



Auchencairn Primary School
Auchencairn
Castle Douglas
DG7 1QU

Any enquiries please contact:

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Wednesday 19th August 2026

Dear Parent(s)/ Carer(s),

Welcome from the Headteacher

I am delighted to have been appointed Headteacher of Auchencairn Primary School in addition to Kirkcudbright Primary School. I thought it would be helpful to introduce myself and to provide you with some information about my background.

I am originally from Dumfries and Galloway. I attended Borgue Primary School and Kirkcudbright Academy before completing my teacher training at the University of Edinburgh (Moray House Campus) in 1999. I taught in Edinburgh for a few years before returning to Dumfries and Galloway shortly after my son was born. (I have two fantastic children: a twenty-three-year-old son and a twelve-year-old daughter.)

Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to have taught in some wonderful schools. I have experience of teaching all stages from nursery to P7. I began my studies into school leadership and was awarded a 'Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management' from Stirling University. I have a wide range of leadership experience including being in senior leadership roles. I have been Acting Headteacher at Minnigaff Primary School, Principal Teacher at Penninghame Primary School, Depute Headteacher at Georgetown Primary School and Partnership Headteacher at Crossmichael and Gelston Primary Schools before becoming Headteacher of Kirkcudbright Primary School in April 2024.

I understand how unsettling it must feel to have another change of headteacher given that you have had a period of stability with Mrs Jarvis. Please know that Mrs Jarvis and I have engaged in a detailed handover to ensure that the transition runs smoothly.

In order for the management arrangements to work effectively between both schools, we need to ensure that there is a member of the senior leadership team in each school each day. Kirkcudbright Primary School has a nursery, Learning Centre and nine classes. Therefore, Mr James Flannighan (Depute Headteacher) has been relieved of his teaching commitment to support me in leading and managing across the partnership schools. This term, Miss Ross (Principal Teacher) will be in school on Mondays and Tuesdays. I plan to be in school on Wednesdays and Mr Flannighan will be present on Thursdays and Fridays. (There will always need to be a degree of flexibility in how we manage our

time so that we can be responsive to the needs of each school.) We will evaluate this arrangement at the end of term.

If you have any worries or concerns, then please don't hesitate to get in touch via my email: gw08cruickshanksmary@ea.dumgal.sch.uk or phone the school. All calls can be transferred between schools. (In case of emergencies, please contact me via my work mobile on 07741 686730.)

Please note that this week Mr Flannighan will be in school on Thursday 20th August and I will be in school on Friday 21st August. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely

Mary E. Cruickshanks

Mary Cruickshanks
Headteacher