

Corstorphine Primary School



Primary 1 Handbook
Session 2015-16

CORSTORPHINE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRIMARY ONE

INTRODUCTION

Dear Parent/Carer

The Staff at Corstorphine Primary School extend a very warm welcome to you and your child and look forward to a happy and productive association with you both. We hope that your child will feel secure and happy here and that the time they spend at Primary School will provide the kind of experiences and opportunities which will enable them to become confident, lifelong learners, able to capitalise on their individual strengths and qualities and recognising that education can and will have a significant positive impact on their lives.

We value the important role that you as parents play in the all-round development of your child and aim to support this by seeking your co-operation in partnership with us. We will aim to capitalise on opportunities for working with you in a variety of different ways which will serve to enhance the education experiences of your child at Corstorphine. We welcome parents in school and are keen to encourage you to take an active role in the life of the school, whilst recognising that for some parents this will not be possible due to work or other commitments. Parents currently help around the school in a wide variety of different ways from accompanying outings, helping with reading and Fruit Preparation to membership of the Parent Teacher Association or Parent Council. If you feel at any stage of your child's primary career that you would like to help out in some way, then please contact us.

This booklet is provided to familiarise parents with our aims, our methods and our organisation, so that home and school can combine to foster the all-round development of children. It is hoped that parents will find the booklet informative and that it will encourage and enhance the liaison that exists between us. Please note that the information contained within this booklet is accurate at the time of compilation but is subject to changes in roll, staffing and resources in future years. A full school handbook can be downloaded from our website or you can request a paper copy from the school office.

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any concerns about your child or feel a problem is potentially developing. For a close partnership to work well, communication requires to be relaxed and easily facilitated. We would actively encourage you to contact us at an early stage should you have any concerns, however minor they may seem. Where possible, we would appreciate if an appointment could be made - but if you need to speak to someone urgently, this will be organised. By the same token we will also aim to contact you as often as we can, not just if we have a concern, but also to communicate positively about your child and their successes.

Jennifer Ross

Head Teacher

START THE DAY THE RIGHT WAY

The School Day starts at 8.50 a.m but children are encouraged to come into the playground from 8.40am onwards. There are two Pupil Support Assistants (PSA) supervising the two playgrounds. At 8.45am the first bell rings and pupils make their way to their allocated lines. At 8.50am the second bell rings and, at this point, the Class Teachers/PSAs will bring the lines into school. It is important that your child arrives on time as the register is taken and information for the day is given first thing in the morning.

First Week Only

The children will start school on Monday 17 August and will be divided into two halves. One group will attend school from 9.00am to 10.15am and the other from 11.00am to 12.15pm You will be given start times for your child. From Tuesday 18 August to Friday 21 August all children will attend from 9.00am - 12 noon for the morning session only.

From the 24 August onwards children will attend all day following normal school times:

Monday to Thursday 8.50 to 3 pm Friday 8.50 to 12.15 pm

Houses

Shortly after starting school your child will be allocated a school house. The four houses are Forrester (yellow), Gordon (blue), Lennie (red) and Murray (green). Siblings are put in the same house. Each house has a mascot. As part of our positive behaviour strategy, the children are awarded house points for such things as lining up sensibly, holding doors, moving quietly in school and many other "good citizen" actions. The points are displayed on the House Board in the Gym Hall Corridor. The winning house gets extra playtime on a Friday. At the end of the year the points are added up and children from the winning house have a picnic in St Margaret's Park in June.

Positive Ethos & Rights Respecting Schools

We operate a positive discipline system in Corstorphine to encourage children to become responsible members of the school community. Each child has the

opportunity to be class Superstar for one week each academic year. The children's names are put in a bag and the teacher will draw out a name at random each week. That child will have their particular strengths and qualities celebrated by being presented with a Superstar certificate and the class cup at the Gather Round on a Friday. The certificate is displayed on the Superstars' board in the school and the parents are invited in during that week to see it. They may ask for their child to come out of class to show them their certificate and many parents like to photograph their child beside their certificate. The cup is then returned on Thursday of the following week to allow another child the opportunity to take it home.

Once a term the class teacher selects up to three children in the class who have put in extra effort or made progress with a particular area they may find hard, or whose attitude or behaviour makes them very good role models. A letter is sent home informing parents about this and inviting them to attend the Special Assembly held at the end of that term to see their child receive their certificate. Please note that not all children may be selected to receive this award, though all have the potential to earn it.

In addition to these recognitions, children frequently receive stickers and are given positive verbal feedback by all staff when they are trying hard and behaving appropriately.

At Corstorphine we are working towards achieving the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. In Primary One the children will be learning about rights and responsibilities. Each class will construct their own class charter which will focus on various rights and responsibilities throughout the year. These will form the basis of a behaviour contract for the children to follow and enables them to get used to being in school and learn about the rules and systems. Research has shown that when children are taught in school about their rights and responsibilities under the UNCRC, they are more respecting of the rights of others. Children have :

- a better understanding of what it means to have rights and responsibilities
- a more positive attitude to school
- better relationships with their classmates and teachers
- higher self-esteem
- an increased awareness of how to be a global citizen

BEING INDEPENDENT - SOME WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP

Clothing

It is important that they are as independent as possible. This will increase their confidence and help them to settle faster. It will help considerably if your child can dress independently and put on jackets and fasten buttons, toggles or zips, although we do appreciate that for a few children, this will not be possible yet. Please do not worry if this is the case.

This is also a good time to start encouraging your child to learn to tie shoelaces as this can take several years to accomplish. Initially Velcro fastenings and buckles are much easier to manage.

On P.E. days we encourage parents to send children to school wearing polo tops and sweatshirts rather than ties.

School Dress Code

All children are strongly encouraged to wear **our correct** school uniform at Corstorphine. We want our children to be proud of being part of our school community and their smart appearance is frequently a source of compliments when they are out of school on visits. The wearing of uniform enhances our children's sense of identity with the school. It also cuts down on individual differences between children which can be a cause of bullying.

Our school colours are red and black. Primary 1-6 wear red sweat tops or jumpers over white or red polo shirts with plain black or grey bottoms. Girls should wear red, black or grey plain tights only. Leggings are not considered part of school uniform. Primary 7 **only** have the privilege of wearing black sweat tops. Other Corstorphine uniform items are available including fleeces, rain jackets and PE T-shirts. These can be ordered on the Primary 1 induction day or online at www.border-embroideries.co.uk. You can also order through the school after the October break and during the summer term. Other uniform items such as girls' red school cardigans, red school jumpers, grey or black trousers, grey pinafores and skirts, red and white checked gingham dresses or plain red or white polo shirts can be bought cheaply from other sources. We do have a school tie but most children

now prefer to wear the polo shirt as it increases their independence in dressing and in young children stays tidier throughout the day.

Please note that football colours on any garment or bag, football strips, jeans, fashion footwear (for example UGG boots or designer trainers) and extremes of fashion are not allowed at school. The wearing of jewellery and nail varnish is also strongly discouraged. If pupils with pierced ears wear earrings, they should be of the stud and not the dangling variety, for safety reasons. They do need to be removed for PE.

For health and safety reasons we prefer children to wear well-fitting, flat black leather shoes in school.

PE Kit

The preferred kit for physical education is a red or white short-sleeved T-shirt and black shorts, ankle socks with black or white gym shoes. Again a red or white T-shirt can be bought with the school badge if desired from school. The kit should be left in school at all times unless you would like to bring it home to wash at intervals.

Gym shoes with elastic instead of laces are very much easier for a young child to put on independently. Please put PE kit, shorts, socks, T-shirt and gym shoes together in a named drawstring gym bag. This is kept hanging on their peg in school. A red school gym bag suitable for the purpose with the school badge is also available to buy through the school.

Labels

Please ensure that everything brought into school including all shoes and removable clothing is clearly labelled. If items including clothing or lunch boxes belonging to your child are not clearly labelled, it becomes impossible to return items correctly if they are lost or misplaced.

Your child will be expected to recognise and be responsible for his/her own possessions. They are also expected to hang up coats and put away their lunch boxes, books, work and games. Please try to choose lunch boxes and school bags which your child can easily fasten and unfasten.

Personal Hygiene

Primaries one to three share infant toilets opposite the primary one rooms. Your child should be able to go to the toilet fully independently (unless they have

additional support needs), flush it afterwards and remember to wash and dry hands properly. This is vital to stop the spread of infections in school.

The boys' toilets have an automatic flushing urinal which can be frightening at first. It would be helpful if boys were prepared for this experience in advance of starting school.

P1 Book Bags

Corstorphine Primary PTA has kindly gifted a Book Bag to your child as a welcome to our school in Primary 1. The purpose of the bag is to carry important communication between home and school. Any letters or correspondence from school will be put in the bag and any notes from home can be found easily by class teachers. Reading books, library books and home work should also be carried in the bag. To safe guard these items from being damaged no drinks or food items should be carried in the bags.

The Parent Council and PTA carry out a vital role within the school. You will have the opportunity to find out more about their role and how you can get involved.

EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES - AT HOME AND SCHOOL

Share Together

Talking to your child about their daytime experiences and listening to what they say sounds a simple thing to do but don't underestimate the value that lies in this shared time. Research proves that discussion with your child about their learning and what they are interested in has a big positive impact on their achievement in school. (Prof Charles Desforges 2000) Taking an interest in their day and their world at school builds their self-esteem and also lets them know you value and support their learning. Supportive and interested parents create motivated and keen learners who will achieve their best.

Transition from Nursery

In recent years at Corstorphine we have introduced a more active approach to learning within school and an element of play within the school day in primary one. This is in line with the guidance in the Curriculum for Excellence document, "Building the Curriculum 2" for the Early Level. This ensures a smoother transition from

nursery and enables children to settle quickly and more comfortably in school. We have found working this way does not affect children's attainment at the end of the year and children are more able to discuss their learning and have a firmer grasp of the curriculum.

Maths

Early recognition of numbers that have meaning for children is invaluable e.g. 4 on their fourth birthday, numbers on buses, house numbers, numbers on remote controls etc. Counting both forwards and backwards and knowing which number comes before and which number after is an essential mathematical skill. Counting up and down steps, counting cars, counting out toys and cutlery all help in this process. Helping your child to name simple shapes, know the days of the week and what a clock does is also helpful. When the opportunities arise, discussing with your child measurements in terms of longer, shorter and quantities in terms of more, less also helps early maths understanding.

We use Stages of Arithmetical Learning (SEAL) as an approach to learning numeracy in the Early Years. This is a very practical and active approach that encourages children develop and use a range of methods and strategies in order to solve number problems . More information on this will be shared during various parent workshops throughout the year.

THE APPROACH TO LITERACY

One of the keys to success in learning is the ability to read. We give a high priority to reading at Corstorphine and the fostering of a life long love of books. Your child will be given a paired reading book at the start of the year to take home each week. A book bag will be provided to keep the books clean during journeys to and from school/home, along with information on paired reading and a reading record to note their homework. This diary can also be used to communicate between home and school. It is very important that you continue to share books with your child during the whole of their school life. Later on in the first term your child will be given a variety of reading books in addition to the paired reading book.

Talking about the story and pictures should be continued as you encourage the turning of the pages and point to the words going from left to right. Learning to act like a reader is very important. Even when your child has started to read, the

sharing of, the talking about and, of course, the pleasure in reading should continue. Please read to them for all of their primary years.

We teach a structured and progressive programme of synthetic phonics in Corstorphine which quickly gives children the tools to read and write. Synthetic phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing which teaches the letter sounds and how to build them together very rapidly to achieve full pronunciation of whole words almost immediately. For example they are taught 'a' and 't' first and then 'p' and 'c'. They can then make 'at,' 'tap,' 'pat,' 'cap' and 'cat'. The process can also be reversed for the children to take sounds apart in order to read unknown words. To support your child in this learning a note of the sounds being taught and cards with that week's sounds will be sent home each week for further practice at home. At the same time the children are taught to recognise and read the common words which do not follow the regular sound patterns; for example - 'the' 'are' 'was'.

Writing

Please help your child to practise reading and writing their own names before they start school.

If your child has shown an interest in forming letters it is best if you can use the letter form that is taught in school. Please encourage the correct tripod pencil grip.

Capital letters should be used at the start of names and children can be taught to recognise and write both lower case and capitals at the same time.

Further information on the curriculum in Primary One will be given at a parents' talk during the first term.

SUPPORTING LEARNING

Below are some suggestions of activities you can encourage at home which will help support your child's learning in school:

- Baking - Maths - Counting and Measuring, Science - Change of stage
- Setting the table - Maths - Counting and Matching
- Helping to tidy up - Maths - Sorting attributes, Social Skills - being a good citizen.
- Sharing a computer game with your child
- Washing Clothes - Maths - Sorting and Ordering , pairing socks

- Numbers in the environment - number recognition, bus numbers, house numbers, counting money for shopping, counting steps, stairs and door colours
- Literacy in the environment - spotting letters, recognising words in street names, shop names, bus adverts
- Imaginative Play - Social Skills, Story Making, Role Play, Turn Taking
- Games - Spatial Awareness, Social Skills, Turn Taking, Fair Play, Maths - Matching, Counting, Literacy - reading cards, following instructions.
- Jigsaws - spatial awareness, matching, perseverance and concentration
- Play Dough or Plasticine - Expressive Arts - Self Expression, Creativity
- Painting and Drawing - Expressive Arts - Self Expression, Creativity, fine motor skills - manipulating pencils, paint brushes
- Physical Play : Balancing, Catching, Jumping, Skipping - Motor control, Co-ordination, Social Skills, Use of Language, Development of Healthy Bodies
- Outings - trips to museums, parks, swimming pools, shops the zoo - all build your child's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Sharing books! This is vital to developing language skills as well as being fun. Joining the library is a good idea.
- **Encourage independence in all things - a good rule is - don't do anything for your child that they can do for themselves**
- Finally - remember your child will need lots of quality sleep during school terms.

SOME PRACTICAL MATTERS

Snack and Lunch

Corstorphine has a stage One Health Promoting School Award and we encourage healthy snack and lunch options.

In keeping with the Scottish Government's Health and Well-being guidance we strongly discourage the eating of sweets during school time and do not allow fizzy drinks. Children can buy milk through the school to drink at snack time or bring water. Children who receive free school meals also receive free milk.

Once your child is staying all day there is a choice of a school lunch or bringing a packed lunch from home. If you are supplying a packed lunch please support our health promotion policy by following our healthy eating guidelines. Check your child can open all containers in the lunch box themselves and please do not include glass bottles or fizzy drinks.

If your child is entitled to receive free school milk and you wish to find out how to access this please contact the school office who will be able to advise you further.

Lunch

As of January 2015 all P1-P3 school children are entitled to a free school lunch. You can, if you wish, provide a packed lunch. To make sure we have the correct number of orders submitted in time to the kitchens, we ask you to order online via the school website by the Thursday at 11am prior to the week before. A menu is sent home twice a year so you can discuss and select the choices with your child in advance. There are three possible choices, Monday to Thursday; Hot 1, Hot 2 or Baked Potato and on a Friday Cold 1, Cold 2 and Cold 3 option. There is always a vegetarian option.

Water in School

If your child requires a drink while in class, they may have drinking water at school. You can buy plastic water bottles from school or you can supply a plastic, non-spillable water bottle labelled clearly with their name and class. The bottles can be refilled in the school. **Please do not fill bottles with anything other than water for drinking in class.**

Absence

CORSTORPHINE POLICY ON NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE

PARENTS SHOULD PHONE THE SCHOOL TO INFORM THEM OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE

Parents/carers will be contacted by the school by 10.30 a.m. at the latest if their child has not appeared at school as expected and no phone call has been received. Where an absence starts in the afternoon a similar procedure will apply. **Please note that it is your responsibility as a parent/carer to notify the school on a daily basis of a child's absence unless you have indicated that your child will be off for a specific period of time.**

Parents/carers also have a responsibility to ensure that the contact information held by the school is accurate and up to date.

We seek your continued support in operating this policy to ensure that all of our children are safe and their whereabouts known.

Please note that in the situation where a child does not turn up for school, no phone call has been made by a parent/carer and **we are unable to make contact with you on any of the numbers you have provided no further action can be taken by us to establish the whereabouts of your child.** This is why it is crucial that we have up to date numbers for you where you or your representative can be contacted.

If you need to contact the office we ask that you call between 8.30am and 9.30am or 2.30pm and 3.30pm daily. This enables office staff to plan their work so they are free to concentrate on their other admin duties.

Planned Leave - Please note that holidays taken during school term times, unless there are special circumstances (for example a family wedding or special celebration), are registered as unauthorised leave. Even short absences can have a big impact on a child's progress in learning, especially in the early days of Primary One. We would encourage all parents, in line with City of Edinburgh Council Policy, not to take holidays within term time.

Personal Safety

The playground is supervised at break times but it is important to discuss with your child that they must never go outside the gates without you or their teacher. The gates are closed but cannot be locked due to fire regulations.

End of School Day - Please make sure that your child understands that if you are on a rare occasion late to pick them up that **they must go back immediately to their teacher inside the school.** Parents must not ask children to leave the playground on their own to find a parent's car nor leave an infant child alone to await an older child coming out of school at 3.15 p.m. Please phone us if you know on occasion you are running late so that we can keep your child safely in school.

Security

We welcome parents into school at Corstorphine and try to be available when you would like to talk to us. However we have to balance free access with the need to keep your children safe during the school day. Parents therefore should always enter school by the Main door at the front of the school, at all times by ringing the

buzzer. This is to ensure all visitors are processed through our security system and signed in.

Adults inside the building without a badge or security pass will be stopped by staff which can lead to embarrassment. Parents should not enter by other doors while children are still in school and the children are trained for their safety not to open doors to anyone.

It is difficult for staff to talk to parents at the start of the school day when they are bringing the class into school. Please put any information for the teacher in a short note or pop into the office with the information and it will be passed to the teacher at a suitable point.

Health Issues

Please let us know before your child starts in primary one if your child has any health issues.

Parents of children with any medical condition should draw this to the attention of the Head Teacher upon enrolment. Children with medical conditions that require management, such as diabetes, epilepsy or severe allergies, will have a Health Care Plan detailing treatment and emergency procedures drawn up.

MEDICAL CARE

If a child becomes ill or has an accident at school, he or she is dealt with immediately by the Class Teacher, Pupil Support Assistants and/or the School Support Assistant, Mrs. Ewing. If it is deemed necessary for the child to be sent home, the parent will be notified. Parents will also be notified if their children require treatment in school for anything other than minor grazes/scratches. Children who require an ice pack will be checked regularly by staff at the point where the ice pack needs replaced or before then. If a child is still complaining of pain from an injury, treated with an ice pack, more than an hour after the injury was sustained then a call will be made to discuss the situation with a parent.

If further medical attention is required, parents are asked to come and accompany the child to the doctor or the hospital. If the parent cannot be contacted, the Head Teacher informs the "Emergency Contact" whose name and telephone number are on the child's enrolment form and computer record. Should the emergency contact be unavailable then the Head Teacher or an appropriate member of staff would accompany the child to the hospital or doctor. It is important that we should be notified of any change of name, address or telephone number or emergency contact, or any new matters regarding health which might affect the child's education, e.g. participation in Physical Education.

Where parents require children to have medication administered by the school **an appropriate Request for Medication form must be obtained from Mrs Ewing**, before medication can be administered. This includes prescribed or over-the-counter medications for long or short term use. Please phone Mrs Ewing with any queries regarding these forms. Where parents have already submitted a **Request for Medication** form for medication which is regularly administered by school i.e. inhalers, Ritalin, please note again, a new form should be completed for any changes to medication. Parents are reminded that, in line with Council policy, the school does not hold its own supply of medicines (eg pain relief).

All medication should be supplied, with a pharmacy label clearly showing your child's name, date of birth, medication name and dosage. For inhalers and epipens we request two separate lots of medication to be held in school.

Children may carry their own medication to school and self-administer this medication i.e. for inhalers, from Primary 4 onwards at which time parents are required to complete a new **Request for Medication form** which can be obtained from Mrs Ewing.

All members of staff who have agreed to be trained in the administration of specific drugs for pupils suffering from epileptic seizure or a severe allergic reaction will be covered by the Council's public liability insurance.

COMMUNICATION

We try very hard to keep parents regularly informed about what's going on at school, however, sending paper letters home can be rather 'hit and miss' with letters often going astray.

Once your child has started school you will receive a letter regarding "ParentMail". This is a web-based communication system run by an independent company.

If you choose to sign up to this then most of the communications from school will be sent directly to your email address. Please be assured that ParentMail is registered with the Data Protection Registrar and guarantees that all information you provide will be kept private and will not be passed onto any other organisation.

If you do not have access to email then communication will be sent to you by normal means i.e. your child's book bag.

Traffic

Please note our voluntary one-way system for traffic in Manse Street, at the back of the school. This is in effect just before and after school each day. Cars should travel from West to East. This should minimise the risk to children and also alleviate driving difficulties. There is **NO PARKING** on the yellow zigzag lines at any time during school hours. Traffic wardens and police are very vigilant in this area.

In keeping with our Health Promoting School Policy we would encourage you to walk to school when at all possible to improve both the environment and the safety of all the children. Another suggestion is to park a distance away from the school and walk the last part.

Child Protection Information

Corstorphine Primary School is committed to working in partnership with parents. As well as constantly striving to build children's self-esteem and confidence, we place a high importance on the safety and protection of children. Corstorphine Primary has in place *Child Protection Guidelines* that all staff must follow where there are concerns about a child. Should any parent wish to see the *Guidelines*, these can be made available.

We appreciate that your child is an individual and that there may be matters that are not covered by this booklet. Further details about the school are contained within the main School Handbook. If you are left with any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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