



Welcome to  
**St Columba's Primary School**



December 2024

# Information at a Glance

## School Address

St Columba's Primary School, Shawhill Road, Annan, DG12 6JX

Email address:

[Gw08officest@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:Gw08officest@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Parent Council Chairperson: Mrs Wendy Hamilton

Head Teacher Mrs Clare Reid

School Roll 56

Denomination Status Roman Catholic

Status of Gaelic Not taught

## School Staff:

### Teaching Staff

P1-3 Mrs J Mann

P4-5 Miss C Gilfillan  
(Principal Teacher)

P6-7 Miss K Griffin

RICCT/Management Cover Miss A Scott

Support for Learning Teacher Mrs J Jefferson

Learning Assistant Mrs K Smart,  
Mrs M Nordon,  
Mrs G Marena-Litherland  
Miss Rebecca Nelson

Clerical Assistant Miss K McDowall

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

### Auxiliary Staff

Playground Supervisor Mrs L Martin

Janitor Miss Linzi Johnstone

Catering Mrs M Dalgleish,  
Mrs K Anderson

Cleaning Mrs L Martin

Parish Priest Fr G Donnelly

### The School Day

The school gates open at 8.40am for pupils to attend Breakfast Club

Pupils not attending Breakfast Club can access the building from 8.50am

9am School begins

10.35am – 10.50am Morning Interval

12.15pm – 1pm P1-5 Lunchtime

12.30pm – 1.15pm P6-7 Lunchtime

3pm End of the School Day

School term dates can be found at:

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates)

### Communicating with home

Working in partnership with home is crucial. We understand our pupils are your most precious human beings. We use a variety of means to communicate with parents. Newsletters are sent via email and reminders may be sent on Seesaw, our online learning site. General school information can be found on our school's Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/StColumbas-RC-PrimaryAnnan-102679371425678>.

We can be contacted via office email, telephone, Groupcall or face to face. Where it is not possible to follow up enquiries straight away, a follow up appointment may be arranged at a mutually agreed time.



## Welcome from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent / Carer

At St Columba's RC Primary we grow and learn together in a positive, caring learning environment, where nurture and responsibility are valued as we encourage every member of our school community to be the best they can be. We aim to provide each individual child the support and encouragement necessary for his/her moral, spiritual and intellectual development within the ethos of our Catholic School.

We endeavour to ensure that all children achieve their potential in every area of a broad curriculum and leave primary with those necessary skills to transfer and use in the next stage of their education.

As a staff, we are highly committed to raising attainment and achievement, working towards delivering excellence and equity for all, helping to reduce the poverty-related attainment gap.

We will work effectively with you to ensure that your child's journey through primary school is a memorable one where they achieve, attain and enjoy the whole experience.

We look forward to welcoming you into our school community.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Clare Reid  
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

St Columba's is a Roman Catholic Primary School where our Christian values are evident in the way we interact and consider the needs of others. As teachers we value pupils as unique individuals and encourage and support them with the development of their own personal gifts and creative qualities. Our school values are used to help foster our positive environment and within the whole school community. They are as follows:

- Love
- Kindness
- Friendship
- Respect
- Determination
- Positivity
- Trust

We, therefore, concern ourselves not only with imparting knowledge and acquisition of skills but in drawing out what is already within each child. We are also concerned with the development of our pupils' personal growth, their ability to form relationships and to be part of a living and loving community. We believe that this can be achieved by



developing the school as a lively, stimulating and caring community in which there is mutual concern and respect among pupils, teachers and parents and for the environment in which we live.

We aim for our pupils to become confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens, gaining lifelong skills through various contexts such as:

- outdoor learning
- play based learning
- stem and digital technology

Since parents play a crucial role in the education of their children, we feel it is essential that the partnership between home and school is fostered so that our children can develop to their full potential and achieve personal wholeness.

## 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, discuss the issue and direct your enquiry as appropriate.

Remember you can also access Dumfries & Galloway Have Your Say at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk>

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

## 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.

For more information, on School class sizes and grouping please visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

Each year it is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to organise the class structure. Our classes can change year to year. Currently we have 3 composite classes: P1-3, P4-5 & P6-7

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

### Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

Children are prepared for responsible citizenship by developing values, beliefs and attitudes compatible with living in a modern, democratic and multicultural society. Children are expected to develop acceptable standards of behaviour, courtesy and respect to all members of staff and to each other. All adults adopt a positive approach to the question of discipline and the relationship between children and adults is based on mutual consideration and respect.

As a Silver Rights Respecting School, children are prepared for responsible citizenship by developing values, beliefs and attitudes compatible with living in a modern, democratic and multicultural society. We endeavour to promote positive behaviour through the following approaches:

- Whole school ethos of inclusivity, respect and responsibility.
- Good behaviour is promoted through the strong values within our school.
- Children are expected to develop acceptable standards of behaviour, courtesy and respect to all members of staff and to each other.
- All adults adopt a positive and restorative approach to the question of discipline and the relationship between children and adults is based on mutual consideration.
- Staff provide appropriate, interesting learning and teaching experiences, within a well ordered school environment.
- All classes take part in weekly wellbeing activities through circle time or mental and emotional wellbeing programmes.
- Parental support and co-operation in avoiding and eliminating instances of indiscipline will be sought at an early stage. Whenever appropriate we work co-operatively with parents, Psychological Services, Social Work Department and Police in order to promote positive behaviour and support pupils.

St Columba's has a robust policy on acting on patterns of bullying incidents. We give clear messages about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and hold regular anti-bullying campaigns and assemblies to deter potential incidents. We reassure children and parents that all matters of bullying are taken seriously and dealt with effectively and proportionately.

For more information please see 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)

Our school colours are yellow and blue and our uniform consists of:

- White or blue polo-shirt or shirt
- Blue sweater with a school badge,
- Black or grey trousers / black or grey skirt for girls.
- In summer many girls wear the school summer dress and many boys prefer black or grey school shorts.
- For weekly outdoor learning lessons we ask that pupils come prepared with warm, waterproof clothes and wellies.

Clothing which is unacceptable in school under any circumstances would include football strips, items which display political or inappropriate slogans and or clothes that may be cause health and safety concerns e.g. loose fitting clothes or dangling jewellery.

The school uniform is fully supported by all our parents and pupils. Uniform order forms are sent home once a year and requests for further order forms can be made through the school office.

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.

## 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](https://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](https://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](https://www.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](https://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](https://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 [www.dumgal.gov.uk/schoolmeals](https://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](mailto:DGschoolmeals@dumgal.gov.uk) or the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or [solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto: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/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)

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

CfE also includes Languages, Expressive arts, Religious and moral education, Sciences, Social studies and Technologies. The responsibility for the curriculum offer in your school sits with the Headteacher.

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.

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

For more information on what is meant by parental involvement visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/)

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

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

- Listen, talk and encourage your child - this has a huge impact on your child's learning
- Encourage your child to talk about their learning, what is happening at school and what they enjoy
- Encourage your child to talk about their strengths and next steps in learning
- Attend school open afternoons and Celebrations of Learning - this shows your interests and allows you time to see your child in their learning environment
- Read with and to your child - any reading is good reading
- Look for opportunities to join the school and take part in parental involvement activities within the school environment
- Seek out hobbies and clubs for your child and support them to develop a range of different skills.
- Support homework and practice of skills - we use Seesaw, an online app to post homework and recent learning achievements.
- Attend Parent's Evenings/ Learning Conversations where we share targets and learning successes.
- Talk to your child about how they are feeling

Parental engagement makes a huge difference to your child's development and we look for many opportunities to encourage this throughout your child's time at St Columba's.

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





## Health and Safety

### Emergency Procedures (including Safer Together Guidance)

If your child feels unwell or have hurt themselves during the school day they must report this to an adult in the school. If we feel that they 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](#)

