

Melrose Primary School

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Handbook 2021/22

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Vision, values and aims

From Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to Primary 7 at Melrose Primary School our vision is:

‘To be the best we can be’

Aims:

- Strive for excellence
- Deliver innovative learning experiences
- Develop skills for life
- Cultivate individual qualities
- Actively engage and collaborate with our learners, parents/carers and the wider community

Values:

- Resilient
 - ◇ We bounce back from challenges and see them as learning. We have the self-confidence to achieve our goals
- Receptive
 - ◇ We are open to new ideas. We have a mindset of success.
- Responsible
 - ◇ We are dependable. We always try to do the right thing.
- Respectful
 - ◇ We show consideration to others. We appreciate everyone's qualities and their contributions.
- Reflective
 - ◇ We honestly consider our approach to tasks and actions. We make positive choices and changes.



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Disclaimer

Welcome

In welcoming new parents/carers and children to Melrose Primary School Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) we wish to draw their attention to the ELC handbook. This handbook is written as a source of reference for all parents/ carers, children and anyone with an association with the school. We see it as our role to work together with parents/carers to provide our children with the best possible opportunities to enable them to be citizens of the future. We consider it important that parents/carers give their point of view. If there are any matters, which you would like to discuss, or if there is anything on which you need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the ELC or school.

Staff

Headteacher

Mrs Gilly Innes

Depute Head teacher
Depute Head teacher

Mrs Dawn Fernie
Mr Jamie Wallace

Early Years Staff
(current staff)

Mrs Jordyn Aitchison
Mrs Alena Aird
Mr Danny Alexander
Mrs Sarah Brown
Mrs Rebekah Hall
Mrs Lorna McVie
Miss Maggie Murray
Mrs Carol Patterson
Mrs Charlotte Scott

Admissions

All 3 and 4 year old children in Scotland are entitled to 1140hrs funded early learning and childcare. Melrose Primary School ELC offers school term time (38 weeks per year) - this is equivalent of up to 30 hours a week (see hours below) .

There are no catchment area restrictions for entry to ELC. However catchment area rules do apply for entry to Primary 1 and it should not be assumed that because a child living out with the catchment area has had an ELC place that a school enrolment is guaranteed.

Enrolment week normally takes place during November. Information will be available on Scottish Borders Council website or at Melrose Primary School office.

The entry date for 3 year old children is dependent on the date of their third birthday.

- Where a child's birthday falls on or between 1 March – 31 August they will become eligible for funding from August (autumn term) occurring in that year
- Where a child's birthday falls on or between 1 September – 31 December they will become eligible for funding from January (spring term) following their birthday
- Where a child's birthday falls on or between 1 January – last day February they will become eligible for funding from April (summer term) following their birthday

Arrangements at Melrose will be decided once enrolment has taken place in November and potential numbers of ELC entrants are known.

All children have different personalities and different strengths. Some children settle into ELC very quickly and effortlessly, while others may take a little longer to adapt. Parents are welcome to stay for as long as it takes their child to feel happy, safe and secure.

ELC timings

Monday to Thursday	Morning session: 8.30—11.30 Lunch: 11.30—12.00 Afternoon session: 12.00—15.00
Friday	Morning session: 8.30—12.30 Lunch: 11.45—12.15

Accommodation and facilities

Melrose Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is a part of Melrose Primary School and we take opportunities to promote and develop links. ELC children make use of school facilities such as the garden and outdoor areas. School staff visit the ELC and may work with the children from time to time and there are regular opportunities where ELC and Primary 1 children work across the Early level. Most ELC administration is carried out from the main school office, such as collating information forms, distributing letters etc.

Melrose ELC has a indoor/outdoor environment and an outdoor satellite setting both of which are accessed by all children in ELC.

ELC indoor/outdoor environment

The ELC indoor/outdoor accommodation has its own entrance and security system. It has two main play rooms and an outdoor area which is accessible to children at all times, and in all weathers, throughout the session. The garden area has an adjoining gate with the Primary 1 garden and is used during 'joined up' play and learning sessions with Primary 1 and at break times when the older children are able to come into the ELC garden to play with the ELC children.

Within Play Room 2 (Tweed Room) there is a kitchen area, where children have their snack, and toilet facilities which are both accessible at all times for the children.

Play Room 1 (Eildon Room) has an adjoining door that leads to the Primary 1 area in the main building of the school and this access is used for 'joined up' play and learning sessions with Primary 1.

Outdoor Satellite setting

The Outdoor satellite setting is situated within the grounds of Melrose Primary School. The children access the setting for a whole day session. The accommodation includes a welcome shed for storage of bags, coats etc, a large sheltered area, outdoor toilet facilities including portable handwashing facilities and a variety of wooded spaces for the children to investigate and explore. The area is fenced to provide a safe and secure environment for the children.

At Melrose ELC setting the environment is organised in a way that encourages children to play, learn and explore. Each area is carefully planned and includes various open-ended resources that encourage creative and critical thinking. Prior knowledge, curiosity and enquiry are used to constantly develop and resource the areas.

Throughout the session children choose where to play and with which resources and are encouraged to be independent. This free flow approach also includes snack time where children are able to independently access the snack table when they choose, and wash up their utensils before returning to play.

Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing are embedded in all of the areas and ELC staff actively support the development of these core skills.

Lunch

Early years are a crucial time in every child's life, and evidence shows that access to high quality early learning and childcare is crucial to improving children's outcomes.

That is why, at the heart of the expansion of ELC, there is a strong focus on high quality early learning and childcare experiences for all of our children. Part of this experience is the meal children have during their ELC session. This experience has been named a 'Learning Lunch'

Providing a nurturing environment where young children are supported to make appropriate choices, to enjoy the food and to have the opportunity to take part in the social interaction and learning experiences associated with eating and drinking together is essential. All Scottish Borders Council early years settings follow the national guidance 'Setting the Table'.

Snack

The Scottish Milk and Health Snack Scheme

From 1 August 2021 all pre-school children who spend two or more hours a day in a nursery or other eligible childcare setting registered with the scheme are entitled to milk and a snack of either fruit or vegetables. Cow's milk will be offered as standard but children who cannot drink it for medical, ethical or religious reasons will be offered a non-dairy alternative.

Curriculum

The ELC and Primary 1 work on experiences and outcomes within the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence.

The aims of the Early Level Curriculum are to provide each child with opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to become Confident Individuals, Successful Learners, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens.

The planning is responsive to the children's needs and interests and takes into account the seven principles for curriculum design;

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Curricular Areas

Literacy: Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning for life. Children will develop competence in listening, talking, reading and writing.

Numeracy: Numeracy and maths opportunities are available daily in the ELC setting. We develop children's knowledge and understanding of numbers, money, measuring, shapes and data.

Health and Wellbeing: Learning in Health and Wellbeing ensures that children develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

Expressive Arts: This area of the curriculum includes; art and design, music and dance, and drama and role play.

RME: Children will learn about the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and other world religions. We encourage children to share their beliefs and develop their own set of values.

Science: We will support children to develop curiosity and understanding of the environment and their place in the living, material and physical world.

Technologies: Children will be provided with opportunities to explore technologies through play. They will also explore food and textiles in the nursery environment.

Social Studies: Children will learn about the history and heritage of Scotland as well as the wider world. They will develop their understanding of people, place and society.

The ELC practitioners plan the learning environment around the children's interests and enquiries and observations of their play. This enables practitioners to be responsive to individual learning and develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the key curricular areas.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share information from home as this is highly valuable and enables us to work together in partnership to plan responsively with the children through sharing experiences, achievements and enquiries.

Curriculum (cont)

Tracking of progress in ELC

Children in ELC have a designated Key Worker who is responsible for tracking their progress throughout the year. Learning is tracked through observations and quality interactions of the experiences in the ELC environment. Significant learning is recorded in a variety of ways including the Personal Learning Plan, floor book and individual tracking documents.

At Melrose Primary School and ELC Personal Learning Plans are an integral part of teaching and learning. Personal Learning Plans are an additional means of facilitating effective dialogue about learning with children. They are a practical and visual resource for children to support them in discussing what and how they learn. Personal Learning Plans in ELC aim to provide evidence to the learner and their family about the child's individual learning journey and progress.

Personal Learning Plans will be shared flexibly, throughout the year and at parent consultations meetings. Parents/carers are encouraged to look at the Personal Learning Plan with their child giving the child an opportunity to share their learning. Parents/carers can comment on their child's progress and achievements on a response slip to play a part in the Personal Learning Planning process.

Parents/carers have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with a member of staff during parent consultation meetings. There is also an opportunity at the beginning and end of each session to communicate any concerns or important information to a member of staff. Parents/carers are encouraged to share any changes or occurrences in their child's life which may impact on their ELC experience in order for appropriate support to be put in place.

Health and Safety

Absence and illness

A register of attendance is kept in ELC. If your child is absent please let us know why by phoning the school office and leaving a message; there is not usually any need to talk directly to ELC staff. It is especially important that we are made aware about infectious illnesses e.g. chickenpox. Please also inform us of cases of head lice.

Accidents and medication

We keep a register of Accidents and Medication. If your child requires prescribed medication while in ELC a member of the office staff will administer it. In compliance with the Care Inspectorate advice you must fill in a medication form and sign the medication register when you collect your child. In the event of your child having an accident that requires attention (e.g. ice pack) you will be informed, shown the accident log and asked to sign.

'Getting it right for every child' form (Personal plan) and Permission form

Children are given an 'Getting it right for every child' form before they start ELC. This gives parents/carers the opportunity to share information about the child's family, interests and about them as an individual. Please fill this in as soon as possible and return to a member of staff. We collate all the information which is used to support child led planning and experiences helping us to make a smooth transition for every child into our ELC setting. We will review them with parents/carers at least every 6 months to ensure the information is up to date.

The ELC permission form includes information needed with regards email addresses so that future newsletters and any information we need to pass on can be sent electronically. Permission is also sought for children to take part in experiences in the local environment.

Fire Precautions

Should there be a fire or a major incident all staff and children are familiar with the evacuation procedure and practices are held at least once a term. A Business Continuity Plan is in place in the event of a major incident.

Letters and Information

The majority of communication from ELC and school will be shared through the Groupcall email system and/or School App for parents. Please ensure your email details are up to date. If there are any changes please communicate the change with the school office.

Pupil collection policy

Melrose ELC recognises that there are times when parent/carer situations change and alternative collection arrangements need to be quickly put in place. If a situation arises where you need to ask someone you have not previously introduced to ELC staff to collect your child then there is a pupil collection policy that should be followed. The policy details the procedures which would be followed including a 'pick up' password system.

Tooth brushing

ELC children take part in tooth brushing after snack every day as part of the 'Childsmile' programme. Every 3 and 4-year-old attending ELC in Scotland (extended into some P1 and P2 classes in schools), is eligible to be offered:

- free daily supervised toothbrushing within their ELC or school
- free dental packs, which contain a toothbrush, toothpaste and oral health messages
- oral health education for your child.



Parents/carers as partners

Communication



Melrose Primary School App:-

Keep in touch with events, news and receive important messages from us. To download the app visit the Apple or Google play stores and search for School App for Parents.



Twitter:-

Follow us on Twitter at **@melrose_ps**

Melrose Primary School website – includes school calendar, school uniform ordering etc.

Groupcall system (email and/or text) - this system is used by school and ELC to keep parents informed throughout the school day. The text system is mainly used in the event of emergency school closures. It is essential that contact details are kept up to date i.e. mobile numbers and email addresses. Please inform the school office of any changes to details.

Friends of Melrose Primary School

All parents/carers at the Melrose Primary School and ELC are members of the Parent Forum. A parent representative group called the Friends of Melrose Primary School aims to have representatives from each stage of school, including ELC. If you would like more information on how to become involved please contact the Head teacher.

How you can help

We welcome parent/carer helpers in and out of the ELC

Generally you can help us by:

- telling us about your child - likes and dislikes, significant developments, changes in home routines etc.
- encouraging your child to talk about ELC
- encouraging your child to draw, paint, cut out etc.
- encouraging your child's ability to change shoes and clothes etc.
- reading books with your child and saying ELC rhymes etc. together
- be on time to pick up your child
- providing dressing up clothes and collecting junk materials (boxes, wood off-cuts, plastic bottles etc.)
- making sure your child has the correct belongings and ensuring that these are named
- telephoning school if your child is ill and ensuring that he/she does not return until fully better
- returning promptly any requested forms etc.
- paying snack money on time

Newsletters

In line with our Eco School policy newsletters will be sent out to parents/carers electronically using the email addresses recorded on each child's enrolment form and will be on the school App and website. Please ensure you inform the school of any changes to email addresses during the year. A copy of the newsletter will be displayed in the entrance hall of the ELC setting. Paper copies of the newsletter are available by request.

Parents as partners (cont)

Parent/carer involvement in child's learning

The ELC responsive floor plans are continuously on display on the wall next to the signing in area.

Parents/carers are welcome to come in and look at them at the beginning or end of a session.

The display boards within the ELC have been divided up so that each child has an interactive square where they can choose to display and share something special they have made or discovered with others. Any personal achievements from home will also be displayed in your child's gallery. The children will be encouraged to share their creativity and enquiries with you, so please make yourself familiar with your child's individual area and enjoy looking at your child's achievements with them.

The learning journey of ELC children is displayed in the main ELC room next to the self-registration area.

'Star Moments'

Achievements in ELC are celebrated in children's Personal Learning Plans which go home three times per year. As part of celebrating success out of ELC, we will send home a 'Star Moment' sheet to be filled in with your child.

Please share any successes your child has had, whether it is a certificate or award, or something they have learned to do that they could not do before.

These can be written on or have a photograph or drawing attached. When completed, hand the 'Star Moment' sheet to a member of staff to display alongside the other 'Star Moments' in the cloakroom. A pocket with blank 'Star Moment' sheets is in the entrance hall. The form is also available on the website.

Stay and Play sessions

The ELC offer an open invitation or planned sessions throughout the year for parents/carers to stay and play with their child during the ELC session. This is an opportunity to explore the environment with their child, to look at the ways in which their child's learning is being developed and talk to their child about their ELC experiences.

The information board situated in the cloakroom area features a monthly calendar where any additional experiences or visits the children will be involved in will be added. Parent/carer who would like to come and help add their name to the calendar. Alternatively if parent/carers find themselves with a free hour or a free morning/afternoon and would like to join us in ELC, they can also sign up on the calendar.

If Parent/Carers have any special talents/skills that they are able to share with us e.g. playing a musical instrument, have a pet, baking or skills through your job such as a doctor, nurse, vet etc, they would also use this calendar to sign up to support.

Parents/carers as partners (cont)

Useful information

- Each child should bring a small backpack to ELC. This backpack should contain a change of clothes, separate indoor shoes and hats and gloves etc (weather dependent). There is a box under the pegs where children store their indoor/outdoor shoes. Please make sure all items are named
- The outdoors is regularly used for learning. Please ensure that your child has suitable clothes, a coat and outdoor shoes. On wet days please send your child to ELC with wellies.
- Children are encouraged to be independent and, where possible, should be sent with shoes they can fasten and unfasten independently.
- Please could you provide a sun hat with your child's name on it to be kept within their bag in ELC. Sun cream should be applied before your child comes to the ELC and if reapplication is required then a named bottle of suncream should be handed to a member of ELC staff. Due to the free-flow approach that the ELC operate the children have access throughout the session to the outdoor environment therefore it is very important that they have protection from the sun.
- Melrose ELC offer parents/carers the opportunity to order an ELC jumper and t-shirt for the children to wear when they are busy learning through play. If you would like to place an order please ask a member of staff for details.
- We aim to develop children's independence in dressing and undressing. Children are encouraged to remove coats, hang items on their own pegs, put on soft shoes and pull up tights and trousers etc. themselves, if they can
- It is most helpful if children know the toilet routine and how to wash their hands, as well as when and how to use tissues

Please help us with your encouragement at the beginning and end of ELC sessions and at home.

Policies and procedures

Melrose ELC is a Scottish Borders Council (SBC) ELC. This means that SBC and national policies regarding the curriculum, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Complaints Procedures apply, as do some school policies and aspects of organisation where appropriate. The work of all SBC Early Learning and Childcare settings are based on 'A Curriculum for Excellence', 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare' and 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me'.

Melrose ELC is registered with Care Inspectorate and will be inspected by it to make sure that the ELC is meeting the regulations under 'The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001' and in doing so will take account of the Health and Social Care Standards. Further information about the Care Inspectorate and what it does can be found on its website

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/>

Child Protection Policy

We have a duty to report any concerns regarding the suspected abuse of a child immediately to the Headteacher, who is the Child Protection Coordinator.

Concerns shall be recorded clearly. The child will at no time be asked leading questions.

If appropriate the concerns will be passed on to the Child Protection Officer based in Galashiels. They have the statutory responsibility for protection of children from abuse, or suspected abuse and they will decide whether to proceed with a formal referral or not.

There are clearly defined guidelines which must be adhered to.

If you require any further information, or wish to speak in confidence, please contact Mrs Innes.

Complaints Policy

Our aim is to create a successful three-way partnership between the child, the parent and the ELC.

It is our policy to encourage open communication between staff and parents at all times. Throughout a child's time in ELC the needs of the children are our prime concern.

Should a parent wish to make a formal complaint however, it should be made in writing to the Headteacher, who will then consult staff and parents before deciding on an appropriate course of action. All complaints will be recorded, dealt with promptly and all parties concerned shall be informed of the outcome. This too shall be recorded.

If you are totally dissatisfied with the response being given make it clear to the member of staff that this is the case.

Write to the Director of Education at Newtown St Boswells and ask for a meeting with an appropriate official.

If a complaint has not been dealt with in a suitable manner you may also write to the Care Inspectorate

Their address is:-

Care Inspectorate

Ettrick Riverside Business Centre

Dunsdale Road

Selkirk

TD7 5EB.

Telephone Number: - 0345 600 9527

Website address - www.careinspectorate.com

Policies and procedures (cont)

Confidential Information

Parents have the right to know what information is recorded about their child and to ensure that records are accurate.

All children's records are confidential and will be kept in a secure filing cabinet

The consent of parents must be sought if their child's details are to be passed on to other people.

However, in cases of Child Protection it may be necessary to pass on information to the main investigating agencies without the consent of parents

Equal Opportunities Policy

Each child in our care will be

- Encouraged to participate in a range of educational experiences appropriate to their needs
- Introduced to appropriate issues of gender through correct resources
- Valued as an individual. No discrimination will be made on the basis of gender, race or ability
- Introduced to other cultures and encouraged to value the attributes of their own culture as well as that of others
- Treated positively by staff who will ensure that each child in their care achieves success whenever possible

Photographs /Video and Media Consent

Photographs and videos may be taken by ELC as well as other parents/carers for a variety of reasons for example Sports Day, celebrations of achievement, charity events, excursions etc.

ELC may wish to display or show photographs or videos taken, in print, in various locations or by electronic means such as a website. Likewise the media or other parents may wish to use the images of pupils in various ways. You can check with the ELC provider direct for further information on this.

Permission will be requested by parents/carers on the enrolment form and will remain in force during the child's ELC placement unless written notification is given to ELC.

Promoting Excellence in Behaviour and Relationships

In the School and ELC we work at maintaining and developing a friendly, safe and secure environment that promotes good attitudes to learning and co-operation. We adopt a positive approach to behaviour and will always praise when we can.

Melrose Primary School and Early learning and childcare rules

Be kind and respectful:
to yourself
to others
to property



Transitions

ELC and Primary 1 'joined up' work

Throughout the year the ELC and Primary 1 children will take part in 'joined up' sessions. During these sessions the ELC children will have access to the Primary 1 environment and may accompany the Primary 1 children to other areas of the school. The purpose of these sessions is to ensure continuity of learning across the early level of Curriculum for Excellence with each year group having specific skills, knowledge and understanding to develop from these experiences.

Transition from home and other ELC settings

The GIRFEC form is an essential part of transition enabling parents/carers to share important information about their child. Previous ELC settings will communicate through the transition process any relevant information to ensure the child has a positive start in their new environment. Parents/carers and the child will be given an opportunity to visit the ELC setting prior to their starting date. The child will be introduced to their key worker and will spend some time getting to know the environment. This is also an opportunity for the parent/carer to ask any questions or share any important information.

Other information

Community

Visits are organised within the community and links exist with the community police officer, health centre, dental services etc. as well as with educational services such as Speech and Language specialists. Good communication links are in place with other providers ensuring information is passed on to parents and carers.

Disclaimer

Whilst information provided is considered to be correct at the time of printing. It is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the time the document reaches parents/carers.