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# Merrylee Primary School



## Handbook 2023/24

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**Welcome to Merrylee Primary School**



Dear Parent/Carer

On behalf of all staff, pupils and parents, I extend a warm welcome to you and your child to Merrylee Primary and thank you for giving me the opportunity to share our learning journey with you. This handbook contains a range of information that you might find helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact the school or check the school website if you need more information.

Merrylee Primary is a caring learning environment in which we all thrive, work hard together and have fun! We have respect for each other and we encourage each other to be the best we can be in all we do. We offer an educational experience which aims to address each child as an individual. We aim to educate the whole child and to nurture children to be successful learners, confident in their own abilities, take a pride and responsibility for their own community and beyond and able to make an effective contribution to society. We set high standards for each individual in both academic and aesthetic attainment and achievement whilst concentrating on developing children to have a love of learning which will stay with them for life.

To achieve these aims and to deliver the most effective education for our pupils, we believe that it is essential to build a strong home - school partnership where we all work together to achieve this common goal. Such a partnership is a strength of our school. In our last local authority quality assurance visit we were rated 'excellent' for our partnership working. There are many ways in which you can contribute to the life of the school or participate in the many activities and events which take place throughout the session. I look forward to sharing these with you.



We feel privileged to be working within our very unique building which is of exceptional design and has all the features necessary for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education. Our classrooms are large, bright and airy. We have a spacious playroom, gym hall and main hall and wonderful outside play areas. Merrylee is the only school in the United Kingdom with a natural play site within its grounds, complete with a wind turbine which provides 12% of the school's electricity. There is also a full-size football pitch which is the envy of many.

Merrylee is now your school. I hope that this handbook gives you a glimpse of life at Merrylee. We look forward to having you and your child work with us and hope that this will be the start of a strong partnership.



Colette Haddock  
Head Teacher

Last updated September 2023

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## Our Vision, Values and Aims

### Vision

Learning together at Merrylee Primary to motivate and inspire our children to be the best they can be and to live happily and confidently in an ever changing world.

### Values

Making friends

Eco friendly

Responsible

Respect

Yes we can!

Learning Outdoors

Enjoy healthy lifestyle

Exciting Opportunities



### School Aims

At Merrylee Primary we aim to:

- Provide a rich, diverse and challenging education through excellent and innovative teaching and learning
- Celebrate success, promote a 'can do' attitude and inspire each other to achieve their best
- Develop the attitudes and skills that support a healthy and fulfilled life together with the confidence for a lifetime of learning
- Work as partners in learning with pupils, parents/carers and the community
- Provide a safe, supported and well-ordered environment where pupils and staff are happy and confident as they aspire to achieve

Our shared values have been devised by representatives of our whole community.

The principles and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence influence the crystallisation of our vision, values and aims. As a school community we wish to embody challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, personalisation and choice in our curriculum design to promote successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Vision, values and aims statements are established in collaboration with all stakeholders.

### School Information

#### Address

Merrylee Primary School  
50 Friarton Road  
Glasgow G43 2PR

#### Telephone number

0141 637 6798

#### Head Teacher

Colette Haddock

#### e-mail contact

[chaddock@merrylee-pri.glasgow.sch.uk](mailto:chaddock@merrylee-pri.glasgow.sch.uk)

#### School website

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/gc/merryleeprimary/>

#### Parent Council website

[www.merryleeprimarypc.org](http://www.merryleeprimarypc.org)

#### Glasgow City Council Education website

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/education>

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### Stages covered

Primary 1 to primary 7

We share the campus with Lime Tree Nursery which caters for children from 0-5 years of age. We enjoy strong relations and excellent working practices.

### Status

Non-denominational

Co-educational

### Current role

384 pupils

## Our current school staff

The school is very fortunate to have a team of dedicated and enthusiastic staff who work together for the benefit of all. Like the children, each is a valued individual who believe in promoting the positive team spirit which makes this school special. A full list is available on the school website.

### Leadership team:

<b>Head Teacher</b>	Colette Haddock
<b>Depute Head Teacher</b>	Catriona Kirk
<b>Acting Depute Head Teacher</b>	Lynsey McLaughlin
<b>Principal Teacher</b>	Fiona Whyte
<b>Acting Principal Teacher</b>	Suzanne Timoney
<b>Acting Principal Teacher</b>	Alana Murray

## Why send your child to Merrylee?

This is a very active school community. The HMle report recognised the excellent practice at Merrylee and we continue to seek ways to continually improve and to offer our children the best possible learning experiences. We have a committed and dedicated team of staff who work tirelessly to ensure that the needs of all our children are met. The staff are superbly supported and encouraged by hardworking, caring and interested parents, carers and friends. We have the privilege of working with outstanding children who clearly love being in school. They are respectful, well behaved and conscientious.

If you send your child to Merrylee it is the greatest honour you could bestow on our school. Your child is the most precious gift and one we will aim to nurture, develop and guide towards being a successful learner, an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible citizen.

### Extract from the HMle report of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

*This inspection of your school found the following key strengths:*

- *Polite, highly-motivated children and their involvement in the life of the school*
- *Children's achievement in literacy and numeracy*
- *Children's learning experiences, including high-quality outdoor learning*
- *Highly effective teamwork among staff and partnership with parents and the wider community which enhances children's learning*
- *Dynamic leadership of the headteacher and promoted staff in improving the school*

If you wish to find out more about Merrylee please email the head teacher or contact the school office on 0141 637 6798 to arrange a telephone appointment with a member of the school leadership team or a visit to the school.

We also offer open sessions in October for our prospective P1s as part of our induction programme.

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### Enrolling your child in school

Registration of Primary 1 children takes place in November and is advertised widely in local press etc. If you wish to enrol your child for next session's Primary 1, please register online via the council's website – see the link below. Please note that your child should be 4 years of age before the 1st of March 2024. We are delighted to once again be able to offer visits from prospective parents to visit the school and organise open days to facilitate this.

We invite all new entrants and their families to join us for a pre-school programme of events to welcome and prepare them for life in school. During these visits we will do our utmost to ensure that your child feels welcome and comfortable in our school.

We liaise closely with the many pre-5 establishments to ensure a smooth and effective transition for all pupils. We aim to continue the excellent work undertaken by our early year's partners in the best interests of individual pupils.

Parents with pupils already of school age who wish a place for their child should follow the online registration procedures. You may also wish to contact the head teacher or any other member of the school leadership team by telephone.

### Placing requests

Families living out with the catchment area are welcome to make a placing request to attend Merrylee Primary School but must enrol their child at their local school as a first step.

To register for school or to make a placing request, please use the link below:  
<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=18426>

**Working together with our parents/carers in partnership is crucial to our success!**

### Organisation of Classes

The following guidelines set by Scottish Government apply:

P1	maximum 25
P2 & P3	maximum 30
P4-7	maximum 33
Composite classes	maximum 25

Composite classes have pupils from more than one stage.



### Learning Community

Merrylee Primary is part of the Hillpark Learning Community. We have strong links with all pre 5, primaries and the high school within our learning community. We share expertise for the benefit of all pupils within our area.

### Breakfast club

This service operates each morning in the school hall from 8am. The cost of this is £2 per day or free if your child is entitled to footwear and clothing grant.

### After school care

Merrylee After School Care Club runs each day in the school hall from 3.10-6pm. Fun Lodge also operates from Merrylee Parish Church Hall. Both services are operated independently from the school.

### School opening hours

9am - 3.10pm daily  
Interval 10.30-10.45am  
Lunch 12.15-1.10pm

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## School holidays

Details of holiday dates are available on the Glasgow City Council website:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17024>

## Attendance at School

In Merrylee we work in partnership with families. We wish to maintain our exceptionally high attendance rate as this ensures that our children are in school whenever possible and are accessing the challenging and exciting educational experiences on offer. Parents are asked to advise if their son/daughter is going to be absent. Please call the central pupil absence reporting line on **0141 287 0039**. The line is open from 8am until 3.30pm Monday to Friday. This should be done as early as possible on the first day of absence. If your child is going to be absent for some time, it would be helpful to know at the earliest opportunity. The line is open from 08.00-15.30, Monday to Friday. Alternatively you can use the online form on the Glasgow City Council website: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=18832>

The attendance policy at Merrylee is in accordance with Glasgow City Council Attendance Policy. If your child is not in school by 9.30am and you have not notified the reporting line of the absence, one of the office staff will contact you to seek guidance. This system can also provide you with the comfort that if your child does not arrive in school as usual and the school has not been notified, we will act on it swiftly.

Please note that in the unlikely case that your child develops a pattern of poor and/or unexplained absence which affects educational progress, the Education Liaison Officer will investigate and the Educational Authority can take the matter further. The Education Liaison officer has the power to refer pupils to the reporter of the children's hearings. Such decisions are always taken in the best interests of the child.

Glasgow City Council policy states that parents/guardians do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school without permission during term-time. The Head Teacher can only authorise time off during term time in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances include:

- Short term parental placement abroad
- Family returning to its country of origin for family reasons
- The period immediately after an illness or accident
- A period of serious or critical illness of a close family relative
- A domestic crisis which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation

Time off during term time for the following reasons is not acceptable and will be recorded as unauthorised:

- Availability of cheaper holidays or desired accommodation
- Holidays which overlap the beginning or end of term

Clearly with no explanation from the parent, the absence is unauthorised.

## Medical and Health Care Information

The school nurse visits the school at various times during the school year. Parents are kept informed by letter. If a child becomes ill during the school day, he/she may require to be sent home. Please ensure that you update



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any changes to contact details with the office staff.

Parents should inform the school of any medical requirements relating to their child. If a child requires medication during the school day, parents must complete the appropriate medical form. This is available from the school office.

### Allergies

A number of pupils and staff have severe nut allergies. Please note Merrylee operates a nut-free policy.

## Information in Emergencies

We make every effort to maintain a full educational service, but some circumstances arise which lead to disruption. Schools may be affected by, for example:

- Severe weather
- Temporary interruption of transport
- Power failures
- Difficulties in fuel supply

In such cases we shall do all we can to let you know about the details of closure or re-opening.

We shall keep you in touch by using our online communication platform, Seesaw and information posted on the school website. There may also at times be announcements in the press and on local radio.

## Clothing and Uniform

All of the pupils attending Merrylee Primary School wear the school uniform as detailed below.

Grey skirt/pinafore/trousers/shorts

White shirt and tie or blue polo shirt

Grey jumper/cardigan or sweatshirt

White or Grey socks/tights

Merrylee school uniform is stocked by:

- Campbell's, Victoria Road
- Blossoms, Ayr Road
- Apparel Exchange, St Enoch Centre
- BE Schoolwear <https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk/schools/merrylee-primary-school.html>
- Set Schoolwear [https://www.schoolwearsotland.com/primary-school-uniform-merrylee-primary-school-c-2\\_247.html](https://www.schoolwearsotland.com/primary-school-uniform-merrylee-primary-school-c-2_247.html)

We also offer a range of good quality pre-loved school uniform and encourage our families to take advantage of this as required. This is available all year round at the school community entrance and is regularly managed by the Parent Association. Donations are also welcome.

**Please ensure that every item of your child's clothing is named and that you check them regularly.**

### PE Kit

It is important that pupils come prepared to learn and for PE this requires appropriate clothing. All jewellery should be removed. Pupils who are not participating in PE must have a note or a medical certificate. Pupils who are unable to participate in practical PE should still bring their kit to allow them to assist in the lesson by refereeing, keeping scores or assisting with the distribution of equipment. This

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ensures that they are still able to take part in some way in the work of the class and do not miss out on the knowledge and understanding of the course.

There are forms of dress that are unacceptable in school, such as items of clothing which:

- Could cause offence (such as anti-religious symbolism or political slogans)
- Could cause health and safety difficulties (such as loose-fitting clothing, jewellery\*)
- Could cause damage to flooring
- Carry advertising particularly for alcohol or tobacco
- Could be used to inflict damage on other pupils

At Merrylee we promote an ethos of respect and tolerance for all and do permit the wearing of football tops for PE and other sports activities.

\* GCC policy states that earrings must be removed for PE for health and safety reasons. If you are planning to get your child's ears pierced, please do so at the start of the summer holiday to allow sufficient time before they can be removed.

### Clothing & Footwear Grants

Parents/Carers receiving Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Working Tax Credit (check link below for thresholds), Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Universal Credit (check link below for thresholds) will normally be entitled to monetary grants for footwear and clothing for their children. Information and application forms may be obtained from schools and at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17885>



### School meals

Our school provides a lunch service which offers a variety of meals and snacks. Medical diets for children can be provided. Further information can be found here: [http://www.fuelzoneprimary.co.uk/UserFiles/files/Medical Diet Leaflet%20-%20June%202017%20WEB.pdf](http://www.fuelzoneprimary.co.uk/UserFiles/files/Medical%20Diet%20Leaflet%20-%20June%202017%20WEB.pdf). Please inform the Headteacher.

Children who prefer to bring packed lunches will be accommodated in the dining hall or may choose to eat outside at designated picnic areas, weather permitting. All children in P1-5 are entitled to a free school meal.

If you plan to send your child/children to breakfast club, you should inform the staff of any medical dietary requirements.

We promote a healthy eating policy at Merrylee. Classes have fruit breaks in the course of the school day. Children are encouraged to bring only healthy snacks for playtimes and to have fresh water in their clean water bottles daily. We do occasionally enjoy a 'treat' as part of a celebration or occasion. For example, for St Andrew's day classes may have some irn bru and shortbread. Also, in outdoor learning sessions when the firepit is in use, children often have the chance to toast marshmallows and enjoy a hot flavoured drink. If for any reason you do not wish your child to be given a 'treat' of this kind, please inform the class teacher.

Children and young people of parents/carers receiving Income Support, income-based Job Seekers Allowance, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit only, Universal Credit and income-related Employment and

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Support Allowance are entitled to a free midday meal (check link below for thresholds). Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17885>

### Transport

The education authority has a policy of providing free transport to all pupils who live out with a certain radius from their local school by the recognised shortest walking route. This means that the provision of transport could be reviewed at any time. Parents/Carers who consider they are eligible can apply online at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17882>

### Animals in and around school

At Merrylee we often enjoy visits from specialists who bring a variety of animals into school for education purposes. All visitors are thoroughly risk assessed. If your child has an allergy to any animal, please ensure this information is shared with the school and/or class teacher as appropriate.

For dog owners, if you are bringing your dog to school at drop off or pick up times, please note that dogs are not permitted on school grounds. Some children are very anxious around dogs and we would respectfully request that you maintain a safe distance and keep your dog on a lead at all times.

### Transfer from Primary to Secondary School

Children and young people normally transfer between the ages of 11 ½ and 12 ½, so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents and carers will be informed of the school arrangements no later than December of P7. Children from our school normally transfer to:

Hillpark Secondary School  
36 Cairngrom Road  
Glasgow City Council G43 2XA  
Email: [headteacher@hillpark-sec.glasgow.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@hillpark-sec.glasgow.sch.uk)  
[www.hillpark-sec.glasgow.sch.uk](http://www.hillpark-sec.glasgow.sch.uk)

Hillpark Secondary School staff work with our pupils from Primary 6 onward to prepare them for the transfer to secondary school.

### Communication

Effective communication is at the heart of any successful organisation. We endeavour to keep parents/carers informed on a regular basis. At Merrylee, we use Seesaw, a digital communication platform which is a private format for use only by those families in the class. The school provides information through Seesaw about future events, achievements, curriculum information, dates for your diary and other relevant news items. It is also used to provide updates on learning and events, homework information and to share photographs of learning and experiences.



Please feel free to contact the Head Teacher via e-mail at any time. Merrylee has an 'open door' policy where we endeavour to meet with parents as and when required. There is always a member of the school leadership team available at all times. No issue is too small and is best dealt with in a timely manner. If you wish to contact your child's class teacher, please telephone the school office or email a member of the

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leadership team to arrange a meeting.

Mrs Timoney, Principal Teacher and Digital Leader of Learning (DLOL), keeps the school website as current as possible. This is a huge task and could actually be a full time job! We are very grateful to her. You will find lots of information on this website, including newsletters, dates etc.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

At the start of each school session, parents will be issued with the annual data check form. Please ensure that this is completed and returned to the school. It is also important that you let us know if there are changes to your telephone number(s) or to those of your emergency contacts throughout the year.

### **Data Protection – use of information about children and parents/carers**

We collect information about children attending school (and also about parents/carers, emergency contacts etc. provided in the annual data check) to allow us to carry out the Council's functions as the education authority for the City of Glasgow. This may sometimes involve releasing personal information to other agencies and other parts of the Council, particularly in relation to child protection issues or criminal investigations, and it may also be used for research purposes (see the link below for more details regarding this).

Information held by the school is, in legal terms, processed by Glasgow City Council. The Council is registered as a data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018 and all personal data is treated as confidential and used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act, the General Data Protection Regulations, and the Information Use and Privacy Policy approved by the City Council. For more information on how we use personal information, or to see a copy of the Information Use and Privacy Policy, see <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=18010>

Education specific privacy statements can be accessed at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22069>

### **Appointments during school hours**

If your child has an unavoidable appointment, please inform the school office staff and then collect them from the school office at the specified time.

### **Comments & Complaints**

In Merrylee Primary School we aim to have positive relationships across our school community. However, if you have a comment or complaint about any aspect of school life, please contact the head teacher in the first instance.

Glasgow City Council complaints procedures are available:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16133>

Customer Care Team

Customer & Business Services

Glasgow City Council

City Chambers

Glasgow G2 1DU

Tel: 0141 287 0900

e-mail: [customercare@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:customercare@glasgow.gov.uk) or [education.customercare@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:education.customercare@glasgow.gov.uk)

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The above website also includes information on data protection and freedom of information.

### Curriculum - Curriculum for Excellence 3-18

Curriculum for Excellence aims to raise standards of learning and teaching for all 3 to 18 year olds and helping prepare children and young people with the knowledge and skills they need in a fast changing world. As part of Curriculum for Excellence all children from pre-school to the end of S3 will receive a rounded education known as a Broad General Education (BGE). Curriculum for Excellence is all about bringing real life into the classroom and taking lessons beyond it.

Through the experiences we provide at Merrylee Primary School we want our children to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors. We are committed to providing children with a broad general education and focus on eight curriculum areas.

Expressive Arts	Health & Wellbeing	Languages	Mathematics
Religious & Moral	Sciences	Social Studies	Technologies

Progress in learning is indicated through curriculum levels as detailed below.

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1 or later
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some
Third & Fourth	S1-S3, but earlier for some

**Expressive arts:** The inspiration and power of the arts play a vital role in enabling our children and young people to enhance their creative talent and develop their artistic skills.

**Health and wellbeing:** Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge, understanding and skills which they need now and in the future to help them with their physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

**Science:** Science and its practical application in healthcare and industry are central to our economic future, for our health and wellbeing as individuals and as a society.

**Social Studies:** Through social studies, children and young people develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and places both past and present, societies, their beliefs and values.

**Religious and moral education:** Religious and moral education includes learning about Christianity, Islam and other world religions, and supports the development of beliefs and values.

**Languages:** Knowing other languages and understanding other cultures is a 21st century skill set for students as they prepare to live and work in a global society.

**Mathematics:** Mathematics equips us with the skills we need to interpret and analyse information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions.

**Technologies:** The range of subjects in technical education has changed significantly over the last two decades and now includes craft, design, engineering and graphics.

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## Merrylee Primary Curriculum Rationale

**Merrylee Primary School Curriculum Rationale**

**Learning for Sustainability**  
High quality learning and teaching  
Health and Wellbeing

**Key Drivers**

**Focus for learning**  
You will know what you are learning, why you are learning it and how you will be successful

**Effective Feedback**  
You will be given a clear idea of how you are progressing and what you need to do to improve

**Effective Questioning**  
You will be asked questions to encourage you to think about what you are learning

**Active Learning**  
You will be asked to think for yourself, solve problems and work collaboratively with others

**Classroom Climate**  
You will be respected and challenged in your learning and supported by your teacher

**What does learning and teaching look like at Merrylee?**

**Learning together at Merrylee Primary to motivate and inspire our children to be the best they can be and to live happily and confidently in an ever changing world.**

**Making friends** We have lots of opportunities to join clubs, learn new skills and meet new people.

**Eco friendly** We make a difference to the world we live in and respect our natural environment.

**Responsible** We have opportunities to be responsible, make decisions and have our voices heard.

**Respect** We are respected and show respect to others in all that we do.

**Yes we can!** We have opportunities to think creatively and critically, solve problems and we are not afraid to make mistakes.

**Learning Outdoors**  
We can use our fantastic school grounds and local community to learn outdoors which helps create a sense of achievement and wellbeing.

**Enjoy healthy lifestyle**  
We are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and habits to support our physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

**Exciting Opportunities**  
We have lots of opportunities to get involved in challenges, projects, initiatives, competitions and many other exciting learning and teaching experiences.

**Skills for learning, life and work**  
confident individuals  
literacy  
numeracy  
responsible citizens  
effective contributors  
successful learners  
health and wellbeing

**At Merrylee we are...**  
safe active responsible  
healthy achieving included  
nurtured respected

**Key Drivers**  
Social Enterprise Growth Mindset STEM Parent Partnerships Community Involvement Outdoor Learning Health & Wellbeing Expressive Arts Language Ambassadors Relationships Respect Communication Pupil Voice Learning for Sustainability Trips & Visits Active Relevant  
Partnerships Sports Merrylee Marvels  
World of Work Creativity Collaborative Play & Explore Digital Learning Languages Numeracy & Maths Social Studies, PE

**Be Ready**  
**Be Respectful**  
**Be Safe**

## STEM (Science, Technologies, Engineering, Mathematics)

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STEM is making connections between sciences, technologies and mathematics through the context of engineering; allowing learners to broaden their understanding of the applications of concepts and skills developed in curriculum subjects. It allows learners to develop solutions to problems and demonstrate creativity through inquiry.



Merrylee and other schools within Hillpark Learning Community worked with Education Scotland to develop STEM based learning across the school. Teachers and learners have been involved in outstanding developments and learning opportunities. All within our community have been enthused and are keen to develop further understanding. Engineering provides a rich, stimulating and challenging context for learning.

To find out more please visit STEM Central on Education Scotland website <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/stem-central/>

There will be opportunities throughout the year for parents and carers to learn more about aspects of the curriculum and to be consulted about significant changes if appropriate.

## Learning for Sustainability

At Merrylee Primary School we provide Learning for Sustainability opportunities for all our young people through:

- Learning opportunities through IDL contexts/curricular subjects
- Outdoor learning opportunities (including educational visits)
- Residential Visits at P6 and P7
- Partner working – volunteers, local and national partners that support with litter, growing and grounds, work with children on wildlife and habitats eg. Grounds for Learning, RSPB, Forest School partners
- Committees e.g. Fair Trade, Eco
- Learning about climate change – supporting initiatives, partner working (WOSDEC)
- Eco schools



We have also worked in partnership with Glasgow Hogwatch Project to become a hedgehog friendly school.

## Outdoor Learning

Taking the learning outdoors is a key strategy in our school's philosophy. We believe that by using our outdoor space at every opportunity we offer our pupils the opportunity to connect with nature and enhance their senses. Our experience is that the pupils use this opportunity to transfer skills learned in the classroom to a real environment. They express that they feel they learn better and it is more fun. We believe we have a responsibility to make the most of the outdoor environment to support the delivery of the experiences and outcomes of a Curriculum for Excellence. In Merrylee we take the learning outdoors in all weathers whether during free play time or during core lessons. Every class also enjoys a weekly outdoor learning day. Please always ensure that your child has appropriate clothing at all times.



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## Facilities



We have fabulous outdoor facilities which include:

- Urban Jungle which is a wild natural area for play and learning
- All-weather full-size football pitch
- Outdoor classroom
- Trim trail
- Basketball area
- P1 free play area with natural materials
- Outdoor climbing wall
- Newly developed community and school garden



We have also been able to create a fantastic outdoor mud kitchen to provide further opportunities for creative and imaginative play.

## Useful websites

Education Scotland [www.education.gov.scot](http://www.education.gov.scot)

National Parent Forum of Scotland [www.npfs.org.uk](http://www.npfs.org.uk)



## Religious Observance

As a non-denominational school, we promote awareness and understanding of all religions. Our school is fortunate to have close links with the local churches, Merrylea Parish Church and Cathcart Trinity Church. The ministers assist with the Christianity element of Religious and Moral Education and provide opportunities for religious observance. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious observance and should inform the school in writing.

In addition, parents and carers from religions other than Christianity may request that their children may be permitted to be absent from school in order to celebrate recognised religious events. Only written requests detailing the proposed arrangements will be considered. Appropriate requests will be granted on up to 3 occasions in any 1 school session.

## Assessment & Reporting

All children are assessed both formally and informally throughout the year. This allows children and their teachers to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. A variety of assessment methods are used to enable staff to pass on information to parents about the progress of their child. It is our policy to give every pupil an equal opportunity to participate and share in all learning experiences, formal and informal, that the school provides. Continual checks are made on every child's progress to ensure that they are achieving their full potential. Progress is tracked regularly and communicated to parents throughout the school year. We offer two meetings for parents with the class teacher to discuss your child's progress each session and you will also be kept informed of your child's learning experiences through the use of Seesaw.

Pupil assessment is an important aspect of school life. It can take many forms but is informative and determines the next steps in learning. Your child will be assessed in what they write, make, say and do. If you have any concerns about your child's progress do not hesitate to contact the school.



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### **Support for Pupils**

The school has a duty to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, with appropriate support for their needs if required. This applies to the content of lessons, teaching strategies and minor adaptations to the school environment. There are a wide range of factors which may act as a barrier to learning. We are committed to working closely with parents and carers to ensure that they are fully involved in any decisions about support for their children's needs.

Any parent or carer seeking further advice regarding this policy should contact the head teacher in the first instance.

Further information relating to additional support needs is available on the Glasgow City Council website at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=18941>

Information on the Glasgow City Councils' Parental Involvement Strategy can also be found at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17870>

### **Nurturing City**

The Glasgow City Council vision 'All Learners, All Achieving', puts building positive, trusting relationships at the core of our work. We ensure children, young people and families feel they belong, they are listened to and they are valued by embedding the principles of nurture across our early years, primary and secondary establishments. Staff are trained in nurture and attachment which deepens understanding of child development and enhances effective practice by responding to the needs of all children and young people in a consistent and caring way. Nurture is a universal approach which builds resilience, helping to reduce the impact of adversity. Effective communication and collaboration with parents and carers build an ethos of partnership working putting the child at the centre, fostering high quality learning contexts.

Each of our nurturing establishments contribute to the development of Glasgow as a nurturing city, creating safe environments which allow our children and young people to flourish by raising attainment and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.

### **School Improvement**

On an annual basis you will receive a copy of our Standards and Quality report. This report highlights progress in key curricular areas such as literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Our priorities for improvement are detailed in our School Improvement Plan which is discussed with our Parent Council. Any parent or carer seeking a copy of the plan can contact the school office or check out our website.

### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

Children's Rights as outlined in the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) are fundamental to a good school ethos. Adults in our school will work with children to ensure they are aware of their rights and fully respect the rights of others. Therefore, the approach within Merrylee Primary School is to build a positive ethos that demonstrates care and respect for all. Positive behaviour is recognised and celebrated. Our school operates a system of class charters to set out expected behaviour. This is celebrated through awards at assemblies and certificates sent home to parents etc. The highest standards of behaviour are expected of pupils at all times. Where this is not the case, a variety of restorative approaches are used. Parents are asked to co-operate with the school in encouraging a sense of responsibility and good behaviour in their children.

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## Expectations of behaviour

We have the highest expectations of all our children and staff. We operate on the basis of mutual trust and respect. This has always been very successful for us. We promote that we must treat others the way we wish to be treated ourselves. This results in a calm but vibrant climate. We rarely have issues which escalate in to challenging behaviours. This is credited to the time taken by all to be involved in each other's lives, likes and aspirations. We value each other and therefore strive to ensure that we are a very effective team which pulls in the same direction for the benefit of all. If children do make wrong choices we involve them in the discussion and how they can correct and make amends. We encourage a climate of openness and respect at all times.

We are proud that visitors regularly comment on the instant warm welcome, positive and exciting feeling they receive when visiting our school.

## Anti-Bullying

Glasgow City Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments. Here at Merrylee Primary School we aim to create a safe, secure, happy learning environment for all pupils based on equality of opportunity, mutual respect and cooperation. We understand that bullying is never acceptable and children have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment.

In Merrylee we adopt a zero tolerance stance and through our programme of study endeavour to equip our pupils with the skills to deal with bullying. A copy of our anti-bullying charter and national guidance can be found on our website.

## Home Learning

Our homework policy was reviewed, taking into account parent and children's views.

It was agreed that whilst there were many diverse opinions in relation to homework, as recorded in our whole school consultation, we wish to spend time on actions that have the greatest impact on learners as evidenced in current research. Home learning ideas are shared with parents on Seesaw. Children are issued with a home learning journal, which can be used to record activities. Many classes offer opportunities to share home learning activities in a variety of ways; for example in presenting to the class, by sharing photographs on Seesaw etc. This allows parents to encourage homework in line with their personal circumstances.

## Parents and Home Learning

Parental support is of great help and the child's progress usually becomes obvious when parents take an active interest. Recent research proved that children who receive help at home in reading make better progress than those who do not. We believe that working with your child at home to enhance, support and review class learning is at the forefront of partnership between home and school; it is therefore crucial that parents of our pupils are actively involved in our planned learning and development.

Visit **Useful websites** for more information about how you can assist home learning.

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/>

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>



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### Home and School Partnership

In Merrylee Primary we feel very strongly that education should be a partnership between school and home. To this end we try to involve parents in as many aspects of school life as possible.

After children have enrolled for Primary 1, we invite parents and children to take part in our pre-entrants programme beginning in May. This involves 'Stay and Play' workshops for parents and children. The workshops are very informal and give the children an opportunity to become familiar with the school, staff and other children, helping them to settle happily in August.

Families are regularly informed about school policy, business and events from newsletters issued on Seesaw each term (or as appropriate) by the head teacher.

Class teachers also issue information regularly through Seesaw. At the start of the school session, all teachers offer an information session for parents. We have found this to be an excellent way to promote our good practice and for parents to find out further information directly from their child's class teacher.

### Parental Support

In Merrylee Primary we are very fortunate to have so many parents who offer their help to the school. Our parents help in a variety of ways, for example:

- Paired reading programme
- Sports coaching
- Gardening club
- Eco-school initiatives
- School shows
- Accompanying pupils on visits and trips
- School publicity
- In class support.....and much more.....!



There are many ways you can get involved in the life of the school. For example, we have a very successful parent and community gardening group, Merrylee Green Fingers, who have been instrumental in creating our Urban Garden and help us to maintain and develop our fabulous school grounds. The Parent Association and Parent Council are highly proactive and provide a range of opportunities for parents to get involved.

At Merrylee we have an open door policy so if you ever have any matters you wish to discuss at any time please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Colette Haddock, head teacher, at school or any other member of the leadership team.



### Wider achievement

We encourage our children to be successful in the widest sense and to participate in as many activities as possible both in and out of school. We provide links to local clubs to allow individuals to develop talents and interests.

### Celebrating attainment and achievement

We value the achievements of all in our community. Merrylee Marvel certificates are issued regularly in recognition of attainment and achievement.

### Pupil profile/ Passports

All children make a passport to pass to their next teacher at the end of each school year. The P7 children produce a profile which is passed to the secondary school. These are from the child's perspective and how they see themselves as learners. They record their aspirations, interests and their next steps.

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### **Merrylee Primary and the Community**

Our school enjoys a high profile and reputation in the community. It involves itself in community initiatives and events and enjoys the support of groups within it. Children from the school also enjoy 'giving back to the community'. For example, they have participated in community litter picks.

The ethos of our school is a caring and sharing one where everyone involved with the school works together for the benefit of all. The school offers a happy and secure environment where the talents and strengths of the individual are recognised and encouraged.

This caring and sharing attitude is extended to the community and the world at large.

Throughout the year we undertake various fundraising ventures to benefit others for example:

- The Glasgow Lodging House Mission
- Southside Food Bank
- The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice
- Children in Need
- MacMillan Cancer etc.

Merrylee has forged many valuable links over the years with other local primary schools including the neighbouring OLA Primary. We have also established excellent liaison with Newlands Tennis Club. Our facilities are accessed by many community groups with the school pitch and gym hall in constant use every evening and weekend. Our philosophy is very much to use our community resources as excellent learning opportunities for our pupils.

### **Parent Council**

We have a very active Parent Council that represents the views of all parents. All parents are welcome to attend the Parent Council meetings and can become members at the AGM held each year. The PC minutes are available on the school website as well as the parent Council website [www.merryleeprimarypc.org](http://www.merryleeprimarypc.org)

Our PC has been involved in gathering and representing parents' views to the head teacher, education authority and HMIE; promoting contact between the school, parents/carers, children and the local community; fundraising to make adaptations to our school grounds; campaigning for improvements to road safety around the school and local area; proactive in the introduction of Parentpay, a cashless payment system. A recent initiative is the Merrylee Bike Bus which operates weekly and encourages safe and sustainable travel to school.

### **Parents' Association**

Our Parents' Association is another representative group which is extremely active within our school community. The PA is a subcommittee of the Parent Council. Their extraordinary fundraising allows us to enhance the education of our children through cultural, social and health visits out with school; residential trips; visiting specialists; extra resources and so much more. They also arrange social and seasonal events for adults as well as children. They work tirelessly throughout the year and welcome new members and volunteers to support the many events they organise throughout the year.

### **Saturday morning football club**

This football and fitness club is run by parents and is another subcommittee of the PC. This club is open to children of all ages and is well attended. Enthusiastic parents undergo training to offer the children the best coaching and fun sessions each Saturday.

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### Pupil Voice

Our Pupil Voice Committee is made up of a representative from each class. They meet regularly to discuss school initiatives and improvements. They have led many successful initiatives including the reduction in the use of single use plastic in the school lunch hall. They also worked in partnership with our Forest School leader to develop a playground area.

Pupils are encouraged to participate in a variety of committees including the Pupil Voice Committee, Eco Committee, Sports Committee, Play Committee and Library Club. Each committee is proactive in bringing positive changes for our school. These groups are important in ensuring that the views of pupils are heard.

### Extra-curricular Activities



At Merrylee we offer a wide range of activities before, during and after school to extend the learning experience and encourage an active lifestyle. Examples of clubs include: running club, dance, football, netball, chess, code club, digital leaders, athletics, Yoga, and allotment club. Miss Kirk, depute head teacher, oversees the management of the clubs and regularly posts details about what is available on Seesaw so please check this for information as places are popular and are usually limited.

Good links with community organisations and our Active Schools Co-ordinator are vital for the success of these programmes. We are also very grateful to Merrylee staff and parents who support these clubs. We were very proud to be recognised for our work in promoting sport and activity when we achieved the prestigious Sport Scotland Gold Award.



Pupils in Primary 6 and Primary 7 have the opportunity to visit outdoor residential centres, offering pupils the chance to try many outdoor pursuits and cultivate a respect and love of our wonderful countryside. Creative and innovative approaches to learning outdoors provide valuable learning experiences for our pupils.



I hope you have found the information in this handbook useful and we look forward to our partnership with you in the years to come.

### Useful Contacts

**Parentzone Scotland** is a unique website for parents and carers in Scotland, from early years to beyond school. The website provides up-to-date information about learning in Scotland, and practical advice and ideas to support children's learning at home in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and science. Information is also available on Parentzone Scotland regarding additional support needs, how parents can get involved in their child's school and education. Furthermore, the website has details about schools including performance data for school leavers from S4-S6; and links to the national, and local authority and school level data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels. Parentzone Scotland can be accessed at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>.

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### **Connect**

Connect is a national organisation that provides advice and resources for parents and carers. [www.connect.scot](http://www.connect.scot)

### **Enquire Scotland**

Enquire is a national advice service for families with additional support needs. [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)

### **Glasgow City Council**

Education Services  
City Chambers East  
40 John Street  
Glasgow G1 1JL

Tel: 0141 287 2000

[www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk)

All information included in this handbook is correct at the time of publication but may be affected by subsequent changes.

## **Appendix**

### **Child Protection**

The Child Protection Coordinator for Merrylee Primary School is Colette Haddock, Head Teacher.

All educational establishments and services must take positive steps to help and protect children themselves by ensuring that programmes of health and personal safety are central to the curriculum and should have in place a curriculum that ensures that children have a clear understanding of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour on the part of another person, no matter who.

As with other areas of the curriculum, you will be kept informed of the health and personal safety programme for your child's establishment.

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Educational establishments and services must create and maintain an ethos and climate which actively promotes child welfare and a safe environment by:

- Ensuring that children are listened to and respected
- Ensuring that programmes of health and personal safety are central to the curriculum
- Ensuring that staff are aware of child protection issues and procedures
- Establishing and maintaining close working relationships and arrangements with all other agencies to make sure that professionals collaborate effectively in protecting children

Should any member of staff have concerns regarding the welfare or safety of any child they must report these concerns to the Head Teacher or the person deputising for her. She, after judging that there may be grounds for concern regarding the welfare or safety of any child must then immediately advise the duty Senior Social Worker at the local Social Work Services area office of the circumstances.

## Dealing with Racial Harassment

The Race Relations Act of 1976 makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his/her colour, race, and nationality, ethnic or national background. The Act makes it the duty of Glasgow City Council to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. In 1999 the guidelines, *'Dealing with Racial Harassment'* were issued to assist all teaching staff in dealing with such incidents. The adoption of an anti-racist approach should be seen as one part of the continuing attempt to improve the quality of education. Glasgow City Council recognises that support from the home is essential if these aims are to be achieved. Every child in Glasgow has the right to be happy and secure at school.

## GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child)

GIRFEC isn't an extra thing people have to do. It's a way for those who support children to work differently, making sure that they are all on the same page. Where needed, GIRFEC links day-to-day work in education, health, policing, social work and the voluntary sector – in fact any organisation whose staff come into direct contact with children. It makes it easier for those different organisations to communicate consistently with each other, and with parents, carers, children and young people.

GIRFEC provides a structure that helps people to work in the same way and use the same language. This allows discussions with the child and their family to focus on what is good in a child's life, and what might need attention or support.

It's the bedrock for all children's services and can also be used by practitioners in adult services who work with parents or carers.

The approach helps practitioners focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people – and how they can act to deliver these improvements. Getting it right for every child is threaded through all existing policy, practice, strategy and legislation affecting children, young people and their families.

## What Getting it Right for Every Child means:

### For children, young people and their families

- They understand what is happening and why
- They have been listened to carefully and their wishes have been heard and understood

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- They will feel confident about the help they are getting
- They are appropriately involved in discussions and decisions that affect them
- They can rely on appropriate help being available as soon as possible
- They will have experienced a more streamlined and coordinated response from practitioners

### **For practitioners:**

- Putting the child or young person at the centre and developing a shared understanding within and across agencies
- Using common tools, language and processes, considering the child or young person as a whole, and promoting closer working where necessary with other practitioners

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