

Dumfries and Galloway Education Services

Primary School Handbook Template

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1. Letter from The Head of Education



Dear Parents,

Dumfries and Galloway Education Services is committed to delivering a high quality education for your child/ren. As part of Dumfries and Galloway Council's overall vision we aim to provide all children and young people with a good start in life and prepare them for adulthood and employment.

Education Services cannot deliver this alone for children and young people but work together with others and, as parents, you are one of our key partners. The research tells us that when parents are involved in their child's education the child will do better. The school handbook is one of the ways in which we inform parents, not just about how the school works, but also about how you can help us help your children to succeed in school and life.

It gives me pleasure as Head of Education, Education Services to commend this handbook to you as an invaluable source of information about your school and Education Services.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Brysdon
Head of Education

Dumfries & Galloway Council, Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning,
122-124 Irish Street, Dumfries, DG1 2PB

2. Welcome from Mrs Hamilton Castle Kennedy Partnership Head Teacher

The staff and pupils of Castle Kennedy Primary School would like to welcome you to our school and hope you will find this Handbook both useful and of interest.

It has been written to give you important information about our school, its aims, the curriculum and many other aspects of school life. As you get to know the school and everyone in it we hope that you will enjoy close contact with the school in the many ways described in the following pages.

In an every-changing society, we are aware of our responsibility to prepare our young people for the future. Our vision is to do all we can to support them and we are committed to the highest possible levels of achievement for all our pupils, We hope

that it will help to develop a close partnership between home and school. In this way we can ensure that your children have the best educational experience possible.

The process of education is constantly under review and improvement. This involves school staff in regular development activities. As a result of these we occasionally add a new policy statement or statement of procedures to the list of documents which form the basis of the educational provision at Castle Kennedy School. In such circumstances we will usually issue updated information for the Handbook and ask you to exchange or add some pages.

Castle Kennedy Primary School was built in 1963 to replace the former school at Inchparks. It is an attractive and spacious building with three large classrooms and a hall, which is separated from the dining room by a sliding partition. When this is opened, we have a substantial area for PE. It also provides excellent accommodation for concerts, open nights, displays, etc.

We are fortunate in having extensive grounds around the school building, mainly grassed. These provide a football pitch, ample space for school sports and an area with a variety of species of trees. Recently we have undertaken extensive development of the grounds. Some older trees have been taken down and new ones planted. Nest boxes have been attached to a number of large trees. Fund-raising over a two-year period has resulted in the installation of an exciting new adventure playground. The hard-surface area has also been resurfaced and we have extended the range of activities for children during intervals and lunchtimes by painting games on this section.

We have a well-equipped kitchen for preparation of school meals, which are taken by the majority of children.

3. Education Services Aims

Our Aim

To raise attainment in all children and young people to improve their life chances through collaboration and innovation.

Our Objectives

1. We will ensure that children and young people will be at the centre of our plans.

This means planning by schools and support from Education Services will be focussed on delivering to all our children and young people the entitlements embedded in Curriculum for Excellence and Getting It Right for Every Child.

2. We will improve our partnership working

This means an emphasis on Cluster working, training on *Getting It Right For Every Child* themes, parental involvement, multi-agency working, partnership with Community Learning and Development (CLD); Professional Learning Communities and collaboration with Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and Further Education colleges.

3. We will encourage innovation, creativity, collaboration and a culture of sharing and learning in all our staff

This means a focus on transformational leadership, professional autonomy and local solutions and building capacity in all our staff.

4. We will streamline our business processes

This means empowering our schools and staff to find better ways of working, with an emphasis on professional autonomy, local solutions, developing leadership, capacity building, effective Continuing Professional Development and implementing *Getting It Right for Every Child* processes.

4. School Aims - what the school is aiming to achieve for children and young people

This school, as a community, will provide a welcoming and secure learning environment in which individuals can fully realise their potential in a climate of mutual respect.

We are committed to ensuring that the Castle Kennedy Primary School community is one in which:

- we trust and respect each individual
- we respect and care for each other and value the diversity which exists among people
- students develop responsibility for themselves and a sense of self worth which is strong in success or failure
- there is a commitment to education as a life-long experience
- all members develop an awareness of their social responsibilities

5. School Ethos - This school, as a community, will provide a welcoming and secure learning environment in which individuals can fully realise their potential in a climate of mutual respect

The staff of this school aim to ensure the highest possible levels of achievement of our children. By fostering partnerships with parents/carers, the local community and support networks in the wider community we endeavour to ensure the educational inclusion of all of our children. We work closely with our Education Authority to develop our aim to be an integrated community school, which meets the needs of our children's educational, social, emotional and health needs.

6. School Information

6.1 Castle Kennedy primary School Castle Kennedy Stranraer DG9 8RY.

Telephone No. 01776702988

Email Address: gw08officecastlekenn@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

6. Partnership Head Teacher: Mrs Pauline Hamilton & Mr James Ferguson

6.3 Roll of School 37 / denominational status (if any)/ Status of Gaelic none

6.4 Nursery (none)

6.5 School Staff

Principal Teacher Mrs Mary Downie

Class Teacher Mrs Gabrielle Gallacher (Maternity Leave)

Class Teacher Mrs Diane MacKinnon

Learning Support Teacher Ms Anna Vedat

Secretary Mrs Morag Mitchell

Janitor Mr Iain Houston

Learning Assistants Mrs Sandra Downie & Mrs Morag Mitchell

Cleaner Miss Ruth Smedley

Playground Supervisor Mrs Sandra Downie

Kitchen Supervisor Mrs Patricia Henderson

6.6 Terms and Holidays

Term 1

Teacher training - Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 August 2019

First day - Wednesday 21 August 2019

Last day - Friday 11 October 2019

Autumn holiday - Monday 14 to Friday 25 October 2019

Term 2

First day - Monday 28 October 2019

Last day - Friday 20 December 2019

Christmas holiday - Monday 23 December 2019 to Monday 6 January 2020

Term 3

Teacher training - Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 January 2020

First day – Wednesday 8 January 2020

Mid-term holiday - Monday 17 to Friday 21 February 2020 (Teacher training - Thursday 20 and Friday 21 February 2020)

Last day - Friday 3 April 2020

Spring holiday - Monday 6 to Friday 17 April 2020

Term 4 First day - Monday 20 April 2020

May holiday - Friday 8 May 2020

Last day - Thursday 2 July 2020

Summer holiday - Friday 3 July 2020 to Wednesday 19 August 2020

7. Contact Us -

7.1 If you need to find out something

Please telephone the school on:01776 702988 or alternatively you can e-mail us at gw08officecastlekenn@ea.dumgal.sch.uk or call in during school hours and we will be more than happy to help

7.2 If you have a complaint

Normally issues rising at a school level should be brought to the attention of the class teacher and senior school staff, such as Head or Depute Headteachers as appropriate. Complaints received directly by Education Services will, where possible, be dealt with at as local a level as possible, i.e. at individual school level.

Education Services operate within the complaints handling procedures for Dumfries and Galloway Council. Information on this can be found at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15382/Complaints-procedure>. Further support and advice can be provided to individual complainants through contacting either the complaints handler within Education Services or to the Council's Corporate Complaints Unit.

Please come in to the school and speak to a member of staff. No appointment is necessary and we operate an open door policy. Any concerns can usually be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

7.3 If you have a complaint

In the first instance use any of the above methods or make an appointment to speak to the head Teacher. Please refer to the following guidance from the authority.

Education Services aims for enquiries, concerns and complaints to be dealt with at as local a level as possible, where possible at individual school level. Individual schools are supported to ensure that matters of complaint are recorded, acknowledged and responded to within normal complaints handling timescales, normally response within 10 working days. Normally issues arising at a school level should be brought to the attention of the class teacher and senior school staff, such as Head or Depute Headteachers as appropriate. Further support and advice can be provided to individual complainants or teaching staff through contacting either the complaints handler within Education Services or to the Councils Corporate Complaints Unit.

8. How the School Works?

8.1 Enrolment -

Children may be enrolled for August commencement provided that they reach the age of 5 between the previous 1st March and the following 28th (or 29th) February.

Once children have enrolled in P1 the school provides the opportunity for children to make pre-start visits to the infant classroom when the P7 pupils have their induction days at Stranraer Academy in June. There are also additional planned visits on a regular basis which take place throughout the term as part of the transition process.

The school has an open door policy which offers prospective parents the opportunity to visit and meet with staff.

Parents may apply for a Placing Request at a school other than their territorial school but must in the first instance, enrol their child at their catchment area school.

Transport to and from an extra territorial school must be provided by parents. All enquiries regarding placing requests must be made directly to Mrs Lesley Beck, Lochside Education Centre, Lochside Road, Dumfries, DG2 0EL.

Parents may opt for a place in any school they wish, at any time, but priority for a place will be granted to children from the recognised or 'delineated' catchment area.

Information regarding catchment areas can be found on the Council's website by accessing "Find My Nearest" <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15086/Find-my-nearest>

Full details on how to enrol or move school are available from the school or on the Council's website (see Section 16).

8.2 Moving from Nursery -

The school employs a number of ongoing transition arrangements to aid a child's transition to primary. Parents will be informed and included in arrangements via school and Parent Consultation Evenings

Primary teachers work closely with nursery staff and parents to ensure that information about each child's learning and achievements is passed on. This will help ensure that their learning and development continues without interruption. Staff will also share other information which will help the teacher to support each child's learning - for example relevant health issues, friendship groups and preferred ways of working.

8.3 School Day

School starts	9.00 am
Morning Interval	10.45 - 11.00 am
Lunch	12.30 - 1.15 pm
School closes	3.00 pm

8.4 School Uniform/Dress Policy

All Dumfries and Galloway schools must have a dress code which encourages pupils to dress in a way appropriate to attendance at school. This code must not lead to direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, or disability. Prior to drawing up the dress code, parents, pupils and staff should be fully consulted and it is the expectation of Education Services that parents will be supportive of the dress code.

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

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

Parents in receipt of a grant for footwear and clothing from the authority will be encouraged to purchase items which are in accordance with the school dress code.

Guidance is available on Clothing Grants from Pupil / Parent Support Unit on <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15246/School-clothing-grants>

While it would not normally be the policy of the authority to exclude a pupil from school solely on the basis of his/her dress, persistent refusal to respond to a reasonable dress code could be deemed to be a challenge to the Head teacher's authority and thus be detrimental to the well-being of the whole school community. In such circumstances, a head teacher could justify the use of the school disciplinary procedures.

8.5 School Meals

Free school meals are available to support families who live and attend a school in Dumfries and Galloway and who are in receipt of qualifying benefits. All Primary 1-3 pupils currently receive free school meals. Any questions about Free School Meals can be directed to the Pupil/Parent Support Unit (See Section 16) or <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals>

8.6 School Transport

Who is entitled to school transport?

- Pupils who live 2 miles away from their catchment school if they are under 8 years old
- Pupils who live 3 miles away from their catchment school if they are 8 years and over
- Roman Catholic children attending the denominational school for their address and live the above statutory distances from that school.

How do I find out if my child will receive school transport?

When school transport is required for a pupil, the school will contact the Parent/Pupil Support Unit. If your child is eligible, details of the transport arrangements will be communicated to you in time for the new academic year. You can check whether your child is entitled to school transport using 'Find My Nearest' on the Council's website <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15086/Find-my-nearest>

Any alterations to transport arrangements that occur during the school year will be communicated prior to any changes being made. If school bus passes are required these are issued at school.

There is a Policy on School Transport and a Guide for Parents, and also Guidance for transport of children and young people with Additional Support Needs. These are available from your school or on the Council's website or from the Pupil/Parent Support Unit (see Section 16) <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15245/Free-school-transport>

8.7 Class organisation -

At present we have 2 multi composite classes at Castle Kennedy Primary: P1-4 and P5-7

What is a composite class? A composite class is one of which there are pupils of different age groups.

There are national and local agreements in Dumfries and Galloway about class sizes in a primary school. Under present arrangements class sizes are determined by the number of pupils on the school roll and the finance available for staffing.

Currently no single-age class should be greater than 25 in Primary 1 and Primary 2, 30 in Primary 3 no greater than 33 in Primary 4 to Primary 7. No composite class should be greater than 25. It could be argued then that a child in a composite class should benefit from the smaller number of pupils being taught by one teacher.

In a rural Authority like Dumfries and Galloway, with some 60% of our primary schools having three teachers or less, pupils in village schools have always been taught in composite classes. In many schools 2, 3 or 4 different age groups are taught together as a matter of course.

Evidence suggests that pupils in composite classes can benefit educationally and socially and indeed become better adjusted having had greater opportunities to develop responsibility and independence. Large schools will also have composite classes as numbers of pupils vary at certain stages.

8.8 Playground Supervision

We have a playground supervisor: Mrs Downie who is out with the children at break times and lunch times. In her absence another member of staff would continue these duties.

8.9 Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

Good school discipline depends on a happy relationship between staff, pupils and parents. Mutual respect is paramount. The school aims to bring each child to a state of development where he/she can acknowledge self-discipline in all situations and circumstances. When behavioural difficulties arise that begin to cause concern in School, parents are involved at an early stage.

9. The Curriculum

9.1 Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is bringing learning to life in the way education is delivered for all 3-18 year olds - in nursery, primary, secondary, at college, workplace

or community learning. It takes a fresh approach to what, how and where young people learn. It aims to raise standards, improve knowledge and develop skills, closing the gap between the lowest and highest performers. Ultimately it aims to nurture young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

How does Curriculum for Excellence work?

- The 'learner journey' will be joined up from 3-18 to avoid gaps and overlaps in learning and to make the most of achievements outside school.
- Learners will work at a pace that suits, with enough challenge and support to stretch them.
- Lessons will be more engaging, inspiring and relevant to everyday life.
- Teachers will make connections between subjects, helping children make sense of the world.
- Children will learn *how* to learn and how to use their learning, not just memorise information to pass tests. This will help them adapt in an uncertain future with the ability to think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.
- There's more focus on knowledge *and* skills - including vital skills: literacy and numeracy, which underpin all learning and are critical in life.
- There are changes to assessment and how progress is reported to give learners, parents and employers better information on potential and achievement.

9.2 Subject Information

The curriculum at Castle Kennedy School is planned within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence issued by the Scottish Executive. The guidelines are structured under the headings of eight curriculum areas:

- **Languages**
- **Mathematics**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Expressive Arts**
- **Religious and Moral Education**

- **Sciences**
- **Social studies**
- **Technologies**

The school regularly holds open nights and information sessions to help parents become acquainted with what their children learn at school. We hope you will be able to attend these from time to time.

Languages

There are three organisers within the literacy framework;

- Listening and talking
- Reading
- writing

All are given equal importance in the guidelines. Within a planned and progressive programme the school offers a wide range of language activities to develop pupils' ability to use language correctly and appropriately, and to develop their critical awareness.

Listening and Talking

These basic skills form an important part of children's development in all curricular areas. They are developed in a structured way through a variety of activities including discussion, play, drama, listening for information, giving reports and talking in groups.

Reading

In the early stages, children are taught reading by the look and say approach as well as by developing their knowledge of phonics. From the beginning they are encouraged to respond to the books, discussing the content, the characters in the books and relating them to their own experience. In this way not only are their reading skills developed in a progressive way, but an enjoyment of reading is established.

Writing

A variety of language experiences are provided for children as they prepare to learn to write. Using discussion, drawing, play activities and listening to stories, children are encouraged to develop their language skills and their ability to express their ideas. Writing activities throughout all stages of school include imaginative and personal writing, writing reports, letter and poems. Presentation skills are also encouraged from early stages with a focus on neat handwriting, and good spelling and punctuation.

Modern Languages

In line with advice from the Scottish Executive, our Education Authority has introduced the teaching of modern languages in their Primary School curriculum. The language taught in this school is French which is taught from P5 upwards.

Mathematics

The mathematics experiences and outcomes are structured within the three main organisers, each of which contains a number of subdivisions.

- Number, money and measure
- Shape, position and movement
- Information handling

Learning in mathematics enables children to:

- Develop a secure understanding of the concepts, principles and processes of mathematics and apply these in different contexts, including the world of work
- Develop essential numeracy skills which will allow them to participate fully in society
- Understand that successful independent living requires financial awareness, effective money management, using schedules and other related skills
- Establish firm foundations for further specialist learning

Health & Wellbeing

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Learning through health and wellbeing enables children and young people to:

- Make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Experience challenge and enjoyment
- Experience positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves

- Apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle
- Make a successful move to the next stage of education or work
- Establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help to promote the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Scottish children.

Expressive Arts

There are four main elements of this area:

- Art and design
- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Learning in, through and about the expressive arts enables children and young people to:
 - be creative and express themselves in different ways
 - experience enjoyment and contribute to other people's enjoyment through creative and expressive performance and presentation
 - develop important skills, both those specific to the expressive arts and those which are transferable
 - develop an appreciation of aesthetic and cultural values, identities and ideas and for some prepare for advanced learning and future careers by building foundations for excellence in the expressive arts.

Religious and Moral Education

Religious and moral education is an essential part of every child or young person's educational experience. Learning through religious and moral education enables children and young people to:

- recognise religion as an important expression of human experience
- learn about and from the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and the world religions selected for study, other traditions and viewpoints independent of religious belief
- explore and develop knowledge and understanding of religions, recognising the place of Christianity in the Scottish context
- recognise and understand religious diversity and the importance of religion in society
- develop respect for others and an understanding of beliefs and practices which are different from my own

Sciences

Children and young people participating in the sciences will:

- develop a curiosity and understanding of their environment and their place in the living, material and physical world
- demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the big ideas and concepts of the sciences
- develop skills for learning, life and work
- develop skills of scientific inquiry and investigation using practical techniques
- recognise the impact the sciences make on their lives, the lives of others, the environment and on society
- establish the foundation for more advanced learning and, for some, future careers in the sciences and the technologies.

Social studies

The social studies experiences and outcomes have been structured under three main organisers

- people, past events and societies

- people, place and the environment
- people in society, economy and business

By participating in social studies children will:

- develop their understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland and an appreciation of their local and national heritage within the world
- broaden their understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present
- develop their understanding of their own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others
- learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place
- learn how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield
- establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers

Technologies

The technologies framework has six organisers:

- technological developments in society
- ICT to enhance learning
- Business
- Computing science
- Food and textiles
- Craft, design, engineering and graphics.

Learning in the technologies will enable children to:

- Develop an understanding of the role and impact of technologies in changing and influencing societies
- gain the confidence and skills to embrace and use technologies now and in the future, at home, at work and in the wider community

- broaden their understanding of the role that information and communications technology (ICT) has in Scotland and in the global community.

9.3 Health and Well Being Education: See above

10. The Wider Curriculum

10.1 Extra Curricular Activities

Castle Kennedy Primary runs a range of extra curricular activities throughout the school year. Each year we have a concert club, a garden club, an art club, a netball team and football training. As well as these we also have regular sporting activities organised by our Active Sports Coordinator: Laura McClymont which are run after school or at lunchtime.

10.2 Pupil Council - We have a Pupil Council which consists of pupils from P4-P7. Pupils meet to discuss issues and concerns linked to the school and the local community.

10.3 School Trips

During projects, staff will arrange **educational visits** to a variety of places of interest which will widen the children's experience of the topic and provide valuable learning opportunities for follow-up work.

You will always be informed in advance of any trips arranged and your consent will be sought. This will usually take the form of a tear-off slip at the end of a letter and it is essential that this is returned, duly completed by parents, well in advance of the trip taking place.

10.4 The Community -

We enjoy excellent levels of communication and liaison with our community. These include curricular links with local companies and organisations, the press and other Authority agencies. Our activities shared with these groups are regularly highlighted in the local press.

A notice board is situated in the reception area. It displays current information of interest to children and parents.

10.5 Eco Schools

The school has an active Eco Schools group that is led by Miss Diana Boles.

To date the school has been successful in achieving two Green Flags.

Being an Eco School is very much part of our development as a school and we very much welcome interest and support from families and the local community

10.6 Rights Respecting School

Staff and students at Glenluce Primary are celebrating after making the first step towards becoming a U.N.I.C.E.F. UK Rights Respecting School. The school has been given the Bronze award and is now busy working towards achieving the Silver level.

The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) is an initiative run by UNICEF who work with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. The Rights Respecting Schools Award embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens. Both schools will place the UN convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of their ethos and curriculum.

11. Home/ School Partnership

11.1 Parent Council -

PARENT COUNCIL

Our Parent Council has been established to strengthen links between the school and all our parents. The parent Council will seek to play an active roll in supporting parental involvement in the life and work of the school and provide opportunities for parents to express their views.

The Council's basic functions and duties include

- Supporting the school in its work with pupils
- Representing the views of parents/carers

- Receiving and requesting information from the Head Teacher and Education Authority
- Promoting contact between the school, parents/carers and the community.
- Reporting to all parents about the activities of the Parent Council
- Participation in the selection process for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher

Parent Council Office Bearers are as follows:

Chairperson	Mrs Heather McKie
Vice Chairperson	Mrs Ashley Farquhar
Treasurer	Mrs Sadie Gilliland
Clerk	
Parent Members	Mrs Cowan, Mrs Susan Campbell, Ms Ellie McCaig, Ms Julie Milby. Mrs Fox

By law schools have a duty to promote parents' involvement in children's education. We are very keen that parents feel able to be involved in their child's education and learning that they are active participants in the life of the school and they feel able to express their views on school education generally.

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

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

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

11.2 Communicating with Home-

HOME/SCHOOL LINKS

We strive to keep parents well informed about what goes on in school.

Regular newsletters are sent with diary dates, pupil achievements and general school news. Curriculum newsletters are issued termly to let parents know what their children will learn in school. We also contact parents by text message or e-mail to keep them informed about trips or if something is cancelled.

Each pupil is issued with a school diary at the start of the session. Note about homework are written in this or reminders about events. In the infant stages, diaries are read every day by the class teacher. After primary three we expect children to take responsibility for their own diaries and write in any information for themselves. . The diaries can provide an invaluable, informal dialogue between home and school.

11.3 Attendance

It is your responsibility as parents to ensure that your child/children attends school regularly. For the safety of all children it is important for you to telephone the school office prior to/at the beginning of the absence. Absences are recorded in class registers and frequent or irregular absences not supported by a reasonable excuse, will be notified to parents and the matter may be referred to the Attendance Officer. If possible please try to make dental/medical appointments out with school hours. However if this is not possible please inform us in writing or by telephone of the appointment and arrange to collect your child from class.

Unexplained Absences / Lateness

In light of the tragic case in West Lothian in 2005 we have been advised to put procedures in place to ensure the safety of all the children in our care. In order that our procedures work efficiently and effectively we require your cooperation in the following matters:

Parents are asked to ensure that:

1. The school is informed if the family is running late.

2. Any legitimate absence is notified to the school by telephone before 9am on the first day of the absence without fail, and that further calls, before 9am, are made on every subsequent day of the absence.
3. Contact telephone numbers, whether for home, for parents at work or for other emergency contacts, are kept up to date and are genuinely numbers where a response will be received. This is particularly important with mobile phone numbers.
4. The school is kept informed of the absence and the likely return date.
5. Any planned absences are officially notified to the school, in writing, in advance.
6. School would be informed before 1.15pm if a child was not returning to school after lunch as a result of becoming unwell over that period.
7. Latecomers report to the school office on arrival at school.

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

Holidays

The Government has highlighted the importance of school attendance to a child's development and has required schools to set targets for improved attendance. Against this background, there is considerable concern at the increasing number of term-time holidays being taken by children at the request of their parents. The Headteacher is not in a position to refuse permission to parents for such holidays but it is the view of Education Services that these holidays should be officially recognised as "unauthorised".

Education Services recognises that some parents have difficulties in arranging their own holidays to suit school holiday periods and parents remain free, within reason, to remove their children for holidays during term time. They should, however, appreciate that prolonged absence from school at any stage is harmful to a child's education and it is not possible - not fair to other children - to direct teaching time to assist a child who has been on holiday to catch up on what they have missed. This means that, whilst parents are at liberty to remove children from school for the purposes of family holidays, such absences will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Parents should continue to inform the school, in writing, of any such holiday plans.

The exception to this is when a family holiday is judged to be important to the well-being and cohesion of the family following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events.

11.4 Homework -

This is an area which has been developed as a result of liaison between school and parents. An agreed set of principles and practices has been drawn up and now forms our Homework Policy Statement. Below is a summary of the statement.

Homework can help pupils in their learning in a number of ways:

1. It provides a link between home and school in order that parents might see the range and variety of materials and study experienced by the pupils.
2. It provides parents with an opportunity to help with their children's education.
3. It provides opportunities to consolidate and give extra practice for class work.

It would be helpful if parents could provide a quiet place for pupils to complete this work without distractions. A note of homework set will be recorded by the teacher or, in the case of older pupils, by the pupils themselves in a homework diary. Parents should sign the diary when your child has completed the homework.

In P1-3, pupils are given an appropriate amount of reading, maths and/or project related tasks to complete at home on a regular basis.

In P4-7 pupils will be given a variety of homework from different subject areas, e.g. spelling, reading, maths, environmental studies, on a regular basis. The amount of work will vary according to the age/ability of the pupil.

Please note that no pupil should spend more than 30 minutes on homework in one evening. If homework set is not completed an explanation from the parent should be written in the homework diary. If homework creates any difficulties parents should contact the Class Teacher.

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

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

In P1, P3, P5 and P7 pupils take part in either PIPS or INCAS assessment in literacy, numeracy, attitudes and developed abilities. These assessments further help confirm teachers judgements made in the course of teaching and along with our internal

systems help us to track pupil progress. Work and assessments are adjusted to ensure that the needs of all children are being fully met.

11.6 Pupil Profiles

A profile is a snapshot of a child's or young person's best achievements at a given point in time. Profiles are primarily aimed at children and their parents and draw together a range of information about a child or young person's learning. It is one of the ways in which a child's achievements can be recognised. Nationally it has been agreed that profiles will be produced at the P7 and S3 stage. The profiling process gives your child the opportunity to talk about their learning and achievements with yourself and others and can challenge, motivate and support all learners. The intention is to give a rounded picture of your child, their achievements and progress in learning to date. There is a Guidance note for parents on profiling which is available from your school.

11.7 Helping your child

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

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

- **Talk** to them about how they are feeling
- **Work together with the school** by taking part in discussions about your child's learning and progress e.g. at parents nights, reviews

Information provided by Education Scotland - Parentzone

11.8 Helping the School -

The assistance of parents on outings to help accompany pupils and staff is valuable to the School. However in accordance with legal requirements any parent who assists in the School itself requires to be school specifically Disclosure checked and would be expected to observe strict confidentiality requirements at all times during and after helping in School in any capacity.

We are happy to fund the costs incurred with the Disclosure check and would encourage any parents who are willing to help to approach the School Office for more information.

Please let us know if you have a special talent or interest you can share with us. You may be able to assist with an extra-curricular activity. If you have sewing skills you may be interested in helping with costumes or outfits for drama activities. Or you may have some local knowledge which would be useful for project work being carried out by a class. Our wide and varied curriculum relies on our local community to help.

11.9 Useful Information

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

12. Support for All

12.1 Pupil Support -

Pupils are supported in school in a variety of different ways. Pupils' individual needs are identified and appropriate support is sought from within school and from partner agencies to meet those needs.

12.2 Pastoral Care -

The school has a strong record on pastoral support for all pupils. Much pastoral care is channelled through our personal and social development curriculum along with our health and well being curriculum.

We are a health promoting school and actively seek opportunities to develop healthy mental and physical life styles.

We work with partner agencies and parents to identify and support pupils at times of particular stress or difficulty. This includes separations, bereavements and other changes in family circumstances.

Teachers and other members of staff work hard at developing good relationships with pupils and this goes a long way to helping provide good quality pastoral support for our pupils and families.

12.3 Additional Support for Learning

Additional Support Needs

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 introduced a new framework for providing support for children and young people who need some additional help with their learning. This Act has now been amended further by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009.

The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential. It also encourages all those supporting children and young people to work together.

This commitment to meeting the needs of all children is based upon the requirements of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 amended in 2009 and is translated into procedure and practice by Dumfries and Galloway Education Services' **Support Manual**. This Support Manual is available on line for all staff within schools and is able to be updated and kept live.

A Guide for Parents and Carers

The Authority is currently developing a range of information booklets outlining both policy and practice, which should be available online at www.dumgal.gov.uk or from your local school in the coming months. In the meantime, if you would like any further information or advice, please contact the school in the first instance or contact the central support team at:

Schools Services
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning
122-124 Irish Street
Dumfries
DG1 2PB
Tel: (01387) 260444

Further information and advice can also be obtained from

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16163/Additional-support-for-learning>

Operated by Children in Scotland, Enquire offers independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

- a telephone helpline - 0845 123 2303
- an email enquiry service - info@enquire.org.uk
- an online enquiry service
- two websites - www.enquire.org.uk (for parents/carers and practitioners) and www.enquire.org.uk/yp (for children and young people)

Enquire also provide a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets explaining everything from 'additional support in the early years' to 'what planning should take place for moving on from school'.

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

The Authority attempts to meet the needs of all children with additional support needs through a range of provision from mainstream classes (with or without support) to part-time or full-time provision in a school with a learning centre or base.

The local authority Educational Psychological Service is an advisory service within education and community Services offering support to children, their families and carers, and schools in Dumfries and Galloway. The Service offers advice to, and works together with, parents and teachers, the local authority. Sometimes an educational psychologist may work directly with children/young people.

One way in which the Service offers support to schools is by advising and consulting with school staff. This can be about general issues (such as learning and teaching approaches, behavioural matters, etc.) This may also include discussion about named pupils, such as at a School Review Group, when discussing special exam arrangements, or offering advice about Additional Support Needs. In many such cases no direct work with a child/young person may be necessary.

In cases where the school is seeking direct work with a child or young person, parental discussion and consent will always be sought first.

Children and young people may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who:

- have motor or sensory impairments
- are being bullied
- are particularly able or talented
- are looked after
- have a learning difficulty
- are living with parents who are abusing substances
- are living with parents who have mental health problems
- have English as an additional language
- are not attending school regularly
- have emotional or social difficulties
- are on the child protection register
- are young carers

This school has developed its own policy for additional learning support within the framework of the Council Policy and a copy can be made available on request. The additional resources for support for learning in this school are:

- Mrs Alison McWhirter, Support for Learning Teacher - 1 session per week on Wednesday morning.
- At present Mrs Sandra Downie is our Support for Learning Assistant.
- At times we may have Visiting Specialists in Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

Individuals and groups of children work with our Support for Learning staff, usually in the classroom. However, pupils can occasionally be withdrawn for one-to-one tuition or assessment purposes and an Individualised Education Programme can be created for specific targets. Sometimes a pupil will have a Co-ordinated Support Plan if several agencies are working together to meet educational objectives for an individual child or young person.

12.4 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is an approach from The Scottish Government that sets out how schools and other services should work with children and their families. GIRFEC is all about ensuring that children get the help they need when they need it - the right help at the right time. For you and your child, GIRFEC means that:

- You are the expert on your child and what you think matters. Getting it right for every child means that the School will always seek to involve you, to listen to your opinions and take them seriously.
- From April 2013 your child will have a Named Person in the School. If you or your child need any advice or any support, the Named Person is your first point of contact and will make sure you get the help or advice that you need. Having a Named Person means that if there is anything that could affect your child's wellbeing, he or she will receive support as quickly as possible so that problems do not develop.
- If your child has complex needs and needs help from several different services, GIRFEC means that all these services must work together for you and your child. You should never have to keep telling your story to lots of different staff in the School or the Education Department or the NHS. Your child will have a single plan that everyone works to and everyone is clear about what they are doing. When your child moves to secondary school there will be a Transition Plan in place for them in good time.

For more information on *getting it right for every child* email GIRFEC@dumgal.gov.uk.

12.5 Child Protection

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children and young people live safely and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway is that they should be: **safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible and included**. Schools and front-line education and child care services will play an important role in ensuring all children and young people are safe and well. Further information is contained within the [Child Protection Policy for Schools, Pre-School and Child Care Services](#) which is available from the school and the on the Council website.

12.6 Educational Psychology Service

Educational Psychologists aim to improve the life chances of all children and young people. Working in partnership with families and other services, we use applied psychology and knowledge of child development to address inequalities, support vulnerability and enhance inclusion. We seek to ensure that young people realise their potential to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

We do this by:

- Working with others in a consultative way to help them make sense of difficulties and make informed choices and decisions
- Sharing knowledge about 'what works' and promoting evidence informed approaches to develop the policy and practice of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in our educational establishments and communities
- Raising awareness of the crucial role of communication, relationships and nurture in children's lives
- Training and developing the skills of other professionals to improve children's attainment and achievement
- Highlighting the interactive nature of assessment, teaching and learning
- Designing and implementing interventions in partnership with others which support individuals and communities to develop resilience and ensure that children are safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.
- Supporting effective transitions (early years into primary, primary to secondary and secondary to post school) to improve the life chances of young people

The Psychological Service is based in offices in Newton Stewart, Dumfries and Annan, and each school has an identified Educational Psychologist. Further information about the service is available from the school.

12.7 Home School Link Worker Service

A Home Link Worker can meet with parents/carers, children or young people to offer advice or help with the sorts of things that can affect a child's learning. These could be connected to a child or young person's home or school life. The service aims to provide help and advice early and prevent something small from growing into a problem. A Head Teacher can ask for this support on a parent's/carer's behalf.

13. Moving to Secondary School

13.1 Catchment Secondary School

Transfer from primary to secondary school will be dealt with by direct approach to parents from individual primary schools. Our catchment secondary school is Stranraer Academy. Information regarding catchment areas can be found on the Council's website by accessing "Find My Nearest" <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15086/Find-my-nearest>. Parents can opt for any secondary school and full details on how to enrol or move school are available from the school or on the Council's website.

13.2 Transition Activities -

The school and cluster provide a range of transition activities to help prepare children for nursery and P7 pupils for secondary. Our arrangements are worked out in co-operation with parents and other agencies. These arrangements include opportunity for children and pupils to visit and get to know their new setting as well as opportunities for more vulnerable pupils to benefit from additional transition work or group work to help develop confidence.

We work closely with the Home Link Worker service particularly in p7 to S1 transition.

The cluster jointly arranges "transition days" in the summer term for P7 pupils.

13.3 Induction Days (see above)

13.4 Support Available -

Arrangements for enhanced transition are put in place in co operation with parents from those pupils who might require a significant degree of additional support at this time.

14. School Improvements

14.1 Improvement plan and priorities - Full details can be found in the school's Standards and Quality Report which is on Dumfries and Galloway Council's web site and a paper copy can be requested from the school office.

In May each year, the school publishes a Standards & Quality Report providing all stakeholders with a comprehensive summary of the school's work and learners' achievements over the last year. The first part of this report provides an overview of the school's progress in addressing its key priorities, while the second part gives information about, for example, how well pupils are learning and achieving; how well the school is supporting children/young people to develop and learn. In June, we publish a School Improvement Plan which outlines the key priorities for the school during the year ahead, following due consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The plan indicates the expected impact of priorities on pupil learning, as well as providing brief information about the key tasks to be taken forward. Both the report and the plan are published on the school's web-site and are also available in hard copy, on request.

14.2 Achievements - Throughout each session the school develops a wide portfolio of successes and achievements across a broad spectrum of activity. This includes sports teams, charity work, community work and participation.

14.3 More information - More information about the school's achievements can be sought through our Standards and Quality report, Our School improvement Plan or by visiting the school.

15. Health and Safety

15.1 Emergency Procedures

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

We will request such information at the beginning of each new school year. Please update this as necessary

15.2 Severe Weather and School Closure Arrangements

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

15.3 Health Care

Education Services is committed to ensuring that all children are able to fully participate in the life of the school. Many children will require their health care needs to be met at sometime within the nursery/school environment, for most children this will be for short periods of time only, but for some children this may require more long term planning and support. If your child has any health care needs please contact the school to discuss arrangements. Full details of the support available and your role as a parent and the role of your child are contained within The Nursery and School Policy on Health Care Procedures Sept 2012 which is available from the school or on the Council website.

15.4 Data Protection

Your child's personal data will be held by the school. All personal data is held on our secure school management information system. We will ensure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date and each year you will be sent an Update Form detailing the information held by the school for you to check and update as required. Access to the school management information system is by individual user and is password protected. Furthermore, access to confidential data is restricted to staff in school as appropriate.

15.5 Images of Pupils

We keep a photographic record of events at the school and this is used for a number of purposes. From time to time we also feature in the local press and we have also appeared on television. The authority has a policy on the use of images of pupils. You will be asked to read this when your child enrolls and to clarify your consent with regard to the publication of images of your child. This permission will be obtained when your child starts school or at a new school, but you can amend your permission at any time by contacting the school office.

15.6 Use of the Internet

As part of the process of learning we allow our children supervised access to the Internet and e-mail. The authority runs its own filter system to ensure that young people are not at risk from exposure to inappropriate material. This filtering system is regularly being upgraded. We have a policy for use of the Internet and a contract for responsible use, which we ask parents and young people to sign up to.

16. Other Useful Information

16.1 Pupil / Parent Support Unit

The Pupil /Parent Support Unit is there to help parents and pupils and can be contacted on the numbers shown below regarding any aspect of Free School Meals/Clothing Grants, Education Maintenance Allowance, School Transport, Home Education, Parent Council administration, school transfers and enrolment, school catchment areas, performance licences, insurance matters and financial support for those pupils entering higher education.

(01387) 260437 (01387) 260498

(01387) 260433 (01387) 260493

16.2 Policies

There are a number of National, Education Services and school policies which will provide information on a range of issues. Further details of all of these are available from your school. The following is a list of the policies which may be most relevant to you and your child/ren although this is not an exhaustive list:-

- Acceptable Use of Dumfries and Galloway Council's ICT Facilities In Schools (2009)
- Attendance at School Policy (2012)
- Child Protection Policy for Schools, Pre-Schools and Childcare Services -
- Children Absent from School through Ill Health - Guidance (2011)
- Curriculum Swimming Policy (2012)
- Digital Images Policy (2012)- Taking and Using Images of Pupils
- Dumfries and Galloway Equal Opportunities Policy and related Equality Schemes
- Enrolling in Schools - Placement Policy(2012)

- Exclusion from Schools - Policy and Procedures (2010)
- Inappropriate Use of Social Networking Sites (2011)
- Parental Involvement Strategy (2006) - *this is under review*
- Primary School Class Organisation (2011)
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme (2011)
- Providing Intimate Care for Children and Young People with Disabilities - National Guidelines for Schools
- Providing Intimate Care for Children - Procedures for Schools and Nurseries (2011)
- Health Care in Schools 3-18 (2013)
- Nursery and Schools Policy on Health Care Procedures (2012)
- Respect for All - Anti-Bullying Procedures (2011)
- School Transport Policy
- Use of Mobile Phones and/or Internet Bullying - Procedures for Schools when drawing up policies (2007)
- Volunteer Policy and Procedures for Schools (2012)

Further information on all aspects of education is available on www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone .

Community use of the school is positively encouraged. Further information on hiring school facilities is available on the Dumfries & Galloway Council webpage www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoollets

Data Protection

Your child's personal data will be held by the school. All personal data is held on our secure school management information system. We will ensure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date and each year you will be sent an Update Form detailing the information held by the school for you to check and update as required.

Access to the school management information system is by individual user and is password protected. Furthermore, access to confidential data is restricted to staff in school as appropriate.

Your school will also ask for your consent to take and use images of your child during the course of the school year. This permission will be obtained when your child starts school or at a new school, but you can amend your permission at any time by contacting the school office.

All schools in Dumfries and Galloway are expected to record any unusual incidents or concerns they may have about a child. Normally this information will be shared with parents or carers when issues of concern arise. This information may also be shared with other agencies, such as Social Work, if schools are asked for it. This allows all agencies who come into contact with children to make the best decisions for each individual child and to make sure they get the help they need when they need it.

If the school feels that any child may benefit from assessment or support from another agency and do not have child protection concerns they will always talk to parents or carers about this first.