

Welcome to

Kirkcudbright Academy



December 2023

Contents

This school handbook should be read in conjunction with the Education Authority Handbook which is found online: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/20049/Education-Authority-Handbook>

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Letter from Rector

Dear Parent or Carer,

On behalf of all the staff of Kirkcudbright Academy, we would like to extend a welcome to you and your child at the start of this phase of their education. This handbook gives you an introduction to the school and we hope it helps you and your child look forward to starting with us.

In the Academy, we take pride in the provision of high quality education. It is a central aim of the school that we work in partnership with parents, pupils and the community to ensure that education takes place in a stimulating, secure and caring environment. To this end, we liaise closely with our primary colleagues so that we can guarantee continuity of learning and smooth transfer of both pupils and information. As part of the induction process, visits are made by Academy teachers and senior students to primary schools and by primary pupils and teachers to the Academy. Your part in this process is very important and we hope that you will attend the P7 Parents' Information Evening and Open Evening (10th January 2024) and contact us in school if you have any questions or any information concerning your child's move to the Academy. This is particularly important if your child is joining the school during the session or entering a year group other than S1.



In Kirkcudbright Academy, education is a careful blend of tradition and innovation. We hold firmly to those aspects of schooling that we believe are of fundamental importance - courtesy, self-discipline, uniform, homework, sporting and social activities. At the same time, we move forward in an innovative manner, providing the facilities and teaching the skills that will allow our youngsters to make good use of the technologies and opportunities that this rapidly developing world offers them. Within this school community or team with its strong sense of corporate identity, we prize the individual and work hard to encourage each youngster to be confident, considerate and ambitious. Our expectations of ourselves and of our pupils are high.

We aim to be truly inclusive to ensure that each child, no matter ability, interest or background, feels that he or she belongs to the school community. The ethos of the Academy is welcoming, encouraging and positive as we value and reward all kinds of progress and achievement.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Tuffery, Rector

Message from Susan Brown, Acting Headteacher (November 2023 – April 2024)

It is a pleasure to have joined Kirkcudbright Academy and Cluster in the capacity of Acting Headteacher. My aim is to work with colleagues, partners, parents and carers and the wider community to help support all of our young people here in the school to reach their full potential. The school is grounded in a rich sense of its history but is also moving forward in exciting new ways, including the work it is doing through its participation in the Rights Respecting Schools initiative. It is a privilege to be joining the school at this time and I look forward to the coming months.



School Aims

Our aim is to provide a meaningful and effective education for all our pupils. We seek to achieve this by creating a caring learning and teaching environment where staff can deliver a vibrant and flexible curriculum which is responsive both to the needs of individual pupils and those of a changing society. Central to this is a strong partnership between staff, pupils, parents and the wider community, all working together in pursuit of the above aim.

School Vision

We want all our pupils to be successful learners and to achieve as well as they can during their time with us. We want them to contribute to the life of the school, taking responsibility for their own learning and looking out for and after others. We regard school as a first step in lifelong learning and we want our pupils to be eager to learn throughout their life. In school, we encourage pupils to believe in themselves and strive to be the best they can be so that they can make the most of the opportunities available to them. This means that we encourage pupils, through word and actions, to become confident individuals and responsible citizens.



School Information

Address:

Kirkcudbright Academy
St. Mary's Wynd
Kirkcudbright
DG6 4JN

Telephone: 01557 330440

Email: gw08officekirkcudbri@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Website: <https://kirkcudbright.academy/>

Headteacher – Mr. A. Tuffery

School Roll – 418 pupils

Denominational status – non-denominational

Status of Gaelic – Gaelic is not currently taught

School Staff

The staff for session 2023-24 is likely to be:

Rector: Mr A Tuffery (Seconded until April 2024)

Acting Rector: Ms S Brown

Depute Rectors: Mr R Henry, Mrs A Clelland

School Support Manager: Mrs R Robertson

Principal Teacher Pupil Support:

Mrs S Kirkland

Miss P Wells

Mrs A Dwojacka

Art

Miss P Wells

Miss C Gibson

Business Education

Mr R Boyce

Computing

Mr K Mason

Drama

Miss Gilliland

English

Mrs A MacDougall (PT)

Ms L Jackson

Mrs S Syed

Mr E Moses

Geography

Miss L McEwen

History/Modern Studies

Mrs A Clelland

Mrs S Kirkland

Miss D Hodgson

Home Economics

Mrs N Cluckie

Ms Z Sigley

Miss K Baird (Assistant)

Mathematics

Mr S Templeton

Mr Bannerman (PT)

Mr Brannock

Modern Languages

Mr E Perez

Music

Miss H Gill (PT)

Ms E Irving

Physical Education

Mr N Christie

Mr L Nicholson

Religious & Moral Education

Mrs S Syed

Science

Dr D Davidson (PT)

Mrs S Davidson

Mrs A Dwojacka

Mr J Firth

Mr D Grounsell

Mrs M McClure

Mr A Tuffery

Technical

Mr R Henry

Mr F McGarrie

Mr R Orr

Support for Learning

Miss T McNaught (PT)
Mrs H Hall (PT)
Ms E Stevenson
Mr E Perez

Learning Assistants

Mrs J Coates
Ms J McCord
Mrs J Lauder
Ms M Curtis

Janitors

Mr D Stitt
Mr M Osborne

Office

Mrs M Baird
Mrs W Seton
Mrs G Edmondson

School Meals

Cook in Charge – Mrs N Poland

School Technicians

Mr W Middleton
Mr R Ross

School Day

| Period | Start | End |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 1 | 08:55 | 09:45 |
| 2 | 09:45 | 10:35 |
| 3 | 10:35 | 11:05 |
| Break | 11:05 | 11:20 |
| 4 | 11:20 | 12:10 |
| 5 | 12:10 | 01:00 |
| Lunch | 01:00 | 01:50 |
| 6 | 01:50 | 02:40 |
| 7 | 02:40 | 03:30 |

Terms and Holidays

Current school year (2023/24)

Term 3

Staff training - Monday 8 January 2024

First day - Tuesday 9 January 2024

Mid-term holiday - Monday 12 February to Wednesday 14 February 2024

(Staff training - Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 February 2024)

Last day - Friday 22 March 2024

Spring holiday - Monday 25 March to Friday 5 April 2024

Term 4

First day - Monday 8 April 2024

May Day holiday - Monday 6 May 2024

Last day - Monday 1 July 2024

Future school year (2024/25)

Term 1

Staff training - Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 August 2024

First day - Wednesday 21 August 2024

Last day - Friday 11 October 2024

Autumn holiday - Monday 14 to Friday 25 October 2024

Term 2

First day - Monday 28 October 2024

Last day - Friday 20 December 2024

Christmas holiday - Monday 23 December 2024 to Monday 6 January 2025 (pupils return Tuesday 7 January)

Term 3

Staff training - Monday 6 January 2025

First day - Tuesday 7 January 2025

Mid-term holiday - Wednesday 19 February to Friday 21 February 2025*

(*Staff training - Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20 February 2025)

Last day - Friday 28 March 2025

Spring holiday - Monday 31 March to Friday 11 April 2025

Term 4

First day - Monday 14 April 2025

Easter weekend (schools closed) Friday 18 April and Monday 21 April 2025

May Day holiday - Monday 5 May 2025

Last day - Thursday 3 July 2025

Summer holiday - Friday 4 July to Tuesday 19 August 2025

Contact us

Enquiries

Enquiries relating to the operation of the school or matters that are causing you concern should be made through the school office. Your concern will be passed to the appropriate member of staff, who will then contact you as soon as possible.

Many parents prefer to come into school in person, and we are happy to accommodate this. Your first port of call, with or without a prior appointment, is the school office which is located to the right of the main entrance and is open from 8.00am to 4.30pm during term time. Office staff will make arrangements for an appointment and issue visitors' badges, if appropriate. These badges also contain important information about fire evacuation procedures.

The school office is a very important port of call for pupils during the school day for a variety of reasons:

- If they need to leave school for any reason during the school day, they should sign out, giving their reason for leaving, and sign in again on their return.
- If a pupil feels ill, he/she should report to the school office to receive appropriate support. It is important that pupils go to the school office **before** contacting parents so that we can ensure they are being appropriately cared for.
- Lost property can also be claimed from the office.
- Pupils who need to phone home on an important matter may ask to use the office phone. This reduces the need for mobile phones in school.

Compliments and Complaints

Normally issues arising at school level should be brought to the attention of a member of the Pupil Support staff, or the Rector / Depute Rectors, as appropriate. We are always keen to act on comments or complaints as soon as possible and to deal with issues before they become more serious. We ask you to help us to resolve a complaint by alerting us to your concern to allow us to take appropriate action to address this.

Complaints received directly by Education Services will, where possible, be dealt with at individual school level. Education Services operate within the complaints handling procedures for Dumfries and Galloway Council. Information on this can be found at:

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

Further support and advice can be provided to individual complainants through contacting either the complaints handler within Education Services or to the Councils Corporate Complaints Unit.

Whilst we are happy to act on negative feedback and improve how we operate as a school, we also appreciate positive feedback and delight in bringing this to the attention of the pupils or staff involved.

Updating of Information

It is essential that parents/guardians inform the school office as soon as possible of any change of address, telephone number or similar basic information. This helps us keep our records up to date and ensures that we can easily contact you, either in an emergency or to pass essential information to you.

Plan of School and Accessibility

Kirkcudbright Academy has a campus that has evolved over hundreds of years, and as such there is a mixture of architectural styles, over multiple floors. Whilst we are proud of the heritage of parts of the building, we are concerned that accessibility is limited for pupils and visitors with impaired mobility, the main entrance in particular. There is signage to the accessible entrance from the disabled parking space, however if you are planning to visit the school and require wheelchair access, please contact the school office on 01557 330440 in advance so we can greet and direct you personally to the best entrance. We will also arrange for meetings with you to be held in the accessible parts of the school.

We are delighted to say that two new ramps have recently been installed, which aid movement into and around the school.

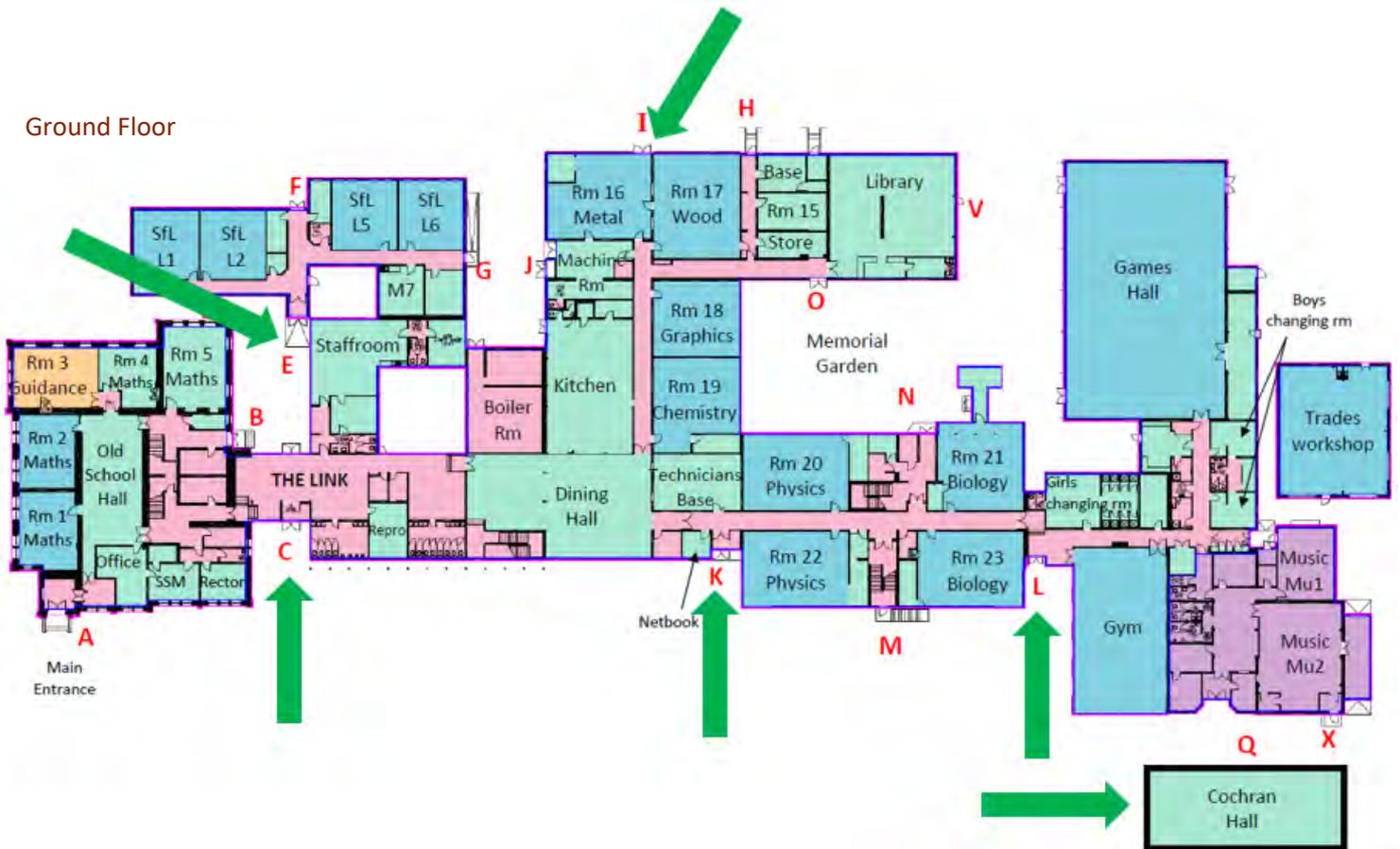
The following areas of the school are wheelchair accessible - The Cochran Hall (for school shows, open evenings, and parent's evenings), The Learning Hub (Support for Learning), In the main school – the Maths department, Library, Technical and Science departments, the dining hall, Music and PE.

Entry points are indicated with a green arrow on the following floor plan.

We are always looking for ways to be more inclusive, if you have any suggestions please do let us know.



Ground Floor



School Uniform

Following discussions at Parent Council, with senior students and with manufacturers, we have revised the school's dress code in order to promote school uniform and clarify what is acceptable.

When in school, all pupils will wear:

- White shirt and school tie
- Black skirt or trousers (no jeans or sports gear, leggings should only be worn with a skirt)
- Any jumper, cardigan or waistcoat worn should also be in black; no other colours or designs are acceptable. Patterns and logos are not acceptable.
- Black shoes with black soles and no motif

The following additional options are available:

- Tailored modern black blazer with school crest on breast pocket (different styles available for girls and boys)
- A plain suit-type jacket or blazer which has one of the new enamel school badges either on lapel or breast pocket. (This option allows for jackets to be worn at other times)

We want our pupils to be as smart as possible and to show pride in themselves and their school through their clothing - naked midriffs and unbuttoned shirts are inappropriate for our school and the Scottish climate. If pupils have any body piercing, they must meet safety requirements, meaning that they should not wear hoops or rings in piercings.

When pupils are representing the school in team or individual sports, in drama or debating competitions, or in any other activity, they will be provided with a school blazer or jacket if they do not already have one.

Education & Learning Dress Code

All Dumfries and Galloway schools must have a school uniform dress code which encourages pupils to dress in a way appropriate to attendance at school. This code must not lead to direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, disability or poverty. Prior to drawing up the school uniform dress code, parents, pupils and staff were fully consulted and it is the expectation of Education and Learning Directorate that parents will be supportive of the dress code.

Clothing which is unacceptable in school under any circumstances would include items which:

- Could potentially encourage factions (eg football colours).
- Could cause offence (eg anti-religious or political slogans, revealing or overly sexualised).
- Could cause health and safety difficulties such as loose fitting clothing, dangling earrings.
- Are of flammable materials which may be a danger in certain classes.
- Could cause damage to floors.
- Carry advertising, in particular for alcohol or tobacco.
- Could be used to inflict damage on other pupils.

School Clothing Grants

Parents in receipt of a grant for footwear and clothing from the authority are encouraged to purchase items which are in accordance with the school dress code. School Clothing Grants 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 £150 per secondary school child. Guidance and more information is available at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15246/Schoolclothing-grants>

While it would not normally be the policy of the authority to exclude a pupil from school solely based on his/her dress, persistent refusal to respond to a reasonable dress code could be deemed to be a challenge to the headteacher's authority and thus be detrimental to the well-being of the whole school community. In such circumstances, a headteacher could justify the use of the school disciplinary procedures.

Sportswear

Indoor – T-shirt, shorts or tracksuit trousers. Gym/ training shoes with non-marking soles must be worn in the gym and games hall.

Outdoor – As indoor, plus sweatshirt or cagoule, change of socks, suitable boots according to activity. Pupils must ensure that they do not have metal studs or blades on the 3G pitch or MUGA.

Equipment required by Pupils

Normally, books, jotters, notebooks etc. will be provided. Pupils are expected to have their own pen, pencils, rubber, ruler, mathematical instruments etc.

Pupils are not usually expected to pay any money towards the cost of their courses, however small charges may be levied if a pupil loses school resources, or wishes to take part in extracurricular activities which have a cost implication.

Where pupils need to make payment to the school for a school trip or uniform, please can we encourage payment by cheque or BACs.

Pupils are urged to label all personal property and clothes/sportswear and to bring to school only what is necessary, particularly with regard to money and expensive technological gadgets.

Pupils must ensure at all times that money and any items of value are handed to PE staff before a PE lesson to avoid them being left in the changing rooms. While every effort will be made to investigate losses, money is rarely identifiable and is recoverable only when the finder is honest.

Mobile Phones

There is normally no need for pupils to have a phone in school; emergency contact with pupils can be facilitated through the school office. If pupils bring mobile phones into school they can be left at the school office for safe keeping, if pupils choose not to do so the mobile phone must be switched off. If pupils use a mobile phone in school, or it interrupts a lesson, it may be confiscated and put into the school office

until the end of the day. If a phone goes off during an internal or SQA exam, the pupil will forfeit his/her award in the exam and may be subject to further penalties in line with national guidelines.

It is becoming clear that many pupils struggle to concentrate on their learning when they have their phones with them. One of the best ways parents could help their child's attainment would be to keep their phones at home.

Lockers

Lockers are installed by the cloakroom areas of the school. These are available for the storage of books and equipment at a cost of £5.

School Meals

Dumfries & Galloway Council Catering Services:

- Places health promotion at the heart of school activities
 - Ensures that food and drink served in schools meets nutritional requirements
 - Ensures their local authority promote the uptake and benefits of paid and free school meals
- The NaturallyD&G brand promoting by Facilities Management ensures that:
- Meals are freshly prepared, with seasonal ingredients
 - Eggs are from free-range hens and our meat is from animals farmed to British welfare standards
 - They don't serve any endangered fish
 - Their menu is free from undesirable additives and GM ingredients

Special Dietary Requirements

Catering Services provide special dietary requirements for food allergy and intolerances; medically prescribed diets; or diets for religious or cultural reasons specific meals for children of different ethnic origin. Simply ask the school for a registration form to allow us to inform the catering team who will discuss your child's requirements in full.

For more information contact the Solutions Centre on 01387 271 112 or solutionscentre@dumgal.gov.uk to access the Legislation & Nutrition Officer.

Transition from Primary

We work closely and collaboratively with our cluster primary schools (Kirkcudbright District Learning – KDL) throughout the session, to progress pupils' learning between primary and secondary stages. Many of the issues facing us and our pupils are the same, whether we are in a rural or town primary, or the Academy. To that end we are working towards a 'common climate' in aspects like anti-bullying, information sharing and wellbeing.

In addition, we are working together on developing various curricular aspects of a Curriculum for Excellence.

We offer P7 pupils a valuable 'taster' experience, through a week-long induction programme where pupils will follow their S1 Academy timetable.

We want to encourage our pupils in secondary school to continue with the good practice which we know exists in our associated primary schools. We know that our primary colleagues have high expectations of behaviour and work; we will continue to expect the same of our pupils in Kirkcudbright Academy.

The Induction Programme

Too often, we tend to think of the induction programme as only the week in June when P7 pupils come to Kirkcudbright Academy. Induction is, however, much more than this, with the process lasting throughout P7. Our aims in the induction process are to:

- ease the transition of pupils from primary to secondary
- promote continuity of pupils' learning on transfer
- promote the best exchange of information about pupils on transition to secondary.

Behind the scenes, primary and secondary staff meet on a regular basis to discuss transition, transition activities and the curriculum at P7/S1. We readily share information on any matters that are of concern and interest to both primary and secondary. In short, we work together for the benefit of our pupils.

During the school year, some P7 pupils visit the Academy to experience different subjects and activities and Academy staff will go into the Primary schools to deliver complimentary work there.

Key Transition Dates

Around Christmas of the P7 year

Transfer forms (PP1) regarding the choice of secondary school are issued.

January

There is an Open Evening on 10th January 2024 where parents and P7 pupils are invited to visit the school. After a brief address by senior members of staff, parents and pupils are able to tour the school where they will find a range of activities taking place in the various departments. Parents will have an opportunity to see the school in action and speak with staff.

The school handbook is delivered to Primary 7 pupils by S6 pupils and S1 pupils talk about their first year. This is also a chance for primary pupils to ask questions about life in the Academy.

Pupils needing an enhanced transition process visit the Academy for a familiarisation tour.

February

Parents return the PP1 form to their primary school. This form confirms that they have accepted a place for their child at Kirkcudbright Academy; the process of transferring from primary to secondary is now well underway.

May

Staff from the Pupil Support department visit primaries to discuss pupils' learning needs or any other matters, and to give pupils further information about the Academy.

Two all day curricular visits take place in May.

June

Week beginning 17th June 2024, P7 pupils will spend a week in the Academy, during which time they will follow their S1 timetable and take part in school activities.

Positive Behaviour and Celebrating Success

Education in its widest sense cannot be successfully delivered without good relationships and appropriate behaviour. The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and a climate of mutual respect and trust, based upon shared values across the wider school community. Everyone should be allowed to learn and work in a peaceful and safe environment.

Within the Kirkcudbright Academy community, behaviour that helps to create a positive and safe learning environment is expected of all pupils. This also helps to protect our individual rights and encourages us to take up our individual responsibilities. We believe that the establishment of clear boundaries, routines and behavioural expectations are critical in ensuring the development of an ethos and culture of positive behaviour and effective behaviour management. Our Behaviour Policy seeks to support pupils through negotiation, reward and sanction. In addition, very clear aims and expectations are publicised and promoted regarding approaches to learning, behaviour, courtesy, organisation and positive personal qualities and values. The vast majority of our pupils behave very well and work hard, contributing to a positive atmosphere and good working relationships between staff and pupils.

Over and above subject attainment and personal progress, we recognise and celebrate positive attitude to study, helping others and service to school. Pupils can receive 'Merits' covering a wide range of criteria from self-improvement to upholding school values. We are always keen to praise pupils for individual achievements and hold regular wider achievement assemblies to celebrate our young people.

For pupils who fail to meet our expectations, there are a number of sanctions which may be used, the effectiveness of which depends on close parental involvement. These sanctions range from written exercises and detention to isolation within school and, in the rare and serious event when all else fails, exclusion. Pupils are offered a range of support strategies, including specialist help, to manage their behaviour appropriately if this is necessary. In each case, there will be close liaison between the school, parents and, where necessary, relevant specialist agencies. A copy of our Behaviour Policy is given to all parents when their child joins S1.



The Curriculum



- Pupils will learn how to learn and how to use this learning, both during their time in school and in later life.
- There is a focus on knowledge and skills, including literacy and numeracy, skills which underpin all learning.
- There are changes to assessment and how progress is reported to learners, parents and employers so that a wide and detailed picture of pupil attainment and achievement is given.

Subject Information

Information about all subjects in the senior phase is available in booklet form and is given to pupils as they prepare to make subject choices. We encourage pupils and parents to read this information as it is an important step in making subject choices as details are given about entry levels, class work, demands of homework and future career paths. Much of this information is available online and/or from the Pupil Support base.

Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence focuses on enabling pupils from 3-18 years old to develop skills for life-long learning and work. It places emphasis on helping pupils make connections across different subjects and applying their learning to real life situations. CfE aims to raise standards, improve knowledge and develop skills, therefore closing the gap between the lowest and highest performers. Ultimately, it aims to nurture young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

The Scottish Government has issued key guidelines for secondary schools as they plan their curriculum:

- Learners will experience a broad, deep general education to S3, with options beyond that for pupils to specialise, go on to further study, improve skills and do work experience.
- The 'learner journey' will be joined up from 3-18 to avoid gaps and overlaps in learning and to make the most of achievements outside school.
- Learners will work at a pace that suits, with enough challenge and support to stretch them.
- Lessons will be engaging, inspiring and relevant to everyday life.
- Teachers will make connections between subjects, helping pupils to make the most of their learning.



Curriculum for S1-S3

Within S1-S3, our curriculum fulfils the criteria for a Broad General Education, as directed by Education Scotland, whilst also allowing pupils a degree of personalisation of their curriculum. In S1, S2 and S3 there are certain core subjects – PE (Physical Education), HWB (Health and Wellbeing), RME (Religious and Moral Education) - which supplement the curriculum.

All S1 and S2 classes follow a common course which is designed to build on the foundations of a broad general education across seven different curricular areas, which pupils started in Primary school. It also continues the development of the four capacities – successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor – fundamental to education 3-18 and beyond. In Maths, pupils are usually organised in sets according to ability. Pupils have the opportunity to personalise aspects of their studies through choice of an Interdisciplinary Learning topic.

In S3, pupils have a degree of choice in their curriculum in preparation for progression into the senior phase, choosing subjects across each curricular area to maintain breadth of study or choosing subjects allowing specialisation in preparation for career pathways through the senior phase. This enables youngsters to play to their strengths and develop specialist knowledge.

Curriculum for S4-S6

Pupils in S4 will be expected to continue with seven accredited subjects, started in S3, including English and Maths. For most students these subjects will be at National 4 or 5.

In S5, pupils choose from the same options to allow maximum choice across a wide range of courses and levels. This means that pupils choose according to their aptitude and interest rather than their age and stage. At present, pupils choose 5 subjects to prepare for National Qualifications at various levels or for courses which are accredited differently. The range of

subjects will vary from the traditional school-based subjects to ones which focus more on skills for work e.g. Rural Skills, Early Education and Childcare and Automotive engineering. In addition to the 5 subjects chosen, pupils will follow a range of core courses: Physical Education, Religious and Moral Education and Study, all contributing to our pupils' overall education and to prepare for life beyond school.



In S6, pupils negotiate a timetable according to their needs and post-school aspirations. In addition to the subject choices available to pupils in S4/S5, they can do an Open University course, study online courses, be involved in Young Enterprise, help out in junior classes or do work experience, either in an area related to a future career or an area of interest that will help develop skills and personal qualities.



The Curriculum

Pupils also have some non-class contact time to allow them to study on their own, thus helping them make an easier transition to Higher Education. This 'free' time also allows S6 pupils to become involved in the important community and leadership aspects of school – organising events such as Charities' days, school dances, participating in Assembly, leading clubs, showing visitors around the school, working on the school magazine and volunteering in the local community.

Making choices

Making course choices is not done in isolation. Many events lead up to the actual making of the choice: tracking reports containing information and advice from staff teaching subjects are issued, pupils have an individual interview with Pupil Support staff, senior school leaders explain the choice process and expectations to pupils, an information booklet is issued to enable pupils to find out information about new subjects and to learn more about ones in which they want to continue their learning. In addition, most choices are preceded by a Parents' Evening – and parents are always welcome to come in for further discussion/ information with senior school leaders, Pupil Support staff, or our Skills Development Scotland worker.

Further details about courses are offered in the booklets which are issued to pupils at the time they are considering course choices for the coming session.

Universal Personal Support (UPS)

UPS is a vertical tutor provision that was introduced in June 2015. Tutor Groups are arranged in each of the 3 Houses - McLellan, Stewart and Selkirk. Most Tutor Groups are led by a single teacher, with assistance by support staff in some.

There are 2 x 30 minutes UPS periods each week. UPS provides pupils with regular contact with the same member of staff, so building strong pupil and staff relationships. Importantly, through regular 'one-to-

one monitoring and tracking learning conversations', staff will be able to monitor, encourage and offer support from both an academic and pastoral perspective. As required, Tutors will liaise closely with the relevant PS Teacher/ Establishment Contact - to ensure that issues and needs are addressed promptly. By individually supporting learners more closely, we are trying to ensure that all pupils maximise their learning, thereby gaining higher levels of attainment and wider achievement.

The vertical 'family' structure offers older pupils the opportunity to provide regular peer support of a pastoral, personal and learning nature, e.g. subject and homework support. As over half of our S1 intake has come through smaller primaries with composite classes, pupils are familiar with the mixed age structure.

When not engaged in learning conversations with their Tutor or whole-school raising awareness topics and activities, e.g. Diabetes and Wellbeing, pupils are encouraged to read for enjoyment and pleasure or use the time for personal learning.

Personal Social and Health Education

Kirkcudbright Academy is a health-promoting school. This means that we actively promote the principle encapsulated by the old saying, "a healthy mind in a healthy body". In reality, this means that we take positive steps to influence what our pupils eat and drink, their levels of activity and their lifestyle in general, as well as ensuring that they learn to look after themselves in terms of health, relationships and responsibility. Much of this is covered in subjects such as PE, RME, Science and Home Economics but each member of staff has a duty to promote Health and Wellbeing. In addition, aspects of living a healthy lifestyle are covered in dedicated PSHE classes in S1-S3 and UPS (Universal Personal Support) classes across the whole school. Topics included are indicated in the following tables:-

Personal Social and Health Education

| S1 | S2 | S3 |
|--|--|---|
| Looking after yourself: Internet Safety Road Safety Bullying Health issues Smoking Alcohol Drugs First Aid Relationships and Sexual Health | Growing up: Body Image Peer Pressure Healthy Lifestyle Healthy Relationships Sexual Health Cyber bullying Looking to the future Personal Finance Careers | Growing up/assuming responsibilities: Domestic Abuse Road Safety Sexual Health, Contraception & Parenthood Preparing for Work Experience Personal Profile |

| S4 | S5/S6 | |
|---|---|---|
| Keeping safe/being aware of others: Homophobic Bullying Drugs Binge Drinking Sex and the Law Sexually Transmitted Infections Personal Safety Looking to the future: My World of Work CVs/Interview Skills Volunteering Positive Mental Health Subject choices | Keeping safe/being aware of others: First Aid Drugs and the Law Healthy Lifestyle Learning to Drive Road Safety Looking to the future: Career Planning CVs/Interview Skills Subject choices Sexual Health Personal Statements FE/HE Preparation | Preparing for life away from home: Personal safety Budgeting/student loan Finding accommodation |

Adults in School

We welcome adult learners to any of our SQA National Qualification classes where we have spaces, provided they are approved by Disclosure Scotland. Attendance would be approximately 5 hours weekly for each subject. For further information, contact Mr R Henry, Depute Rector, prior to the start of the new timetable in June.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Activities

Kirkcudbright Academy offers many opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Highlights of the school's social calendar include the unique Kirkcudbright tradition of the Junior and Senior Candlemas Balls in February.



Pupils can practise their various talents by helping to produce KAM, the school magazine, or by taking part on stage or behind the scenes in drama. The Young Enterprise Company gives S6 students the opportunity to manage a small business, designing and marketing an actual product. In addition, the English Department runs the yearly Ian Wishart Memorial Creative Writing Competition, the Peter Cook Memorial competition for non-fiction and "Youth Speaks", a public speaking contest sponsored by the Rotary Club of Kirkcudbright with whom we work closely on a number of ventures. Growing in popularity is our Young Chef competition, sponsored by The Rotary Club, judged by local business partners, organised by the Home Economics Department and open to all pupils. There are numerous opportunities to perform many types of music.

Various sporting and other activities take place regularly at lunchtime or after school: basketball, badminton, computer games, crafts, dance, choir, drama, hockey, football, netball, and athletics. The school hockey, rugby, football and basketball teams compete against other local schools and participate in various regional tournaments and the school golf team takes part in the annual Regional Schools Golf Tournament in June. Other interests are catered for: pupils can learn to play or improve their skills in chess and the English and Drama Department organise trips to a variety of films and plays during the year.

In addition to the above, most subjects also offer subject support at lunchtime and/or after school.

Lunch and after school clubs and activities are publicised on the daily Pupil Bulletin and noticeboards around the school.



School Trips

Pupils are regularly offered opportunities to travel to various events and places of interest throughout the session, both in Dumfries & Galloway and well beyond its boundaries. The School Fund plays an important role in subsidising the considerable transport costs of all our trips.

We expect that the variety of trips in the forthcoming session will be as extensive as in previous sessions: field trips, visits to theatres, museums, art galleries, exhibitions, careers conventions, universities, places of historical or geographical interest and expeditions.

Hardship Fund

The school has at its disposal a small Hardship Fund whereby pupils who cannot afford to attend a non-curricular school trip may be financially supported to enable them to take part. Please contact the Headteacher for more information.

The School Fund

Few of the activities that are offered in Kirkcudbright outwith the school curriculum would be possible without financial support from the School Fund. Administered by a committee of staff and pupils, it exists to subsidise trips/outings and to provide for situations not met by public funds or school budget. Thus, it may make a grant towards a sporting activity, it may buy equipment, subsidise extra-curricular activities or contribute towards travel expenses for school trips. Its income comes from many sources e.g. profits from dances, concerts and the Half-Marathon. We are always grateful for parental and community involvement in helping us raise funds.

Support for Charities

Each year, the pupils in Kirkcudbright Academy choose charities to support. S6 pupils then co-ordinate fund-raising events for these charities, with each year group organising activities.

Kirkcudbright Academy Endowment Trust

Kirkcudbright Academy Endowment Trust exists to allow parties to make charitable donations and endowments to support the advancement of education. For example, the Trust funded the purchase of a replacement 16-seater minibus for the school to enable pupil participation in curricular and extra-curricular events across the region and beyond. The trust is managed by Cavers & Co, Kirkcudbright. Please contact the school for more information.





The Community

Within Kirkcudbright Academy, staff work hard to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education and that they achieve their potential.

On occasion, we rely on additional expertise from outside agencies to meet all pupil needs. We work with a variety of agencies to support some of our pupils, either as individuals or as part of the curriculum that we offer our pupils:

Social Work
 Educational Psychological Service
 Youth Justice
 CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
 Kirkcudbright Rotary Club
 School Chaplains
 School Nurse Service
 Police Scotland – Stewartry Youth Engagement Officer
 Skills Development Scotland
 Attendance Support Officer
 Youth Worker
 Care Experienced Support Worker
 Autism Outreach Support Worker

The School Environment

Kirkcudbright Academy is proud of its environment and over the years, pupils, staff, parents and the wider community have undertaken several projects to improve the school grounds. These have included: tree planting, garden maintenance, and painting.



Enterprise

Kirkcudbright Academy is committed to preparing pupils for life beyond school, whether it be in the workplace, college, or at university. One of the ways in which we seek to achieve this is through Enterprise Education. This often involves pupils in learning about the world of work, running their own business or taking part in programmes or events which are specifically entrepreneurial in nature. However, Enterprise Education also includes activities which get pupils to think, act or learn in an enterprising way, and which get them to take responsibility for decision making, to work cooperatively in teams and to think creatively. Kirkcudbright Academy has a busy programme of Enterprise activities including:

- Enterprise Components of ASDAN Awards
- Young Enterprise Scotland
- Kirkcudbright Academy Magazine
- Charities' Days
- Café Academy
- Rotary International Enterprise Challenge

We believe that an enterprising approach will help young people acquire knowledge, skills, dispositions and capabilities that will help them realise their potential and play a full part in our ever-changing society.

Home-School Partnerships

Parent Council

Welcome to Kirkcudbright Academy

Parents or Carers of pupils at the Academy are all members of the Kirkcudbright Academy Parent Forum

Representing your views, and acting as a line of communication between you and the school, is your Kirkcudbright Academy Parent Council.

The Council was established in line with the Scottish Government's 'Parental Involvement Act' 2007, and is made up of Parent/Carer members, a Teacher representative, the Rector (in an advisory capacity) co-opted members from the wider community by invitation, and Councillors from Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Even during the Covid crisis we continued to assist in fundraising, and be active in aspects of pastoral care to provide support and assistance for all members of the School Community. We meet on alternate months in hybrid format, with those who are able attending in person in the school library and remote attendance via Zoom. Meetings this academic year are:

Tuesday 12th December 2023

Tuesday 6th February 2024

Tuesday 19th March 2024

Tuesday 7th May 2024

AGM – Monday 17th June 2024

As of June 2023 the **Office Bearers** are:

Chair – Laura Moodie

Treasurer - Gill Durham

Clerk - Mrs Julia Archibald

Teacher Representative – Ms Shameen Syed

If you'd like to volunteer your services, organise fundraising events, share ideas, or concerns, you can contact us directly:

Facebook: Kirkcudbright Academy Parent Council Forum

Email: kapcchair@outlook.com

Whatsapp: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/F7PqI515kfO8NLp949Y5u0>

School Office: gw08officekirkcubri@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Laura Moodie

Chair

Communicating with Home

Where possible, our communications will be electronic.

Information will come to you in a number of different ways:

Newsletter

These newsletters contain notification of events and activities, issues of concern and congratulation and general information concerning the running of the school.

Website

<https://kirkcudbright.academy/>

The Academy website contains detailed information about the school and courses on offer. Newsletters are also posted there.

Letter

You will receive letters containing information about specific events (e.g. school trips and medical examinations), working groups (i.e. an invitation to participate) or incidents (i.e. behaviour and/or homework). You may also receive letters that alert you to issues concerning the academic progress of your youngster and invite you to come in to school to meet a Pupil Support and/or subject teacher and/or a member of the Senior Management Team. When appropriate, letters are also sent home as part of our system for recognising pupil success.

- by telephone
- by Text Message
- by Xpressions App
- by Satchel1

If there is any matter that we wish to discuss with you promptly, we will telephone you. Obviously, if your child is unwell or has had a mishap in school, we will call immediately. It is vital that we have an up-to-date contact number on file. Equally, if you are concerned in any way about your child's progress or well-being, do not hesitate to telephone the School Office.

- In common with other schools in Dumfries and Galloway, we use a texting service to alert parents in a variety of situations – e.g. absence of a child, information regarding trips, specific events (Parents' Evening, medical inspections). We also use this service daily to alert parents if their child is not in school.

- by the issuing of reports (See section on Reports/ Parents' Evening.)
- by interview with teachers

We are very keen that all parents take advantage of the opportunity to meet their child's subject teachers at Parents' Evening. This allows not only an exchange of information, but also the development of understanding and even a joint strategy to support a youngster.

Communication of information should be a two-way process. We would like all parents to feel that the school and its staff welcome contact with parents. As indicated previously, you are encouraged to contact the school - by letter, telephone or in person - if there is anything you would like to discuss with teachers or the Senior Management Team. If you wish to meet with a member of staff, we ask that you make an appointment to ensure that the person you want to see is available through the school office.

Parents seeking a place for their child(ren) because they have just come into the area, or because they wish their child(ren) to come to Kirkcudbright Academy rather than attend their local school, should contact the school to ensure that the correct procedures are followed. This may be done by letter or telephone or by a direct visit to the School Office.

We also ask parents to tell us about any non-resident parents so that information about school, specifically a copy of all pupil tracking reports, is sent to them as well as to the resident parent.

Attendance

We ask parents to contact school if they know that their child is going to be absent. This can happen in advance of a planned absence, either by telephone, email, text message or letter, or on the day of absence in the case of unplanned/ medical absence. Our school office is open from 8am. This information eases the burden on office staff and also ensures that we know that your child, whilst not in school, is safe with parents or other responsible adults.

If an absence is not explained, we use an automated texting service for alerting parents to their child's absence. A telephone call/text message is usually made after 11 am to the numbers given to us by parents. It is obviously much easier for both parents and school if we know about absences before school starts. Any absence which remains unexplained will be marked as "unauthorised".

When pupils require to be absent from school for compassionate or other personal reasons, we ask that parents send a note or phone school stating the expected dates of absence. We will try to send homework home in such instances. In the case of illness, parents should inform the school once the pupil is well enough to do homework and indicate when a return to school is likely. Two days' notice is required for homework to allow staff time to organise work.

Attendance is reviewed weekly and, where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance rate, we will seek parental cooperation to work towards improving this. If attendance continues to be a concern, we may seek support from other agencies such as Opportunities for All or Social Work.

Further information about parental responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school can be found in the "Attendance at School Policy" (2012).

Holidays

The Government has highlighted the importance of school attendance to a child's development and has required schools to set targets for improved attendance. Against this background, there is concern at the number of term-time holidays being taken by pupils at the request of their parents. We are not in a position to refuse these holidays, but in accordance

with Dumfries & Galloway Council policy, these holidays are recognised as 'unauthorised' absences.

If a family holiday is judged to be important to the well-being and cohesion of the family following a serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic event, the holiday will be marked as authorised.

Homework

We give homework for a variety of reasons:

- to allow practice and consolidation of the work done in class
- to allow for preparation for future classwork
- to provide opportunities for individualised work
- to assess pupils' understanding of the work being covered
- to allow pupils to develop good study habits
- to encourage ownership and responsibility for learning
- to encourage pupils to realise that learning takes place both in and out of school.

Pupils can expect homework from the majority of subjects, although the amount will vary from subject to subject. In general, pupils will receive more homework in the upper stages of secondary school than in the earlier years as they prepare and revise for national examinations.

All pupils should make use of the Satchel1 (Show My Homework) system to ensure homework deadlines are met. Parents can also monitor their child's homework using Satchel1, where you can see homework set, approaching deadlines and the submission status of assignments. Additionally, Satchel1 will provide parents with information on detentions or upcoming events.

Assessment and Reporting

We want pupils to see assessment as part of their learning; so they can acknowledge their progress. Pupils will also prepare for tests in certain subjects, training them to cope with national examinations in the senior school.

Assessment in S1-S3

Assessment is seen as an integral part of teaching and learning in that it helps measure pupils' progress whilst also informing the teacher and pupil about issues in learning. Just as in primary school, pupils are assessed against set standards, namely Curriculum for Excellence levels, rather than against each other. In this way, they are able to chart their progress as they move through their curriculum.

To gain experience in sitting formal exams, pupils will sit a diet of S3 exams across most subjects.

Assessment in S4-S6

In addition to on-going assessments that are an integral part of the learning and teaching process, we have to focus on preparing pupils for success in external examinations in the senior school.

In most subjects pupils will sit a practice exam, sometimes called a 'prelim'. These examinations are important as training and preparation for SQA exams, as pupils work within a time limit, and they are scheduled between January and February, at a time that best suits pace of learning and course coverage. Where possible, exams are scheduled around teaching time to avoid disruption to other courses.

Reports and Parents' Evenings

We report on pupils' progress through a tracking system at various points during the school year. Teachers comment on progress, attitude, effort in class and in homework tasks and, in S4-S6, contain information about dates of assessments. Dates of when parents can expect reports will be published on the school website.

Each stage has a Parents' Evening (advertised by letters to parents and/or in pupil reports) at which parents may discuss pupils' progress with subject staff and Pupil Support staff. If parents are unable to

attend and wish to meet with teachers, alternative appointments can be arranged during the school day.

Pupil Profiles

A profile is a snapshot of a child's or young person's best achievements at a given point in time. Profiles are primarily aimed at learners and their parents and draw together a range of information about a child or young person's learning. Ownership of the profile lies with the pupil although we will guide our pupils in the creation of his/her profile. In the profile, pupils can record their achievements as learners, both within and outwith school. Nationally it has been agreed that profiles will be produced at the P7 and S3 stage, but we will be encouraging pupils to update their profile throughout S1-S6. This ongoing process will be linked to our Tracking and Reporting system so that pupils can reflect on their learning at a similar time to comments on their progress being made by their teachers.

The end of S3 represents an important milestone as this sees pupils moving from the Broad General phase of Curriculum for Excellence into the senior phase where they can focus their learning on subjects related to their chosen career path. The profile produced at the end of S3 will give a reliable and full account of their progress and achievements to date, focusing on what pupils feel are their latest and best successes. This leads well into the work done in the senior school as pupils start to write their CVs, job applications and personal statements for college, university, or work.

We welcome parental involvement with your child's profile.

Helping the School

We welcome parent/carer volunteers in school or to help with school events or run extra-curricular activities. Please contact the School office and one of the members of staff in the office will contact the appropriate member of staff or Parent Council. Be assured that we will follow up your offer of support!

Helping your Child

In addition to the advice contained in the previous section on homework, we encourage all parents and carers to be active in their parenting role to help their child perform to his/her best in school. This involves the following:

- Taking an active interest in your child's learning and providing him/her with a quiet place to do homework, checking that it is done with care
- Ensuring that your child adheres to the school dress code and brings the correct books and equipment to school
- Ensuring that your child attends regularly and is on time
- Sharing responsibility with us in school for your child's behaviour

- Contacting us if you have concerns about your child
- Taking an active interest in what is happening in school and attending Parents' Evenings, Information Evenings, etc.
- Please consider keeping your child's phone at home. They do NOT need it at school.

Useful Information

For more information on parental involvement or to find out more about parents as partners in their child's learning, please contact a member of Pupil Support or Senior Management

or visit the Education Scotland website – <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>



Pupil Support

It is the role of all staff in the school to foster a positive, caring and inclusive ethos in which all pupils are supported in their learning and in their health and wellbeing.

Pupils will also be assigned a Pupil Support Teacher, whose role includes:

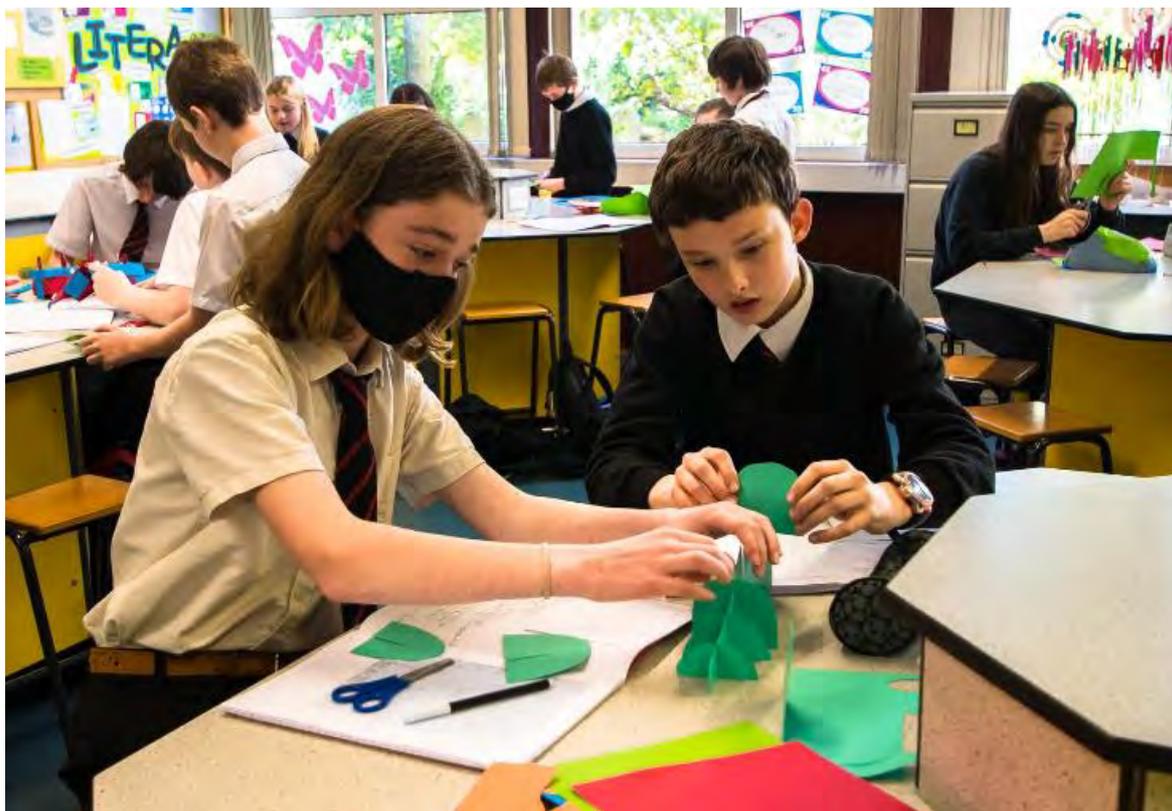
- Pastoral care of pupils in their caseloads, including interviews at key points in their school career to offer support and guidance.
- Support with pupils' learning, working with teachers, the Additional Support for Learning Department and outside agencies to remove barriers to learning and to ensure pupils are able to work to their potential.
- Behaviour support, working with pupils and parents/carers to resolve behaviour issues which arise.
- Curricular and vocational advice, including support with subject choices and post-school destinations.
- Liaison with parents/carers and outside agencies to provide support for pupils.

Pastoral Care

At Kirkcudbright Academy we operate a House System, taking a team-based approach to the pastoral care of pupils. In S1 each pupil is assigned a House – McLellan, Selkirk or Stewart – and a tutor; pupils attend a 30 minute Universal Support Period 2 times a week with their UPS Tutor. It is the role of the UPS Tutor to get to know their pupils well and to have regular Learner Conversations to offer support and advice to pupils. In S1, pupils will also be assigned an S6 Buddy to support them with the transition to Secondary.

UPS Tutors work alongside the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support for each House, and inform them if further intervention is needed to provide support for any pupil. Pupils are encouraged to approach their UPS Tutor or Pupil Support Teacher if they wish to discuss any problems in terms of their learning or their health and wellbeing.

A member of the Senior Management Team acts as Head of House for each of the three Houses, and meets regularly with Pupil Support Staff to discuss strategies for supporting young people, including meetings with parents or the support of outside agencies such as the School Nurse, CAMHS, Skills Development Scotland and Social Work.



Additional Support for Learning

If your child needs extra help or support, in addition to that which is usually provided in school, they can be said to have Additional Support Needs. Children may need additional support for short or long periods of time and for a variety of reasons. The reasons can include specific disabilities, social and emotional problems, behavioural difficulties, bullying or identified learning difficulties.

At Kirkcudbright Academy, we are proud of our inclusive practices that demonstrate our commitment to developing the broad range of talents and abilities that exist in our school.

We provide support for pupils through a combination of in-class support and individual or small group tuition.

Our team of teaching and non-teaching staff provides support in a variety of ways:

- in class support for individual pupils and groups
- liaising with subject teachers with regard to curriculum development
- providing teachers with information about pupils and how to overcome barriers to learning
- withdrawing pupils from class for support targeted at particular weaknesses, or in special circumstances
- supporting pupils with individualised reading, writing or spelling programmes (e.g. Paired Reading)
- providing additional support for pupils in tests and national examinations
- devising Individualised Education Programmes (IEPs) with clear learning targets
- providing and delivering appropriate and challenging courses in S4-S6
- linking with feeder primary schools from an early stage in the transition process to ease pupils' transfer from one phase of schooling to the next
- working closely with external agencies to support pupils leaving school to start work or college
- helping to co-ordinate and contribute to the teaching and learning of pupils with English as a second language
- overseeing the use of individualised computer programmes and other technological support.

Pupils who have an IEP normally have one of the Department teachers as a named Key Worker, who

devises the support programme for the pupil and is a specific contact point for parents. Pupils' progress is kept under review and any plans and support changed as necessary. As a parent, you will be closely involved in any review process. There will be several opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress through informal discussion with the teacher or at Parents' Evenings or through more formal, focused meetings with all agencies involved. You should discuss and agree with the school how you would like to be involved.

If you have any concerns about your child, you should contact your child's Pupil Support Teacher. They will make arrangements to discuss your concerns and decide, with you, a course of action. There are a number of ways in which concerns can be followed up. This may involve the input of other educational professionals such as specialist teachers, Educational Psychologists or external agencies such as health authority staff. If, after discussion with all concerned, it is felt appropriate, your child will have an educational plan agreed which will identify how they are to be supported.

A small number of children may require a more detailed planning process which co-ordinates the input of education and other agencies to fully support the child. This plan is called a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP). The CSP process is managed by Education Officers with responsibility for Additional Support for Learning.

Further information on all of the above is available from the school or on the Council website.

Child Protection and Anti-Bullying

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children and young people live safely and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway is that they should be safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, 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.

The school has a Child Protection Policy which, in line with national guidelines, outlines advice, strategies and support on a number of issues which concern the protection of children from abuse. We readily liaise with Social Services and other external agencies to work together in the best interests of our pupils. Further information is contained within the Child Protection Policy for Schools, Pre-School and Child Care Services which is available from the school and the Council website.

Within school, we believe that pupils are entitled to enjoy their educational experiences without fear of harassment from any sector of the school population. To achieve and ensure this, we have an active anti-bullying policy which is applied consistently and promptly throughout the school. Pamphlets explaining our approach to bullying incidents are issued to parents and the issue is addressed within the HWB programme.

Our Mentors in Violence Prevention programme uses senior pupils to educate other pupils and promote an ethos of Honesty, Equality, Aspiration, Respect and Trust, as per our School Values.

Kirkcudbright Academy is a community where each individual can play his or her part in promoting an atmosphere which encourages tolerance, understanding and mutual respect. Respect for oneself and others is the starting point from which we can develop our anti-bullying approach within the school community.

We aim to do the following:

- create positive relationships at all levels
- show concern for the welfare of others through words and actions
- be sensitive to the feelings of other people
- show respect for differences in gender, race and beliefs.

A summary leaflet or full copy of the school's anti-bullying policy is available from the school on request and is issued to all parents when their child starts S1.



Education Maintenance Allowance

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a means tested weekly allowance payable in two week instalments in arrears during term time only. It is intended to encourage students to stay on at school in post-compulsory education. Applications are available from the school office.

For further information on the EMA programme please contact:

Pupil/Parent Support Unit

Tel: 01387 260493

Email: educationmaintenanceallowance@dumgal.gov.uk



Career Pathways

Career Choices

Within school, pupils have access to careers support through a variety of means:

- **Pupil Support Staff** - Staff have access to a wide range of resources relating to vocational pathways. Pupils, particularly seniors, work closely with Pupil Support in exploring different vocational and academic options.
- **Careers Advice (Skills Development Scotland)** - This provision operates through appointments for individual pupils, pupils self-referring and through a lunchtime Drop-In Clinic.
- The Careers advisor is in school on a weekly basis and has a significant input to the school's PHE programme, the School Careers Evening and the Parents' Evening for S4-S6.
- **Computer-assisted research** - Pupils have access to "My World of Work", a national data-base of careers and entry routes to Higher Education. The website <https://www.planitplus.net/> has a wealth of information on careers and education.
- **UCAS Applications** - In the senior school, UCAS applications are processed using the UCAS electronic mailing system. This provides a very efficient means of dispatching university/college application forms.
- **School Careers' Evening** - Parents and pupils have the opportunity to meet with representatives from further and higher education as well as employers and training agencies.

- entering further or higher education, participating in the national training programmes, or taking part in personal and social development opportunities offered through community learning and development
- the right financial support must be available to ensure that young people make choices based on the most appropriate learning for them, rather than on the amount of money offered
- the right information, advice and guidance must be available to make sure that young people know what opportunities are on offer, how those fit with their own needs and ambitions, and how they will progress.

Every young person leaving school at their earliest opportunity is entitled to further learning opportunities to help them develop skills for their future.

Employability Link Workers work with those young people who need extra support to keep learning. These include young people who have not been attending school or are dealing with personal issues and difficulties. What we do is work with each person to find a learning opportunity that is positive, enjoyable, based on their needs and that they can take responsibility for. We have two Employability Link Workers who work directly with young people on a one-to-one basis to find out more about each person and their issues and interests in order to get the best learning programme in place. When the young person is happy with the learning programme that has been identified they will be asked to sign an Activity Agreement where they agree to follow the programme of learning and activities.

16+ Learning Choices

16+ Learning Choices is a Scottish Government commitment to giving every young person an entitlement to learning at least until age 18. It is part of the Curriculum for Excellence.

The key aspects are:

- the right learning provision must be in place - a range of options, including staying on at school



Work Experience

S5

A small group of S5 pupils opt for work experience for different reasons. The first group is pupils for whom a full curriculum is not appropriate and who gain from practical, hands-on experience for future employment. The second group is pupils who opt to devote part of their study time to work experience to gain further insights into a possible career, possibly one which has tough entrance requirements for study at university and for which a work placement is highly regarded.

S6

Pupils can opt to do a work experience placement as part of their timetabled week, usually for part of a day or a full day. For many study routes and career choices, this is essential, both in terms of preparation and entry requirement for the study/ career and as a way of helping pupils to decide if this career will suit them.



Support Available

As pupils move into the senior school, there are various elements in their curriculum to help them prepare for future careers, whether they intend leaving school at the end of S4, S5 or S6. We do this in a variety of ways, calling on the expertise which exists within Kirkcudbright Academy and that of our colleagues in other agencies:

- At the beginning of each session all senior pupils complete a questionnaire detailing their career intentions and indicating when they propose to leave school. This information is used by Pupil Support staff to determine appropriate support for individual pupils over the coming session.
- The Careers Evening in November allows pupils contact with various employers and colleges/ universities at a time when pupils are making subject choices for the next year.
- Support from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) means that the Careers advisor is in school weekly to meet with pupils who have been referred by Pupil Support staff. In addition, there is a weekly drop-in session where pupils can access the Careers Officer.
- At various stages in S4-S6. Pupils use the Internet to access information about employment opportunities/requirements and courses for further study so that they became engaged in career planning, they are given advice and practice in writing CVs and they practise interview skills and techniques.

Leaving

- Pupils are encouraged to attend ‘taster’ days and, in S6, open days at various colleges or universities so that they make informed decisions about future study. In S6, pupils are invited to attend the Higher Education Convention, organised by Skills Development Scotland.
- Pupil Support staff meet with pupils on an individual basis to support pupils as they prepare for and make applications for jobs/further study. They also bring to
- We use the careers notice board to draw pupils’ attention any job vacancies that are advertised to us.
- The local Rotary Club offers senior pupils the opportunity of a mock interview to prepare them for the real interview that they will face for a job/study place.
- Our Additional Support for Learning department arranges transitional reviews to help pupils with additional support needs as they prepare to leave school.
- We always ask pupils who leave school to tell us their intended destination so that they can be followed up by SDS if they have no positive destination – and, on an informal basis, we can track the progress of a lot of our former pupils through siblings or friends who still attend Kirkcudbright Academy.

Leaving Dates

Pupils who reach the age of 16 by 30 September of any year may leave school on 31 May in that year.

Pupils who reach the age of 16 between 1 October and the last day of February (inclusive) may leave school at Christmas in that school year. Pupils may leave only on the authorised dates, unless they have stayed on after their authorised leaving date and attained the age of 16. Before leaving, pupils must obtain a leaving slip from the School Office. It should then be signed by all the pupil’s teachers and the Rector/Depute Rector (Senior School).

Achievements

We take great pride in the achievements of our pupils, whether that is in examination performance, sporting or musical excellence, personal effectiveness and improvement, caring for others or, indeed, in any chosen specialism or area of participation. We encourage youngsters to do their best as individuals and as members of teams and, while our academic record as one of the highest achieving schools in Dumfries and Galloway, has been maintained and extended in the past decade, this sample of recent achievements gives an indication of just how impressive our young people are:

- The English department encourages public-speaking and debating through the very successful yearly competition, Youthspeaks. Pupils also create and enter poems in the yearly National Poetry Day competition.
- Various Sports awards
- Music Achievements – Showcase, numerous school bands, Junior and Senior School Choir, Ceilidh Group, much success in ABRSM Music exams. Pupils from Advanced Higher Music class are involved in tutoring younger pupils in Kirkcudbright Academy and Primary.
- Pupils performing at regional level in the Regional choir and the Dumfries and Galloway Youth Jazz Orchestra.



Improvement Plan and Priorities

- Drama – school pantomimes, One Act Play competition
- Lessons from Auschwitz – most years pupils take part in the ‘Lessons from Auschwitz’ programme during November. Pupils visit Auschwitz as well as attending seminars where they are spoken to by survivors and historians. This experience is then shared with younger pupils.
- Maths Challenge – pupils take part in local, regional and national competitions for the intermediate and junior section of the UKMT challenge each year.
- Voluntary work and fund-raising – volunteering in the community and raising funds for various charities.
- Winners of Rotary Young Chef Competition, representing the school in the regional finals which we hosted.

We are fortunate to have a staff of committed and talented teachers who do their utmost to ensure that we have developed a broad and varied curriculum to cater for the diverse needs of our pupils. We are equally fortunate to have the support of the parent body and, in particular, of a dynamic and proactive Parent Council. We are proud of our successes but we still strive for improvement, recognising that we can always do better. We try to lead by example, encouraging our pupils to aspire to greater things whatever their abilities, talents and interests.



Each year, the school will publish a Standards and Quality Report providing all stakeholders with a comprehensive summary of the school’s work and learners’ achievements over the last year. The first part of this report provides an overview of the school’s progress in addressing its key priorities, while the second part gives information about, for example, how well pupils are learning and achieving; how well the school is supporting children/young people to develop and learn. We also produce a School Improvement Plan which outlines the key priorities for the school during the year ahead. 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.

The current School Improvement Plan has, as its central goals, the effective implementation of Curriculum for Excellence and the continuing improvement of the facilities and skills that enhance the learning experience of our pupils.

In summary, the key priorities are:

- Raising Attainment through learning and teaching
- Embedding The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

These priorities reflect the developments that are required to deliver Curriculum for Excellence. Alongside these, we continue to work hard to ensure the individual and collective professional development of our teaching and non-teaching staff, thereby addressing quality assurance in terms of both what we do and how we do it.

Additionally, the improvement plan recognises the importance of working in partnership with the community around the school and seeks to strengthen those relationships.

Health and Safety

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 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. It is essential that we hold the accurate contact details for your child - i.e. your own home and work number and a telephone number of an emergency contact. We ask, too, that contact details are available to us for both home settings if your child stays in more than one home.

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 absolutely 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.

The school may be closed early on days when weather conditions are extremely bad e.g. snow lying and drifting heavily. In such conditions, some pupils may be at risk, either because of the conditions under which they have to walk home, or because of the distance they would have to walk after getting off the school bus.

We will do our utmost to ensure that pupils make contact with home before leaving school to ensure that you know that school is closing. The school will broadcast a "groupcall" text message to keep you informed of the situation.



Leaving School Premises

It is important for us to know that our pupils are safe and simple rules have been established to ensure that we know their whereabouts during the school day.

- During morning interval, all pupils must remain on campus.
- S1 pupils remain on the school campus during lunch time
- Other pupils can leave the campus at lunch time each day but must ensure that they are back in good time for afternoon classes.
- If a pupil needs to leave school during the school day for whatever reason – e.g. appointment, feeling ill – he/she must come to the School office so that contact can be made with home and a parent comes to pick him/her up. It is helpful if we are told about appointments in advance.

Emergency Procedures

To ensure pupils and staff know what to do in an emergency, and to meet our legal and moral obligations, we practise the emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures on multiple occasions throughout the year. Please contact the school if you would like further information about these drills.

Health Care

Education & Learning Directorate is committed to ensuring that all children are able to fully participate in the life of the school. Many children will require health care needs to be met at sometime within the 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, we ask that you contact us in school to discuss arrangements. Full details of the support available and your role as parents and the role of your child are contained within the policy "Health Care in Schools 3-18 (2013)" which is available from the Council website.

Pupils who feel unwell during the school day should report to the school office. Should it be necessary to send your child home, you will be contacted to arrange this. In this connection, you will be asked to inform us how to contact you in an emergency or whom we should contact if you are not available. If your child phones you to ask you to collect them, please ask them to go to the school office so we can look after them, and so we know where they are.

While we would prefer that appointments are made outwith school times, pupils are allowed to attend dental and medical appointments at times within the school day. They should produce their appointment card and sign out at the school office and sign back in once they return to school.

The School Health Team work in partnership with the school to help pupils achieve their optimum in health and to develop life skills as they approach adulthood. The main focus of work carried out is health promotion and preventative health care. The School Health Team will inform parents/ guardians at the appropriate time of any immunisation programmes carried out in the school.

Employment of Pupils

If a school is notified by a pupil that he/she intends to take up part-time employment and that this employment falls within the terms as set out in

"Part-time Employment: A Young Person's Guidelines", there are procedures for schools to follow. These procedures are detailed within "Part-Time Employment of Pupils – Procedures for Secondary Schools" which is available on the Council Website. Regulations governing the employment of school children prohibit the employment of children under the age of 13 (except by a parent or guardian for light agricultural or horticultural work). There are regulations about the times and hours of employment for children of 13 and over and they prohibit work in certain occupations.

It is also worth stressing that the demands of National Qualifications in S4, S5 and S6 are considerable and students are expected to undertake several hours of work at home on a regular basis. It is not advisable for a student to attempt a number of National Qualification courses and a demanding part-time job. This is a recipe for overload and failure: students who work long hours in a part-time job are less likely to achieve good passes in examinations. Although part-time work can play an important role in preparing pupils for life after school, we would urge all pupils and parents to consider carefully the best way to achieve the right balance between part-time work and study.

Data Protection

Your child's personal data will be held by the school. All personal data is held on our secure school management information system. We will ensure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date and each year you will be sent an Update Form detailing the information held by the school for you to check and update as required.

Access to the school management information system is by individual user and is password protected. Furthermore, access to confidential data is restricted to staff in school as appropriate.

Your school will also ask for your consent to take and use images of your child during the course of the school year. This permission will be obtained when your child starts school or at a new school, but you can amend your permission at any time by contacting the school office.

Data Protection

All schools in Dumfries and Galloway are expected to record any unusual incidents or concerns they may have about a child. Normally this information will be shared with parents or carers when issues of concern arise. This information may also be shared with other agencies, such as Social Work. This allows all agencies who come into contact with children to make the best decisions for each individual child and to make sure they get the help they need when they need it.

If the school feels that any child may benefit from assessment or support from another agency and do not have child protection concerns they will always talk to parents or carers about this first.

Images of Pupils

We regularly keep a record of school events, with photographs of pupils featuring greatly. On occasion, photos may appear in local papers or media. The authority has a policy on the use of images and you will be asked to read this when your child enrolls with us and to clarify your consent with regard to the use of images of your child.

Use of Internet

As part of the whole learning process, we allow pupils 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 updated regularly. When pupils join Kirkcudbright Academy, they receive a copy of our policy for responsible use of IT facilities. We ask parents and pupils to read the document to ensure that they are aware of our expectations for responsible use of our network system. Pupils will gain access to the system once a signed agreement is returned. Thereafter, use of the system is monitored to ensure that it is as safe and secure as possible.

School Security

In line with national measures to improve pupil safety, the school is monitored by closed circuit television cameras and by a fob entry system at all doors. All visitors (including parents) should enter the school by the main door and report to the school office. Visitors who require access to the school will be issued with a visitor badge. This also contains important information about our emergency procedures.



Addresses and phone numbers

Education Authority Link

Gillian Brydson - Director of Skills, Education and Learning
Dumfries and Galloway Council
122-124 Irish Street, Dumfries, DG1 2PB
01387 260427

Associated Primary Schools

Headteacher - Auchencairn and Borgue Primary Schools – Mrs E Jarvis

Auchencairn Primary School

Auchencairn

Castle Douglas

DG7 1QU

01556 640236

Email: gw08officeauchencair@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Borgue Primary School

Borgue

Kirkcudbright

DG6 4SH

01557 870249

Email: gw08officeborgue@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Headteacher - Kirkcudbright Primary School - Mr D Stevens

Kirkcudbright Primary School

St Mary's Wynd

Kirkcudbright

DG6 4JT

01557 332610

Email: gw10officekirkcudbri@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Headteacher – Gatehouse and Twynholm Primary Schools - Mr J Riley

Gatehouse Primary School

Gatehouse of Fleet

DG7 4JX

01557 814262

Email: gw08officegatehouse@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Twynholm Primary School

Twynholm

DG6 4NY

01557 860235

Email: gw08officetwynholm@ea.dumgal.sch.uk