

# Westruther Primary School Handbook 2023 – 2024





## Welcome to Westruther Primary School

*Welcome to our School handbook. I hope it provides helpful information for all parents/carers, children and anyone who has an association with the School. We see it as our role to work together to provide our pupils with the best possible opportunities to enable them to be happy children and successful citizens of the future. If there are any matters which you would like to discuss, or if you need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the School.*

Charlotte Shortel  
Head Teacher

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Scottish Borders Council Schools and Learning Website:  
[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20009/schools and learning](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20009/schools_and_learning)

## CONTENTS

Westruther Primary School – All About Us .....	4
School Vision, Values and Aims .....	5
Enrolment and Admissions .....	6
OUR SCHOOL DAY AND OTHER INFORMATION .....	7
School Policies and Other Useful Information .....	7
<b>Mobile Technology Policy</b> .....	7
Staffing .....	8
Term Dates.....	9
School Meals.....	1010
School Uniform .....	10
Parents as Partners.....	11
Parent Council.....	11
Pupil Voice .....	11
Community Links .....	12
The Curriculum .....	12
School Improvement and Planning Report.....	13
Curriculum Design .....	13
Skills for Learning, Skills for Life, and Skills for Work.....	13
National Framework .....	14
Showbie.....	14
Assessment and Reporting to Parents .....	15
School Expectations.....	16
Unsafe Behaviour .....	16
Extra-Curricular Activities.....	17
Family Learning and Outings.....	17
Homework and Home Learning.....	17
School Support Services .....	18

## Westruther Primary School Handbook 2023-2024

Young Carers.....	21
Equity and Inclusion Statement.....	21
Educational Psychology Service.....	22
Communication .....	22
COUNCIL'S IMPLEMENTATION OF BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN.....	23
Attendance and Absence .....	24
EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL .....	25
Assistance with School Meals and School Wear .....	25
Free School Meals .....	25
School Clothing and Footwear Grant .....	25
How to Apply or Renew .....	26
Customer Advice and Support Service .....	26
Medicine Administration.....	26
Infectious Illnesses.....	27
Family Contact Details.....	27
Head Lice.....	27
School Nurse and Dental Nurse .....	27
CHILD PROTECTION .....	28
Healthy Beginnings- Top Tips.....	29
Complaints and Concerns .....	32
Data Protection.....	33
Photographs/Videos .....	34
Your Rights .....	34
Complaints .....	34
EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN .....	35
Useful Addresses and Quick Website Link Information: .....	36

## WESTRUTHER PRIMARY SCHOOL – ALL ABOUT US

Westruther Public School admission register starts on 6th October 1873. Records show "School Accommodation on 30th October 1912 was 95 places, Cookery and Laundry workroom, 339 square feet in area".

In 2000 the school was extended adding a new classroom and a new entrance door and hallway. In 2014 a further bright and airy extension was added, this included transforming one of the original classrooms into the Early Learning Centre, adding a new classroom, toilets, and a new pupil entrance. The latest addition completed on December 2016 is an outdoor classroom for our Early Years and Childcare (ELC).

We start 2023-2024 with 15 children in a composite class of P1-7. Our ELC caters for 2–5year-olds.

*School Accommodation  
at 30<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1912: —  
42 + 53 = 95 places.  
Cookery and Laundry Work Room.....  
339 square feet in area.*



SCHOOL VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

‘Small schools do big things’



The Vision and Aim for our school is...  
‘For everyone to do W.E.L.L. at Westruther’

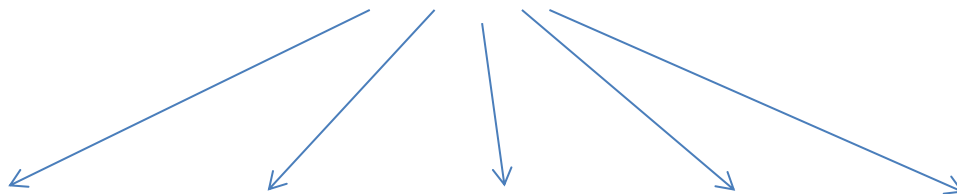


Wellbeing, Excellence & Equity and Learning for Life



Our school Values make us SMART

S M A R T



SUCCESSFUL MOTIVATED AMBITIOUS RESILIENT TOLERANT

## ENROLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Westruther welcomes enrolments all year round in addition to Scottish Borders Council's Enrolment Week.

We encourage families to visit us, meet the Staff and Pupils, and have a look at our school.



- There is always a warm welcome. Our staff are happy to meet prospective families to discuss your needs and what our school can offer to you.

For pupils within the catchment area - please complete an enrolment form on SBC website. If you reside outside of our catchment area, you will need to complete a placement request form in addition to an enrolment form for the school in your catchment area. We will require a copy of your child's birth certificate and evidence of where you live. In most cases, a place will be available, and the staff will give you details of start dates, uniforms and a copy of the school handbook.

Westruther Primary School is very supportive during Transition times (ELC to P1, P7 to High School). ELC pupils spend time in the playground to meet peers and join in with whole school trip and events. We arrange classroom visits as the year ends.

Our catchment Secondary School is Earlston High School. P7 is considered a 'Transition Year'. For more information about Earlston High School please visit: <https://www.earlstonhighschool.org.uk/>

The P7 Residential takes place with other catchment schools allowing pupils to meet peers who will attend the catchment High School at the same time. Various sports festivals and visits from High School staff ensure a smooth path to Earlston High School. We work closely with our partner school, Channelkirk Primary School, to increase opportunities to extend social networks.

To view Scottish Borders Council Policy on School Admissions, please visit:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/652/class\\_composition\\_policy](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/652/class_composition_policy)



## OUR SCHOOL DAY AND OTHER INFORMATION

Monday to Thursday	Times
Morning	08:45 to 12:15
Break	10:30 to 10:45
Lunch	12:15 to 13:00
Afternoon	13:00 to 15:15

Friday – Half Day	Times
Morning	8:45 to 12:20
Break	10:15 to 10:30
Brunch	11:40 to 12:00

We are keenly aware of our duty to promote healthy eating and would ask that healthy snacks are sent with your child for break time. We would ask you to support us by discouraging your child from bringing sweets, chocolate, and fizzy drinks to school and keeping these for special treats at home. We are a '**Nut Free**' school due to a potential risk of anaphylaxis in the school community; therefore, we ask that products containing nuts are **not** brought to school.

## SCHOOL POLICIES AND OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

A list of current school policies is available from the Head Teacher.

### MOBILE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

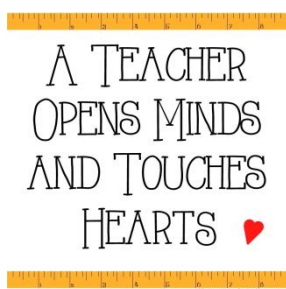
Any mobile phones brought into school should be given to staff for safe keeping during the school day. Technology is not to be used in the playground before school. This also applies to any watches that have any capacity other than telling the time or counting steps.



## STAFFING

We have a committed and dedicated team at Westruther Primary School:

Westruther Primary School Staff List	
Head Teacher	Mrs Charlotte Shortel
Principal Teacher	Mrs Lauren Rocha
Teacher of P1-7	Mrs Ellie Spence
Curriculum Support Teacher (PE)	Mrs Sara Green
Support for Learning Teacher	Mrs Lorna Sanderson
Support Staff	
Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Emma Bouwens
Pupil Supervisor (PE)	Mrs Marie Howey
Business Support Assistant	Mrs Heather Toal
School Cook	Mrs Grace Donaldson
Janitor (Peripatetic)	Miss Marie Todd
Active Schools Coordinator	Miss Gemma Ross
Early Learning Centre Staff	
ELC Support Teacher (to support ELC provision)	Mrs Rochelle McEwan
Early Years Officer	Mrs Valerie Young
Early Years Practitioner	Ms Julie Davidson
Early Years Support Worker (lunch cover)	Mrs Kath Lothian



## TERM DATES

Here are the school Closure dates for the forthcoming year. Please visit Scottish Borders Council website for the planned dates for the next two years at:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20009/Schools\\_and\\_learning/621/term\\_holiday\\_and\\_closure\\_dates](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20009/Schools_and_learning/621/term_holiday_and_closure_dates)

Autumn Term Monday 14 August 2023 to 21 December 2023		
Monday & Tuesday	14 & 15 August	Staff resume - in service days
Wednesday	16 August	Pupils resume
Friday	06 October	Last day for pupils and staff – mid-term holiday
Monday	16 October	Staff resume – in service day
Tuesday	17 October	Pupils resume
Monday	27 November	Closed - St Andrew's Day holiday
Tuesday	28 November	Closed - Earlston Cluster Holiday
Thursday	21 December	Last day of term for pupils and staff – Winter Holiday
Winter Term Monday 8 January 2024 to Thursday 28 March 2024		
Monday	8 January	School resumes
Friday	09 February	Last day for pupils – February Holiday
Monday - Friday	12-18 February	Closed - February holiday
Monday	19 February	Staff resume – in service day
Tuesday	20 February	School resumes for all
Thursday	28 March	Last day of term for pupils and staff – Spring Holiday
Summer Term Monday 15 April 2024 to Friday 28 June 2024		
Monday	15 April	All resume
Monday	06 May	Closed – May Day Holiday
Tuesday	07 May	Closed – Staff in service day
Friday	28 June	Last day of term for pupils and staff – Summer Holiday
		<i>School resumes for pupils on Wednesday 14 August 2024</i>

## SCHOOL MEALS



Westruther Primary School provides hot meals cooked on the premises. Scottish Borders Council works closely with catering staff to ensure balanced and nutritional meals are provided, including a vegetarian option, at a cost of £2.40 per day (correct at June 2023). All meals are bookable in advance.

Children in ELC and Primary 1 to 5 are eligible for Free School Meals which are funded centrally. The Scottish Government plans to extend this expansion for free school meals to all Primary age children and this is the first phase. We will keep you informed as to the further roll out when we know the details.

Scottish Borders Council use a cashless online system, ParentPay, to process orders and payments. Please contact the School Administrator if you need any further information.

For those who have registered, you can contact ParentPay by this link: <https://www.parentpay.com/>

To find out more about school Meal Provision at Scottish Borders Council:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20040/clothing\\_meals\\_and\\_transport/342/school\\_meals](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20040/clothing_meals_and_transport/342/school_meals)

## SCHOOL UNIFORM



In line with SBC Dress Code Policy, Westruther Primary School encourages the wearing of school uniform. Our uniform consists of a red polo shirt, royal blue sweater and dark-coloured trousers / skirts. Blue checked dresses may be worn in the summer months.

Children are expected to wear dark shorts or joggers and a plain white T-Shirt for P.E. On P.E. days they can come dressed for P.E. We keep a small stock of 'pre-loved' uniform in school. Please ask staff for more information.

Alternatively, school uniform is available to purchase online from Border Embroideries at:

[Westruther Primary School \(border-embroideries.co.uk\)](https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk)

Nursery Uniform may also be purchased online at:

<https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk/schools/westruther-nursery.html>

SBC Dress Code Policy ([https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/648/dress\\_code\\_policy](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/648/dress_code_policy))

**Please can all articles of clothing and footwear be labelled with your child's name.**

## PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We encourage parents to become partners in supporting and enhancing children's learning. It is important that we all have a clear understanding of viewpoints and attempt to manage a system which takes these into account. We aim to be accessible to parents and to be open minded, with attitudes and beliefs being shared and discussed. Parents, carers, and family members are by far the most important influences on their children's lives. By becoming involved in the life of Westruther Primary School you can show your child that their education is important to you. We welcome Parent Volunteers to help with various workshop days, preparing for concerts, assisting with school trips and such like. If you would be interested in volunteering in school, please get in contact with us.

## PARENT COUNCIL

**Every parent / carer is a member of the Parent Forum.** The Parent Council is the voice of the Forum. Being a member of the Parent Council can influence plans for your child and others. All parents/carers are welcome to come along and be involved. If you have any points you wish raised, please speak to a member of the Parent Council. The Parent Council has a notice board in the playground where contact details of Office Bearers and dates of forthcoming meetings are displayed. You can contact them using this email address: [pcwestrutherprimaryschool@scottishborders.npfs.org.uk](mailto:pcwestrutherprimaryschool@scottishborders.npfs.org.uk)

## PUPIL VOICE



We are committed to hearing the voice of our pupils giving them an active role as partners in our school. Pupils are consulted about their environment, curriculum, and learning, often taking a lead role in implementing change. All pupils are engaged in leadership activities and groups.

We provide Leadership opportunities throughout the school. Some of the roles we currently have are:

- Committee Member Roles for all pupils
- Junior Road Safety Officers
- Buddies
- Literacy Leaders

## COMMUNITY LINKS

Westruther Primary School has strong links within the local village of Westruther. We explore the village as a learning resource and regularly utilise the Village Hall for PE as well as Pantomimes and School Shows. We use Westruther Community Playing Field for PE and Sports Day. Neighbours and local residents are invited to our Christmas Performances and other open days, and our school takes part in the Westruther Flower Show every year. We are fortunate to have a voluntary Winter Resilience Team who keep our paths gritted and clear of snow in winter weather. We are aiming to build further partnerships with local businesses and wider world of work.

## THE CURRICULUM

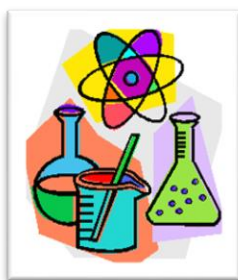
The Scottish Curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence, is for all 3–18 year olds wherever they learn. It aims to raise standards, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast- changing world. The Curriculum is the ‘totality of all that is planned for young people throughout their education’. The curriculum is made up of 4 distinct areas:

- Ethos and Life of the school as a community
- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Opportunities for personal achievement

**The curriculum areas and subjects are:**

- Languages, English and Literacy Modern Languages
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Health and wellbeing
- Expressive Arts (Art, Music, Dance, Drama)
- Religious and Moral Education \*
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

\* As part of the curriculum pupils will learn about different cultures and religions. Parents will be informed of any religious observance planned and be given the opportunity for their child to opt out, as is their right.



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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND PLANNING REPORT

A school improvement plan summary is issued to parents annually. The latest school report is uploaded to the school website.

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## CURRICULUM DESIGN

**‘A broad general education includes all of the experiences and outcomes across all curriculum areas up to and including the third level. These should be experienced by all children and young people as far as this is consistent with their learning needs and prior achievements.’** (Building the Curriculum, Chapter 5 Page 12)

At Westruther we have worked collegiately to ensure coverage of all the experiences and outcomes in a way that is specific to our unique setting and is able to be delivered in our multi composite classes.

Each curricular area has the experiences and outcomes grouped in a way that allows us to provide meaningful and appropriate learning experiences that meet individual learner needs, no matter which stage/level of Curriculum for Excellence they are at. It also gives us the flexibility to allow our learners to have input into how they learn and in which context.

At Westruther within an academic year, learners will experience all areas of the curriculum, but not necessarily on a weekly or daily basis. We teach the curriculum through IDL (Inter Disciplinary Learning). This means (for example) that children may learn aspects of literacy at the same time as history. We place value on the learners making connections through different subject areas.

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## SKILLS FOR LEARNING, SKILLS FOR LIFE, AND SKILLS FOR WORK

At Westruther we are committed to providing learning experiences that provide learners with opportunities to develop their skills for learning, life, and work. These opportunities are provided from early level and skills such as leadership, decision making, and team working are built upon right through their school journey. We invite parents and family members to share these skills with our children.



## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of experiences and outcomes is designed to be flexible in order to permit careful planning for those with additional support needs, including those who, for example, have a learning difficulty, and those who are particularly able or talented. Below is an outline of the broad expectations about progression through curriculum levels:

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4. The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programs and will not include all the fourth level outcomes.
Senior	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

We have national, school, and local authority policies, programmes, position statements and guidelines which are being amended and adapted to align them with Curriculum for Excellence. Find out more about the school's curriculum from:

Parentzone: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/curriculum-in-scotland/#>

Education Scotland: <https://education.gov.scot/>

## SHOWBIE

Showbie is an online platform we use to document a child's learning journey. Parents receive a unique link to their child's learning portfolio.

## ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING TO PARENTS

Reflection and dialogue, in which learners participate throughout all phases of their education 3 to 18, are central to practice in recognising achievement, profiling and reporting.

*(Building the Curriculum 5, Recognizing Achievement, Profiling and Reporting, p3)*

At Westruther Primary School, assessment focuses on application of standards and expectations of each learner's progress and achievement in:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Skills
- Attributes and capabilities

This is ongoing throughout the year.

We report on learners' progress in the following ways:

- Written report
- Showbie portfolio
- Open days/events/learning together sessions
- Assemblies and performances
- Parent's nights
- Certificates





## SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

We are committed to having a school that is caring, safe and respectful and have expectations for all at Westruther Primary School.

We have adopted 3 simple expectations for us all to use when in school which are **'Ready, Respect and Safe'**.

Children can be recognised and rewarded for meeting these expectations in many ways including: Praise; Certificate; Positive Notes Home; Class Recognition boards; and even a Hot Chocolate with the Head Teacher!

If a child needs support with meeting expectations, then reminders and records will be kept of any concerns and, when needed, parents would be involved to work in partnership to help move things forward.



We also follow SBCs Respectful Relationships Anti Bullying Policy:

[Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/respectful-relationships-and-anti-bullying-policy)

Staff, pupils, and families were involved in creating a current School Statement which reflects how this policy is implemented at Westruther.

### Individual Approaches

Sometimes individual learners need individual solutions and approaches to support them with their behaviour. Planned, differentiated and individual strategies may need to be implemented to meet their needs. Parents may be consulted as to bringing in partner agencies to support.

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## UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR

Sometimes we have to act quickly and decisively to support pupil behaviour. In the case of unsafe behaviour where a child is experiencing difficulty regulating themselves, or in some way stopping the entire class from learning – the pupil may be sent to management and/or removed from the learning space or other children may be moved to a safer space.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are offered throughout the school session and vary from year to year depending on volunteers and hall/room/space availability. Sports sessions linked to forthcoming Festivals and Tournaments such as netball and hockey, are run in conjunction with our partner school Channelkirk Primary School, allowing pupils to mix and experience competitive training.



Westruther Primary School works closely with 'Live Borders' and provides opportunities for Extra-Curricular Activities in and out of school. Street Dance, Fencing, and Judo for example, are some of the blocks of activity that have been provided. We provide information from outside providers to let families know what activities are available locally, such as the Lauderdale Scouts.

## FAMILY LEARNING AND OUTINGS

The school aims to organise outings linked to the current learning in School. We endeavour to make these trips interesting and exciting to engage learners. Parents are encouraged to come along on these trips which have included museum visits, den building, and fire making etc.



## HOMEWORK AND HOME LEARNING

In order to create our current Homework Policy, we consulted with key stakeholders and research.

The key messages from children were...

- Homework should help you practise your learning.
- Homework should be fun, creative and include some choice.
- Reading is the most important kind of homework.
- Homework can sometimes be difficult to complete due to time pressures caused by children doing other activities or parent's responsibilities in other areas (e.g., work, siblings).

The key messages from parents were...

- Homework allows families to be involved in children's learning.
- Homework shouldn't be too lengthy and creative homework works best.
- Reading is the most important type of homework (especially reading for enjoyment).
- Homework can sometimes be difficult to complete due to children being tired, time pressures caused by children doing other activities or parents' responsibilities in other areas (e.g., work, siblings).

The key messages from research are...

- Homework is a very difficult area to research as there are multiple variables.
- There is little or no evidence that homework at primary age improves attainment.
- Daily reading for enjoyment has more impact on future attainment in all areas than any other home activity.
- Regular participation in extra-curricular activities such as belonging to a club or family activities (such as going for a walk, visiting places of interest, baking etc) support a child's achievement and are very important.

Taking all these factors into account we have designed our homework to give families **flexibility** in terms of timescales, incorporate some **choice**, recognise the **importance of reading**, and include some **creativity** and **variety** of tasks. These tasks are presented in a 'grid' format and are issued for a block of time.

In addition, parents requested more ideas as to how to support learning at home. Guides were created on different themes and are issued termly.

## SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES



Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people.

The GIRFEC approach aims to make it easier for parents, children, young people, and the services that support them – such as early years services, schools, and the NHS – to work together to get it right.

Practitioners work together to support you and your child, working across organisational boundaries and putting your child and you at the heart of decision making, ensuring we give all our children and young people the best possible start in life.

GIRFEC means that everyone working with Scottish Borders children, young people, and their families are encouraged to:

- Ensure children, young people, and their families get the help they need when they need it and are central to the process of finding solutions.
- Use one consistent and equitable approach, actively share information to agreed protocols and work more effectively together to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Be clear about personal responsibility to do the right thing for each child/young person.
- Work with children, young people, and their families, using a collaborative approach with fewer meetings. This should ensure that children, young people, and their families give information only once, and enables the development of one plan to meet all their needs.
- Respond to children and young people and take appropriate, proportionate, and timely action with the minimum of paperwork, bureaucracy, and duplication.



GIRFEC is part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the GIRFEC provisions are planned to be fully implemented by August 2017. If you would like any further information, please ask your child's Head Teacher.

As part of our team of professionals at Westruther, we have a visiting Support for Learning Teacher, a Pupil Support Assistant, Curriculum Support Teacher (Physical Education), and a School Nurse.

Some of the visiting specialists your child may encounter at Westruther Primary are:

- Inclusion and Wellbeing Teacher
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Behavioural Support Teachers
- Occupational Therapists
- Educational Psychologists
- Curriculum support teachers and visiting musical specialists
- Staff from Earlston High School

At any point in their lives children or young people may need extra help with their education. This may be for any reason, and at any time. This is often referred to as additional support for learning or having additional support needs.

Some examples of why a child/young person may require extra help with their education are:

- Bereavement or family illness
- Problems at home
- Relationships
- Being particularly gifted or able
- An illness, disability, or sensory impairment
- Having English as an Additional Language
- Attendance/Absence

A child/young person's needs may last for a short time, and the problem may be resolved easily or, their needs might be very complex, and they may require additional support for a number of years.

If you feel that your child needs additional support for learning, the first person to speak to is your child's teacher. You have the right to request an assessment of your child. Within our school we operate a model of staged intervention where support is provided in varied ways to meet individual needs. Our approach to assessment ensures that the needs of children and young people are recognised, and appropriate support can be provided.

Parents and carers are always involved in making decisions about their child's education and **we will always ask your permission before any specific referrals are made**. While your child is receiving support, we will regularly review your child's progress.

At times, parents, carers, and schools may come into dispute. While we would always hope that difficulties could be resolved at the school level, we recognise that parents or young people may wish to formalise their concerns. To assist with this, we have a complaints procedure and also offer independent mediation and adjudication. It is also possible under certain circumstances to refer the case to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland. The statutory framework for Additional Support for Learning is the Education [Additional Support for Learning] [Scotland] Acts 2004 and 2009.

Scottish Borders Council Website has a wealth of information and much more detail at:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20041/support\\_for\\_pupils](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20041/support_for_pupils)

[Making a complaint | Making Complaints | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#)

For more information, you can contact:

- **Enquire** the Scottish advice service for Additional Support for Learning. They have a wealth of information, including practical guides and fact sheets for both parents and carers and young people. You can find the website at [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk) or ring them on 0345 123 2303.
- **Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance**, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576 [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

- **Scottish Child Law Centre**, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO1274 [www.sclc.org.uk](http://www.sclc.org.uk)

## YOUNG CARERS

Are you a Young Carer?

A Young Carer is someone who is under 18 years of age or who has reached 18, is still a pupil at school and provides or intends to provide care and support for another individual. A number of Young Carers do not always identify themselves as Young Carers or wish to be identified.

Young Carers often undertake a number of tasks for the people they live with and look after. They are often left alone to do things like washing, cooking, shopping, paying bills, collecting medication, or helping to look after younger brothers or sisters.

This means they might not have as much time to complete work at home which has an ongoing effect on progress and learning or attending clubs and after school activities, therefore missing out on the social aspects of school.

Within Westruther Primary School we want our Young Carers to enjoy school, know that it is a positive place to come and is somewhere they feel included. Please let us know if there are difficulties meeting deadlines with work, arriving on time or any other issues which affect a young person.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Our vision at Westruther is for Excellence, Equity, and Well Being. For us Equity means 'we all get what we need' in order to help us reach our potential, close any gaps in learning, and meet any wellbeing needs. We are an inclusive school who celebrates and respects individuality and diversity. We are committed to working hard to ensure that our learners and school community have equal and inclusive opportunities. We embrace our rural location and strive to prevent it being a barrier to how well, and by how much our learners experience equity of provision and opportunity. We have supports in place to help children and families affected by poverty.

## EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works with all SBC schools to support children's learning and wellbeing.

We provide advice and training to school staff on how children learn and advise them on ways to help children who require support.

If requested by the school, we can arrange follow-up for individual children and young people, together with their families and teachers, to help support their learning, or with social or emotional issues. This is generally achieved by meeting the children, their families and school staff, to review the support they have already received and agree ways in which we can all help your child in school. In some cases, we may agree that a psychologist will work on a one-to-one basis with your child to obtain a clearer picture of how they can best be supported.

If you have any worries about your child, please contact the school, in the first instance, to arrange a meeting to discuss your concerns. All schools have access to a range of support services and your child's Head Teacher will be able to advise you about when the EPS may be able to help.

Further information about the EPS is available on the Scottish Borders Council website. Here you can access a downloadable leaflet for parents and carers, which explains in more detail how we may be able to work with you to support your child in school.

For further information, please visit [www.scotborders.gov.uk/EPS](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/EPS)

## COMMUNICATION

To support Westruther Primary School to continue to be a thriving and successful school we must communicate effectively with each other. We need to ensure that communication between all members of the school community is clear, timely, and appropriate. Our communication procedures set out expected practice for effective oral and written communication within our school community. A copy of this statement is available from the school office.

We believe that:

***Good communication is much more than the exchange of information, it involves:***

- the management of relationships and the need to involve people
- the understanding that communication from everyone is as much about attitude and behaviour as it is about the message
- effective listening
- the responsibility of all staff and partners to support effective communications and to recognise that the quality of their communications is important

Our communication systems include:

- Emails
- Phone calls
- Face to Face meetings
- Groupcall- text messaging
- Letters- we try to distribute as little paper as possible to be more environmentally friendly
- Signs on our noticeboards



## COUNCIL'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN

The Council's BSL Plan 2018-24 has seven holistic actions. These actions are consistent with the ten long term goals of the National BSL Plan in Scotland, which are, early years and education; training and work; health, mental health, and wellbeing; transport; culture and the arts; justice and democracy.

These goals represent the Scottish Government's aim "to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit."

The Council will implement measures to promote awareness of BSL and the use of BSL, with the long-term goal being that across Scotland information and services will be accessible to all BSL users\*.

Contact Scotland – BSL is an online British Sign Language interpreting service that allows deaf people across Scotland to access services free and available 24 hours a day throughout the year: <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

If a BSL user requests a face-to-face meeting, then the School is required to provide a face-to-face interpreter.

\*Whenever we refer to 'BSL users' we mean Deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.



## ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

All parents/guardians/carers have a duty and responsibility to inform the school when and why their child is absent. If your child is absent, please contact the school office *before 9:15am* on the first day of absence explaining the reason why your child will not be in school.

The school *cannot* assume that absent pupils are at home under the safe care and supervision of a parent, guardian, or carer. Where the school has not been informed of a pupil's absence, we will phone or a 'Groupcall' text message will be sent to the main parental contact number (usually a mobile telephone number) asking them to contact the school office to explain why their child is not in school.

Parents/guardians/carers are asked to respond to these 'Groupcall' requests promptly, as there may be a serious reason why a pupil has not reached school in time to be registered. Parents/guardians/carers should ensure that the school always has current and up to date contact details, including nominated emergency contacts.

We ask that all pupils arrive in the playground by 8:45am. There is playground supervision from 8:30am. Pupils who arrive late to school must report directly to the school office before making their way to class.

Parents and Carers do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school without permission during term time. The Head of Establishment can only authorise time off during term-time in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances include:

- Short-term parental/carer placement abroad.
- Longer-term exceptional domestic carer circumstances where support has been provided.
- Family returning to its country of origin for family reasons.
- The period immediately after an illness or accident.
- A period of serious or critical illness of a close relative or other traumatic events where it is important to the well-being and cohesion of the family.
- A domestic crisis which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation.
- Where a parent's employment is of the nature where school holiday leave cannot be accommodated (for example Emergency or Armed Services).

Time off during term time for a family holiday will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

With no explanation from the parent or carer, any absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If your child's attendance reaches a concerning level, the school will make contact with you to explore possible support that we can provide. In this instance, you may be invited into school to discuss the situation with staff.

## EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL

It is Council policy that schools remain open except in the most severe weather conditions. Parents are asked to use common sense when it comes to very poor weather i.e., please escort your child to school on days of very heavy snowfall etc. to see if there is someone available to care for your child.

In the event of very severe weather or an emergency arising whereby it is necessary to close the school, you will be contacted by Groupcall.

Pupils will not be allowed to leave the school unaccompanied during adverse weather conditions.

Updates on severe weather and school closures will be found on the SBC website:

## ASSISTANCE WITH SCHOOL MEALS AND SCHOOL WEAR

Parents can apply for free school meals and also a Clothing Grant which provides financial assistance towards the purchase of school clothing. The current amount payable is £120 per year per qualifying primary aged child:

[Free school meals and help with schoolwear | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/free-school-meals-and-help-with-schoolwear)

### FREE SCHOOL MEALS

All children in ELC and primary one to five are automatically eligible for a free school meal. For all other children to qualify, you must meet one of the following criteria.

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with an annual income less than £18,725
- both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an annual income of up to £8,717
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with monthly earnings less than £726

### SCHOOL CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR GRANT

- Council Tax Reduction (based on income assessment)
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit with an income less than £18,725
- both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an annual income less than £8,717
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with monthly earnings less than £726

The clothing grant is only paid once per child per school year between August and the following March.

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## HOW TO APPLY OR RENEW

If you are renewing, you will need your claim number from your renewal letter.

- Fill out the [online application form](#) available from [www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)
- [Download and print the application form](#) and return it to your local [contact centre](#)
- [The application form can also be downloaded and printed](#) in the following languages; Arabic, Polish, Romanian

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## CUSTOMER ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Telephone: [0300 100 1800](tel:03001001800)

Address: Council Headquarters  
Newtown St. Boswells  
Melrose  
TD6 0SA

[www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)

## MEDICINE ADMINISTRATION

Staff are not permitted to administer any non-prescribed medicines and pupils should not have these in school. Staff may volunteer to administer prescribed drugs, but before school staff can give prescribed medication, a Medicine Administration Form must be completed. These are available from the school office or online from:

<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services/children-young-peoples-services-directory/multiagency-administration-of-medicines-for-c-and-yp/>

If a child has more complex medical needs, please discuss with the Head Teacher so arrangements can be put in place.

Minor injuries which occur during the school day are treated by First Aid trained members of staff. When professional medical treatment is considered necessary, parents will be informed by telephone and offered the opportunity to accompany their child to the doctor or hospital. If neither parent nor emergency contact can be reached, the Head teacher will see that the child is taken for medical help & parents will be advised as soon as possible. When a child becomes unwell at school and is unable to continue with their learning, parents will be informed and asked to collect their child from the school.

**Please ensure that the school has up to date contact details at all times.**

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## INFECTIOUS ILLNESSES



We follow NHS recommendations for guidance on infectious illnesses. We do ask that if your child develops vomiting and diarrhoea, that they are kept at home for 48 hours after the last symptoms. This is to prevent an outbreak spreading across the school.

The Medicine policy is available online at:

[http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/media/64719/multiagency\\_admin\\_of\\_meds\\_and\\_healthcare\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/media/64719/multiagency_admin_of_meds_and_healthcare_procedures.pdf)

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## FAMILY CONTACT DETAILS

**To help keep school records accurate and contact details up to date, please let us know of changes to phone numbers/addresses/workplace contacts/family circumstances.**

We ask that any changes to your family circumstance be shared with a member of staff in school, (all information will be treated confidentially) thus allowing us to support your child as needs arise.



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## HEAD LICE

We ask that families check hair regularly for Head Lice and encourage the use of 'Condition and Comb' on a weekly basis. Please let the school know if you have had to apply treatment so that we can monitor outbreaks. Treatments and accessories are available free from the local chemist under the 'Minor Ailments' scheme.

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## SCHOOL NURSE AND DENTAL NURSE

The School Nursing Service works with the school to provide support to a child with health needs. Parents give permission to refer into the service.

The Dental Nurse visits pupils to discuss tooth brushing and dental hygiene.



## CHILD PROTECTION

Keeping our children and young people safe in the Scottish Borders

- Our settings in the Scottish Borders work hard to keep our children and young people safe - all children and young people have a right to feel safe within the setting, home, and community.
- Within our setting we strive to provide a safe, secure, and nurturing environment for our children and young people, which promotes inclusion and achievement.
- All staff in Education have a statutory and professional responsibility to take action if we have reason to believe a child is suffering or is at risk of abuse.
- Our [Scottish Borders child protection procedures](#) set out what we will do if we have reason to believe a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse, either within the home or the community. These procedures are designed to ensure that children and young people get the help they need when they need it.
- All staff are aware of their child protection responsibilities and every year all staff in our setting attend a child protection update.
- Many of our staff undertake additional multi-agency child protection training.
- Every setting has a Child Protection co-ordinator who has the responsibility for overseeing child protection concerns as well as those young people who are care experienced within the setting.
- The Child Protection co-ordinator for the setting is Mrs Charlotte Shortel.

### What to do if you have a child protection concern?

**It is everyone's responsibility to protect children.**

**If you have any concerns that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm, please call without delay.**

01896 662787 (Duty Children and Families Social Work Team)

01896 752111 (Out of office hours that covers all areas)

#### **Emergency contact**

If you consider a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999 immediately.

## HEALTHY BEGINNINGS - TOP TIPS

Creating healthy childhood experiences is a shared responsibility for all. Working together we can ensure all children and young people have a sense of belonging, self-worth, and self-confidence to achieve their unique potential.

- Start your day with a healthy breakfast
- Eat more fruit and vegetables
- Keep food and drinks containing sugar to a minimum
- Enjoy family meal times
- Brush teeth at least twice a day – “spit, don’t rinse!”
- Register with a local dentist
- Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish
- Be active, move more
- Explore different kinds of play and physical activity everyday
- Increase outdoor learning
- Reduce screen time – Phones, Tablets, PCs and TV
- Think of the 4 B’s – Bath, Brush, Book and Bed

Healthy eating and physical activity are essential for positive growth and development.

Healthy snacks are provided during your child’s ELC journey, continue to give these types of snacks for your child to have at break times throughout Primary School.

### Contacts

Joint Health Improvement Team: [health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk)

Food & Nutrition Coordinator: [Hazel.Scott@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:Hazel.Scott@scotborders.gov.uk)

NHS Borders Oral Health Promotion: [Helen.brand@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Helen.brand@borders.scot.nhs.uk)

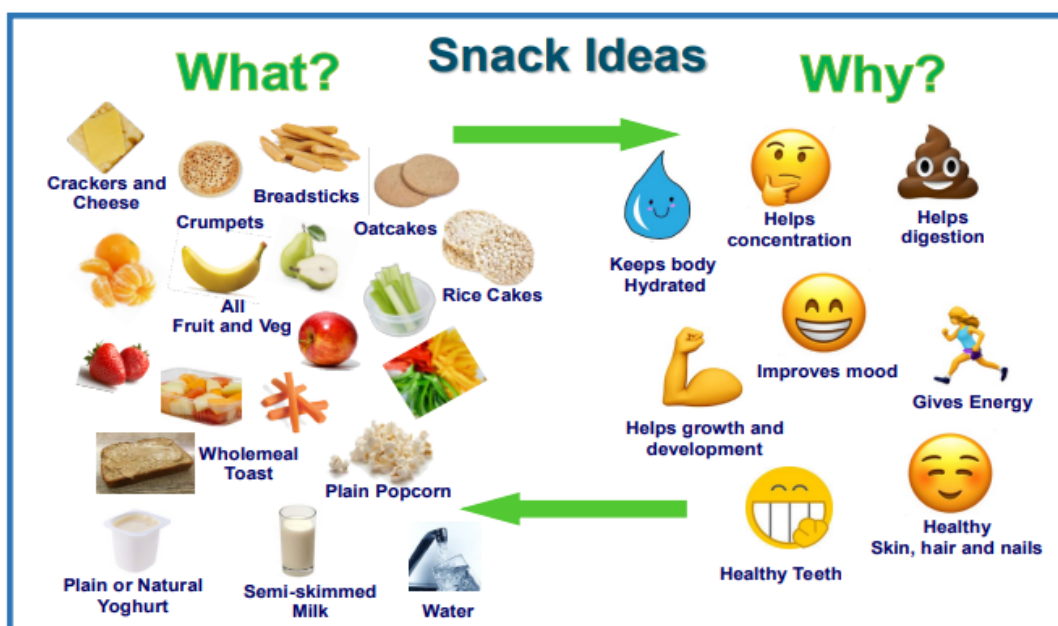
## Helping your Child to Grow, Learn and Play

Healthy eating and physical activity are essential for growth and development.

Healthy snacks have been provided during your child's ELCC journey, continue to give these types of snacks to your child to eat at break times throughout primary school.

### Top Tips for Eating Well, Feeling Good and Being Active

- Eating Breakfast gets the day off to a good start
- Enjoy a variety of foods and eat together when you can
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Limit food and drinks high in sugar, fat and salt, especially at snack time
- Be mindful of portion size
- Eat 3 meals a day with healthy snacks in between
- Brush your teeth at least twice a day – “spit don't rinse”
- Register with a local dentist
- Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish
- Enjoy being active everyday
- Reduce time spent on phones, tablets, computers and watching T.V
- Think of the 4 B's - Bath, Brush, Book and Bed to encourage a good sleep routine



### Keep Hydrated - Hydration helps improve concentration, mood and digestion

- Offer 6-8 cups of fluid a day
- Water or semi skimmed milk are best and will not damage teeth
- Bottles used in class should be filled with **plain water only**







## Fit4Fun Families

**Fit4Fun Families is a free family focused healthy lifestyle programme which offers practical tips to help support children, young people (0-18 years) and their families, eat well and be active**

**We can support you to make positive lifestyle changes and work with you to identify specific goals that you would like to achieve**

### Service user feedback:

"We have really enjoyed the Fit4Fun Families programme. It was arranged at a time that was convenient so we could both participate. Sessions have been fun and informative and at a level that suits the age of any child"

"We have learned a lot over the past few weeks, which has been fun and helpful. We've been keeping up with the goals that we set. We would highly recommend Fit4Fun Families to any parents/carers looking to know about how to eat healthily with their kids"

Scanning the QR code below with your smartphone or typing in the link will take you to our Fit4Fun Families website

Here you can find helpful resources for all families on how to eat well, be active and feel good

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/child-healthy-weight-service-fit4fun-families](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/child-healthy-weight-service-fit4fun-families)



**If you would like to find out more, please contact us on:**

**Tel: 01896 826447**

**Email: [Child.HealthyWeightService@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Child.HealthyWeightService@borders.scot.nhs.uk)**

You can self-refer into our programme or if you prefer you can speak to your GP, Health Visitor, School Nurse or another health professional



Produced August 2023 by CHWS: Fit4Fun Families





## COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

This complaints procedure refers to matters relating to your child at school.

The procedure assumes that complaints are being made to the Head Teacher; however, it may be the case that some complaints will be dealt with by class teachers. We will always endeavour to meet with you as quickly as possible. Please bear in mind that, because of class commitments, you may have to wait before a class teacher is free to meet with you.

- The Starting Point

Work out in your own mind exactly what you are unhappy about, what you believe has gone wrong and what you would like to see done to put things right.

- Sharing the Problem

You should talk to the member of staff face to face. You may wish to write or telephone first, outlining your concerns. Arrange a time when you can sit down with the member of staff to discuss your worries fully. If the member of staff wishes time to find out more, or to consult someone else or think about a solution, give them the time, but then arrange another appointment to discuss the possible solutions to your worries.

- Solving the Problem

When a solution is suggested, be reasonable and if necessary, accept a compromise that may resolve the situation. Give the solution time to work with an agreement to review the situation after an agreed period of time has passed.

- Facing up to Difficulties

If you are totally dissatisfied with the response being given, make it clear to the member of staff that this is the case. Write to the Depute Chief Executive for People at Newtown St Boswells and ask for a meeting with an appropriate official. When you write, take the time to spell out your concerns, then follow the same procedure as you did with the member of school staff.

- The Final Step

If you are still dissatisfied with the response you receive, say so, and then approach your Regional Councillor and ask for his help. He/she will be able to guide you through the Local Authority Complaint Procedure.

## DATA PROTECTION

Scottish Borders Council is a local authority established under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994 and its headquarters is based at Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA. You can contact our data protection officer by post at this address, or by email at [dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk), or by telephone – 0300 100 1800.

### **Why we need your information:-**

Every child of school age has the right to be educated. A child is of school age if he/she has attained the age of 5 but has not attained the age of 16 years. The term 'young person' applies to a pupil over school age, but who has not attained 18 years. The education authority has a duty to provide education to any young person who is still a school pupil.

We need to collect, use, and store personal information about you and your child/children to enable us to provide your child/children with an appropriate education. We provide these services to you as part of our statutory function as your local authority under:

- The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- The Education (Placing in Schools etc. Deemed Decisions) (Scotland) Regulations 1982
- The Standard in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

We also use your information to verify your identity where required, contact you by post, email, or telephone to maintain our records.

### **Who we will share information with:-**

We will share information with health and wellbeing services and may share information with other external agencies and organisations who provide or assist with educational provision and with online payment solution providers.

- The [Scottish Government](#) for examination, career guidance and monitoring purposes.
- ParentPay, ESP Systems and CRB to allow the school to offer cashless catering and to receive payment for school trips and events.
- Groupcall to allow the school to communicate with you.
- The NHS for health monitoring.
- Netmedia to enable the online arrangement of parent's evenings.
- Internal Scottish Borders Council departments to allow the provision of catering and transport.

On each occasion, the recipients are bound to the terms of a Data Sharing Agreement and accordingly will only use your child's data for the specified purpose. This data sharing is in accordance with our Information Use and Privacy Policy and covered in our full [privacy statement](#) on our website.

We are also legally obliged to share certain data with other public and regulatory bodies such as Education Scotland, Police, and NHS, and will do so where the law requires this.

Your information may also be shared and analysed internally in order to provide management information, inform service delivery reform and similar purposes to meet our duty to achieve best value and continuous service improvement.

We are legally obliged to safeguard public funds, so we are required to verify and check your details internally for fraud prevention. We may share this information with other public bodies (and also receive information from these other bodies) for fraud checking purposes.

### **How long do we keep your information for?**

We only keep your personal information for the minimum period of time necessary. Sometimes this time period is set out in the law, but in most cases, it is based on the business need. We will retain a copy of your child/children's educational record up until they reach the age of 25.

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### PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS

Photographs and videos may be taken by staff in the school, media, and other parents for a variety of reasons for example Sports Day, celebrations of achievement, charity events, excursions et cetera. The school your child attends may wish to display or show photographs or videos taken by themselves, in print, in various locations or by electronic means such as a website. Likewise, the media or other parents may wish to use the images of pupils in various ways. We ask you at the time your child enrolls at one of our schools if you are happy for images of your child to be used in this way and we try to ensure you are aware of, and understand, such possible use of your child's image and that you have consented.

Any permission given will remain in force during your child's primary and secondary schooling until you indicate that you wish to withdraw your consent. You can do this by contacting the Head Teacher of your school as soon as possible.

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### YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to request access to any personal data held about you by the Council. You can also request that we restrict the use of your information or even object to any further processing. You can do this by contacting the Data Protection Officer using the contact details provided above. We will respond to your request within thirty calendar days.

For more information on your rights please visit our website <http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/DPOYourRights> or if you would like a hard copy of this information, please contact us using the contact details provided above.

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### COMPLAINTS

We aim to directly resolve all complaints about how we handle personal information. If your complaint is about how we have handled your personal information, you can contact our Data Protection Officer by email at [dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0300 100 1800.

However, you also have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection matters with the Information Commissioner's Office, who can be contacted by post at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

You can visit their website for more information <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/> .

If your complaint is not about a data protection matter, you can find details on how to make a complaint on our website:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20016/have\\_your\\_say/1255/making\\_complaints/4](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20016/have_your_say/1255/making_complaints/4)

## EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN

Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the byelaws on the Employment of Children. These regulations allow anyone to be employed at 14 years but under certain circumstances children under 13 years of age can be employed, and for those over the age of 13 there are limits on the hours and type of employment which are allowed. Parents and employers must both complete an application form for an employment permit before the employment begins.

Further details can be obtained from HQ Operations, Children & Young People Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA

Further information can be found at:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/670/employment\\_byelaws\\_for\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people/1](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/670/employment_byelaws_for_children_and_young_people/1)

**DISCLAIMER - All information within this handbook was correct at the time of printing; however, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracies if policies and circumstances etc. have changed since printing**

USEFUL ADDRESSES AND QUICK WEBSITE LINK INFORMATION

Channelkirk Primary School  
Main Street  
Oxton  
Lauder  
Berwickshire  
TD2 6PN  
Tel: 01578 750242  
Head Teacher: Mrs Charlotte Shortel  
[www.channelkirkprimarySchool.co.uk](http://www.channelkirkprimarySchool.co.uk)

Earlston High School  
East End  
Earlston  
TD4 6HF  
Tel: 01896 849 282  
Head Teacher: Mr Alex Johnson  
[www.earlstonhighSchool.org.uk](http://www.earlstonhighSchool.org.uk)

Lauder and Stow Medical Practice  
Lauder Surgery  
Crofts Road  
Lauder  
TD2 6QJ  
Tel: 01578 718670  
[www.stowandlauderhealth.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.stowandlauderhealth.scot.nhs.uk)

Borders General Hospital  
Melrose  
TD6 9BS  
Phone: 01896 826000  
[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk)

Pathhead Surgery  
210 Main St,  
Pathhead  
Mid Lothian  
EH37 5PP  
Tel: 01875 320302  
[www.pathheadmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.pathheadmedicalcentre.co.uk)

Scottish Borders Council  
People and Young People Department Council  
Headquarters  
Newtown St Boswells  
Melrose  
TD6 0SA  
Tel: 01835 824000  
[www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)

Live Borders  
Melrose Road  
Galashiels  
TD1 2DU  
Tel: 01896 661166  
[www.liveborders.org.uk](http://www.liveborders.org.uk)



Education Scotland is the national body in Scotland for supporting quality and improvement in learning and teaching.  
[www.education.gov.scot](http://www.education.gov.scot)



Be at the heart of your child's learning  
[www.education.gov.scot/parentzone](http://www.education.gov.scot/parentzone)



*Please note information provided is accurate as of Dec 23.*

