

Stepps Primary



Website: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/nl/steppsprimary>

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Office Hours: Monday – Friday: 8.15 am – 4.00 pm



Dear Parent/Carer

Time appears to be moving extremely quickly this session. We were delighted to see so many parents/carers attending our Primary One Curriculum Workshop and our P2-P7 Meet the Teacher event. Our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Parent Council held their Annual General Meeting on Monday 11th September and we were delighted to welcome a small number of new members to both groups. The Parent Council & PTA continue to provide great support to the school and we appreciate all the work both groups carry out during the year.



Staff News

Most of you will know by now that we will be saying a very sad farewell to Mrs Allan on Friday 14 October as she leaves us to start her well-earned retirement. Mrs Allan joined the staff at Stepps Primary in 2008 and her energy and enthusiasm, as well as her commendable work ethic, has made her an extremely valued and respected member of staff. There is no doubt that Mrs Allan will be greatly missed by our entire school community. I am sure that you will join with me in wishing Mrs Allan a long and happy retirement.

Miss Davidson will now be leaving us on **Tuesday 4 October** to begin her Maternity Leave. This is slightly earlier than originally planned. We look forward to sharing some good news with you about the new arrival in the coming months.

School Email

As noted in our Back to School Newsletter, the majority of school information is now issued electronically using our Groupcall email system. If you are aware of any parent/carers not receiving school emails, please ask them to contact the school office as soon as possible to enable us to check the contact details we hold for them. Our email system enables us to check if the emails have been successfully sent, if they have arrived in your inbox and if they have been opened. We are aware that, on occasions, some school emails have been getting automatically directed to junk mail boxes, or to 'Other' if you use Outlook, so please check these folders on a regular basis. **Some email providers will also automatically block school emails and treat them as spam, so we would ask you to check your settings to ensure that this is not happening.** This shows up as the email having 'Bounced' on our system. Emails from the school should always come from enquiries-at-stepps@northlan.org.uk. Emails/text messages will always be sent to the first contact you have identified for your child.

We are always exploring ways to improve communication with parents/carers. At present we are investigating the purchase/development of a school App. Although there would be an initial set up fee and annual charge to the school, the App would be free for parents/carers to download and enable letters/newsletters, reminders and other information to be sent directly to your phone/tablet. This App would largely replace the @SteppsPrimary Twitter feed and email system which is currently used to post school information. The App would only be accessible to school parents/carers via a code, so it would not be visible to the general public. Due to the costs and time involved in the purchase and set up of the App, we would like to gauge if this is something that the majority of parents/carers would use. To this end, we would be grateful if you could take two minutes to note your interest using the link below. The link will remain open until Friday 7 October.

<https://forms.office.com/r/FX7ef4Qtmi>

Every School Day Counts - Attendance

North Lanarkshire's Managing Attendance Policy for schools is based on the Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools document originally published in 2007 and updated in 2019. It draws together advice on good practice, working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies and establishes requirements regarding classifying and recording attendance and absence. The policy stresses that parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school until he or she reaches school leaving age (section 30, Education (Scotland) Act 1980). As we are only too aware, absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning. It is important that parent/carers encourage their children to attend school and arrange family holidays during the holiday period. Family holidays will not be recorded as authorised absence, except in exceptional domestic circumstances. Although we have only returned to school following the summer break, we have already had a significant number of children off due to term-time family holidays. Every effort should be made to avoid family holidays during term time as this both disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. Parents/Carers should inform the school **by letter** of the dates before going on holiday. **Due to the way work for pupils is now planned and introduced, teachers are unable to provide work in advance for pupils being taken out of school for family holidays during term time.**

It is important that parents/carers liaise and communicate with the school when there is an indication that attendance at school is becoming an issue. This will allow any issues to be dealt with promptly and to allow the right support at the right time and to remove barriers to non-attendance as quickly as possible. Parents/carers should continue to inform the school of absences on the first day and indicate when their child or young person is likely to return to school.

The table below has been developed by the Council to illustrate the impact non-attendance can have on a child's development during a normal school year.

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|------------------|---|--|
| 100 % Attendance | 0 Days missed. | Gives your child the best chance of success and ensuring their full potential is achieved. |
| 95 % Attendance | 9 Days of Absence. 1 week and 4 days learning missed. | Makes it harder to achieve full potential and secure the best possible outcomes. |
| 90% Attendance | | |
| 85% Attendance | 27 Days of Absence. 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed. Almost half a term missed. | Impacts significantly on learning and progress which can lead to poorer outcomes in achievement, wellbeing and social and emotional development. |
| 80% Attendance | 36 days of Absence. 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed. Half of a term missed. | |
| 75 % Attendance | 45 Days of Absence. 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed. Almost 1 whole term missed. | |

Where the school has a concern surrounding a pupil's attendance, we will issue an attendance letter which reflects the Council's attendance policy. The letter will be issued when a child's attendance falls below 85%. We fully appreciate that children do get ill, and that there are understandable reasons for extended absence, such as a family bereavement, recovery from surgical procedures, diagnosed medical conditions etc. We will continue to be sensitive and supportive, where we know these factors exist.

School Improvement Priorities

Every year we take forward a number of school improvement priorities, which take into account local and national guidance as well as reflecting areas for improvement identified through our own school quality assurance processes. Our key improvement priorities are as follows.

1. Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy & Numeracy:

Developments include:

- Training for all teaching staff in the 'Talk for Writing' programme. This programme uses spoken activities to develop writing skills. Quality writing is created by first expanding and developing learners' oral

language skills and then teaching the necessary steps for text construction. This approach uses the processes of 'Imitation – Innovation – Invention'. This approach offers all children, no matter what their ability, an opportunity to develop stronger writing skills in a fun, engaging and motivational way. Training will take place in November.

- Identify and purchase more challenging, motivational and age appropriate texts for our senior stage readers following consultation with learners.
- Begin our 'Reading School' accreditation journey.
- Extend the use of Power Maths teaching approaches across the school.
- We will participate in North Lanarkshire's new Early Years' Play Pedagogy Programme in early 2023.
- Continued development of play in our nursery setting to improve early stage literacy and numeracy skills.

2. Curriculum for Excellence: Health & Wellbeing:

Developments include:

- Increased focus on the EmotionWorks programme to improve learners' resilience and coping mechanisms.
- All staff will undertake training in the 'Do BeMindful' programme and implement this approach with learners after the Christmas Break. This approach is designed to empower staff and children to care for their own mental and emotional wellbeing and create a supportive environment.
- Nursery staff will revisit the Solihull Approach to ensure appropriate support mechanisms are in place for all children.
- The school will work with Barnardo's this session to support learners who are experiencing high levels of anxiety. Barnardo's will work closely with parents/carers when delivering support to ensure strategies introduced are used consistently in school and at home. Both individual and group support sessions will be offered to identified learners. Barnardo's will also offer a support session for parents/carers focusing on supporting children who may experience anxiety.
- Our Rights Respecting School Committee will submit their application for the Rights Respecting School Silver accreditation.
- We will seek to extend outdoor learning and STEM opportunities for all learners.
- Our Diana Committee will review our **Working Together to Minimise Bullying** policy in conjunction with stakeholders.

3. Curriculum for Excellence: Support for Learners

Developments include:

- Training for all staff in Sensory Processing and Integration.
 - Review and update of the school's ASL policy to reflect local and national developments.
 - Development of comprehensive in school 'Request for Support' forms to ensure all support mechanisms available are being fully utilised.
 - Development of new tracking formats to support help measure the impact of support interventions.
 - Increased use of technology to support learners' with identified support needs.
- Ongoing engagement by Support Staff in NLC's Additional Support for Learning training modules.



DIARY DATES

We will notify you of additional events and dates as they are confirmed.

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| Thursday | 6 th | October | NLC Football Tournament – 10 pupils to attend |
| Thursday | 13 th | October | PTA Discos |
| Monday | 10 th | October | World Mental Health Day: Dress Down/Wear Something Yellow |
| Monday | 17th | October – Friday 21st | October – School closed for October Week Holiday |
| Monday | 24 th | October | Parent Council Meeting @ 7.00pm |
| Monday | 24 th | October | PTA Meeting @ 6.30 pm |
| Monday | 14 th | November | School & Nursery Closed for pupils – In-service Day for Staff. |
| Tuesday | 15 th | November | Parents' Evening 1 |
| Thursday | 17 th | November | Parents' Evening 2 |
| Friday | 18 th | November | Children In Need Day (Information to follow) |

