West Lothian Council

Dechmont Infant School Handbook

DECHMONT

Infant School

Contents

Heading	*Page number*
Welcome	4
Contact Details	5
School Aims	6-7
West Lothian Council Values	7
School Context	8
The School Day	9
Absences, punctuality and Early release	10-11
School Uniform/Dress Code	12
School meals, grants and Breakfast Club	13-14
Extra-Curricular Activities and homework	15
Communication and Customer Service	15-17
Concerns and Complaints	17
Admission procedures	18-19
Parental Involvement	20
School Ethos	21
Behaviour	21
The Curriculum	22-27
Assessment and Reporting	28-29
Transition	30
School Improvement	30

Contents continued Page number

Emergency Contact and Medical Information 31-33

Photography 34

Transport, Playground/Car Park, Wet Weather & Playground Supervision 35

Data and Child Protection Guidelines 36

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you to Dechmont Infant School and hope that your child will be very happy throughout their years with us. We pride ourselves in being a vibrant learning community where the individual is valued and achievement in its widest sense is celebrated.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced and we make every effort to ensure that it is relevant to today's society and therefore meaningful to the children. We use a variety of learning and teaching approaches and offer many opportunities for the children to learn independently and as part of a group. The skills they will develop will be essential to them as they progress beyond primary school and face the demands made of them as they get older.

We believe that learning should be enjoyable and that fun is an essential part of life at Dechmont Infant School. We want our pupils to leave with very happy memories of their time here, having achieved success and feeling motivated and enthusiastic about the future.

We have very strong home/school partnerships and welcome the support the parents can offer, not only to their own children but also to the wider school community. Parental support helps to enhance the activities on offer to the children and we value offers to help in any capacity.

We look forward to working in partnership wth you and should you have any issues, concerns or ideas for improvement, please feel free to share these with us.

The Dechmont Infant School Team

Contact Details

Dechmont Infant School
69 Main Street
Dechmont
EH52 6LJ

Head Teacher: Miss Kirsty McLaren
Tel: 01506 811264

Website: https://dechmontprimary.westlothian.org.uk/
Email: wldechmont-ps@westlothian.org.uk

Vision Statement

A strong community to grow and learn together.

School Values

Be determined

Be kind

Be respectful

School Aims

Learning and Teaching

To provide high quality learning and teaching in order to meet the needs of all our learners

To provide all staff with a range of development opportunities to meet the needs of both the pupils and the school

To recognise and celebrate achievement with pupils, parents and the wider community

Vision and Leadership

To encourage and support all stakeholders in the learning community to reach their full potential by embracing opportunities for leadership

To provide opportunities for all to take ownership and accountability for their responsibilities and to build self esteem

To provide an inclusive learning community where all are valued, encouraged and able to influence improvement

Partnership

To build pride and respect in the community in which we live and work

To provide opportunity for effective collaboration across the school, cluster and beyond

To establish and maintain partnerships with parents/carers, the community, education and inter-agency working to meet the needs of all or our learners

People

To value the unique differences and skills of all our stakeholders and celebrate success and achievement

To build a learning community which values, supports, encourages each other while developing resilience

To promote a learning community which encourages all stakeholders to reach their full potential

Culture and Ethos

To build a learning community that is supportive, aspirational and challenging

To create a school ethos which is welcoming, inclusive, respectful, nurturing, warm, innovative and motivational

To provide a learning environment where children can reach their full potential

West Lothian Council Values

Focusing on customers' needs

Being honest and open and accountable

Providing equality of opportunities

Developing employees

Making best use of resources

Working in partnership

"Working together for success"
To provide education of the highest quality for all pupils which will meet their educational, personal and spiritual needs and which will enable them to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and to make an effective contribution to society in their present and future lives.

School Context

Dechmont Infant School is non-denominational and provides for stages P1 - P3.

The school does not provide teaching by means of the Gaelic language as spoken in Scotland.

Dechmont Infant School admits pupils of both sexes.

Dechmont Infant School is staffed by a Head Teacher, 1 Depute Head Teacher. 1 Principal Teacher, class teachers for 1 class and a Support for learning teacher. We have a visiting specialist teacher for Music.

An Administrative Assistant, Pupil Support Workers and Facilities Management Assistant, Kitchen Staff and Cleaning Staff make up the range of support staff in school, which provides vital services to the pupils.

Composite Classes

When pupil numbers make it impossible to have a single year class, it is often necessary to form composite classes. Class size legislation now dictates that all P1 classes should be a maximum size of 25 pupils, P2 and P3 should be a maximum of 30 and P4-P7 should be a maximum of 33 pupils. Composite classes should have no more than 25 pupils. It may become necessary to re-structure the school and this may include the creation of composite classes. The academic and social needs of pupils within the composite classes would be well planned for and no parent should have any reservations about their child being part of such a class. The creation of composite classes is in keeping with West Lothian Council guidelines. Copies for parents are available from the school of can be downloaded from the West Lothian Council website http://www.westlothian.gov.uk

The School Day

Primary 1-3

8.50am – 10.30am
10.30am – 10.45am – morning break
10.45am – 12.20pm
12.20pm – 12.55pm - lunch
12.55pm – 3.05pm

On Fridays, all children leave at 12.25pm

School term dates and holidays can be accessed online at:
https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/

Procedures for reporting your child's absence

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

The School enters pupil absence electronically using codes for particular reasons for absence. To ensure an accurate record is kept it is important that, should your child be absent, you provide an expanation for that absence either by letter or by telephone. A Group Call System, which sends out an automated text message to a mobile telephone in cases of unexplained absence, has been introduced in all schools. Parents/Carers and schools must work in partnership in order to benefit from early notification of unexplained absence from school. Parents are urged to opt into this system.

Please avoid keeping your child absent for reasons other than illness. Work missed is not easily made up and allowing casual absences encourages a casual attitude towords work, and this applies equally in the case of frequent late-coming. Please help us develop in your child a regular habit of good time keeping. If circumstances arise when your child will be unavoidably late please provide a note of explanation. The Scottish government has issued a directive informing local authorities that, due to the impact absences during term-time have on children's learning any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised. Family holidays should therefore not be taken out-with term times. If, in exceptional circumstances, you wish to take your children out of school, you must make your request to the Head Teacher in writing.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. In cases of unsatisfactory attendance, the Head Teacher will ask a Family Support Worker to visit the home and discuss the problem with the parent or carer. If such unsatisfactory attendance persists, the Head Teacher, following discussion with the Family Support Worker and other agencies, will decide whether the case should be referred to the Local Area Attendance Advisory Group. This group has been formed to make recommendations to the Director on the statutory responsibilities of the Authority with regard to defaulting parents.

If you become aware that your child may be absent from school for a considerable length of time, due to illness or admission to hospital, you are requested to inform the school as soon as possible. Notification from the hospital will also be sent to the school.

Punctuality
It is good manners to be punctual and our children are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival embarrasses them and also disrupts the class work already begun. However in the event of the occasional 'sleep-in' please send your child to school no matter what time.

Requested Early Release of Pupil
There are occasions when parents/carers wish their children to be released from school at other than normal closing times, to enable them to keep a dental or medical appointment outside school, or for other reasons. In all cases, a written/verbal request must be made for early release. Parents/carers must then call at the school office and their child will be brought to them.

On no account should a child leave school premises on her/her own.

If a child is taken ill at home during lunch break, it would be of great help if you inform us should you decide not to send the pupil to school in the afternoon.

School Uniform/Dress Code

The School Uniform is as follows:
Blue Sweatshirt
Grey Sweater
White Polo Shirt
Black or Grey Trousers/Skirt
Black School Shoes

P.E .Wear
Shorts
T-Shirt
Black gym shoes
A drawstring bag or plastic carrier with child's name is useful for holding P.E. wear.

In 1999 West Lothian adopted a policy on school dress. Some forms of dress are unacceptable in school for health and safety reasons or for moral or other reasons.

School will not allow clothing, jewellery or makeup which:

- could encourage rivalry (such as football colours)
- could cause offence (such as anti-religious symbols or slogans which might be regarded as political or carrying a questionable moral message)
- could damage flooring
- could promote a message contrary to the values of the school and Council (such as support for drug culture)
- carry advertising, particulary for alcohol or tobacco
- could be used as a weapon.

The Council considers that the introduction of school dress codes:

- improve security by making it easier to identify intruders
- give pupils a pride in, and a sense of belonging to, their school
- reduce taunting by identifying school pupils as belonging to a particular school
- improve a school's reputation in the community
- discourage competition among pupils
- make it cheaper for parents to buy school clothing
- encourage discipline among pupils

Dechmont Infant School has its own dress code, for the whole school, based on the Council's policy, which will be expected to be kept to. Information on our school uniform and order forms can be obtained from our school office.

The Council will not be responsible for loss of or damage to pupils' clothing and personal belongings including mobile phones. Valuable items, including jewellery and unnnecessarily expensive articles of clothing, should not be brought to school.

Clothing Grant eligibility

Families in receipt of the following will be eligible for a School Clothing Grant:

- Income Support / Pension Credit
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Any Income-Related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit within annual income limits
- Universal Credit where your "monthly earned income" is within certain limits
- Council Tax Reduction (not to be confused with Council Tax Discount)
- Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

School Meals, food and drink

School meals in Primary schools are offered a two course meal with a choice of main course, supplemented by salads and bread, and which meet the new Scottish Nutrient Guidelines for School Meals

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended gives the education authority:

- power to provide milk, meals or other refreshments for pupils at its schools;
- a duty to provide meals free of charge to pupils whose parents are in receipt of income Support or Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance (qualifying benefits);
- A duty to accommodate the consumption of packed lunches.

All pupils of nursery schools and classes, all P1-3 pupils, P4-7 pupils whose parents are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and pupils at Beatlie and Pinewood Schools where consumption of milk is part of the educational programme as agreed by Psychological Services are entitled to 0.25 litres of milk daily free of charge. Milk is available to other primary schools at a reduced cost.

Further information and application form can be obtained from the school or from the Council's website www.westlothian.gov.uk

Free School Meals eligibility

Families in receipt of the following will be eligible for Free School Meals & Milk:

- Income Support / Pension Credit
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Any Income-Related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax credit (but not Working Tax Credit) within annual income limits
- Both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit within annual income limits

- Universal Credit where your "monthly earned income" is within certain limits
- Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

All children in ELC and Primary 1 to Primary 5 receive free school lunches, regardless of financial circumstances. However families who are in receipt of the above benefits should complete an application to ensure their child receives free milk and a clothing grant.

Children may have school meals regularly or on odd days when necessary. The school dining area is organised as a self-service cafeteria. This area is supervised by members of staff. Children choose from three options each day. This usually includes a non-meat meal.

A three coloured tray system is used;

- blue - hot two course meal
- red - hot two course meal
- green - packed lunch.

These are on display to allow the children to see the choices.

Some parents prefer their children to have a packed lunch and facilities are provided in the school for the eating of packed lunches.

Breakfast Club

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

Extra Curricular Activities

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

Homework

The main aims of setting homework are to reinforce learning, establish positive study habits, promote independent learning and give parent/carers further information about their child's learning at any particular time. The nature of homework based tasks is left to the discretion of the teacher but may consist of a piece of reading, spelling, some personal research or a short extension of learning previously undertaken. Time spent on homework will vary according to the age of the child. Please ensure that your child undertakes their homework tasks in an appropriate environment away from distractions.

Book Fairs

The school organises two large Book Fairs during October and March. These fairs take place during the week and evenings of the parent nights and all parents and pupils are invited to buy from the excellent selection of books on offer.

Communication

We aim to communicate regularly and in a timely fashion with parents/carers. Our monthly newsletter provides up to date information about the life of the school.

"Group Call" is a text messaging facility, which enables us to make quick and easy contact should we require to. Please ensure that your emergency contact details are updated as required.

Our plasma screen in the front entrance also provides information about the school with photos of recent activities providing further evidence of the vibrant life of the school.

Should you require to contact us in writing, by telephone of by e-mail, you will find contact details on West Lothain Council's website and on school documentation and communication.

Customer Service

Our aim is:

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for your child, by ensuring health and safety standards are maintained and policies such as our anti-bullying policy provide a clear outline of how these issues will be dealt with.
- Provide a variety of learning opportunities for your child by using current teaching methods, incorporating all aspects of like skills tailored to meet an individual child's social, educational, and health needs.

When you contact the school we will provide the highest professional standards of service. We will do this by:

- Treating you fairly and with respect
- Respecting your confidentially at all times
- Ensuring the provision of professional, well-qualified staff

We will keep you informed of the wider developments and achievements within the school by:

- Giving you comprehensive and accurate information in a way that meets your needs. We will measure the effectiveness of our information by conducting a survey annually.
- Keeping you up to date with the whole school and individual issues, through newsletters and at curriculum and parent evenings.
- Being actively involved in and supporting the Parent and Staff Association in their role of involving the Parent Forum in the daily aspects of school life.

We will be responsive to your needs when you contact the school for any reason by:

- Addressing concerns within 3 working days either giving a direct response or a clear indication of when to expect one.
- Providing a telephone answering service, if due to priorities the telephone is unmanned, during published opening hours. Return calls, responding to messages left will be made within two hours.
- Responding effectively and fully to letters within 5 working days.
- Answering e-mail within 2 days, with a comprehensive and direct response.
- Ensuring polite, friendly, approachable, responsive staff at all time
- Ensuring you will be met by a member of staff within 5-10 minutes of your appointment.
- Ensuring that when you make contact with the school, the member of staff you first speak to will pass your message to the appropriate staff member, who will then deal with your enquiry promptly and effictively, by finding out the information you have asked for, investigate any concerns you have presented and respond to you the same working day.

On an annual basis, we will conduct a survey to ascertain how we are meeting our standards and targets and how we can improve upon them. The results of these questionnaires will be colated, reported on in our Standards and Quality Report with a summary sent out via pupil mail and parent/carer mail.

Concerns and Complaints Procedure

If you have concerns or complaints regading the service you are receiving, these can be addressed by contacting the Head Teacher in the first instance.

If you are dissatisfied with that response you should contact:
Customer Services Manager
Education Services
2nd Floor
North Wing
Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH54 6FF
Tel: 01506 775000

If, in exceptional circumstances, it is felt that the case has not been properly administered, you should contact:
Scottish Public Service Ombudsman
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS
Tel: 0800 377 7330

The Complaints Policy and Procedures for Education and Cultural Services is available in booklet form on request or can be downloaded from the West Lothain Council Website. For further advice please refer to the Comments and Compaints Procedure for Education: http:// www.westlothian.gov.uk

Procedure for Admission to School

West Lothian Council is divided into denominational (Roman Catholic) and non-denominational primary school catchment areas. Currently West Lothian has no other categories of denominational primary school.
Each home address therefore has two catchment primary schools and each primary school is associated with a secondary school of the same denomination.

Applications for admission in West Lothian Council primary or infant schools ar all stages (P1-P7) are made by completion of an Application for Admission to Primary/Infant School Form. Applications Forms are part of an application pack. Please read all the details carefully, particularly the pupil placement guidelines in the Information for Parent Booklet.

Application Packs can be collected from the school and forms completed with the assistance from school staff or by reference to guidance notes or alternatively application made online at https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/apply-for-pre-school-and-school-places

Pre-School Admission Policy
http://www.westlothian.gov.uk

Primary School Admission Policy
http://www.westlothian.gov.uk

Application Packs are also available from:
Pupil Placement Section
Education Services
2nd Floor
North Wing
Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingtston
EH54 6FF

New Entrants to P1

Application for admission of pupils to P1 for the August intake normally takes place in November and December of the preceding year. Details appear in the local papers, Council Information Centres, in ELC buildings and playgroups.

Children will be invited to spend some time in school, usually in June to meet their teacher and see their classroom. Primary 1 pupils will commence a full day infant session from the start of term.

Transport assistance may be provided for children who cannot be placed in the catchment school. Information of this can be obtained from Public Transport (telephone 01506 280000) or from the Council website – www.westlothian.gov.uk.

Applying for a Place at a Non-Catchment School
The deadline for an application for a placing request to a non-catchement primary or secondary school is 31 December, prior to the transfer in August.

Acknowledgment
All applications will be acknowledged within 14 days. Admission will be confirmed as soon possible on or before 30 April by letter from Pupil Placement. Where a school is over-subscribed, parents will be informed in writing, and asked to provide, if the wish, further supporting information for their application which will be considered in determining their application. Enquiries may be made either to the individual school or Pupil Placement Section.

Transfer to S1
At the end of primary school most children transfer to Broxburn Academy. We have close liason with the secondary school together with participation in a transition programm which takes place.

Prior to moving to the Academy the children have a one day experience in December in their P7 class a the Academy and will also spend some time there (usually in June) where they meet their register teacher, go to their new classes and follow their timetable. There is normally an information evening for the 'new' first year parent/carers. Over the period October to June various meetings are held between Academy staff, parents/carers, senior pupils and the primary children in order to answer pupils' and parents'/carers' questions and make the transition to secondary as smooth as possible.

Parental Involvement

West Lothian schools operate an open, responsive policy with regard to questions or concerns that parents/carers may have. Should you have concerns or complaints regarding the service provided you should raise these with the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Newsletters are issued frequently and curricular evenings and Parents' Meetings are held regularly. Your comments and suggestions on the work done in school and the service provided for you and your child are welcomed.

Every parent/carer can expect to: receive information about what their child is learning along with information about events and activities at the school receive advice/help on how they can support their child's learning and be told about opportunities to become involved in school.

Evaluation forms will be sent to you from time to time so that we can be sure that we are listening to what you say about the service provided for you and your child.

Dechmont Infant School Association

Dechmont Infant School Association is a group of parents who meet regularly with the Senior Leadership Team to discuss school improvements. Fundraising is also part of this group and these additional funds allow us to enhance the educational experiences for all our pupils.

Dechmont Infant School Association welcomes all parents.

Further information can be found at: https://education.gov.scot/parentzone

School Ethos

Dechmont Infant School has an ethos of achievement, community spirit and sense of belonging. We are involved in a number of community initiatives and regularly celebrate achievement in all areas including:

- Local and Global Citizenship
- Remembrance Day Services
- Broxburn Cluster Active Schools participation
- Celebrations in school assemblies
- Curricular showcases
- Nativity
- Rights Respecting Schools Programme
- School Committees

School Code of Behaviour

We promote and expect a high standard of responsible behaviour from pupils towards staff, other pupils and towards their surroundings. Self-discipline is the key to good behaviour and we depend on your support in reinforcing the discipline guidelines of the school. These guidelines are based on mutual consideration, good manners and respect and are in place to ensure the safety and well being of all pupils and staff in school.

We ask your child to:
Be honest
Be kind and helpful
Care for others
Be hard working
Look after property
Listen to people
Cross the road safely, using the crossing patrol wherever possible

We ask the child not to:
Cover up the truth
Hurt others
Hurt others' feelings
Waste time or others' time
Damage property or drop litter
Interrupt
Leave the school without permission.

The Curriculum

General

The national framework known as Curriculum for Excellence sets four main purposes for the curriculum for all children and young people from 3-18. These purposes are to ensure that they become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens and will steer the delivery of the curriculum over the next few years. The key areas to be covered are Health and Wellbeing, Languages, Mathematics, Sciences, Social Studies, Expressive Arts, Technologies and Religious and Moral Education.

Pupils are also entitled to:

- Experience a curriculum which is coherent from 3-18
- Experience a broad general education
- Experience a senior phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications (secondary education)
- Develop skills for learning, skills for life, skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- Personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence can provide
- Support in moving into a positive and sustainable destination

We provide programmes of study in the following areas which are enhanced, explored, extended and contextualised through interdisciplinary learning, enterprise education, global citizenship, Rights Respecting Schools and other National and local agendas.

Languages

The main areas of study are:

Reading

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for reading including the learning of phonics and key words
- Finding and using information
- Understanding, analysing and evaluating

Writing

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for writing including phonics and spelling
- Organising and using information
- Creating texts including writing for a variety of different purposes

Listening and Talking

- Enjoyment and choice including various multi media
- Tools for listening and talking
- Finding and using information
- Understanding, analysing and evaluating

Modern Languages

Learning other languages enables children to make connections with different people and their cultures and to play a further part in Global Citizenship. French is currently taught from ELC-P7.

The main areas of study are:

- Listening for information
- Listening and talking with others
- Organising and using information
- Using knowledge about language
- Finding and using information

Mathematics

The main areas of study are:

- Estimating and rounding
- Number and number processes
- Multiples, fractions and primes
- Powers and roots
- Fractions, decimal fractions and percentages
- Money including financial education
- Time
- Measurement
- Mathematics – it's impact on the world, past, present and future
- Patterns and relationships
- Expressions and equations
- Properties of 2D shapes and 3D shapes
- Angle, symmetry and transformation
- Data and analysis
- Ideas of change and uncertainty

Social Studies
Designed to develop in children an understanding of and responsible attitudes towards the world around them:
The main areas of study are:

- People, past events and societies
- People, place and environment
- People, society, economy and business

Technology including ICT
The main areas of study are:

- Technological developments in society
- ICT to enhance learning
- Business contexts for developing technological skills and knowledge
- Computing science contexts for developing technological skills and knowledge
- Food and textiles contexts for developing technological skills and knowledge
- Craft, design, engineering and graphics contexts for developing technological skills and knowledge

Use of the Internet
Computer equipment is used to support effective Learning and Teaching. This is an integral part of the curriculum, which enables pupils to access information and resources on local worldwide networks.

West Lothian Education Services implements software to provide protection from inappropriate material on the Internet. It must be recognised, however, that no protection can be absolutely guaranteed and, to this end, pupils must not actively seek inappropriate material and should report any items that make them feel uncomfortable.

The authority has set out the following Internet rules for pupils to minimise the possibility of accessing inappropriate material or communications.

Internet Rules
When using the Internet, we expect children:

- not to swear, use rude or threatening words
- not to reveal their address or phone numbers or those of others
- to remember that electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private
- not to use the Internet is such a way that would disrupt its use by others
- not to try to find inappropriate material
- to tell a member of staff if a page, picture or message is found that makes the child feel uncomfortable

If these rules are not followed the child will not be allowed to use the Internet and the school may take further action.

Further information on safe use of the Internet is available at: https://besafeonline.org and https://thinkuknow.co.uk

Seesaw
Children in P1-P3 stages use Seesaw, a secure online journal where students can document and reflect on what they are learning in class. Children are able to add things they work on in school to their Seesaw journal and we can share them privately with you to view and comment on throughout the school year.

Glow
Managed by Education Scotland and delivered by Research Machines (RM), Glow is the world's first national intranet for education. Children will be issued login details that will allow them to access Glow from school and from home.

What Glow will provide

- A trusted and safe environment for pupils, teachers and parents.
- An area to create personalised programme of work and share curricular resources. A variety of online tools to enhance learning experiences.
- Virtual learning to share information and take part in lesson.
- Tools to enhance you to communicate and collaborate across the network.

Sciences
The main areas of study are:

- Biodiversity and interdependence
- Energy sources and sustainability
- Processes of the planet
- Space
- Forces
- Electricity
- Vibrations and waves
- Body systems and cells
- Inheritance
- Properties and uses of substances
- Earth's materials
- Chemical changes
- Topical science

Expressive Arts
The main areas of study are:

Art and Design
In Art and Design we build on children's natural desire to express themselves visually. Your child will have the opportunity to explore varied media, drawing, painting, collage, model making and clay work.

Music
This includes singing, making music, listening to music, moving to music and composing music.

Drama and Dance
Drama and dance activities range from dramatising stories and historical events to the writing and performance of plays. School concerts, class assemblies and the end of term services also provide opportunities for children to show of their dramatic skills. Drama and dance provides an opportunity for language development and emotional expression. Culture can also be explored through this curricular area.

Instrumental Tuition
The Council has instructors for brass. Instructors will assess children in P4 and P5 who have expressed an interest in learning to play an instrument. Successful children are given a place if one is available or placed on the waiting. Parents/carers are asked to sign a contract to ensure regular practice and proper care of the instrument. Children who make progress will be encourgaged to acquire their own instrument and join local bands and orchestras.

Religious and Moral Education
The main areas of study for both Christianity and other world religions are:

- Beliefs
- Values and issues
- Practices and traditions

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

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

Health and Wellbeing including Physical Education
The main areas of study are:

Physical Education

- Movement skills, competencies and concepts
- Cooperation and competition
- Evaluating and appreciating
- Enjoyment
- Health benefits

Health and Wellbeing

- Food and Health
- Substance Misuse
- Relationships, sexual health and parenthood

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing are essential for successful learning therefore it is the responsibility of all within school to support the development of these four aspects.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process and your child will be continuously assessed throughout his/her education. This assessment takes many forms, from teacher observation, pupil/teacher discussion, class tests, through to written assessments and evaluations.

The result of this assessment process forms the content of your child's annual school report and is also shared with you at the parent/teacher consultations. You are welcome to make an appointment with your child's teacher to discuss progress at any time.

It is the authority's policy to carry out standardised testing across all stages. The aim of the annual report is to provide details of your child's strengths, development needs and attainment in each curricular area. Where applicable National Assessment results will be included in this report. Your comments on your child's report will be welcome.

Achievement

- To ensure that all pupils are able to become sucessful learners and confident individuals and nurtured to realise their full potential.
- To encourage enthusiasm and motivation for learning and a determination to succeed.
- To recognise and celebrate achievement with pupils, parents and wider community.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

There are two formal opportunities, in October and March, for parents and teachers to discuss the progress of individual learners. One written report is produced annually in June. Teachers are willing to discuss individual progress at any time should there be concerns or issues surrounding the child. Arrangements for this can be made by appointment.

Support for Learning

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

Should your child be experiencing difficulties in a particular area you are invitied to discuss this with the Head Teacher. Support for learning teachers work co-operatively in class with the class teacher in a variety of curricular areas and with all of the children. Additional help can be provided in school through Pupil Support Workers who will work alongside the class teacher. Continuous records are maintained and you will be kept informed of your child's progress.

This authority has a policy of inclusion. This promotes the placement into primary and secondary schools of pupils' wih significant needs. Additional support may be given to the school to enable such placements to be successful. Should an integrated placement or

placement into special classes be necessary, these are made following professional assessment and in consultation with parents/carers. The authority considers that each school is equally capable of meeting the needs of all pupils. Dechmont Infant School fully implements the West Lothian Council Continuum of Support Policy.

Framework for Learning

- To provide high quality learning and teaching experiences which encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning.
- To provide resources which motivate, challenge, support and meet the needs of all pupils.
- To provide all staff with a range of development opportunities to meet the needs of both the pupils and the school.

Inclusion and Equality

- To ensure that all pupils are able to access a positive and safe learning environment that promotes a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.
- To ensure a respectful atmosphere where all are treated equally and fairly.

Values and Citizenship

- To foster a positive ethos of care and concern where each individual is respected and valued as an individual.
- To develop confident, responsible pupils with appropriate values and attitudes who are able to relate well to others.
- To encourage pupils, through developing knowledge and understanding, to make appropriate informed choices and descisions.

Learning for Life

- To encourage pupils to think creatively an independently.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take the initiative, develop leadership and team work skills in a variety of different contexts.

Equality and Fairness

All pupils have the right to enjoy opportunities and activities, regardless of their background, race, gender or religion, so that they will be given the freedom to develop their full potential without constraint.

Our aim is to promote self-esteem and a positive self-image in every pupil. Self respect and respect for others is a priority. We treat boys and girls equally and offer the same opportunuties to all pupils by offering a diverse curriculum, which addresses the needs and opinions of all. We aim to maintain an environment which is free from bullying, racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour. We value your support in maintaining this ethos.

Transition

Each home address has a denominational (Roman Catholic) and non-denomination secondary school in their catchment area.

Dechmont Infant School is associated with Kirkhill PS and Broxburn Academy. Children attending Dechmont Infant School and living in the catchment area of the school would therefore normally transfer to the above schools.

In November and December parents of P7 pupils will receive a letter from the Pupil Placement Section indicating the catchment area seconday schools for their home address. The letter, which will be sent home with the child, asks parents to confirm their transfer intentions. It is generally assumed that P7 pupils transfer to their associated secondary school providing that their associated secondary school for the primary school that they attend is also a catchment secondary school. The letter also advises parents/carers of their right to make a placement request and how to do this. Information on placement requests is available from the Pupil Placement Section.

Transport assistance may be provided for children who cannot be placed in the catchment school. Information of this can be obtained from School Transport (telephone 01506 775291), Pupil Placement (telephone 01506 776002) or from the Council website – www.westlothian.gov.uk.

Support for Pupils

Pupils requiring additional support through times of transition at any stage will be supported through the West Lothian Continuum of Support Policy in consultation with parents/carers.

School Improvement

As part of our commitment to continuous school improvement we complete a Standards and Quality report documenting progress, achievement and next steps for school and curricular development. Views of all stakeholders, as well as parents/carers, are audited and represented in this document.

We produce an annual School Improvement Plan taking into account National, Council, Local and School priorities for development.

Summaries of these documents are shared with parents/carers annually and full copies of these documents can be made available upon request.

Emergency Contact and Medical Information

West Lothian School Health Service
Children's well being depends on meeting their emotional, physical and intellectual needs. Children do better at school when they are both healthy and happy. The School Health Service is here to help children achieve their full potential.

Every school in West Lothian has a named Community Paediatrician and a fully qualified School Nurse with relevant training to meet the needs of the child. ELC Schools also have a named Health Visitor. The Nurse and the Doctor visit the school regularly.

What does the School Health Service do?
We work as part of the integrated community school, multi-disciplinary team along with other agencies promoting children's welfare. They work closely with schools to encourage and assist them becoming Health Promoting Schools.

In Primary 1, Primary 7 and Secondary 2/3 you will be sent a Health Questionnaire to complete to alert us to any concerns you may have about your child.

Children with health related problems will be offered an appointment with the School Nurse or Doctor.

Children can aslo be offered an appointment at the request of the parents/carers, school staff or other health professionals.

The School Nurse is also involved in Health Education Classes and events at your child's school.

Advice can be provided on health issues to parents/carers, teachers, and children and where appropriate assist in planning the curriculum for Health Education.

Primary Schools
Parent/Carers of children in P1 may be offered an opportunity to attend with their child for a health/development check by the School Nurse.

In Primary 7 your child's health will be reviewed before moving to secondary school.

Children with health related problems may be reviewed at intervals by the School Nurse or Doctor.

Immunisations
BCG vaccination will be offered to children who are felt to be at high risk. From the age of fourteen years, pupils are offered booster immunisation against Tetanus, Diptheria and Polio if their GP has not already done these. The School Nurse and Doctor are based in:
Community Child Health
St John's Hospital
Howden Road West
Livingston
EH54 6PP
Telephone: 01506 524404

At any time, parents/carers and pupils can ask to meet with the School Nurse or Doctor to discuss health or personal problems.

General Responsibilities for Health
Within the general policy laid down by West Lothian Council, Education Services has prepared a series of statements of safety policy for all areas of its responsibility in accordance with Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

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

Head Teachers of school establishments have a duty to ensure that all Health and Safety requirements are fully complied with within the school grounds. These duties include a responsibility to make sure that the apporpriate member of staff records and logs details of-

- termly fire drills
- annual fire extinguisher checks
- weekly fire siren/bell checks
- administration of medication to pupils
- annual risk assessment of buildings and structures

Medication in Schools
Most pupils will at some time have a medical condition that may affect the participation in school activities. For many this will be short-term; perhaps finishing prescribed medication even though the child's doctor regards the child as fit to attend school. Others have medical conditions which, without help, could limit their access to education.

Parents/carers have a prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide schools with information about their child's medical condition.

Forms for any child requiring medicine to be taken during school time are available from the school office or can be downloaded from:
www.westlothian.gov.uk

Parents/carers are requested to complete these forms to allow medicine to be administered. Medicines are kept in a central location and administered by school staff. Preventative inhalers are kept by the children and a back up at the school office. It is important that each child has two labeled inhalers for school use.

If your child uses an inhaler, it is important that it is labeled. It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure these are renewed as necessary. Each class teacher has a list of children requiring these. Any child who requires other medication on a regular basis may require a health care plan. Please contact the Head Teacher to discuss this.

Emergency Contacts and Arrangements

It is essential that the school has the name, address and telephone number of an adult to be contacted in case of an accident or your child feeling ill. Please ensure records are kept up to date by notifying the school of any change of address and telephone number of your child's emergency contact.

Only in special circumstances (e.g no heating), will children be sent home early. School will make every effort to contact you in such situations. Where there is no adult to receive the child, they will be supervised in school until such time as suitable arrangements are made. In the event of extreme weather conditions it would be helpful to listen to local radio stations, where updates on school closures will be broadcast on Forth 1.

All schools have a means of contacting parents and carers via the Group Call System.

Employment of Children

Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the bye-laws on the Employment of Children. These regulations do not permit the employment of children under 13 years of age.

Security

The school has a security system which allows all doors to be locked electronically once the children are in school. The locking system is released automatically if the fire alarm goes off. All visitors should report to the school office via the front entrance of the school, sign in and collect a visitor's badge. It is extremely important to the security of the school that no adult is on the premises unless they have signed in at the school office.

Photography

West Lothian schools have a photography policy which is in accordance with data protection and human rights legislation. Photographs taken for curricular, assessment, security, registration, training and development or travel reasons will not be used for any other purpose.

Photography is helpful in publicising the success of the school and in promoting educational initiatives. From time to time members of the press and media are invited into schools to cover events celebrating success. However, the views of parents/carers who, for any reason, do not wish their children to appear in such photgraphs will be respected at all times, as will the views of the senior students, themselves, in secondary schools.

Photography by staff on school trips and visits may be used in the curriculum and displayed within the school or at parents' evenings to illustrate the work of the school. Parents/carers may be allowed to purchase a copy of the photograph of their individual child, or as part of a group, if the parents/carers of the other children in agreement.

If photography is permitted at an event, parents/carers and guests should take care to avoid distracting pupils and the audience. They should observe any constraints imposed by school staff. Video or sound recording of a copyright musical or theatrical performance is normally forbidden and photography may also be restricted for reasons of child protection our out of respect for the rights and privacy of individuals.

If so, photo-opportunities will, instead, be arranged before or after a performance or an event, if possible.

If unsure whether or not permission has been given by staff to record a particular performance or event, parents/carers should ask the Head Teacher.

Class and individual or group photographs are annual school events. Parents/carers are asked in advance whether or not they wish their children to be included in these events. Reputable commercial photographers are involved and the law allows them to retain the copyright in the photographs.

The use of the mobile cameras is prohibited in view of the risks inherent in such use, which include the existance and/or distribution of photographs contrary to the wishes, welfare and privacy of young people and adults.

Transport

West Lothian Council will provide transport assistance for all primary pupils living more than a specified distance from their designated school. The provision of transport for pupils attending special schools and classes is not subject to these limitations, but is based on individual pupil need. Further information can be obtained from Public Transport (telephone 01506 775291) or from the School Transport policy on www.westlothian.gov.uk

Parents/Carers who choose to send their children to a school outwith their catchment area will be responsible for any extra travelling expenses incurred.

A school bus is available for all pupils to use homeward bound. Tickets can be purchased online via the iPayimpact system. The children are supervised until seated on the bus and seatbelts are checked. For more information please contact the school office.

Car Park

In the interest of safety parents/carers must not park in the playground and be aware when entering the playground to drop off or collect pupils. At no time should children be playing around the parked cars.

Wet Weather Arrangements

During spells of bad weather, pupils are normally allowed to remain in a classroom at interval or lunch time, where pupils are supervised by staff. Each class has a wet interval box. This is stocked with a variety of activities for the pupils.

Playground Supervision

Supervision is provided in the school grounds 20 minutes prior to the school opening, during intervals and during the lunch break. If children have an accident or any other problem in the playground they report initially to the supervisor who will take the necessary action. When pupils are at school, the responsibilty for their safety rests with the Local Authority. The Head Teacher and staff undertake this responsibilty on behalf of the Local Authority.

Transferring Educational Data about Pupils

Data is transferred electronically to the Scottish government.

Collection and transfer of pupil data
Data on each pupil is collected by local authorities and the Scottish Government. The data collected and transferred covers areas such as date of birth, postcode, registration for free-school meals, whether a pupil is looked after by his/her local authority, additional support needs including disability, attendance, absence and exclusions from school. Pupil names and addresses are collected by their school and education authority but they are not passed to the Scottish government. Your postcode is the only part of your address that is transferred.

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.

Use of data by the Council and the Scottish Government
In order to make the best descision about how to improve our education service, the Scottish governemnt and education authorities need accurate, up-to-date data about pupils. The Council may also cross-reference pupil data with population data. The Council is keen to help all pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better exam results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows the Scottish government, education authorities and schools to: plan and deliver school provision, plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils, better understand some of the factors that influence pupil attainment and achievement, target resources better.

Your data protection rights
On occasion, schools will make data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, schools will provide our partners with information they need to order to fulfill their official responsibilities.

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Child Protection Guidelines

The safety of your child at school is a priority for the authority. All West Lothian schools follow the Lothian Child Protection guidelines. A copy can be found on www.weslothian.gov.uk

We hope the information contained in this handbook is relevant and accessible. If you require this handbook in an additional language or a larger print please contact us.