



Dykesmains Primary School

Termly Newsletter



August 2026

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome all of our pupils and families back to a new school year, and especially those joining our school community for the first time. The children have made a fantastic start across the school, settling quickly into their new classes with a positive attitude to learning. They have also been creating their class charters, reflecting our shared values and commitment as a Gold Rights Respecting School.

This newsletter provides key information for the start of the school year and highlights some of the events and opportunities planned for the months ahead. We look forward to working in partnership with you to make this another successful year for all our children.

Communication

We value parents and carers as vital partners in our pupils' education. Good communication and regular sharing of information is key to this partnership. We endeavour to communicate any information in a timely manner and provide a list of upcoming dates at the end of each newsletter to allow families the opportunity to plan in advance. At times, outwith our control, dates and times may be subject to change.

Communication from school

EDUSPOT

The app used for communication is Groupcall Eduspot. This is our primary communication tool to share important information and school letters with you. An email will also be sent to the identified main carer. Where you have multiple children and have any problems accessing their information then please uninstall and then reinstall the app. Please get in touch with the school if you have any problems setting this up and we will check that all parent details are correct. You can visit their help page by clicking [here](#).

PARENTS PORTAL

Parentsportal.scot is now the main way for parents and carers to access a range of school services online. The secure app allows families to receive school communications and complete tasks such as travel permission, updating contact details and accessing key information. If you have not yet registered, you must do this so as soon as possible to ensure you receive important updates from the school.

You can visit their page by clicking [here](#)

What to do if you have a question or concern.

We wish to support your child fully to reach their potential. If at any time you wish to ask a question, share a concern or speak to a member of staff, please contact the school office in the first instance on **01294 461354**. Unfortunately, it is not always possible for the management team to be available without an appointment.

Services available on parentsportal:*

 Absences	 Annual Data Check
 Attendance	 Class Timetable
 Notice Board	 Permission Slips
 Report Cards	 Young Persons' Free Bus Travel

*Not all services are available in all council areas.

Attendance

Every school day matters and we would like to see every child in school every day, where possible. North Ayrshire Council has developed a booklet for your information. This outlines the importance of good attendance on pupils' achievement and outlines when it is ok for a pupil to be absent from school. It also outlines when it is not acceptable for your child to be absent from school and the negative impact regular late coming has on pupil progress. A link to the booklet will be available on our website and we would appreciate you taking the time to read it. Please familiarise yourself with the actions schools are expected to take should they have any concerns around attendance.

The office is open for communication from 8.15am. Please call into the office before 9am to notify of any absences. We appreciate that not all appointments can be made outwith school times but we appreciate attempts to avoid making appointments within school hours, this is disruptive to your child's learning. Any longer term absences should be notified in writing to the head teacher to consider whether they will be classed as authorised or unauthorised absences.

Supporting Good Time keeping

School hours are 9.00am–3.00pm. Children should arrive in the playground before 9.00am so they are ready to line up for the bell. The playground is supervised from 8.45am, and staff remain at class doors until 9.05am for those who have just missed the bell.

Arriving on time allows children to settle into their morning routine alongside their classmates, register, order lunch and take part in the day's learning from the very beginning. Children arriving through the school office after 9.05am will be recorded as late in line with North Ayrshire Council procedures. We appreciate your support in helping children arrive on time each day. If there are circumstances affecting your child's attendance or punctuality, please speak to a member of the management team. We are always happy to work with families to provide support where needed.

Healthy Start- Breakfast club

Mrs Young, Ms Millar and Mrs Fox are delighted to welcome our children back into the breakfast club from 8.00am until 8.45am. Please note that children should not arrive at the school office before 8.00am as there is no supervision available at this time and should be in breakfast club before 8.20am. Parents/carers are responsible each morning for dropping their child off to the office to be registered by Breakfast Club staff. Breakfast is served until 8.20am. After eating, children will take part in activities until 8.45am, when they will be taken to the playground and supervised by support staff until the start of the school day.

Reporting to parents

We welcome parents in for a Meet the Teacher drop-in on **Wednesday 9 September**. This is an informal drop in where families can come into the classroom with their child/children at any time between 3.15pm and 4pm. This is an opportunity for you to explore their new classroom environment and meet their new teacher. You will have received a copy of the class termly newsletter which provides an overview of learning for the term.

Formal parent evenings will take place in November and March, dates are in the 'Dates for your diary section' at the end of the newsletter. As always, if you have any concerns about your child, please contact the office to arrange a meeting with a member of management outwith the allocated parent evening times.

Learning at home

Based on previous feedback from families, a more flexible range of opportunities are provided to ensure families can support their child's learning at home. Below you will find an overview of the variety of ways that learning can be supported in line with busy family routines. Any parents/carers with specific concerns, can meet with the school to create individual home learning packs targeted to particular areas of the curriculum. We are also planning to enhance opportunities for family learning, please look out for further information.

Stages	Activities
All classes	Class Termly Newsletters Class termly newsletters are shared with families to provide information on what is being covered across the term in Literacy, Numeracy, Interdisciplinary Learning (class topics) and any stand-alone curricular areas. These newsletters provide parents/carers an overview where they can support discussion on learning at home.
All classes	Reading for pleasure Reading for pleasure is a fundamental skill that offers numerous benefits to children's development. It fosters imagination, enhances language skills, improves cognitive abilities, and cultivates a lifelong love of learning. All children are encouraged to enjoy reading their own books at home. In support of this, children will regularly visit our refurbished library, offering weekly borrowing. We will continue to develop a diverse range of reading material in line with pupil interest.
All classes	Technology In line with pupil interest and developing literacy skills across the school, we utilise technology in school and encourage this to be used effectively, to support home learning. All pupils are provided with logins for home use, for example Sumdog for literacy and numeracy and Seesaw which provides access to your child's personal targets as well as allocated online activities that support the consolidation of learning in class. Please encourage your children to access these regularly at home. If you are unable to access technology at home, please contact the school.
Primary 1	Home learning pack Within the first few weeks of settling into primary 1, learners will receive number and sound flashcards the week after they are taught in class. These will be built up over the term, to support the consolidation of what has been taught in class. Class teachers will also provide suggested activities for parents/carers on how to use these at home. From October, familiar reading books are sent home weekly and common word grids that allow parents to support common and tricky words being taught in class.
Primary 2-3	Home learning pack Within the first few weeks of returning to school, learners will receive weekly reading books that are familiar reads. Lists of common words, phoneme sounds taught, number bonds/timetables taught in the previous term will be provided, with suggested activities to take part in at home.
Primary 4-7	Home learning grids In the upper school, the focus for home learning is to increase independence. Grids will be given to learners with previously taught spelling and numeracy concepts to consolidate learning in school. Information on learning in classes will be available in the class termly newsletter. From Primary 4, mechanical reading is usually secure and therefore no reading books are sent home. We encourage reading for pleasure and supporting your child to experiment with a range of authors and genres to help them explore books that they enjoy.
All classes	Open afternoon In term 3, families are invited into their child's class to experience how their child learns in school.

Uniform and accessories

Children across the school are looking smart in their school uniform, contributing towards our aim of an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all. We appreciate children grow quickly across the year and our Parent Council support this through their pre-loved uniform stalls. This will be made available at various events across the year. If you require any support with uniform please contact the school office.

Labelling items

We advise that all jackets, uniform and accessories, such as packed lunch boxes, water bottles, pencil cases etc. should be labelled with your child's name using a permanent marker. This helps to avoid items being muddled or misplaced.

Water bottles - the importance of hydration

Children are encouraged to bring a labelled water bottle into school. Children should arrive with their bottles already filled up containing only water. We would encourage you to purchase low cost bottles as they can often get lost, confused if similar or knocked to the floor by accident.

P.E. kits

All classes across the school will have 2 hours of PE each week. We ask that children bring in the following items to keep in school as indicated below. (alternatively, you may wish to pack their kit on their allocated PE days)

- T-shirt or school polo shirt
- Indoor trainers
- Tracksuit bottoms, Leggings or shorts

On PE days, children should not wear any jewellery, particularly earrings. This is to avoid any injury to themselves or to others during P.E. lessons. If your child is unable to take them out and put them back in independently, we recommend that they do not wear these on their allocated days. In the likelihood a pupil has new piercings, micro-tape should be provided. If children do not have their kits, we will call home for a quick reminder to pop their kit in the school bag.

Allocated P.E. days- Please note that times can change throughout the year to accommodate events or visitors, therefore it is best for pupils to keep their kits in school where possible.

Primary 1- Monday and Thursday

Primary 2- Tuesday and Friday

Primary 3- Tuesday and Thursday

Primary 4- Wednesday and Friday

Primary 5- Monday and Friday

Primary 6- Wednesday and Thursday

Primary 7- Monday and Wednesday

Football colours

Please note that children should not wear any football team colours, such as hats, pencil cases, bags etc. This is to avoid any conflict within the school community. At times during whole school theme dress down events, football attire representing national countries may be worn if appropriate to the theme.

Partnership working

Our teachers are dedicated to providing a wide range of lunch and after school clubs. Children contribute their ideas and are able to access a wide range of activities such as sports, art, dance, cooking and coding. Please look out for opportunities across the year that may be of interest to your child.

Active schools

Jordan Stewart is our allocated Active School's co-ordinator. His team organise a wide range of opportunities to take part in cluster and authority events. We aim to participate in these where we can and appreciate support from our parents and carers to support our attendance at these (parent/carers must have their PVG certificate). Information on your child's participation will be communicated directly.



Area Inclusion Worker

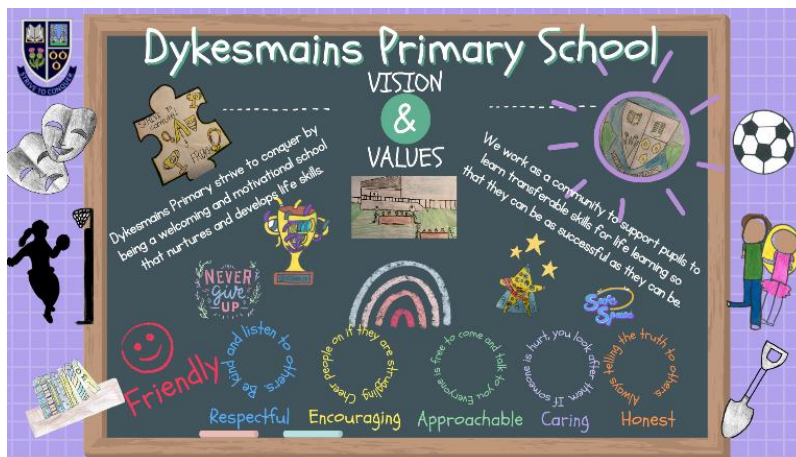
Elaine Floyd has been our Area Inclusion worker for many years. Elaine spends most of her time in our school supporting our Primary 6 and 7 pupils in preparation for transition onto Ardrossan Academy. Elaine can offer group work and 1:1 support when required. Parents/Carers and pupils would discuss this with Mrs Smith prior to any support being offered. Elaine comes into school most Tuesdays and the children love getting to know her.

Wider achievements

Our whole-school assembly takes place every Wednesday and provides an opportunity for pupils to come together as a school community, celebrating successes and recognising the many achievements of our children. This is a very important aspect of building a strong sense of community across the school in their school houses.

We encourage pupils to share their wider achievements from outside school, whether that is learning a new skill, taking part in a club or competition, achieving a personal goal or showing determination to try something new. These achievements are celebrated during assembly and displayed on our Wider Achievement Board, helping to inspire others and recognise success in all its forms.

Throughout the year, staff and pupils will also nominate children who demonstrate our school values of being Friendly, Responsible, Encouraging, Approachable, Caring and Honest. By recognising positive attitudes, kindness and excellent behaviour, we continue to strengthen our school ethos and celebrate the qualities that make Dykesmains such a positive place to learn.



Fidget resources for learning

As part of our whole-school Zones of Regulation approach, each class has developed a regulation resource kit containing a range of fidget resources, soft toys and other sensory tools. These resources are intended to support children with regulation, concentration and readiness for learning.

Children can access these resources when they feel they need additional support. Staff will also use their professional judgement to guide children in choosing an appropriate resource or, where it is no longer supporting their focus, ask them to return it to the resource box. While these tools can be very helpful, it is important that they are used appropriately and do not become a distraction from learning.

To ensure consistency and fairness across the school, we ask that children **do not** bring personal toys or fidget items from home. Our classrooms have a range of carefully selected resources available to support children when needed, and we appreciate your support in helping us to ensure these are used effectively to promote positive learning experiences. For some children, individual plans may identify a specific need for personalised regulation tools. Where this is the case, these supports are discussed and agreed in partnership between home and school to ensure they are appropriate and beneficial for the individual child.

SUPPORT FOCUS USING
FIDGET TOOLS

What are fidget tools?
Fidget tools are used to support some children stay focused and regulate their emotions. Each class has a range of fidgets in their Zones of Regulation tool kit boxes.

Why might a fidget tool be needed?
Some children experience restlessness, worries, sensory needs or repetitive behaviours such as chewing or picking. Fidget tools help them remain engaged in learning. Not every child needs a fidget tool but for some it is needed and part of their plan.

When should they be used?
Fidget tools should be used during learning, quietly, and as directed by staff. They should not be treated as toys or used to distract others.

Choosing the right tool?
School fidget tools should be used, children are not encouraged to bring resources from home unless discussed as part of their plan.

-  **Lip biting / chewing:** Chewelry, chewable toppers
Helps prevent damage to lips/clothing.
-  **Skin picking / nail biting:** Putty, textured rings, Velcro
Keeps hands busy.
-  **Restlessness:** Stress balls, fidget cubes
Allows movement while seated.
-  **Emotions:** Soft sensory items, squishy toys
Supports calming.

DYKESMAINS HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

SUPPORT FOCUS
FIDGET TOOL VS DISTRACTION

What is the difference between a fidget and a distraction?

Fidget tool  The tool needs my hands but the task doesn't.	It's a distraction  The tool and the task needs my hands.
Fidget tool  The tool needs my eyes but the task doesn't.	It's a distraction  The tool and the task need my eyes.
Fidget tool  The tool is the task. The item needs my brain.	It's a distraction  The tool and the task needs my brain. Your brain can't concentrate on two things at the same time.

DYKESMAINS HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Adult Volunteers

We are always grateful for the support of parents and carers who volunteer their time to enhance experiences and opportunities for our children. Many of our wider opportunities and events, including activities taking place outwith school, rely on the support of volunteers. Without this support, some of these experiences may not be able to go ahead this year.

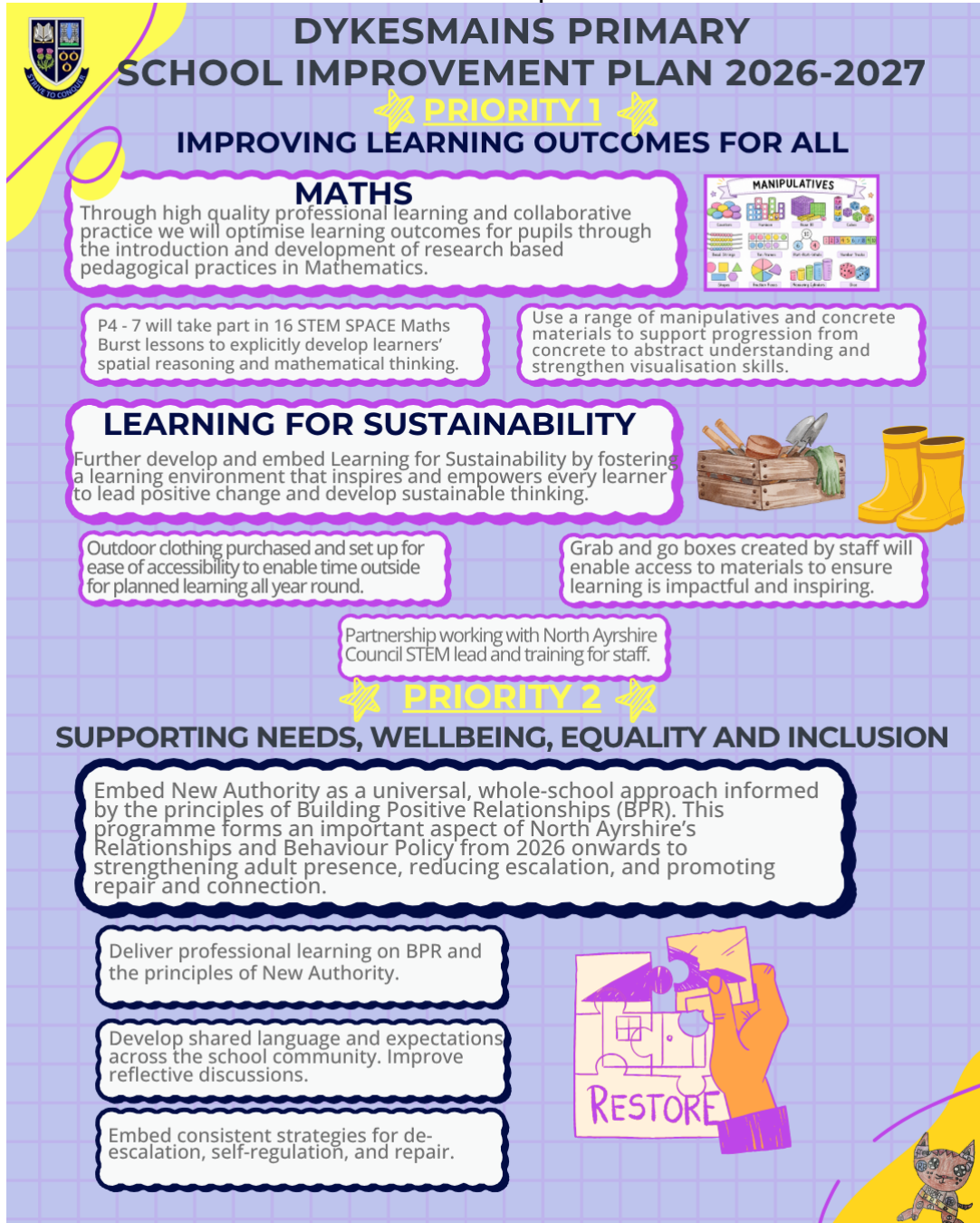
Any volunteering in school or supporting activities involving children must be a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme in line with Scottish Government requirements.

If you would be available to support any events this year, please complete the paperwork that has been dropped in your child's school bag. To join the PVG scheme, you must provide **3 forms of required ID** alongside the completed paperwork.

School Improvement Plan

Each year we create a school improvement plan in line with North Ayrshire Council's Education Service Improvement Plan. We take into account the views of our whole school community, collated throughout the last school session.

To view a copy of our Standards and Qualities from 2025-26 please click on the link [here](#). We evaluated last year's plans and have included an overview on our priorities for this session.



DYKESMAINS PRIMARY
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2026-2027

★ **PRIORITY 1** ★

IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ALL

MATHS
Through high quality professional learning and collaborative practice we will optimise learning outcomes for pupils through the introduction and development of research based pedagogical practices in Mathematics.

P4 - 7 will take part in 16 STEM SPACE Maths Burst lessons to explicitly develop learners' spatial reasoning and mathematical thinking.

Use a range of manipulatives and concrete materials to support progression from concrete to abstract understanding and strengthen visualisation skills.

MANIPULATIVES

LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY
Further develop and embed Learning for Sustainability by fostering a learning environment that inspires and empowers every learner to lead positive change and develop sustainable thinking.

Outdoor clothing purchased and set up for ease of accessibility to enable time outside for planned learning all year round.

Grab and go boxes created by staff will enable access to materials to ensure learning is impactful and inspiring.

Partnership working with North Ayrshire Council STEM lead and training for staff.

★ **PRIORITY 2** ★

SUPPORTING NEEDS, WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Embed New Authority as a universal, whole-school approach informed by the principles of Building Positive Relationships (BPR). This programme forms an important aspect of North Ayrshire's Relationships and Behaviour Policy from 2026 onwards to strengthening adult presence, reducing escalation, and promoting repair and connection.

Deliver professional learning on BPR and the principles of New Authority.

Develop shared language and expectations across the school community. Improve reflective discussions.

Embed consistent strategies for de-escalation, self-regulation, and repair.

RESTORE

I hope you find this information helpful, please do contact the school office if you have any questions or concerns. Please see the final pages for important dates for your diary.

Elizabeth Gribben
Head Teacher

Dates for your diary

We endeavour to ensure these dates remain the same, however there are times outwith our control where we may need to amend or cancel events. We will communicate this at our earliest opportunity.

TERM 1

Thursday 3 September	Parent Council AGM 6.30 pm – 8 pm	School Gym Hall (TBC)
Wednesday 9 September	Meet the Teacher Drop In 3.15-4pm	Families into Pupil Class
Monday 14 September	Dental Inspections P1 and P7	
Monday 21 September	INSET – Pupils not in school	
Monday 28 September	Tempest Photographer – Individual	Gym Hall
Friday 9 October	Show Racism the Red Card Event – wear red day	
Friday 9 October	Autumn Assembly 9.15-10.15 (Parents/Carers)	Gym Hall
Friday 9 October	School closes at 3 pm for the October Break	

TERM 2

Monday 19 October	School re-opens at 9 am	
Thursday 29 October or Tuesday 3 November	Parent Appointments: time slot allocated between 3.15-5.15pm	Pupil class bay Information to follow
Wednesday 28 October	P1 Fancy Dress Party in school 1.30 – 3.00 pm	Gym Hall
	Parent Council Fancy Dress Disco P2-7 after school	Gym Hall
Monday 2 – 11 November	Poppies on sale in school	In classes- 20p donation
Monday 9- 19 November	Pudsey raffle tickets on sale in school	In classes- £1 per strip
Thursday 12 November	Flu vaccination	Gym hall
Thursday 19 November	Children in Need	Information to follow
Friday 20 November & Monday 23 November	Holiday	
Tuesday 24 November	In Service Day – pupils not in school	
Wednesday 25 November	Christmas Fayre- times to be confirmed	
Friday 4 December	Start of Christmas Jumper Friday	Optional
Monday 7 December	Nativity Rehearsal Performance 9.30am – Early Years Centres and local care homes invited alongside P4-7	Gym Hall
Tuesday 8 December	Nativity Performance P1–3 2pm	Gym Hall – Parents/Carers
Wednesday 9 December	Nativity Performance P1-3 9.20am	Gym Hall - Parents/Carers
Friday 11 December	Panto Trip- Dick Whittington	Gaiety Theatre Ayr
Monday 14 December	Primary 6 & 7 Christmas Party	Gym Hall
Tuesday 15 December	Primary 4 & 5 Christmas Party	Gym Hall
Wednesday 16 December	Christmas Assembly 9.15-10am	Gym hall - Parents/Carers
Friday 18 December	Primary 1-3 Christmas Party	Gym Hall
Friday 18 December	School Closes 2.30 pm for Christmas Break	

TERM 3

Tuesday 5 January	School opens 9 am	
Thursday 28 January	P7 Burns Supper 1.45-2.45pm	Gym Hall – P7 Parents/Carers
Wednesday 10 February	Whole school open afternoon 2.00-2.45pm – Focus on showcasing our school improvement priorities.	In classes/school areas- Parents/Carers invited
Thursday 11 February	Parent Council Valentine Disco (after school)	Gym Hall
Monday 15 February	Holiday	
Tuesday 16 February	In Service Day – Pupils not in school	
Thursday 4 March	World Book Day	Information will follow
Thursday 18 March or Tuesday 23 March	Parent Appointments: time slot allocated between 3.15-5.15pm	Pupil class bay
Wednesday 24 March	Spring Assembly 9.15-10am	Gym Hall – Parents/Carers
Thursday 24 March	School Closes 2.30pm for Easter Break	

TERM 4

Monday 12 April	School Opens 9 am	
Monday 3 May	Holiday – school closed	
Monday 10 May	P4-7 Show dress rehearsal for partners and P1-3	Gym hall
Tuesday 11 May	P4-7 Show P4-7 Parent performance 1.45pm	Gym hall
Wednesday 12 May	P4-7 Show P4-7 Parent performance 9.30am	Gym hall
Monday 31 May	INSET- pupils not in school	School closed
Thursday 10 June	Meet the Teacher- Pupils in new classes 11-12pm	Bump up to new classes
Friday 11 June	P1 Celebration – 9.15am P7 Fleck Celebration – 1.45pm	Gym Hall – P1 Parents/Carers Gym Hall – P7 Parents/Carers
Monday 14 June – Thursday 17 June	Primary 7 Arran residential	Arran – Information will follow to P7 parents/carers
Tuesday 22 June	Sports Day- whole school	Playing field at the back
Tuesday 2 June	Dykesmains Got Talent Competition	Gym Hall
Friday 25 June	Summer Assembly 9.15- 10am	Gym hall Parents/Carers
Friday 25 June	Primary 7 Leavers Event (Parent Council)	
Tuesday 29 June	Dykesmains Got Talent Final	Gym hall
Wednesday 30 June	Dykesmains Got Talent winners announced	
Wednesday 30 June	School Closes at 1 pm for Summer Break	