents to contribute to school improvement and making decisions that affect the school;
- using the skills of parents to enrich the curriculum where appropriate; and
- providing opportunities for families to come together and engage with learning

Aims and Rationale

The purpose of our strategy is to ensure excellence and equity in parental involvement and engagement within our schools. It will ensure:

- we have the capacity and skills to support parental involvement and engagement;
- involvement and engagement is monitored and evaluated;
- effective communication is in place between home and school;
- parents can see how their involvement is influencing school improvement;
- we provide appropriate opportunities to involve all parents, whatever their ability, background or interest, to participate in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services and facilities that impact on their children;
- all staff who work with children and young people see the importance of engaging and working with parents.

Parental Involvement

'Parental involvement is about supporting pupils and their learning. It is about parents and teachers working together in partnership to help children become more confident learners.'

Parental Involvement Act, 2006

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning and the school encourages both parents and pupils to attend parents' evenings. To assist parents in making decisions about their choices, the school issues regular reports as well as having online booklets and information sessions at crucial transition points such as from primary to secondary, S3 to Senior Phase, etc. Parents' views are regularly sought on a wide variety of subjects.

Getting involved in the life and work of your child's school can include:

- Establishing and reviewing the Vision, aims, rationale of setting/school
- Improvement planning
- Decision-making on education matters affecting child's learning
- Developing/reviewing policies
- Organising events for families
- Using parents' skills to enhance/enrich the curriculum
- Short-life working groups
- Volunteering
- Developing the young workforce
- Parent Council/Parent Teacher Association
- Parental representation at school, local authority and national levels

Parental Engagement

'Parental engagement can be considered as active involvement in learning. Parental engagement represents a greater 'commitment, ownership of action' than parental involvement within educational settings such as early learning and childcare or schools.'

Goodall and Montgomery, 2014

Your child's school will actively involve you in their child's learning. This can include:

- Discussions between parents/practitioners and children
- Focusing on how families can build on what they already do to help child's learning and to provide a supportive learning environment at home
- Providing clear and regular communication from school to home
- Making good use of information technology and the school website

Family Learning

'Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage.'

Family Learning Network, 2016

Family Learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning.

Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning.

Learning at Home

'Learning at home recognises the vital role that parents, family members, peers and practitioners play in children's learning and development.'

Review of Learning at Home 2018

The learning which happens in the home, outdoors and/or in the community, including organised or active learning opportunities. Everyday activities that families already do can be learning at home. These can include:

- play
- leisure activities
 - fun events
 - sports
 - trips
 - cultural or volunteering experiences
 - school related activities such as homework, reading and sharing books.

Parental Consultation

We offer opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress with teachers through arranged meetings. You will be advised when these meetings take place. Over and above these set meetings, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for an interview. Please see section two of this handbook for more details on home/school partnership.

Parental Consultation/Reporting to Parents Throughout the Year

Our reporting calendar provides regular updates and reports to parents.

Each pupil will receive 3 or 4 tracking reports (dependent on year group) and one written report during the course of the year.

Tracking reports will provide a snapshot of progress towards attainment targets in each subject and written reports will provide a more detailed summary of progress and will identify next steps for improvement.

We are undertaking a significant review and development of our Parental Engagement during the 2024-25 school year and we expect the range of engagement opportunities to increase.

Parent Forum and Parent Council

The Parent Council is the formal representative body for parents / carers with children attending school. Parent Councils are different in each school to enable them to meet the needs of parents / carers locally.

Parents are welcomed to:

- be involved with their child's education and learning;
- be active participants in the life of the school; and
- express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with their children's schools.

All parents / carers are automatically members of the Parent Forum at their child's school.

As a member of the Parent Forum all parents can expect to:

- receive information about the school and its activities;
- hear about what partnership with parents means in our school;
- be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you;
- identify issues you want the parent council to work on with the school;
- be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and the education it provides;
- work in partnership with staff; and
- enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way possible.

The Parent Forum decides how their representatives on the Parent Council are chosen and how the Parent Council operates. Parents / carers are encouraged to volunteer or put themselves forward to be chosen as representatives of the Parent Council if they wish.

The main aims of the Parent Council are:

- To support the school in its work with pupils
- To represent the views of parents
- To promote contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
- To report to the Parent Forum
- To be involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff
- To raise funds for the school for the benefit of pupils (in some schools the PTA/PA fulfils this role).

Parent Council Email: firrhillpc@gmail.com

Parent Council Chair: to be elected at the first Parent Council meeting

For more information on parental involvement or to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk.

Fund Raising Committee (Parent teacher Association)

The PTA is mainly responsible for arranging events for parents and raising funds for the

school. The Fund Raising Committee provide invaluable support at major school events including the provision of refreshments. Volunteers are always welcome - please contact the Committee if you want to join in.

PTA Email: firrhillpta@gmail.com

PTA Chair: position to be filled

Connect (formerly The Scottish Parent Teacher Council) is the national organisation for PTAs in Scotland, Parent Councils can join too, and it runs an independent helpline service for all parents. You can find them at: <https://connect.scot/>

The National Parent Forum of Scotland has been 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. Their web address is: <https://www.npfs.org.uk/>

Locality groups and the citywide Special Schools Group

Locality groups and the citywide Special Schools Group enables Parent Councils members to get together to discuss common issues and have their views on local and citywide issues heard.

The above groups meet four times a year. There are four locality groups: north west, north east, south west and south east. There is also one citywide special schools group, and a mainstream group for the parents of children with an additional support need.

The Consultative Committee with Parents

The Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP) is a forum that gives parents and carers the chance to discuss citywide and national issues with members of our staff and other groups.

The CCwP meets four times a year. Parent members are chosen at the meetings of the locality groups and citywide special schools group. Two parents from the CCwP are put forward to take part in the Education, Children and Families Committee. These posts last up to two years.

Education Children's and Families Committee

The committee has one parent representative who speaks on the behalf of parents, taking their views from their work in a school, locality group and the Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP).

Who to ask

All questions/ requests for information can be sent to parental.engagement@edinburgh.gov.uk

Your email will be forwarded onto the right person/department to provide the answer/ support you need.

Pupil Representation

Each register class elects a class representative. This representative attends the relevant Year Council. These councils meet several times per year and are chaired by members of the Senior Student Council. The DHT House Head and Pupil Support Leader(s) will also sometimes attend.

The Head Boy and Head Girl, their Deputes, the School Captains and the House Captains are appointed through an application, assembly presentation and interview process. The interview consists of a presentation and questions and the selection panel consists of staff, including the Headteacher, and younger pupils.

These S6 pupils form the Senior Student Council (SSC) and this body works to support whole school priorities. Together the Senior Student Council and the Whole School Council are available for the Headteacher to consult and to advise the Headteacher on matters of importance to pupils.

Serving on the Senior Student Council is, at times, a demanding role and members of the SSC can expect to be called upon to represent the school in a variety of ways. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to give something back to their school community and also to develop their leadership and organisational skills as well as building confidence in their own abilities. These are valuable skills to develop as these young people move on from Firrhill at the end of S6 into whatever new opportunities await them.

A variety of ad hoc pupil groups are formed each year to provide information, ideas and guidance on a variety of matters that are important for the school at that time.

Our Equalities. GSEA and Rights Respecting groups all meet regularly and contribute greatly to our work in these areas. This includes generating materials which are used for staff training.

Section Three: School Curriculum

This section describes how the curriculum is planned and delivered in our school including the range of subjects and subject areas your child will be learning. It also includes information on how pupils develop skills for learning, life and work, including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in and out of the classroom.

As well as giving you information about the statutory curriculum requirements we have included details on sports and outdoor activities available to pupils and the range of facilities available within the school.

Details of how parents will be informed about sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness are included as well as information about religious instruction and observance and arrangements for parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child.

Edinburgh Learns for Life –A Vision for Education



Our Vision

The Edinburgh Learns for Life vision is to create a fairer, healthier, greener future for everyone. We will work together to ensure that high quality learning takes place in schools and in the wider communities where young people live, learn and work. All our young people will be supported to make progress in their learning, pursue their interests and passions, without being limited by barriers. We will provide inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for everyone. Learners will be provided with opportunities to lead, and shape, their own learning where a wide range of pathways are valued equally. Through working together, we will form relationships, and connections, which support positive health and wellbeing and reduce poverty.

Curriculum for Excellence

Bringing learning to life and life to learning.

Curriculum for Excellence has now been fully implemented across Scotland for all 3-18 year-olds. It aims to raise standards, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world.

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

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of knowledge and skills.

Every child is entitled to a broad, and deep, general education, whatever their level and ability. Every single teacher and practitioner will be responsible for the development of literacy and numeracy from Early Level through to Senior Phase.

The curriculum develops skills for learning, life and work, bringing real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links knowledge in one subject area to another helping make connections in their learning.

It develops skills which can enable children to think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.

There are new procedures for assessing progress and ensuring children achieve their potential. There are Standardised National Assessments which take place during S3 and National Qualifications (National 1 to National 5, Higher & Advanced Higher) which pupils will sit, as appropriate, during the Senior Phase (S4 – S6).

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

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

The subjects studied in S1-3 are:

Curriculum area	Courses
Expressive Arts	Art & Design, Drama, Music, Music Technology
Health & Wellbeing	Physical Education, Personal & Social Education
Languages	English, Literacy, French, German, Spanish
Mathematics	Maths, Numeracy
Religious & Moral	Religious & Moral Education
Sciences	Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering
Social Studies	Geography, History, Modern Studies
Technological Studies	Home Economics, Food Technology, Hospitality, Design & Manufacture, Design & Technology, Graphic Communication, Metalwork, Woodwork, Computing, Business Studies
<i>All pupils in S1 & S2 also follow a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) course.</i>	

The S1 to S3 curriculum (BGE) provides a broad and balanced curriculum which allows pupils to begin to personalise their curriculum through a limited course guided choice process at the end of S2 and a more significant course choice process at the end of S3 to enable pupils to move into the Senior Phase well prepared for the NQ courses they will be taking to qualification level.

S2 Skills Choice options

These courses are designed to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to build on employability skills and that all pupils:

- Are ambitious and better prepared for the world of work
- Experience progressive learning that connects more directly to employment, in which creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation are increasingly embedded
- Are supported to develop an international mind-set, equipped for rapidly changing and increasingly globalised world
- Understand the importance of key skills to future lives.

The career management skills framework includes employability, communication, problem solving, working with others and self-awareness skills and these are covered to some extent in each of these courses.

Each course described below will run for 8 weeks, 2 periods per week. Pupils should choose 5 options from a selection of courses. The list below gives an indication of the types of courses offered but is not a definitive list of what is, or will be, on offer in the current school year :

- Global Issues and how they affect you
- "An Iron Curtain": the era of the Cold War
- Animal Ethics
- Clay work in Art
- Dance
- Drama Community Performance
- Fashion
- Hair dressing and Make-up Artistry
- Makerspace
- Music Performance
- Music Technology
- Media
- Numeracy
- Outdoor Learning
- Science Skills
- Spanish
- Sports and Recreation
- Sports Leadership
- Tennis
- Computing

In S1 and S2 all pupils study all subjects with the exception of the choice offered in the S2 Skills Choice Curriculum. Time allocations are balanced between the curricular areas over the two years.

In S3 pupils continue to study English & Literacy, Maths & Numeracy, PE, PSE and RME. They are able to choose which subject to continue to study in each of the other curricular areas and in Modern Languages, along with two further choices from any curricular area, allowing for personalisation and specialisation of their curriculum.

During the S4 to S6 curriculum pupils follow courses which lead to qualifications, as well as study of Personal and Social Education and RME.

In S4 pupils continue with Maths & Numeracy, English & Literacy, Physical Education, PSE and RME. They also choose to continue with up to five of the other seven subject choices they made in S3. This means most pupils will be certificated in seven National Qualifications by the end of S4.

There are other more specialised choices in vocational education for pupils who are likely to leave at the end of S4, including the possibility of work experience or placement. All pupils will sit assessments leading to qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy at National 3, National 4 or National 5 level.

For the vast majority of pupils returning to Firrhill for S5 is the most appropriate decision. For the small number of pupils where this may not be the best option, we will have discussed this with the pupil and their parents well before the end of the year and will have provided assistance and guidance on the most appropriate post-16 route.

In S5/6 most pupils will choose five subjects at National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher level (usually S6 only), or may increase the number of subjects studied by picking from those choices available to S4 pupils. Pupils are able to increase the range of choices available to them by studying a subject at another school or one of the local Further Education Colleges. There are also further opportunities for work placements and enrichment activities. This is particularly true in S6 when pupils are able to choose from a wide variety of activities.

Throughout the senior school attainment is a priority and all pupils are expected to aim for the highest possible standards in all of their subjects. There are, however, many opportunities for pupils to add value to their curriculum by taking part in leadership, mentoring, paired reading, peer mediation, prefect duties and committee work. There is also a high level of support including mentoring by staff and target setting.

Course Choice Options

The process of making choices for the following year begins shortly after the Christmas holiday although it is likely that teachers will have been discussing best options for future study with pupils long before that time.

A detailed Course Choice Booklet is issued electronically via the school website usually in January and this includes detailed information on the courses available in the following year

and instructions for pupils and parents on the process of making choices and the deadlines for submitting those choices.

We operate a free choice system at Firrhill which means that we do not pre-determine 'columns' of subjects. We do this to give the maximum possible flexibility and choice to our pupils. However, the job of timetabling a free choice is more difficult and time-consuming so we do insist that deadlines for submitting pupil choices are met. Late submissions may be less likely to be accommodated as the process of timetabling the 'on-time' submissions will already have started. To avoid any anxiety please submit all course choice information by the deadlines indicated.

Active Learning

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises the value of an active learning approach. In the early years, children will have a range of learning experiences that include planned and purposeful play and stimulating learning which engages and challenges children's thinking using real life and imaginary situations. As children progress through school they continue to be involved in active learning experiences which are engaging and give them ownership of their own learning.

Planning Children's and Young People's Learning

Teachers at Firrhill share their learning intentions with pupils on a day-to-day basis by setting out and, as appropriate, agreeing the aims of individual pieces of work.

Longer-term planning also takes place in a variety of forms: individual staff work, department and faculty team planning or working with colleagues in our primary cluster and subject specific staff at other schools. Staff plan for a variety of experiences in and out of the classroom and regularly consult with pupils on the quality of the learning experience.

In S3 pupils have the opportunity to do an extended business placement where they work on a group challenge and in second year they are given a commercial project where they develop a product and sell it to a 'Dragon's Den' type audience. Staff actively seek out outside partnership agencies to make the learning experience more relevant.

Homework

Pupils are regularly given homework to support their learning and to encourage them to become more organised and self-supporting in their learning. Homework tasks will be given where a teacher feels a particular child or group of children may benefit from it.

The homework will be organised according to the stage and ability of the child, it can arise from all curricular areas, and it may include written, oral or practical activities. The tasks set will be interesting, worthwhile and challenging for the child.

Parents are encouraged to support pupils with organising and completing their homework as a means of keeping them up to date with the work of the class and the child's progress and to promote partnership between the school and parents. Homework provides an opportunity to consolidate what has been learned in class, and makes you aware of what your child is learning and provides you with a useful discussion starter. Homework is also an

integral part of school work. Parental interest and co-operation in ensuring homework is undertaken is appreciated but please remember **it is your child's homework – not yours!**

Individual subjects may post details about homework and how to receive support with work on the website. Many faculties operate catch-up and/or homework sessions where pupils can complete homework and get assistance from teachers. The times and locations of these sessions are made known to pupils and usually via the website.

Religious Instruction and Observance

At Firrhill we have six assemblies across the school year which encourage children to reflect on the positive role they can play in the school, the community and the world. Our assemblies recognise the important symbolism of particular times of year to many different religions and seek to promote an understanding of different faiths without promoting a specific single religion. All children are encouraged to attend but if a parent wishes their child not to attend they can withdraw them from the religious observance assembly programme.

Assemblies are linked to the work of the school and a variety of pupils take part in their delivery, for example the school's charitable sixth year committee link the message of hope connected with the December assembly to celebrating the school's fund raising.

The school works with a number of partners in the creation of our assembly programme.

Month	Theme	School Group
September	Values that make a caring community	Senior Student Council Rights Respecting Group
October	Harvest : plenty and famine Custody of the planet	Eco Group
November	Armistice : importance of actively working for Peace	Senior Student Council Musicians & Readers
December	Good Mental health	School Counsellor Rights Respecting Group
January	Holocaust memorial day Inhumanity/Humanity	Seniors involved in Lessons from Auschwitz project
December	Light in darkness Appeal for foodbank Showcase juniors working in craft club	School chaplain Speaker from Sleep out Project Junior choir
May	Rebirth Theme of change Importance of creativity to our well being	Art faculty School chaplain

Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious instruction and /or observance should contact the head teacher in writing and alternative arrangements will be made for your child.

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:

<https://www.readingchallenge.scot/>

A reading app called Bookzilla, aimed at S1-S3 pupils, helps them find and recommend books and to set themselves reading challenges.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils during lunchtime and after school. Information about the clubs and activities on offer is displayed in school for pupils and will also be made available on the school website.

A number of revision classes are run both during and after school. These are, again, publicised in school and through the website.

New activities and revision classes can be added to the programme throughout the year and these additional opportunities are notified to pupils in school and on the website.

Active Schools

The fundamental aim of Active Schools is to give school-aged children the tools, motivation and the opportunities to be more active throughout their school years and into adulthood, and to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. These opportunities are available before, during and after school, as well as in the wider community. For further information contact the Active Schools Coordinator, Lorna Norman. lorna.norman@ea.edin.sch.uk

Assessment

As pupils progress through our school, teachers use a range of assessment strategies, including Assessment for Learning strategies as well as setting more traditional tests. Pupils are also involved in assessing their own progress and developing their next steps.

Assessment data, in all its forms, provides teachers with vital information about the progress of each child. Consequently it is very important that all pupils take every assessment, by whatever means, seriously. There is no such thing as an assessment that 'doesn't count'.

We recognise that all pupils do not develop and progress at the same rate and, therefore, we use both group and individual methods to ensure that all pupils are given appropriate instruction and the opportunity to succeed.

Please contact the school as soon as possible if you have any concerns about your child's progress.

Assessment & Reporting

Staff at Firrhill will monitor pupils' progress and give regular feedback on how they are progressing and discuss with pupils what the next steps in their learning should be. Answers in class, written work and performance are all used to form an overview of how pupils are progressing.

After certain key pieces of work departments will match pupils' attainment against National Standards to ensure that they are progressing appropriately and to report using CfE levels.

In Third and Fourth Year, pupils are assessed regularly. Internal assessments may include Investigating, Talking, Designing, Problem Solving, Performing, Handling Information and Practical Abilities as well as written assessments.

Fifth and Sixth Year pupils, studying Higher and/or Advanced Higher courses, will also be assessed regularly and sit practice examinations in November/December.

All pupils will be issued with one written report and three or four tracking reports each year. These reports will focus on progress being made and on the skills a pupil has mastered. For pupils in the Senior Phase (SP) these reports will assist parents to understand what the pupil's progress in a subject will mean in terms of likely public exam performance.

S1 parents have an opportunity to meet PSLs in October for a 'settling-in meeting'. This is an opportunity for parents to hear directly from the PSL how their child has settled into Firrhill and to start building a strong working relationship between parent and PSL which is so important to supporting and developing the potential of every pupil.

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5/6
Written Report*	21.11.25	05.12.25	07.11.25	03.10.25	24.10.25
Tracking Report 1*	19.09.25	19.09.25	19.09.25	19.09.25	19.09.25
Tracking Report 2*	19.12.25	19.12.25	19.12.25	19.12.25	19.12.25
Tracking Report 3*	13.03.26	13.03.26	13.03.26	13.03.26	13.03.26
Tracking Report 4*	22.05.26	22.05.26	22.05.26		
Parents' Evening	17.03.26	10.02.26	04.02.26	15.01.26	21.01.26

** Report dates indicate the start of the week the report will be sent home. The report will not necessarily be sent on the Monday of that week. Please wait until the end of the week before notifying us of a missing report.*

Parents will be given the opportunity to attend a parents' meeting to discuss their child's progress with staff once per session. At other times, parents will be contacted if there is

concern about a child's progress or behaviour. We are equally ready to meet with parents by appointment, if they feel concerned about their child's progress.

Progression Pathways in the Senior Phase (S4-S6)

We are committed to supporting all children and young people into positive and sustained leaver destinations. By curriculum pathway we mean: "the totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education" (Building the Curriculum 3, 2008) - where all learners are on the right route to the right job, through the right course via the right information.

Career Information, Advice and Personal Support

Through personal support we must build the confidence of our children and young people that they are making the right decisions about their learning pathways in line with their aspirations and abilities.

www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk is developing as a 'one-stop shop approach' to better signpost all qualifications, pathways and support for learners in Scotland. Each school has a dedicated *Skills Development Scotland* Careers Adviser who can support young people and parents at times of choice and change.

For information and support with career conversations go to: www.mykidscareer.com
My World of Work provides an online learner account that enables young people to develop their career management skills and record their attributes, skills, achievements and successes to help them plan their learner journey into work.
<https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/secondary-school-pupils>

The Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework (SCQF) helps people of all ages and circumstances to access the education and training that is appropriate to them over their lifetime. It can help you plan your learning and develop progression routes to follow, whatever your situation may be.

The SCQF helps you make sense of qualifications and plan the next stage of your learning journey. You can also compare vocational and more traditional qualifications and see that, although they can be different types of learning, in many cases they sit at the same SCQF Level.

Scottish qualifications are delivered at SCQF level 1-12, schools deliver qualifications up to SCQF 7 which is Advanced Higher. Course awards include National Progress Awards (NPA), Skills for Work Awards (SfW) as well as National Certificates (NC) and Higher National Certificates (HNC).

The following is a helpful guide to the SCQF for secondary school pupils:
<https://scqf.org.uk/media/1408/connecting-your-learning-journey-final-web-may-2018.pdf>

Parents and Carers can access further support on the SCQF here:
<https://scqf.org.uk/support/support-for-learners-parents/support-for-parentscarers/>

Your child may still be at school and about to make a transition to the next stage of their education or may already be at college or university. Wherever they are in their learning journey the SCQF is here to help you make sense of the range of Scottish qualifications, so you can support them to plan their next move.

Sometimes we know where we're going next and what we want to do. For example, your child might study Nationals, then Highers at school and be sure they're going to university next. However, they might prefer to undertake a Foundation Apprenticeship (SCQF Level 6) in S5-6 instead of a Higher or go to college and do some vocational training or learn whilst working through a Modern Apprenticeship (SCQF Levels 5-7). The SCQF can help young people work out their next move and the various pathways to employment.

The **Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)** website provides detailed information on all courses from National 3 – Advanced Higher:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45625.3728.html>

The **National Parent Forum of Scotland** has produced a range of leaflets providing useful summaries of qualifications and progression in the Senior phase:

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/senior-phase-in-a-nutshell/>

The Nutshell Series gives the key facts about National Qualifications (National 1-5 and Higher) including details of course assessment:

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series/nationals-in-a-nutshell-series/national-5/>

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/revision-guides/higher/>

Senior Phase School-College Partnership (SCP): The City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh College

The Senior Phase SCP can bridge the gap between young people's education and their employment opportunities through improved vocational and technical learning opportunities. Vocational pathways complement academic studies. They are also vital to helping young people develop skills that are crucial to Scotland's economy while exposing them to the more independent and self-reliant environment of college education.

Pooling resources and expertise between schools and colleges maximises what can be offered to young people.

How are the courses delivered?

Most courses run for an academic year, with some Foundation Apprenticeships running for two academic years. The majority of courses will be delivered over two school afternoons, usually Tuesday and Thursday, however some courses have a different attendance pattern so please check course duration and attendance patterns carefully.

Colleges use the same Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCN) as schools so young people should expect to see their college results alongside other school-based qualifications. Edinburgh College, like school, can provide additional support if required.

<http://www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk/Schools/Are-You-Still-At-School/SCP-Programme>

What is a Foundation Apprenticeship (SCQF Level 6)?

A Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) is a nationally recognised SCQF Level 6 qualification (same level as Higher) offering a combined classroom and work-based learning opportunity for senior phase pupils. It is delivered in partnership with employers, Edinburgh College and specialist learning providers, such as Edinburgh Early Learning Childcare Academy (EELCA).

The FA has been developed with Skills Development Scotland to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and work-based experience, relevant to occupations in growth industry sectors. The City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh College offer Foundation Apprenticeships in the following areas:

- Children and Young People
- Engineering, Civil Engineering
- Social Services and Health care
- Creative Design and Media
- Financial Services, Accountancy and Business Skills
- Scientific Technologies
- ICT Software Development
- Food and Drink technologies

What qualification does the FA provide?

Most FA programmes last two years, with learners beginning their FA in S5. There are some one-year FA programmes available for S6 learners. The FA is offered through the School-College Partnership, so learners will spend part of the school week at Edinburgh College or with a local employer and complete the FA alongside other senior phase courses.

Attainment is measured by ongoing assessment in college and in the workplace – there is no final exam. On successful completion of the course, learners will achieve a Joint Qualification Certificate for the Foundation Apprenticeship comprising a National Progression Award (NPA) and a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) at Level 6.

Several progression pathways will be open to learners including accelerated entry onto a Modern Apprenticeship or continued study at college or university, dependent on meeting entry requirements. The FA will support entry requirements to courses at University and College, and Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.

By giving earlier exposure to the world of work and undertaking work-based projects, the Foundation Apprenticeship will help young people develop the necessary skills, experience and knowledge employers seek, all while still at school.

More details can be found at:

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/foundation-apprenticeships/>
Gaelic-Medium Education

Gaelic-Medium Education (GME), is available at nursery, primary and secondary levels. There are Gaelic parent and toddler groups at various locations in the city. For more information visit their Facebook page [here](https://www.facebook.com/croileagan/). <https://www.facebook.com/croileagan/>

Edinburgh's first dedicated Gaelic nursery and primary school, [Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pairce](#), opened in Aug. 2013 in the Leith area of the city. The school attracts a wide range of families from across the city and the wider Lothian area. Although pupils attending the school do not need to have prior knowledge of Gaelic, it is strongly recommended that they attend a Gaelic-medium setting for their pre-school years. So that our pupils are able to develop the language skills needed to gain full benefit from our rich curriculum, Gaelic is the main language of the classroom and the school, from the earliest stages. To allow for the best outcomes for all our learners, we would usually only admit pupils later than Primary One if their skill and confidence in Gaelic language are demonstrably at a level that would allow them fully to access the curriculum and take part in school life with confidence. To be best placed to support pupils thrive in a GME environment, all parents are strongly encouraged to committing to engage with learning the language themselves. School staff are happy to advise and support families with their Gaelic learning.

Pupils should register for a nursery or school place in the usual way. Taobh na Pàirce runs regular open afternoons for prospective nursery parents, where all families will receive a very warm welcome. Please contact the school for further information.

Currently, pupils who have studied at [Bun Sgoil Taobh na Pairce](#) transfer to [James Gillespie's High School](#), at the end of P7, to continue with GME. In response to increasing demand, the City of Edinburgh plans to further develop its secondary GME provision by opening a dedicated GME Secondary. Details relating to specific location, timescales, etc. will emerge after further consultation.

Additionally, pupils from across the Lothians entering S5 or S6, who wish to study Gaelic at secondary level, can, depending on space and availability of courses, enrol at James Gillespie's High School to study at National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses.

For general enquiries about GME provision in Edinburgh you can contact us via our dedicated mailbox at gme@edinburgh.gov.uk

Section Four – Support for Pupils

This section gives information about how pupils' additional support needs will be identified and addressed and the types of specialist services provided within our school.

Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

Taking care of our children's well-being and making sure they are alright - even before they are born - helps us to ensure the most positive outcomes for them later in life. It gives them the potential to grow up ready to succeed and play their part in society. Our school adopts the Getting It Right for Every Child in Edinburgh approach to give the right help to children, young people and families, when they need it from a joined up multi agency team.

GIRFEC aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It promotes a shared approach that:

- builds solutions with and around children and families
- enables children to get the help they need when they need it
- supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice
- involves working together to make things better

GIRFEC is the foundation for work with all children and young people, including adult services where parents are involved. It builds on universal health and education services, and is embedded in the developing early years and youth frameworks.

Protecting Children and Young People

We place a high priority on the well-being and safety of our pupils. To this end we have in place a personal safety programme to give pupils knowledge and life skills to keep them safe from all form of abuse. Where we have concerns with a child about the possible abuse of pupils we are required to follow the Edinburgh and the Lothian's Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures which set out the specific duties and responsibilities towards the child and their parents/carers.

Additional Support Needs

As with all local authority schools in Scotland, this school operates under the terms of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2009) and its' accompanying Code of Practice. Further details of the policies and procedures can be found on Edinburgh Council website at [In on the Act - Supporting children and young people with additional support needs provides the following information](#) specified by the Education (additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 which includes:

- a) the authority's policy in relation to provision for additional support needs.
- b) the arrangements made by the authority in making appropriate arrangements for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of each such child and young person and the particular additional support needs of the children and young persons so identified.
- c) the other opportunities available under this Act for the identification of children and young persons who -
 - i. have additional support needs
 - ii. require, or would require, a co-ordinated support plan
- d) the role of parents, children and young persons in the arrangements referred to in

paragraph (b).

- e) the mediation services provided.
- f) the officer or officers of the authority from whom parents of children having additional support needs, and young persons having such needs, can obtain advice and further information about provision for such needs.

The Act requires each Education Authority to publish information about the Act. In on the Act, was produced by the City of Edinburgh Council:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/22136/in-on-the-act>

Literacy Difficulties/ Dyslexia

Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities.

The Authority also recognises that there may be **associated difficulties**

- Reading comprehension
- Phonological awareness
- Processing: auditory and/or visual processing of language-based information
- Short-term and working memory
- Organisational skills and motor skills
- Maths
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties

Support and assessment begin in the classroom. Class teachers and Support for Learning teachers have resources and training to identify this learning difference and to put appropriate support strategies in place.

If you have concerns please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

English as an Additional Language

Education and Children's Services provides English as an Additional Language (EAL) support for schools. Specialist EAL Teachers work with schools to support developing bilingual learners' English language skills and access to all areas of the curriculum, to enable them to achieve their potential.

We use a variety of approaches to identify pupils who may have support needs. These approaches include:

- Child Planning Meetings at Primary/Secondary transition
- House Team meetings
- Observation of classes (especially our new S1 classes in August/September)
- Parental concerns/information
- Pupil and staff feedback on progress
- Referrals from staff/other professionals

We use a very wide variety of supports for pupils with an Additional Support Need and these include:

- 1:1 and small group Literacy & Numeracy teaching
- Adapted curriculum/timetables
- Additional Assessment Arrangements for all assessments (including SQA examinations)
- Classroom support from Pupil Support Assistants
- Individual Education Plans
- Input from Additional Support for Learning colleagues
- Lunchtime 'Hub Club'
- Nurture group
- Professional Learning on strategies for classroom teachers
- Reading Recovery Group
- Support from partner agencies (e.g. Spartans, Edinburgh Together)

Parents should contact the Support for Learning department or their child's PSL if they have any questions or concerns regarding Additional Support Needs.

Individual needs are identified timeously and effectively and are reviewed annually via transition discussions, standardised tests, staff and professional observations and parental input. Support for Learning staff and partner agencies provide support to individual learners and advise teaching staff on needs and useful strategies.

A range of partner agencies (EWO, CLD, Link Officer, Ed Psych, Counsellors) work collaboratively with our staff to remove barriers and provide valuable support in meeting learning needs. We prepare pupils well for life beyond school, with 94% of our pupils moving onto a sustained positive destination in 2018.

We work with other agencies and professionals – for example, Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, National Health Service and you the parent to make decisions with regards to the best possible education to meet the needs of your child within the resources available.

Parents, carers and children with additional support needs can also seek independent advice and support through:

- Enquire: www.enquire.org.uk, 0345 123 2303
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance: www.siaa.org.uk, 0131 524 1975
- Scottish Child Law Centre: www.sclc.org.uk, 0131 667 6333

Pastoral Support

The pastoral team consists of five Pupil Support Leaders working in close partnership with the Deputies and support staff.

The register classes on the caseloads of the five Pupil Support Leaders are as follows:

Mr Smith

1B2*, 1D1*, 2A2*, 3B2*, 3D2*, 4C3*, 5B2*, 5C2*, 6A2*

Mr Brodie

1B1, 1B3, 2B1, 2B2, 3B1, 4B1, 4B2, 5B1, 5B3, 6B1, 6B2

Mrs Dunn (MS Kupisz – Mondays)

1C1, 1C2, 2C1, 2C2, 3C1, 3C2, 4C1, 4C2, 5C1, 6C1, 6C2

Mr Hollis

1A1, 1A2, 2A1, 2A3, 3A1, 3A2, 4A1, 4A2, 5A1, 5A2, 6A1, 6A3

Mrs Kerr

1D2, 2D1, 2D2, 3D1, 3D3, 4D1, 4D2, 5D1, 5D2, 6D1, 6D2

These staff form the first and most important link between school and home. If your child is unable to resolve a situation which involves a number of subject difficulties or a relationship problem, after having talked it through with you, this is the person they should seek out for advice.

If it is a subject based issue they should speak to their class teacher in the first instance, or if there is a difficulty with this you can contact the relevant Curriculum Leader.

Sensitive Aspects of Learning

Information about sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships, sexual health, parenthood, drugs awareness etc. is taught by Support for Pupils staff within PSE classes. Parents can review materials used by contacting their child's Support for Pupils teacher.

Transitions – Moving to a New School or Leaving School

This section also gives information about transition. There are also details about making a placing request to another school.

Primary to Secondary Transfer

A 3-day visit takes place toward the end of June. P7 pupils meet their specific Support for Pupils' teachers and Group Tutor along with fellow pupils in their Tutor Group. The P7 pupils are buddied by S6 students who are on hand to help with any issue that may arise. For the most part the P7 pupils follow their S1 timetable, attending secondary subjects and meeting their new teachers. An added dimension is the Fun Sports Day and the Summer School.

Parents of children who are planning to change from denominational to non-denominational or vice-versa between primary and secondary school should ensure that both the primary school and the intended secondary school know what is to happen by the end of September in the year preceding the move.

Placing Requests

As a parent, if you don't want your child(ren) to be educated in your local catchment school, you have the right to make a Placing Request for your child(ren) to attend another school.

If you would like your child to start P1 or S1 at a school outside your catchment area, you must make a Placing Request. You can get a Placing Request application form at any nursery or primary school in Edinburgh from mid-November and must return it by **24 December** to:

e-mail: school.placements@edinburgh.gov.uk

post: School Transactions
P1/S1 Placements,
PO Box 12331,
EDINBURGH
EH7 9DN

If we receive your application form after 24 December, your request will be considered, but if we receive your application form after 24 December places in your chosen school may no longer be available.

The Council must grant Placing Requests where possible. If there are more places available in a school than there are placing requests, all placing requests are usually granted.

If the school you choose has more placing requests than available places, each case is looked at individually. Please include all relevant details on your Placing Request application form so this can be taken into account.

As school rolls have increased there has been a decrease in the number of places available for children living outside the catchment area. This has resulted in high numbers of placing requests being refused.

If a Placing Request is successful for one child, this does not guarantee a successful Placing Request for their sibling. This could mean parent(s)/carer(s) have children attending different schools.

Transport for Placing Requests

If a Placing Request is successful, parents will be responsible for the safety and transportation costs of their child to and from their chosen school.

Further information

Further information on school placing requests can be found on our website at:

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20256/school_places/1375/school_placing_requests

Section Five – School Improvement

The section gives you an overview of the main achievements of the school within the last 12 months and performance information relating to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Raising Attainment

Monitoring performance and using the resulting information to secure improvement is an important part of the work of head teachers, school staff and officers within Education and Children's Services.

Standards and Quality Report

Every year each school publishes a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school's major achievements. See our website for further details.

School Improvement Plan

Each year Firrhill High School produces a School Improvement Plan to identify our main priorities for improving the work that we do. See our website for further details.

How well do pupils learn and achieve?

The attainment of pupils at Firrhill is very good and improving.

The attainment in the senior school is particularly strong with our pupils performing well when compared with pupils from similar backgrounds.

With the publication of a revised CEC trips policy following the covid-19 pandemic and associated disruptions, overseas trips can now take place. The 23-24 school year saw a WW1 Battlefields trip and a Music trip to Italy with a Sports Tour in summer 2025 already in the early planning stages.

A large number of our pupils participate in extra-curricular sport which is well supported by both staff and parents. Our Duke of Edinburgh programme provides the opportunity for pupils from S3 upwards to gain accreditation at Bronze, Silver and Gold.

How well do we support our pupils to develop and learn?

Pupil questionnaires evidence that most pupils feel appropriately challenged and supported in S1 – S3 and almost all in S5 and S6. Resources are reviewed regularly by most departments and updated as necessary. Most staff plan learning activities which match the needs of individuals and groups with differing abilities or aptitudes.

Support for pupils with parents who work in the armed services is well-embedded and helps to facilitate enhanced transition, study support and additional individualised support as required.

There is an increasing number of teachers adopting critical skills methodology as a means of improving higher-order learning and problem solving skills. Assessment for Learning approaches are used across the school and are used (along with Personal Learning Planning

work and target setting) to give high quality feedback to pupils. There is some excellent practice and staff are proactively involved in sharing this practice.

We have focused on high-quality classroom pedagogy for many years and we will continue to do so in addition to working on greater impact by enabling staff to work collaboratively even more effectively.

The use of Personal Learning Planning (PLP) in S1 and S3 encourages pupils to be reflective about their learning and to set targets for future learning. This ensures increased awareness of learning strengths and next steps. Almost all pupils, including the most vulnerable and at risk (lowest attaining 20%) have progressed well. Levels of attainment and wider achievement have improved.

Our learners tell us that they feel valued, and that they are satisfied with the school's provision. They are aware of the opportunities to express their views, and some feel that their opinions are valued in the decision making processes.

How well do we improve the quality of our work?

We are committed to improving the quality of the education we provide and our self-evaluation processes are recognised as being very good.

Our school leaders have demonstrated their commitment to self-evaluation by observing classes, modelling and sharing good practice, giving effective and appropriate feedback and by analysis of data.

Our approach is consultative and collegiate where there is a shared commitment to and understanding of the purpose and context for improvement.

As a school we strive to constantly improve through our improvement planning processes which includes measuring our performance against national benchmarks provided by the Inspectorate.

Sharing Classroom Experiences (shared lesson observations) as a self-evaluation tool, and class shadowing and peer observations serve to highlight high quality learning and teaching.

A rigorous analysis of examination results (involving all members of faculties) is an integral part of our self-evaluation. Quality Assurance meetings early in the new school year lead to action plans which are then monitored and evaluated throughout the session.

The views of all stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, partner agencies) are sought regularly and staff feel that they have a voice in relation to improvement planning.

What are we going to do next?

- Support our pupils to achieve their potential by promoting and sustaining our positive ethos and culture across the school
- Further build the culture of success by embedding a high aspiration and high expectation culture in the school

- Maintain high levels of pupil attainment by ensuring that all pupils are supported and challenged to achieve their potential and are engaged in constantly high quality learning experiences
- Review and develop the curriculum to ensure that it provides breadth, depth, challenge and relevance for all pupils
- Further improve staff knowledge of pupil needs and their capacity to respond to them
- Improve the success and achievements of learners by enhancing the school's arrangements for self-evaluation
- Utilise our self-evaluation and other data to address aspects of school performance that needs further development and to raise attainment in groups of pupils who are under-performing

Websites

You may find the following websites useful.

www.edinburgh.gov.uk - contains information for parents and information on Edinburgh schools.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> - parents can find out about everything from school term dates to exam results. This site also offers information for pre-5 and post school. It also lists relevant publications for parents and provides hyper-links to other useful organisations.

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports> - parents can access school and local authority inspection reports and find out more about the work of Education Scotland.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishschoolsonline-index-asp/> - parents can find out about individual schools. They can choose a school and select what type of information they need such as Education Scotland reports, exam results, stay on rates and free school meal entitlement.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/> - contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying.

<https://respectme.org.uk/> - Scotland's anti-bullying service. Contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying

<https://education.gov.scot/> - provides information and advice for parents as well as support and resources for education in Scotland

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en> - contains information for everyone on equality laws within the government and local authorities.

Glossary/Acronyms

1+2	Mother tongue plus two additional languages	The policy to expand and improve learning so that by 2021 every child will learn a first additional language from Primary 1 and a second by Primary 5.
ACP	Anticipatory Care Plan	A document detailing how a patient would like their medical care to progress if they become unwell. For pupils with an ACP it should travel with them on school outings.
ADES	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland	The national organisation which represents directors and senior managers from Scottish local authorities.
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	ADHD is a condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse.
AHDS	Association of Head Teachers and Deputies in Scotland	AHDS is a union for promoted teachers in primary, nursery and ASN schools.
AHPs	Allied Health Professionals	An umbrella term for a range of professional practitioners and support staff including Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapist and Orthotists.
ASDAN	Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network	A British education charity and awarding organisation. Provides programmes and qualifications for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Autism is a lifelong, developmental condition that affects the way a person communicates, interacts and processes information.
ASL	Additional Support for Learning	Additional support for learning means giving children extra help or support so they can get the most out of their education.
ASN	Additional Support Needs	A child or young person is said to have additional support needs if they need more, or different, support to what is normally provided in schools or pre-schools to children of the same age.
BGE	Broad General Education	The broad general education begins in early learning and childcare and continues to the end of S3 (the third year of secondary school).
BNN	Bilingual Nursery Nurse	Nursery Nurse who works in English and another language, to support Early Years settings and schools (P1) in their work with children and families who have

		English as an Additional Language. This includes joint assessment of children with other additional support needs.
BSA	Bilingual Support Assistant	Bilingual Support Assistants support early stage EAL learners to access the curriculum using their home language and English; support home-school-home communication; and advise on cultural issues. In Edinburgh, we have BSAs for Arabic, Cantonese, Kurdish, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi/Urdu.
CA	Classroom Assistant	Classroom assistants provide support to teachers.
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence	Curriculum for Excellence is the Scottish curriculum for pupils aged 3 - 18. It helps our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century.
CL	Curriculum Leader	A promoted teacher who typically works in a secondary school and has a specific remit to take a lead role in managing their curriculum area. They typically manage and lead a team of teaching staff within their subject area.
CLD	Community Learning and Development	Teams who work with and support communities in areas such as adult and family learning and youth work.
CLPL	Career-long Professional Learning	Ongoing learning throughout a professional's career.
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	A membership organisation for councillors in Scottish local authorities.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	Each teacher in Scotland is required to undertake a certain amount of CPD each year to maintain or upgrade skills and knowledge (see PRD and PU).
CPM	Child's Planning Meeting	A meeting to implement or review a child's plan. A personalised child's plan will be available when a child needs a range of extra support planned, delivered and co-ordinated. This will explain what should improve for the child, the actions to be taken and why the plan has been created. The child's plan is managed by a 'lead professional': someone with the right skills and experience to make sure the plan is managed properly. Depending on the situation and the child's needs, the lead professional may also be their named person. The child and parent(s) will know what information is being shared, with whom and for what purpose, and their views will be taken into account. This may not

		happen in exceptional cases, such as where there is a concern for the safety of a child or someone else.
CSP	Co-ordinated Support Plan	A child/ young person is eligible for a CSP when they need support at school from services other than education services, on an ongoing basis. A CSP document gathers together reports and plans from all the professionals who will support a child with additional support needs in school, for example Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers. A CSP should be reviewed every year and parents have a key role in this process.
CT	Class Teacher	Teacher who is assigned to a specific class. In secondary specialist provision they may also be known as the base class teacher.
CYPADM	Children and Young People Acute Deterioration Management	A document detailing how a patient would like their medical care to progress if they become very unwell. For pupils with a CYPADM it should be with them at all times.
DHT	Depute Head Teacher	The role of DHT will vary from school to school but generally they will stand in for the headteacher as necessary and will have responsibility for leadership and management of colleagues.
DO	Development officer	Development Officers are appointed, often on a temporary basis, to undertake specific development work at school or authority level.
D of E	Duke of Edinburgh Award	A youth awards programme founded in the UK in 1956 by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, that has since expanded to 144 nations. The award recognises wider achievement
EAL	English as an Additional Language	A learner of English as an Additional Language is a pupil whose first language* is other than English. This includes children and young people: - who arrive in Scotland from another country during their schooling - who have always lived in Scotland / UK and use a language other than English at home * The first language is the language the child was initially exposed to in childhood and continues to be the language used at home and in the community.
EE	Enhanced enrolment	Enrolment meeting with a new arrival whose first language is not English and their and parents-carers (supported by an interpreter, if needed). This meeting

		enables school to gather full information about the child or young person's language skills (in all languages they speak/read/write), prior education and attainment, strengths and interests, additional support needs; and to share key information about school with the learner and family. Through effective use of information gathered at an enrolment meeting, the school can fully support the learner's transition into education in Scotland.
EIS	Educational Institute of Scotland	The largest teaching union in Scotland
ELC	Early Learning and Childcare	This term is meant to emphasise that care and education of very young children are not two separate things as babies and young children are learning all the time. ELC settings include family centres, nursery schools, nursery classes attached to primary schools and childminders. These places may be run by local authorities, private businesses, voluntary sector organisations and self-employed individuals.
EP	Educational Psychologist	Educational psychologists support schools and the local authority to improve all children's experiences of learning. They use their training in psychology and knowledge of child development to assess difficulties children may be having with their learning.
EPG	Education Placement Group	A City of Edinburgh Council group that considers which specialist provisions to place pupils in.
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	ESOL is studied by those whose first language is not English. SQA ESOL qualifications for young people (S3-S6) are delivered through the Schools College Partnership and by some secondary schools. ESOL courses and classes for adults are delivered by different providers, e.g. local authorities, colleges, third sector organisations.
EYO/EYP	Early Years Officer/ Early Years Practitioner	EYOs and EYPs make up most of the staff who work in nurseries and pre-school settings in Scotland.
FE	Further Education	This is post-compulsory education which is different from that offered in universities. It is mainly taught in colleges as well as work-based learning or in adult and community learning.

FEF	Finance for Equity Funding	Funding for schools to address the poverty related attainment gap.
FLO	Family Learning Officer	This person may develop and run courses and activities for families so they can help or support their child's learning.
FSM	Free School Meals	
FTE	Full-time Equivalent	This is a way to measure how much time a member of school staff works in school. For example, FTE 1.0 means the person works full time, FTE 0.5 means the person is half-time.
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child	A Scottish Government policy which aims to make sure all Scotland's children, young people and their families have support across public services such as health, education and social work. The GIRFEC approach supports children and young people so that they can grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and can realise their full potential.
GRT	Gypsy Roma Traveller	The term Gypsy, Roma and Traveller is used to describe a range of ethnic groups or people with nomadic ways of life, including: • Gypsy Travellers (English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish Romany people) • Roma (more recent migrants in the UK from Central and Eastern Europe) The term Traveller can also refer to groups that travel (e.g. New Travellers, Boaters, Bargees and Showpeople) however these are not ethnic groups.
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland	The professional body that maintains the register of teachers and ensures teachers' professional standards. In Scotland children must be taught by qualified and GTCS registered teachers.
GUS	Growing Up in Scotland	Growing Up in Scotland is a long-term study tracking the lives of thousands of children and their families from the early years through childhood and beyond. The main aim of the study is to provide new information to support policy-making in Scotland but it is also intended to provide a resource for practitioners, academics, the voluntary sector and parents.
HE	Higher Education	This is post-compulsory education which usually takes place in universities.
HESS	Health Education Support Service	1:1 support service to meet the complex care needs of pupils that meet specific health care criteria.

HGIOS 4	How Good Is Our School (version 4)	A self-evaluation tool kit for schools.
HNC/ HND	Higher National Certificate/ Higher National Diploma	Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) are advanced qualifications equivalent to the first two years of study at university. They are offered by colleges, some universities and many training centres. HNCs take 1 year to complete and HNDs take 2 years.
HT	Head Teacher	Also known as a rector, the headteacher is the leader and manager of a school.
ICT	Information and Communication s Technology	ICT in education can be found in the following ways: - as a subject, e.g. computer studies - as a tool to support teaching and learning, e.g. the use of whiteboards - as an administrative tool.
IEP	Individual Education Plan	An IEP is a document which sets out the goals and achievements of each school pupil. Every child should have an IEP and should also have an input to its content. It should be reviewed regularly.
ITE	Initial Teacher Education	This describes the courses taken by people who want to become teachers. Courses are available at universities across Scotland through a four year undergraduate course leading to a BEd degree or a one year Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE).
ITS	Interpretation and Translation Service	
JASS	Junior Award Scheme for Schools	A progressive learning programme for young people which has been designed to recognise wider achievement.
LA	Local Authority	There are 32 local authorities in Scotland.
LAC	Looked After Child	Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, 'looked after children' are defined as those in the care of their local authority – sometimes referred to as a 'corporate parent'. There are many reasons children may become looked after, including: • they face abuse or neglect at home • they have disabilities that require special care • they are unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, or who have been illegally trafficked into the UK • they have been involved in the youth justice system

LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender	
LNCT	Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers	See SNCT. Some matters are devolved to LNCTs for local agreement. LNCTs are required to have constitutions setting out the recognition and procedures arrangements. In addition to a negotiating function LNCTs also provide a consultative mechanism.
MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament	
NAS/UWT	National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers	A teaching union.
NAT 1/2/3/4/5	National 1/2/3/4/5 qualification	National courses have seven different levels; National 1 to 5 then Higher and Advanced Higher, but the buzz words that you will hear the most are Nat 4/5s and Highers as these are most likely to gain your child access to college and university. In fourth year pupils will study for Nat 1 - 5s depending on what their attainment level in each subject is. In most schools a fourth year pupil would tend to sit Nat 4 or 5s. If they decide to stay on for a fifth year, they can sit more Nat 4 or 5s and progress to Highers.
NIF	National Improvement Framework	A Scottish Government framework focused on measuring and evaluating performance in schools. It includes parents and carers as part of the process.
NPFS	National Parent Forum for Scotland	Supported by the Scottish Government, NPFS provides a parental perspective for local and national policies and issues and helps support parental involvement.
NQ	National Qualifications	NQs are taken by young people in secondary schools, colleges and some training centres.
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification	Work based qualifications.
OSCR	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	OSCR decides whether to grant an organisation charitable status and to enter it on the Scottish Charity Register. They monitor charities to ensure they comply with the law.
OT	Occupational Therapist	Occupational Therapists can help people with practical tasks if they are: - physically disabled

		- recovering from an illness or operation - have learning disabilities - Have mental health problems They can look at aspects of daily life at home or in school. They look at activities that a person finds difficult to see if there is another way to do them.
PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan	A plan for a person who may need assistance, for instance, a person with impaired mobility, to evacuate a building or reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency.
PEF	Pupil Equity Funding	Pupil Equity Funding is money that is given to schools to help them provide the best possible opportunities for children's learning. In particular, it is there to help the school support children who experience barriers to learning and who might be falling behind or not getting the same chances in their education because their family is experiencing poverty or other financial difficulties. This money is given to schools as part of the Scottish Government's Scottish Attainment Challenge. Pupil Equity Funding is designed to support children in Primary 1 to S3 who are eligible and registered for free school meals. However, Headteachers can use their judgement to support other children in their school who are affected by poverty. For every child that is registered, the school will receive £1,200 in addition to their normal budget. The Headteacher decides how the money is spent and has to demonstrate the impact the funding has had on children affected by poverty.
PLP	Personal Learning Plan	A document/folder where a pupil can keep a record of their goals and achievements alongside examples of their work.
PPP/ PFI	Public Private Partnership/ Public Finance Initiative	A collaboration between a local authority and private companies, often used in the building and management of schools.
PPR	Pupil Progress Record	A key record relating to a child/ young person's education that follows them through education.
PRD	Professional Review and Development	PRD is an essential part of the GTCS's Professional Update and professional learning. It provides teachers with ongoing opportunities to reflect on their practice and personal learning through professional learning conversations supported by an annual review meeting.
PSA	Pupil Support Assistant	Supports pupils with a wide variety of tasks in school. Also called Learning Support Assistant or Classroom Assistant.

PSE	Personal and Social Education	PSE addresses the learning outcomes within the Health and Wellbeing indicators in Curriculum for Excellence relating to mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, planning for choices and change, substance misuse and relationships, sexual health and parenthood.
PT	Principal Teacher	In primary and special schools this is usually a classroom teacher who also takes on some managerial roles within the school. In a secondary school this is typically a head of department or guidance position.
PU	Professional Update	This supports teachers to develop their skills and work. Teachers are asked to keep a record of their learning throughout their careers. This is logged on their GTCS profile and signed off by their line manager every 5 years.
PVG	Protection of Vulnerable Groups	The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland. It helps ensure people who work with children and protected adults
QIEO	Quality Education Improvement Officer	Usually a local authority officer who has a specific job around improving the performance of schools.
RA	Risk Assessment	A systematic process that involves identifying, analysing and controlling hazards and risks.
RME	Religious and Moral Education	
RSHP	Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood	
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge	The Scottish Attainment Challenge aims to raise attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, in order to close the attainment gap. It will drive forward improvements in educational outcomes to ensure that everyone is encouraged to be the best they can be.
SALT/SaLT/SLT	Speech and Language Therapist	Speech and language therapists provide life-treatment, support and care for children and adults who have difficulties with communication, eating, drinking and swallowing.
SCCYP	Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People	The Commissioner aims to promote and protect the rights of children and young people in Scotland.

SCEL	Scottish College for Educational Leadership	SCEL supports teaching staff by providing access to high quality leadership programmes of training.
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework	This organisation promotes lifelong learning in Scotland. The Framework can help parents and young people to plan learning and develop routes through different types of learning.
SDO	Senior Development Officer	Senior Development Officers are appointed, often on a temporary basis, to undertake specific development work at school or authority level.
SEIC	South East Improvement Collaborative	A collaboration between City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian and Scottish Borders councils to improve schools, early learning settings and other services for children and young people.
SEYO	Senior Early Years Officer	Work in pre-school and nurseries.
SHANARRI	Safe, Health, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included	GIRFEC wellbeing indicators which help make it easier for children and families and the people working with them to discuss how a child or young person is doing at a point in time and if there is a need for support. At home, in school or the wider community, every child and young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
SIF	Summary of Inspection Findings	This document is available on the Education Scotland website following an inspection.
SIP	School Improvement Plan	This document should show improvement targets for a school. This is typically now included in the SQIP.
SLS	School Leaders Scotland	A union for headteachers and depute headteachers.
SLT/SMT	Senior Leadership Team/ School Management Team	Usually includes the headteacher and depute head teachers; may also include the business manager and principal teachers.
SNAG	School Nutrition Action Group	A committee which usually includes school staff, pupils, parents and local people to promote healthy eating within the school community.
SNCT	Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers	A tripartite body comprising members from teaching organisations, Local Authorities, and the Scottish Government. The SNCT follows a negotiating framework for teachers' pay and conditions of service.
SORT	School Operations Risk Toolkit	A risk framework to manage all risk assessments and guidance required in association with the response to Covid-19.

SQIP	Standards and Quality and Improvement Plan	The purpose of the annual SQIP is to report on the main achievements over the last school year and to bring about further improvement to the learning experiences and achievements of pupils. Improvement planning involves identifying what is good about a school, deciding how good a school can be and identifying the best way forward.
SSTA	Scottish Secondary Teachers Association	A teaching union.
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths	The name used for this group of subjects.
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification	These qualifications are based on standards drawn up by industry, commerce and education.
TALC	Team Around the Learning Community	A collaborative approach with Educational Settings and Partners to support and maximise learning, attainment and achievement
UCAS	University and Colleges Admissions Service	UCAS process most applications for entry to higher education throughout the UK.
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	This is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a set of rights.
VOICE		A teaching union
VSDS	Volunteer Scotland - Disclosure Services	VSDS is funded by the Scottish Government to support some charities with processing disclosure checks.
VSE	Validated Self-Evaluation	This aims to support and challenge the work of education authorities to improve the quality of education and outcomes for learners.
YAD	Young Adult Disability Social Work Team	SW team that support families of young adults with complex disabilities as they transition from children and families into adult services.
YPPM	Young Person Planning Meeting	See CPM

Throughout this handbook the term 'parent' has the meaning attributed in the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. This includes grandparents, carers or anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child.

The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of compilation E&OE (August 2025).

It is possible that some information may be superseded as the school year progresses. A new School Handbook is published at the start of each new school year.

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the questionnaire on this page. Your feedback will help us improve the hand book next year.

Your feedback will help us to improve our handbook.

Did you find	Please tick	
1. The handbook useful?	Yes	No
2. The information you expected?	Yes	No
3. The handbook easy to use?	Yes	No

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Yours,

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