

St. Thomas' RC Primary School



Addiewell, West Lothian

School Handbook

Session 2017/2018



West Lothian
Council

The information contained within this section refers to the day-to-day running of our school and is pertinent to St. Thomas' Primary and our pupils. It complements the guidance provided by West Lothian Council.

Contents

- ❖ Headteacher's Welcome
- ❖ Contact Information
- ❖ General Information
- ❖ Mission Statement
- ❖ Educational Vision, Values and Aims
- ❖ Parent Involvement
- ❖ Assessment Recording, Reporting and Transition
- ❖ The Curriculum
- ❖ Languages
- ❖ Maths
- ❖ Health and Wellbeing and Religious Education

Welcome to St. Thomas' Primary School, Addiewell

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to welcome you to St Thomas' Primary School and hope that your child will be very happy throughout their years with us. We are proud to be a vibrant learning community where each child is valued and achievement in its widest sense is celebrated.

We believe that our school is at the heart of the community and encourage strong home/school partnerships and welcome the support and skills that parents can offer, not just to their own children but also to our wider school community. Your views, help and support are very much welcomed and valued.

St Thomas' is also part of the spiritual community of Our Lady's and St. Brigid's RC Parish. There are regular opportunities for prayer, worship and assemblies as well as visits from our school chaplain, Fr Marcin. We aim to develop the full potential of every pupil in a caring environment which reflects gospel values.

We work with Addiewell Primary School as a collaborative learning community, Our Lady's Primary through the shared headship and with Bridgend Primary through the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

We believe that learning should be enjoyable and that fun is an essential part of life at St Thomas'. We want our pupils to leave our school with happy memories having achieved success and feeling motivated and enthusiastic about their future.

We look forward to welcoming and working in partnership with you throughout your child's time at St Thomas' Primary School.

Yours sincerely
Laura Caulfield
Head Teacher (Acting)

Contact Details

St. Thomas' Primary
Church Street
Addiewell
West Lothian
EH55 8PG

Denomination: Roman Catholic

Telephone Number: 01501 762794

Email: wlstthomas-ps@westlothian.org.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Laura Caulfield (Acting)



General Information

St. Thomas R.C. Primary School in Addiewell is a co-educational Roman Catholic primary school and provides for stages P1 – P7. The school admits both boys and girls.

Staffing

Teaching Staff 2017/2018

Head Teacher:	Mrs. Laura Caulfield
Principal Teacher:	Mrs. Mairi Morton (Acting)
Class Teachers:	Combined P1 Mrs. Margaret McKay
	P2- 4 Mrs. Mairi Morton
	P5-7 Miss. Julie Watt
Brass Instructor:	Mr. French

Non-Teaching Staff

Secretary:	Mrs. McGregor
Pupil Support:	Mrs. Hinde Mrs. Feeney
Family Support Worker	Miss. Rhiannon Armstrong
Kitchen Assistants:	Miss Whyte Mrs. Hamilton
Facilities Services Manager:	Mr. Rarity
Crossing Patrol:	Mr. Toner

Scottish Attainment Challenge Partners

Hidden Giants	Paul Gorman
Karate	Eric Wood

School Hours

	<i>Morning</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Afternoon</i>
Mon – Thurs	08:45am – 10:30am Break 10:30am– 12:15pm	12:30pm – 1:15pm	1:15pm – 3:10pm
Fri	08:45am – 10:30am Break 10:30am– 12:20pm		

If for any reason the school has to close early, we will ensure someone is at home before allowing children to leave the building. It is very important, therefore, that all emergency contact details are kept up to date and accurate.

School Meals

School meals are not cooked on the premises. Children are given a choice of three meals, two of which are hot. Meals cost £2.04 per day and this should be paid on the day or at the beginning of the week.

Free School Meals:

All primary 1-3 pupils are entitled to a free midday meal. In addition, free school meals are also provided to pupils in primary 5-7 where parents are in receipt of either:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Any Income Related element of Employment & Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (with no working tax credit) and whose annual income is £16,010 or less
- Working Tax Credit and whose annual income is £6,420 or less.

If your child is vegetarian or has a special diet for health or religious reasons, non-meat meals can be provided. Please speak to a member of staff.

Breakfast Club



West Lothian Council has extended *free breakfast* provision to all pupils in primary school who want breakfast. Breakfast club begins at 8.00am in the school dining hall

Whole School Nurturing Snack

As part of being a nurturing school, snack is provided for all the pupils at a charge of £1 per week. The children are responsible for choosing the weekly snack and preparing it for each other. The children then sit down together at a table to eat their snack together.

School Uniform

St. Thomas' School uniform is:

- Black v-neck sweatshirt with embroidered school badge
- Grey or black skirt/trousers/pinafore
- white blouse/ shirt or gold polo shirt
- school tie and black shoes
- Special Primary 7 Sweatshirts which have Primary 7 embroidered below the school crest.



School ties, sweatshirts, polo shirts and badges may be purchased from the school. Some families may be entitled to clothing grants. Please check the West Lothian Council website or speak to Mrs. McGregor, our school secretary, for more information.

Bilingual Learners

Provision will be made for families with English as an additional language. Please speak to the Head Teacher prior to your children attending school if you require a meeting, documents translated into another language or any other support.

Security

There is a secure entry system in the main entrance of the building. Parents are asked to always enter through the main door to ensure we know who is in the building at all times. Your support is appreciated in this to enable us to keep the building safe for our pupils and staff.

Cars and Car Park

In the interests of safety, we ask that parents pay particular attention to the parking restrictions around the school and nursery. Parents must not use the school car park.

Playground Supervision

When pupils are at school, the responsibility for their safety rests with the Authority. The Head Teacher and staff undertake this responsibility on behalf of the Authority. From 8.30am, at morning break and throughout lunch, the playground will be supervised. At the end of the school day children will be escorted to the school gate and supervised leaving the premises by a member of staff.

Reporting Absence

In the event of illness please contact the school by telephone on the first day of absence. If the absence is planned, a letter of explanation should be sent prior to the absence.

Please ensure that your child is punctual for school in the morning.

Where children have a series of unexplained absences or late comings, this information will be passed to the Children and Young People's Team for investigation. Please refer to the Attendance at School Policy for further information

Additional Learning Needs

Delivering appropriate provision for pupils with additional support needs is central to the national commitment to inclusion and is underpinned by legislation. West Lothian Council believes that all children and young people are entitled to learn together. This will help develop a culture of acceptance within which all children have a presumptive entitlement to mainstream education and services provided to facilitate this goal.

Focus on inclusion is designed to help schools in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and partner agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of provision. This leads to improved educational outcomes and opportunities for pupils with additional support needs.

Homework

Homework is the link between home and school and enables parents to see what can be achieved independently by their child as well as strengthening their partnership with the school.

It provides the child with practice in skills already learned in school. Work sent home should already have been taught and should not prove difficult to complete.

We very much appreciate your support in completing tasks set by the class teacher.



St. Thomas' Primary School

Growing Together in Friendship, Faith and Love



Our Vision is underpinned by our shared values:

Fairness

Follow in
the ways
of Jesus

Our
Values

Nurturing
Environment
with mutual
respect

Inspirational
Learning
Experiences

A positive
and proud
school
community

It is our aim that you will
see and hear:

- Quality learning and teaching which provides pupils with a variety of experiences and opportunities to raise aspirations.
- A motivated learning community who are encouraged to participate in opportunities for leadership at all levels.
- Co-operative working which includes and values the contributions of everyone within our school and parish community
- Happy, healthy children with a positive mind set who are proud of themselves, their friends and their school.
- Respectful interactions which demonstrate Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus.



Parent Involvement

The aims of the Parental Involvement Act are to:

- ❖ Help parents become more involved with their child's education and learning.
- ❖ Welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school.
- ❖ Provide easier ways for parents to express their views and wishes.

To help achieve these aims **all parents will automatically be members of the Parent Forum** and will be entitled to have a say in what happens at the school.

We run a joint Parent Council with parents from Addiewell Primary School to:

- ❖ Support the school in its work with pupils
- ❖ Represent the views of all parents
- ❖ Supporting the work of the school, for example, by advising the school on its policies
- ❖ Being involved in the appointment of senior staff
- ❖ Organising social and fundraising events
- ❖ Encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and their wider community
- ❖ Report back to the Parent Forum

If you would be interested in being part of the Parent Council for St Thomas', please speak to a member of the Leadership Team who will be delighted to advise you on how to get started.

The need to maintain a positive partnership with parents/carers is well recognised. Your help and support is vital if discipline is to be effective. You will always be contacted to share success within the school and also, at the earliest possible stage, when there are concerns.

St. Thomas' Primary School also welcomes parent helpers. If you wish to become involved in this you will need to obtain a disclosure certificate through the PVG scheme.

Complaints

If you have a complaint about any aspect of the service we provide in our school we will try to resolve this, if appropriate, as quickly as possible.

In the first instance, please contact the school directly using the contact information provided.

If you are still unhappy you may contact:

Education Customer Services
West Lothian Council
Civic Centre
Howden Road South
Livingston
EH54 6FF

01506 281952

For further advice please refer to the Comments and Complaints Procedure for Education:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/wl/AddiewellPrimarySchool/files/2014/04/Education-Comments-and-Complaints-Procedure.pdf>

Assessment Records and Reports

Children will be continually assessed in school work at all stages of the school.

The children are also involved in self-assessment and take some responsibility for their own learning by reflecting with the teacher on areas where they have been successful learners and also to set targets in their learning. The children are also involved in peer assessment where they comment on each other's work during collaborative learning.

There will be two parents' evenings, one in November and one in June where parents are allocated a set time when they can speak to their child's teacher. Parents will also receive a written report prior to the consultation in June. If, however, you need to make an appointment to see a teacher at any other time, please contact the school. If you arrive at the school without an appointment, the teacher may not be able to see you if class cover cannot be met. Therefore, it is to your advantage to make an appointment.

Transition

Primary 7 pupils from St. Thomas' Primary will normally transfer to St. Kentigern's Academy, Blackburn. There is an extensive transition programme which runs through the primary 7 year. Pupils have many opportunities to visit the school to take part in group activities, information days and induction days.

Pupils attending their pre-school year in nursery will be involved in an early years transition programme with opportunities to become more involved in school life and meet the staff in the school.

Enrolment

Children are enrolled for Primary 1 in late November/early December. Notification is displayed in local nurseries and will be published in the local press. Parents who are considering enrolling their child at St. Thomas' are most welcome to make an appointment to visit the school and discuss the education provided.

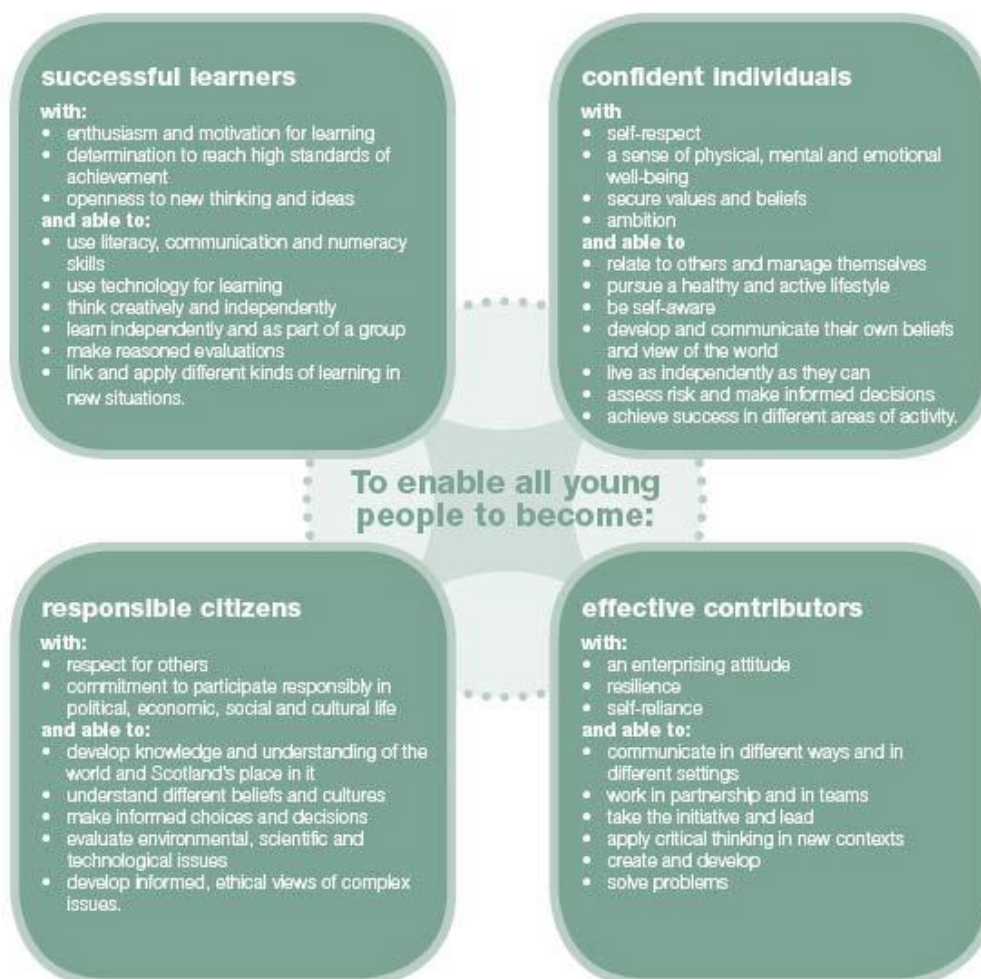
The Curriculum

Curriculum for Excellence aims to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum from ages 3 to 18.

The 3 to 18 curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.

The knowledge, skills and attributes learners will develop will allow them to demonstrate four key capacities – to be *successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens* and *effective contributors*.

The curriculum is structured around all the experiences that are planned as part of learning and teaching. This includes the curriculum areas and subjects, the school community and interdisciplinary topics. By recognising and planning learning around different contexts and experiences, the curriculum aims to make better connections across learning.



Literacy

The Literacy and English framework in St. Thomas' Primary School promotes the development of critical and creative thinking as well as competence in listening and talking, reading, writing and the personal, interpersonal and team working skills which are so important in life and the world of work.

The development of each child's language is pursued through an integrated programme of language work involving talking, listening, reading and writing. Early reading material is based on the child's own natural language, progressing thereafter, through a guided reading programme. As their skills progress they will also learn skills in comprehension and referencing to help them understand more of what they read to assist them in looking for information.

Alongside this they will develop the necessary skills of spelling, punctuation, language structure and handwriting, each at the level appropriate the child's needs. Writing will form an important part of this development and the child will start with simple stories and go on to different forms and genres of writing activities. Much emphasis will be placed on speaking and discussion.

The objectives of reading are:

- ❖ To help children cope with reading in each and every area of the curriculum.
- ❖ To help children cope with out-of-school reading needs.
- ❖ To develop children's reading from the general to the more specialised.
- ❖ To develop reading for enjoyment.

It is very important that reading is also practised at home. Children will be given reading homework but should also be encouraged to read for enjoyment.

Modern Languages in the Primary School

The Scottish Government's policy (Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach) is aimed at ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn a modern language from P1 onwards. Additionally, each child should have the right to learn a second modern language from P5 onwards.

The children in St. Thomas' begin learning French in Primary 1, beginning at the early level.

At early and first levels, children will develop generic skills in their first language. These include taking part in conversations, developing listening, reading and writing skills and knowledge about language. Within modern languages, teachers build on children's natural curiosity for sounds and words. Activities include playing games, singing songs, carrying out simple instructions and playing with simple poetry and rhyme. The children become confident language learners from the outset.

By the end of Primary 7, the majority of children will have learned the skills necessary to:

- Give a short presentation about themselves
- Take part in simple conversations
- Understand classroom instructions and personal information
- Enjoy listening to a story, song or poem
- Read aloud a simple text
- Read and understand a short text
- Write a few sentences about themselves and others

Additionally, children will have the opportunity to have experience of other languages in line with interdisciplinary topics.



Maths and Numeracy

The experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence encourage learning and teaching approaches which stimulate children and young people and promote their enjoyment of mathematics. To achieve this, teachers in St. Thomas' will use a skilful mix of approaches, including:

- Planned, active learning which provides opportunities to explore, investigate, experiment, play, discuss and reflect
- Modelling and scaffolding the development of mathematical thinking skills
- Learning collaboratively and independently
- Opportunities for discussion, communication and explanation of thinking
- Developing mental agility
- Using relevant contexts and experiences familiar to young people
- Making links across the curriculum to show how mathematical concepts are applied in a wide range of contexts, such as those provided by science and social subjects
- Using technology in appropriate and effective ways
- Building on the principles of Assessment is for Learning, ensuring that young people understand the purpose and relevance of what they are learning
- Developing problem-solving capabilities and critical thinking skills

Maths in a real life context will be at the heart of all our learning and teaching.

Mental Agility

Mental agility is an important mathematical skill. In St. Thomas', the beginning of each maths lesson comprises of interactive mental agility exercises, in line with the West Lothian Mental Maths Framework.

Health and Wellbeing

This is divided into six areas:

- Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- P.E, physical activity and sport
- Planning for choices and changes
- Food and health
- Substance misuse
- Relationships, sexual health and parenthood

Children learn to develop values and positive attitudes towards themselves and others, this contributes to their personal and social development. St. Thomas' works hard to build confidence and self esteem and to provide opportunities for children to contribute to the whole school community. Much of their development in these areas helps to lay the foundations for becoming responsible citizens of the future. Personal and social development is concerned with the education of the whole child and in St. Thomas' we develop personal and interpersonal skills to enable them to become responsible and active members of their community.

Religious Education



Our hope for the young people in St. Thomas' Primary is that they will become responsible and caring members of our community. Through the positive Christian teaching of our Catholic school, we will develop in our children a love of God, a respect for all and a consistent set of beliefs, values, attitudes and practices.

Religious education forms a daily part of every class and the school has assemblies throughout the school term. We also attend Mass on the first Thursday of every month and for special occasions or feasts.

St. Thomas' Primary enjoys an excellent relationship with our school chaplain, Father Marcin. Particular support is given in the preparation for Sacraments. Partnership between home, parish and school is vital during Sacramental preparation. Parents have the right to withdraw children from Religious observance and this right may be exercised by informing the Head Teacher.

School Policy on Discipline

School discipline in our school is essential. The general aim of St. Thomas' policy is to emphasise that relationships between all in the school should reflect the teaching of the gospels. The school has adopted a Positive Behaviour Policy whereby every child is rewarded for their good behaviour and effort. We subscribe to an online behaviour tool, ClassDojo (<https://www.classdojo.com/>), which allows parents to monitor their child's positive behaviour throughout the day using a smartphone app. Children whose behaviour gives cause for concern will be placed on an individual behaviour plan to support them in changing their behaviour patterns.

Where necessary, sanctions range from verbal reprimands, removal of privileges or referral to promoted staff.

In the event of serious breaches of discipline, the school may exclude a pupil until a resolution can be agreed with school, parents and the local authority.

School Improvement

The main achievements of the school can be found in the Standards and Quality Report. The plans for future improvement can be found in the School Improvement Plan.