



Welcome to

Hardgate Primary School



December 2022



Information at a Glance

School Information

Hardgate Primary School,
Hardgate, Castle Douglas, DG7 3LD

Email address

gw08officehardgate@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Tel No. 01556 660 221

The school office is manned from approx. 8.45am to 1.00pm. Out with these times, calls are transferred though to our partnership schools who will be able to take a message / direct your call as required.

Parent Council Chairperson(s):

Head teacher Ms Vicky Donaldson

School Roll 67

P1: 13, P2: 10, P3: 10, P4: 10, P5: 9, P6: 7, P7: 8

Denomination Status Non-denominational

Status of Gaelic Gaelic is not taught

School Staff

Partnership Head Teacher Ms Vicky Donaldson

Principal Teacher (Hardgate) Mrs B. Murray

Principal Teacher (Lochrutton) Mr D. McBride

Principal Teacher (Springholm) Miss C. Dooley

Teaching Staff

Primary 1/2 Miss J. Wright

Primary 3/4 Miss S. Brown

Primary 5/6/7 Mrs B. Murray
(M, W, Th and F)
Miss D MacDonald (Tu)

NCCT Support Miss D. MacDonald

Support for Learning Teacher

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

Auxilliary Staff

Learning Assistants

Mrs H. Sinden

Mrs M. Bryson

Senior Clerical Assistant

Mrs D. McKnight

Playground Supervisor/
Facilities Assistant

Mr R. Smith

School Cleaner

Mrs L. Turner

Catering Manager

Mrs S. Neil

Catering Assistant

Mrs L. Green

Child Protection Officer

Ms V. Donaldson

Depute Child Protection Officer

Mrs B. Murray

Education Officer

Mr D. Maxwell

Educational Psychologist

Mrs G. Davis

School Chaplain

Mrs F. Wilson

School Support Manager

Mrs K. Howatson

The School Day

Playground supervision begins at 8.30am

School Starts 8.55am

Morning Break 10.30am - 10.50am

Lunchtime 12.15pm - 1.00pm

School Ends 3.00pm

Communicating with home

The school has an Open Door policy where parents are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any concerns they have with the Class Teacher, Principal Teacher or Headteacher. Records of meetings are kept and reviewed to ensure all matters are dealt with fully.

We use various forms of communication with parents and carers including Groupcall emails or texts, letters, parent events and learning events.

We are also happy to send out correspondence to non-resident parents. This can be done through letter, text message or by email. Please contact the school office if you wish these procedures implemented.



Welcome from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent / Carer

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you and your child and family to our school and partnership. I hope you find the information in this handbook both informative and helpful as your child enters and progresses through school.

Here at Hardgate, and our partnership schools Springholm and Lochrutton, we encourage all parents and family members to be part of the life of the school and active partners in your child's education. The skilled, dedicated and hard-working staff in school aim to inspire, nurture and support every child enabling them to grow and develop, have the best possible learning experiences and be aspirational in their goals. With the support of yourself and the community we aim to offer a wide range of experiences that provide every child with the opportunity to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Kind regards

Ms Vicky Donaldson

Head Teacher

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

School Aims, Values and Ethos

Our Vision

We value the people and rural locality of our school and strive for Hardgate Primary to play a vital role within our community, enhancing the learning of all.

Our learning community is central to the education and development of all our children. We rely on the support, expertise and opportunities that come from the people involved in our school to open up prospects for every child (e.g. running community events, taking lead roles within the school, using local facilities). Through these opportunities, the children explore how their local environment expands into the wider global community and encourages them to use their skills, knowledge and attitudes to explore, think creatively and solve problems in real-life experiences. However, learning does not stop when we leave school. The vision and values we strive for with the children also apply to the adults that are involved in the partnership. Whether staff, parents, family or friends the school is a place of encouragement and opportunity to reflect true life-long learning. In the truest sense of the words, our schools are places where we can learn and succeed together.

Our Values

Hardgate Primary aims to celebrate our rural community and value our unique features, whilst also coming together to share strengths and support the learning of every child. We enjoy close links with our parents (parent councils, supporting activities, school improvement planning), community groups (local churches, partner nurseries, local businesses) and partners (Active Schools, Queen of the South, Stewartry Rugby Club). Each relationship enhances the planned learning activities the children experience and enriches the opportunities for every child.

We learn in a happy, safe environment

We feel listened to and listen to others

OUR CORE VALUES

We demonstrate mutual respect

We use good manners and are well behaved

We develop skills for life, learning and work

In consultation with our pupils, parents, staff and community we created our 5 Core Values in 2017-18 which underpins all of our activities.

These values, shared across the partnership, link our work and encourage all of our community to come together and strive for the best possible results.

Our curriculum is built upon our strong values. It considers the key principles and philosophy of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure every child experiences a broad general education. We aim to develop knowledge and skills for learning, life and work through well planned, coherent and progressive programmes and activities.

We see ourselves as a learning community and strive to include everyone (children, staff, parents & community) in our activities and learning. Everyone is encouraged to participate, achieve and grow in the best possible way and we have a very strong ethos of leadership at all levels. We are very lucky to have a talented and dedicated group of adults who are continually developing their own knowledge and skills to the benefit of all children.

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. 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.

Being a rural school, children at Hardgate School are taught in composite classes (P1/2, P3/4 and P5/6/7) with a maximum number of 25 in each class. Consideration is given to a number of factors including:

- Learning needs
- Gender balance
- Siblings
- Age

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

Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

At Hardgate we aim to provide the best possible educational outcomes and experiences for our pupils, and we recognise the close links which exist between pupils' learning and behaviour. The school is currently reviewing their Positive Relationships (including behaviour and anti-bullying) Policy in session 2019/20. This will include consultations with children, parents and staff and is being done in partnership with the schools in the Castle Douglas HS cluster and will reflect current local and national guidance and good practise.

Of particular importance is that all staff set consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and these are shared openly and agreed by both the pupils and their parents. We therefore see the promotion of positive behaviour in our school as a key element in enabling our pupils to meet the Scottish government outcome: that all children and young

people will become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Our 5 Core Values highlight the expected behaviours that we expect from everyone in our school community. Mutual respect and good manners underpin the good behaviour and positive relationships expected from all children. Furthermore, teaching our pupils to manage their relationships with others in positive ways is also an important end in its own right. We believe that helping our pupils to acquire the ability to manage their behaviour and relationships appropriately is a key element in preparing them for life in an adult society, including the workplace.

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

At Hardgate Primary School, children are expected to dress neatly and sensibly at all times. The uniform consists of:

- white shirt/burgundy or white polo shirt
- burgundy sweatshirt or cardigan
- dark skirt/ trousers
- dark shoes
- school socks/ tights

Sweatshirts, cardigans, jackets, fleeces, polo shirts, and protective summer hats are available to order from the school office.

Pupils are required to have their gym kit, water bottle and an art shirt in school at all times. Please ensure that all items are clearly marked with the pupils' names.

Suggested P.E. Kit

Should PE be outdoors, pupils will be notified in advance to bring outdoor kit.

- Plain t-shirt or school t-shirt
- Plain shorts
- Trainers/gym shoes (non-marking soles)

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 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 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)

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 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

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 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

Visit the school meal website for further information

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 (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

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.

At Hardgate School we plan learning experiences and outcomes across a broad general curriculum within the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

Underpinning all learning are the Responsibilities for All (Literacy and English (inc Modern Languages), Numeracy and Maths and Health and Well-Being).

These over-arching curricular areas are taught both discretely and through inter-disciplinary learning (IDL) contexts.

In recognition of the fact that the delivery of health and wellbeing is the responsibility of all, we ensure that the school works closely with partner agencies to plan effective programmes of study in keeping with the GIRFEC well-being indicators

- **Safe • Healthy • Achieving • Nurtured**
- **Active • Respected • Responsible • Included**

In keeping with the Scottish Government initiative, all pupils receive an allocation of 2 hours of PE weekly

Other curricular areas are taught either as stand-alone subjects or through interdisciplinary learning. These include:

- Technologies (Including Digital Learning)
- Expressive Arts (Art, Music, Drama & Dance)
- Sciences
- Social Subjects
- Religious and Moral Education

Children have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of collaborative and investigative tasks which provide frequent opportunities for active learning. The development of the children's enquiry and creative skills forms an important element of learning and teaching within all areas of the curriculum.

Appropriate links are planned across the curriculum including opportunities for children to participate in performances and presentations in a wide range of contexts (e.g. assemblies, school concerts, class talks, competitions). This may be supported by curricular visits, guests and visitors, personal research, game based learning, problem solving and group activities.

We encourage all children to explore their own interests and strengths through wider achievements in and out of school. These are celebrated regularly through weekly assemblies, displays, newsletters etc. A programme of events are planned each year to give the children a range of experiences that they may wish to take further outside of school through extra-curricular and personal activities.

Learning through Play

Play is a fundamental aspect of a child's overall development; it is a critical factor in enriching learning and development. At Lochrutton Primary School the importance of play is acknowledged and play is incorporated as a key element of early learning experiences. The environment is developed using natural resources such as wooden blocks, pine cones and other open ended resources. This helps to develop and inspire creativity and imagination.



Religious and Moral Education

RME has a statutory position in primary schools in Scottish education. It is taught within whole-school weekly assemblies and our programme of study within the school which fosters an awareness of the beliefs, values and issues and practices and traditions within Christianity and other world religions.

Times for Reflection

As part of our annual programme we plan at least 6 opportunities for the children to explore wider issues (forgiveness, friendship, resolutions etc.). These sessions, through assemblies and class lessons, are supported by our local ministers, churches and religious groups. Our programme is reviewed annually.

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

Within the Partnership, we understand that parents / families / carers are the main educators of their child / children from birth onwards. All the things parents do with their children can be described as educational in that they will learn how to behave around others, learn / practice / perform skills and adapt to situations based on parental guidance.

These activities can include:

- Visiting a place of interest like a museum, library, theatre or cinema
- Playing a game or using a computer together
- Visiting friends and relatives; going shopping together, going to a café / restaurant.
- Choosing own or public library books to read to and with their children
- Providing opportunities to develop skills in a sport, art or other hobby and / or
- Encouraging co-operative and constructive play with other children.
- Attending special events like concerts, exhibitions and festivals

These are all valuable learning experiences for children and can properly be called "learning at home", in this case home-directed learning. Educational research indicates that is often more beneficial to overall attainment in the long-term to do these types of things than to do extra academic work.

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 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

In May/June each year, the school publishes a School Improvement, Progress and 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. We work with our Partnership and Cluster schools to create and publish a Partnership

Improvement Plan. This outlines the key priorities for individual schools as well as the Partnership 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 are available in appendices in this handbook or in hard copy on request.

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

Data Protection

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