



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



December 2023

# Information at a Glance

## School Address

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School, Lewis Street,  
Stranraer, DG9 7AR

Telephone 01776 703460

## Email address

[gw08officestjosephsr@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08officestjosephsr@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Parent Council Chairperson Donna Westbrook

## Parent Council email

[donnawestbrook@mail.com](mailto:donnawestbrook@mail.com)

Head Teacher Mr Bill Burns

School Roll 31

Denomination Status Roman Catholic

Status of Gaelic Not taught

## School Staff:

### Teaching Staff

Acting Principal Teacher  
(P.1-4 Teacher) Mrs Jackie Anderton

(P.5-7 Teacher) Miss Natalie Lisi

Additional Support for  
Learning Teacher Miss Gemma Smith  
Mrs Shirley Drysdale

Parish Priest Father Ben

Learning Assistants Mrs Angela Hughes  
(Generic/Authority)  
Mrs Heather McClenaghan  
(Pupil Equity Funding)

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

## Auxiliary Staff

School Secretary	Mrs Iona Donnan Mrs Fiona Harvey
Janitor	Mr Gerard McGuigan
Catering Supervisor	Mrs Elizabeth Jones
Cleaning Supervisor	Mrs Mary Fox
School Education Support Officer	Mr David Maxwell

## The School Day

9:15 am	School starts
10:45 - 11:00am	Morning interval
12:30 - 13:15pm	Lunch
15:15 pm	End of school day

School term dates can be found at:

[http://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

Parents/carers are kept well-informed as to what is happening in the school by means of regular updates/letters, termly information sheets and seasonal factsheets. They are involved in the life of the school through attendance at Parent Council Meetings, assisting on school outings, Breakfast Club, fundraising ventures, etc. We can be contacted by e-mail, telephone, Group Call text message 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.

## School App

Find the St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School App by searching in your phone/smart device's App Store for 'Jigsaw School App'

Download the app and, once opened, select 'St Joseph's R.C. Primary School'.





## Welcome from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent / Carer

Welcome to our school from all at St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with all the key information you will need as your child starts at St. Joseph's R.C. Primary. 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.

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School aims 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.

Yours sincerely

**William J. Burns**

Headteacher

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

The staff of St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School aim to ensure the highest possible levels of attainment, achievement and participation for our children. By fostering partnerships with parents/carers, the local community, our Faith Community and support networks in the wider community we endeavour to ensure the educational inclusion of all of our children. We work closely with our Education Authority to develop our aim to be an integrated community school which meets our children's educational, religious, social, emotional and health needs. In our school entrance hall we display our four key aims which are to enable our young people to become:

- Supportive and Successful Learners
- Caring and Confident Individuals
- Respectful and Responsible Citizens
- Inclusive and Effective Contributors

We are all committed to ensuring that the St Joseph's R.C. Primary School Community is one in which we aim to:

- Ensure that the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church form the basis of our learning and teaching in the delivery of our Religious Education Curriculum.
- Support children to achieve their potential in all aspects of their education and skills for life.
- Encourage children to be motivated, independent and successful learners.
- Establish an open, supportive learning community where all children, staff and parents/carers work effectively as part of a team.

- Provide equal opportunities for all and celebrate diversity.
- Build positive and productive relationships within the school, the Faith Community and the wider community valuing the participation, contribution and commitment of all.
- Ensure that our school community has the capacity and desire to improve and keep pace within an ever-changing world.
- Afford our youngsters opportunities to contribute towards and engage in high quality learning activities.
- Promote high standards of tolerance and respect for others.



## 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 [www.dumgal.gov.uk/](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/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16646/School-class-sizes-and-groupings)

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary serves the town of Stranraer and the surrounding area known as the Rhins. Priority for a place will be granted to Roman Catholic children from the recognised or 'delineated' catchment area.

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

### Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

The school reviews its 'Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy' on an ongoing basis. The primary aim of the Positive Behaviour Policy is to promote good relationships so that the full school community can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn.

At St. Joseph's R.C. Primary, our general principals are:

- Pupils are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and polite manner at all times during the school day both inside school and outside in the playground.
- Pupils should observe the instructions given to them by all staff in order to ensure their own safety and that of others in addition to ensuring care and respect for their own property and that of others.
- Pupils are expected to work diligently in class at all tasks set for them by staff members.

Each class has its own Classroom Code, which is agreed by the children and closely linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We always strive to:

- Respect everyone
- Listen carefully
- Talk politely
- Try our very best!

*'All children are treated equally, fairly and with respect by all teachers and other adults. They in turn treat all staff with respect'.* (Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools)

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

## School uniform

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

The uniform at St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School is:

- Grey skirt/trousers
- Maroon sweatshirt/cardigan (gold school logo)
- White shirt/blouse/polo shirt
- Maroon and gold tie
- Red gingham dress for summer wear

Parents/carers are welcome to call into the school to have a look at the school uniform. Parents/Carers are also asked to label all items of clothing and footwear with a permanent marker.

## 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://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.

### 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)

### 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.**

### 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)

### 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)

## 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.

## Religious Education

Miss Lisi , P.5-7 Class Teacher, has the approval of the Roman Catholic Church to work in our school and deliver Religious Education. This approval is given to practising Roman Catholics who have undergone/are undergoing recognised and accredited training in the delivery of religious education as approved by the Roman Catholic Church.

Our Parish Priest is an occasional visitor to the school and provision is regularly made for our children and staff to attend liturgical services in St Joseph's R.C. Church. Children are prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation whilst in attendance at St Joseph's. The school celebrates of Mass on a monthly basis.

Pupils at St Joseph's R.C. Primary also study other world religions developing an awareness of and respect for the religious beliefs held by others and recognising that religion is an important expression of human experience.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from participation in the delivery of the RE curriculum. Should this be exercised the school will endeavour, within the constraints posed by staff availability, to ensure that alternative arrangements are made for their child.

Various extra-curricular activities, including a Breakfast Club and Netball Club, are offered by school staff, parent volunteers and Active Schools. Primary 7 benefit from curling tuition at the North West Castle, participate in Bikeability and experience an outdoor adventure residential experience. Swimming lessons are provided for children in Primary 4.

## 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

Homework has an important place in supporting the curriculum offered by this school and should be seen as a meaningful extension of what is done at school. With this in mind, parents/carers are asked to practise certain exercises at home e.g. colour recognition, counting, times tables, spelling etc. Parents/carers are further asked to provide material, time and opportunity for reading. In the case of our younger learners, it is particularly helpful if parents/carers can listen to and be familiar with their child's reading. If homework is causing difficulty or anxiety for a child, parents/carers should contact the class teacher in the first instance.

Please note, as a school we are reviewing homework throughout Session 2023/2024, involving pupils and parents/carers in this process.





## 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)

In Session 2023/24, St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School's key priorities are as follows:

#### Priority 1 - Raising Attainment & Achievement

#### Priority 2 – Engaging Parents/Carers and Families

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is additional funding allocated directly to schools and targeted at reducing



the poverty-related attainment gap. PEF is allocated on the basis of free school meal registration, however headteachers can use their professional judgement to identify children who may benefit from targeted interventions and approaches. The school utilises PEF to provide targeted support for children, focusing on improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Universally, additional learning assistant input made available to classes across the school has supported Curriculum for Excellence Performance. In addition, specific interventions: Talking, Listening and Questioning (T.L.Q.), Closing the Literacy Gap (CtLG) and Closing the Numeracy Gap (CtNG) have been instrumental in improving attainment and achievement for identified individuals and groups of learners.



## 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](#)

