

**“A NEW
SCHOOL YEAR
MEANS NEW
BEGINNINGS,
NEW
ADVENTURES...
AND NEW
CHALLENGES.”**



Staffing

Room 1: The teacher is Ms Lisa Nichol, and the pupils supported by Ms Laura Hall and Ms Christna Sutherland

Room 2: The teacher is Ms Elaine Simmons, and the pupils supported by Ms Suzanne Gallagher and Ms Kaitlyn Brownlee

Room 3: The teacher is Ms Gillian McCann, and the pupils supported by Ms Patricia Nodwell, and Ms Gillian

Room 4: The teacher is Ms Donna Harvey and the pupils supported by Ms Nikki Ballantyne and Ms Jen Brisbane and Ms Jenni McLean

Room 5: The teacher is Ms Kyra King and the pupils supported by Ms Ksenia Finlay and Ms Ashley

Room 6: The teacher is Ms Dawn Kean, and the pupils are supported by Ms Nicola Ramsay, Ms Lorna Alexander and Ms Gillian Emmerson

Room 7: The teachers are Ms Emma Stevenson and Ms Morna McKenzie, and the pupils supported by Ms Stef McGill and Ms Litsa Alatsaris

Room 8: The teacher is Ms Amber Mason and the pupils supported by Ms Louise Brown, Ms Gillian Gourlay and Ms Lisa Timoney

Other teaching staff: Mr Kevin McAdam will support classes when teachers have preparation and planning time each week.

Ms Janice Gourlay will take classes and groups for musical extravaganzas each week, supported with instruments, dance, movement, and song.

Ms Lisa McMahan (Principal Teacher) with Ms Leanne Coleman will support our Nurture interventions.

Office: Ms Kim Martis and Ms Nicola Core support everyone from the school office

Janitor: Ms Lyndsey McDowell

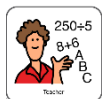
Cook-in-Charge: Ms Fiona Parkinson

News Briefing

August 2023

Welcome to another new year at West Mains School. This promises to be another exciting and inspiring year, building on all we achieved in 2022-23. We hope that you enjoyed the holidays and spending time with family and friends.

A few highlights at the beginning of this term...



Meet the teacher: Week beginning 11th September

“Meet the Teacher” is a time when families can come to school to meet the teacher and see the classroom. It’s a great opportunity to introduce yourself to your child’s teacher, see the classroom and find out a little about the learning and teaching. More importantly, it’s the first real opportunity to create a relationship and establish communication with the teacher. Your child’s teacher will contact you with more details, date and times for appointments.



Communication, Language and Speech

We continue to work with our wonderful Speech and Language Therapist, Sandra Brathwaite. This year we are hoping to continue to work closely with her as she supports communication with targeted individuals and classes to support communication. There will be workshops to support families.



Learning new things

All classes are beginning new learning topics this term. In the next few weeks you will get a leaflet about the learning theme in your child's class. This will outline some of the learning targets your child will be working on this term. There are also ideas to help families support learning together at home. If there are any ideas, skills or resources, based on the theme, you could share with the class, please let the teacher know.



Attendance

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Scottish Government data suggest that school attendance figures are below pre-COVID levels. Across Scotland there is an increase in children having intermittent days off and families taking 1 or more holidays during term-time. There is also increasing long-term absence. Whilst we appreciate that children will have minor ailments and there are sometimes special circumstances when holidays need to be outside of the school holidays, all schools have been asked to monitor attendance. In line with South Lanarkshire's policies and procedures, attendance letters will be sent if a child's attendance is below 90% and on-going support offered to parents whose children's absence causes concern. I have attached a diagram that shows the impact poor attendance has on learning opportunities.

computer



Parentsportal

Can we remind families of the Parentsportal? This the new digital platform for parents to interact with the school. All official paperwork and communication between home and school will be via Parentsportal. Parents can keep up to date with developments at their child's school, arrange parents' evening appointments, check attendance, and even read reports online – all at a time that suits them, and without crumpled forms going missing. A huge thank you to all parents who have already registered with Parentsportal. We will be offering a rolling programme of support for parents who have yet to register with Parentsportal. Kim and Nicola from the school office will contact you directly over the next few weeks so that we can use the Parentsportal fully by October. For more information:

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200140/education_and_learning/2163/parentsportal



Parent Workshops

We will be working with SAMH to support positive well-being. As part of this initiative Iona will be in school to run three parent and family workshops on mental health awareness, understanding and

managing stress and anxiety, and managing well-being. Each workshop will be open to all West Mains families and are free. See the table below for dates and times.

Teachers are also planning parent and child workshops/events as part of the school learning support programmes. Further details and invitations will be issued throughout the year.

Parent Council

Last session parents indicated that they are keen to re-establish the West Mains Parent Council. The main aim of a Parent Council is to try to represent the interests of all families to the school and South Lanarkshire Council. There will be many things the Parent Council may get involved with and is open to all parents and carers. The Parent Council gives a forum to discuss issues of interest to parents and that the school gets feedback on parents' views. It gives an ideal forum for all parents to be involved in the life of the school and to help parents support their child's learning. For much more information on all aspects of a Parent Council see the link below.

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13458/parents_as_partners_-_introductory_guide_for_parent_councils_2019

Dates for evening meetings have been booked, with the first meeting on **August 30th 19:30-21:00**. A full list of the evening meeting dates is in the dates list at the end of this newsletter. There will also be opportunities for meetings to be during the school day as part of Coffee afternoons (dates to be confirmed).



Allergies

West Mains and Halfmerke have a number of pupils who have a nut allergy. For some even a small trace can trigger a life-threatening allergic reaction. For this reason, we ask that pupils **do not** bring **nuts** or products containing nuts or **traces of nuts** into school. This is in line with all South Lanarkshire Schools, which are all **nut free**.



Snacks in School

West Mains is a health promoting school and we ask that families support us with this. We encourage pupils bring a healthy snack for the mid-morning break. This is usually taken out onto the playground, so something that can be eaten easily there is a good idea. Enclosed is a chat mat to support your child to choose their own snack. The chat mat gives some ideas, please feel free to add other favourites with photos, symbols or words. Each pupil should also have a water bottle with their name on it. Research has shown that children need plenty of water, not only to keep healthy but also to support their learning power. We have several water coolers in the school where pupils can fill their bottle. We encourage pupils to have only water in the classrooms as juice and other sticky drinks can spoil the carpets. A carton of fruit juice can be in a child's packed lunch for the dining room.



Clothing

As you can imagine keeping track of many so red school jumpers and other clothing can be challenging for staff. Please can you make sure that **EVERYTHING** is labelled with your child's name. We cannot guarantee that any lost property is returned if there is no clear label.

Our aim is to support children to be as independent as possible. You can be part of this supportive approach by sending you child with comfortable clothes and footwear that they could fasten easily. Joggers are preferable to school trousers which have fiddly buttons and zips. Trainers and shoes with laces are very challenging for most of our children to manage in school.



Parent and Family Events

Date	Time	Event
30.8.2023, 4.10.2023, 22.11.2023, 24.1.2024, 21.2.2024, 20.3.2024, 8.5.2024	19:30-21:00	Parent Council Meetings
Week beginning 11.9. 2023	TBC by the class teacher.	Meet My Teacher.
28.9.2023 4.10.2023 12.10. 2023	TBC	SAMH well-being workshops. More details to follow.
5.12. 2023	6:00-7:00	Parent and Family Fun Evening
19.12. 2023	10:00	Nativity Show
4 th March 2024	6:00-9:00	Formal Parents' Evening: How am I doing?
5 th June 2024	6:00-7:00	Parent and Family Evening

We are all looking forward to another term full of fun and learning!



Christine Shaw

Christine Shaw
Head Teacher

WHAT IS YOUR ATTENDANCE?

Above 95%
Well Done



High attendance leads to improved and high achievement which means greater success!

95% or less
Slight Concern



This is the same as missing **9 school days**, nearly 2 weeks!

90% or less
Concerning



This is the same as missing **19 school days**, almost 4 weeks!

85% or less

Risk of
Underachievement



This is the same as missing **27 school days**, just less than 6 weeks!

80% or less

Severe risk of
Underachievement



This is the same as missing **36 school days**, just less than 8 weeks!



Right to an Education (Article 28)

