



Welcome to

Hardgate Primary School



December 2025

Welcome from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent / Carer

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

Here at Hardgate, and our partnership school Springholm, 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 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 learning experiences that provide every child with the opportunity to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Kind regards

Richard Teall

Partnership 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

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, Dumfries Ice Bowl, Stewartry Rugby Club). Each relationship enhances the planned learning activities the children experience and enriches the opportunities for every child.

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

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'. Visit www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk to find out how you can do this. At this point an Officer will contact you, discuss the issue and direct your enquiry as appropriate.

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.dumfriesandgalloway.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.

Primary School Class Organisation

Within education our clear purpose is to bring about success for all our young people through raising levels of achievement, attainment, and participation.

For more information on school class organisation please visit [Class Organisation Leaflet](#)

Class sizes are based on the Scottish Government guidelines. Children at Hardgate School are taught in composite classes.

This session we have three primary classes: P1/2/3, P3/4/5 and P5/6/7.

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 reviewed their Positive Relationships (including behaviour and anti-bullying) Policy in session 2019/20. This included consultations with children, parents and staff and was done in partnership with the schools in the Castle Douglas HS cluster and reflects current local and national guidance and good practice.

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 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 important. 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.

Restorative approaches are used to support children to make positive decisions and build positive relationships. Our approaches are underpinned by

Emotionworks (www.emotionworks.org.uk/) principles have proven effective in supporting positive relationships and behaviour management within the school.

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

- White shirt or white / burgundy polo shirt (school logo is not necessary)
- Burgundy sweatshirt or cardigan (not hoodies)
- Dark skirt/trousers
- Dark shoes are preferable. Trainers are not advisable for the youngest children as many of them are not great for foot development.
- Please do not send a child in with shoes that have laces until such a time that they can tie their own laces.

Please ensure that all items are clearly marked with the pupils' names - it is frightening how quickly our lost property box fills up!

P.E. Kit

Ideally, from P2 upwards, children should wear shorts or tracksuit bottoms/leggings plus a T-shirt (all black, navy or white) and a change of shoes. No clothing/shoes/trainers should be associated with a particular football team.

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.

For further information and an application please visit www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

Education and Learning Directorate are committed to supporting families through their Anti-Poverty Strategy – details of which can be found at costofliving.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/cost-living-support 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 8,9,10 and 11)

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

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 www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk or the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

Parents/Carers - Please register your child with the catering team as soon as you are aware of any allergens 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 www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

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 freebus.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.dumfriesandgalloway.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

[Education Authority Handbook](#)

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.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have developed a dedicated [resource hub](#) for parents and carers, where you will find support and guidance in relation to supporting your child's regular attendance at school. Resources can be found at:

blogs.glowscotland.org.uk

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.

At Hardgate Primary School we plan learning experiences and outcomes across a broad general curriculum within 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.

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 Hardgate 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.

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

Visit www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk for more information on 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.

Family learning is actively encouraged as sharing a learning experience supports understanding. Learning together can raise self-esteem and confidence and can positively impact on family relationships. We aim to facilitate opportunities for families to learn together throughout the year.

Homework expectations will be shared by your child's class teacher. Homework should secure a child's knowledge and understanding of a concept which has been previously taught in class and will be nothing new.

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.dumfriesandgalloway.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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk and on page 21 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 www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

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 www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk Information regarding catchment areas can be found on the Council's website by accessing [Near Me](#).

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

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, partnership and cluster during the year ahead, following engagement with staff, pupils and parents.

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.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk

Data Protection

Visit www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk for information on how the Council uses personal data.

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 [Safe Digital Learning and Social Media Leaflet](#)

