

# PRIMARY 1 WELCOME BOOKLET



REPHAD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY  
LADIES WALK  
STRANRAER  
DG9 8BW

Tel No: 01776 704195



Please keep in mind this booklet is not linked to any current COVID 19 conditions and discusses the Primary 1 experience as anticipated in a normal school year. Adaptations will be shared as needed.

# WELCOME TO REPHAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parent/Carer,

The aim of this booklet is to give you more specific information about Primary 1 and how you can help your child at home with early literacy and numeracy skills. A School Handbook which gives you general information about the School and the curriculum your child will experience can be accessed on the school blog at the following link: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/rephadconnects/> in the Parent Area, under the tab School Reference Documents.

## First some general information:

Our local authority has moved in recent years to a situation where most P1 pupils come to school all day right from the start. There is a period over the first two weeks where parents have the option to opt for a phased entry consisting of attendance every morning with flexibility to suit the child in afternoons.

Some parents worry that their child might be 'missing out' if they opt for a phased or gradual build-up of afternoons in those first two weeks. This is not the case. In this transition phase most of the afternoon's activities are similar to nursery with exploration and learning through play. More formal learning in those first few weeks tends to take place in the mornings when the children are fresh, less tired and can focus and concentrate a bit better.

If you would like to consider or find out more about an initial brief, phased entry period to suit your child's needs, please speak to your child's P1 teacher and they will be happy to try to help.

Over the course of the first term in particularly (up to October), you may find your child becomes very tired in the later afternoon and early evening. Primary 1 is a big step from pre-school education both educationally and socially and it can take several weeks to get used to the new routines. Early to bed at these times will help your child be at their best and more able to cope during the day.

## What are the School times?

All pupils now have the same length of day. Infants no longer have a slightly shorter day other than during their first 2 weeks if parents opt for a phasing in period.

The Primary 1 Day begins:

9.00am	-	Day begins
10.30am – 10.45am	-	Morning break
12.30pm – 1.15pm	-	Lunchtime
1.15pm – 3.00pm	-	Day ends at 3.00pm

## Where does my child line up?

P1 children should line up outside the Infant Door (beside the netball court and garden). This would also be an appropriate time to pass on any information which the staff in the playground e.g. your child is being picked up early for a doctor's appointment.

## When do I stop coming in school with my child?

For the first few days, a parent (one adult) can wait in the playground with their child but after this time we ask that parents drop off their children and give them time to run, play, meet their friends and get ready for the bell. There is always staff in the playground prior to school to support any children who may not be feeling overly confident in the morning. We understand how overwhelming all of this change can be.

**Usually though, after the first few days children to come in to school on their own, leaving parents waving at the gate or in the playground. It is best for the children if parents allow them to develop this independence. Quite often most children are ready for this before some parents feel they are!**

While it can be very difficult to let them do this, increasing independence is what we are ultimately striving for and this break can be the first step for both parents and children. Also, reducing the number of adults waiting in the playground makes it easier for school staff to notice anything unusual or anyone unfamiliar in the school grounds; also giving the children somewhere to run and play prior to the school day.

## What if my child is going to be absent from School?

Please inform the School of any absences before 9.30am, as the School has a duty to know the whereabouts of all pupils who are expected in School and to log attendance figures. A note or phone call explaining absences helps us to keep our attendance records accurate for each pupil and ensures that we know where absent children are and that they are safe somewhere.

**IF A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL AND WE HAVE NOT HAD WORD ABOUT THE ABSENCE FROM A PARENT, SCHOOL STAFF WILL CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE DAY TO TRY TO ESTABLISH THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE ABSENT CHILD.**

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO THIS UNTIL WE KNOW THAT THE CHILD IS SAFE SOMEWHERE AND THAT THEY HAVE NOT SET OFF FOR SCHOOL AND NOT ARRIVED.**

It is therefore very important that we hold up to date contact information and emergency contact information for every pupil. If we are unable to make contact to find out why a child is not in school, this is likely to result in someone knocking on your door to establish that the absent child is safe.

## What will my child wear to School?

The School Uniform is:

royal blue jumpers, cardigans,  
blue checked summer dresses;

white or royal blue polo shirt

black or grey trousers, skirts, pinafores –

Please avoid leggings and trackies unless otherwise directed to wear them

**-PLEASE LABEL all clothing, especially sweatshirts and gym shoes. This is vital if we are to be able to find any lost items.**

These are all available from local suppliers with the logo and motto if you wish, or can be purchased from other retailers without the school logo.

All children should have a pair of indoor shoes to wear. A shoe bag will be provided to store them in.

## Do children take a play-piece/snack?

Please keep this to one item. If they have too much to eat they do not get the opportunity to play and they are sometimes not hungry at lunch. We are also trying to encourage healthy eating and we would appreciate your support in this.



## What about lunch?

Children who stay for lunch have three lunch options, a hot meal, snack bar or packed lunches from home. The lunches which are cooked on the premises, provide several well-balanced choices daily and are both delicious and great value. Parents are issued with a menu which shows the meals on offer. **Lunches for all P1-P5 pupils are provided free of charge.**

Primary 1 and Primary 2 children are usually seated nearest to the serving area to make carrying food to their seats much easier. The children are supervised throughout lunchtime in the dinner hall.

If your child brings a packed lunch then please make sure the contents are secure inside the box. It can be very upsetting to your child when they find their sandwiches covered in yoghurt! Please also label lunch boxes on the outside as pupils often have the same design of box. We also encourage children to take home their food wrappings, but they are welcome to use the school bins to dispose of juice boxes or yoghurt tubs.

**Lunch boxes should be put on the racks provided and not left in school bags in classes where the heat of the classroom can affect them.**

## What if my child is ill?

Please do not send your child to school if they are ill. Often, when the School contacts parents informing them that their child is unwell, we are told that mum or dad noticed they were unwell but the child wanted to come to school. Our advice is that even if a child thinks they are well enough, you know your child best and being firm with your decision in the morning avoids the extra distress your child experiences when they are ill at school. This also helps avoid spreading any illness amongst the other children in the class.

## What if my child has head lice?

Head lice does happen and can spread quickly in a school. Prevention is the best method for keeping it in check. The Health Board advice is to check hair thoroughly once a week and after shampooing, use conditioner on your child's hair and then comb through with a head lice comb. (Lice cannot hold onto the conditioned hair). Rinse and brush as normal. Please report any instances of head lice to the School in order that teachers can be made aware.

## How will I know what goes on at school?

Children who start school are notoriously silent about what they do all day. When asked, they say, "I just played", so how do you find out more?

There will be meetings arranged early in the session to tell you about the curriculum i.e. reading, maths, language, play, etc. There will be two Parents' Nights during the session where you have an opportunity to talk to your child's teacher.

There is a termly class Curriculum newsletter as well as a school termly newsletter to inform you of school matters both in the classroom and in the school community.

In all circumstances, we are only a phone call away.

Please check school bags and homework diaries daily for notes or letters. Often important information goes home by "pupil post" and these notes can equally often be found languishing at the bottom of school bags!

We use the Learning Journals site on a regular basis to share work in class and the school app to discuss events taking place. The school app can be downloaded from the JigSaw site on google play. Learning Journals are accessed through a specific code shared by the school.

## **Smartphone App**

We use our Rephad smartphone app to communicate news, information, dates, times etc. This app is free to download and there are versions for IOS (Apple) and Android operating systems. Just search 'Rephad App' on your internet browser and you should find our app to download with this icon.



## **Can I become involved in the life of the School during the day?**

The school operates a system of parent helpers mostly to help with trips, visits and outings, so if you are available then you will almost certainly get a chance to help out in school. Our Parent Council and Fund Raising Committee are always on the lookout for parents who are able to help out with school events. You don't have to commit to anything, just help whenever you can. School will meet the cost of Disclosure Scotland checks for our regular or specialist helpers. (eg music, sport helpers) We must stress the importance of confidentiality for all of our parent helpers. Parents who are unable to adhere to this will not be asked to help in the future. However, most parent helpers are a tremendous asset to the school and their help and support allows us more flexibility to be creative and innovative in planning trips, visits and experiences.

## **What do Primary 1 pupils learn?**

In Primary 1 we like to establish the learning relationship between home and school at an early stage. We believe that education is a partnership between school and home. We recognise and encourage the central role that parents play in their child's learning and development. To achieve this, we strive to inform and involve parents as much as we possibly can.

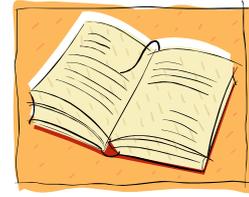
We aim to produce well-rounded, articulate children by providing a balanced curriculum covering all aspects of their development – social, emotional, physical and intellectual. "Curriculum for Excellence" strives to bring this about by allowing all children the opportunities they need to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors to Society and Responsible Citizens.

The children in Primary 1 will experience a variety of teaching methods and approaches based on what we know works best through evidence from extensive global research.

The Curriculum will encourage a progressive development of skills and learning contexts and the children will be given opportunities for investigation and practical activities, alongside structured play and collaborative work. Structured play activities and play based learning approaches are particularly important in the early years to develop skills, social skills and learning.

## Talking and Listening

- Speak confidently, with interest.
- Learn how to take turns when speaking.
- Listen with growing concentration, responding appropriately.



## Reading

- Learn initial letter sounds
- Develop word recognition - simple consonant; vowel; consonant (CVC) words and 'look and say' words at first.
- Develop phonic awareness i.e. recognise letter shapes and sounds and phonic blends eg. ch, bl, wh.
- Learn 42 key sounds (Jolly Phonics).
- Understand the organisation of books and use them correctly.
- Use a range of cues in their reading and begin to develop higher order reading skills.
- Show interest in printed and written words around them.

The children develop early handwriting skills through practise in correct pencil grip, pencil control and letter formation. Good habits established early will enable the children to get into the habit of using a good pencil grip, forming letters correctly and then joining up letters successfully later.

### **It is very important that children are taught the correct way to hold their pencils.**

The correct grip should be a "Tripod Grip" between thumb tip and first two fingers like in this picture.

Bad habits are particularly difficult to rectify. (A side of thumb and first finger grip only can be very difficult to put right and can make letter formation more difficult.)

#### **Left Handed Children**

If your child is left handed or shows a preference for using their left hand for writing, please do NOT try to make them write with their right hand. This can be potentially damaging to your child's wider development in a number of different ways. We are able to help left handed children to learn to write just as successfully as their right handed peers.



Early writing skills are introduced through emergent writing activities e.g. a telephone pad in the house corner.

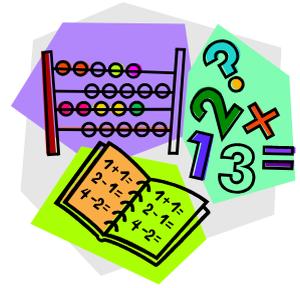
#### **Pupil will learn to:**

- Write to communicate, to inform and for enjoyment.
- Write to different forms – stories, lists, messages.
- Write for a range of readers, teachers, family, peers and self.
- Write as response to personal experience, classroom activities, stories or poems.
- Form lower case letters correctly and start own name with capital letter.

## Mathematics

Practical, written and investigative work takes place in the following areas of learning in order to develop good mathematical language and establish concepts.

- Place value – counting and conservation of number up to 10 and higher.
- Number – more/less, number bonds, addition and subtraction within 10.
- Patterns – recognise, continue and create patterns.
- Weight – compare by using simple balances with non-standard units.
- Measurement – comparisons and use of non-standard units.
- Capacity – identify full, partially full and empty.
- Money – recognise and use 1p, 2p and 5p coins.
- 2D shapes – identify squares, rectangles, circles and triangles.
- 3D shapes – begin to identify cubes, cuboids, cylinders, cones or spheres.
- Positional vocabulary – use and understand terms e.g. under, beside.
- Time – develop awareness of times of day and days of week.
- Handling data – sorting and recording information e.g. sets, block graphs, pictograms.



## Social Studies, Science & Technology

Social Studies, Sciences and Technologies includes History, Geography, Modern Studies, Science and Technology. Most activities at the P1 stage are practical with some recording and are based around themes, for example:

- What is Outside My Window?
- Toys
- My Body
- Clothes
- When Granny Was Wee
- This is Where I live
- Jobs People Do

The topics or 'contexts for learning' along with others like 'Scotland', 'Christmas', 'Easter' form part of a child's learning journey as they go through the school year.

## Information and Communication Technology

The children work with computers using the mouse or touch screens and learn simple keyboarding skills. A wide selection of software is used and much of the computer work compliments the maths and language work being introduced in class.

Interactive whiteboards are used during teaching and learning.

Design Technology – areas covered are:

- Food – cooking.
- Simple mechanisms – pop up cards.
- Construction equipment e.g. building bridges.
- Understanding simple products e.g. boxes.
- Learning skills for cutting, joining, etc.



## Expressive Arts - PE, Drama, Art and Music

Activities include:

- Games and athletic activities.
- Dance and gymnastics.
- Role play and mime.
- Painting e.g. self-portraits/wax resist.
- Observational drawings.
- Modelling using clay or boxes.
- Collage – cutting and glueing.
- Mixing colours.
- Printing.
- Singing.
- Reacting to different sounds and rhythms.
- Using percussion instruments.
- Performing in plays and concerts.



## Religious Education/Moral

Children will hear and learn about Christian festivals e.g. Christmas and Easter and stories from the Old and New Testament. Children will also be introduced to stories and key figures from major world religions.

We develop a culture and ethos of acceptance, tolerance and inclusion for different view-points, beliefs and cultures. Children learn about a range of religious and secular lifestyles, views and attitudes as they journey through school. We want children to recognise and understand that tolerance and acceptance of diversity should be part of every-day life in a multicultural society and greater understanding can enrich our life experiences.



## Personal and Social Development/Health Education

Through activities like Circle Time, personal and social skills are developed. Topics include sharing, helping, dental hygiene, handwashing, etc. Health and Wellbeing is embedded throughout the whole curriculum and school experience.

We use the Skills for Life programme to support emotional wellbeing. Our school expectations for Primary 1 are:

**We are respectful.**

We use positive words and actions with other people.

**We are honest.**

We make sure the truth is shared with others.

**We are kind and helpful.**

We do the best for others.

**We listen to others.**

We avoid interrupting.

**We look after property.**

We take care of school or personal property.

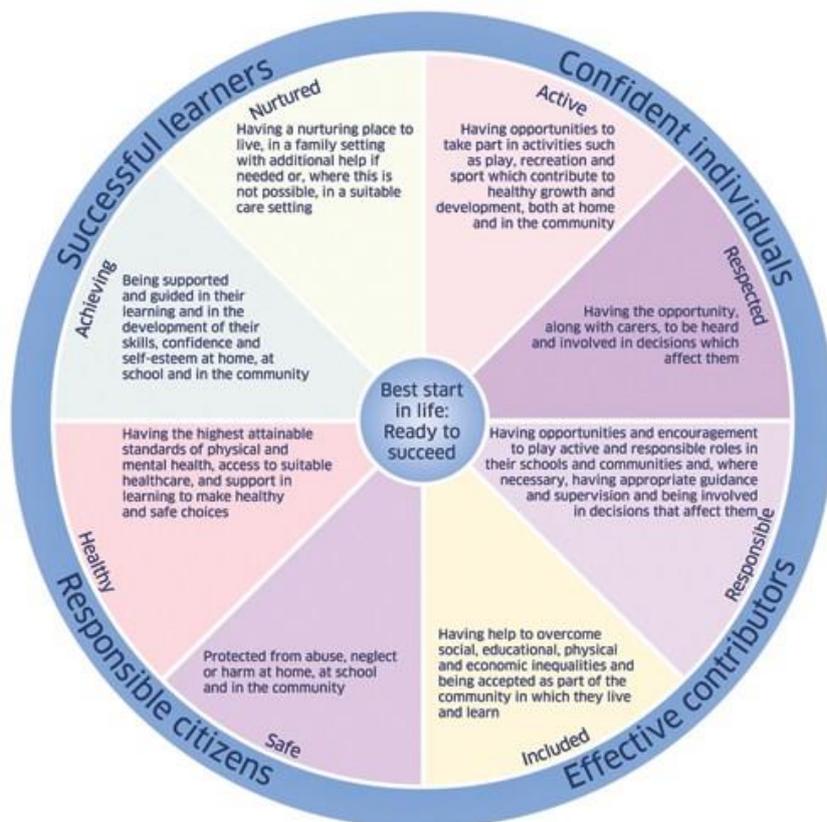
**We work hard.**

We have high expectations of ourselves and others.

The values we promote are:

We are **respectful** and **inclusive**. We promote **resilience**, **hard-work** and **creativity**. We have an **aspirational** learning environment.

We use wellbeing indicators like SHANARRI (safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; included) to ensure we are meeting the full health and wellbeing needs of all of our young people.



## Additional Support for Learning

The School has a part-time (approx. 3 days per week) Additional Support for Learning Teacher who assists class teachers in meeting the educational needs of our pupils. Initially the ASfL Teacher may work alongside all the children in Primary 1 and when appropriate, more direct support may be planned for individual children. Before this support begins we would invite you to meet with the class and ASfL Teacher to discuss how best we can all help your child.



## Homework

Homework will be tailored to meet the learning needs of the class and individuals. Pupils will be given a 'blue bag' with homework tasks and activities. In the early stages there will be an emphasis on fun and sharing learning together with parents. We try to keep homework reasonable, proportionate and achievable for everyone. We also use the online TEAMS environment on GLOW to share homework ideas to promote family discussion and interaction.

### Help with Early Reading and Number Skills at Home

When we feel your child is ready to start the process of learning to read we will introduce your child to early reading books from a variety of different sources and schemes. Please don't be in too much of a hurry to push, push, push!

Reading is not a race or a competition. Different children are 'ready to read' at different times. Our experience enables us to select a pace that is right for each individual child and this is not the same for everyone.

Some parents can sometimes become frustrated when they feel that their child could “read” more or are “only” discussing pictures. This is all part of the process of encouraging an interest in reading and establishing the necessary pre-reading skills. The last thing we want to do is turn children off reading before they get to the October break in Primary 1! Encouraging and developing higher order reading skills needs much more than simply verbalising words on a page. It requires skilled questioning that moves from simple recounting a ‘story’ to predicting, summarising and extending comprehension of a range of different text.

In some cases, if the pace is pushed too much early on, important weaknesses in aspects like comprehension, word decoding and phonics can arise as the reading material gradually becomes more challenging. Building a solid foundation from the start is essential to smooth progress later on.

In many cases, the more you “force it” the worse it will be. Let the reading develop over time. Please try not to look over your shoulder at what other children or even other schools are doing. We know what works and you can rest assured that we will normally have almost all children reading at or beyond age and stage appropriate levels as they progress through school.

Books and new words are sent home so that you can take part in the process of learning to read. In the early stages of reading children will learn about characters, initial sounds and key words. You can help enormously by really spending time with your child on their reading. Remember to get the most out of the experience, it needs to be about much more than simply reading the correct words in the correct order! Take time to ask questions, get your child thinking and try to make the experience fun. If you get stressed out, your child is likely to pick that up!

#### **Our range of early reading material includes:**

Oxford Reading Tree books which contain key words for the children to learn.

P.M. Readers – a range of different genres and contexts

Pattern and rhyme books which are stories using rhyming words.

Information books for general reading and discussion. The children are not expected to read every word.

We have an extensive school library with books that are ‘banded’ so that children and adults can select books that are at the right level for individual children.

#### **Tips for Parents**

Enjoy it - Encourage your child by giving lots of praise.

Talking - Talk about the pictures and stories. Ask different kinds of questions – (recount, information, predict, Why.....? What do you think? etc.)

For how long? - Keep reading to a minimum. A short time, maybe 5 to 10 minutes will be long enough.

When? - Choose a good time for both of you, not with a TV on in the corner if you can help it.

Where? - Find a quiet place where you can sit side by side with no distractions.

“I don’t want to” – take the lead from your child but, try to find ways of developing interest by reading to your child books that might interest them.

## SOME OTHER GUIDELINES

- Remember that you are the adult and are looking at it with an adult brain – your 5 year-old child isn't so it is important to understand the child's perception of a situation.
- Make reading a pleasant event. (If it isn't, stop – have a break don't try to force it)
- Give praise and encouragement.
- Give time to try words.
- Help children over difficulties.
- Contact the School if you have any worries or questions about reading.
- Sing and say songs and number rhymes with young children.
- Look for numbers in the environment – house numbers, car number plates, prices, clocks, weights, phone numbers and talk about them. Is that number more than .... How much change from ..... what numbers comes after .....
- Add number apparatus to your child's toy collection – counters, a purse full of change, dice, dominoes, a tape measure, ruler, pack of cards, timer, different shapes and use them to make mathematics come alive.
- Shop using money and calculate change.
- Play Snakes and Ladders, Cribbage, and other games that depend on counting and calculation.
- Watch and play sports that involve scoring, timing, counting and measuring.
- Invest in a range of maths puzzle books.
- Cook together and enjoy the result!
- Look for patterns and shapes on floors, wallpaper, plants, animals and buildings.
- Avoid getting frustrated – remember we all had to learn to read sometime: patience and support work best! Please contact the class teacher for further guidance.

### Developing a Sense of Number

One of the best ways of developing an understanding of early number and number awareness is to make it fun and interesting by exploring numbers together.

Playing number games, number rhymes, looking for numbers in the environment and using numbers in everyday life are all good ways of raising a young child's awareness of number. Simple counting of objects and comparing quantities of real things (eg sweets, counters, coins etc) can help children begin to develop an awareness of number.

### Use real materials to explore number.

Young children need a lot of time with real / actual materials that they can see, touch and feel to explore number before they are ready to work with and think about more abstract ideas like symbols to represent numbers and quantities. That is a big leap for young children and takes time to establish.

The link and association between number symbols (eg 1,2,3,4,5) and 'quantities of things or objects' seems completely intuitive to most adults, but for young children this link needs to be established through lots of practise and repetition.

Counting real things together is an excellent way of establishing the idea of number and quantity.

When out and about you can ask number questions like:

- How many swans can you see in the pond? Let's count and point.
- How many red cars can you see in the car park? You point and count.
- Can you see two of something? (ears, eyes, shoes, socks etc)
- Can you help me count this bunch of bananas?

You can work on recognising number symbols by looking for them in the environment.

- Can you see a number 5 anywhere?
- I can see a number 2, can you?
- First person to see a number 4 anywhere is the winner!

## **Be positive in engaging in Numeracy activities with your child.**

We want to make sure children have a positive experience of number and that we don't accidentally pass on any negative vibes around numeracy that some of us may have experienced when we were young.

Try to avoid saying things like, 'I was never any good at Maths when I was at school. Or, 'Maths is hard'.

As with reading, encouragement and support is the best way forward.

We hope that you and your child have a very positive experience as part of the Rephad family and we look forward to getting to know you as we move forward together.



**One last special message!!**



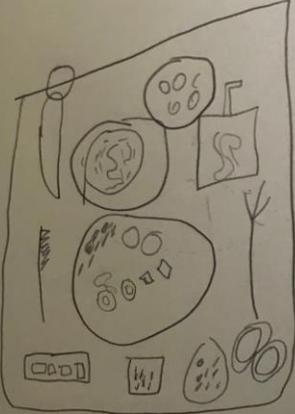
**Some words from Primary 1 Pupils at Rephad Primary School:**

I Was excited to  
start P1 to meet my  
teacher and my friends

There are 6  
hens They eat  
grass.



Lunch is tasty.



0000

If lay with my  
friends and  
have fun.

Rephad school is fun. I like playing with my friends. The teachers look after us.

Welcome to P1



You get to read a book



You get to play

You get to be a doctor



You can be an artist

