



Melrose Primary School

Early Learning and Childcare

Handbook

2016/17

Huntly Road

MELROSE

TD6 9SB

Headteacher Mrs G Innes

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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'

This vision is embodied in our aims to:

- create a welcoming and happy environment where all achievement is celebrated
- listen to and consider all points of view
- provide a variety of stimulating opportunities and experiences to maximise potential
- equip children with the skills for life and for the future
- recognise and support different styles of learning and teaching
- work in partnership within our school and the wider community

Our values guide the way we work.

Together we will:

- respect and look after each other and the world around us
- create a challenging, engaging and responsive environment
- provide a safe, supportive and inclusive community where we value everyone
- build on the strengths, interests and aspirations of all
- promote equal opportunities, respect diversity and value the special contribution everyone can make
- actively encourage and promote health and well-being

Melrose Early Learning and Childcare environment

Melrose Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) 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 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 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.

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.

Staff

Headteacher	Mrs Gilly Innes
Depute Head teacher	Mrs Dawn Fernie
Depute Head teacher	Mr Jamie Wallace
ELC Senior Nursery Nurse	Mrs Carol Patterson
ELC Nurses	Mrs Rebekah Hall Ms Kerry Scott Mrs Sarah Brown

ELC Times

Morning session	Starting time 8.30	Doors open from 11.35
Afternoon session	Starting time 12.30	Doors open from 3.35

Opening and Pick Up Times

The ELC session lasts for 3 hours and 10 minutes.

The cloakroom door opens five minutes before the session begins to allow the children to change shoes and be ready to enter the ELC setting. Please ensure your child arrives on time for each session. Late arrivals should go to the main school office where office staff will facilitate entrance to the ELC setting.

Morning sessions start at **8.30 am** until **11.40 am**. The ELC setting doors will be closed and alarmed at **8.40 am**.

Afternoon sessions start at **12.30 pm** until **3.40 pm**. The ELC setting doors will be closed and alarmed at **12.40 pm**.

The ELC setting doors are opened at 11.35 am and 3.35 pm to allow time for parents to pick up children.

Please come straight into the ELC setting when the doors are opened. We ask parents/carers to be prompt at pick up times due to staff being involved in team meetings at the end of each session. Children who are not collected by the pickup time will be taken to the school office to wait to be collected. Parents/carers who are late for pick up should go directly to the school office.

If your child is being collected by someone different, please fill in the "Pick Up" sheet, which can be found on a clipboard in the cloak-room area.

Should your child's collection arrangements change during a session, please inform the school office.

'All about Me' and Permission Forms

Children are given an 'All about me' sheet 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.

The ELC permission form includes information needed with regards to taking photos and 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.

Letters and Information

All the letters and information for the children can be collected each day from their pocket on the hanger inside the ELC door. **Please keep checking for new information.**

Newsletters

In line with our Eco School policy and for financial reasons newsletters will be sent out to parents electronically using the email addresses recorded on each child's enrolment form. 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 and posted on the school website. Paper copies of the newsletter are available by request.

Melrose Early Learning and Childcare and School

The ELC is a part of the 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 school office, such as collating information forms, banking money, distributing letters etc.

The ELC accommodation has its own entrance and security system. There is a small fenced-off play area outside. ELC children make use of the school playground on a regular basis.

ELC places

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 outwith the catchment area has had an ELC place that a school enrolment is guaranteed. Please ask at school for further information.

Free pre-school ELC education is available for all children in the Scottish Borders. All 3 and 4 year old children in Scotland are entitled, at present, to a maximum of 600 hours of Government-funded pre-school education. The entry date for 3 year old children is dependant on the date of their third birthday (see Scottish Borders Council website for further information). Families at Melrose ELC are offered 5 sessions per week during term time, with each session lasting 3 hours and 10 minutes.

Arrangements at Melrose will be decided once enrolment has taken place in November and potential numbers of pre-school entrants are known. A small number of places are set aside for children with additional educational needs and in such cases Additional Needs Assistants may be employed to work in the ELC.

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.

Useful information

- Each child has a drawstring bag at ELC in which to keep shorts and shoes. For each child it is essential that there is a spare set of clothes kept in this bag at all times. **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. 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

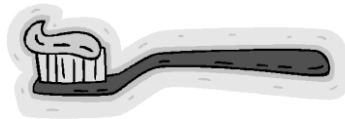
Please help us with your encouragement at the beginning and end of ELC sessions and at home.

Snack Money

The children have snack every day through which healthy eating is promoted. In the cloakroom there is a snack menu for the week and a list of snack costs. Children are given the opportunity to suggest healthy snack ideas and try new foods.

Snack is priced at £0.40 per day. You will be informed of the total cost of snack for your child each term, (holidays and in-service days will be taken into account). Payment should be given to a member of staff. Cheques should be made payable to "Melrose Primary School" and cash in an envelope marked with the child's name. A receipt will be written and placed in your child's pocket.

ELC children take part in tooth brushing after snack every day as part of the 'Childsmile' program.



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.

We also 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.

Curriculum for Excellence

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

The ELC staff 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.

For further information about Curriculum for Excellence please refer to the following website

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/>

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.

ICT

We are experiencing rapid developments in information and communication technologies in our fast-evolving world. Your children are children of the information age, living in a world rich in media and resources. As early years educators we are building on individual experiences and interests to provide opportunities for children to explore the world of ICT and extend their learning. To that end, we include a range of technologies in our play; remote control toys, programmable toys, battery operated toys, digital cameras, computers and audio equipment. Building skills and confidence today will prepare children for the (as yet unknown) technologies of the future.

Parent involvement in child's learning

The ELC responsive floor plans are continuously on display on the wall next to the snack area. Parents/carers are welcome to come in and look at them at the beginning or end of a session.

The talking and thinking tree will display all interests, discussions, experiences and photos shared from home. ELC staff will then discuss and provide active opportunities to explore and extend these interests and enquiries within the ELC learning environment. Comment sheets will be available next to the talking and thinking tree for parents to take away to scribe or document children's enquiries etc.

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 ELC will be offering 'Parent/carer stay and play' sessions. These sessions will be monthly and parent/carers will be given a list of dates termly. To allow the children to settle into the ELC environment the first sessions will begin after the October holidays. The session times will be from 8.40am until 10.00am for the morning session and 12.40pm until 2.00pm for the afternoon session. Session times may change throughout the year but plenty of notice will be given.

'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.

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. In Melrose ELC the Personal Learning Plan takes the form of a learning journey. 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 help to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of where they are going and how they are going to get there.

Ultimately, pupils will aim to build the skills required for them to be Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors.

Personal Learning Plans will be shared flexibly, at least once a term, throughout 2016–2017 and at parent consultations meetings.

Please look at your child's Personal Learning Plan with them and encourage them to share their learning with you. Please comment on your child's progress and achievements on the response slip to play a part in the Personal Learning Planning process.

It is essential that Personal Learning Plans are returned promptly as they are used regularly in ELC.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with a member of staff during parent consultation meetings in February. 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. Please let us know of any changes or occurrences in your child's life

which may impact on their ELC experience in order for appropriate support to be put in place.



Promoting Positive Behaviour

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.

ELC Golden Rules

Care and share

Look after books and toys

Use walking feet

Keep our hands and feet to ourselves

Use inside voice

Do as we are asked the first time



Parent Council

All parents at the school are members of the Parent Forum. A parent representative group called the Parent Council 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.

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.

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' and 'The Child at the Centre'

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 national care standards. Further information about the Care Inspectorate and what it does can be found on its website

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.

Photographs and Video

Under the 'Consent Under Data Protection Act 1998' parents are asked to give permission for their children to be photographed and video-taped whilst attending education facilities provided by Scottish Borders Council. Parents and carers may not photograph or video children or staff without express consent.

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 the 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: - 01896 664 400

Website address - www.careinspectorate.com

Policy on 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

How you can help

We welcome parent 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