

"MY CHILD LOVES THIS SCHOOL.
EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE IN IT IS
BRILLIANT!" PARENT



PROSPECTUS

DUNCLUG

PRIMARY

SCHOOL

“The children are all well behaved, mannerly, helpful and this all comes down to great staff input. As a parent of four, it has given me great reassurance to know that my kids enjoy going to school so much.”

PARENT



WELCOME

A very warm welcome to Dunclug Primary School. Thank you for taking the time to read our prospectus. Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions that you will make as a parent. I hope that as you browse these pages you will be able to gather something of the ethos of our school. It aims to convey to you the quality of education and the friendly, nurturing environment for which we are renowned.

The pupils at Dunclug Primary School know that they attend a caring, happy and supportive school. Academic standards are high and positive behaviour, hard work and learning go hand in hand with mutual respect, courtesy and kindness.

Above all, we aim to establish a community wherein pupils, teachers, parents and support staff enjoy a sense of belonging and have an important part to play.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you require any additional information. Enquiries and school visits are always very welcome.

Alastair Beacom BEd MEd PgDip
Principal



OUR SCHOOL BUILDING

A Proud Past and an Exciting Future!

Dunclug Primary School is situated on the north side of Ballymena within easy reach of the many growing residential developments and the surrounding rural areas of the borough. The school shares a superbly facilitated site with Dunclug Nursery School and Dunclug College. We are fortunate to have extensive grounds with separate playgrounds allocated to different age groups, a multi-purpose sports field, fruit and vegetable gardens and several large grass areas with hedgerows and trees.

The school was opened in 1971 and was named after the townland of Dunclug, meaning 'fortified hill.' The name symbolises the school as a focal point in the community on the north side of Ballymena. Dunclug Primary School is a controlled, co-educational, all-inclusive primary school. We welcome children from all religious and ethnic backgrounds and social classes. Children with a disability or specific learning difficulty are also most welcome.

Facilities include several learning support rooms, a well-stocked library, ICT stations, several resource areas, an assembly hall and a separate dining room with meals prepared on site. All classrooms are well equipped and have interactive white boards alongside computers, laptops and iPads with safe and supervised internet access.

Outside, a superb outdoor play facility promotes this crucial aspect of the curriculum and is in daily use by a variety of classes. We also have a large playing field, an attractive quiet play area with seating and several raised beds for classes to grow their own vegetables. Resources are constantly improved and extended through the support of a very active parent and teachers association.

“This school has made such a difference for my kids. I wish I had have moved them to Dunclug Primary School sooner. ”

PARENT



Our Vision

To provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment where pupils are nurtured and challenged to fulfil their potential and grow to be happy, confident and responsible young people.

Board of Governors

The school's Board of Governors bring a wealth of enthusiasm and commitment to ensuring Dunclug Primary is an effective school, meeting the needs of the children and the community it serves. They make decisions in areas such as curriculum content, finance, community links, pastoral care, child protection and promoting good behaviour. The governors work closely with the Principal and staff to ensure all children fulfil their potential in all areas of the curriculum.

Staff

Our classes benefit, not only from their own dedicated teachers and team of classroom assistants, but also from the contribution of a wide range of auxiliary and ancillary staff permanently employed on site. In addition, learning support staff, music tutors, sports coaches and many others visit the school every week, providing a valuable network of support for our staff and pupils.

“They support my child in every aspect of her school life. She loves everything about the school.”

PARENT



CURRICULUM

Dunlug Primary School is committed to delivering the Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum. The school embraces innovation, while retaining traditional best practice.

3 Stages of the Primary Curriculum

Foundation Stage: P1 & P2 Key Stage One: P3 & P4 Key Stage Two: P5, 6 & 7

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in six Areas of Learning. These include:

Language & Literacy	Mathematics and Numeracy	The Arts	The World Around Us	Personal Development and Mutual Understanding	P.E.
To include talking & listening, reading & writing	Focusing on the development of mathematical concepts & numeracy across the curriculum	Including art & design, drama & music	Focusing on the development of knowledge, skills & understanding in geography, history and science & technology	Focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and mutual understanding in the local and global community	Focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities.

Our dedicated teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies and resources, depending on the needs of the children and the subject being covered. Activities are carefully matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities to ensure effective learning.



ASSESSMENT

Pupil progress is monitored closely daily and pupils are formally assessed in literacy and numeracy in September and May each year. This progress is discussed with parents through parental consultation and end of year reports sent home in June.

How will I know how my child is doing?

- *Parent-Teacher consultations are held twice a year in October and February*
- *An appointment with your child's class teacher can be arranged, should you wish to speak about your child's progress*
- *An open day takes place in December*
- *A comprehensive annual written report is issued in June*
- *A summative Record of Achievement is issued in Primary 7 celebrating a child's achievements, both academic and non-academic, while at Dunclug Primary School.*

HOMEWORK

At Dunclug Primary School we believe that homework can play an important part in reinforcing the learning which has taken place in the classroom. Homework is often further practice of work already learnt in school and may include reading, spellings, number facts and written activities. Homework should be an enjoyable experience and last between 15 and 45 minutes depending on the age of the child.

- Parents can help their child by:
- Setting a regular time for homework.
- Ensuring there is a suitable surface to work on, away from distractions
- Showing an interest in homework, signing it each night and informing the teacher if their child is having difficulty.

TRANSFER PROCEDURE

The school ensures all children are well prepared for admission to secondary level education. The majority of pupils transfer to Ballymena Academy, Cambridge House, Dunclug College, Slemish College, St Louis Grammar or St Patrick's College.



RE AND UICT

Religious Education

We offer a programme of Religious Education throughout the school. Religious Education is provided within class and also at our weekly assemblies where we have visits from local ministers.

Pupils may be withdrawn from RE teaching, if desired, following a written request and consultation with the principal.



U.I.C.T.

Using Information Communication Technology (U.I.C.T.) plays a significant role in the curriculum at Dunclug Primary School, enhancing learning and teaching in all classrooms.

All pupils have access to a wide range of U.I.C.T. resources. All classrooms are well equipped and have newly purchased interactive white boards alongside computers, laptops and iPads with safe and supervised internet access.

At Dunclug Primary School we understand the responsibility to educate our pupils in E-Safety issues. We aim to teach our pupils appropriate behaviours and critical thinking that will enable them to remain safe and responsible when using the internet, both in and beyond our classrooms.



MUSIC

Music plays an important part in the life of our school. Music is taught throughout the school and pupils from all classes have the opportunity to take part in regular music workshops. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument from Primary 4 onwards. Experienced tutors offer lessons for Strings, Woodwind and Brass instruments.

Children have the opportunity to develop their music skills by joining our very successful school choir. Pupils perform at school and local church events, Radio Cracker, local nursing home visits and cross-community concerts with local schools.

MUSIC HUB

We are fortunate to have our own specialised music room at Dunclog Primary School. Our 'Music Hub' was built in memory of Mrs Shirley Cochrane who sadly passed away in December 2021. Shirley's family & friends kindly raised money in lieu of flowers, to create this Music Hub at the centre of our school; as well as funding the purchase of musical instruments and music lessons. This lasting legacy combines Shirley's love of music and her desire for all children with differing needs and abilities to reach their potential in an inclusive school setting. The Music Hub is a busy part of our school with pupils' music lessons and music workshops taking place here every week.



OUTDOOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY GARDEN

We are delighted to have our own school community garden for our pupils, parents, staff and visitors to enjoy.

We were able to develop this garden thanks to funding from the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful: Live Here Love Here school pollinator grant scheme.

Within our community garden, we have several fruit tree orchards, a willow dome, a large polytunnel, wild flowers areas and over a dozen raised beds for different classes and groups of pupils to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

We also have a wildflower meadow area of our school field - this contains hedges and a vast array of wild flowers and trees to encourage wildlife and biodiversity within our school grounds.

Above all, it is a lovely area for our children to learn, play, relax, sit and enjoy the world around them!



FOREST SCHOOLS

Our pupils love taking part in Forest School lessons (outdoor learning) throughout each term. We often use the People's Park for these lessons. Our school gained official Forest School status in 2019 and since then we have continued our involvement with Forest Schools Northern Ireland by regularly promoting the benefits of outdoor learning.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Our school partnership with Kindfund Hope Primary School in Kenya continues to go from strength to strength. This partnership programme involves a range of activities for pupils from both schools to benefit from. Amongst other topics, it looks at the work of UNICEF, the rights of the child and the value of education. As part of the British Council Connecting Classrooms project, some of our staff have spent time teaching (during their summer break!) in Kindfund Hope PS in remote North Kenya.

Thanks to the British Council for funding this programme - helping our pupils understand the big issues that shape our world and equipping them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make a positive contribution.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Each year we offer a range of extra-curricular activities. Some of these are run by outside providers and others are run by our dedicated teaching staff. Examples of some of these include:

Tag Rugby Hockey Athletics
Choir Football French Drama
Computers Cycling Proficiency
Board games Dance club
Art and Design Crafts
Scripture Union Science
Gardening Club Eco Club
School Council
HeartStart Training

Our teams compete regularly in many tournaments with other schools, enjoying great success.

Breakfast Club as well as after school clubs have all proven popular with busy parents and provide pupils with the opportunity for an extended school day.

“I love all the after school clubs especially football and tag rugby.”

P7 PUPIL

EDUCATIONAL VISITS & VISITORS

We welcome a wide range of visitors into school throughout the year, both to work with individual classes and to join us for our weekly assemblies. Pupils also make educational day visits to places of local interest. In upper Key Stage 2 residential visits are also organised.

Feedback from recent Education and Training Inspectorate Reports (2014 and 2017):

“A range of activities beyond the classroom.”



LEARNING SUPPORT



At Dunclug Primary School, we recognise that not all pupils progress or develop at similar rates and where children are experiencing difficulties, extra support and assistance is provided by our learning support team so that these children too can reach their full potential.

Our learning support team, coordinated by a full time designated learning support coordinator, work in partnership with children, parents and relevant outside agencies to ensure equality of access to all.

When necessary, individual education plans are agreed upon which target specific areas in the child's development. The child's progress towards meeting these targets is carefully monitored and their progression supported by all involved in the child's development.

“For us as parents to a child with differing needs, the school is so much more than being about the building. Dunclug Primary School has renewed my appreciation of the Northern Ireland education system!” PARENT

SPECIALIST SEN PROVISION

We are very pleased to host two Autism Support Centres at Dunclug Primary School.

This small group, specialist provision enables children with Special Educational Needs to access the same curriculum as other children but at a pace more suited to their needs. The pupils integrate with the pupils from the mainstream classes throughout the school day. These learning environments are coordinated by the class teacher and classroom assistants.

“The school gives the most precious and valuable thing to parents and children with SEN - “hope”. Pupils are treated with unconditional acceptance and the whole school ethos of inclusivity and openness is outstanding.” PARENT

Feedback from recent Education and Training Inspectorate Reports (2014 and 2017):

**“Children’s learning benefiting from differentiated work in class and well-structured withdrawal classes,
Good achievements and standards,
Committed staff meeting the individual needs of the children.”**



PASTORAL CARE

At Dunclug Primary School we are committed to providing each pupil with the best opportunities to develop academically, emotionally, physically and socially. We strive to provide the best for every pupil.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

At Dunclug Primary School we have a responsibility for the care, welfare, safety and therefore the learning environment of all our pupils and staff. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them to learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

The arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection are set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy which is given to all new parents and updates are regularly provided. Copies are also available on our website: www.dunclugs.com

The purpose of the school's procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works at our school - teachers, non-teaching staff and adult volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse of a child is suspected. All staff receive child protection training each year and visitors report in and out wearing visible passes. All of our learning community are involved in our policy development and all parents are regularly given information relating to safeguarding and child protection.

Any Safeguarding issues should be reported to:

Designated Teacher:

Mrs McKay

Deputy Designated Teacher:

Mrs Thompson

Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal:

Mr Beacom

Designated Governors:

Mrs M Hayes

Mr S Beatty



POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

We have a system of positive rewards and encouragement for desirable behaviour and a system of sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Parental support is essential to maintain high standards of behaviour. We expect parents to give our Positive Behaviour Policy their full support.

The purpose of our school's positive behaviour is to:

- Encourage and praise good behaviour;
- Prevent and discourage inappropriate behaviour;
- Deal with inappropriate behaviour in a fair and consistent manner;
- Develop behavioural skills in the pupils that will benefit both them and the community in which they live and learn creating a calm, learning culture
- Have effective whole school anti-bullying procedures.

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in school. Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim.

Feedback from recent Education and Training Inspectorate Reports (2014 and 2017):

“Welcoming and caring ethos

Very good pastoral care provision

High levels of care, guidance and support.”



**At Dunclog Primary
School, our pupils
are taught to be:**

Ready

READY TO LEARN AND PARTICIPATE IN
SCHOOL LIFE

Respectful

RESPECTFUL OF THE INDIVIDUAL
DIFFERENCES, OPINIONS AND VALUES OF
EACH OTHER

Safe

SAFE IN OUR ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS
TOWARDS OURSELVES AND OTHERS

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOURS

The playground is supervised from 8.45am and classes commence at 9am.

After a short settling in period P1 children finish at 2pm along with P2 and P3.

P4–P7 children finish at 3pm.

Morning Break (all pupils): 10.30–10.45am

Lunch Break P1–P7: 12.20–1pm

SCHOOL MEALS

Our School Kitchen staff, led by Mrs Angela Gregg, are an indispensable part of our school community. Angela and her team provide the school meals for seven local primary schools including our own. Not only do they provide our daily Breakfast Club, they also provide cooked break and delicious homemade dinners. Throughout the year, they organise unique themed days with special menus and competitions. Examples of these theme days include World Book Day, Children in Need, Christmas Party, Valentines and Summer picnic days.

Menus are provided in advance and all meals are cooked on site and served in our school dining hall. If you require any additional information on allergens or special diets please contact the school office.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Our breakfast club is very popular and runs every day from 8.30-8.45am.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All pupils should wear the Dunclug Primary School uniform with pride.

Boys

Grey trousers (long or short)

Blue polo shirt

School sweatshirt

Dark socks

Black shoes

Girls

Grey skirt or pinafore

Blue polo shirt

School sweatshirt

Grey or white socks

Black shoes

Blue and white summer dress

In the interests of safety, we would ask that no jewellery is worn to school.

All school uniform including other items such as school coats, hats and PE bags are available to purchase at the school office.



“Both myself and my husband attended the Primary school as children so it was inevitable that our kids would go. The staff are really friendly and encourage my child in every aspect of her school life.”

PARENT

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND INDUCTION OF NEW PUPILS

Dunclug Primary School adheres to a fully inclusive admissions policy. We welcome applications from all families. Parents considering sending their children to the school may contact the Principal if they wish to arrange an appointment to visit. The school also holds an open afternoon at the beginning of December.

Children who are admitted to Dunclug Primary School embark on a programme of induction commencing in June. To begin to establish an effective home/school partnership, Primary One children and their parents attend an Induction Afternoon prior to school commencing to meet the teacher and receive information. A Parent Information Event is held in September and Parent Consultations in October and February.

At the beginning of September pupils come to school for a shorter period. After this initial settling in time children stay in school until lunchtime. From the third week in September, the school day for P1 ends at 2pm.



AND FINALLY...

Thank you for taking the time to read our prospectus. We hope that you are impressed with what we have to offer and how we aim to provide the very best that education has to offer your child. However, no prospectus can ever provide a complete picture of the life of a school. Please come and see Dunclug Primary School first hand and experience its happy atmosphere - you will be assured of a very warm welcome. If you would like to arrange a visit or if you have any other enquiries please contact us.

“Dunclug Primary School is a lovely safe environment and the teachers are so approachable.”

PARENT



“Simply, this is more than a school, a home from home for your children, a place where your child will be loved and part of a beautiful family.”

PARENT



"LOVELY TEACHERS AND STAFF. VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL. MY CHILDREN LOVE TO GO TO SCHOOL." PARENT



DUNCLUG PRIMARY SCHOOL

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