

# STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2024-2025



## Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre



Articles 1, 2, 3, 12, 18, 23, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31

## Introduction

This report has been written in response to the question, 'How good was our school and early years centre in 2024-2025?' The report will explain to you the quality of education at Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre and how the children benefit from learning here.

## Context

Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre is a non-denominational school which serves the area of Doonfoot in Ayr. It is situated in a prime location, close to Greenan Beach and Castle, near the River Doon and is within walking distance of the local parks, Belleisle and Rozelle. The catchment area for Doonfoot Primary has expanded, due to several phases of new housing developments being added to the area. This has brought a wealth of new families to the area and is creating a more economically diverse context for the school. We have welcomed several new pupils and their families to the school throughout the session and will continue to welcome more over the course of next session.

The school consists of 13 mainstream classes, a 52-week Early Years Centre and 5 communication base classes for children whose primary barrier to learning is Autism. The school is undergoing several phases of work to upgrade the building, which will continue over the next few years. We are in the process of an upgrade to our upper communication base classes. We have had a new ICT suite built, two additional classrooms added on and sensory equipment fitted to one of our original rooms. Our upgrade to the school carpark has improved the safety for pupils, parents and staff entering the school. Plans to improve the infant toilets and entrance to the school are planned for future sessions.

The school works closely with other primary schools in the cluster and there are positive and enhanced transitions in place with the local secondary schools. We have strong community links with Burns Cottage, Dolphin House, Alloway Church and Alloway Rotary Club. The school has engaged in a range of outdoor learning opportunities to benefit the local community, including being involved in the Alloway Tunnel regeneration project and helping with the community sensory garden.

The present roll of the school is 370, including 30 pupils within the communication base classes. There are an additional 50 pupils in the Early Years Centre. 17% of our pupils are registered for free school meals and clothing grant entitlement. A small proportion of our school community live within deciles 1 and 2, with the rest of the children spread across deciles 3-10. The school uses free school meal and clothing grant entitlement as a measure of where pupil equity funding is required. Due to the cost of living crisis, we have worked closely with the Pupil Council and Parent Council to reduce the cost of the school day. This has included funding for trips, providing free school uniform and offering free family events.

We have several pupils within our mainstream who have a diagnosis or are undergoing assessment for ADHD and/or Autism. We have approximately 20% of children within the school identified as dyslexic learners and we have strong supports in place for all children. We have a few children who are exceeding national expectations in literacy and numeracy. We continue to have a healthy number of placing requests into the school.

Our average attendance this year is sitting at 94.3% which is above South Ayrshire Council's average and is a 1.3% improvement on last session. We continue to follow South Ayrshire's Policy on maximising attendance and will continue with the additional measures we have in place to improve attendance and

reduce late coming. There have been no pupil exclusions this session and positive relationships are evident across the school community.

#### Teaching staff

- 1 Head Teacher
- 2 Depute Head Teachers (School and Communication Base)
- 1 Principal Teacher
- 26 full and part time class teachers across the school and communication base classes.

#### Early Years Centre staff

- 1 Depute Centre Manager
- 1 Senior Early Years Practitioner
- 8 Early Years Practitioners (Full and Part Time)

#### The school has an allocation of the following:

- 0.6 Pupil Support
- Brass instructor
- Violin instructor

#### Other School staff

- 8 school assistants (Full and part time)
- 2.4 FTE clerical assistants
- 1.5 FTE janitors
- 3 cleaners and 5 catering staff

#### Parent Council

We are fortunate to have the active and dedicated support of our Parent Council. They have organised a variety of successful fundraising events, including family fun nights, sports day goodies and hampers, Christmas and Summer Fayres. They have also provided a range of enjoyable yet cost free events for pupils including our first ever 'Spring Fling' and a well-received P1 and P6 buddy breakfast. They also generously provided school ties for our Primary 7 Leavers.

We are seeing the benefits of the polytunnel, which was purchased by the Parent Council last session. This is significantly enriching our outdoor learning experiences for our pupils. Additionally, the Parent Council have been actively fundraising for an additional trim trail to further enhance the outdoor experiences for pupils in the school grounds. Across the school, we continue to benefit from strong and enthusiastic parental support.

#### Communication Base

Our communication base welcomes 30 pupils across five classrooms. This provision is for children of primary school age who have been assessed as experiencing communication difficulties related to the Autistic Spectrum. The Communication Support Base is an integral part of the school. Children who attend, follow individual milestones and/or Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes as appropriate to their level. The staff in the Communication Support Base employ a range of teaching techniques and learning resources according to the specific needs of each pupil.

To support children to access the curriculum, individualised targets are set across the year in consultation with school staff and parents. Targets are set to focus specifically on Autism specific challenges / barriers to learning including; communication and interaction, social understanding and relationships, sensory processing, interests, routines and processing, emotional understanding and self-awareness, learning and engagement, healthy living and independence and community participation. Using a nurturing approach, supports pupils to develop their 'readiness to learn'.

The classroom is structured so pupils understand where to be, what they can do and how to do it, as independently as possible, using the TEACCH approach, colourful semantics and zones of regulation. Pupils follow an individual daily work-plan as part of the classroom structure. This gives each pupil direction for certain times in the day. The format of the plan can be written or presented pictorially.

The Communication Base directly addresses the communication needs of pupils and seeks to include the pupils into the mainstream primary classes as fully as possible, where appropriate to the needs of each individual. Awareness raising is key within Doonfoot Primary. Mainstream pupils interview for the role of inclusion ambassadors, which involves helping pupils to transition to and from their taxis and being a buddy for playground time or special events.

Where there is a benefit to pupils joining their mainstream class, the base and mainstream teachers plan together to ensure that appropriate supports are in place, strategies are shared and pupils feel a sense of belonging and calm and are able to engage in appropriate activities. Our mainstream pupils welcome children from the communication base into their classes to participate in shared activities. For those who find accessing a larger class overwhelming, the base teacher facilitates a smaller group where pupils are joined by one or two peers from mainstream to share an activity. For others, attending a small group with the nurture teacher can be a positive way to build friendships and confidence in working with mainstream peers.

## **Challenges and Achievements**

While we had hoped for a more settled year, the ongoing cost of living crisis and staff absences have continued to present challenges across our school community. Despite these challenges, our dedicated team have worked hard to provide stability and continuity for all our pupils, while continuing to drive forward our school improvement priorities.

We were proud to receive a positive inspection report from HMIE this session, which highlighted many of the important strengths within our school, recognition we are keen to build upon. We are also pleased to report continued improvement in attainment levels in literacy and numeracy this session across P1, P4 and P7 combined.

Our commitment to community involvement remains strong, with all P1–P7 pupils contributing to the Alloway Tunnel art project, an initiative that has enhanced the local environment. In addition, our Early Years Centre and Communication Base classes were delighted to achieve their Communication Friendly Environmental Award, a reflection of the inclusive and supportive environment that has been developed. One of the year's highlights was our annual boat race, where our House and Vice Captains showcased the canoeing skills they have developed through their lessons, demonstrating both confidence and teamwork. All P5-7 pupils achieved their Paddle Start Award.

Our Young Carers group has gone from strength to strength this year. Our school is one of the first schools in Scotland to have achieved a Young Carers in Schools Award (Carers Trust Scotland). This work was also recognised as practice to be shared nationally by HMIE. We have also received 'The Promise Award' for our commitment to supporting our care experienced pupils. We are delighted with the positive feedback from our inspection and will strive to build on this success.

## **Vision, Values and Aims**

At Doonfoot Primary School we are proud to provide an inclusive, nurturing and stimulating learning environment where our pupils feel valued and inspired to achieve their full potential.

Our vision, "*Education without walls*" demonstrates our commitment to overcoming the barriers that our children face within our unique context. The unique setting of our school, next to the beach, Greenan Castle, the River Doon and local parks, enables our pupils to experience a range of outdoor learning opportunities right on our doorstep.

Our pupils, parents/carers and staff proudly celebrate the school vision.

### **Values**

We are proud to be part of the Doonfoot community and we encourage everyone to uphold our values:



1. RESPECT
2. HONESTY
3. KINDNESS
4. INCLUDED
5. RESILIENCE

Our values are linked closely with our Rights Respecting Schools ethos and classroom charters and they form the basis of our Positive Relationships Policy. Our values are embedded within our practice across the school.

## **How evidence was gathered this session.**

As part of the information gathering process, the school continues to implement a programme of self-evaluation, which is timetabled and agreed with all staff. Our Parent Council and our Pupil Council provide evidence throughout the year. This process is linked to How Good Is Our School 4 and How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare Centre, as well as the local authority's expectations and the National Improvement Framework. We have worked closely with Education Scotland as part of the inspection process.

The aim is to identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement.

Some examples of gathering evidence to support this during session 2024/2025 are:



- HMle Inspection Findings
- Annual monitoring calendar
- Informal observations of learning and teaching and pupil voice
- Moderation built into planning and assessment processes
- Monitoring of jotters
- Pupil Progress/Attainment meetings and target setting/points for action
- Attendance and Late coming Monitoring
- CLPL programmes and feedback
- Professional review and development/ Professional Update
- Child, parent/carer, staff and stakeholder surveys
- Summative and formative assessments
- Self-evaluation through quality indicators within HGIOS4, HGIOELCC and HGIOURS
- Engagement and professional dialogue between staff during meetings
- Communication between home and school
- Monitoring Pupil Equity Funding, by evaluating progress of interventions
- Local Authority PEF Impact discussions
- Team with the Family reviews for pupils
- Education Scotland Adaptive Teaching Pilot Feedback

### What key outcomes have we achieved?

#### Reporting on Curriculum for Excellence Levels

The table below shows the percentage of children achieving the appropriate CFE levels for literacy and numeracy at P1, P4 and P7 over the past 3 years.

	Early Level (P1)			First Level (P4)			Second Level (P7)		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/2023	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Listening & Talking	86	82	89	87	80	88	94	95	89
Reading	74	79	85	78	76	80	80	87	85
Writing	74	73	85	72	70	75	76	82	77
Overall Literacy	74	73	85	72	70	75	76	82	77
Numeracy	86	79	85	77	78	88	80	84	81

\*The data above includes mainstream and communication base data collectively.

### Audit of Progress of the School Improvement Plan 2024-2025

<b>Priority 1: Raising Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy through meeting the needs of all learners (Adaptive Teaching).</b>	
<b>NIF Priority: 1, 2</b>	<b>Links to HGIOS 4/HGIOELC</b> <b>1.1,1.2,1.3,2.2,2.3,2.4,3.2</b> <b>Links to Children's Services Plan:1, 2</b>
<b>Progress and Impact:</b> We have continued to work hard to improve attainment in all areas of literacy and numeracy and have	

seen improved attainment levels for cohorts of children over the past few years. Literacy attainment overall for P1,4 and 7 combined has increased by 12% from June 2022 till June 2025. In Numeracy, we have seen a 5% increase in the number of children achieving the appropriate CFE levels in Numeracy across P1,4 and 7 combined from June 2022 till June 2025.

### **Listening and Talking:**

We have been working towards becoming a communication-friendly school. To support this, symbols were introduced throughout the Early Years Centre (EYC) and the wider school to help pupils with language and communication difficulties, including those with English as an Additional Language (EAL) to communicate effectively, find resources, and fully access the curriculum. As part of this initiative, we established our Communication Crew, a group made up of pupils from both mainstream classes and the communication base. The crew has been instrumental in teaching the school community the Makaton 'sign of the week', as well as leading songs during assemblies and Church services. Their work has helped foster inclusive communication among pupils, particularly those who use Makaton. The EYC and base have already earned the Environmental Badge for Communication Friendly Schools. In the coming session, we aim to extend this achievement to the entire school and continue progressing toward the next level of the award.

### **Reading**

All staff are aware of the vision for South Ayrshire Reads. Although our school is part of Phase 3 of the pilot, we have focused on the teaching of reading skills and reading for enjoyment as parts of our school improvement plan. We invested in accelerated reader which we have started to implement in the upper school. We continued to use GL literacy assessments, alongside Burts reading, PM benchmarking and teacher professional judgement to ensure pupils are attaining at the appropriate levels. There have been significant gains in reading ages of pupils who have taken part in Reading Wise decoding and zip phonics so we will continue with these proven interventions next session. Most children have made 'expected or better than expected' progress through their GL assessment evidence.

### **Writing**

Our Talk for Writing Lead has supported staff development in nearly all classes by enhancing their delivery of both fiction and non-fiction units. She has modelled lessons and team taught alongside new staff members. As a result, pupils have demonstrated clear progress, with noticeable improvements from their cold writes to their hot tasks. Feedback from both pupils and teachers indicates increased motivation to write, particularly among our reluctant writers and pupils with dyslexia. Alongside Talk for Writing, our infant literacy lead has implemented a structured plan to deliver Drawing Club, Poetry Basket, and Helicopter Stories to pupils in EYC and Primary 1. The programme was also extended to Primary 2 this session, with positive outcomes.

### **Numeracy**

Our numeracy lead has continued to support staff development by enhancing their skills in delivering Number Talks and implementing effective numeracy pedagogy using concrete, pictorial, and abstract methods. Additional family sessions have been offered at various stages throughout the school, giving pupils and parents the opportunity to collaborate with the local authority lead and build their confidence in supporting numeracy learning at home. A floorbook has also been created by the lead to document the school's journey towards improving attainment in numeracy.

## **Adaptive Teaching**

The school continued to develop our approaches to Adaptive Teaching. Both teachers and pupils audited classroom environments and implemented changes, which led to the establishment of shared expectations, including our Doonfoot non-negotiables. Pupils played an active role in evaluating the impact of these changes by using HGIOURS tools.

Teachers adopted scaffolding strategies to enhance the clarity and effectiveness of their explicit teaching. Classroom observations highlighted improvements in differentiation as a result of these strategies. In addition, we focused on providing greater challenge for our highly able learners. Staff identified these pupils and engaged them in focus groups to gather feedback on their current learning experiences and explore ways to further increase engagement.

As a staff team, we prioritised planning learning at an appropriate level for every individual pupil, an area highlighted as a strength in our HMIE inspection. To support pupil ownership of learning, we introduced personalised target setting in literacy and numeracy. This included the launch of 'Choose to Improve' jotters, individualised target books that encourage pupils to challenge themselves further. This practice is now being shared across other schools within the local authority.

**Next Steps:** We will continue to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy for all pupils, with a particular emphasis on reading through our involvement in the South Ayrshire Reads project. This initiative will support a consistent, research-informed approach to the teaching of reading. The Accelerated Reader programme will be further embedded to enhance pupil engagement and demonstrate progress in reading comprehension.

Our commitment to Adaptive Teaching will continue, ensuring that all learners experience appropriately paced lessons with the right level of challenge. Additionally, we will work to fully embed our non-negotiables, gold standard lesson expectations, and our learning, teaching, and assessment policy across the school to ensure consistency and high-quality learning experiences for all. We will also progress our development as a communication-friendly school.

**Priority 2: All pupils will have access to high quality outdoor learning experiences, that support progression through the meta-skills framework.**

**NIF Priority: 1,2,3**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC:**

**1.1,1.2,1.3,1.5,2.1,2.2,2.3,2.4,2.5,2.7,3.1,3.2 3.3**

**Links to Children's Services Plan:1, 2, 3, 4 & 5**

### **Outdoor Learning, Science and STEM**

#### **Progress and Impact:**

Meta-skills have been embedded across the curriculum through assemblies, class activities, and tailored outdoor learning experiences. These skills are also reflected in planning and assessment processes. Staff have started tracking pupil progress in relation to each meta-skill.

Our Primary 6 pupils have continued their collaborative "Weans in Wellies" project with the National Trust for Scotland at Burns Cottage. As part of this initiative, they explored how to improve both the Burns Cottage smallholding and our own school grounds, actively implementing their plans. Activities have included an apple pressing day in the orchard, bushcraft skills sessions, and learning how to plant



and care for a variety of crops. These real-life experiences have enabled P6 pupils to develop their meta-skills in a meaningful and relevant context. Primary 7 pupils partnered with Land Energy to explore the production of sustainable materials at the local Girvan plant, gaining insight into how forestry waste is repurposed into useful products.

Throughout Outdoor Learning Week, pupils engaged in outdoor learning experiences across a range of local environments, including the river, beach, and woodland areas. Pupils in P5–P7 earned their Paddle Start Award through canoeing sessions on the River Doon. Additionally, all P5 and P6 pupils successfully achieved their Level 1 and 2 Bikeability Awards respectively.

Our Science Lead has introduced a programme of outdoor science lessons aimed at gathering baseline data on biodiversity within our school grounds. From this, an action plan was developed to enhance the presence of plants and pollinators. A polytunnel was constructed on-site to support a planting cycle of native fruits, vegetables, and flowers. To further this work, a gardening club was established to maintain and harvest the crops grown in the polytunnel.

**Next steps:** The school will continue to offer a variety of outdoor learning experiences that connect with the local community. Primary 6 pupils will further strengthen their partnership with the National Trust for Scotland at Burns Cottage, using this collaboration to enhance their meta-skills.

Our Eco Committee will lead a science experiment in partnership with Land Energy, testing the effectiveness of a new chemical-free fertiliser in our recently installed poly tunnel. Once the experiment is complete, they will share their findings with the company.

To broaden opportunities for pupils to develop canoeing skills on the local river, additional staff training will be undertaken. We will also continue to grow our outdoor learning provision by seeking new partnerships within the local community and aim to extend these opportunities to younger year groups.



**Priority 3: Enhancing learning across the school through the use of digital technology, whilst promoting cyber resilience and internet safety.**

**NIF Priority: 1,2,3**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC:**

**1.1,1.2,1.3,1.5,2.1,2.2,2.3,2.4,2.5,2.7,3.1,3.2,3.3**

**Links to Children's Services Plan: 1,2,3,4,5**

**Progress and Impact:**

A comprehensive audit of essential and core digital skills was carried out for all teaching staff, enabling the identification of targeted areas for professional development. Opportunities were then provided to staff in order for them to upskill themselves in specific areas. The school's Digital Leaders (P3 and P6) have continued to provide strong peer support by maintaining the ICT suite, assisting younger pupils with login procedures, and introducing new resources across classes. Their growing confidence is evident, particularly with Glow, where upper primary pupils are now creating and sharing their work independently. Organisation within the ICT suite has improved significantly, with clearly labelled devices and pupils consistently using the same laptop or computer, supporting quicker login times and efficient use of OneDrive.

Digital learning has been further enhanced through the effective timetabling of iPads and the distribution of QR code maths packs to all classes. The Promethean boards have been updated and are now more widely used to support live lessons across the school. In addition, Euroquiz materials and the School Improvement Plan are now accessible digitally through QR codes and Thinglink, increasing engagement with school-wide initiatives. Digital Leaders have started working with Microbits and extension packs, preparing them to teach their peers, and are also preparing for a new coding club and participation in the Lego Spike Prime robotics project as part of the First Lego League.

Our Digital Leaders have actively promoted cyber resilience and online safety by sharing key information with both pupils and parents. School assemblies have focused on strategies for staying safe online, and visits from the community campus police officer have further reinforced this message, particularly for pupils in the upper stages.

Communication between home and school has been enhanced through the use of Learning Journals in the Early Years Centre and communication base classes. Mainstream pupils have become more effective in using Microsoft Teams to share their learning.

**Next Steps**

To build on these strengths, priority digital targets will be set for teaching staff in line with the School Improvement Plan. Training will focus on improving confidence and competence in using Accelerated Reader, STAR Reader assessments, Microsoft Teams, digital calendar features, and accessibility tools such as text-to-speech. Further awareness is needed around available support from organisations like CALL Scotland and the use of AI-assisted features in digital tools.

The role of Digital Leaders will continue to expand, particularly in peer-led training and the running of digital clubs. All pupils will be supported in becoming familiar with the full range of digital tools available in school, including equipment from the digital lending library, to maximise their learning opportunities.

### 1.3 Leadership of Change

We have established a clear and ambitious vision of *“Education without Walls”*, which reflects the school’s unique context and is embraced by the whole school community. This vision, along with the school’s values of respect, honesty, kindness, resilience and inclusion, have been developed in collaboration with children, parents, staff and partners. These values are consistently embedded in everyday practice and provide strategic direction for our school, informing and supporting the pace of change. Staff promote the values through relationships and learning, and children confidently describe their meaning and relevance to both learning and life.

There is a strong culture of distributed leadership across the school. Staff feel empowered and supported by senior leaders, and they contribute actively to improvement through clearly defined leadership roles and participation in working parties. These groups develop and implement action plans that are closely linked to the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Professional learning is highly valued and well-structured, with staff engaging in leadership development programmes, collaborative planning, peer observations, and learning with local authority specialists. This has supported improvements in pedagogy, particularly in the teaching of numeracy, writing and play-based learning.

There is a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation, guided by a well-planned calendar of quality assurance activities. These include lesson observations, reviews of planning and assessment and consultation with pupils through leadership groups and committees. This approach allows effective evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching, ensuring that decisions are based on evidence and lead to meaningful improvement. The team will continue to review the remits and responsibilities of senior leaders to further strengthen shared strategic leadership.

Children across the school have regular opportunities to develop leadership skills through roles such as pupil council members, digital leaders, house captains and inclusion ambassadors. They are very proud of their involvement and achievements, including awards for inclusion, Eco Schools and their work on children’s rights. These experiences have helped children build confidence, resilience and a strong sense of belonging within the school and the wider community. The school will continue to develop age-appropriate leadership opportunities for younger children to ensure they are equally included in the leadership culture.

The commitment to wellbeing, equity and inclusion is strong across the school. Children and staff consistently refer to and model the school values, which are visible in classrooms and embedded in positive relationships. Staff have implemented initiatives such as adaptive teaching, digital learning and communication-friendly environments, all of which are improving outcomes for children. A strategic and well-considered plan for the use of Pupil Equity Funding is in place, with the funding being used effectively to enhance staffing and support attendance and attainment. The parent council is consulted and informed of this process. Moving forward, there are plans to involve children more directly in decisions around resource allocation and funding.

Our Young Carers have taken part in a range of outings and residential trips, giving them valuable opportunities for informal peer support and a break from their caring responsibilities. Two Young Carers from Doonfoot are active members of our Wee Carer Voice Group, made up of primary aged children, which helps shape strategy, priorities, and actions. One of our P7 Young Carer Ambassadors has joined the South Ayrshire Young Carer Strategy Implementation Group, bringing lived experience to the table. He also attended the Travelling Cabinet, where he shared his personal experiences and discussed

national priorities for Young Carers with the First Minister, Deputy First Minister, and Cabinet Representatives. He later visited Holyrood to continue this important conversation with the Deputy First Minister. Young Carers from Doonfoot played a leading role in the production of a new short film designed to raise awareness about the lives of primary aged Young Carers. They were involved in all aspects of the film; acting, directing, and filming. Additionally, they hosted a podcast with the Director of Education, where they discussed their personal experiences as Young Carers.

Self-evaluation is a key strength of the school, with pupils and staff engaging in reflective activities using national frameworks such as HGIOS4, HGIOELCC and HGIOURS. The school operates a three-year self-evaluation cycle, allowing strategic focus on key quality indicators. This process underpins continuous improvement and ensures that school and local priorities are effectively aligned. Staff regularly share learning and support each other to embed new practices. The school maintains ongoing communication with parents, which the school aims to further develop by sharing improvement priorities with the wider parent forum. Staff will continue to use parental and carer feedback to shape future improvement planning.

Overall, the school demonstrates a very strong capacity for continuous improvement through collaborative leadership, evidence-based decision making, and a shared vision linked to our unique context and values.

The overall evaluation in this area is for the school and EYC is **very good**.

### 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The school community works very well together to create a positive, inclusive and nurturing environment where children feel supported, valued and respected. Children are friendly, polite and speak proudly about their school. They demonstrate care and empathy for one another and understand that everyone learns in different ways. Staff use praise, encouragement and the school's core values to support positive behaviour, while class charters linked to children's rights help to reinforce shared expectations and respectful relationships.

Children benefit from calm, purposeful classrooms that have been thoughtfully designed to meet their needs. The implementation of adaptive teaching strategies across all classes allows children to access resources independently and utilise quiet spaces when needed. Regular emotional check-ins support wellbeing and allow staff to help children to remain focused and ready to learn. The adaptive teaching strategies are used to support differentiation of teaching and learning to meet the needs of all.

Learners engage well with bright and informative classroom displays which celebrate learning journeys and children speak confidently about their experiences and achievements. Staff make effective use of outdoor learning, incorporating the local environment, including the beach, river, and local attractions such as Burns Cottage, into rich, stimulating learning experiences linked to the meta-skills. This has helped bring the school's vision of "education without walls" to life and fosters children's skills for learning, life and work. Projects such as the development of the school grounds and a new polytunnel has encouraged pupil ownership of learning spaces.

Play-based learning is highly valued, particularly in the early years. Teachers work collaboratively with colleagues and cluster schools to implement play pedagogy using a shared rationale. Learning

experiences are matched well to children's developmental stages and interests, with the large, shared space used effectively to encourage creativity and positive social interactions. Story-based provocations support literacy and are designed to inspire exploration and investigation. There are clear plans to continue developing play and experiential learning across the school, with strong links to the Early Years Centre.

Across most lessons, teachers effectively share the purpose of learning and support children to recognise success. Clear instructions and well-structured questioning build on prior learning, with some questioning used to deepen thinking and promote curiosity. Staff refer to 'Doonfoot's Gold Standard Lesson' model and the 'See, Hear and Feel' guidance to help to promote high-quality learning experiences, with a continued focus on consistency across all classes.

Teachers plan a wide range of approaches that encourage independent, paired and group work. Classroom environments are designed to support universal needs, with a continued emphasis on adaptive teaching to ensure appropriate challenge and pace for all learners. Interactive whiteboards are used in most classrooms, and in some instances, digital technologies are well integrated to support and enhance learning. Children use devices for a variety of purposes including presentations, games, reflection, and recording their learning. Peer Digital Leaders help build digital confidence among younger learners. There is a clear commitment by pupils and staff to expanding the creative use of digital technology across the curriculum.

Assessment is used well to support planning and progression. An assessment calendar ensures consistency of approaches across stages, and termly high-quality interdisciplinary assessments are used to consolidate and transfer learning across curricular areas. Children are supported to set personal learning targets in their 'Choose to Improve' jotters, which they review weekly with their teachers. This allows ownership and encourages pupils to set ambitious yet achievable targets in consultation with their teacher.

Staff engage in regular moderation activities, both within the school and across the cluster. This is building a shared understanding of standards and increasing teacher confidence in their professional judgements. Collaborative planning is supported by clear guidance and ensures progression across all curricular areas. Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of core, support, and challenge groups, with individualised approaches in place where needed.

Tracking systems are used effectively by the senior leadership team to monitor progress in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Regular pupil progress meetings ensure targeted support is put in place for children who require it, including those requiring additional challenge. Planned interventions and support/boost groups help most children make appropriate progress. Ongoing work will focus on ensuring the most able learners are further stretched and supported to reach their full potential.

Doonfoot Primary School & EYC Learning, Teaching and Assessment		
See	Hear	Feel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smiles and happy faces ☺</li> <li>Children actively engaged in their learning</li> <li>Independent work, collaborative work, supported work, play based and active learning</li> <li>Making use of the local environment including outdoor learning opportunities</li> <li>Children being appropriately challenged and supported</li> <li>Pupil choice of activities and different learning styles catered for (including TEACCH approach)</li> <li>Children leading learning</li> <li>Various concrete materials and resources to enhance learning</li> <li>Purposeful and calming wall displays</li> <li>Learning being shared out with the classroom (parents/community)</li> <li>Consistent approaches to formative assessment</li> <li>Lessons enhanced by technology</li> <li>Relevant and meaningful contexts</li> <li>Interdisciplinary learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laughter</li> <li>Discussions around learning, including links to real life contexts, sharing of learning intentions and success criteria</li> <li>Collaborative and supportive conversations</li> <li>Effective questioning (Higher Order)</li> <li>Positive and respectful language</li> <li>Celebrating effort, success and achievements</li> <li>Acknowledging mistakes and feedback on how to improve</li> <li>Constructive and purposeful teacher and peer feedback</li> <li>Connections being discussed and made</li> <li>Continuous positive encouragement using the Language of Growth Mindset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A nurturing and welcoming ethos (Part of a whole school family/community)</li> <li>Safe</li> <li>Nurtured and cared for</li> <li>Respected</li> <li>Included and accepted</li> <li>Supported, valued and listened to</li> <li>Happy</li> <li>Enthusiastic</li> <li>Motivated</li> <li>Part of a team</li> </ul>



Doonfoot Primary - Gold Standard Lesson	
<p><b>Design and Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use learning Teaching and Assessment Policy (Teacher Expectations of Doonfoot Primary)</li> <li>Planning that ensures individuals and groups are focused on the appropriate, relevant, individual, support, core and challenge</li> <li>Use their 'Feel' poster</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Lesson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure fifty-fifty plan is in place</li> <li>Start the lesson with a hook</li> <li>Recap prior learning if appropriate</li> <li>Learning Objectives should be displayed and shared with pupils</li> <li>Differentiated Co-ordinated success criteria should be displayed - refer to this throughout the lesson and during plenary/assessment</li> <li>Teaching input - keep this concise</li> <li>Ensure you scaffold the learning - use Adaptive Teaching scaffold posters</li> <li>Ensure the work is appropriate differentiated</li> <li>Work must support group</li> <li>Ensure open ended questioning - use boxes/boxers resources</li> <li>Use Q&amp;A/Thinkers - Planed up use 3 before me, 10 before me, 100 before me generators</li> <li>Refer to any maths skills being developed during the lesson</li> <li>Plenary at the end of the lesson - add, put it into context, questioning</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Target Setting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all pupils are aware of their targets and can discuss these - SDOT</li> <li>Refer to the school's Success criteria. Ensure any teacher or staff working with the pupil are aware of their targets and how to support/challenge</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Managing Behaviour and Positive Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please follow the school Positive Relationship Policy - refer to school behaviour policy when addressing behaviours within the class</li> </ul>	

The overall evaluation in this area is **good** for the school and **very good** for the EYC.



### 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion

The school has established a warm, inclusive, and nurturing environment where staff and pupils work together to ensure a strong sense of community. Wellbeing is central to all aspects of school life. Pupils benefit from regular emotional check-ins and self-assessments, enabling staff to identify and meet individual needs. Wellbeing is tracked and monitored from Primary 1 to Primary 7 and informs the planning of specific interventions. Targeted groups such as *Seasons for Growth* and *Let's Introduce Anxiety Management (LIAM)* offer additional support for children experiencing separation, loss, or anxiety. Through both individual and group interventions, pupils feel safe, supported, and valued. The health and wellbeing curriculum is engaging and encourages pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Staff understand their statutory duties in relation to child protection and safeguarding and actively pursue ongoing training to enhance effectiveness in this area. Staff know their children well and are equipped to deliver a variety of targeted interventions. They create calming environments within their classrooms and the sensory room to ensure pupil wellbeing is paramount. Staff have undertaken local authority training to ensure that every child grows up feeling loved, safe, and respected, in line with Scotland's Promise. Their dedication to supporting care experienced pupils is clear, and the school has been awarded 'The Promise Award' in recognition of our commitment to upholding these values.

Pupils are well informed about their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). They help develop class charters and take part in leadership roles and committees. Their voices are valued through pupil groups such as RRS Committee, Dyslexia and Inclusion group and through school captains and ambassadors, all of which promote equity and inclusion. The school continues to maintain its Gold Rights Respecting Schools status for its commitment to children's rights.

Staff work closely with external professionals, including speech and language therapists, to support communication friendly practices. Pupils play an active role as part of the 'Communication Crew' by using visual supports and teaching Makaton to other pupils and staff in the school. Young carers are supported through a dedicated group that builds their confidence and sense of identity and offers them a range of activities and residential opportunities. Pupils with dyslexia benefit from inclusive approaches, supported by a pupil led group that raises awareness and offers supports and strategies. Transitions into and within the school are carefully managed, with consistent teaching practices and close collaboration that support continuity in learning and wellbeing through staged intervention paperwork and targets. Inclusion is a core value of the school, with pupils from the Communication Base being fully integrated in the life of the school.

The nurturing ethos is evident in how staff respond to individual needs. Calming areas and structured lunchtime clubs and activities support emotional regulation and contribute to overall wellbeing. We actively promote diversity and cultural awareness, with plans to further expand work in the area of equalities. Positive relationships are maintained through nurturing approaches, positive behaviour strategies, and careful planning of supports. Overall, the school embodies a strong, inclusive ethos with effective systems in place to support the wellbeing and success of all learners

The overall evaluation in this area for the school and EYC is **very good**.



## 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy remains a central focus for the school. Most pupils in Primary 1, 4, and 7 are achieving the expected national levels, with those requiring additional support making steady progress toward their individual targets. This highlights the effectiveness of targeted interventions and support/boost groups. Combined attainment data for P1, P4, and P7 has shown a consistent upward trend over the past three years.

In literacy, most pupils make strong progress from their prior levels. They benefit from a rich and varied learning environment that promotes the development of listening and talking skills. Pupils contribute confidently to discussions and demonstrate the ability to build on the ideas of others. Reading skills are well established, with children engaging with a broad range of texts and displaying growing competence in comprehension, authors' techniques, and text features. In writing, pupils are creative and purposeful, producing work across a variety of genres. A culture of encouragement supports pupils to take pride in their work and enjoy the writing process.

In numeracy and mathematics, most pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of core concepts and confidently apply their knowledge in practical, real-life contexts. A consistent whole-school approach to teaching number talks and concrete, pictorial, and abstract approaches, supports learning effectively. Family learning initiatives have positively influenced growth mindsets and attitudes towards numeracy.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have strengthened the tracking and monitoring of pupil attainment through strategic use of the South Ayrshire Attainment Tracker and the local authority's data pack. Attainment data is rigorously analysed by both the Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher, with separate and collective tracking of pupils from the communication base and mainstream settings. This provides a comprehensive and accurate picture of individual and cohort progress over time. Continued improvement in literacy and numeracy attainment has been evident this session. Early identification of support needs allows timely, targeted intervention. Staff are increasingly confident in using data to inform decisions and improve outcomes. We have seen improved attainment in Science and look to replicate this success across all other curricular areas.

Ongoing professional learning in literacy and numeracy, enhanced by involvement in Education Scotland's Adaptive Teaching pilot, has strengthened pedagogy and increased accuracy in teacher professional judgement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Going forward, the school aims to increase the pace and challenge of learning experiences to drive further progress. Most pupils are achieving expected CfE levels, with nearly all attaining appropriately at key stages. Learners who require additional support or would benefit from increased challenge are clearly identified and individual or group planning is in place.

Teachers are increasingly confident in discussing pupil progress and justifying their professional judgements in relation to the four stages of progress. Engagement in moderation activities, both within the school and across the cluster, has improved the consistency and reliability of assessment practices. The use of GL and National Standardised Assessments has helped identify learning gaps, inform planning, and validate teacher judgement. For Primary 1, transition data and developmental milestones are used to shape targeted support.

The school continues to work closely with a range of partners to reduce barriers for pupils in receipt of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The PEF plan outlines a range of supports for both pupils and families.

Regular 'Team Around the Family' meetings ensure timely and appropriate interventions are tailored to individual needs. Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the school's socio-economic context and are proactive in ensuring equitable access to learning and participation. PEF is used strategically to enhance literacy, wellbeing, and attendance outcomes.

A wide variety of opportunities are provided to support children's wider achievements. Clubs, pupil committees, and leadership roles help pupils build communication, teamwork, and citizenship skills. Strong community links enable pupils to engage meaningfully through local projects and partnerships. Participation is carefully monitored to ensure all children have equitable access, and the value of wider achievements is recognised through weekly assemblies and celebration events. Pupils contribute actively to maintaining the school's Gold Rights Respecting School Award, as well as its Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice Award, Eco Flags, and communication-friendly environments.

School attendance remains above the South Ayrshire average and has improved by an additional 1.3% this session. This success is attributed to a range of effective strategies, including robust tracking of attendance and punctuality, early intervention, and positive relationships with families. Staff have strong knowledge of their learners and provide a nurturing, inclusive setting in which every child is supported to achieve their full potential.

The overall evaluation in this area is **good** for the school and **very good** for the EYC.

### Impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

We fund an additional 0.1 for our Pupil Support Teacher to allow her to continue to gather and analyse the data trends and oversee the impact of all literacy, numeracy and health and well-being interventions. This funding allows her remit to closely track and monitor the attendance of our PEF cohort. Individual tracking for pupils is highly effective and allows early intervention and recognition of patterns. Additional school assistant hours were funded to aid the delivery of HWB and literacy interventions that we have seen the most impact with over the past few years. This additional time has also enabled pupils to access our Hub and sensory room. A school assistant continues to provide a walking bus which has improved attendance for targeted pupils, and this will continue next session. Full details of this can be found within the PEF plan.

### What is the school's main priorities for session 2025-2026?

The school improvement priorities for next session will focus on:

- Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy, by increasing pace and challenge for all learners, through adaptive teaching, communication-friendly environments, and consistent approaches to learning and teaching.
- Raising attainment in literacy and significantly reducing the reading attainment gap between our most and least disadvantaged children (South Ayrshire Reads).
- Improving pupil experiences and attainment across a range of curricular areas, with a particular focus on Physical Education, Religious and Moral Education and Digital Technology.

## What is the school's capacity for improvement?

There is a clear and shared vision for driving the school's continued progress. The Senior Leadership Team has a strong understanding of the school's context and is focused on key improvement priorities. Leadership roles within the team will be reviewed and aligned to individual strengths. Our recent HMIE inspection has affirmed the school's capacity for ongoing improvement.

Next session, we will welcome two newly qualified teachers, who will be supported and mentored by experienced class teachers under the guidance of the Depute Head. This additional capacity will allow other staff members to lead improvement initiatives across the school. The staff team has a shared understanding of the priorities needed to move the school forward, and there is a strong collective commitment to continued improvement. Staff members will continue to embrace leadership opportunities.

Collaboration and moderation activities with cluster schools will remain a key strategy in raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. Health and wellbeing will continue to be a central focus, with targeted interventions in place to support individual pupils. Strong teamwork and leadership are evident at all levels across the school. All staff members will contribute to development groups, leading initiatives that align with both the School Improvement Plan and their own professional development. The dedication of staff, support from parents, and the confidence of our pupils will ensure the successful delivery of key priorities in the year ahead.

Our pupil leadership committees have made a significant impact, as recognised by awards such as the Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award, the Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice Award, and Eco Schools certification. Pupils will continue to build on this positive work and lead learning throughout the school community. Attainment will be closely tracked and monitored to ensure every pupil is appropriately supported and challenged.

The Early Years Centre will transition from a 52-week model to a term-time service. The Depute Manager will continue to lead improvements and manage this change effectively. The Senior practitioner will work in partnership with the Depute Manager to support the large and dedicated staff team, ensuring children's wellbeing and supporting them in achieving key developmental milestones.

Construction work is currently underway in the upper school to reconfigure the two communication base classrooms. This development is expected to enhance the learning environment for our pupils. The new teaching staff joining the communication bases bring both experience and enthusiasm, complementing our existing team.

Our active Parent Council will continue to play a key role in school improvement planning and fundraising. While the Chair is stepping down, three office bearers will remain in their positions to ensure continuity, and we look forward to welcoming new members.

We remain confident in the forthcoming changes and are committed to building upon the strengths outlined in our positive inspection report. We look forward to ongoing collaboration in driving continuous improvement across the school, Early Years Centre, and communication base classes.