



AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

“Learn, Believe and you will Succeed”



News from Ms McMaster and the staff at Bellsquarry Primary School and Nursery Class

We would like to extend a warm welcome back to our new school session 2019-20. We hope you had an amazing Summer break with your family and friends.

We would like to offer a particularly warm welcome to our new pupils and their families. Our P1s are settling in very well, all looking very smart in the Bellsquarry uniform. Their P7 buddies are making sure that it won't be too long before they know the routines. We also have some new families who have joined us at other stages within the school and nursery. We look forward to working in partnership and we are confident that your child will have a happy and successful time at Bellsquarry Primary School and Nursery Class.

The staff here at Bellsquarry have had a great Summer. We welcome back Mrs McAdam this session, who will be sharing P3/2 with Mrs Gilmour. Mrs McAdam will replace Mrs Weatherston Sharma who took up a new post at a school in a different authority, closer to her home. We welcome new staff Miss Danni Ward (P1), Miss Lynn Mackie (Nursery Nurse) and Mrs Liz Barrett (PSW). Mrs Quinn works Monday to Wednesday and will be supporting our French and Drama curriculum as well as Primary 1. There has been a reduction to hours in our school office which means Mrs Marra will be working Tuesday – Friday and Mrs Macdougall will be working Monday and Friday. Please be mindful that there will be times in the school day when office staff are away from their desk. In this instance please leave a message on the school answering machine, which is checked regularly.

Our staff team in **both the school and nursery** are looking forward to meeting you at the up and coming **Meet the Team evening on Thursday 5th September**. Please make every effort to attend as information differs from one stage to the next. It is therefore important to find out about the year ahead from the outset. This event is for parents only and please note, we are introducing a crèche for nursery and school age children only. This will be supervised by two Pupil Support Workers in the school hall.

As usual we are looking forward to the session ahead and the various opportunities and challenges that will shape the childrens' experiences as we move through the school year. As we aim to build on previous success and ensure continuous improvement, we will build on our work from last session. We will continue to develop our curriculum, working closely with our other cluster schools. Our School Self Evaluation Summary for session 2018-19 will soon be available to view on our website, as will our School Improvement Plan for session 2019-20.

Breakfast Club

We continue to operate a school breakfast club which is free to all pupils in Primaries 1-7 and supervised by Mrs Marr, Mrs Jones and Mrs Reid in the school hall from 8.00 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.

Safe arrival/departure arrangements

Arrangements will continue as usual, with children dropped off and collected at the school gates, under the supervision of staff. Mrs Reid, Mrs Jones and Mrs McKerral will supervise children in the school playground from 8.30-8.50 a.m. Please do not drop children off before 8.30 a.m. as there will be no supervision then. In the event of bad weather, children will be supervised from 8.30 a.m. in our school hall.

At the end of the day, P1-3 staff will escort their classes to the front playground. P4-7 children will be dismissed from class. If any pupils remain, they will be brought into the main building and asked to wait at the school office until arrangements have been made to pick them up. School finishes at 3.15 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 12.25 p.m. on a Friday. Please contact the school office if you are unable to pick your child up on time.

Absence

Please contact our school office by 9.30 a.m. at the latest, should your child be absent from school. This needs to be repeated each day that your child is absent. Please leave a message on our school answer machine if no one is available to take your call. Our answer machine is checked on a regular basis throughout the day. Any unreported absence will be followed by a group call text message requesting parents to contact school. Should we receive no response and are unable to contact parents/carers, information will be passed to appropriate authorities who will then pursue the reason for absence. Continued absences are monitored in school on a regular basis.

Annual Data Checks

As you will be aware West Lothian Council have been working hard to promote Parentsportal.scot with parents. Once parents are linked with their child this will allow completion of the annual data check online.

We are confident that this service will be available for release soon, however we are aware that schools require the data check to be completed for new P1 pupils before this time. We have been advised by Head of Service that the annual data check form should only be printed off and issued to P1 pupils. The remaining forms should be delayed until the annual data check service has been released on Parentsportal.scot.

Primary 1 pupils will be issued with an Annual Date Check form which will be sent out next week. Please check the information and return the form to school with any amendments. ***Please provide your current home email address to allow information and newsletters to be sent by email.*** We cannot accept business email addresses. If you do not use email, please notify the school office and paper copies will be issued via pupil post.

A Parental Agreement form for local visits for 2019-20 session will also be sent out for completion and return.

All pupils will receive an updated West Lothian Council Photography Consent Form which allows photography in school. Please complete and return to the school office.

School Lunches and Milk

School lunches are free for pupils in P1-3 and cost £2.11 for P4-7 pupils. We wish to encourage all parents to order/pay through West Lothian's online I-Pay impact system. Please contact the school office if you have any questions or difficulties accessing this system.

Lunch times are 12.15 – 1.00 p.m. for P1-3 and 12.35 – 1.20 p.m. for P4-7 and they are supervised by two staff members. Can we please ask parents of P1-3 pupils to discuss the menu with their child/ren to ensure that they are aware of the choices on offer. A menu is available on our school website. Packed lunches are available to order for P1-3 pupils on a Friday and for children with free meal entitlement.

A halal option is now available to order. Orders for halal should be placed **one week in advance by Thursday at the latest, as orders are placed on a Friday morning**. The **special diet** option should be selected on i-pay impact.

I-Pay Impact System

All new Primary 1 pupils who did not attend Bellsquarry Nursery have been issued with I-Pay login details. These have also been issued to new pupils in other classes who started at the beginning of term. New nursery children joining us will be allocated login details over the next few weeks.

Snack

As a health promoting school we encourage children to bring a healthy snack for morning break. Our tuck shop is run by pupils from 8.45 – 9.00 a.m. each morning, selling healthy snacks from 10p – 50p. We have Fruity Friday each week where children are asked to bring a piece of fruit for snack on a Friday to encourage healthy eating.

Book Bags

We would like to give parents the opportunity to purchase a school book bag. These are used by the majority of children for carrying homework, letters etc. to and from school. The book bags cost £5 and are available from the school office.

Nursery Class

Welcome to our new children who joined us this week. They have all settled in well.

The children will have the opportunity to play outdoors most days in nursery therefore please provide a pair of wellies for your child. Wellies should be labelled with your child's name and will be kept in the nursery class.

Nursery snack is available daily and parents will have the opportunity to make payments on I-Payimpact. Pupils will receive their unique number and instructions over the next few weeks. If you have any problems please contact the school office.

Only morning and full day children will be required to bring a packed lunch.

Dates for your diary (further information to follow in newsletters)

Tuesday 27th August	Primary 1 and Parent Lunch
Thursday 5th September	Meet the Team event – 6.00 -7.00 pm in school/nursery, crèche for nursery and school aged children available
Saturday 7th September	Livingston Cricket Club Gala Day
Monday 2nd September	P7 to Lanthorn library – p.m.
Monday 9th September	Parent Council AGM – all parents welcome
Wed 11th – Friday 13th September	P5 to Low Port residential
Friday 13th September	Roald Dahl Day – activities in class
Friday 13th September	All break for the September holiday
Tuesday 17th September	Staff return for In-Service Day
Wednesday 18th September	All children return to school and nursery
Thursday 19th September	Talk Like a Pirate Day – activities in school
Friday 20th September	Jeans for Genes day/Assembly – wear jeans/make a donation
Tuesday 24th September	Author in school for P1 – 3 classes
Friday 27th September	MacMillan Coffee Morning – in school hall (11.30-12.25)
Monday 30th September	Scottish Maths Week

Future dates:

Friday 11th October	All break for October holiday
Monday 21st October	Staff return for in-service day
Tuesday 22nd October	All children return to school and nursery
Wednesday 30th October	School flu programme
Wednesday 6th November	Parent Consultations
Thursday 7th November	Parent consultations

Our monthly school newsletter will provide parents/carers with further dates and information. We will also provide a parent calendar of events which we will update throughout the session.

Newsletters will continue to be sent via parent mail. All newsletters will also be uploaded to our school website.

We look forward to working in partnership with you this session.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McMaster

Head Teacher