



20 August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to update you on our ambitious 'Equipped for Learning' programme.

The 'Equipped for Learning' initiative is the council's £10.5 million project to give every school age pupil in the county, a learning device such as an iPad or Google Chromebook.

We are proud to say that Midlothian is the first local authority in Scotland to launch a world-class digital learning project on this scale, supporting children and young people from Primary One to Secondary Six with digital access. This programme will benefit pupils and our staff by:

- Providing a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment that all school age pupils can access equally.
- Giving pupils the tools to take greater responsibility for and ownership of their learning with the ability to access materials on their device at anytime from anywhere.
- Technically supporting the opportunities and demands of remote learning if required or as planned for senior learners.
- Using the platform Google Workspace – popular across many industries – to help pupils and staff develop digital skills for life and work.

Our rolling programme will equip our senior phase pupils (S4-S6) with new devices first, followed by additional support needs pupils (and early learning settings), S1-S3 pupils and then children in primary schools.

Your child/young person's school will be in touch with you before they get their new device with further details, including a request to fill in an online consent form covering issues such as accidental damage etc.

Your child or young person will be shown in person how to use the device and how to access the online learning tools via Google Workspace before it is issued to them. They will not be given the device until we are sure they are confident in how to use it. Technical restrictions will be in place and pupils, as part of the digital literacy curriculum, will learn how to stay safe online.

To help you support your child, our Digital Inclusion & Learning Team will be offering parents and carers online information sessions about the project and Google Workspace, in particular. Further details of those will be issued in due course.

We've also set up a website at <https://equipped.midlothian.education> with more details of Equipped for Learning, including FAQs.

Your child/young person's school will be in touch over the coming months. However, here are some of the key changes coming:

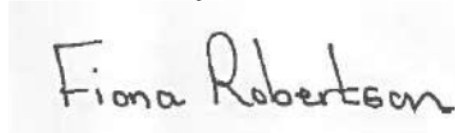
August - We have launched a new Google Classroom online environment for staff and pupils, using "@midlothian.education" accounts.

September - The new "@midlothian.education" email address will be available for all staff and pupils to use in Google Mail.

October - All existing documents present in Google Drive within GLOW will be moved to the new Google Drive and the old Classrooms will move to the new Classroom environment.

We thank you for your support in this exciting project, which will be a huge step forward in helping to achieve equality in learning and attainment for our young people.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Robertson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Fiona Robertson
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