

Witness appeal after suspicious fire at Loanhead primary school



Police are appealing for witnesses following a suspicious fire at Paradykes Primary School in the Mayburn Walk area of Loanhead which took place around 8.20pm on Saturday 23 September .

A shed containing specialist play equipment owned by an after school club was deliberately set on fire. This caused damage to the fencing and roof of the main building and approximately £10,000 of specialist play equipment was destroyed. Officers are now urging anyone who can assist with their enquiries to come forward.

Inspector John Dryden of Penicuik Police Station, "This was a deliberate act that has caused considerable damage to property and goods. Children who rely on this specialist equipment have now been deprived of these resources that a charity have worked hard to secure for their benefit. Thankfully no one was injured and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service were able to quickly extinguish the fire.

"We are appealing for anyone who may have seen anything suspicious in the Loanhead area during the evening on Saturday or, similarly, anyone with information that can help us identify the culprits to come forward."

Midlothian Council's cabinet member for education, Councillor Jim Muirhead said, "I'd urge anyone with any information to come forward. Destroying £10,000 of specialist play equipment is absolutely shocking, a huge blow to the children, staff and parents and it will have a major impact on pupils' learning

through play.

“Anyone involved in this act of wanton destruction should be absolutely ashamed of themselves and should be held accountable for their actions.”

Those with information should contact Police Scotland on 101, quoting incident number 4280 of 23 September, or report this anonymously to the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.