



*Working together to  
achieve excellence*

# Duncow

## Handbook

### November 2024



## Welcome from the Head teacher

### Welcome to Duncow School.

Our vision for Duncow School is for our pupils to learn and reach their full potential as part of an innovative and creative team. We aim to challenge them in all aspects of the curriculum with a focus on global and wider community issues – ensuring that our pupils are prepared for learning, working and living in the global forum. We provide a creative approach to the curriculum, firmly based on the principles and entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence.

We aim to enable our pupils to develop self-confidence and independence, recognising that each and everyone has a part to play as a responsible member of our learning community.

We actively promote parental involvement and work to build relationships across the school and wider community. We know that open positive relationships with parents enhance the learning experiences and increases success for our pupils.

Welcome to our team.



Miss Paula Dale  
Head teacher

Find out about what our pupils get up to on the school blog,





# Duncow Primary School

## Our Curriculum Rationale

### Our Vision:

Our vision at Duncow School is to create a safe and nurturing environment which supports pupils, families, staff and partner agencies and where we all work together to enable all to develop to their full potential.

We care

Inclusion

Community

Honesty

Fun



Kindness

Nurturing

Sharing

Respecting

Teamwork



### Our Aims:

- Create a learning environment which provides access to a broad, balanced curriculum, seeking to improve the quality of education and levels of attainment and achievement for all learners.
- Ensure that the school is free from discrimination and supports learners to be creative, innovative, ambitious and happy.
- Work together to promote positive attitudes and healthy lifestyles
- Be imaginative, innovative and child-centred in developing a curriculum for excellence, ensuring we work together and are Getting Right For Every Child.

*Duncow – Working Together To Achieve Excellence*

### Our Values:

Being inclusive and nurturing. We demonstrate consideration and respect for others, being honest, kind, and grateful, with compassion and integrity – doing the right thing even when no one is looking.



### What makes us Unique;

Opportunities for outdoor learning in garden, wood, river, George V field, surrounding estate  
 Close friendships of all ages  
 We respect each others rights  
 We are community helpers  
 We get a say in all we do – our voice is heard!  
 We are all special in our own way  
 Teachers are accepting  
 We love our buddy system

"We get a say in all we do"  
 (Pupil)

"This is a school where the children always come first"  
 (Learning Assistant)

"I just love inclusive teaching, outdoor learning experiences and teaching staff"  
 (Parent)

SHANARRI – Safe Healthy Active Nurtured Achieving Responsible Respected Included

## Information at a Glance

**Duncow Primary School**

**Kirkmahoe**

**Dumfries**

**DG1 1TA**

**Phone:** 01387 710305

**Email:** gw08officeduncow@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

**Parent Council Chair:** Kate Goodall

**Vice Chair:** Dawn Young

**Secretary:** Mairi Snape

**Treasurer:** Steven Lumb

**Parent Council email:** duncowparentcouncil@gmail.com

**Head teacher :** Miss Paula Dale

**School Roll:** 37

Non - denominational

No Gaelic

**If you would like some help understanding this or need it in another format please contact 030 33 33 3000.**

### Staff Team

**Mrs Miller** - Principal Teacher

**Mrs McCrudden** - Class teacher

**Mrs Campbell** - Additional Support for Learning Teacher

**Mrs Stevens** Learning assistant

**Mrs Davidson** - Senior clerical assistant

**Mrs Jardine**- Playground Supervisor / Facilities Assistant

**Tanya Patrick** - Catering Manager

**Leanne**- cleaning

Term dates and holidays can be found at:

<https://new.dumgal.gov.uk/schools-learning/schools/school-term-holiday-dates>

### Contact Us

Duncow Primary promotes an open door policy and parents with concerns, questions or great suggestions can stop by the office to talk with Miss Dale , the Headteacher.

Class Teachers are available for parent meetings at the start or end of the school day. If a longer discussion is required telephone or stop into the school office and Mrs Davidson will be happy to make an appointment for you.

We acknowledge that busy working parents cannot always make it into school in order to resolve issues quickly therefore parents can also e-mail the school office.

Mrs Davidson is in the school office from Monday through to Friday lunchtime

Please note that an answer machine will take your messages during break and lunchtimes.

### School Day

School Starts:	9.00AM
Morning interval:	10.35AM – 10.55AM
Lunch:	12.15PM – 1.10PM
School closes:	3.15PM

## School Uniform/Dress Policy

**All Pupils are expected to wear the school uniform each day**

Black sweatshirt / fleece with Duncow logo or plain  
White shirt/polo shirt/blouse  
Black trousers / skirt  
Trainers/shoes/boots – without elevated heels

### SUMMER ALTERNATIVES

Trousers / skirts may be replaced by self-coloured shorts in navy or black  
Green and white gingham-style dresses may be worn.

**ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH THE PUPILS'S NAME**

### Clothes for P.E.

Shorts, socks and T-shirt / Warm clothes for outside activities  
Trainers

**For everyday wear: Indoor gym shoes – No slippers or crocs.**

***Football strips are not allowed***

**Please note pre-loved stand available in school for picking up school uniform for free.**

**Please donate uniform items to us if no longer needed.**

## Wet Days

Pupils should have suitable clothing and footwear as we are normally outside even on wet days.

Wellingtons can be borrowed from the shed. Please gift us your old wellies so that we can start a reuse scheme.

## Personal Appearance

Make up (including nail varnish and temporary tattoos) is not allowed in school.

The only jewellery permitted are small stud earrings which must be removed for P.E. for safety reasons.

A watch may be worn but it is the responsibility of the child and must be removed before any P.E. activities.

Hair - shoulder length or longer should be worn up during the school day – this is for Health and Safety reasons.

### Clothing Grant

The award of clothing grants is to assist with the cost of school clothing for families who are on a qualifying benefit or on low income. The current award is presently £134 per primary school child. Further information and an application can be made at: Free school meals and associated payments - Dumfries and Galloway Council ([dumgal.gov.uk](https://www.dumgal.gov.uk))

**Clothing which is unacceptable in school under any circumstances would include items which:**

- Could potentially encourage factions (e.g. football colours).
- Could cause offence (e.g. anti-religious or political slogans).
- Could cause health and safety difficulties (loose-fitting clothing, dangling earrings)
- Are of flammable materials which may be a danger in certain classes.
- Could cause damage to floors.
- Carry advertising, (such as alcohol or tobacco)
- Could be used to inflict damage on other pupils.

Waterproofs and Wellingtons are needed for Big Thursdays and for Forest time.

We have loads of waterproof trousers to lend you and some wellies in the school shed!

Dumfries & Galloway Council have set up several permanent School Uniform Donation and Collection Points in partnership with community organisations throughout our Region.

Each location has an extensive stock of excellent to good -condition school uniforms which are suitable for the schools near the Uniform Bank locations.

Additional equipment including School Bags and Stationery can also be sourced at times from these locations and full details of each can be found on the following link <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/25718/Free-School-Uniforms>

## Class Organisation

For organisational purposes, schools are structured into classes.

Each year it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to organise the class structure.

**Currently at Duncow we have two classes: P1-3 and P4-7.**

For more information, on School class sizes and grouping please visit

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings)

## Transitions within Duncow Primary School

Your child will as they progress through the school have transitions from one class to another. Throughout their time at Duncow School pupils will work in a variety of groupings including whole school. For example, during a block of learning on science pupils worked in mixed age and ability groups to carry out investigations. This ensures our pupils have strong relationships with all staff and pupils across the school making transitions smoother.

At the start of a new year the class focus will be on building up a positive learning environment and creating positive relationships. This then sets the standard for the rest of the school year.

### Induction days

New P1 pupils are invited to transition mornings and afternoons at Duncow School. A whole day at school including lunch is organised so that new pupils have the chance to get to know the team.

Pupils are issued with a homework pack and an order form for school uniform.

## Children with additional support needs

The Education authority offers support for children who have identified additional needs. However, any such support needs must be declared on the application form at registration in order for the authority to consider the most appropriate placement/level of support.

Where parents/carers believe their child has additional support needs that have not yet been identified by any agency, they should, in the first instance, contact the Headteacher/Manager of their preferred pre-school education provider.

## Playground Supervision

Duncow has a Playground Supervisor.

Mrs Jardine supervises the playground and encourages good play from 10.30am– 11.00am and 12.15pm – 1.15pm.





## School Meals

The Naturally D&G local provenance for a sustainable future ensures that meals are freshly prepared with seasonal ingredients and are free from undesirable additives.

Detailed information on school meals is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmenus](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmenus)

## Free School Meals

Free school meals are provided for all pupils in Primary 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Confirmation of when this will be rolled out to Primary 6 and Primary 7 from the Scottish Government has yet to be confirmed.

In Nursery, eligible children can receive up to 1140 hours a year of Early Learning and Childcare. As part of this funded offer, the child will be entitled to one free meal and a snack each day.

Online pre-ordering of school meals is currently being rolled out to all secondary schools, information will be supplied by your school.

Free school meals can lead to a large saving in each year, nursery and primary school pupils can save £361 and secondary school pupils can save £370. You'll also be helping your child's school if you qualify for free school meals. Some Scottish Government funding provided directly to schools is linked to the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

For more information visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals)

## Special Dietary Requirements

Facilities Services Catering provide special dietary requirements for food allergy and intolerances; medically prescribed diets; or diets for religious or cultural reasons specific meals for children of different ethnic origin. Simply ask the school for a Special Diet Request Forms to allow us to inform the catering team who will discuss your child's requirements in full. For more information contact [DGschoolmeals@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:DGschoolmeals@dumgal.gov.uk) or the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or [solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk) to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

## School Transport

Free school transport is available for some school children attending primary or secondary school if they live within the school catchment area and if they meet certain criteria. For more information and guidance visit <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15245/Free-school-transport>

### Free Travel for 5 - 22 year olds

From 31 January 2022 all children and young people aged 5-22 will be entitled to free bus travel in Scotland.

You can apply for free travel online from today at [www.getyournec.scot](http://www.getyournec.scot). (This cannot be done through your school).

For more information on Active Travel which is about making journeys in physically active ways like walking, wheeling and cycling, we encourage parents and pupils to walk, wheel, cycle and scoot all or some of the journey to and from school, where it is safe to do so. Please click on this link: [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

## Get a primary school place

Children normally go to their catchment area primary school between age 4 years 6 months and 5 years 6 months.

Children turning 5 before the end of February will enrol in January to start school in August. Children born between 1 September and the last day of February can [choose to start primary school later](#). Children born between the first day of March and the last day of August can also apply for deferred entry. If your child is 4 years old at the start of the school year they can [delay and start primary school the following year](#). Exact enrolment dates and instructions will be advertised online and in local papers once they're confirmed. Visit <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15241/School-places> for more information.

### How to apply

Our schools cover areas known as catchment areas. You can apply to any school but children living in the catchment area get priority when places are allocated.

Parents must go to their catchment school to apply for a school place for their child. Contact the school to find out when you can do this.

Apply to your catchment school - [Find your catchment area school](#)

Take a completed application form and the identification documents listed at the bottom of the form with you.

Document [Download the catchment area school application form \(PDF, 481.86KB\)](#)

### Apply to a non-catchment school

If you want to apply for a place at a non-catchment school you must apply at your catchment school. If you apply to a non-catchment school but do not get a place, you may not get a place at your catchment school.

[Find a primary school](#) - Take a completed application form and the identification documents listed at the bottom of the form with you.

Document [Download the non-catchment area school application form \(PDF, 482.47KB\)](#)

## Attendance

It is your responsibility as parents/carers to ensure that your child/ren attend school regularly. For the safety of all children it is important for you to telephone the school office prior to/at the beginning of the absence. Absences are recorded in class registers and frequent or irregular absences not supported by a reasonable excuse, will be notified to parents and the matter may be referred to the Opportunities for All Service. If possible please, try to make dental/medical appointments out with school hours. However, if this is not possible please inform us in writing or by telephone of the appointment and arrange to collect your child from class. For more information on Attendance, Absences, Lateness and responsibilities of parents please visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

## Absence from School

Pupils who need to leave school during the school day i.e. doctor /dentist appointments, must be collected by a named contact confirmed with the school office. They must also report to the school office on their return to school.

### Parents are asked to ensure that:

- The school is informed if the child or young person will be late.
- Any legitimate absence is notified to the school by telephone before 9am on the first day of the absence without fail, and that further calls, before 9am, are made on every subsequent day of the absence. The school may contact you by phone if there are any concerns about a child's absence.
- Contact telephone numbers, whether for home, for parents at work or for other emergency contacts, are kept up to date and are generally numbers where a response will be received. This is particularly important with mobile phone numbers. Please update your child's school if you change your mobile number. This is essential as the school may need to contact you if your child is ill.
- The school is kept informed of the absence and the likely return date.
- Any planned absences are officially notified to the school, in writing, in advance.
- School would be informed before 1.15pm if a pupil was not returning to school after lunch because of becoming unwell over that period.

Latecomers report to the school office on arrival at school. Staff will ensure that absences are checked every day and follow up the whereabouts of any child for whom we have no explanation. Due to the amount of extra work involved and necessity of having the correct information we would ask you to make note of the above requirements and ensure that you follow through the procedures to ensure the safety of all our pupils.



### Positive steps to avoid negative behaviour undertaken at Duncow School:

Positive and clear verbal response from staff, reminder of positive alternatives/wise choices, expectations based on school values, vision and aims. This helps situations resolve quickly as we seek to – ‘nip it in the bud!’

All staff at Duncow will be consistent, kind, patient and ‘firm but fair’ as we deal with negative behaviour, with safety and wellbeing of all staff and pupil’s paramount.

Consequences of actions discussed with class teachers.

Discussion with Class Teacher – pupils and parents.

Discussion with Principal Teacher – pupils and parents.

Discussion with Head Teacher –pupils and parents.

Children understand the difference between a big deal and a little deal, knowing that staff at Duncow are always there to listen, help and support whenever needed.

Open and positive ‘circle times’ lessons within each class to deal with differing matters safely, fairly and honestly.

Children know their views are valued and they will be listened to by an adult.  
(Article 12)

Pupil Voice Groups are of high priority at Duncow Primary, where all pupils work together to make our school and wider world a better place.

‘Gathering’ and Health and Wellbeing lessons focus on key learning/arising needs within the school e.g. honesty, trust, relationships (peers and adults), resilience etc..

‘Children have the right to relax and play’ (Article 31) therefore, children will only be ‘kept in’ at break or lunch if it is felt that the safety of others/ themselves is compromised.



*A copy of the full policy can be requested.*

### **If you have a comment or concern:**

A comment might be some brief feedback about how we have handled a situation or delivered a service. It is best to pass a comment straight to the school so that we can take any necessary action. You may be suggesting an improvement to what we do or a change to how we operate. If you have something you would like to raise, we would always ask you to discuss any concerns / issues you have initially with your

- Nursery/Primary Class teacher if the enquiry relates to classroom practice.
- Headteacher if the enquiry relates to whole school matters or you require an unresolved classroom issue to be discussed further.
- Parent Council and/or Connect (the membership organisation to support your Parent Council) If your enquiry relates to whole school matters linked to Parental Involvement.
- In Secondary, the teacher with responsibility for Personal Social and Emotional Supervision followed by the Headteacher.

If you are not happy with the response you receive or a decision that has been made, you can Ask us to Look Again. You can do this by contacting [EducationandLearningParentalInvolvement@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:EducationandLearningParentalInvolvement@dumgal.gov.uk)

At this point an Officer will contact you and discuss the issue and share directly with you the outcome of this work. If you would like to compliment staff or the school you can also use this email.

Remember you can also access Dumfries & Galloway Have Your Say at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/17349/Have-your-say>.

### **If you remain dissatisfied and wish to make a formal complaint**

If you remain dissatisfied, Education Services operate within the complaints handling procedures for Dumfries and Galloway Council. Information on this can be found at [Making a complaint \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](#)

Complaints must be made within a period of 6 months from the initial incident. Matters will only be addressed within this six month period through our Complaints Handling Process.

## Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), now known as ‘Scotland’s Curriculum,’ is bringing learning to life in the way education is delivered for all 3-18 year olds in nursery, primary, secondary, at college and via workplace or community learning. It aims to respond and adapt flexibly to meet the needs of an ever changing and evolving world and Scotland’s place within it. At its heart lies a constant commitment and drive towards excellence and equity, to raise standards, improve knowledge, develop skills for all learners and close the gap between the lowest and highest achievers by ensuring everyone has an equal opportunity to be successful, no matter what their background or circumstances. Ultimately, it aims to nurture children and young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

### How does Curriculum for Excellence work?

#### Curriculum for Excellence includes four contexts for learning:

- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Ethos and life of the school
- Opportunities for personal achievement

### Curriculum levels and stages

The curriculum has two stages: the broad general education (from the early years to the end of S3) and the senior phase (S4 to S6).

The broad general education has five levels (early, first, second, third and fourth). The senior phase is designed to build on the experiences and outcomes of the broad general education, and to allow young people to take qualifications and courses that suit their abilities and interests

**Broad General Education** Children and young people work their way through Experiences and Outcomes in each of the five Curriculum Levels (Early, First, Second, Third, Fourth) and in each of the eight Curricular Areas. The five Curricular Levels span pre-school to the end of S3. This is the Broad General Education. Pupils progress at their own pace, working through the Experiences and Outcomes of the most appropriate level for them. Pupils will be supported in collecting evidence of their achievements, with a profile of these being produced in P7 and S3.

**Experiences and Outcomes** are what the learner will be able to explain or do. There are detailed Experiences and Outcomes for all subjects available on the Education Scotland website; teachers work to deliver these, and the progress of learners is measured in the achievement of Outcomes. Reporting to parents is likely to include information about children’s Experiences and Outcomes and about the Levels at which they are working.

**Senior Phase** learners work towards qualifications in the Senior Phase. Available qualifications and awards include National 1, National 2, National 3, National 4, National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher, Skills for Work, Progression Awards. Learners may also gain awards such as the John Muir Award, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and Youth Achievement Awards. When young people leave school aged 16+, they are entitled to a positive and sustained destination. This may be college, university, work, apprenticeships or training.

## Subject Information

Curriculum areas and subjects

The curriculum areas are the organisers for ensuring that learning takes place across a broad range of contexts, and offer a way of grouping experiences and outcomes under recognisable headings.

The eight curriculum areas are:

Expressive arts

Health and wellbeing

Languages – The modern language taught at Holywood Primary is French and tuition usually commences in Primary 6 but may be earlier because of class organisation. Pupils are able to continue with this language at Northwest Community Campus and most other local Secondary Schools.

Mathematics

Religious and moral education

Sciences

Social studies

Technologies

Curriculum areas are not structures for timetabling we have the freedom to think imaginatively about how the experiences and outcomes might be organised and planned for in creative ways which encourage deep, sustained learning and which meet the needs of our pupils.

## Experiences and outcomes

The experiences and outcomes describe the expectations for learning and progression in all areas of the curriculum.

The title ‘experiences and outcomes’ recognises the importance of the quality and nature of the learning **experience** in developing attributes and capabilities and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning. An **outcome** represents what is to be achieved.

They describe learning which has a clear purpose at levels from early to fourth in the acquiring of knowledge and the establishment of understanding. They also support the development of skills and attributes.

Important themes such as enterprise, citizenship, sustainable development, international education and creativity need to be developed in a range of contexts. Learning relating to these themes is therefore built in to the experiences and outcomes across the curriculum areas.

## Curriculum levels

Curriculum for Excellence defines five levels of learning. The first four levels are described in the experiences and outcomes, with progression to qualifications described under a fifth level, the senior phase.

Some pupils will start learning at these levels earlier and others later, depending upon individual needs and aptitudes. The framework is however designed to be flexible in order to permit careful planning for those with additional support needs, including those who, for example, have a learning difficulty and those who are particularly able or talented.

## Principles for curriculum design

The curriculum will be designed on the basis of the following principles:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

The principles will assist us in our practice and as a basis for continuing review, evaluation and improvement.

### Challenge and enjoyment

Pupils should find their learning challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum should encourage high aspirations and ambitions for all.

### Breadth

Pupils will have opportunities for a broad, suitably weighted range of experiences. The curriculum will be organised so that they will learn and develop through a variety of contexts within both the classroom and other aspects of school life.

### Progression

Pupils should experience continuous progression in their learning from 3 to 18 within a single curriculum framework.

### Depth

There should be opportunities for pupils to develop their full capacity for different types of thinking and learning. As they progress, they should develop and apply increasing intellectual rigour, drawing different strands of learning together, and exploring and achieving more advanced levels of understanding.

### Personalisation and choice

The curriculum should respond to individual needs and support particular aptitudes and talents. It should give each pupil increasing opportunities for exercising responsible personal choice as they move through their school career.

### Coherence

Taken as a whole, pupil's learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience. There should be clear links between the different aspects of pupil's learning, including opportunities for extended activities which draw different strands of learning together.



# The Purpose of the Curriculum

## The four capacities

The purpose of the curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities - to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

## Skills for learning, life and work

'Every child and young person is entitled to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing.'

Curriculum for Excellence will support all children and young people in developing skills which they will use throughout their life and in their work, including the development of pre-vocational, enterprising and employability skills, personal skills, high levels of cognitive skills and the opportunity to put learning into a practical context.

A strong focus on literacy and numeracy is essential; all children and young people require these skills to gain access to learning and to succeed in life. Confidence and competence in literacy and numeracy provide the foundations for lifelong learning. 'Numeracy across the Curriculum' and 'Literacy across the Curriculum' explore how staff might review and develop approaches to learning and teaching in numeracy and literacy across the curriculum.

The health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes include a range of opportunities to develop skills for life and skills for work, including working effectively with other people and career planning. These experiences and outcomes also include opportunities to develop a range of skills and attributes that will enable children and young people to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle.

Making the link between the classroom and workplace can help young people to see the relevance of their learning and understand the contribution that they can make to their schools and colleges, to their community and to the economy. They can feel valued and involved and experience challenge and enjoyment; their confidence can increase with, potentially, a positive impact on their levels of attainment and achievement.

Children and young people should have opportunities to:

- build knowledge and understanding of the workplace, what employers may expect of them and what they should expect from employment
- experience enterprising activities and an enterprising culture
- have access to more specific opportunities for learning through Skills for Work courses or other vocationally relevant qualifications

and so enable them to develop the skills, confidence and abilities to become the employees, employers and entrepreneurs of the future.

## Interdisciplinary learning

Our curriculum will include space for learning beyond subject boundaries, so that pupils can make connections between different areas of learning.

Interdisciplinary studies, based upon groupings of experiences and outcomes from within and across curriculum areas, can provide relevant, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences and stimulating contexts to meet the varied needs of our pupils.

Revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding, and can also make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful from the learner's point of view.

Effective interdisciplinary learning:

- can take the form of individual one-off projects or longer courses of study
- is planned around clear purposes
- is based upon experiences and outcomes drawn from different curriculum areas or subjects within them
- ensures progression in skills and in knowledge and understanding
- can provide opportunities for mixed-stage learning which is interest-based.

## Big Thursday

On a Thursday all pupils wear old clothes (long sleeves and long trousers) and bring their PE kit.

Each teacher teaches one subject to each class in turn on a Big Thursday.

Big Thursday subjects: STEM (Science Technology Engineering Maths), Digital Skills, Art and Design, Music, Outdoor Skills, Drama and P.E..

Teachers switch subjects each term to ensure that they are upskilled across the subjects areas.

Pupils receive core learning in the subjects which can then transfer across the curriculum, for example - Outdoor Skills are used to plan for Week in the Woods. Digital Skills could be used in maths.

Pupils get the opportunity to build positive working relationships with all staff across the school. Big Thursday is most pupils favourite day of the school week.

## Opportunities for personal achievement

Personal achievement provides children and young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence.

The [experiences and outcomes](#) include opportunities for a range of achievements in the classroom and beyond.

We offer opportunities for achievement and provide the support and encouragement which will enable our pupils to step forward to undertake activities which they find challenging.

## The Wider Curriculum

### Pupil Voice Groups

All pupils take responsibility for improving the quality of our local and wider community. We expect our pupils to be active citizens who give as well as take from society. It is important that our pupils have opportunities to voice their opinions, ideas and concerns about their school. Our current groups include: Events, Pupil Council, Eco group, Community Helping Hands, Job Group, Reading Reps and Vision, Values and Aims group.

### School Trips

All school trips are related directly to current class work and the curriculum. Primary first hand experiences are essential for quality learning and we undertake numerous trips throughout the session. We will seek your permission for local outings at the start of the school session. Local outings would include leaving the school to visit areas of Kirkmahoe and travel to the Dumfries area for events. For school trips outside these criteria we will write to you, usually by email, to seek permission for your child/ren to leave school. If there are any variations on the arrangements of the trip we will contact you, usually by text message, to keep you updated.

Off-Site safety Procedures for Schools have been revised requiring schools to upload OS forms to the GLOW school Trips site. Schools may also seek national guidance from Going Out There- Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site visits with examples are, planning visits, risk assessments, transport, overseas trips etc. <https://www.goingoutthere.co.uk/>.

### The Community

We continue to build strong partnership working with our local community .



## Homework

### Why have homework?

Partnership between home and school.

Parents, carers and other family members can and do make a real difference to children's education. When parents and schools work together, children do better. Children learn a great deal at pre-school and school and parents/carers can add to that learning by supporting them at home. For example showing an interest in their homework and talking to them about it really helps children to learn. With support and encouragement children find it easier to get into the homework habit.

Homework helps children:

- Sharing learning with parents / carers
- Reinforce skills which can be applied in class learning
- Build confidence with recall and skills

### When can we expect homework?

At the beginning of the new school session the teacher needs more time to fully organise the class, therefore, the issuing of the first homework will not take place until the third week of the first term.

Thereafter, homework will be issued from the second week of every other term in the session.

Homework is set to include a degree of flexibility and to recognise that both children and parents have other commitments during the week.

Homework will not be issued during the last week of a term, during school holidays or if a child is taken out of school during term time for a holiday. Homework missed due to an absence of more than two days, will not normally be required to be completed.

### Everyone at Duncow Primary has a role to play to ensure that pupils get the most from homework.

The pupil's role will be to:

- take homework pack and share with parents /carers
- make time to do the homework
- ensure homework is of a high quality in content and presentation
- hand in completed homework on time.

The parent's role will be to:

- help children find a suitable place and time to complete tasks
- support children with tasks and to join in games / activities
- contact the school with any concerns

The teacher's role will be to:

- set homework which is skills based and clearly supports in class learning
- set homework which allows for choice in activity and timings
- ensure pupils are confident about undertaking the homework tasks
- take account of other pressures and responsibilities pupils might have
- set realistic deadlines
- check on homework and give feedback
- give recognition for effort and skills transfer



## How can you help your child with their homework?

Everyday activities can also be a source of learning. These obviously will vary according to the age of the child but could include the following:

### **Find out about their day**

What happened? Every time you ask what they have done at school and listen to what they say, you help them to communicate better.

### **Help them to be organised and responsible**

Have they got the right equipment and books before going to school? Check that their homework is done. Have they got their homework pack?

### **Share everyday activities**

Involve them in planning a family event, journey or holiday. Encourage them to show you how to use the internet! Read together. Use the football results or a trip to the shops to discuss numbers and words.

### **Talk about what is in the papers or on the TV or radio**

Ask them what they know and chat about their views. Help them to develop their ideas.

## **There are a number of things you could try to help your child learn more about a topic or theme.**

- Suggest they make up a quiz and get you to ask them the questions.

- Make up some questions to ask them.

- Suggest they talk to a friend and discuss the homework topic.

- Suggest they draw a diagram or picture illustrating the main points of what they are learning.

- Encourage them to explain what they have learned to someone else in the family.

- Suggest they pretend they were teaching the rest of their class about the topic.

## **Will homework be the same for every child in the class?**

In some curricular areas the pupils work in ability groups and homework tasks will often be differentiated to reflect the work of their particular group. Differentiation of tasks may be:

- by outcome – an open ended task tackled in a variety of ways

- by support – the teacher may need to provide additional support to a group before they take home the task

- by task, different children carrying out different tasks

Differentiation of tasks ensures that children work at a level best suited to them and at the most appropriate pace. Individuals may also have specific homework set to best suit their needs.

## **What form does homework take?**

Curriculum for Excellence asks us to make learning meaningful by linking learning and transferring skills into real life contexts. We will therefore employ active strategies or games which we hope the children will find fun and which will allow family members to become more involved in their children's learning.

## **Handing in Homework**

Homework is a voluntary task and cannot be compulsory. We recognise that some parents may not wish their child to have homework.

If any parents wish to withdraw their child from homework activities, they should inform the child's teacher in writing.

## Communicating with Home and Sharing Learning with Parents

Blog – Duncow Diaries

Class Newsletter – each class produces a learning newsletter to update parents.

Emails – Brief messages used as a reminder service or for instant messages.

Phone Calls – The Staff in school may wish to make instant and timely updates and prefer to telephone parents.

Reports – Pupil Interim Reports and an End of Year Report are currently sent home to parents in December and June.

Learning Conversations are usually held in September and February. Parents, pupils and staff meet to discuss learning and to set targets to take it forward.

Celebrations of Learning – Pupils share their learning with parents and family members during an afternoon / evening event. In the past pupils have organised a

Parent Workshop – A variety of parent workshops can be held to support pupil learning these include Getting Ready to Read and Mental Maths.

Context Evaluations - on the conclusion of an IDL topic pupils create a context evaluation sheet with their teacher. This is added to the pupil's learning folder and a copy is shared with home.

**Information can be e-mailed out or posted to parents who live away from their child.**

**The school is happy to work with parents to find an approach which works for them and their child.**

## School Improvement plan and priorities

Each year the school will publish a School Improvement Plan which outlines the key priorities for the school during the year ahead, following engagement with staff, pupils and parents. The plan indicates the expected impact of priorities on pupil learning, as well as providing brief information about the key tasks to be taken forward. Both the report and the plan are published on the school's web-site and are also available in hard copy, on request. A copy can also be found by searching for your school at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools)

We remain committed to ensuring every child can achieve their fullest potential, with this in mind our school improvement priorities for 2024 - 2025 are:

- Continue to Raise skills and attainment in numeracy and literacy through improved teacher pedagogy - developing inquiry based learning approaches in numeracy and a small test of change approach to identify and improve skills in writing. Improved skills based learning approach for all pupils.
- Improved and increased parental engagement and involvement - increased understanding of what their child is learning and how to help.
- Confident pupils with transferrable and technical skills - including meta skills.

## Parental Involvement and Engagement

### Duncow Parent Council

Chairperson –  
Vice Chairperson –  
Secretary –  
Treasurer –  
Vice Treasurer –

Our Parent Council is an open meeting to which all parents are welcome and invited.

Parent council meetings are regularly attended by 8 – 12 parents, so we are very well supported by our parent body. Meetings are held once or twice a term. The Parent Council are heavily involved in raising funds for school and the organisation of social events to build school community. Contact them by e-mail: [duncowparentcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:duncowparentcouncil@gmail.com)

Every parent who has a child at our school is a member of the Parent Forum. The parent council is a group of parents who have chosen to represent the parent forum. As a member of the Parent Forum, each parent can expect to:

- Receive information about the school and its activities
- Hear about what partnership with parents means in our school
- Be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you
- Identify issues you want the parent council to work on with the school
- Be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and education it provides
- Work in partnership with staff, and
- Enjoy taking part in school life in whatever way possible

#### The type of things the parent council may get involved in include:

- Supporting the work of the school
- Gathering and representing parents' views to the Headteacher, Education Authority and Education Scotland
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils and the local community;
- Fundraising and organising events
- Reporting to the parent forum, and
- Being involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.

For more information or support for how you can become involved in or to run your Parent Council please visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/)

For more information on what is meant by parental involvement visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/)

More information and support for Parents/ Parent Councils is available at <https://connect.scot/>

Parentclub Scotland <https://www.parentclub.scot/> provides support information and guidance to expectant parents, baby, toddler, Child, Pre-teen and Parents and Carers.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland's (NPFS) Curriculum for Excellence in a Nutshell series. Free Downloads for parents/carers: <https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series/nationals-in-a-nutshell-series/>

Parentzone Scotland <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> information about the Curriculum and how you can be involved in your child's learning.

Parental Involvement Strategy and Volunteer Opportunities [Parental Involvement \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/) and [Volunteering \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/)

## How is my child doing? (Assessment and Reporting)

The staff team meet regularly to discuss each pupil and to review the pupil's progress, learning and wider achievements. This ensures that pupils make continual progress with their learning.

Pupils are target setting in Literacy and English, Math and Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. They set learning goals through discussion with the class teacher based on in class work and assessments.

'Assessment' is the word used to describe all the things which schools do to see how your child is getting on, what they are learning and what they know and understand. It is important to know how each child is getting on so that schools can make sure that each child is progressing and developing according to their abilities. Assessment happens all the time in schools and your child's progress will not just be based on 'tests' but also on how they learn both in class and in other settings. Written work will be used to assess your child but so will their ability to take part in class discussions, make presentations, be in a production or team, produce drawings or projects etc. Parents will be involved both informally in discussion with teachers, looking at their child's work and also formally through parents nights, profiles and reports. In senior school children will also have the opportunity to be assessed through a range of qualifications.

## Helping your child

There are many things which as a parent you can do to support your child's learning in school:-

- **Listen, talk, and encourage** – this can have a big influence on children's learning
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their learning, what learning is happening at school and do what you can at home to build on that
- **Talk** to your child about their strengths and interests and how they are progressing
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their next steps in learning and find out how you can work with the school to support this
- **Ask for help** if you think your child needs it for any reason.
- **Praise** your child if he/she is working hard at something or has achieved something within or out of school
- **Encourage any reading**
- **Look for opportunities at home** to develop literacy and numeracy skills: money, number problems, time, measuring, matching, size, reading, writing, understanding instructions, questioning information
- **Encourage your child to take part in activities** e.g. hobbies, clubs which will provide opportunities to develop a range of skills
- **Help them work on tasks on their own** and then talk about it with you afterwards
- **Do things together where appropriate** – learn together e.g. if your child has a project or task to do, take an interest and discuss with them what he/she is doing or offer support if this is needed.
- **Help prepare for change** particularly at key transitions – talk about the change together.
- **Talk** to them about how they are feeling
- **Work together with the school** by taking part in discussions about your child's learning and progress e.g. at parents nights, reviews

Information provided by Education Scotland – Parentzone

## Helping the School

We welcome parent support and helpers within school. Parents can volunteer to support with daily class routines or as part of a special project. Parents with specific skills can also support after school activities. We would be delighted to have your expertise!

For more information on parental involvement or to find out more about parents as partners in their child's learning, please contact the school or visit the Education Scotland website – [www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone).

For local information please visit <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools>



## Support for All

### Support for Learners

Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to the well-being and educational development of all learners. The process of inclusion requires all involved in the business of learning and teaching to demonstrate commitment, innovation and flexibility to ensure that all children and young people have access to quality learning opportunities and experiences.

More information is available at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16163/Support-for-Learners> and on page 18 of our [Education Authority Handbook](#)

### Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

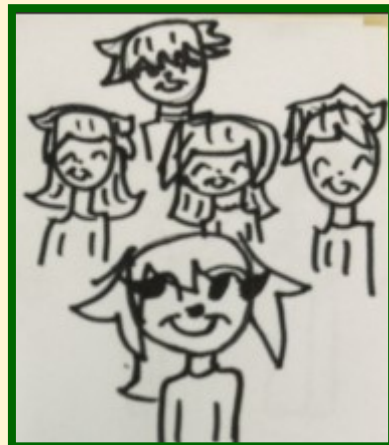
You are the expert on your child and what you think matters. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) means that the School will always seek to involve you, to listen to your opinions and take them seriously.

More information is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec) and on page 20 of our [Education Authority Handbook](#)

### Child Protection

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway is that they should be: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included. Schools and front-line education and child care services will play an important role in ensuring all children and young people are safe and well. Further information can be found at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16640/Support-for-children-and-families>

Parents, carers and pupils have a key role in keeping the school community safe. We would therefore urge parents to share any information which would keep everyone safe, and to support and encourage their child (ren) to do the same.



## Health and Safety

### Emergency Procedures (including Safer Together Guidance)

If your child feels unwell or have hurt themselves during the school day they must report this to an adult in the school. If we feel that they would be better at home we will telephone you or your emergency contact. Minor accidents, e.g. cuts, bruises, are dealt with by the school staff. Serious accidents are few, but should one occur your child will be immediately taken either to your doctor or to hospital, if necessary, and you or your emergency contact will be notified. We cannot stress enough the importance of supplying the school with the relevant information we require in such a situation, i.e. your own home and work number and a telephone number of an emergency contact. Please remember that if your child stays in more than one home setting contact details should take account of this.

### Health Care (including First Aid)

Many children will require their health care needs to be met at sometime within the nursery/school environment, for most children this will be for short periods of time only, but for some children this may require more long-term planning and support. If your child has any health care needs, please contact the school to discuss arrangements. Full details of the support available and your role as a parent and the role of your child are contained within Health Care in Schools 3-18 (NHS and Dumfries and Galloway Council) which is available from the school. For more information see our Authority Handbook.

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/22154/Education-Authority-Handbook/pdf/0117-21-Authority-Handbook-2021.pdf?m=637686132754470000>

### Severe Weather and School Closure Arrangements

Headteachers are authorised to make an emergency closure when the state of the weather or any other exceptional circumstance make it necessary in the best interests of the pupils. In these circumstances parents will be communicated with in a variety of ways including text messages/ phone calls and emergency contact arrangements. All school closures will be notified on the Council Website.

### Data Protection

Information on how the Council uses personal data is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15129/](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15129/)

[Data-protection and www.dumgal.gov.uk/](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/Data-protection)

Privacy

## ICT in Schools

For more information on ICT in school please see page 14 of the Education Authority Handbook

Use of the Internet, Social Networking Sites.

As part of the process of learning we allow our children supervised access to the Internet and e-mail.

The authority runs its own filter system to ensure that young people are not at risk from exposure to inappropriate material. This filtering system is regularly being upgraded. We have a policy for use of the Internet and a contract for responsible use, which we ask parents and young people to sign up to.

For more information visit our Education Authority Handbook and Safe Digital Learning and Social Media Leaflet.