

Be the Best You Can Be!



Williamston Primary School Update October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

With autumn fast approaching and weather changing, please make sure your child arrives at school with a coat and dressed appropriately for all weathers. We know that spending time outdoors has significant wellbeing advantages. Outdoor learning as well as breaks and lunches will be outdoors unless of significant rain or severe weather making the playground dangerous underfoot. The doors will only open for pupils from 8.40am as part of our soft start ahead of the day formally starting at 8.50am, as this is when there is staffing supervision indoors. Therefore, please do not arrive early on bad weather days. We would also ask that in the event of severe frost or snow, that you carefully consider walking instead of using the car park. The incline at the exit can be very slippery and has resulted in vehicles becoming stuck. The car park is not gritted until later in the day. In the event of severe weather meaning a school closure, this is communicated via groupcall as an emergency text message. Please ensure your contact details are current and accurate on the parent portal. If we are able to open in severe weather, Facilities Management clear a path to the main office for staff, a path to the nursery and a path to the small hall for both breakfast club and entry to the school. These routes take priority clearing, meaning that paths would not be cleared to the rear of the school. If the gate at the top of the steps from Bankton Lane is closed on a snow day, please make your way down to the second gate where the paths to either the small hall for primary school age children, or to the nursery will be cleared for you.

Staffing

We remain 2 support staff down with 2 long term absences with this impacting on the school. We have had Zahida Akhtar joining us around Easter and Liam Corrie join us since the return after summer, both as supply support staff. We have 2.5 new staff in the nursery due to natural changes in staffing.

Communication and new Eduspot app

We are working hard behind the scenes to get Eduspot up and running. Our office team is working with our Business Support Manager (BSM) to ensure the roll out is as smooth as possible. We are trying hard to get all parents signed up to the app part of this. In the meantime, we are using Groupcall email to send out communication. Mrs Shaw will be available on parent evenings to help anyone who is still finding accessing Eduspot a challenge.

School Improvement Plan, Standards and Quality Report

Every year, all schools are required to share key statutory documents with all our families and community. These are the Standards and Quality report (SQR) reflecting on the last academic year progress and achievements as a school,

and a School Improvement Plan (SIP) that sets priorities out from the SQR, as well as from a range of self-evaluation activities, feedback and data gathered. Both documents are published on all school websites and shared with parents. There is a new format for the Standards and Quality report this year. These are already on our school website and will be sent out to you all by the end of the week.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Planning

The Pupil Equity Plan is a detailed plan of interventions funded by pupil equity funding and supports identified children with health and wellbeing, attendance, numeracy, literacy, achievement and engagement. A visual is shared on the website with a link within the school improvement plan for your convenience. The interventions are based on data, pupil feedback, parental feedback and a range of evidence based measures to support individuals.

Self-evaluation and VSE process

We plan a range of self-evaluation and quality improvement (QI) activities across a year. We use How Good Is Our School 4 and the quality indicators within this to rate our practice. QI activities may include –

- Learning walks
- Observations of learning, teaching and learners
- Pupil work
- Planning – both class teacher, interventions, pupil equity fund planning
- Ensuring our programmes and pathways are meeting learner needs
- Moderation across a level or curricular area
- Analysis of data, including attainment, achievement, attendance, behaviours, health and wellbeing indicators, ethos survey results
- Working within our school, across the cluster or across the authority
- Pupil views gathered throughout the year – pupil council, budget group, global citizens, neurodiversity group, equality and diversity group, ethos surveys, etc
- Parent views gathered – at meet the teacher, parent evenings, community catch up at sports day, parent council, ethos surveys, parental engagement or family learning events
- Analysis of impact on both universal approaches for all children and interventions for small groups or individuals
- Regular excellence and equity meetings with staff to discuss progress in each class
- Support staff feedback
- External self-evaluation. This may include Quality Improvement Officer visits; thematic review where we conduct a deep dive into one area (we had this last session to support 3.1 health and wellbeing which was validated as very good, with aspects of best practice); HMIE visits; West Lothian Council Validated Self Evaluation (VSE), similar to an internal inspection process. A VSE is planned on a 3 yearly cycle.

We are having a VSE this session in November from 16th to 18th. We are looking forward to sharing our strengths, successes, achievements and areas for development as a school, as well as having the team support us in validating our self-evaluation statements that are outlined in the Standards and Quality report. An excerpt from the guidance for VSE explaining the purpose is below:-

The focus of the authority supported VSE process is to support improvement and evaluate the quality of:

- *Leadership and management*
- *Learning provision*
- *Successes and achievements*
- *Child Protection Procedures*

VSE is a process which aims to build the capacity of schools to evaluate their own performance and improve the quality of outcomes for learners and families. VSE involves collaboration between the school

and Education Officers (EOs) to support wider challenge and enhance the school's own self-evaluation processes for continuous improvement. VSE is led by the school and is:

- *Focused on outcomes*
- *Proportionate to need*
- *Flexible, with scope to recognise differences in school contexts*
- *Rigorous and transparent*

VSE teams use How Good is Our School? 4th Edition (HGIOS4), How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC), How Good is OUR School? (learners' version), the National Care Standards, Care Inspectorate Quality Framework and the National Improvement Framework.

A very important part of the VSE is that the voices of all stakeholders are gathered. There will be pupil, staff, partner and parent/carer focus groups. We would welcome the support of our school community with this process. Your input in triangulating the evidence is invaluable. Please look out for communication relating to parent/carer focus groups nearer the time.

Parental Engagement and Family Learning

All our priorities in the School Improvement Plan are identified through all of the above. We always plan parental engagement/family learning to sit alongside this. For example, we have offered our families opportunities to see learning in action in the following areas -

- Literacy and numeracy sessions at ELC, P1, P2, P3 and P4
- Expressive arts
- Profiling and digital learning
- STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)
- Meeting learner needs
- Trauma informed practice and what this looks like at Williamston Primary School
- Outdoor learning
- Our diverse school
- Health and wellbeing

Sessions have been offered during the day and evening based on parental feedback. It is not always appropriate for parents and carers to visit classrooms after the input depending on the area of focus, however we do offer this where we can. This year we are offering sessions for parents/carers as follows –

- health and wellbeing/meeting learner needs blended with trauma informed practices
- numeracy whole school event
- literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing bitesize sessions for early level into P1.

A Microsoft form has been sent out for all families to have an opportunity to share if there is anything specific you would like us to focus on. Please do share your views.

New Curriculum Changes with the Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC)

We are working nationally to implement significant changes to the curriculum that are coming that will impact on every school. This is a major focus of our School Improvement Plan this session. As things progress, information for parents/carers will be sent out. This is very early days, and will result in significant changes to the curriculum.

ASN grant and playground developments

You may have noticed some changes in our playground over summer. We were lucky to receive a grant for £5000 to support inclusive playgrounds. Staff were busy over summer making changes to the layout as well as building items, setting things up and ensuring the playground offers a range of free play opportunities. Unfortunately some of the wooden sleepers had rotted in the courtyard playground around the raised bed, and these had to be removed. We are awaiting costs for this to be possibly replaced, depending on the quote. The P1 outdoor play area that was in the

corner of the infant courtyard has now been moved onto the field beside the allotment. Our children seem to be enjoying the changes and different play they can experience. Please do bear with us while some other larger items are built and set up. It is proving tricky to build some of the larger items!

School Charity Focus for 2026/27

Our charity focus this session will be for Aplastic Anaemia. We have a family within our school community who has been significantly affected by this and our budget group are keen that a charity that means something to our school community be supported this year. The budget group have decided that a dress down day be held on Friday 9th October for this, with something red if you have it. Children are welcome to bring any donation of any amount to support this. Please note that red does not have to be worn, and children are welcome to simply dress down if preferred. Football tops are not appropriate. All proceeds will be sent to the Aplastic Anaemia Trust. We have a number of staff participating in a sponsored climb/abseil inside the Kelpies shortly as part of our fundraising too! Further information about the charity can be found here -

[What is aplastic anaemia? | The Aplastic Anaemia Trust](#)

Rag Bag

We have a Rag Bag collection booked for Thursday 29th October. If you are having a clear out at home, please bag up any old clothing and hand it in to school before 9am on the morning of the 29th. The company give the school a price per weight for any bags collected, all making a difference to the school funds.

Team W fundraising

Our Team W (formerly known as parent council and PTA) would like to try something different as a fundraiser that also builds community across the school. I believe the school has done something similar back in 2018.

They have been looking into the idea of an Art Exhibition for the school.

This will be a whole-school event, including ELC. The date planned is **FRIDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2027**.

Every child in the school will be offered the opportunity to produce a piece of artwork with their teacher. Once all the artwork has been completed, it is returned to the organiser who professionally mounts and frames all of the artwork ready for the exhibition date. Parents will have the opportunity to purchase their child's framed artwork. There is absolutely no obligation for families to purchase a picture, and we appreciate that not every family will be in a position to do so. This would be a lovely opportunity to share art with our wider community and see the wide range of talents of our children across the school and nursery with a cuppa from the pop up cafe. Children will see the art work in the morning of the exhibition, with parents visiting from the end of the school day until mid afternoon the same day. Further details will be sent in due course but do please note the date now – Friday 27th February 2027.

Health and Safety

We continue to see unsafe usage of the car park that has resulted in near misses. As a reminder, 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.

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. At the recent numeracy event on 30th September we had a number of children who could not be dropped off in time for the school day because people had parked in the car park and left their vehicles. We also had complaints from residents. Please be considerate of other parents using drop off correctly and of our neighbours.

Please avoid parking in STAFF ONLY labelled areas or the yellow hatched area where the bus needs access to.

Sharing our Learning

We had an AMAZING turn out for the numeracy shared learning event – thank you to everyone who came. Even an unplanned fire alarm in the rain did not dampen spirits! We thank you for the many positive comments at the visit. A feedback form has been sent out to gather all views and find out what other areas of learning you would like to see in action. Please do complete this as we would always tailor events to what you would find helpful.

Wider Achievements

We are delighted to share that our school has been awarded reaccreditation of the International School Award! We are delighted about this achievement as it is something our school has been dedicated to for a long time.

We are very proud of our school community for achieving this award as it reflects our school's approach to global citizenship and international education throughout the curriculum from Nursery to P7.

We received this lovely quote from in our feedback...

"It is clear from your evidence that it has had a positive impact on pupils, staff and the wider community."

We are excited to continue developing our global dimensions through our curriculum, the experiences and opportunities we give pupils and through further collaboration with our partner schools.

A special thank you to Mrs Kerr and Miss McMillan as well as the Global Ambassadors for leading this work.

Mrs Blair has been invited to a West Lothian Council GIRFEC event to share best practice in 'Meeting Learner Needs' and also her work around learners celebrating neurodiversity and learning about neurodiversity in school.

P7 Cross Country Livi South Competition

Well done to our 2 P7 Cross Country Teams who took part in the first round at Bankton Mains on the 15 September. They looked extremely smart in our new running vests provided by our Parent Council.

We are also proud to say that our Boys Team and Sydney from the girls team have got through to the West Lothian Cross Country Finals on Thursday 8 October at Bathgate Xcite.

We wish them all the best of luck.

P6 Scottish Schools Athletics Association - Road Runners Competition

We are very proud to have 2 of our P6 Athletes Blair and Amelia representing Williamston at the SSAA Road Run on Wednesday 7 October in Dunfermline.

We wish them the best of luck and look forward to hearing how they did.

P6 & 7 Basketball - West Lothian Wolves Junior NBA League

Following trials we have now entered a team for the upcoming West Lothian Wolves Junior NBA league. This has always been a popular and successful event for all schools.

Training will start on Wednesday 7 October, 3.15 - 4.15pm with our first tournament at West Calder High School on Friday 30 October, 2 - 4pm.

We are excited to see which NBA team kit we will be wearing this season.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

These will be starting the first week back after the October holiday break. Booking and information of clubs on offer will be coming out next week (Wk beg: 5 Oct).

Please can we ask that you only book your child onto clubs if they intend on attending all sessions.

Health & Wellbeing Mini Champs

Our HWB Mini champs have been busy with their Fitness Fridays inviting different stage groups down to the large hall on a Friday with Mrs Howard to get active in the morning.

This will be ongoing throughout the year and has been really popular so far with children who come to breakfast club on a Friday.

We always love hearing about our pupil's 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 always welcome news about the achievements our pupils have beyond school so please do share these with us!

Office Update

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. This includes breakfast club where we do ask that parents only go as far as the sign in desk.

Uniform

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

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 –

Tuesday 24th November

Tuesday 26th January

Tuesday 16th March

Monday 10th May

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. Our recent upper school athletics was very nearly postponed as we did not have a parent helper until the evening before. A HUGE thanks to Mrs D for assisting at the last minute with this. Without the support of parent helpers, we simply cannot manage the required ratios for trips and these may need to be cancelled if we do not have enough help.

Parent Consultation - Halloween

Following a request from parents last November, a consultation was held during March parent evenings about whether to allow dressing up for Halloween or not. In previous years, some families have not felt this appropriate.

The overwhelming vote was to allow this to take place. Therefore, children will be permitted to come to school in their Halloween outfit on Friday 30th October. We would ask that no masks are worn, and that any additional props, such as broomsticks, pitchforks, etc be left at home in case they get lost. This is entirely optional, and if you would prefer that your child does not participate this is absolutely fine.

As part of our Winted, if you have any Halloween or Christmas jumpers that are now too small, we would gladly accept them BEFORE parent evenings so they can be reused by another family. Christmas jumpers may be worn to the school Christmas lunch day. Again these are optional.

Diary Dates

A calendar of dates was issued in August for preplanned events. Please note that some diary dates below may have been added since this calendar was issued. I have included all the dates up until Christmas, as I know this can be a very bust time for families. Please note there may be some other events that may come arise in addition to these.

Mon 5 Oct	P7 Army Visits – in house trip
Thurs 8 Oct	Cross country competition for those qualified to next stage
Fri 9 Oct	Dress down day/Wear something red for Aplastic Anaemia fundraiser. Donations are optional, but welcome
Mon 12 Oct	P7 Army Visits – in house trip
Tues 13 Oct	P7 Smile Counselling information session as part of transition Parent consultations 1630-1930
Wed 14 Oct	Flu vaccination day Parent consultations 1630-1930
Thurs 15 Oct	P7 Risk Factory trip
Fri 16 Oct	All break for October week
Mon 26 Oct	In Service Day – staff only
Tues 27 Oct	Pupils return Fire safety visit for P6 and P7 in house trip
Wed 28 Oct	P7 Madrid Marathon at JYHS
Thurs 29 Oct	Rag Bag – any bags to be brought in on the morning by 9am please
Fri 30 Oct	Dress down for Halloween – please note, no masks or additional props (brooms, etc) to be brought.
Fri 6 Nov	P7W Classroom visit at JYHS
Fri 13 Nov	P7L Classroom visit at JYHS
Mon 16 Nov	VSE supported by WLC central team – see above
Tues 17 Nov	VSE supported by WLC central team – see above Prospective new P1 intake meeting for those considering applying to Williamston PS 27/28 1800-1900
Wed 18 Nov	VSE supported by WLC central team – see above
Fri 20 Nov	P7W Classroom visit at JYHS P3 shared finish – parents and carers welcome 1130-1215. Please note this is for P3MM and 3TM. P3/2 will be later in the session
Tues 24 Nov	TEAM W meeting 1900-2030 all welcome
Fri 27 Nov	P7L Classroom visit at JYHS Choir event at St Mary's Christmas Choir Festival
Thurs 3 Dec	School Christmas lunch – details to follow
Fri 4 Dec	P7W Classroom visit at JYHS
Mon 7 Dec	P1 and 2 nativity dress rehearsal for school
Tues 8 Dec	P1 and 2 nativity 9.15am – ticketed event for parents. Details TBC
Wed 9 Dec	P1 and 2 nativity 9.15am – ticketed event for parents. Details TBC
Thurs 10 Dec	Instrumental music and choir Christmas performance 4pm-5pm

Fri 11 Dec	P7L Classroom visit at JYHS
Mon 14 Dec	P6 party am / P5 party pm
Tues 15 Dec	P4 party am / P3 party pm
Wed 16 Dec	Pantomime for whole school am – in house trip P7 party pm
Thurs 17 Dec	P2 party am / P1 party pm
Fri 18 Dec	Christmas singalong – school only All break for Christmas holiday 1225
Tues 5 Jan	ALL RESUME

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

