

Welcome to Whithorn Primary School



December 2024



Information at a Glance

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

School Information

School Address

Whithorn Primary School and Nursery
Castlehill
Whithorn
DG8 8PN

Telephone: 01988 500 291

Email address:

gw08officewhithorn@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Parent Council Chairperson: **Susie McKay**

Parent Council Email Address:

whithornparentcouncil@gmail.com

Parental Involvement information:

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools>

Parentzone Scotland:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Head Teacher

Mrs Evelyn Steele

Principal Teacher

Miss F. Hawthorn

School Roll

Primary = 91
Nursery = 19

Denomination Status:

Non-denominational

Status of Gaelic:

No Gaelic Taught

School Staff

Teaching Staff

P1/2
P2/3
P4/5
P6/7
Learning Support
Learning Assistants

Nursery Manager
Nursery Nursery

Early Years Assistants

School Education
Support Officer

Auxiliary Staff

Clerical Assistant

Facilities Assistant
and Playground Supervisor

Catering

Cleaning

Mrs. S. Wallace
Mrs. R. Henderson
Mrs. C. Cluckie
Mrs. N. Kelly
Mr. G Anderson
Mrs. H. Flannighan
Mrs. L. Matier

Mrs. K. Galloway
Miss H. McGuire
Miss E. McIntyre
Miss L. McClymont
Miss K. Ross

Mr. D. Maxwell

Mrs. S. Simpson

Mr. S. Kennedy

Mrs. D. Maxwell
Mrs. F. Kennedy

Miss I. Murray
Mrs. F. Kennedy

The School Day

The school gates are opened at 08.45

Nursery

08.30 – 15:30

Primary School

08:55

10.20 – 10.40

12:30 - 13:15

15.00

Begin School

Morning Interval

Lunchtime

End of School Day

Whilst in the playground, children are supervised from 8.45am daily.

Communicating with home

You can contact us via the phone number or email address on this page.

School makes use of group call to message parents either by text or email.

We have a Facebook page to share what's going on in school and also a fortnightly newsletter.

Please ensure that your contact details are kept up to date.

School term dates can be found at:

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

Welcome from the Head Teacher



Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our parents / carers and pupils of Whithorn Primary School and Nursery. Whithorn Primary School and Nursery is an inclusive school with high expectations and ambitions. It strives to meet the needs of all learners and aims to ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential. The school is the heart of the community and enjoys support from parents / carers and the wider community. The education of your child is a partnership between home and school which is fostered during the early years in nursery and continues throughout the primary. This partnership can only function through a mutual trust and understanding which open communication brings.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with all the key information you will need as your child starts at the school. If you have any queries about the content of the handbook, or any questions that the handbook does not answer, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

In line with the Education Bill (2015) and the National Improvement Framework the school's aim is to ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential through:

- Raising attainment particularly in literacy and numeracy and weakening the link between attainment and socio-economic disadvantage.
- Ensuring early intervention.
- Supporting children to be healthy and active.
- Using data gathered from school, the local authority, children, parents and national organisations to find out what makes a positive difference to children's learning and health and wellbeing.

My staff and I look forward to meeting you at the various school events throughout each session and we hope you will contribute and become actively involved in the life of the school.

Yours sincerely
Evelyn M. Steele
 Head Teacher

For more links and detailed information about how we support parents and work with our schools, please see our [Authority Handbook](#). This also includes a page for financial support for Children and Families.

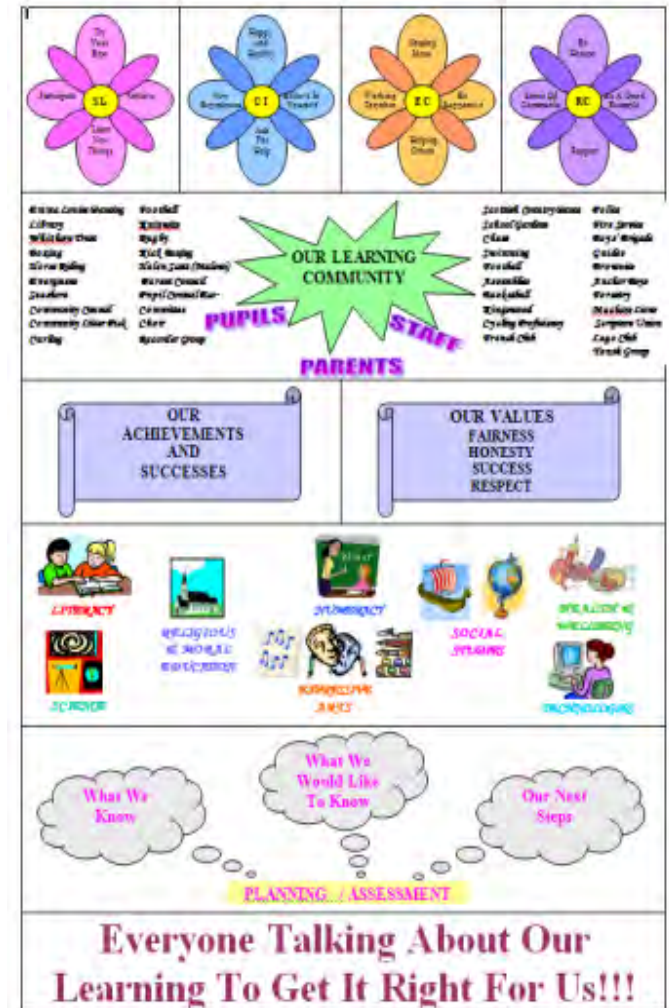
School Aims, Values and Ethos

Whithorn Primary and Nursery work as a partnership with Garlieston Primary while still keeping their own identity. At Whithorn we put our children first every time. We aim for every child to achieve their full potential through providing a challenging, safe and nurturing learning environment where diversity and success are celebrated, mutual respect among adults and children is practised, and where parents and caregivers are seen as valued partners. We aim to provide our children with the foundations for life-long learning which will enable them to enrich the community.

- We value our school and wider community.
- We value honesty even though it is sometimes difficult.
- We value children's rights and pupil voice.
- We value respect for all: individual abilities, co-operation through team work, personal beliefs, ethnicity and gender.
- We value learning: enthusiasm, curiosity, motivation, determination, perseverance, achievement, confidence and independence.
- We value opportunities to learn through technology.
- We value our environment, plants and animals, both locally and globally, to work towards a biodiverse, sustainable world.
- We value ourselves, each other and living happy, healthy lifestyles.
- We value success: ownership of learning, participation in extra-curricular activities and celebration of achievements.
- We value effort and enterprise.
- We value the entitlement of all children and young people to experience opportunities to develop resilience, skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

To enable all children to become successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals we:

- Promote and recognise achievement and excellence.
- Provide high quality learning and teaching experiences.
- Build and maintain effective partnerships between the school, parents / carers, external agencies and the wider community.
- Develop positive values, beliefs and attitudes.



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.

If you have a comment or concern

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>

If you remain dissatisfied, the Education and Learning Directorate operate within the complaints handling procedures for Dumfries and Galloway Council. Information on this can be found at

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15382/Complaints-procedure>

How the School Works

Class Organisation

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

For more information on school class sizes and grouping please visit <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings> and [Authority Handbook](#)

Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

Children learn best in a safe, secure environment. Our Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy and Child Protection Policy have been put in place to address safety issues. However, if we are also concerned with children's emotional and social development and wish to encourage positive attitudes to self and others, we need to have rules for acceptable behaviour.

Our aim is to ensure that through the establishment of reasonable rules for behaviour, acknowledging and praising good behaviour and consistent, fair and acceptable methods of dealing with problems that children will benefit from learning in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for all.

The rules throughout the school are positive and few in number, setting an expectation that children will be well behaved rather than that we expect to have to deal with people who behave badly. Every opportunity is taken to praise good behaviour and on the rare occasions that children have to be reprimanded there is an understanding that everyone gets the chance to start afresh.

Through our learning dispositions we encourage and develop co-operation, curiosity, independence, challenge, resilience and success. Each week class teachers award Pupil of the Week certificates based on success and achievements during that week. We celebrate our successes at weekly assemblies, in our fortnightly school newsletter, in the press and partner / community websites and also on our celebration of achievements star board.

For more information please see page 13 of the Education Authority Handbook. [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

Whithorn school uniform consists of: black / grey trousers / skirt, school polo shirt (maroon, gold or white), school sweatshirt / fleece (maroon), gym shoes to change into during the school day. School ties are issued to P1 and can be worn on special occasions, e.g. choir / recorder group and festivals. Please ensure that you label your child's clothes. Sweatshirts / polo shirts can be ordered during the school year. Order forms can be obtained from the School Office. Children are expected to change for PE lessons. Branded clothing is discouraged.

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.

Financial Support for Children and Families

Grants and Bursaries Scottish Child Payment

Scottish Child Payment helps towards the costs of supporting your family. It's a weekly payment of £25 that you can get for every child you look after who's under 16 years of age. You'll get the payment every 4 weeks if your application is successful. 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) and Collection information can be found at the above link.

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.

For more information on financial support please visit the Authority Handbook (pages 8, 10 and 34)

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

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. Online pre-ordering of school meals is currently being rolled out to all secondary schools, information will be supplied by your school.

Free school meals can lead to a large saving in each year, nursery and primary school pupils can save £361 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 <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals>



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 Special Diet Request Forms to allow us to inform the catering team who will discuss your child's requirements in full. For more information contact DGschoolmeals@dumgal.gov.uk or the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

All Children with allergens should register with the catering team as soon as they are aware that their child has an allergen or intolerance to food.

Scottish Child Payment and Bridging Payments

The Scottish Government's Scottish Child Payment helps towards the costs of supporting your family and, as of 14 November 2022, applications are now open for all children under the age of 16. The weekly value of this award will also increase to £25 as of this point.

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/Freeschool-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)

For more information on Active Travel which is about making journeys in physically active ways like walking, wheeling and cycling, we encourage parents and pupils to walk, wheel, cycle and scoot all or some of the journey to and from school, where it is safe to do so. Please click on this link: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk>

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 <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk>

Absence from School

Pupils who need to leave school during the school day i.e. 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 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.



In Whithorn we strive to provide a broad and challenging curriculum. Lessons will be engaging, inspiring and relevant to everyday life. Teachers will make connections between subjects, helping children make sense of the world. Teachers and children will work together to assess and discuss progress and next steps in learning.



A range of wider achievement activities run throughout the session. Some activities are organised and run by school staff and parents and others through close links with community groups. Through the 9 Curricular Areas and our wider achievements programme, we also target the development of our young workforce, learning skills for lifelong learning and the world of work.



Pupils are encouraged to be part of school development and are elected onto groups for the year; Pupil Council, Eco-Committee, Health Promoting School, Rights Respecting School, Digital School and Learning for Sustainability. We also have elected Junior Road Safety Officers and House Captains. This enables pupils to develop skills of responsibility and co-operation.

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

For more information or support for how you can become involved in or to run your Parent Council please visit <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/23310/Parent-Councils>

For more information on what is meant by parental involvement visit <https://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

Homework is a valuable link between school and home. Homework is usually set on a Monday in all classes with additional tasks being added throughout the week. Parents will discover that homework activities tend to be active and inclusive of the home environment. School uses homework diaries to inform parents of the various homework tasks for each week. Parents are encouraged to engage with homework and the homework diary.

Usually throughout the session, parents are offered many opportunities to join their children in learning activities such as Stay, Play and Learn sessions, Curriculum Workshops and family learning homework task grids.



Support for All

Support for Learners

All children receive support at school and nursery to help them learn. 'Additional support for learning is how we describe any support that is extra or different to the help that most children receive. Most of this additional support is provided by teachers in mainstream classes, focussed on learning and support to be fully involved in school life. For the majority of children and young people this will be delivered in a mainstream classroom supported by their classroom teacher for a few this will mean some additional support alongside the classroom teacher, and for a very few this will be part-time or full-time provision in a school with a learning centre or an inclusion base.

More information is available at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16163/Support-for-Learners> and on page 18 of our [Education Authority Handbook](https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/22154/Education-Authority-Handbook-Authority-Handbook/pdf/0117-21-Authority-Handbook-2021.pdf?m=637686132754470000)

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 <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec> and on page 20 of our [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 <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools>

In May / June of 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 engagement with staff, pupils and parents. Parents are issued with a summary of the Standards and Quality Report and the School Improvement Plan in June.

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 (including 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

Head Teachers 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.

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15240/Emergency-school-closures>

Data Protection

Information on how the Council uses personal data is available at

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15129/Data-protection> and <https://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 [Authority Handbook](#) and [Safer Digital Learning and Social Media Leaflet](#)

