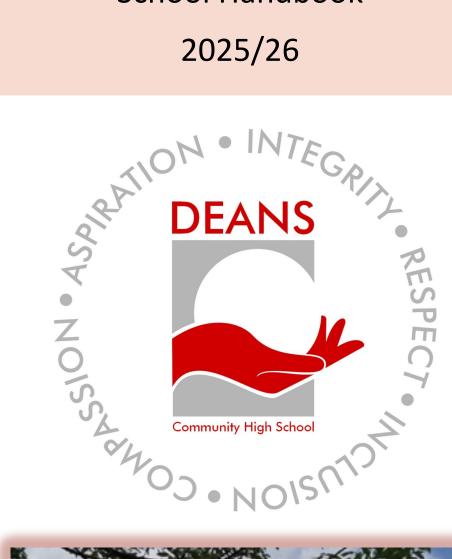
# Deans Community High School Handbook 2025/26





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# Welcome to our school...





Whether you are a prospective student or a parent of one I hope the information in the following pages gives you some insight into what makes Deans the thriving community that we are very proud of.

Deans Community High School aims to provide an educational experience of the highest quality for all our learners. We want students of all ages to attain and to achieve the highest level that they can so they can be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. We want DCHS to thrive as an ambitious, vibrant and caring community. We work in

partnership with others to improve and meet the needs of every learner wisely using and sharing resources, knowledge and skills. Every achievement is shared and celebrated.

We appreciate parents, carers and the home environment are the most influential aspect of a child's life and this is why we place so much importance on partnership. This means that we actively seek as many ways as possible to involve you in the education of your child or in your own education.

The following pages give details of some of the ways in which you can expect us to keep you informed and involved along with the key staff an educational experience of the highest who will work with you. We look forward to quality for all our learners. We want students

Pauline Allison

Headteacher

# values and aims...

### West Lothian Council Mission Statement

"Strivingforexcellence...workingwithandforourcommunities."



### **West Lothian Council Values**

- Focusing on customers' needs
- Being honest, open and accountable
- Providing equality of opportunities
- Developing employees
- Making best use of resources
- Working in partnership

### **School Aims**

### ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

To raise standards of educational attainment for all in school, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.

### FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING

To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self-discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning.

### **INCLUSION AND EQUALITY**

To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages.

### **VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP**

To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society, and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.

# All about Deans....





Deans Community High School is a comprehensive, nondenominational school situated in North Livingston. We aim to challenge and support all of our learners in achieving the very best they can, enabling them to move successfully onto their choice of destination when they leave us.

Students are supported by a dedicated team of teaching and non-teaching staff across the school. The senior leadership team consists of two principal teachers, eight principal teachers of curriculum, three depute headteachers and the headteacher. Leadership across the school is encouraged and extended further within both the staff and the student body. Student representation within the senior student leadership team, junior student leadership team, student council and further working groups have ensured students have a voice and actively affect change within their community.



The school is a modern building with excellent facilities including extensive sports areas, swimming pool and theatre. The roll generally sits at around 1000 students, along with an additional senior phase cohort from Cedarbank School.

# Student Leadership...







**School Vice-Captain** 

We value the positive impact of student leadership in enhancing the experiences of all students. Leadership opportunities exist in many forms across the school including senior school captain, school vice-captain, prefects, subject ambassadors and student council.

The student council consists of representatives from each year group who are elected by their peers for a two year term. They have been very effective in putting forward the views and bringing about changes within the school, including the number of qualifications undertaken in S4 and the introduction of school blazers.



**Senior Student Leadership Team** 

# Our Vision and Values...



Our vision and values have been developed and agreed together as a school community. These represent what we want learners to gain from their time at Deans Community High School and what is important to them as young people within society and those who share this community.

# **Our Shared Vision**

Students at Deans Community High School will be inspired through high quality learning and teaching, in a safe, inclusive environment, to confidently achieve and attain the very best they can to succeed in life, learning and work.

# **Our Shared Values**

**INCLUSION** 

**RESPECT** 

**INTEGRITY** 

COMPASSION

**ASPIRATION** 



# Transition to Deans....



# **Primary School to Secondary School Transition**

An application form must be completed for all primary to secondary transfers in West Lothian. The Pupil Placement Section deals with all primary to secondary transfers. Application forms should be returned to Pupil Placement unless your primary school is collecting the forms for return to Pupil Placement.

West Lothian is divided into catchment areas for primary and secondary schools. Each home address has a catchment denominational school and a catchment non-denominational school, for both primary and secondary education. Although the council aims to provide enough places for all children in the catchment area at a catchment school, living within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at a catchment school. Parents can request a school other than one of their catchment schools. This is known as a 'placing request'. Parents can request their child go to any primary school in West Lothian regardless of their religion. The council must grant these requests unless there is a legal reason not to.

Preparatory work is done in the months preceding transfer by the support staff in conjunction with the staff of the primary schools so that levels of attainment, learning, health and emotional difficulties are fully taken into account when allocating these young students to their tutor group in Deans.

We have a transition programme for primary students which includes multiple opportunities for students and parents to gain some insight into our curriculum, staff and the school building. All information around these events will be communicated in advance through your child's primary school.

We have a strong, collaborative relationship with all of our cluster primaries and work closely with them to make the transition from primary to secondary an event to look forward to.









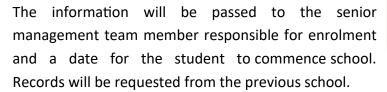


# Other Applications to Deans ....



# **Applications During the School Session**

Secondary schools deal with all applications for S1-S6 during the current session. Application for admission to secondary schools forms may be obtained from the schools or West Lothian Authority. Completed forms should be returned directly to your preferred secondary school.





### **Applications Outwith the School Session** (July and August)

The Pupil Placement Section at West Lothian Civic Centre deals with all applications outwith the school session.

To apply for a school place you must complete an online application form. If you are unable to complete an online application, paper versions of all application forms are available from schools, nursery schools, libraries, Council Information Service Offices and from the Pupil Placement Section.

Full details of the application process are set out in the policy documents in related documents. Each Provision has:

- application form, which requires to be completed and submitted.
- policy document, which explains the policy and process for that provision.
- guidance notes, which lists establishments that provide this provision and contact details/ times for them). Two year old provisions guidance is in the form of a flowchart.

https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32389/Applying-for-a-place-in-a-West-Lothian-Council-secondary-school



# **Senior Management Team**



Mrs Pauline Allison Headteacher

Mrs Allison has overall responsibility for the school, its ethos and school policies. She also has overall responsibility for learning and teaching, school finance and staff management.

Mrs Caroline Bleach Senior Depute Headteacher

Mrs Bleach is year head for S5 and S6. She leads the school pastoral team and also has responsibility for school examinations, professional learning and developing the young workforce. Mrs Bleach is the school's lead child protection officer.





Mrs Dawn Fleming
Depute Headteacher

Mrs Fleming is year head for S3 and S4. She leads the school curriculum team and also has responsibility for writing the school timetable, course choice and pupil equity fund.

Miss Gemma Thomson Acting Depute Headteacher

Miss Thomson is year head for S1 and S2. He leads the school support for learning team and also has responsibility for primary/secondary transition, additional support needs and quality assurance.





# Senior Leadership Team Curriculum Leads



Mr Stephen Wright
PTC Expressive Science



Mr Pete Duncan PTC Maths & Art



Mrs Lisa Emmett
PT (Acting) Modern Languages



Mrs Margaret McNicol PTC Humanities



# Senior Leadership Team Curriculum Leads



Mr Michael O'Donnell PT English



Mrs Sharon Yates
PTC Technologies



Mrs Gordon Acting PT Music



Miss Evans
Acting PT Physical Education



# Senior Leadership Team Pastoral Leads



# Mrs Lorraine Clark PTC Support (Acting)

**Dechmont House** 



Mr Dean Tearney

PTC Support Houston House

The Support Team also in	1-
cludes:	
	_

Mrs Berwick APSW

Mrs Brown PSW

Ms Dickson PSW

Mrs Lammie PSW

Miss McIntosh PSW

Mrs Nicoll APSW

Ms Stephenson PSW

Ms Wielachowska PSW

Mrs Wilson

Wellbeing Support Officer

# **Mrs Stacey McCallum**

Acting PTC Support Cairnpapple House

# Meet our teachers....

# DEANS NO. SANOS NOISON

# **English Faculty**

# **Expressive Arts**

Mr O'Donnell (PTC)	Music
Mr Henry	
Mrs Hewit	
Ms Jenkins	
Ms Kazeminia	Drama

Mrs McAleer Ms Marshall Mrs Smith Mrs Vanson Ms Welsh

# **Physical Education**

Miss Evans (Acting PT)

Miss Campbell
Mr Croser
Mrs Devlin
Miss Drummond
Mr Robertson
Mr Tearney
Mr Yardley

# **Modern Languages Faculty**

Mrs Emmett (PTC)

Ms Accarier Miss Cabezudo Miss Ruols

### **Support for Learning**

Mr Cherry Mrs Grigor Mrs Meikle Mrs Simpson Mrs Walker Music Mrs Gordon (Acting PT)

Mrs Igbesoko Miss Luke Mr Middleton

Miss Glass Mr Stewart

**Humanities Faculty** 

RMPS Mrs McNicol (PTC)

Mr Laurie Geography Miss Crawford Mr Gibson

> Mr Beveridge Mrs Culbert

Mrs Brown

Miss Cunningham

Modern Miss Duller Studies Mrs Stewart

History

# **Maths & Art Faculty**

Maths Mr Duncan (PTC)

Miss Garrod Mr Mackin Mr McConville Mr McCord

Miss McGurl Mrs McLaren Mrs McNaughton

Mr Gillon

Art

Mr Pepperell-Young

Miss Reid

# **Science Faculty**

Chemistry Mr Wright (PTC)

Mrs Clark
Mr McLay
Mr Wight

Biology Miss Andrews

Mrs Clark Mr Elliott Mrs McCallum Mr Steele

Physics Miss Liddell

# **Technologies Faculty**

Business Mrs Yates (PTC)

Mr Easson Mrs Findlay Ms Lammie Miss Smith

Computing Mrs Bell

DMG Mr MacKerrachar

Mr Rafferty

Home Miss Burdett

Economics

# Support for pupils....



We have an integrated approach to supporting students to ensure that we can meet the needs of all students within the school. The main aim of the support team is to remove barriers to learning and help students to access the curriculum at an appropriate level. The team consists of tutors, heads of house, support for learning staff, pupil support staff and support assistants. The school has a designated support area on the first floor where all staff are based.

As the needs of our students change so too does the support we offer. We continually review and refresh this. When students have additional learning needs they may be supported by an individual education plan, created by students, staff and parents together, giving them specific targets relevant to their needs and ability. Support for learning staff also organise additional assessment arrangements negotiated with the Scottish qualifications authority (SQA) for those students in S4, S5 and S6 whose

learning needs necessitate this. Delivering appropriate provision for all our students is a key aim, and we are all totally committed to this at Deans Community High School. If you feel your child may require additional support then please contact the school for information and advice. Lothian's policy on inclusion can be accessed online https:// at www.westlothian.gov.uk/ article/30879/Support-for-Pupils-and-**Parents** 

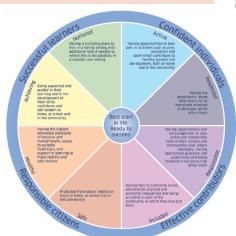
The Parents' Guide to Additional Support for Learning is now available to download

at: https://



# Support for pupils...

We are fully committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of our learners and have a wide range of supports available to students. These include but are not limited to:



# **Pupil Support Base**

This base is managed by the team of support

assistants who work with students from all year groups and liaise closely with parents/carers. They also offer support with attendance issues, medical issues, homework and dress code. They aim to maintain a positive ethos within the school by supporting the positive behavior policy.

### **Your Space Counselling Service**

Your Space has been working since February 2018 in Deans Community High School. The service was commissioned to work in Deans to address the emotional needs of young people who can be affected by poverty, family breakdown and reconfiguration, bereavement, loss, family and peer relationship difficulties, anxiety and bullying. Your Space positions itself as part of the pastoral care within the school and represents an immediate, on-site response for those pupils who need the additional expertise therapy and counselling brings to the overall pastoral system within Deans Community High School.

### Mental Health

All of our staff are trained in supporting mental health and we have a number of key staff also trained as mental health first aiders. We have a member of staff trained in teaching mindfulness and who works with students on using these techniques to help relieve stress and anxiety.



# Developing the Young Workforce...



Our vision is to develop a young workforce that has the skills, confidence and aspirations to achieve their goals and ultimately reach their full potential. In doing so we work with a wide range of partners including employers, training providers, colleges and universities.

# Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Our SDS careers advisor is Evelyn Rogers who works with students in every year group, providing career management skills coaching and guidance to students.

She is based in the school library and students can make appointments with her at any point in the school year.



# STEPSING WORK Appropriate the state of the

# **Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Coordinator**

Mrs Ward is the DYW coordinator within the school. She develops and maintains close links with many local businesses, ensuring our students are made aware of job opportunities available to them. Regular DYW bulletins are issued to students and can be viewed on the school website.

Students have opportunities throughout their time at school to develop the skills they will need in the workplace and these are reinforced across all subjects.



Every child and young person in Scotland is entitled to experience a broad general education, as described by the Scottish Government's Curriculum for Excellence. Within Deans Community High School, students are offered some personalisation and choice within their curriculum from S3.

The curriculum is organised into eight broad categories.

### **Expressive arts**

Includes art and design, dance, drama and music. Your child will get the chance to find out about and express their feelings and emotions, and those of others.

### Health and wellbeing

Includes mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, planning for choices and changes, PE, activity and sport, food and health, substance misuse,

relationships, sexual health and parenthood.

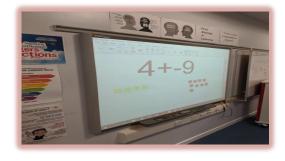


## Languages

Includes learning about English as well as learning an additional language.

### **Mathematics**

Includes using real life experiences to make predictions, connect to other things, provide skills to understand and examine information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions.





# Religious and moral education

Includes exploring the world's major religions alongside views that are non-religious. Your child will think about their own beliefs and values.

Children learn about Christian practice in worship and the place of Christian action in the community. Children will also study other world religions in line with national guidelines.

This part of the curriculum operates through class teaching, assemblies, outside visits and visitors to school.

Any parent who wishes to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious education/ observance should inform the Head teacher.

### **Sciences**

Includes learning about the natural world and living things, forces, chemical changes and our senses.

### **Social studies**

Includes developing understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances.

### **Technologies**

Includes business, computing science, food, textiles, craft, engineering, graphics and applied technologies.

More information about Curriculum for Excellence is available on the Education Scotland website

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/





### **Instrumental Tuition**

The Council offers instruction in bagpipes, brass, percussion, strings and woodwind. The music department will tell children when there is an opportunity to apply for lessons. There is no charge for lessons and you can find out more from the instrumental music service.





### **Digital Learning**

Children access information and resources on local and worldwide networks as part of their studies. Our main platform for accessing digital learning is Microsoft Teams and all students are added to class Teams by their teachers. A large volume of coursework and additional resources can be accessed by students in school and at home on digital devices via Teams. We teach children about internet safety and how to report any items that make them feel uncomfortable.

We ask parents to promote the responsible and safe use of the internet at home, including the use of social media if parents permit their children to access it.

Further information on safe use of the Internet is available at:

http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk



### **Extracurricular Activities**

All extracurricular activities are free and open to every student. We encourage students to make the most of these opportunities to try new activities and meet new friends.

Football Charities Committee

Wind Band Yearbook Committee

Choir Multicultural World Club

Gymnastics Science Club

DNA Film Club

Soul Band Sustainability Group

Pipe Band Rugby

School Show Badminton

Drama Club Table Tennis

Volleyball Fitness

Gaming Club Basketball

Humanities Club Folk Band

# Our Curriculum...



From S1 to S3, students follow the Broad General Education (BGE) which essentially means they study a wide range of subjects. As they progress to the senior phase of their education from S4 to S6, they have opportunities to specialise in a smaller range of subjects.



In S3 students study eight subjects which they select towards the end of S2. From these, they then select seven to study in S4 and gain National Qualifications in.

In S5 and S6 they can then specialise further and choose up to five subjects.

# Assessment & Reporting...



Student progress is regularly assessed in a variety of ways within the classroom. This enables us to track the progress of each child and to provide them with feedback on their learning. Tracking reports are issued at various points throughout the year, with action points detailed at key times within the school calendar.

We aim to ensure reports are:

- Informative parents/carers and students should be aware of current progress and steps to be taken to continue to progress.
- Accurate whether a student is coping well or struggling, this should be clear from the report.
- Timely the report should be based the teacher's assessment of progress (formal and informal) whilst leaving time for next steps to be undertaken and a platform for students to discuss their next steps with a member of the teaching staff.
   Information would be needed for students to make informed course choices in \$2/3/4/5.

Parents have an opportunity to feedback on their child's report.

Parents' evenings are currently being held in person with dates posted in advance in the parent newsletter.

# Attendance...



# **Reporting an Absence**

If your child is going to be absent from school, please let us know as soon as possible by calling us on **01506 282155** and selecting option 1 for 'absence and groupcall'

Please help us develop in your child a regular habit of good timekeeping. If circumstances arise when your child will be unavoidably late please provide a note of explanation.

The school enters pupil absence electronically using codes for particular reasons for absence. To ensure an accurate record is kept it is important that, should your child be absent, you provide an explanation for that absence either by letter or by telephone. Our school has a system which sends out an automated text message to a mobile telephone in cases of unexplained absence. The text is repeated regularly until answered. Parents/carers and schools must work in partnership in order to benefit from early notification of unexplained absence from school. Parents are urged to opt into this system.

The Scottish Government has issued a directive informing local authorities that, due to the impact absences during termtime have on children's learning, any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised. Family holidays should therefore be taken out-with term times. If, in exceptional circumstances, you wish to take your children out of school you must make your request to the headteacher in writing.

If you become aware your child may be absent from school for a considerable length of time, due to illness or admission to hospital, you are requested to inform the school as soon as possible.

# Ethos ...



### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

Children learn to develop values and positive attitudes towards themselves and others in many aspects of the curriculum which in turn contribute to their personal and social development. Our schools work hard to build confidence and self-esteem and provide opportunities for children to contribute to the whole school community. Much of their development in these areas helps to lay the foundations for becoming responsible citizens of the future.

We promote and expect a high standard of responsible behaviour from pupils towards staff, other pupils and their surroundings. Self-discipline is the key to good behaviour and we depend on your support in reinforcing the discipline guidelines of the school.

These guidelines are based on mutual consideration, good manners and respect and are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff in school.

# **Fairness and Equality**

All pupils have the right to enjoy opportunities and activities regardless of their background, race, gender or religion. They will be given the freedom to develop their full potential without constraint.

Our aim is promote self-esteem and a positive self-image in every pupil. Self-respect and respect for others is a priority. We treat boys and girls equally and offer the same opportunities to all pupils by offering a diverse curriculum which addresses the needs and opinions of all. We aim to maintain an environment which is free from bullying, racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour. We value your support in maintaining this ethos.

# Ethos...



### **Partnership and Communication with Parents**

West Lothian schools operate an open, responsive policy with regard to questions or concerns parents may have. If you have concerns or complaints regarding the service provided you should raise these with the headteacher in the first instance.

Newsletters are issued frequently including weekly headteacher updates and wider newsletters. Curricular evenings and parents' meetings are held regularly and additional information is communicated through the school app and parent newsletter. Your comments and suggestions on the work done in school and the service provided for you and your child are welcomed.

Evaluation forms will be sent to you from time to time, mainly using electronic forms, so we can be sure we are listening to what you say about the service provided for you and your child.

Tracking reports are issued regularly to provide you with information on your child's progress



# Ethos...



### **Parent Council**

A parent council is a group of parents selected by members of the parent forum to represent all the parents at a school on a voluntary basis. All parents/carers in a school are automatically members of the parent forum of that school.

The purpose of a parent council is to:

- support the school in its work with parents
- represent the views of all parents
- encourage links between school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community.

We have an active parent council who meet regularly and consists of parents and school staff. All parents are welcome to join at any time and minutes of previous meetings can be found on the school website.

Further information can be found on the Scottish Parent Teacher Council Website http://www.sptc.info

### **Parentzone Scotland**

Parents can sign up to receive Parents and Carers e-bulletins for the latest developments in Scottish education.

Edscot.org.uk/p/LQE-39I/subscribe

Email: enquiries@educationscotland.gov.scot

Education.gov.scot/parentzone

# School Dress Code...





### **Our Uniform**

- Deans jumper/tank-top/hoodie or plain black jumper/cardigan/hoodie
- Plain black trousers/jeans/leggings/skirt/ shorts (not joggers)
- ♦ White shirt (short or long sleeved).
- ♦ S1-4 'junior' tie.
- S5-6 'senior' tie.
- Black/mostly black shoes
- Black school blazer (optional)

Each school has its own dress code, for the whole school, based on the Council's policy which all pupils will be expected to keep to.

We are committed to keeping the cost of the school day to a minimum and as such have ensured that all uniform items can be easily purchased at low cost. Students are asked to avoid wearing clothing with prominent logos in class.



#### **Medication in Schools**

Most pupils will, at some time, have a medical condition that may affect their participation in school activities. For many this will be short-term; for example finishing prescribed medication despite the child's doctor regarding the child fit to attend school. Some pupils have medical conditions which, without help, could limit their access to education.

Parents have prime responsibility for their child's health and should provide the school with information about their child's medical condition.

Please tell the school if your child needs medication. Forms for any child requiring medicine to be taken during school time are available from the school office or can be downloaded from www.westlothian.gov.uk

## **Emergency Contacts and Arrangements**

It is essential the school has the name, address and telephone number of the adult to be contacted in case of an accident or your child feeling ill. Please ensure records are kept up to date by notifying us of any change of address and telephone number of your child's emergency contacts.

Children will only be sent home early in special circumstances. The school will make every effort to contact you in such situations. Where there is no adult to receive the child they will be supervised in school until such time as suitable arrangements are made. In the event of extreme weather conditions you may check the council website for information on any school closures.

Deans Community High School have a means of contacting parents and carers via text message.



# **Security**

The school has a security system that allows all doors to be locked electronically once the children are in school. The locking system is released automatically if the fire alarm goes off. All visitors should report to the school office via the front entrance to sign in and collect a visitor's badge. The school welcomes parents and carers but asks them to help to ensure the security of the school by reporting to the school office.

### **Photography**

West Lothian schools have a photography consent form which is in accordance with data protection and human rights legislation. All parents are asked to sign a consent form before any photographs are taken.

If you have any concerns about photography, please let us know.

### **Child Protection Guidelines**

The safety of your child at school is a priority for the authority. All West Lothian schools follow the Lothian Child Protection guidelines, a copy of which can be found on www.westlothian.gov.uk.

All Deans Community High School staff are trained annually in child protection procedures

Mrs Caroline Bleach	DHT	Mrs Lorraine Clark	PTC Support
Mrs Dawn Fleming	DHT	Mr Dean Tearney	PTC Support
Miss Gemma Thomso	n DHT	Mrs Stacey McCallum	PTC Support



# **Feedback and Complaints**

If you have feedback, concerns or complaints regarding the service you are receiving, these can be addressed by contacting the headteacher in the first instance.

If you are dissatisfied with the response you should contact:

**Education Services West Lothian Council** 

West Lothian Civic Centre Howden South Road Livingston, EH54 6FF

Tel: 01506 281952



### **Car Park**

The school car park has dedicated spaces for disabled parking. In the interests of safety parents are asked to avoid blocking access to and from the school car park at the start and end of the school day in particular.

## **Transport**

West Lothian Council will provide transport assistance for all secondary school pupils living more than two miles from their designated school. The provision of transport for pupils attending special schools and classes is not subject to these limitations but is based on individual pupil need. Further information can be obtained from school transport (telephone 01506 775291) or from the school transport policy on www.westlothian.gov.uk

Parents who choose to send their children to a school out with their catchment area will be responsible for any extra travelling expenses incurred.

### **Data Sharing**

On occasion schools will make data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, schools will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities.

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act. For more information on how children's data is handled please see our Privacy Notice https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/21250/Education-Schools-Privacy-Notice/pdf/Education\_-\_Schools\_Privacy\_Notice1.pdf?m=637049262959500000