



# Welcome to

Gretna Primary School



December 2022

# Information at a Glance

## School Address

Gretna Primary School  
Victory Avenue, Gretna, DG16 5AG

Tel: 01461 339105

Email

[gw08officegretna@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08officegretna@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Head Teacher Mr J. McDowall

School Roll Primary 1-7 = 300  
Nursery = 60

Denomination Status Non-denomination

Status of Gaelic None

Parent Council Chairperson Miss E. Lamont

Parent Council email

[gw08officegretna@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08officegretna@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

## School Staff

Headteacher Mr J. McDowall  
(Child Protection Officer)

Depute Headteacher Mrs C. Mackenzie  
(Depute Child Protection Officer)

Depute Headteacher Mrs K. McConnachie  
(Depute Child Protection Officer)

## Class Teachers

Mrs M. Adams	Mrs L. Ansbro	Mrs E. Burgess
Mrs K. Callaghan	Miss C. Carroll	Miss J. Davis
Mr C. Dolderson	Miss R. Gibson	Miss E. Holmes
Miss M. Irving	Miss K. Johal	Mrs H. Lucas
Mrs S. Martin	Miss K. Miller	Mrs M. O'Connor
Mrs A. Todd	Mr A. Gray	Mrs A. Graham

**If you would like some help understanding this or need it in another format please contact 030 33 33 3000.**

## Learning Support

Mrs S. Vallance Support for Learning Teacher

## Learning Assistants

Mrs J. Aitken	Ms A. Allan	Mrs L. Byers
Mrs J. Hogg	Mrs K. Hogg	Mrs H. Main
Mrs S. McCracken	Mrs D. McCubbin	

## Nursery Manager

Mrs C. Reynolds

## Nursery Nurses

Miss A. Calvert	Mrs S. Glendinning
Mrs M. Glendinning	Miss B. Grant
Mrs B. Irving	Miss K. Lamont
Miss R. Nelson	Miss E. McMillan

## Early Years Support Assistants

Mrs S. Erskine	Mrs L. Dalgleish
Mrs H. Runcie	Mrs A. Muir

## Support Staff

### School Secretaries

Mrs S. Bryden  
Mrs L. Jackson  
Mrs L. Thompson

### Facilities Assistant

Miss L. Crombie

### Regular Visitors

Educational Psychologist Mrs A. Walker

Active School Co-ordinator Mrs S. Proudfoot

Speech and Language Therapist Mrs A. Lang

School Nurse Mrs A. Findlater

## The School Day

The school gates are opened at 8:45am.

The school day is organised as follows:

School starts 9:00am

Morning intervals 10.30am to 10.50am

Lunches 12.15pm to 1.00pm

School closes 3:05pm

Please note that the school day begins at 9:00am. Please try to ensure that children are in the playground before 9:00am. Children should not arrive at school before 8:45am, unless they are attending Breakfast Club (opens 8:30am) or a Breakfast Club Activity (opens at 8:00am).

School term dates can be found at:

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates>

## Communicating with Home

Gretna Primary encourages a close relationship between home and school and endeavours to keep parents/carers fully informed on all matters by issuing regular newsletters throughout the session, regular posts on social media and and Gretna Primary School app as well as regular emails.

## Welcome from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent / Carer

The staff and children of Gretna Primary School extend a warm welcome to all parents, friends and visitors to our school. We want our school to be a happy, caring and stimulating place for everyone and welcome your assistance and co-operation in achieving this.

Our nursery and school have a clear vision for all who attend, work in and support our school. The work we do sits within our local context and also the national context of the National Improvement Framework. The key priorities of which are:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

This handbook is provided to familiarise you with some of the educational, organisational and social aspects of our school and to foster the good relationship, which already exists between home and school. I do hope you find our handbook informative and useful, but should any of your questions not be answered here, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to meeting and working with you to ensure that your child's primary education is both happy and rewarding.

Yours sincerely,

**John McDowall**

Head Teacher

For more information about how we support parents and work with our schools please see our **[Authority Handbook](#)**

## Vision, Values and Aims

We revised our vision, values and aims in February 2020, in consultation with staff, parents and pupils. Be all you can be!

### Vision

- We will encourage our pupils to fulfil their potential.
- We will develop self-confidence and self-esteem in our pupils.

### Values

**G**rowth

**R**espect

**E**quality

**T**olerance

**N**urture

**A**chievement

### Aims

- We will inspire our pupils to develop a sense of responsibility towards each other and our local community.

We will support our pupils to play an effective role as a member of our community.

## Contact Us

The school welcomes suggestions and enquiries from parents and carers.

### If you need to find out something

We can be contacted by e-mail, telephone, group call text messages or face to face. Where it is not possible to resolve enquiries straight away, we will make arrangements to follow up as necessary with the most appropriate member of staff.

### Comments, Complaints and Compliments

A comment might be some brief feedback about how we have handled a situation or delivered a service. It is best to pass a comment straight to the school so that we can take any necessary action.

If you are not happy with the response you receive or a decision that has been made, you can Ask us to Look Again. You can do this by contacting **[ParentalInvolvement@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ParentalInvolvement@dumgal.gov.uk)**. At this point an Officer will contact you and discuss the issue and direct the enquirer as appropriate.

Remember you can also access Dumfries & Galloway Have Your Say at **<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/17349/Have-your-say>**

## How the School Works

### Class Organisation

For organisational purposes, schools are structured into classes. Each year it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to organise the class structure.

Current 2022/23 school structure: Nursery (Early Years), P1A, P1M, P2, P2/3, P3, P3/4, P4, P4/5, P5/6, P6, P6/7, P7.

## Organisation of Teaching Groups

At the end of each school year parents will be advised of the classes and the class teachers for the following session. It is likely that during seven years at primary school your child will be placed in a composite class, where the same teacher teaches two or three age groups, i.e. P1/2 or P5/6 etc. These classes are capped at a maximum of 25, which is usually smaller than one stage classes. Since all of our teachers are experienced in dealing with children of all ages and abilities, your child's education is in no way disadvantaged. When it is necessary to split a stage, e.g. P3 to form a P2/3 and a P3/4, it is important for all parents to understand that the P3 pupils in P2/3 have not been 'kept back' but will in fact follow the same programme of work as the P3 pupils in the P3/4 class. At Gretna, the allocation to composite classes is based not on age or ability but on social grouping primarily through consultation with the pupil and the professional judgement of the teacher. There is further guidance on: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings>.

For more information please see the [Education Authority Handbook](#)



## Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

All children have a right to feel happy and secure in our school. We aim to promote a caring and co-operative atmosphere in the school and playground. Our staff are fair and polite to children, and we provide a quiet, calm environment in which children can work and play. Our children are supervised throughout the day and there is always an adult available should children want to discuss any concerns or worries.

From an early age our children are encouraged to respect other people, their belongings and the environment in which they live and work. The majority of our pupils behave well and recognise that our school rules are necessary (a) for their wellbeing and (b) for the efficient running of the school. In order to endorse good behaviour and promote teamwork we operate a house system. Each child belongs to a house: Baird, Bell, Bruce and Burns. Pupils can win points for their house by working hard, displaying good manners, empathising with and helping their peers. We also have a variety of certificates and stickers which are given when we celebrate at assemblies.

We recognise the importance of full co-operation between parent and school, especially where cause for concern arises.

## Rights Respecting School

We are committed to promoting and supporting equality and good relationships. We know everyone in our school is entitled to three basic rights:

- The right to learn
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to be safe

Our approach to managing behaviour is based on developing our children's understanding of these rights and their role and responsibility in ensuring these rights are maintained for all members of our school community.

For more information please see page 13 of the [Education Authority Handbook](#)

## School uniform

All Dumfries and Galloway schools have a dress code which encourages pupils to dress in a way appropriate to attendance at school. For more information on School Uniform, Dress Code, and School Clothing Grants visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

This code must not lead to direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, disability or poverty. It is the expectation of Education and Learning Directorate 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 (e.g. football colours).
- Could cause offence (e.g. anti-religious or political slogans).
- Could cause health and safety difficulties (loose-fitting clothing, dangling earrings)
- Are of flammable materials which may be a danger in certain classes.
- Could cause damage to floors.
- Carry advertising, (such as alcohol or tobacco)
- Could be used to inflict damage on other pupils. Parents in receipt of a clothing grant for from the Authority will be encouraged to purchase items which are in accordance with the school dress code.

## Financial Support for Children and Families

### Grants and Bursaries

#### Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Child Payment is a payment for families on certain benefits or tax credits. Eligible families will get £40 every four weeks for each child under six.

Further information and an application can be made at: [mygov.scot](http://mygov.scot) website or call us on 0800 182 2222.

#### Best Start Grant

Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods are payments that help towards the costs of being pregnant or looking after a child. Best Start Grant is made up of 3 one-off payments:

- Pregnancy and Baby Payment
- Early Learning Payment
- School Age Payment

Best Start Foods is a prepaid card that can be used in shops or online to buy healthy foods like milk or fruit. The payments you can get now will depend on:

- how far along in your pregnancy you are
- how old your child is

Further information and an application can be made at: [mygov.scot](http://mygov.scot) website

#### Clothing Grant

The award of clothing grants is to assist with the cost of school clothing for families who are on a qualifying benefit or on low income. The current award is presently £134 per primary school child and £150 per secondary school child.

Further information and an application can be made at: Free school meals and associated payments - Dumfries and Galloway Council ([dumgal.gov.uk](http://dumgal.gov.uk))

Education and Learning Directorate are committed to supporting families through their Anti-Poverty Strategy – details of which can be found at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/poverty](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/poverty) Schools should also make parents aware of the School Uniform Bank Project. Donation and Collection information can be found at the above link.

### School Meals

The Naturally D&G local provenance for a sustainable future ensures that meals are freshly prepared with seasonal ingredients and are free from undesirable additives.

Detailed information on school meals is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmenus](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmenus)

### Special Dietary Requirements

Facilities Services – Catering provide special dietary requirements for food allergy and intolerances; medically prescribed diets; or diets for religious or cultural reasons specific meals for children of different ethnic origin. Simply ask the school for a registration form to allow us to inform the catering team who will discuss your child's requirements in full.

For more information contact the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or [solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk) to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

### Free School Meals

Free school meals are provided for all pupils in Primary 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Confirmation of when this will be rolled out to Primary 6 and Primary 7 from the Scottish Government has yet to be confirmed.

In Nursery eligible children can receive up to 1140 hours a year of Early Learning and Childcare. As part of this funded offer the child will be entitled to one free meal and a snack each day.

All primary schools are now operating a pre-order system for school lunches for paid and free school meals. Parent / Carer will receive a letter informing them of how to create and set up an account for their child.

Free school meals can lead to a large saving in each year, nursery and primary school pupils can save £360 and secondary school pupils can save £370. You'll also be helping your child's school if you qualify for free school meals. Some Scottish Government funding provided directly to schools is linked to the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

For more information visit

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals)

Visit the school meal website for further information

[www.dgschoolmeals.co.uk](http://www.dgschoolmeals.co.uk)



## School Transport

Free school transport is available for some school children attending primary or secondary school if they live within the school catchment area and if they meet certain criteria. For more information and guidance visit <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15245/Free-school-transport>

## Free Travel for 5 - 22 year olds

From 31 January 2022 all children and young people aged 5-22 will be entitled to free bus travel in Scotland. You can apply for free travel online from today at [www.getyournec.scot](http://www.getyournec.scot) (This cannot be done through your school)

## Attendance

It is your responsibility as parents to ensure that your child/children attend 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 Opportunities for All Service. If possible please, try to make dental/medical appointments outwith 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.

For more information on Attendance, Absences, Lateness and responsibilities of parents please visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

## Absence from School

Pupils who need to leave school during the school day ie doctor /dentist appointments, must be collected by a named contact confirmed with the school office. They must also report to the school office on their return to school.

## Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), now known as 'Scotland's Curriculum,' is bringing learning to life in the way education is delivered for all 3-18 year olds in nursery, primary, secondary, at college and via workplace or community learning. It aims to respond and adapt flexibly to meet the needs of an ever changing and evolving world and Scotland's place within it. At its heart lies a constant commitment and drive towards excellence and equity, to raise standards, improve knowledge, develop skills for all learners and close the gap between the lowest and highest achievers by ensuring everyone has an equal opportunity to be successful no matter what their background or circumstances. Ultimately it aims to nurture children and young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

### Broad General Education

Children and young people work their way through Experiences and Outcomes in each of the five Curriculum Levels (Early, First, Second, Third, Fourth) and in each of the eight Curricular Areas. The five Curricular Levels span pre-school to the end of S3. This is the Broad General Education. Pupils progress at their own pace, working through the Experiences and Outcomes of the most appropriate level for them. Pupils will be supported in collecting evidence of their achievements, with a profile of these being produced in P7 and S3.

The pupils at Gretna are encouraged to learn by activity and investigation. Individual talents in all areas of the curriculum as well as extra-curricular talents are positively encouraged.

Technology is used as an aid to learning in all classes and it will permeate all areas of the curriculum.

During their seven years here, the children will be taken on visits related to their classwork, e.g. Roman Army Museum, Tullie House, the forest, a castle, a farm, places of interest in Dumfries and Galloway and sometimes further afield e.g. Glasgow, Edinburgh.

Whenever possible, we invite people with a special talent/knowledge to come into the classroom/school to talk to the children and to answer their questions. This makes the curriculum more meaningful, and gives our pupils first-hand experience, thus helping them to become more confident and caring young people.

At Gretna we believe that children should have ownership of their learning. We do this by first finding out what they know about a subject and then asking all the pupils what they would like to find out. From this the teacher plans experiences (lessons) based around finding the answer.

All the different steps are recorded in our planning format. We encourage the children to share their Wider Achievements, and this is captured in a variety of ways:

- Assemblies – we celebrate wider achievement with certificates and stickers which then are shown on our Wider Achievement TV
- School's social media
- Newsletters

## Parental Involvement and Engagement

### Parent/Carers and the Parent Council

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
- Enjoy taking part in school life in whatever way possible

More information is available at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/17608/Parental-Involvement>

More information and support for Parents/ Parent Councils is available at <https://connect.scot/>

Parentclub Scotland <https://www.parentclub.scot/> provides support information and guidance to expectant parents, baby, toddler, Child, Pre-teen and Parents and Carers.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland's (NPFs) Curriculum for Excellence in a Nutshell series. Free Downloads for parents/carers: <https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series/nationals-in-a-nutshell-series/>

### Parentzone Scotland

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> information about the Curriculum and how you can be involved in your child's learning.

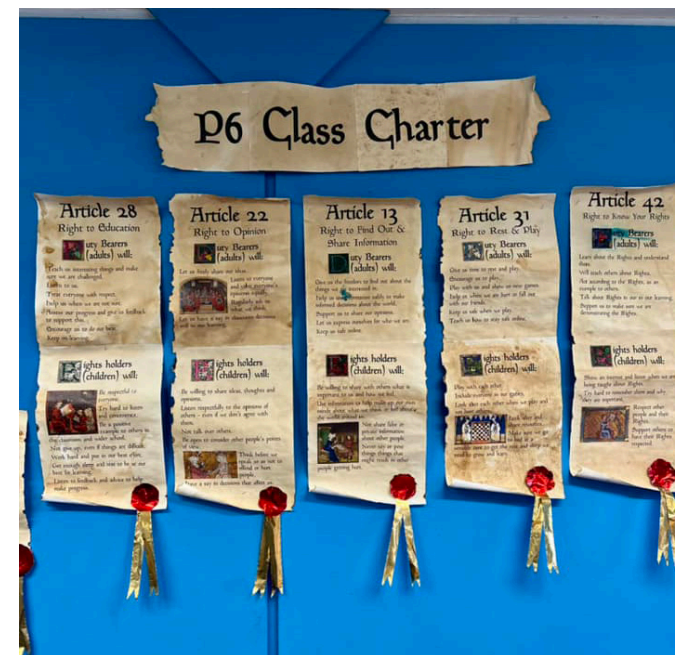
### How is my child doing?

There will be several opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress. This may be through informal discussion with the teacher or at Parents' Nights/ Learning Conversations, formal reports or for some it may be through more formal, focussed meetings with other agencies.



## Helping Your Child and Family Learning

At Gretna, each class teacher produces a termly newsletter which outlines class homework guidance. We produce numeracy and literacy helpful hints guidance for further information. We believe it's quality that matters, not quantity - the kind of homework your child does is often more important than the amount. Even if you have little time, or don't know much about the subject or level your child is studying, you can still be involved. It's not your time or ability, but a positive and encouraging attitude to your child's learning that really matters. Homework is for children to do, not for parents. How we learn is as unique as our fingerprint, so every child might well approach homework differently, as a result of this we work closely with parents to decide if adaptations need to be made to the class homework to meet the needs of children. We also make parents aware that homework is not compulsory, and you have the right not to undertake tasks set with your child, we would ask that you notify the class teacher of this request.



## Support for All

### Support for Learners

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 to ensure that all children and young people have access to quality learning opportunities and experiences.

More information is available at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16163/Support-for-Learners> and on page 18 of our [Education Authority Handbook](#)

### Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

You are the expert on your child and what you think matters. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) means that the School will always seek to involve you, to listen to your opinions and take them seriously.

More information is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec) and on page 20 of our [Education Authority Handbook](#)

### Child Protection

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway is that they should be: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, 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 can be found at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16640/Support-for-children-and-families>

Parents, carers and pupils have a key role in keeping the school community safe. We would therefore urge parents to share any information which would keep everyone safe, and to support and encourage their child(ren) to do the same.

### Enrolment in Schools - School Places

Information on enrolment in school and catchment areas is available at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15241/School-places> Information regarding catchment areas can be found on the Council's website by accessing "Find My Nearest".

### School Improvements

Each year the school will publish a School Improvement Plan which outlines the key priorities for the school during the year ahead, following engagement 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. A copy can also be found by searching for your school at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools)

We work with pupils, parents and staff to establish the main priorities of improvement for Gretna. We will provide feedback in May on progress to date before working with partners to establish next steps and the priority agenda for the next session 2023/24. This is shared with all between June and August. A parent version of the current priorities is available from the school – please ask. A copy can also be found by searching for your school at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools).





## Health and Safety

### Emergency Procedures (including Safer Together Guidance)

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.**

### Health Care (inc First Aid)

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 Health Care in Schools 3-18 (NHS and Dumfries and Galloway Council) which is available from the school.

For more information see our [Authority Handbook](#)

### Severe Weather and School Closure Arrangements

Headteachers are authorised to make an emergency closure when the state of the weather or any other exceptional circumstance make it 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.

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15240/Emergency-school-closures](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15240/Emergency-school-closures)

### Data Protection

Information on how the Council uses personal data is available at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15129/Data-protection](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15129/Data-protection) and [www.dumgal.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/privacy)

### ICT in Schools

For more information on ICT in school please see page 14 of the [Education Authority Handbook](#)

### Use of the Internet, Social Networking Sites

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.

For more information visit our [Education Authority Handbook](#) and [Safe Digital Learning and Social Media Leaflet](#)

