

Simpson Primary

News

April 2020



Simpson Primary School
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A message from Miss Ferris



Welcome to Term 4!

I could never have imagined that we would be starting Term 4 under such different circumstances.

Our Simpson team are certainly rising to the challenge and are working hard to support our children and families.

Teachers will continue to provide learning ideas/opportunities through their online learning in 'Teams' for P4-7 and on the blog for Nursery and P1-3.

All children were issued with a hard copy learning pack, prior to closure, for families who wish to use these. If you did not receive the learning pack please let us know.

It is perfectly natural that anxieties may arise as this can be a common reaction to rapid change and the unknown of our new situation. Please be assured that we are here to help. My wish for our children is that they remain happy, healthy and safe.

**We are all in this together.
You are doing a great job.**

Points of Contact during School Closure

It is important that our digital platforms, e.g. Teams, remain a classroom environment for staff and pupils.

We would appreciate it if parents could send any queries to our school email at - simpson-ps@westlothian.org.uk

Our Admin staff will respond or forward to the most relevant member of staff who can help.

This is especially important as it will prevent instances where parents have emailed members of staff who have been absent and as we have been unaware, we have been unable to respond on their behalf.

Any specific concerns regarding your child can be emailed to our Senior Leadership Team as follows;

Second Level

P7 – Ms Plenderleith

kelly.plenderleith@westlothian.org.uk

P6 – Mrs McQuarrie

l.mcquarrie@westlothian.org.uk

P5 – Mr Weir

brian.weir@westlothian.org.uk

First Level

P2, P3 and P4 – Mr McCallum-McKay

a.mccallum-mckay@westlothian.org.uk

Early Level

Nursery and P1 – Mrs Fawkes

carol.fawkes@westlothian.org.uk

We will endeavour to respond in a timely manner and thank you for your patience, as enquiry rates have been particularly high at this time.

Home Learning Expectations

Even though our school is closed, learning is continuing. As you are aware, teachers are working hard to provide pupil learning activities through Microsoft Teams and the Simpson BLOG during the school closure period. Our primary focus remains to ensure that pupils, parents and carers are supported to cope with the challenging circumstances. Our key goal during this period will be to continue learning, with approaches that are appropriate to all our pupils.

We would like to thank you for all your hard work and effort in supporting your children's learning at home. Please be reassured that it is not an expectation that learning approaches and experiences provided in school are replicated at home.

We are very aware that not all learning takes place online. We would encourage the use of many other learning opportunities and activities, including books, television, radio, and creative activities that will help with learning at home, as well as useful life skills such as laundry, bed-making, baking and cooking amongst many other daily household tasks. Playing board games, card games and allowing children time to just play, explore and use their own imagination also provide vital learning experiences.

For some children who have additional support needs, their parents and carers may find it particularly challenging to support their learning when they are at home. The latest Scottish Government advice recommends the following websites as reliable sources of information and support.

CALL Scotland which has information on tools that parents can use to support home learning, such as overlays and text to speech.

The Reach – which provides information to young people on coping while schools are closed.

Enquire – which provides advice for parents and carers of children with additional support needs.

Parent Club Scotland and Parentzone Scotland web pages will continue to be updated with Covid-19 advice and support on health information, wellbeing, learning at home and other key matters.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland to provide core information and advice to parents during Covid-19.

We would like to reiterate that parents and carers are not expected to be teachers, nor to home educate in the formal sense. We are very aware that families will have different needs and demands on their time and our key focus is ensuring that parents and carers feel supported in relation to their child's learning at home.

School teachers and practitioners remain the key point of contact for parents and families, therefore if there is anything you need please do make contact with us using the key contact information included. We will respond to all messages as quickly as possible, however as teachers continue to provide support in the Simpson HUB for key workers, this may take longer than our normal response time.

Please be assured that we will continuously monitor and review the support in place to ensure our pupil's wellbeing and learning is prioritised in these challenging times.

COVID-19 Information and Updates

Coronavirus (COVID-19) information and updates can be viewed on the Council website at:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/coronavirus>

and

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/coronavirus-schools>

Further Help and Support

There are a number of agencies offering support to families at this time, for example, our Educational Psychology Service. Please visit the website below for a number of helpful resources in particular, support for children with Autism;

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/50765/Coronavirus-Helpful-resources>

Role of Hub School at Simpson

West Lothian Council have identified HUB Schools across the authority to provide childcare for key workers who have no alternative childcare in order to undertake their critical work.

The HUB schools provide childcare Monday-Friday between the hours of 8am and 6pm, with a hot lunch provided. If you are a critical worker you can register for this service by following the process outlined at; <https://westlothian.gov.uk/article/51906/Keyworker-Childcare>

Simpson PS has been chosen as a HUB school for the Bathgate area. It is coordinated by the Head Teacher's across the cluster and takes in a small number of children. The children are from a variety of different schools as it is not only open to Simpson Pupils. Staff from different schools work on a voluntary basis using a rota system. Some of our Teachers at Simpson who have been volunteering have also been placed at other HUB schools in the authority where required. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff who have been supporting the HUB schools to provide this service.

End of Year Reports

Teachers are beginning to work on end of year reports as in previous years. Although lessons in the physical classroom have stopped for the moment pupils and teachers continue to engage in learning using learning packs and a digital platform where available.

Our teachers will make use of the current assessment and tracking information around your child's progress and offer a report based on their professional judgement. Class Teachers are working hard to highlight the learning that has taken place and evaluate pupils' strengths and next steps in: Literacy and English, Numeracy and Mathematics, Health and Wellbeing and Highlights from Learning Across the Curriculum. Information on how these reports will be shared in due course.

Transitions

At this time of year, we begin planning for transition to the next stage in August. Due to our current situation, this will be adapted this year. Over the coming weeks the staff team will be working hard to plan for next session to make sure we are able to support pupils with the next steps in their learning and ensure transition is as smooth as possible.

We want to reassure you that we are already discussing as a staff team how we can support transitions between stages across the school. Our staff have begun planning our nursery to Primary 1 induction packs, which will contain all the important information that you will need to know before your child starts school. We are working closely with our colleagues at the high schools to plan for transition to secondary school.

Once we have final numbers for our new Primary 1 and staffing arrangements are in place we will be able to make plans for the classes for next session. We will inform you of these details as soon as we can. We will continue to keep you informed of any plans or activities linked to transition through newsletters, Twitter, the Blog and Glow teams.

Personal Data

Please advise the school office via email, as soon as possible, of any changes to home / mobile telephone numbers, address or other personal details. This will ensure that our records are up to date at all times and is of even more importance during this current time of school closure.

Cycle Friendly School

As a cycle friendly school promoting Bikeability, we ask that you support us in encouraging children who are out cycling as part of their daily exercise to **wear a helmet.**

IMPORTANT DATES



<i>DATE</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
Fri 1 st May	SLT virtual assembly for P4-7 children to view at 11.00am in 'Teams' (Access via 'Simpson Assemblies' team group) A copy of the assembly will be uploaded to the blog shortly afterwards for P1-3 to view at their leisure.
Mon 4 th May	Holiday for pupils and staff
Tues 5 th May	Holiday for pupils In-service day for staff
Mon 18 th May – Fri 29 th May	Whole School Fitness Focus Fortnight – further information and ideas to follow
Mon 25 th May	School Sports Day – ideas you can try at home to follow
Wed 27 th May	Nursery Sports Day – ideas you can try at home to follow
Thurs 28 th May	Nursery/P1 Transition Meeting – as this scheduled event has been cancelled we will issue information electronically
Mon 8 th June	Holiday for pupils and staff
Tues 9 th June – Fri 12 th June	Scheduled Transition week for P7 pupils attending S1 at Bathgate Academy – further information of alternative arrangements to follow