

Be the Best You Can Be!



Williamston Primary School Update Term 1 August 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

A warm welcome back to all of our families after the summer break and a special welcome to our new families joining us at P1, in our ELC and across the school. I hope you all have had a lovely summer break and are ready for the new session.

Communication Update

Williamston Primary School has used the school app for a number of years. This app was funded by our Parent Council/PTA, now called TEAM W. Although it had its issues, we could send comms out to all families for them to filter and access themselves. The company have ceased to operate from mid July. All West Lothian Council schools are now required to use Eduspot.

We will be moving towards using Eduspot from now on. For the first 3 weeks of the new session, comms will be sent via Eduspot AND Groupcall email. The system uses the primary contact details identified on Parent Portal for this. These 3 weeks allow for all families to check their details are current and correct, download the app and check everything is working. After the 3 weeks Eduspot will be the sole method of sending communication out from school. We continue to use other methods to share learning as we always have. A reminder of the other methods we share information and for what purpose it as follows –

Method	For who	Purpose
Seesaw	ELC – P3 Accounts are refreshed and join codes sent home at the start of each new session	To share learning and profiling of individual children with their family only. This is not for use to converse with the teacher. If you wish to discuss your child's learning, please get in touch with the office to arrange a mutually convenient time to do so.
My World of Work	P4-7 Children have their own accounts	To share learning and profiling of individual children with their family only.
TEAMS	Children only, P4-7.	To share home learning and for use in the event of a school closure such as severe weather. Please note TEAMS sits within Glow and is a secure, child only platform, moderated by school staff. No parents/carers should be accessing TEAMS.

Padlet	For all families. This will be sent out in due course with a password protected class page where photos of learning will be continually updated over the school session.	To share photos of learning in action in a whole class or generic manner, where permissions are in place. We have moved away from Twitter/X. We trialled Sway but this has not been effective since the cyber attack and has been complicated in how staff can share photos of learning in action.
Eduspot	Primary carer identified on Parent Portal/Seemis. We can no longer use the school app. Eduspot sits within Seemis and draws information from contact details held here to send communication. Please ensure your contact details are correct within Parent Portal for this to work.	For sharing information with parents specific to admin related tasks, running of the school day-to-day and events coming up. This may include information relating to lunches; milk; school transport; parent consultations; events; partners; extra-curricular clubs; newsletters; termly descriptors; Parent Council news (now called TEAM W); etc.

Instructions for the use of Eduspot are as follows –

Download the Eduspot mobile app to keep in touch

Our school uses the Eduspot app to make home-school communication easier, more effective and more accessible. Eduspot is completely free, and available on the App Store (for Apple iPhone or iPad) or on Google Play (for Android smartphones or tablets). Benefits of using the app include -

- *Get instant notifications for new messages from school*
- *View all updates from connected school systems in one clear timeline*
- *Make payments for meals, trips, clubs and more*
- *View student information including assessments, behaviour and attendance*

If you have children in different schools where Eduspot is also used, you will be able to view messages and information about multiple children with a single login for the app.

Updating your contact details

Please ensure we have an up-to-date email address and mobile phone number for you in our school database. This is stored in the parent portal. You will need to verify these details for security purposes to login to the app, so it is important they match our records and are always kept updated.

If your contact details are up-to-date in our records, you can use these to login to the Eduspot app. You do not need to be issued with a username or password.

Getting started with the app

Please find “Eduspot” on the App Store/Google Play and install it. For more help with installing the app and logging in, visit: parents.eduspot.co.uk/getting-started

Groupcall (can be sent either email OR text. For the most part, we shall be using email)	For parents/carers (sent to the primary contact)	For emergency use, such as severe weather closures; emergency comms; school camp arrival times; etc. This will be used alongside Eduspot for the first 3 weeks of term only.
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Parent Portal Contact Details

It is really important that your contact details, including email address and phone numbers, are correct so that you are receiving all communication appropriately. This links to all the other online tools we use such as Ipayimpact (to arrange bus tickets, extra-curricular clubs, parent consultations, trips, etc) and to Groupcall (used for emergency

contacts such as severe weather and extra-curricular clubs). Parent portal details are also used for parent evening consultations.

Calendar

The calendar of events will be updated on the school website.

As in previous years, A parent calendar for the school session coming up, 2026-27, will be sent out within the first 2 week of term in August. This will be sent via groupcall as well as Eduspot whilst we transition to the new platform.

Website

We will be utilising the website for calendar, documents, policies, meet the teacher information, handbook, TEAM W details, etc. Please note that none of the learning in action photos will be displayed on the website in an openly accessible way in the way that X did. The padlet per class will be password protected.

Timescales for School Responding to Communication Coming into School

We will always do our best to respond to emails within 48 hours. The school email address is wlwilliamston-ps@westlothian.org.uk

The school inbox is checked twice a day. Please note that if your email is sent after 1615, it will not be received until the following day after 0800.

If you are phoning the school or nursery, please leave a message if no one is able to take your call. Messages are checked three times a day – first thing, later morning and in the afternoon. If you wish to notify school that you are making a change to the end of day arrangements for your child, please contact the office BEFORE 1430 wherever possible.

If your child is going to be absent, please contact the office BEFORE 0945 to let staff know the reason for the absence. After 0945 all schools are then required to contact all emergency contacts and/or the Safe Arrival team if we are unable to reach anyone.

Termly Descriptors

At the start of each term, the class teacher will send home a grid describing the termly learning for your child. This will be sent home approximately 2 weeks into a new term following the teacher and pupils planning responsively together. For the first term of the new session, the termly descriptors, these are sent home following meet the teacher. This year, this will be on Tuesday 25th August at 6pm. Please enter via the small hall. Details for the format will be sent out nearer the time.

Requests to Discuss an Issue Relating to Your Child with the Teacher or Leadership Team

If you wish to discuss any issues relating to your child, please contact the office in the first instance. Your request will be passed promptly to the teacher who will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time. Please note there may be days when staff have meetings or training after school, sometimes in other schools. We will again aim to respond to your request within 48 hours.

First thing in the morning can be tricky to meet unless prearranged, as the teacher and support staff are timetabled to be with the children.

For security reasons, the only entrance for parents/carers is the main office door, other than for assemblies/events when staff will let parents/carers in via the assembly door by the nursery entrance.

Social Media Use - Parents

Williamston Primary School does not manage any social media relating to the school, as we use the communication outlined above. Any social media use is NOT officially linked to the school.

As a community, it is crucial that we work together to ensure the safety and well-being of **all** our children. If your child expresses concerns or if you notice signs of distress, please contact us directly at the school so we can work together to make sure your child's needs are being met.

In the spirit of our school values and positive relationships, we ask that you continue to be kind, respectful and empathetic towards others in our school community, especially children, when using personal social media forums. We appreciate that as a school we cannot control these informal social groups, but would ask that individual children are never named. This not helpful and can cause considerable distress to families and individual children.

We are committed to working with our children and families to provide an inclusive learning environment for all our children and we thank you for your on-going support. We welcome parents and carers to hear about the range of ways we do this by coming to our parent event planned for 3 February 2027.

Devices in Schools

Following a significant collaborative working group development, laptops/tablets for children are only permitted with NO SIM card. Bring Your Own Device forms will be sent home in the coming weeks. Please be reassured we have devices in school to support learning so it is not essential to have their own device (despite what they may tell you!)

Staffing

With the end of term being somewhat last minute in relation to staffing, please find below a reminder of which teacher is at which stage. The letters identifying the classes are based on the teacher surnames. This usually works well, except for P5 this year!

Class	Teacher
1B	Rachael Banks
1H	Lauren Hurry
2/1	Rachel Bell
P2K	Nikki Kaplan
P3/2	Noreen Lytle
P3MM	Ellie Motion and Rachel McConnachie (Wednesday)
P3TM	Susan Trotter (Mon, Tues, alt Fridays) Jenn McMillan (Wed, Thurs, alt Fridays)
P4HDK	Lisa Hall (Mon, Tues, alt Fridays) Natalia Donnelly-Kay (Wed, Thurs, alt Fridays)
P4P	Eva Petkova
P5LC	Laura Christie
P5AC	Alex Champion
P6E	Kirsty Ellis
P6J	Michelle Jempson
P7L	Sarah Lindsay
P7W	Owen Wicksted
RCCT specialist PE	Emma Howard
RCCT	Steph Kerr (Mon, Tues, Wed) Rachel McConnachie (Thursday)
Additionality	Lisa Hall – supporting learning at identified stages Thursdays and every second Friday
APT (1 day) and Support for Learning (4 days)	Sharon Blair

We welcome Ellie Motion to our staff team this session. Sharon Blair will continue as Acting PT until Christmas when this will be reviewed alongside Mrs Thomson's secondment. This will also impact on Ms Jempson's post.

Information about Play, Entrances and Exits

- All pupils can enter the school in the morning by any of the entrances from 0840 to 0850. All entrances close at 0850 promptly. All late arrivals should enter by the main office. Please plan for your journey to ensure that your child arrives before 0850 as it can be unsettling for children to arrive late.
- If using the car for drop off, children should enter by the gate at car line and walk into school from here where the supervised access is. Parents and carers should not use car line to drop off and walk to the rear of the school as this causes congestion for drop off. The car line is manned by staff to enable parents to drop/collect and go.
- The allocated playgrounds are P1-3 in the courtyard and P4-7 in the container area, apart from the beginning of session where P7 buddies will support P1 in the courtyard initially. This means that where there are composite classes, children can continue to play in their year groups.
- Wherever possible and weather permitting, children from P2-7 will play on the field. P1 will access this area of the playground later in the session.
- At the end of the day, car line from P1-4 will exit from the container entrance. Car line for P5-7 should exit from the P6/7 ramp exit.
- P1-3 pupils who are walking home are escorted to the courtyard playground to meet their parent/carer. If you have arranged to meet your child elsewhere, please let the teacher know.
- P4-7 children walking make their own way out of the building to either meet a parent/carer or walk home. P4 will exit from the container exit. P5-7 will exit from the P6/7 ramp exit.
- The end of the school day is 1515 and all pupils should be collected at this time. We have some limited supervision of car line to enable pupils to be safely collected from the car line gate. However, all supervision stops at 1530 at which time the children are brought into school and family contacted.
- Bus line is supervised by a PSW for both arrival and exiting school. Please do NOT use the bus without a valid ticket, be this annual, termly or weekly. This is especially important for travelling TO school in the morning as tickets are sold per seat meaning there are no spare seats for additional children to travel.
- Simply Play collect from the school hall. They send us a list of the children they will be collecting first thing in the morning. Unless we are notified otherwise, their collection list is the one our staff follow.
- We would ask that your child is clear about their end of day arrangements before coming to school each day.
- The school day is 0850-1515 Monday to Thursday and 0850-1225 on Fridays. We have 3 lunch sittings due to the numbers in the school and the size of the lunch hall.

In the event that your child will be absent, please contact the school office NO LATER THAN 0945. Any later than this results in all contacts being contacted and possibly alerting the Sare Arrivals team. The school answerphone is always on.

Health and Safety

Our car park arrangements were reviewed in partnership with the Health and Safety Team, West Lothian Council Roads and the Parent Council. The current arrangements separate staff parking from visitor (including parent/carers) parking. It was designed specifically so that all children can safely exit the vehicle and walk around the pavement into/out of school without any need to cross the road. Please find attached a copy of the map for the car park arrangements as a reminder. A copy can be found on our website. The car park line is used for **drop off and pick up only** using the gate beside the drop off area. This is manned by support staff from 0830-0850 and 1515 to 1530. If you wish to collect your child from the classroom door, for example the P1 door, we ask that you park outwith the school car park and walk in. On days where there are events in school such as class assemblies, nativity, shared starts, etc please do not park in the drop off area. Please plan your journey ahead of the event. Please avoid parking in STAFF ONLY labelled areas or the yellow hatched area where the bus needs access to.

School Improvement Update

At our in-service days, all staff attending renewed their annual update training, as well as focusing on school improvement priorities for this session; preparing learning environments to support inclusive classrooms; MAYBO training; training alongside our cluster colleagues around the new Curriculum Improvement Cycle.

Our School Improvement Plan that identifies our priorities for this academic session 2026-2027, and our Standards and Quality Report that reflects our progress made last session 2025-2026, will be published on our school website from the September weekend and will be sent out electronically to all families, as well as posted on our website. These are on a new format that we hope is more user friendly, but still gives the same level of detail around our improvement journey.

Our identified priorities for next session are –

HWB	Leader in me focus; UNCRC rights of the child as a central focus; pupil voice; creative connections cluster project year 3; embedding refreshed policies developed last session; Trauma informed practice session for parents/carers; embed reviewed progression framework; developing the Curriculum Improvement Cycle
Literacy/Numeracy	Embedding reviewed literacy programme and practices developed last session; developing the Curriculum Improvement Cycle; effective use of feedback in learning; Building thinking classrooms; refresh of numeracy approaches; whole school sharing learning event with a focus on numeracy
Curriculum Development	School and ELC participation in the Leaders of Learning Programme.

This session we have planned for a range of family learning and parental engagement sessions where parents/carers can find out about how we deliver aspects of the curriculum and support children in their learning. These are outlined on the attached parent calendar of dates.

Parental engagement/family learning opportunities will be offered to support –

- Trauma informed practice and how we support learners with regulation/health and wellbeing; numeracy whole school event.

Sharing our Learning

Please find attached to this first newsletter of the year a list of key dates for session 2026-2027 you may find useful for the school session ahead for opportunities for sharing learning with you. These include class assemblies, parent evenings and key events such as sports day, nativity, P7 leavers dates. There may be additional dates to this, but we will always try to give as much notice as we can for these. We report progress in learning to parents/carers in a range of ways, from performing at assemblies/events, to seeing learning in action through shared starts/finishes, to more formal parent consultations and written reports. If you have any questions at all about your child's progress, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Wider Achievements

Our learners have an extremely broad range of skills, talents, qualities and interests. We always love hearing about their achievements in school and out of school. These are celebrated in class and at whole school level through recognition boards, Wider Achievement Celebrations, newsletters and assemblies. We have been developing online profiling through Seesaw for our nursery age children to P3 and My World of Work profiling for P4-7. We always welcome news about the achievements our pupils have beyond school so please do share these with us!

Office Update

Ipayimpact logins for new parents and P1s will be generated as soon as is practically possible. A message will be sent on the app for parents to check school bags for your own unique log in.

Should you phone the office and the answerphone clicks on, please leave a message. There are occasions where staff may be away from their desks. As above, the answerphone is checked at key points during the day.

For safety reasons, we ask that only members of staff allow entry to the main office. This means that whoever is visiting can be directed appropriately. Please avoid tailgating other visitors into the building as this presents a security risk.

Uniform

This is a plea to PLEASE ensure uniform is labelled clearly with your child's full name. With over 421 pupils it can take some detective work to find who owns a jumper only by initials or no name at all!

Williamston Primary runs our Winted uniform where we can reuse and recycle nearly new uniform. This is free. All we ask is that you complete a Form so we can allocate the correct size for your child. This can be accessed at any time during the academic session. The link to the form and a QR code to take you there are below.

<https://forms.office.com/e/FbEfnXjzev>



Parent Body News – TEAM W and Parent Helpers

We welcome parent helpers to support classes with practical activities in school and trips outwith school. Please note that all parents and carers involved in any aspect of school life, from assisting with trips to joining our TEAM W, (Parent Council or PTA) are required to hold PVGs. Please contact the school office where staff can assist anyone who wishes to volunteer as a parent helper. If any parent/carers wishes to be involved in the Parent Council, PTA, the PVGs are processed by our TEAM W. Our PTA, rebranded as TEAM W, work tirelessly to support our school. You would be most welcome to join one of our meetings (see dates below).

Parent Council/PTA/ TEAM W meetings will be held on the following dates –

Monday 7 September

Tuesday 24th November

Tuesday 26th January

Tuesday 16th March

Monday 10th May

Diary Dates

REMINDER - SAVE THE DATE – MEET THE TEACHER TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2025 6-7PM (ENTER VIA THE SMALL HALL)

Please see the attached calendar of dates for the year ahead.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.



Jane Livingston and Williamston Staff Team

