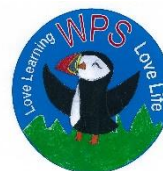


Whiteness Early Years

Information
For
Parents



Session 2025-2026



WELCOME

We would like to welcome you and your child to Whiteness Early Years. National practice guidance for early years in Scotland can be found within the document- Realising the Ambition- <https://education.gov.scot/media/3bjpr3wa/realisingtheambition.pdf>

The notes contained in this booklet are intended to provide you with relevant information about our early years at Whiteness Primary School.

We hope you find it useful.

We believe in building positive relationships between parents and early years staff. By working well together we are able to provide the best care and learning opportunities for our youngest children.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address:
Whiteness Early Years
Whiteness Primary School
WHITENESS
Shetland
ZE2 9LJ

Telephone: 01595 745380

Email: whiteness@shetland.gov.uk

Website: www.whiteness.shetland.sch.uk

Staff

Head teacher / Manager ELC	Mrs Rachel Colclough
Senior Practitioner ELC	Miss Lindsey Hay
Practitioner ELC	Mrs Pauline Gilfillan (Jobshare) Mrs Mhari Drozdowska (Jobshare)
Support Worker ELC	Miss Nicola Morrison
Temporary Support Worker ELC	Ms Jenny-Lane Laurenson

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PLACEMENT

You have received your official offer letter from the central Early Learning and Childcare team (ELC). This will confirm the allocated hours for your child. Please check this information carefully and contact the ELC team 01595 744000 or elc@shetland.gov.uk to discuss any queries you may have about your placement allocation. Any request to alter your child's allocated times or your placement setting can be done by emailing elc@shetland.gov.uk.

OUR VISION

Love Learning Love Life

OUR CORE VALUES

Kindness
Inclusion
Respect
Determination
Perseverance



OUR SCHOOL RULES

We are safe
We are ready to learn
We are respectful



YOUR CHILD'S DAY

Whiteness Early Years is registered to accommodate up to 24 children. All children must be accompanied to and from early years by an adult. For safety reasons, please ensure that your child and the school know who is picking them up each day. Should a new person be picking your child up it would be helpful if you familiarise them with early year's staff prior to this happening.

All children of early year's age (3 and 4 year olds) are entitled to up to 1140 free hours per year. This works out during term time (38 weeks) as 30 hours per week. Times for drop off and pick are flexible to help parents and between the hours of 0815 and 1615. We have a protected lunch break between 1200 and 1330 to reduce disruption during lunchtime. We advise a child has a maximum of 6 hours per day in the ELC setting.

Each child has a basket. Please check this after each day for letters, drawings etc.

General information, such as the weekly snack menu, the planning floor book, improvement floor book and parent views section be found inside the inner porch before entering the setting.

THE CARE INSPECTORATE

In 2001, The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act established a new system of care regulation covering the registration and inspection of care services against a set of National Care Standards.

From April 2011, two new public bodies began to operate in Scotland – The Care Inspectorate (formerly Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland – before that – the Care Commission) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland – HIS.

As a direct result, all ELC settings are now inspected by The Care Inspectorate who, alongside HM Inspectorate of Education, regulates the provision of care in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in line with the National Care Standards issued by

Scottish Ministers. The National Care Standards reflect the rights of children as set down in the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

The main principles are Dignity, Privacy, Choice, Safety, Realising Potential, Equality and Diversity.

The quality indicators of “How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare” describe National Expectations. In particular, these provide us with guidelines about the pre-school curriculum, children’s progress, assessment, support for learning and quality assurance.



ENROLMENT

The Children’s Services department Admissions Policy lays down priorities for enrolling in ELC classes as follows:

- Children referred by Additional Support Needs, Social Work or Health professionals.
- Children who have already attended the pre-school setting and wish to continue for their pre-school year or have deferred entry to Primary School.
- Children who have siblings at the pre-school setting.
- Eligible four year olds.
- Eligible three year olds (oldest first).
- Eligible two year olds.



You can find the policy by following this link:

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/directory-record/5996/admissions-policy>

The local authority stages an annual “Enrolment Week” which is advertised in the local press – usually in February.

TRANSPORT

At present it is the Children’s Services Policy that parents must arrange transport of their children to and from the Early Years setting.



SETTLING IN

Children come from various backgrounds and have enjoyed a variety of experiences. Some will settle in quickly whilst others will take longer to gain in confidence.

We will decide with you how to start them into early years – we will send out a welcome letter and pack, before their start date to invite you in for a Stay and Play session prior to their start date.

Please feel free to stay with your child, in the early days. Your child will be experiencing many new routines, a strange building and new faces - we shall work together to ensure that he/she feels secure in these new surroundings. We operate a soft drop off/soft pick up policy. This means you are able to stay with your child until you are both happy for you to leave, also when picking up you are able to join your child at their play until you are both ready to go. Please always let a staff member know when you are leaving.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is encouraged in order that your child gains maximum benefit from their early years' experience. We believe that all young children benefit from a regular routine.

Please inform the school if your child is to be absent on any day – it helps us to know of any ill health or of extended periods of absence. We can also cancel any booked dinners.

HOME-SCHOOL LINKS

The various experiences and activities provided in the early years are carefully planned to develop the whole child - intellectually, socially and physically. You are your child's first educator and we aim to build on what your child has already learnt at home and to work with you in order to continue this development.

We therefore feel that for this education process to be truly effective the support and co-operation of parents is necessary. We work with you to build positive relationships and trust between school and home, between parents and staff.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

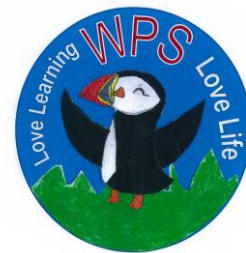
Each child has a “**Learning Story**” book stored in the Early Years setting. We use this to file observations, record achievements, collect items of work, display photographs and generally provide a snapshot of your child's time with us. We encourage you to look at this and to add any items from home. The Learning Stories can found inside the Early Years door. Please feel free to have a look and if you would like to take it home, please let a member of staff know. We routinely send the Learning Stories home once a term- for you to add your comments and contributions. We are happy to photocopy any certificate your child may have been awarded or to include drawings photographs or comments from home. Please date and sign the sheet at the front once you have finished.

Each child has a **Personal Plan** opened on entry to Early Years. This plan is reviewed with you every 6 months and contains notes regarding health and general interventions that have been agreed between home and school. This document is open and transparent and you are able to ask to see it at any time.

In your welcome pack, you will find a “*What matters to me*” A3 sheet. We encourage parents to take time to complete this, including photos of your family to help staff get to know everyone and for them to get to know your child's interests quickly. Also included is a grid showing *developmental overviews for 3 year olds*. It is very helpful if you highlight the statements your child is confident with- this will then be stuck into your children Learning Stories and updated throughout their time in Early Years.

We operate an “open door” policy, which means if at any time you would like to discuss any issues relating to your child and/or Early Years, please approach a member of staff to request this.

Our Promise



At Whiteness Early Years we aspire to have:

Spaces that:

- are neutral, welcoming and stimulating;
- provide opportunity for learning in a variety of ways;
- are clutter free spaces to play;
- offer opportunity to experience the outdoors every day;

Experiences that:

- are child-led with adult support where needed;
- are developmentally appropriate to each individual;
- allow elements of risk and real life experiences;
- give opportunity to lead learning and become independent thinkers.

Interactions that:

- are with qualified staff who undergo Continuous Professional Development;
- are with staff who are open minded and forward thinking;
- are with staff who know the children well as individual learners;
- are with staff who ask open questions and speak to children at their level;
- are with staff who do not rush children or interrupt play;
- are with staff who encourage learning

FACILITIES

Early Years at Whiteness is situated to the left as you enter the school building. The door handle configuration is aimed to prevent any child leaving the classroom unnoticed - top handle goes up – bottom handle goes down.

Upon entering the room you will find the reception area where your child will have a named peg – we will move these around to help your child to be able to recognise his/her own name.

The main early year's room is divided into areas which will change throughout the week as led by your child's interests. Areas include:

- Block play area
- Creative area
- Tables for a variety of uses- small world, fine motor skill activities
- Home corner or role play area
- Message centre / mark making area
- Quiet room
- Outdoor space
- loose parts
- sofa and cosy corner
- kitchen and snack / lunch area

There is access to various areas within the school grounds which we use to take advantage of outside play.

We try to visit other areas within the wider community – the football pitch, the beach, the local hall, etc.

We have weekly visits to the **GYM** for PE and to the **LIBRARY** where your child will have the opportunity to choose a book to take home.



TOYS

We would be grateful if your child did not bring toys from home as they may be lost or damaged. We have “Show-and-Tell” sessions throughout the year to give the children an opportunity to bring toys and other items from home. We will let you know when we plan to do this.



LUNCH

For children who are in the setting over the lunch period, school lunch is provided free of charge. Parents have to pre-book meals through ParentPay. Information on how to do this will be shared once your child has started.

SNACK AND MILK

A snack and milk (cow's) is provided free of charge each day. If your child is unable to consume cow's milk for any medical, religious or ethical reason, please let the school know in writing (medical – from the GP/consultant). Snack is an integral part of your child's day and is an opportunity to develop basic hygiene rules, healthy eating, independence, social skills and a taste for a variety of food.



CLOTHING

No special clothing is required, aprons will be provided for all messy activities. However, as children learn through play, they must feel free to participate in all activities, please do not dress your child in good clothes- despite our best efforts- they may come home less presentable than when they arrived!



Children should have suitable outdoor clothes, such as hats, gloves and wellies **every** day as, if the weather allows, even in winter, we hope to be able to play outside

or take short walks within the local area. Shoes should be suitable for walking outdoors and for physical activity outdoors. We supply an outdoor suit for each child.

We encourage independence at every opportunity, by sending your child in clothes they are able to take on and off themselves- we are able to support this better. We will always help them if they cannot manage, but we do talk through with them what to do and give space for them to have a go. We encourage children to zip up their coats, change their shoes and use the toilet themselves.

P.E. KIT

Your child should have shorts and suitable gym shoes to wear for our visits to the gym. Please provide these in an easily identifiable bag – write your child's name on the bag. We encourage all children to independently get themselves in and out of clothes in readiness for P.E. Please ensure that your child comes to early years wearing clothes that they are able to take on and off themselves. From experience, we find that tights, skinny jeans, boots with many zips and clips can be too challenging for children.

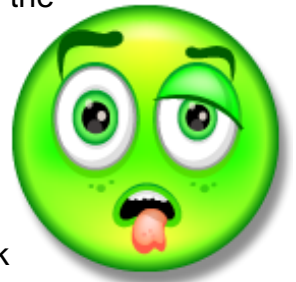
HEALTH

Toilets – it is desirable that children are toilet trained, however it is recognised that children develop at different rates. Please ensure that your child is able to tell Early Years staff when there is a need to go to the toilet. It would also be helpful if your child wears clothes which are easy to remove – sometimes speed is of the essence! It would also be helpful if your child had a dry change of clothes to use in the event of an accident.

Please note the supply of nappies and wet wipes is the responsibility of the parent.

Sickness – Although we encourage children to attend on a regular basis. Please be assured that we follow national guidance to protect the health of all the children in our care.

- If your child is ill, they must not attend Early Years
- If your child becomes unwell whilst in our care, we will phone you to arrange for them to be collected
- Children suffering from sickness or diarrhoea should not attend Early Years until completely recovered. Health Protection Scotland guidelines displayed in Early Years ask that you allow **48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting before your child returns to Early Years.**
- Please tell us if your child has been ill while they are away from Early Years



Immunisation

As your child will now be mixing with other children, it is important that they are protected and up-to-date with their immunisations. You can access further information about the immunisation schedule at [Immunisations in Scotland | NHS inform](#)

If you think your child has missed any vaccinations please contact your general practice to arrange an appointment. You can also ask your health visitor for advice.

Sun cream- On bright sunny days, please send your child to early years with a long lasting sun cream already applied to any exposed skin. Children should wear clothing that is comfortable and covers their shoulders. Early Years staff will make the most of sunny days. Please be aware it is **your responsibility** to make sure your child is protected from the effects of the sun. You will be asked for your permission to let Early Years staff reapply sun screen. Please provide this for us with your child's name clearly marked on the bottle.

Particular difficulties

It is important that you inform us of any health problems (e.g.hearing, speech, allergies, any medication being taken) which you feel may affect your child's progress in the Early Years.

Speech therapy – this service is available for pre-school children and can be arranged through the school, with your permission.

Outside agencies – we aim to work closely with other professionals involved with the health and development of pre-school children e.g. health visitors and dentists. The involvement of any outside agency takes place only after consultation with, and the agreement of, parents. However all schools have staff trained in the use of Shetland Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures. There may be cases where referrals go directly to the Social Care Department.

“Childsmile” – your child will be invited to join the tooth brushing scheme. We endeavour to brush teeth most days. Regular visits are made by the “Childsmile” team.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

All children and young people have the right to be protected and kept safe from harm from others. Everyone has a part to play in ensuring children and young people get help when they need it.

If you are worried about a child's safety you should speak to a professional about it.

TRANSITION INTO PRIMARY

Early Years is an integral part of the whole school. As we have already mentioned, we foster links with the school, the lower stage primary classrooms in particular.

When your child is due to start in Primary One we will be in touch with you during the term leading up to the summer holidays.

BUDDY SYSTEM

We operate a "Buddy System" whereby we match Primary Six children to the children going in to Primary One. This means that when your child goes to school he/she will be familiar with the children who will then be in Primary Seven. This proves to be a great support to the new Primary One class during interval and break times.

PRE-SCHOOL PARENTS' INFORMATION

Parents of pre-school children receive a leaflet detailing the move into Primary One and the structure of the school day prior to the summer break. A Parents' Meeting is scheduled before the summer break, enabling parents to meet the P1 teacher, ask questions and gain an understanding of school life. We plan, with you, a comprehensive transition calendar of events through your child's last term in early years.

HOW CAN PARENTS' HELP?

If you have a particular interest/hobby (e.g. cookery) that you would like to share with us, or have some spare time to join us on our trips out with school then please let us know. We would be happy to hear from you.

If you have any suggestions about any aspect of Early Years, there is a "Suggestions Box" in the main entrance area - or feel free to discuss ideas with Early Years staff. We value your opinions.

From time to time we shall ask you for help, for example, to provide a collection of junk materials, old clothes for dressing up, provide items for "Show-and-Tell", Library book scheme and many others things as they arise.



PARENT COUNCIL

The Parent Council is there to represent your needs, wishes and concerns – feel free to contact any of the members if you wish your opinions to be known or concerns raised.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Email address</u>
<u>Stewart Somerville</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>830207</u>	somy@btinternet.com
<u>Dawn Smith</u>	<u>Vice Chair</u>	<u>830284</u>	dawnsmith72@gmail.com
<u>Darren Silver</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>540172</u>	darrenwilliamsilver@gmail.com
<u>Paula Somerville</u>	<u>Clerk</u>	<u>830207</u>	Paula.Somerville@shetland.gov.uk
<u>Monica Moncrieff</u>	<u>Parent member</u>	<u>830278</u>	mcamoncrieff@outlook.com
<u>Shona Sim</u>	<u>Parent member</u>	<u>830384</u>	peerieshona_91@hotmail.co.uk
<u>Jessica Sales</u>	<u>Parent member</u>	<u>830279</u>	Jessmx82@gmail.com
<u>Rebecca Waldie</u>	<u>Parent member</u>	<u>7469954968</u>	Rebecca2108@hotmail.co.uk
<u>Diane Forsyth</u>	<u>Teacher member</u>	<u>745380</u>	diane.forsyth@shetland.gov.uk
<u>Rachel Colclough</u>	<u>Head Teacher member</u>	<u>745380</u>	rachelcolclough@shetland.gov.uk
<u>Vacant</u>	<u>Co-opted member</u>	-	-
<u>Vacant</u>	<u>Co-opted member</u>	-	-

Our three local councilors: Catherine Hughson, Moraig Lyall and Davie Sandison are also members of the Parent Council.

We hope this booklet has been of help to you in answering some of the questions you may have. We will do all we can to ensure that your child settles and enjoys their Early Years experience.

SUMMARY

Times

0815-1615 daily with a maximum of 30 hours free ELC per week.
A maximum (ideally) of 6 hours in any one day

Your child needs

Clothing and shoes suitable for gym in a named bag
Sunscreen applied before attending on summer days
Wear suitable clothing, for ease of removal and comfort.

Parking

Please do not use the bus bays or the disabled parking places – unless you are entitled to do so - when you drop off or pick up your child.