

Drongan Primary School and Early Childhood Centre

Curriculum Rationale



Drongan Primary School and ECC Curriculum Rationale

Drongan Primary School and Early Childhood Centre is a non-denominational school, currently in the Auchinleck Education Group. The village of Drongan (originally known as Taiglum) is a former mining village on the western edge of Ayrshire and is situated between Cumnock and Ayr, roughly 8 miles from both towns. In 1946, it was proposed that Drongan should be developed as a 'new town' and families from various small mining communities were also re-housed in Drongan. Drongan was a thriving and prosperous place when the Killoch and Barony pit mines were operational; however, was hit hard during the demise of the mining industry. In the most recent census in 2018 Drongan had a population of 3,125 people.

We have a current role of 262 and within the ECC the number of children registered can range from 60 – 100. We also have a 2 year old provision.

Based on our current school roll our SIMD data indicates that 63% of our pupils are within SIMD 1 and 2. 77% of our children are entitled to free school meals. We have had a consistent attendance percentage over the last five years ranging from 93 – 94%. There has also been a change in culture where behaviour is concerned, with a significant reduction in exclusions. In 2018-19 and 2017-18 there was 1 exclusion in each school session whereas in 2014-15 there were 14, 2015-16 there were 25 and in 2016-17 there were 10 exclusions. 18% of our children are currently on the Additional Support Needs log and supported by EAST and Classroom Assistant support staff.

Local Context

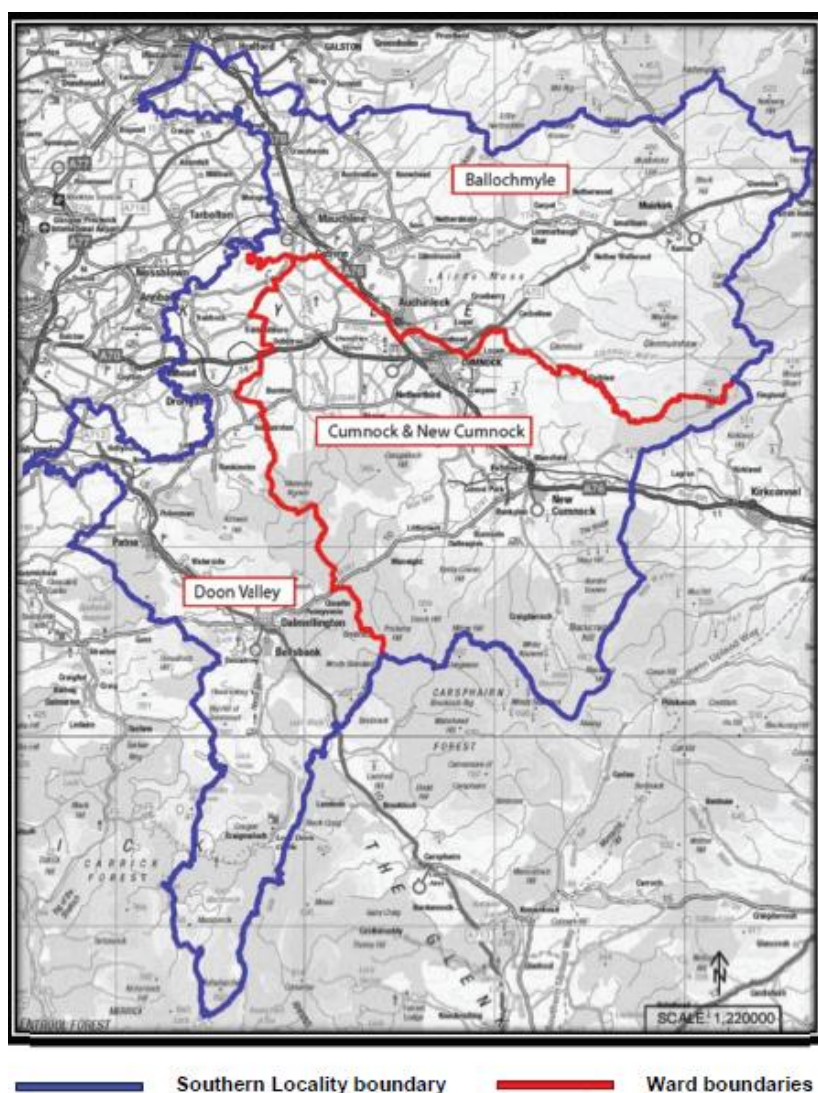
In East Ayrshire's 2017 published Southern Locality Profile, which Drongan is included, it discusses how East Ayrshire is considered an idyllic setting. However, the rural environment has led to challenges for some local populations in relation to access to services / amenities, transport links and employment opportunities. This has led to socio-economic and health deprivation for some residents and has influenced outward migration of working age individuals from the area. It is projected that there will be a significant rise in older people living in the southern locality of East Ayrshire. There are currently one in five (20%) people in this area who are aged over 65. Around 27% of people live in a deprived neighbourhood with 20% of children living in poverty. The level of both overall and youth unemployment is higher than the East Ayrshire average. Of those not in work, one in five is long-term sick or disabled. 85% of secondary school leavers in the Southern locality achieved SCQF Level 4 in Literacy and Numeracy, with 55% achieving SCQF Level 5 in Literacy and Numeracy. This has risen by roughly 7% over the last three years. 93% of school leavers are in positive destinations including college, university, training or work. Over half of the people in this area work in health and social work, retail, construction or manufacturing.

There are significant challenging trends relating to health and wellbeing in the Southern Locality. One in ten (9%) of Primary 1 children are overweight or obese and 37% of children in Primary 1 have tooth decay. There is a higher level of teenage pregnancies compared with the East Ayrshire average. One in three (35%) of Southern Locality residents have a long-term health condition and the rate of alcohol and drug related hospital stays is higher than the East Ayrshire average. 22% of residents are prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis.

The Southern Locality Profile highlights that many people in this area do not live in a home that is warm, dry, secure and affordable. There is a high crime rate, which suggests an unsafe community, having a negative effect on the quality of life and personal safety. It also highlights that the health of young people could be improved by reducing smoking and alcohol use in pregnancy, promoting healthy diets and physical activity, and by offering more support to families in need with housing, finance, safety, parenting and social isolation. There is a higher percentage of people living in bad or very bad health compared with the East Ayrshire average.

Overall, The Southern Locality Profile shows that this area came out significantly worse than the East Ayrshire average in 8 out of 15 indicators, while East Ayrshire as an authority came out as worse in 10 areas compared with the Scottish average.

In Drongan Primary School and ECC we are developing a positive and aspirational culture that challenges these assumptions as well as some of the protected values and beliefs that exist in the community. Through the promotion of our revised aspirational vision, all stakeholders are encouraged to be the best we can be and take a pride in our local community. We encourage children to lead a healthy lifestyle by promoting the wellbeing indicators and working towards becoming a Rights Respecting accredited school. We include all children in learning and encourage all children to work hard to achieve their full potential. It is the responsibility of every adult who contributes to the lives of our young people here at Drongan, to reinforce the message that regardless of the challenges that they may face, all children can achieve their full potential and live a healthy, happy and successful life where they demonstrate the shared values that have been instilled in them.



Who Are We?

In session 2018 -19 we consulted with all stakeholders and have agreed a shared vision for our establishment. This vision is underpinned by agreed values and aims, which were created following a detailed consultation process.

Vision

In Drongan Primary School and Early Childhood Centre our vision for all is:

To have a sense of belonging and pride in our local community where everyone is valued and we work together to be the best that we can be.

Values

Within our school, ECC and local community, the values that we feel are important to instil in all are:

Teamwork – by working together with those around us in a supportive culture

Mutual respect – where everyone feels valued, is treated fairly and is communicated with in an effective and appropriate way

Trust – through demonstrating honesty and integrity in all situations

Inclusion – where everyone feels included in their learning and in the life of the school and all staff works as part of a team

Self-belief – where children are provided with opportunities to develop confidence and are encouraged by all adults that they can achieve

Resilience – where children are encouraged to never give up and that they can do it

Aims

In Drongan Primary School and Early Childhood Centre our aim is to develop the **four capacities** outlined in Curriculum for Excellence in all of our pupils to prepare them for future life.

We will encourage our children to be:

Confident individuals by promoting self-worth, ambition and resilience

Responsible citizens by promoting diversity, communication skills and confidence

Effective contributors by promoting community spirit, enjoyment and participation

Successful learners by promoting skills development, challenge and engagement in learning

What people say...

We recently consulted with our children, parents, partners and local community when creating our Vision, Values and Aims and our Curriculum Rationale. This is what some people said:		
Our pupils say...	Our parents say...	Our partners say...
<p>'The teachers and children make our school special! We are one of a kind.' (Toby)</p> <p>'My hope is that I can get a good education.' (Thomas)</p> <p>'Our Nursery is attached to our school, this helps our nursery children when they are moving to Primary 1.' (Kaycee)</p>	<p>'The school is much more welcoming and has a caring environment.'</p> <p>'There is greater involvement for all children and parents.'</p> <p>'Friendly and welcoming environment with staff that are committed to helping children achieve their potential.'</p> <p>'Drongan Primary feels very much part of the community.'</p> <p>'I hope for my child to leave Drongan Primary with a good understanding of reading, writing and maths.'</p> <p>'I hope for my child to be treated fairly and with respect and to learn to treat others this way.'</p>	<p>'Drongan Primary School and ECC is a welcoming school with excellent, approachable staff and extremely well-mannered children. A community school that is driven to be the best it possibly can.' (EAST Support Teacher)</p> <p>'I enjoy working with the staff who are very welcoming and accommodating with any activity possibilities I can offer the school.' (Active Schools Coordinator)</p>

Curriculum Design

In Dromgan Primary School and ECC we are working collaboratively to design and develop our curriculum in line with local and national guidance. In creating our curriculum rationale we ensured that the social and economic context of the local and surrounding community informed the content. It is underpinned by the shared vision, values and aims and the wellbeing indicators were also considered. When reviewing our Curriculum Rationale we engaged with and reflected on The Four Contexts for Learning, The Four Capacities, Children's Entitlements as well as reflecting on How Good Is Our School 4 section 2.2. The Principles of Curriculum Design are at the heart of everything we do in Dromgan Primary School and ECC and are continuously reflected on as we develop and review our curriculum.

The Four Contexts for Learning

Ethos and Life of the School

We have recently reviewed our vision, values and aims and have worked hard as a school community to improve the ethos and life of the school. A positive, nurturing ethos where children feel safe and are encouraged to achieve in a culture of mutual respect is the starting point effective learning to take place. We have increased opportunities for children to contribute to the life of the school and local community, ensuring that they are listened to and play an active role in the decision making process.



Curricular Areas and Subjects

We have worked collaboratively and will continue to do so to review and develop the structure and balance of the curriculum, ensuring that we provide all children with the broad general education that they are entitled to. As we build the curriculum we will continue to seek opportunities to provide children with experiences that are more relevant to their local context and developing their skills for life, learning and work.

Interdisciplinary Learning

Through the delivery of individual one-off projects and longer topic studies, teachers planning often involves linking experiences and outcomes from different curricular areas or subjects within them. This provides opportunities for children to make connections between different areas of learning and can provide meaningful and stimulating contexts for learning to take place.

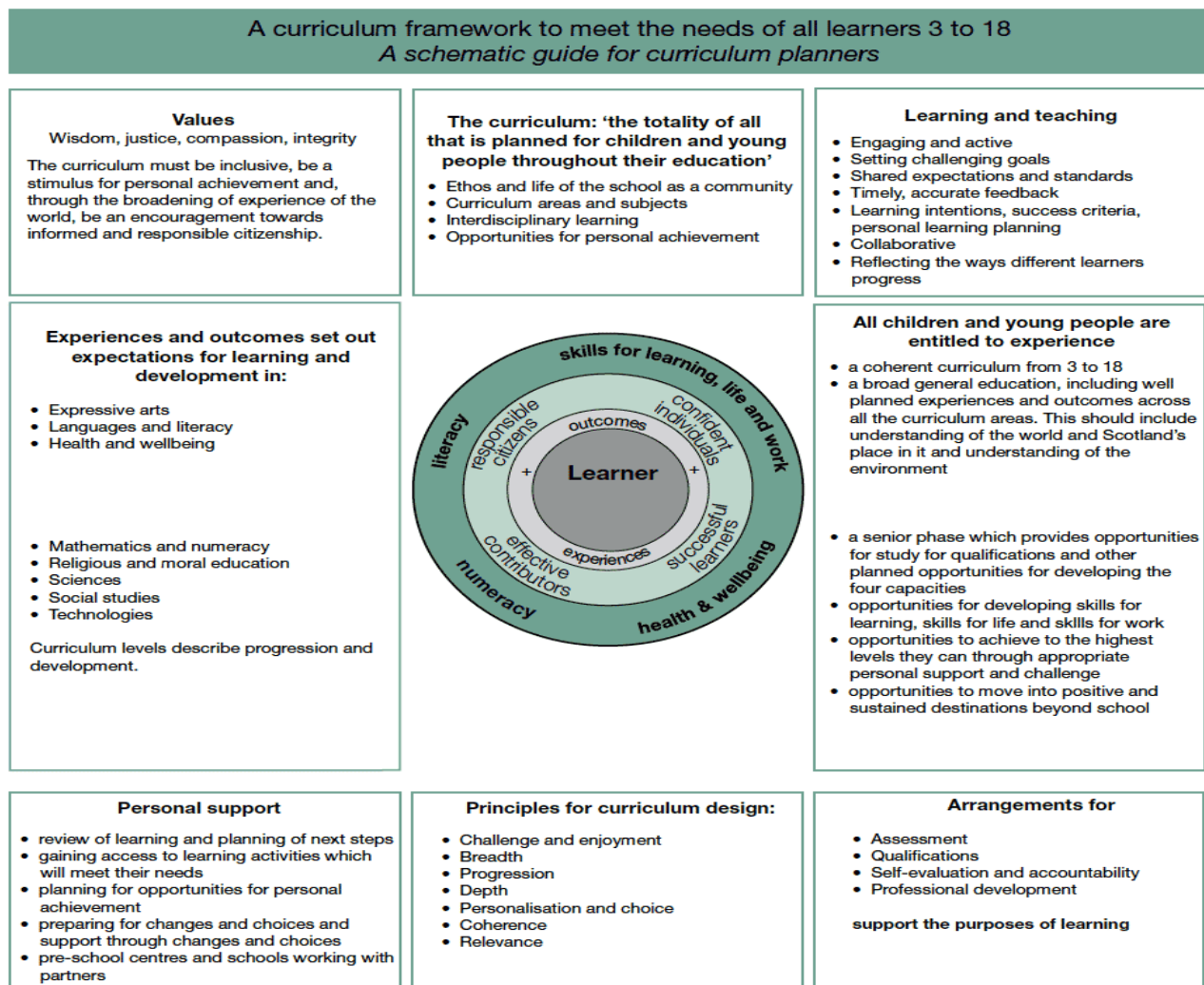
Opportunities for Personal Achievement

In Drongan Primary School and ECC we provide children with several opportunities to achieve and to celebrate their successes. This can include both achievements reached in school and wider achievements gained out of school. We also work with other organisations to provide children with wider opportunities to gain personal achievements.



Some examples of some of the recent developments that have taken place in Drongan Primary School and ECC, which will provide children with the totality of experiences through their education	
Ethos and Life of the School	Curricular Areas and Subjects
<p>Shared vision, values and aims created</p> <p>Promotion of core values</p> <p>Rights Respecting Schools initiative introduced</p> <p>Class charters created and shared</p> <p>Promotion of wellbeing indicators across establishment (wellbeing wheel)</p> <p>Respectful relationships policy created and implemented effectively</p> <p>Dyslexia Friendly Schools initiative introduced (working towards silver accreditation)</p> <p>Pupil committees created and playing a more active role in school</p> <p>Children have increased opportunities to contribute to and take ownership of their learning</p> <p>Thrilling Thursday citizenship assemblies</p> <p>Pupil focus groups</p> <p>P7 responsibilities / buddy system</p> <p>House captains</p> <p>Head / Depute boys and girls</p>	<p>Active Literacy Programme implemented</p> <p>Lynda Keith Numeracy approaches implemented</p> <p>Number Talks implemented</p> <p>Revised Social Subjects and Science topics</p> <p>East Ayrshire HWB programme implemented</p> <p>East Ayrshire Skills Progression Frameworks implemented across all curricular areas</p> <p>Increased opportunities for children to participate in music and drama productions</p> <p>Sharing learning assemblies introduced across all Primary stages</p> <p>P6 / 7 Burns Supper / Scots Verse competition developed</p> <p>Daily Mile / Workout of the Week launched</p>
Interdisciplinary Learning	Opportunities for Personal Achievement
<p>Social Studies topics reviewed collegiately</p> <p>Creation of Context for Learning / IDL grids</p> <p>KWL grids to plan together with children</p> <p>Moderation Activities in literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Some examples of mixed stage learning</p> <p>Shared context for learning across school where natural opportunities arise to encourage cross stage working and IDL</p> <p>Shared collaborative planning taking place</p> <p>Increased opportunities for children to demonstrate and develop transferrable skills across curricular areas</p> <p>Visitors to school and educational excursions increasing children's awareness of the world of work</p>	<p>Star of the Day award – bronze, silver gold award</p> <p>Four Capacity themed certificates</p> <p>Monthly caring award</p> <p>Tree of achievement in ECC</p> <p>Children achieving personal targets</p> <p>Celebration of Wider Achievements</p> <p>House point / award system</p> <p>Annual Prize-giving</p> <p>Sporting awards</p> <p>John Muir Award</p> <p>Heritage Detective Award</p> <p>P6 LEAD programme</p> <p>Burns / Scots Verse competition</p> <p>Class reward system</p>

Curriculum Entitlements



Transitions

In Drongan Primary School and ECC we provide children with a coherent curriculum that ensures smooth transitions at all stages.

ECC and Primary 1 staff have worked with the Principal Teacher to develop a robust transition programme for children moving from the ECC to Primary 1. There is now an effective transition programme, which supports the pastoral needs of the children as well as ensuring that there is effective passing on of information.



Time is allocated in the collegiate calendar for teachers to pass on information between stages. Teachers now use a checklist to ensure that appropriate information is passed on with the children to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Children enjoy a 'bump-up day' with the teacher of their new stage before the summer break.

Children moving between Primary 7 and S1 participate in transition events throughout the session. Information about the levels children have achieved is passed on to the Academy. Identified children are selected to participate in an enhanced transition programme to support their emotional needs.



Information regarding children who require additional support needs is recorded on Child's Plans and is passed on as and when appropriate. Transition meetings for children on the ASN log are held in pre-school year and also in Primary 6 and Primary 7 to ensure information is passed on and appropriate supports are in place.

Broad General Education

The aspirational Vision, Values and Aims is now embedded across the establishment and will continue to be promoted to ensure that it is lived and breathed on a daily basis. The values that underpin the shared vision are increasingly seen, heard and felt throughout the establishment encouraging children to achieve their full potential while experiencing challenge and success.

Curriculum progression pathways have now been implemented across the establishment to ensure that there is smooth skills progression and coverage of curricular areas as children progress through the stages. As children progress through the stage, their broad general education will include all of the experiences and outcomes. As we continue to develop the broad general education these experiences will continue to be even more relevant to children's own lives and local context.

Assessment procedures have recently been reviewed, leading to a more consistent approach to the use of assessment across the establishment. There are robust tracking processes and procedures in place to ensure that children are being effectively challenged and supported.

Children are encouraged to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and there is a current focus on developing Health and Wellbeing across the establishment. East Ayrshire's Health and Wellbeing programme is now embedded across all stages. Children are being provided with more opportunities to reflect and engage with the wellbeing indicators and the Rights Respecting Schools initiative has impacted positively on the establishment ethos.



We have considered how learning and experiences connected with the arts provides a basis for developing the four capacities and have provided children with increased opportunities to perform and share learning to an audience. Children have gained in confidence through participating in music and drama performances, Burns' Suppers, class assemblies, choir performances and Nativities as well as class assemblies throughout the session. We will continue to seek opportunities for children to play a more active role in their local community.



Skills for learning, life and work

As we continue to build our curriculum and improve the learning experiences for our children we are introducing more opportunities for children to develop skills for life and skills for work. We have recently implemented new programmes and teaching methods in Literacy and Numeracy and we are currently working through the Dylan Williams Tapestry programme as we focus achieving a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the establishment.

Through discussion with their children, teachers now include one of the establishment values or a wellbeing indicator in the success criteria. This raises the profile of our values and the wellbeing indicators and highlights to children that they are developing these skills through the experiences being provided.

Through the totality of the curriculum there are many opportunities throughout the session where children have opportunities to share their learning in a number of ways. We are proud of the links we have made within the local community and will continue to seek opportunities to do so to enhance the experiences of our children. Teachers are beginning to link learning to the world of work and are more involved in enterprising topics following the review of our Social Studies topics. Children now have opportunities through topics such as the History of Drongan and John Muir Award to explore the local community and its history. There is more of a focus on enterprise and charity as well as local business and important people in the community. This will continue to be reviewed and where opportunities arise to link learning even more closely to the local community then topics will be changed or adapted appropriately.



Personal Support

Children are provided with opportunities to discuss their learning with their teacher on a regular basis. Pupil targets, learning intentions and success criteria, teacher feedback, self and peer assessment, writing checklists, number talk discussions and various other teaching strategies provide children with the opportunity to be involved in and take ownership for their own learning.

We have recently focused on improving the way in which we support children who have barriers to their learning or require more challenge to ensure that we are getting it right for every child. All children should be provided with the opportunity to achieve their full potential and through staff training and the implementation of several initiatives, we are supporting children to do so. Children who require additional support or challenge are identified early and teachers gather assessment information to inform the supports that are put in place. Teachers have been trained in the writing of Child's Plans and Individual Learning Plans to ensure that SMART targets are used and that appropriate supports are in place. Children and families are provided with the opportunity to contribute to Child's Plans and they are reviewed regularly. We work closely with partners who provide support, advice and guidance throughout the process.

We will continue to provide children with increased opportunities to co-create targets and ensure that targets are written in child friendly language.



Conclusion

This curriculum Rationale reflects the establishment vision, values and aims and takes into consideration the local and national guidelines. It has carefully considered the local context and has been informed by relevant documents and information. The consultation process and creation of this Curriculum Rationale will inform the development of the curriculum in Drongan Primary School and ECC in order to ensure that we most effectively meet the needs of our children. We believe strongly in our shared values and all stakeholders will play a vital role in promoting these as we work towards achieving our shared, aspirational vision for all.

Our Journey of Improvement...so far...

2018/19

- All stakeholders consulted on establishment vision, values and aims. New, shared, aspirational vision, values and aims created
- Robust ASN procedures introduced to ensure all needs are being met
- Further implementation of Lynda Keith Numeracy approaches
- Further training in Number Talks to ensure embedded across all stages
- Literacy Box implemented across stages
- Social Studies and Science topics reviewed and embedded
- Dyslexia Friendly Schools initiative introduced, bronze accreditation achieved
- Assessment Overview created to ensure a consistency of approach and effective use of assessment across all stages
- Rights Respecting Schools Initiative introduced, class charters introduced in all classes
- Heritage Detective Award and John Muir Award led by teaching staff successfully
- Moderation activities introduced both at establishment and learning community level to develop a shared understanding and share good practice
- Significant increase in parental involvement and engagement with the life of the school and ECC and children's learning
- Sustainable links to community established to enhance learning experiences and support delivery of the curriculum
- Increased pupil voice through raising profile of pupil committees, Thrilling Thursday assemblies, pupil focus groups and leadership opportunities
- Butterfly Wall created to provide children with opportunity to contribute to whole school change process
- Excellent Lesson reviewed with all staff clear on basic standards and expectations
- A consistent approach to target setting agreed with all staff increasing children's involvement in their learning
- Daily Mile relaunched across the school
- Transition programmes developed for ECC – P1 and P7 – Secondary. Pass on information processes reviewed and time built in to collegiate calendar to facilitate
- East Ayrshire Council progression pathways introduced in Literacy and Numeracy

2019/20

- All staff responsible for promoting the establishment vision, values and aims
- Consultation process undertaken to create Curriculum Rationale. More relevant Curriculum Rationale created, considering local context and priorities for our establishment
- Through rigorous monitoring procedures, further explore aspects of Excellent Lesson and Excellent Experience as well as aspects of Dylan Williams tapestry programme
- All staff trained in and introduction of Active Literacy Approach to phonics, spelling and reading across all stages as well Lynda Keith Numeracy approaches
- East Ayrshire HWB programme developed and implemented fully
- Wellbeing wheels introduced in every classroom and school wellbeing wheel now used appropriately to promote the wellbeing indicators
- Workout of the Week launched as alternative to Daily Mile
- East Ayrshire Council progression pathways introduced for all other curricular areas
- Dylan Williams tapestry programme being undertaken by all teaching staff
- Dyslexia Friendly Schools journey continues, aiming to achieve silver accreditation
- Rights Respecting Schools profile raised, aiming to achieve bronze award

- Opportunities for family learning have been successful with positive engagement from targeted families
- Homework procedures have been reviewed leading to a more consistent approach across all stages
- RME topics to be reviewed and piloted following creation of Curriculum Rational to reflect the needs of our children
- Increased number of visitors and educational visits to enrich the learning experiences

2020/21

- Vision, values and aims reviewed. All stakeholders agree that they are still relevant.
- DFS Inclusive practice silver accreditation achieved
- RRS journey continues with silver accreditation in September 2021
- RME curriculum developed with a focus on moral education. Successful pilot in Term 3 and will be fully embedded next session.
- Primary 1 pedagogy developed informed by 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' document
- New format of progression frameworks introduced for Literacy and Numeracy
- Focus on wellbeing continued through various initiatives
- Increased Leadership of Learning across the establishment evidenced in daily classroom practice and various initiatives being driven forward

The Covid Pandemic led to periods of online / home learning and educational recovery. As an establishment we are proud of how we have supported our children, families and community during what has been a difficult time for everyone. The self-evaluation exercises undertaken, together with feedback from parents and carers, highlights how we successfully provided a wide range of learning opportunities for our children, while doing what we could to support their Health and Wellbeing. A consistent approach to learning and teaching as well as effective communication led to children and stakeholders feeling reassured and satisfied with the approach taken. Various virtual events, videos and activities also provided enjoyment and brought pleasure to children and families in the Drongan Community during the school closures and on the return to school / ECC.

2021/22

Please refer to the School Improvement Plan for session 2021/22 improvement priorities.