



Newcastleton Primary School

School Information Handbook for Parents/Carers 2025-2026

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Fiona Irvine

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Contact Scotland BSL: If you use British Sign Language, then please contact us via <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/> which is equivalent to a phone call. You may request a face-to-face meeting, and we will provide a face-to face interpreter.

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Welcome to Newcastleton Primary School



Dear Parents,

We are delighted to welcome you to Newcastleton Primary School, as a key part of our school community and as a partner in your child's education. We recognise that you, as parents, are both the first, and the main educator of your child, and we look forward to developing a partnership with you, in order to support your child's development. This collective 'together' approach will help your child reach their full potential.

Newcastleton Primary School has a very caring and committed staff, who work well together as a team, to engage the children in motivating and stimulating learning experiences both inside and outside the school building.

Starting school or coming to a new school can be exciting but also worrying. Hopefully this handbook will help reduce the worries that you or your child might have and answer many of your questions, though further information or clarification can be obtained from the school office or myself. We strive to provide up to date information on upcoming events and school news through regular emails, Xpressions, newsletters and our Facebook page. We constantly strive to make Newcastleton a friendly school and we are confident that your child will very quickly feel at home here.

Before your child starts school, it is very useful to have a visit so that you and your child can see for yourself what we offer and understand a little more about how we work, and it helps both you and us get to know each other. If your child has additional support needs, please arrange a visit as soon as possible, so that we can discuss how together we can support your child.

If, at any time, you have concerns, please feel free to contact the school - we have an open-door policy, as good communication is the key to positive relationships between parents and school, and helps promote happy children as learners.

We look forward to meeting and working with you to ensure that your child's primary education is both happy and rewarding.

Mr Andy Jones
Headteacher

Staffing

Session 2025-26

Acting Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Irvine	
Class Teachers	Mrs Katie Irving	P1-3
	Mrs Jo Young/Mrs E Dalgleish/Mrs Fiona Irvine	P4/5
	Miss Helen Middlemiss/Mrs Elaine Dalgleish	P6-7
Pupil Support Teacher	Mrs Elaine Dalgleish	
Curriculum Support Teachers	Mr Greg Thomson	PE
	Mrs Janey Lowthian	Art
ELCC Staff	Mrs Hayley Pearson	Early Years Officer
	Mrs Julie Thomson	Early Years Practitioner
	Mrs Lisa Hewitt	Early Years Practitioner
Non-Teaching Staff	Mrs Amanda Marley	Business Support
	Mrs Sonia Herd	Pupil Support Assistant
	Mr Craig Anderson	Playground Asst/PSA
	Mrs Danielle Brough	Pupil Support Assistant
	Mrs Samantha Lamb	Cleaner
	Mrs Kendra Grierson	Cleaner/Janitor
Catering Staff	Mrs Pamela Young	Cook Supervisor
School Chaplain:	Mrs Julie Thomson	

Vision, Values and Aims



As a school we strive to help our learners develop their skills for life through enabling them to become effective contributors, responsible citizens, confident individuals and successful learners.

Our Vision, Values and Aims underpin our approach and reflect the SHANARRI Wellbeing Indicators - **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Responsible, Respected and Included**. This ensures that the holistic needs of the child are being considered and that we are **Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**.

Our Vision Statement

Aim High to Fly!

Our Aims

Learning Together

Enjoyment and Choice

Aiming High!

Respecting Everyone

Never Giving Up!

Our Values

Honesty
Kindness
Respect
Curiosity
Courage

At the end of each session a School Improvement Report is written and distributed to parents in September, along with a School Improvement Plan for the following year. Both documents are available on request and displayed in the reception area.

General Information

- Newcastleton Primary School takes children from the village of Newcastleton and the surrounding district of Liddesdale.
- The school has a nursery (ELC) class and currently three primary classes.
- The current school roll is 42 and 14 in the ELC, a total of 56 children.
- After seven years of full-time education, children transfer to Hawick High School - 01450 372429
- An excellent transition programme for ELC to P1 and P7 to S1 is in place which includes joint working of staff in all settings and visits tailored to children's needs.

Our School Day

Monday - Thursday		Friday
Morning	8:45am -(12:15-12.25pm)*	8:45 am -12:30 pm
Break	10:30 - 10:45am	Brunch 10:30 - 11:15am
Lunch	12:15 - 1:10pm (Staggered lunch for P6/7)*	
Afternoon	1:00/1:10pm - 3:15pm	No Session

Office Hours

Office Hours		<p>Our Business Support Administrator Amanda Marley is available at these times to answer many queries. Out with these times you can leave a message on our answering machine, and we will return your call.</p> <p>It is very important that the school has accurate contact details for all children so we can contact parents/guardians quickly in an emergency.</p>
Monday	8:30 am - 3:15 pm	
Tuesday	8:30 am - 3:15 pm	
Wednesday	8:30 am - 12.30pm	
Thursday	8:30 am - 2:15 pm	
Friday	No office cover	

Organisation of Classes

We follow the SBC Composite Class Policy. At the end of school year, parents will be advised of their child's class and teacher for the following session. It is probable during their time at Primary School that your child will be in a composite class where the same teacher teaches 2 or 3 age groups. In Scotland, our teachers are experienced in dealing with children of all ages and abilities; therefore, their education will not be affected.

Transport

Transport is provided by Scottish Borders Council for children who live more than 2 miles from school. Please contact SchTransport@scotborders.gov.uk for further details.

INSET

Schools across Scotland have designated training days - INSET - which is part of our regular staff development and training. It involves discussion, investigation and implementation of the many and varied aspects of Primary Education. As a result of INSET the staff can engage in valuable professional dialogue resulting in curriculum development and moving the school forward. We have regular INSET days which are currently held in August, October, February and May.

School Uniform

At Newcastleton we wear a school uniform. This promotes a sense of belonging - showing that we are proud to be part of our school. It also helps identify our children when attending events and trips and helps keep them safe. Our school sweatshirts/cardigans are navy blue and display our Steel Bonnet logo which relates to the Reivers and the rare orchid found on the moorland above the school. Alternatively children can wear a navy sweatshirt sourced elsewhere (Supermarkets!). We also promote the wearing of dark trousers/joggers/skirt with a white polo shirt. Denim wear and team embossed clothing e.g. football shirts, are not permitted in school. ELC children wear purple school sweatshirts (Chosen because they don't show as many marks!) or they can wear their own clothes. Our sweatshirts and cardigans are available to order direct from the supplier at www.beschoolwear.co.uk where you can see the range and sizes on offer. We have a pre-loved clothes rack which parents are encouraged to make use of; you can swap clothing that your child may have grown out of for a larger size or pay a small donation for one off the rack. Also, SBC offers a clothing grant of £120 (2025-26) to eligible families. Details can be found on the SBC website. https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20009/schools_and_learning

PE Kit

Children should have a pair of shorts, a plain T-shirt and a pair of gym shoes or trainers. The kit should be kept in school as each child receives a minimum of 2 hours of physical exercise per week, and PE days can change. We encourage children to keep their gym kit in a gym bag on their peg. It will be sent home at the end of each block for washing unless requested at other times by parents. Children with pierced ears should wear only sleepers or studs at school for reasons of safety and appearance. Sleepers or studs must be taped over during P.E. lessons. (Earrings should not be worn.) For certain lessons, children with long hair should ensure that it is tied back for health and safety reasons. All clothing, especially PE clothing, should be clearly labelled with the child's name. Please don't forget this!

Attendance and Absence

All schools in Scotland follow National Policy in regard to Attendance and Absence. We also follow the updated SBC Attendance Policy. Children are normally required to attend school every day. Absences should be notified to the school in advance. If your child is going to be absent for whatever reason, please call the school before 9.00am to let us know, or send us a message on Eduspot. There is an answering machine on 24 hours a day so please leave a message, and we will pick it up. We will always follow up a child's non arrival at school, initially contacting yourselves, but then following through on emergency contacts. Holiday absences during term time are discouraged and, apart from exceptional circumstances, will not be authorised.

Good attendance is important in our school. It allows the child to make the most of their education and social development and gives them better choices in the future. It is your responsibility as parents, by law, to ensure your child attends school regularly. We actively monitor attendance and if your child's attendance drops below 95%, we will begin to monitor their attendance and may contact you by Eduspot/letter to alert you to this. We will then continue to actively monitor their absence and may contact you at the end of each day of the absence. We do this because we know that your child's learning will be affected. An attendance rate of 90% is equivalent to your child missing a whole year of their education. If you have difficulty getting your child to school, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss how we can support you.

Insurance

Teachers act in loco parentis (in the place of parents) when children are at school. This means that teachers, through their training, undertake to look after the children in their care with every consideration that a parent might be expected to show. Children are not insured directly by the Local Authority - It is the teachers who are insured for third party liability. We suggest that children do not bring smartphones, smartwatches or other valuables into school as we cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal belongings.

Safety

Building Security

- In the interests of safety for all concerned, all persons coming to the school must enter by the main entrance and then report to the School Office where they will be requested to sign our visitor's book and be inducted in our fire evacuation policy.
- The main inner door to school remains always closed for security reasons. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please contact the office and a suitable time will be arranged.

- To ensure the security of all children, adults should bring/collect all P1 and P2 children to the playground. We would encourage parents to say goodbye to their children at the school gate, as this does separate home from school, but we recognise that some parents may choose to wait in the playground. At the end of the day, please wait on the pavement outside the fence
- The children will be dismissed by the class teacher from the gate.

Road and Playground Safety

We have taken several measures to improve safety around the school.

- Park and Stride is strenuously encouraged. To improve safety on Montagu Street, parents are asked to park in Douglas Square to reduce congestion and improve safety. A safe crossing place is indicated at the Liddesdale Hotel and there are 'pawprints' to follow along the north side of Montagu Street.
- The zigzag lines in front of the school prohibit parking at any time by any vehicle or driver, so that children and drivers can enter and leave safely. DO NOT park, wait or pick-up here.
- Children entering school from North Hermitage Street should NOT come through the No.8 playground, as this crosses the staff car park. Please enter from Montagu Street.
- Children entering from Montagu Street should come through the pedestrian gates and go into the main playground.
- The only children who have access through the parking area are children supervised by parents. Parents must not park in the staff/visitor car park at any time for safety.

Video & Photography

The school follows Scottish Borders Council guidance on using Videos and Photography within Education. Written consent is required on entry to school to allow the taking of photographs and videos in school. Parents have the option to change their consent at any time - please inform the school office. Where parents wish to take photographs/videos at events they should first request permission from the Head Teacher, but they will be encouraged to only take photos of their child, and not to share on social media, as some parents may not have given permission for their child to appear on social media.

Breaks and Lunches

In almost all weathers, our children spend breaktime and lunchtime in the playground under the supervision of the playground supervisor. Our Playground Supervision begins at 8.40am - please don't send your children to school before then, as there will be no adult in the playground. In very extreme weather the children will have their breaks within their classrooms. We always aim to give the children the opportunity to be outside, so please ensure that they have appropriate clothing for the 'changeable' weather! Please send your child to school with a healthy snack so they can have something to eat at breaktime.

Lunches

SBC offer nutritious balanced 2 course school lunches: free for ELC and P1-5 and currently £2.64 for P6-7. Two hot meal choices are available, along with packed lunch/soup. To order lunches we use an application called ParentPay. Once your child is enrolled at our school, you will receive an activation letter to register with ParentPay, which then enables you to prebook and pay for lunches online. It is parent's responsibility to book and cancel if your child is absent from school, but failure to cancel may result in you being charged for a lunch your child has not taken. If your child does not have a school lunch booked or if they have not brought a packed lunch from home, the office will phone to ask you to bring a packed lunch in for your child.

Free school meals are provided for those children who are eligible. Forms may be obtained from the SBC website:

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20040/clothing_meals_and_transport/480/free_school_meals_and_clothing_grant and returned electronically. It is the policy of the school to be discrete about the administration of free school meals and children involved are not treated any differently from others who have paid for a school meal. **If you are eligible, please consider registering for free school meals, even if your child would automatically receive one because of their age, as schools in the past have received additional funding (Pupil Equity Funding) which is based on the number of children registered for free school meals.** Over the holidays, parents have also been credited with money direct to their account to help subsidise a meal for their child.

In line with our Food in School Policy, fizzy drinks, nut products and sweets should not form part of a packed lunch. Fresh drinking water is available, and children are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school every day.

Creating healthy childhood experiences is a shared responsibility for all. Working together we can ensure all children and young people have a sense of belonging, self-worth and self-confidence to achieve their unique potential.



Healthy eating and physical activity are essential for positive growth and development.

Healthy snacks are provided during your child's ELCC journey, continue to give these types of snacks for your child to have at break times throughout primary school.



Bottles used in class should be filled with plain water only.

Good hydration makes a difference to how children think, feel & function!



Curriculum

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is the education system in Scotland. It includes ELC's, schools, colleges and community learning from 3 to 18 and beyond.

Early Stage - ELCC3, ELCC4 and P1

First Stage - P2 - 4

Second Stage - P5 - 7

CfE include **Experiences and Outcomes** across all curriculum areas, up to and including the third level. Some children may work at a level earlier or beyond their age and stage. Throughout all learning, prime importance is given to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Aim

The aim of CfE is to raise standards, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast-changing world. CfE enables teachers to teach subjects creatively, to work together across the school and outwith, to share best practice and explore learning together. CfE balances the importance of knowledge and skills. Every child is entitled to a broad education, whatever their level and ability, at a pace they can cope with and with challenge they can thrive on. Between 2023-2027, Scottish Borders Council are working on the #SBCWay, which will ensure that all schools within SBC teach literacy and numeracy in a similar way.

The Four Capacities

Our curriculum is built on our desire to instil 4 capacities into every child - to be a Successful Learner, a Confident Individual, an Effective contributor and a Responsible Citizen.

Curriculum Rationale

We have developed our own Newcastleton Primary School Curriculum Rationale - indicating why we teach and how we teach in our school.

Contexts

A range of teaching methods and contexts for learning are used e.g. active, outdoor, collaborative and enterprise. Learning across the curriculum helps children make links between subjects. Learning outdoors and within our community, gives opportunities for children to apply their learning in real-life contexts. Within the session we may plan themed weeks such as a Literacy, Numeracy or Expressive Arts week or a French week, to provide opportunities for the children to apply their learning within a context. These will be shared with parents/carers in advance.

Educational Visits

School visits to places of interest or events can greatly support the children's learning, as well as having visitors coming to the school. We aim to give regular experiences; this is linked to both the curriculum focus and the availability of appropriate places/visitors. You will be informed of any visits out with the village beforehand and details of the arrangements and costs will be given. Costs will be kept to a minimum or subsidised by Newcastleton School Partnership/school funds. Without the active support from the NSP we would be unable to offer as many experiences. A residential experience is offered every two years to the P6 and P7 children.

Modern Languages

Newcastleton follows the Scottish Languages 1+2 approach. The Scottish Government's policy, Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach, is aimed at ensuring that every child can learn a

modern language from P1 onwards. Additionally, each child should have the right to learn a second modern language from P5 onwards. At Newcastleton, all our children are taught French. Older children will have opportunity to learn some German. We do not teach in the Gaelic medium.

Religious and Moral Education

We are a non-denominational school but are ably supported by a variety of local groups and organisations, including Newcastleton Churches who lead religious observation through assemblies and Church services. We also have a school chaplain, Mrs Julie Thomson, who is available to members of our school community. Through the teaching of RME the children will develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious instruction and or religious observance should contact the Head Teacher to arrange a meeting to discuss alternative learning arrangements for your child.

Learning, Life and Work

We encourage parents and visitors into the school to share their skills and knowledge with the learners. We also provide opportunities for the learners to apply skills within a context such as through enterprise projects.

Sensitive Aspects of Learning

You will be informed about sensitive aspects of learning such as relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness.

Assessment

Progress is assessed in a variety of ways and is integral to the teaching and learning process to promote raising attainment and to ensure the learners achieve their potential through support and challenge. Assessment information is used to determine next steps in your child's learning. Teachers regularly meet with the Headteacher and Support for Learning Teacher to discuss children progress. Children are involved in the assessment process through self-assessment which supports setting their own targets.

To find out more about our National Education system follow the links below:

- <https://education.gov.scot/>
- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>
- <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Health & Wellbeing

The Health and Wellbeing of our children and staff is very important to us; we try to ensure that everyone is happy and leads a healthy lifestyle. Some of the ways we promote good health are:

- Teaching and learning of Health and Wellbeing for all children.
- Building Resilience programme of work.
- Raising children with confidence course for parents.
- Giving praise and rewards for good work/effort and positive behaviour.
- Sharing successes and achievements at our weekly assemblies.
- Having an end of year Prizegiving ceremony.
- Providing children with opportunities for outdoor learning and play
- Providing chilled, filtered drinking water accessible for all.
- Nutritious school lunches and packed lunches that are prepared on the premises.



- Physical Education - every child has 2 hours of PE per week.
- A variety of additional sports are offered with specialists/volunteers both within school time and after school clubs at various times throughout the year.

We also work closely in partnership with our health colleagues, the School Nurse, the Child Smile Team, Occupational Health and the Speech and Language Therapist.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Newcastleton works in close partnership with our Learning Community's Active Schools Coordinator Lauren Grant, Langholm's Active Schools Coordinator and our local Polysport, with many opportunities for all children to participate. Through this, we offer a number of taster sessions to the children both within and after the school day. We also have after school sports clubs. These vary according to the time of year and the availability of staff, parents and volunteers. The children are given opportunities to take part in many wider Learning Community events such as tennis, cricket, rugby, netball, athletics, country dancing and Cross Country. Through Active Schools a wide range of holiday activities are also available.

Pupil Voice



At Newcastleton we believe in **Pupil Voice**. In 2025-26 we aim to continue to include our children in decisions which affect them and are reviewing how we include them in decisions that affect their community and their learning. (This year they have been involved in community discussions about the new Playground and the curriculum.

"Through contributing my views, time and talents, I play a part in bringing about positive change in my school and wider community." **HWB 1-13a**

Our P6/7 children have extra responsibilities such as being Buddies for our ELC/P1 children, helping outside at break/lunchtimes and indoor wet breaks, House Captains and Junior Road Safety Officers. These extra roles provide opportunities for the children to be responsible citizens and help them to become good role models for the younger children.

There is a house system in operation throughout the school led by House Captains (P7 children). Children can gain house points within the school day through being responsible citizens, effective contributors, successful learners and confident individuals.

Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) - We have two JRSOs who receive training at the start of each session and use this input to promote road safety for our children through assemblies, displays and competitions etc., with support from the Community Police Officer PC Liam Nichol.

Within class we promote 'Pupil Voice' through providing opportunities and a supportive learning environment to share ideas and opinions.



Respectful Relationships - Promoting positive behaviour

It is SBC's vision that all learning establishments are safe, respectful and nurturing environments where bullying behaviour is never acceptable. It is therefore critical that those who play a role in the lives of children and young people in the Scottish Borders are equipped to prevent and respond effectively to incidents of bullying behaviour. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) in the Scottish Borders ensures that the child and their family are at the centre of policy and practice and that the views of the child, young person and their parents/carers are sought, listened to and considered when decisions are being made. In the Scottish Borders, learning establishments promote respectful relationships approaches. SBC have created a document - SBC: INCLUDES Respectful Relationships and Anti-bullying Policy which outlines the steps that will be undertaken in Newcastleton Primary School and Early Learning Centre. It provides guidance to staff, parents/carers and children on the prevention and management of bullying behaviour. Our aim is to make Newcastleton Primary School and Early Learning Centre a safe, respectful and nurturing environment where bullying behaviour is never acceptable.

[Respectful Relationships and Anti-bullying | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/respectful-relationships-and-anti-bullying)

Overarching Aims

- Develop a positive ethos in our whole school community, understanding that our rights and the rights of others are the building blocks of successful thriving communities.
- Promote respectful relationships between the children, staff, parents and our wider school community.
- Reward children who demonstrate respectful relationships using praise, stickers and certificates, including weekly star certificates and termly Headteacher awards. This cumulates in our Prizegiving at the end of the session, when various children, who we have noted have gone above and beyond the high expectations that we have, are recognised.

All children in our schools need to know that they have:

- A right to be listened to
- A right to be safe and supported
- A right to learn
- A right to relax and play
- A right to be respected



Core Expectations - Our Core Expectations relates to all areas of the school environment and are displayed around the school.

They are, simply:

Safe, Kind, Ready to Learn

Partnerships with Parents/Community

At Newcastleton we strive to develop good relationships with parents and the community through a joined-up approach. We very much support the Curriculum for Excellence, statement: *'Learners benefit when practitioners develop positive partnerships with parents and families by involving them in decisions affecting their children's education and learning'* (CfE).

Communication

We ensure that parents are kept up to date with relevant information through regular Newsletters, Eduspot App messages, emails, letters, Showbie groups, Facebook posts and direct communications. Your child's class teacher will give you information on how you can support your child; this may include guidance on homework or other activities to do at home to reinforce their learning.

Homework

Homework helps the children take ownership of their learning and promotes independence. It is a beneficial way of reinforcing learning that has taken place in school. Currently we expect regular reading support from parents at home. (We are aware that literacy difficulties affect a significant part of the adult population, so please speak discreetly to the Headteacher if this is an area that you may find challenging - we can work together!) There may also be further learning activities that are given occasionally to the children to work on at home, with older children making use of their individual iPads.

Supporting the school

We rely on parents to support us in many ways whether this is through helping on school outings, volunteering to help with groups and activities, or through supporting the children's learning. Let us know if you would like to help. A Disclosure Check is required for those helping on a regular basis, which is a commitment from both us and you, but these volunteers are highly valued!

Open Door Policy

You are welcome to visit the school, although prior warning will ensure that the school is ready to receive you. As you will understand, you would not be able to discuss matters with teachers when they are in class, so discussions should be arranged outside class teaching time. On visiting the school, parents should report to the school office first and wait at the reception for the staff member to come to you.

Reporting to Parents

There will be two opportunities for parent consultations, which can be either a 'phone call' or in person. The first one in Term 1 is related to how your child is settling in and the second one in April/May to discuss your child's progress, achievement and future learning. Throughout the year we make use of the Showbie App as a portfolio of your children's work and add a short written report to this. If you would like to discuss your child's progress at other times, contact the school to make an appointment. We plan a variety of other opportunities for parents to come into the school, including class assemblies, to be a part of your child's learning.

Showbie Portfolio

Making use of the Inspire iPads that each P4-7 child has, we place several learning tasks on Showbie, which both staff and children can then add to the child's portfolio of work, demonstrating their achievements. ELC and P1-3 also access these portfolios, and we aim to create a record of each child's achievements through their school journey, from 3 through to 18! We share our curriculum

overviews either on Showbie or in paper copy, so that parents have an awareness of what their child will be learning that term, potentially helping parents to share learning opportunities that can broaden their children's education experience outside of school. (Remember parents are the primary educator of their children!)

P1 Parent Information Meetings

In June an information meeting is held for incoming P1 parents. The purpose is to give information about the school, outline our reading and phonics programmes and give parents information of how they can support their child with their learning. We do ask for parents to make this a priority.

Community Partnerships

We work in partnership with several organisations within the community and the Hawick Cluster such as Liddesdale Heritage Association, Church of Scotland, Newcastleton Traditional Music Festival, Copshaw Common Riding, Live Borders, Rock UK, Newcastleton and District Community Trust, Active Schools, Hawick Reivers Festival and Newcastleton Community Council.

These partnerships support a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities which enrich the curriculum that we provide.

Newcastleton School Partnership

We have a fantastic and committed Parent School Partnership (NSP) committee that meets regularly and do great work to support the school. Due to all their hard work and fundraising events, we can offer our children a range of opportunities. The NSP are always looking for new members to join them. If you would like to find out what they do, or if you would like to join, let us know - it would be great to have you on-board.

Currently, the office bearers are:

- **Chairperson:** Mike Allen
- **Secretary:** Danielle Brough
- **Treasurer:** Heather Allen

Transitions/Enrolments

Starting School - Enrolment

- Children entering school for the first time are enrolled in November preceding the August admission date; enrolment times are advertised in advance.
- Children who reach the age of five years before 1st March of the following year are eligible for enrolment in the P1 class beginning in August each year.
- Parents who wish to enrol their child in a school out with their catchment area should make a placing request to the school of their choice. The admission process is all completed online at:

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20038/school_and_nursery_places/575/apply_for_a_school_place.

- A parent wishing to enrol a child out with the start of the session (for P1 or any other stage), can apply online and every effort will be made to give them a place in the school.

- Throughout the year we have opportunities for ELC and P1 to work together, though these are arranged formally during the summer term. This provides opportunities for the children to become familiar with the P1 classroom and relevant staff.
- If your child has Additional Support Needs please discuss this with the Headteacher. There are some circumstances when your child will need to delay starting school if they have significant support needs that require the school to seek extra support - Please ask for the SBC Buffering policy.

Deferred Entry

Legislation changes in August 2023 means that children do not have to start P1 until the August after their fifth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child starts primary school if their child turns five years of age after the school commencement date in August. This means a guaranteed further funded year in an ELC setting. This is available to children who will turn five years old between after the first day of school in August 2026 and 29 February 2027. Applications for deferred entry should be discussed with your head teacher or ELC setting manager. If you would like to apply for this, complete the [application form](#) selecting the start date 'next academic year from August 2026' and ticking the box for deferred entry.

What must parents/carers do? How to apply for a primary school place:

Parents are required to complete the SBC [online form](#).

You will need to have electronic copies of your child's birth certificate and proof of address such as a council tax letter or child benefit notice available to upload along with your application.

You will need to have a [MyScotBorders account](#) if you don't have one already. Registering for an account is quick and easy, all you need is an email address and to provide some basic personal details. You are also advised to be logged into your MyScotBorders account before starting to complete the online form.

This form should be used for all enrolments, including all placement or other requests outside of enrolment week.

Transfer between Primary Classes

We have strong working relationships between staff at Newcastleton Primary School. Clear systems for transition are in place to ensure that information regarding each child's learning, interests, challenges and overall wellbeing are communicated effectively when progressing from one year to the next. A 'Step Up' morning is timetabled towards the end of each academic year. Children will spend time in their new class and with their new teacher.

Transfer from Primary to Secondary School

Children are normally transferred between the ages of 11yrs and 12yrs (at the end of P7) so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents will be informed of high school arrangements during their child's P7 year.

Children normally transfer from this school to Hawick High School, Tel: 01450 372429.

Newcastleton Primary School has close links with Hawick High School (HHS). There are regular Primary/ Secondary Liaison meetings for staff; HHS pastoral staff visit the school, meet the P7 children to discuss any concerns they may have and gather information from the class teachers to ensure a smooth transfer to secondary. All children in P7 also attend an additional two days High School Transition visit in June. An 'enhanced transition' can be arranged if there are any concerns raised by either parents or school staff. This usually means extra visits to the high school which

may include meeting key staff and becoming familiar with the layout of the building. Children with additional needs will receive additional support to make successful transitions. These will be discussed with parents to ensure a joined-up approach.

Further information and advice regarding transition, enrolment and placement requests can be obtained from the following national organisations:



www.education.gov.scot/parentzone

www.enquire.org.uk

www.parentingacrossscotland.org

www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/878schools?evacid=mp

Because of our proximity to Langholm, some parents may choose to ask for a placement at Langholm Academy. This is the responsibility of the parents and they would need to contact Langholm Academy to progress this further. Please note that placements can be refused. We do liaise with pastoral staff from Langholm Academy and share all your child's information with them. If your child has additional support needs, there may be additional factors that you would need to consider in discussion with Langholm Academy.

Child Protection

All SBC schools and their staff are required to follow the Scottish Borders Child Protection Committee's Inter-agency Child Protection Guidelines and procedures. The Child Protection Guidelines can be found on the Scottish Borders Council website: www.scotborders.gov.uk In the search box enter - **Child Protection**.

A key element in the procedures is that if a member of staff in a school is made aware of a concern (usually through a statement made by a child) or an issue that could have child protection implications, the member of staff has no option but to refer to the Child Protection Unit - 01896 664159. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that the welfare of the child is paramount and this must always be the sole consideration for the school.

In making a referral staff will not be making any judgement on the strength or truth of the child's statement but must follow procedures to support children and staff. An extensive training programme has been undertaken to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The child's parents or carer will always be informed as soon as possible about such disclosures and any action resulting from this.

Keeping parents informed may not always be undertaken by school staff and could involve other organisations, such as social work staff or the police. If the child protection issue is taken further, school staff will work with families to support children through the process. The school Child Protection Co-ordinator is **Mrs Irvine (Acting HT)** who can be contacted to discuss any concerns that may arise.

A useful website providing information on dealing with child protection issues for children, young people and their parents and carers is www.childline.org.uk. The site also provides advice on what steps you should take if you have concerns on a child protection issue.

Additional Support Needs

Most children and young people can access their curricular programme at school without the need of additional help other than that which any teacher will provide in any classroom. However, at any point in their lives children or young people may need extra support with their education. This may be for any reason and at any time. This is often referred to as additional support for learning or having additional support needs. Some examples of why a child/young person may require extra help with their education are:

- Bereavement or family illness
- Problems at home
- Specific areas of support required with literacy or numeracy
- Bullying
- Behaviour
- Being particularly gifted or able
- An illness, disability or sensory impairment
- Having English as an Additional Language

A child/young person's needs may last for a short time, and the problem may be resolved easily or, their needs might be very complex, and they may require additional support for a number of years. If you feel that your child needs additional support for learning, the first person to speak to is your child's teacher. You have the right to request an assessment of your child. Within our school we operate a model of staged intervention where support is provided in varied ways to meet individual needs. Our approach to assessment ensures that the needs of children and young people are recognised and appropriate support can be provided.

Parents/carers are always involved in making decisions about their child's education and we will always ask your permission before any specific referrals are made. While your child is receiving support, we will regularly review your child's progress.

At times, parents/carers and schools may come into disagreement. While we would always hope that difficulties could be resolved at the school level, we recognise that parents or young people may wish to formalise their concerns. To assist with this, we have a complaints procedure and also offer independent mediation and adjudication. It is also possible under certain circumstances to refer the case to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland. If you believe your child has additional support needs, Scottish Borders Council publishes a range of informative advice. Visit the following website for further details.

www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/886/additional_support_needs

The statutory framework for Additional Support for Learning is the Education [Additional Support for Learning] [Scotland] Acts 2004 and 2009. For more information, you can contact:

(a) Enquire, the Scottish advice service for Additional Support for Learning. They have a wealth of information, including practical guides and fact sheets for both parents/carers and young people. You can find the website at www.enquire.org.uk, or ring them on 0345 123 2303.

(b) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; www.siaa.org.uk

(c) Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC01274. www.sclc.org.uk

British Sign Language (BSL) SBC recognizes BSL. There is a free service for BSL users who want to contact us, via <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>. This is equal to a phone call. If a BSL user requests a face to face meeting then the School will provide a face to face interpreter.

The Educational Psychology Service.

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works with all SBC schools to support children's learning and wellbeing. We provide advice and training to school staff on how children learn and advise on ways to help children who require support. If requested by the school, we can arrange follow-up for individual children and young people, together with their families and teachers, to help support their learning, or with social or emotional issues. This is generally achieved by meeting the children, their families and school staff, to review the support they have already received and agree ways in which we can all help your child in school. In some cases, we may agree that an educational psychologist will work on a one-to-one basis with your child to obtain a clearer picture of how they can best be supported.

If you have any worries about your child, please contact their school, in the first instance, to arrange a meeting to discuss your concerns. All schools have access to a range of support services and your child's Head Teacher will be able to advise you about when the EPS may be able to help. Further information about the EPS is available on the Scottish Borders Council website. Here you can access a downloadable leaflet for parents and carers, which explains in more detail how we may be able to work with you to support your child in school. Please see www.scotborders.gov.uk/EPS

GIRFEC

Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. The GIRFEC approach aims to make it easier for parents, children, young people and the services that support them - such as early years services, schools and the NHS - to work together to get it right.

Practitioners work together to support you and your child, working across organisational boundaries and putting your child and you at the heart of decision making, ensuring we give all our children and young people the best possible start in life. GIRFEC means that everyone working with Scottish Borders children, young people and their families are encouraged to:

- Ensure children, young people, and their families get the help they need when they need it and are central to the process of finding solutions.
- Use one consistent and equitable approach, actively share information to agreed protocols and work more effectively together to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Be clear about personal responsibility to do the right thing for each child/young person.
- Work with children, young people and their families, using a collaborative approach with fewer meetings. This should ensure children, young people and their families give information only once, and enable the development of one plan to meet all their needs.
- Respond to children and young people and take appropriate, proportionate and timely action with the minimum of paperwork, bureaucracy and duplication.

GIRFEC is part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the GIRFEC provisions are planned to be fully implemented by August 2017. If you would like any further information, please ask your child's Headteacher.

Medical



Accidents

In case of an accident at school, trained first aid staff will attend to any medical incidents. If the incident is serious, parents are immediately informed, and arrangements are made to ensure that the child is seen by medical personnel. An Accident Book is kept in the school and relevant details may be seen by the parents of the child concerned.

Prescribed Medication

There is no legal or contractual duty on school staff to administer medication and supervise the children taking it. If it is agreed by the headteacher to take on this responsibility it is purely on a voluntary basis. It is presently only permissible to give children prescribed and/or complex medication. We are unable to administer non prescribed medication. When a child is in receipt of prescribed medication it is helpful in the first instance to consider whether it is necessary for the medication to be taken during the school day. This requires parents planning the administration of the child's medication to be done in out-of-school hours and includes planning for the child to return home at lunch times where possible. Where this is not possible and schools are asked to administer prescribed medication, the following procedures should operate:

- All prescribed medication should be accompanied by clear, written, signed instructions from parent/guardian on the form "Request for the School to Give Prescribed Medication" (available from the school office), which includes dose, frequency, and duration of course and date prescribed. These details and the children's name should be clearly marked on the medication container.
- All prescribed medication, in the smallest practical amounts should be brought to the school by the parent/carer and should be delivered personally to the headteacher, office staff or a designated member of staff.
- The renewal of any medication, which has passed its expiry date, is the responsibility of the parent. The school will contact parents/guardian if medication remains uncollected.
- Where any change in medication occurs, clear written instructions from parents/guardian should be provided for school staff
- All information regarding medication will expire at the end of each school session. If the administration of medication is to continue all relevant information must be confirmed in writing at the commencement of the new session.
- A written record will be kept on the appropriate form indicating administration of all prescribed medication to children. This record will be kept together with the instruction, checked on every occasion and completed by the member of staff administering the medication. The record should give the date and time of administration, the name of the medicine, the dosage, the name of the children and the name of the staff member.

If your child has been vomiting or has diarrhoea, they MUST stay off school for 48 hours afterwards to reduce the spread of illnesses.

Emergency School Closure

In the event of an Emergency Closure e.g. the breakdown of the heating system the school has an action plan which will be implemented.

- The Headteacher ascertains from Education Department whether school may be closed.
- In the event of closure, parents or emergency contact will be contacted to ensure that there is someone to receive the child.
- **NO** child will be released without contact being made.

In the event of fire or other serious incident that requires the immediate closure of the school, the children will be evacuated to the Village Hall before being dismissed. Regular fire practices are held every term.

Young Carers

A young carer is someone who is under 18 years of age or who has reached 18 and still a pupil at school and provides or intends to provide care for another individual. A number of young carers do not always identify themselves or wish to be identified. Young carers undertake a number of tasks for the people they live with and look after. They are often left alone to do things like washing, cooking, shopping, paying bills, collecting medication or helping to look after younger brothers or sister. This means they might not have as much time to complete work at home which has an ongoing effect on progress and learning or attend clubs and after school's activities therefore missing out on the social aspects of school.

Within Newcastleton Primary School we want our young carers to enjoy school and that it is a positive place to come and they feel included. Please let us know if there are difficulties meeting deadlines with work, arriving on time or any other issues which affect a young person.

Employment of Children

Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the byelaws on the Employment of children. These regulations allow anyone to be employed at 14 years but under certain circumstances children under 13 years of age can be employed, and for those over the age of 13 there are limits on the hours and type of employment which are allowed. Parents and employers must both complete an application form for an employment permit before the employment begins. Forms and application forms are available from the school office. Further details can be obtained from HQ Operations, Children & Young People Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA

Further information can be found at:

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/670/employment_byelaws_for_children_and_young_people/1

GDPR - DATA PROTECTION

Scottish Borders Council is a local authority established under the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 and its headquarters is based at Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA. You can contact our data protection officer by post at this address, or by email at: dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk , or by telephone - 0300 100 1800.

Why we need your information

Every child of school age has the right to be educated. A child is of school age if he/she has attained the age of 5 but has not attained the age of 16 years. The term "young person" applies to a pupil over school age, but who has not attained 18 years. The education authority has a duty to provide education to any young person who is still a school pupil. We need to collect, use and store personal information about you and your child/ren to enable us to provide your child/ren with an appropriate education. We provide these services to you as part of our statutory function as your local authority under:

- The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- The Education (Placing in Schools etc. Deemed Decisions) (Scotland) Regulations 1982
- The Standard in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

We also use your information to verify your identity where required, contact you by post, email or telephone to maintain our records.

Who we will share information with

We will share information with health and wellbeing services and may share information with other external agencies and organisations who provide or assist with educational provision and with online payment solution providers.

- The [Scottish Government](#) for examination, career guidance and monitoring purposes.
- ParentPay, ESP Systems and CRB to allow the school to offer cashless catering and to receive payment for school trips and events;
- Groupcall to allow the school to communicate with you;
- The NHS for health monitoring;
- Netmedia to enable the online arrangement of parents evenings;
- Internal Scottish Borders Council departments to allow the provision of catering and transport.

On each occasion, the recipients are bound to the terms of a Data Sharing Agreement and accordingly will only use your child's data for the specified purpose. This data sharing is in accordance with our Information Use and Privacy Policy and covered in our full [privacy statement](#) on our website. We are also legally obliged to share certain data with other public and regulatory bodies such as Education Scotland, Police and NHS will do so where the law requires this.

Your information may also be shared and analysed internally in order to provide management information, inform service delivery reform and similar purposes to meet our duty to achieve best value and continuous service improvement. We are legally obliged to safeguard public funds so we are required to verify and check your details internally for fraud prevention. We may share this information with other public bodies (and also receive information from these other bodies) for fraud checking purposes.

How long do we keep your information for?

We only keep your personal information for the minimum period amount of time necessary. Sometimes this time period is set out in the law, but in most cases it is based on the business need. We will retain a copy of your child/ren's educational record up until they reach the age of 25.

Photographs/videos

Photographs and videos may be taken by staff in the school, media and other parents for a variety of reasons for example Sports Day, celebrations of achievement, charity events, excursions etc. The school your child attends may wish to display or show photographs or videos taken by

themselves, 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. We ask you at the time your child enrolls at one of our schools if you are happy for images of your child to be used in this way and we try to ensure you are aware of, and understand, such possible use of your child's image and that you have consented. Any permission given will remain in force during your child's primary and secondary schooling until you indicate that you wish to withdraw your consent. You can do this by contacting the head teacher of your school as soon as possible.

Your Rights

You have the right to request access to any personal data held about you by the Council. You can also request that we restrict the use of your information or even object to any further processing. You can do this by contacting the Data Protection Officer using the contact details provided above. We will respond to your request within thirty calendar days. For more information on your rights please visit our website <http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/DPYourRights> or if you would like a hard copy of this information, please contact us using the contact details provided above.

Complaints Policy

Parents are encouraged to share concerns or issues with the school at an early stage. Our policy is to deal with any issues promptly and as far as possible, an 'open door' policy is adopted. Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of provision made by the school, you should write in the first instance to the Head Teacher whose address is given in this handbook. Once the Head Teacher has responded, and if you are still dissatisfied you should use the procedure set out in the Scottish Borders Council leaflet "Complaints Procedure". This leaflet is available online at the following address. Complaints can also be made online using this link.

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20016/have_your_say/155/make_a_complaint

Complaints will be recognised, recorded and dealt with in accordance with SBC Complaints Handling Procedures.

If your complaint is about how we have handled your personal information, contact our Data Protection Officer by email dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk or phone on 0300 100 1800.

However, you also have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection matters with the Information Commissioner's Office, who can be contacted by post at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire, SK9 5AF

You can visit their website for more information <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>.

Disclaimer

Whilst information provided within our Handbook is considered to be correct at the time of printing (August 2023 it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy as we progress through the session due to changes which may occur.

On request, we can provide a hard copy of the Handbook alternatively you can access a copy online at https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/392/school_handbooks

A version in an alternative format e.g. Braille, or translated into a community language other than English can be supplied on request to us as we have access to translation services at Scottish Borders Council.



	Holiday Starts	School Resumes
First Day of School		Wed 20th August 2025
Autumn Holidays	Mon 13th October 2025	Tues 21st October (in service day Mon 20th Oct)
St Andrew's Holiday	Mon 1st December 2025	
Christmas Holidays	Mon 22nd December 2025	Mon 5 th January 2026
Half term Holiday	Mon 16 th February 2026	Tues 24 th February 2026 (In service Day Mon 23 rd Feb)
Easter Holidays	Mon 4 th April 2026	Mon 20th April 2026
May Day	Mon 4 th May	Wed 6 th May (Inservice Day Tues 5 th May)
Local Holiday (Hawick Common Riding)	Fri 5 th June	Mon 8 th June
School finishes	Thursday 2 nd July 2026	
First Day of School		Wednesday 19 th August 2026

Updated December 2025