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East Dunbartonshire Council

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Merkland School



Handbook 2021-2022

Head Teacher – Kay Hunter
DHT (Primary) – Amanda Braid
DHT (Secondary) – Jim Paterson

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Introduction by Head Teacher

We are really proud to be able to share with you all the exciting and innovative activities we take part in at Merkland School. We hope you find this handbook useful and informative and that it will reflect the exciting times we are currently in.

Merkland School is a primary and secondary school for children and young people with additional support needs. We strive to ensure that all learners are supported and motivated to achieve their potential – both academically and socially. We work within the Scottish Government’s policies and guidelines with a strong focus on ‘Getting it Right for Every Child’ by ensuring that all our learners are supported to ensure that they are safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. We work to provide a range of opportunities that are relevant to their needs both now and in their positive post-school destinations.

Through our individualised curriculum and range of additional supports, we provide appropriate learning systems to meet the needs of each pupil. We look to our wider community to ensure that our young people access a range of opportunities and are able to learn the skills necessary to progress within both their academic and social learning. A vital part of this progression is ensuring that everyone is working as a strong team around the child in partnership with parents and carers in order that consistency of approach can take place across all settings.

I hope that our new Handbook will give you as much information as possible about our school, the staff and the opportunities which are available to our children and young people. As always, please feel free to contact me at the school if I can provide further information.

Kind regards,

Kay Hunter



Merkland School

Handbook 2021-2022





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Section 1

Accommodation and Facilities

Merkland School is designed as a ground level Campus. It consists of a main school building with additional accommodation provided by eight modular classrooms. There is a PE hall for Physical Education, a section of which is used to provide a dining area for pupils. The school also has a language and communication support base and a Well Being Base.

Currently we also have 2 primary classes based in Gartconner Primary School Monday to Wednesday each week and a secondary class based in St. Ninian's High School; also Monday to Wednesdays.

Classrooms are equipped to provide education for all Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) areas:

- Health & Wellbeing,
- Languages,
- Mathematics,
- Sciences,
- Social Subjects,
- Technologies,
- Expressive Arts,
- Religious & Moral Education.

The school campus also includes two play areas for primary and secondary pupils and an outside teaching area and gardens which were created through a project linked with local businesses. S5 and S6 pupils can also use two social areas within the main building of the school. Within the grounds of the school there are facilities for cycling proficiency. CCTV cameras and additional external lights have now been installed to cover all areas of the property and increase security.

Support Staff and management supervise the playgrounds at intervals and lunch breaks as required by the Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990.

The nearby Merkland Recreational Playing Fields provide additional facilities for all outdoor recreational activities such as football and athletics. Merkland school pupils are also able to access a play park adjacent to Holy Trinity Primary School.



School Information

Name	Merkland School
Official Address	Langmuir Road, Kirkintilloch, G66 2QF
Head Teacher	Kay Hunter
Telephone	0141 955 2336
Website	www.merkland.e-dunbarton.sch.uk
Email address	office@merkland.e-dunbarton.sch.uk
Status	Inter-denominational Co-Educational Additional Support Needs
Agreed Capacity	Parents should note that the working capacity of the school may vary dependent upon the number of pupils at each stage and the way in which the classes are organised.
Stages Covered	Primary 1 to Primary 7 Secondary 1 to Secondary 6
Current Roll	Total 98

It is difficult to estimate the likely intake of pupils into the additional support needs sector. There has been a steady intake into the primary and secondary departments.



The school day is as follows:

Primary Pupils				
09.00 - 10.30	10.30 - 10.45	10.45 - 12.15	12.15 - 1300	1300 - 1500
Classes	Morning Break	Classes	Lunch	Classes

Secondary Pupils								
9.00	9.30	10.20	11.10	11.25	12.15	13.05	13.50	14.40
9.30	10.20	11.10	11.25	12.15	13.05	13.50	14.40	15.30
Reg	Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Lunch	Period 5	Period 6

N.B. Please note that whilst Covid restrictions are in place all Secondary Pupils shall finish at 15.00 every day.

PE	All pupils in Merkland School attend PE 2 hours each week in line with national guidelines, however some pupils will take part in further activities dictated by personal programmes.
Assemblies	Assemblies take place throughout the session depending on need and school focus.



School Staff

Management Team

Kay Hunter	Head Teacher
Jim Paterson	Depute Head Teacher
Amanda Braid	Depute Head Teacher
Stewart McRae	Principal Teacher Primary
Alisdair Marshall	Principal Teacher – Broad general education
Lynsey O'Donnell	Principal Teacher Secondary

Primary Department

Julie Fortucci /	
Christine Fitzpatrick	Primary Class 1
Lorna Waddell / Isabel Young	Primary Class 2
Sandra Cochrane	Primary Class 3
Amanda Murray	Primary Class 4
Steph Morrison	Primary Class 5

Secondary Department

Kariann Steele	Art
Mark McBryan	English
Pat Orr	English
Siema Ashrif	English/Maths
Kirsten Murray	Home Economics
Alan Douglas	ICT Co-ordinator/Technical
Martin Cairns	Maths & Science
Stewart Cochrane	Drama/Personal Development
Fraser McGuinness	ICT
Claire Parker	Music Teacher (Part time)
Alison McGugan	Physical Education
Lloyd Kinnaird	Physical Education
Raymond Poli	Pupil Support Resource Co-ordinator/Maths
Alistair Cochrane	Science
Helen Connolly	Spanish/English
Steven Kenny	Social Studies/ Religious and Studies
Nicky Graham	Class Teacher

It should be noted that the number of teachers is adjusted each session in relation to the size of the school roll.



Support Staff

Lynda Ritchie	Support Services Coordinator
Karen Fairbairn	Admin Assistant
Jacqui Harris	Admin Assistant
Jillian Bruce	Clerical Assistant
Flora MacKinnon	Early Years Worker
Lorraine Carstairs	Support for Learning Assistant
Elsie MacDonald	Support for Learning Assistant
John Paul Conroy	Support for Learning Assistant
Pauline Church	Support for Learning Assistant
Michelle Furphy	Support for Learning Assistant
Tracey Gallagher	Support for Learning Assistant
Amy Harkins	Support for Learning Assistant
Deborah Jones	Support for Learning Assistant
Elizabeth McCluskey	Support for Learning Assistant
Alisha McGowan	Support for Learning Assistant
Karen Maley	Support for Learning Assistant
Claire Mileham	Support for Learning Assistant
Josie Murray	Support for Learning Assistant
Frances Thain	Support for Learning Assistant
David Sewell	Support for Learning Assistant
Kylie Smyth	Support for Learning Assistant
Emma Leitch	Support for Learning Assistant
Ailsa MacDonald	Support for Learning Assistant
Ross Thom	Support for Learning Assistant
Sharon Young	Support for Learning Assistant
Caroline O'Donnell	Site Co-ordinator/Team Leader
Fiona McKeown	Facilities Team Leader
Elizabeth Turner	Facilities Assistant
Pamela Hutton	Facilities Assistant
Frances McArthur	Facilities Assistant
Cate Morris	Facilities Assistant
Maura Donaghue	Facilities Assistant
Elizabeth Steele	Facilities Assistant

Supply Staff

Emma Allanach (Goold)	Secondary
Cathy McCallum	Secondary
Emily Devlin	Primary
Lucy Roy	Primary



School Calendar 2021 – 2022

August 2021 https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-learning/school-holidays	
Teachers return (In-service day)	Tuesday 10 August
In-service day	Wednesday 11 August
Pupils return	Thursday 12 August
September 2021	
September weekend	Friday 24 September to Monday 27 September (Inclusive)
Pupils return	Tuesday 28 September
October 2021	
In-service day	Friday 08 October
October break	Monday 11 October to Friday 15 October (Inclusive)
Pupils return	Monday 18 October
December 2021 and January 2022	
Christmas and New Year (end of term)	Thursday 23 December to Tuesday 04 January (Inclusive)
Pupils return	Wednesday 05 January
February 2022	
February break	Monday 07 February to Tuesday 08 February (Inclusive)
In-service day	Wednesday 9 February
Pupils return	Thursday 10 February
April 2022	
Easter break	Monday 04 April to Monday 18 April
Pupils return	Tuesday 19 April
May 2022	
May Day (closed)	Monday 02 May
In-service	Thursday 05 May
May weekend	Friday 27 May to Monday 30 May (Inclusive)
Pupils return	Tuesday 31 May
June 2022	
Last day of school	Wednesday 22 June



Section 1

Attendance and Absence

Attendance at School

Section 30 of the 1980 Education Act lays a duty on every parent of a child of 'school age' to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Attendance must be recorded twice a day, morning and afternoon.

Regulation 7 of the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Amendments, etc. Regulations 1993 requires each child's absence from school to be recorded in the school register as authorised i.e. approved by the authority, or unauthorised i.e. unexplained by the parent (truancy) or temporarily excluded from school.

Un-notified Absence Policy

It is East Dunbartonshire Council's policy that parents should notify their child's school if their child is going to be absent. In some instances, it might not be possible for parents to pre-notify the school of an absence because their child may have become unwell during the night. In these circumstances, parents should notify the school before registration begins.

If parents do not inform the school of their child's absence, the school will take action to find your child. This will involve contacting you and, where necessary, your emergency contact person(s). If these actions are not successful, the school will ask the school's Attendance Officer to visit your home. In some exceptional circumstances, where the school believes your child could be at risk of harm, contact will be made with the Police and/or Social Work. Parents should also give their child a note on his/her return to school confirming the reason for absence.

Family Holidays

Every effort should be made to avoid family holidays during term time as this seriously disrupts a child's education and greatly reduces learning time. It should be noted that it not only has an adverse effect on a child while he/she is absent from school, but also leads to extended disruption to a child's education for a period of time when he/she returns to school after the family holiday. Family holidays will only be regarded as authorised absence where prior agreement from the school has been obtained and where it is judged the holiday is important to the wellbeing and cohesion of the family, following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events.

Parents may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to make an extended visit to relatives. This leave will be regarded the same as a family holiday but will be recorded separately from school holidays for attendance purposes. Requests should be made in writing detailing the destination and the duration.

Clearly with no explanation from the parents, the absence is unauthorised.



Information regarding exceptional closures

We make every effort to maintain a full educational service, but on some occasions circumstances arise which lead to disruption. Schools may be affected by, for example, severe weather, temporary interruption of transport, power failures or difficulties of fuel supply. In such cases we shall do all we can to let you know about the details of closure or re-opening. We shall keep you in touch by using letters, notices in local shops and community centres, announcements in local churches and announcements in the press and on local radio. There will also be updates on the website www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk.

(a) Parental Communication with School in Case of Emergency

It is important that parents keep contact with the school to a minimum in the case of an emergency. When you telephone the school you will be asked for a contact number and your message will be repeated back. Please ensure the pupil's name, class and/or teacher's name is given.

Where possible you should telephone before 2.30pm if there are any changes to childcare arrangements.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

We are keen that you should be completely satisfied about your child's education and we encourage feedback on our services from parents and pupils. We are, therefore, interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be comments, compliments, or complaints.

If you want to register a comment of any type about the school you can do this by writing, e-mailing, telephoning or making an appointment to see someone. All feedback is welcome and keeps us in touch.

If, in particular, you have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that these things are shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than being allowed to damage the relationship between the family and the school. There will be no negative consequences arising from making a complaint and we will deal with the issue as confidentially as possible.

In relation to making a complaint:

- Stage 1 – Frontline resolution, we will always try to resolve the complaint quickly and to the customer's satisfaction wherever we can. This resolution will be provided within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Stage 2 – Investigation, if you are dissatisfied with the decision at stage 1, the complaint will be investigated, acknowledge in three working days and decision provided as soon as possible but within twenty working days.
- If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, our reply will include the contact details.
- You should also note that you have the right to raise unresolved concerns with your local councillors, MSP or MP.



Section 2

Parents Welcome

All East Dunbartonshire Schools welcome parental involvement as research has shown that when parents are involved children do better in school.

It is the policy and practice of the school to encourage parents to visit or contact the school at any time to discuss any matter in relation to their child's education. We welcome comments and opinions from our parents who can leave feedback by phone, email, letter or using the 'Get in Touch' page on our website. We make every effort to ensure we are an 'open' school and strive to reply to contacts within 24 hours. Parents also have the opportunity to leave feedback at the end of each parents' night.

In addition to this overall policy certain planned methods of contact have also been arranged:

- Review Meetings,
- Parents' Nights,
- Curricular Meetings,
- Newsletters,
- Home/School Diaries.
- Twitter feed,
- Text alerts,
- E-mail,
- Website,
- Calling our office to speak to staff directly.

We encourage parents to become involved in the life of the school and to support their child's learning at home and are happy to offer advice and support to families on an individual basis.

Parental Involvement

Parent Councils

Parent Councils are the formal representative body for parents / carers with children attending school. Parent Councils are different in each school to enable them to meet the needs of parents / carers locally.

Parents are welcomed to be:

- involved and engaged with their child's education and learning;
- be active participants in the life of the school; and
- express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with their children's schools.

All parents / carers are automatically members of the Parent Forum at their child's school. As a member of the Parent Forum all parents can expect to –



- receive information about the school and its activities;
- hear about what partnership with parents means in our school;
- be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you;
- identify issues you want the parent council to work on with the school;
- be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and the education it provides;
- work in partnership with staff; and
- enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way possible.

The Parent Forum decides how their representatives on the Parent Council are chosen and how the Parent Council operates. Parents / carers are encouraged to volunteer or put themselves forward to be chosen as representatives of the Parent Council if they wish.

The main aims of the Parent Council are:

- To support the school in its work with pupils
- To represent the views of parents
- To promote contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of Early Learning and Childcare education (*if applicable*) and the community
- To report to the Parent Forum
- To be involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.
- To raise funds for the school for the benefit of pupils (in some schools the PTA fulfils this role).

Parent Council Office Bearers

Chairperson	P. Wright
Parents	E. Ates S. Couttie S. Clark A. Lyden M. McConway L. McCotter L. McManus S. Rhead E. Smith
Merkland School Staff	S. Cochrane
Adviser to School Board	K. Hunter
Clerk to the Board	J. Bruce

Please contact the Parent Council at :- pcouncil@merkland.e-dunbarton.sch.uk

For more information on parental involvement or to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>



Joint Merkland /Campsie View Parent Council

Merkland and Campsie will be merging in a fantastic new facility projected to open in term 2022/2023.

Merkland Chairperson	P. Wright
Campsie View Chairperson	C. Fuller
Secretary	
Trustee	
Staff Representatives	K. Hunter A. Douglas

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The PTA is mainly responsible for arranging events for parents and raising funds for the school. Volunteers are welcome - please contact the PTA if you want to join in.

Friends of Merkland (previously Parent Teacher Association - PTA)

Friends of Merkland School (FoMS), a parent run fundraising organisation has an important part to play in the life of the school.

The FoMS meets several times a year to organise fund raising events and social gatherings where parents and teachers can meet in less formal surroundings.

The FoMS contribute generously to school resources.

The following parents and staff can be contacted for further information:

Chairperson	L. McCotter
Treasurer	S. Clark
Secretary	E. Ates
Trustee	K. Stewart
Staff Representatives	K. Hunter A. Douglas

For more information on parental involvement or to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>.

The FoMS is mainly responsible for arranging events for parents and raising funds for the school. Volunteers are welcome – please contact Kenny Stewart, via the school office, if you want to join in.

The Scottish Parent Teacher Council is the national organisation for PTAs in Scotland and runs an independent helpline service for all parents.



They can be contacted by phone on 0131 226 4378, fax 08707065814 or email on sptc@sptc.info or write to SPTC, 53 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2HT.

The national Parental Involvement Strategy can be downloaded from:-
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/pages/14/>

The Scottish Parent Teacher Council is the national organisation for PTAs in Scotland and runs an independent helpline service for all parents. They can be contacted by phone on 0131 226 4378, fax 0870 706 5814 or email on sptc@sptc.info or write to SPTC, Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BB.

Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion

In East Dunbartonshire, all children and young persons are entitled to participate fully in a learning community which promotes equality of opportunity and seeks to protect against all forms of discrimination.

The school believes that pupils and staff have the right to learn in a caring and safe environment. Staff will not tolerate any behaviour or attitudes which lead to staff and pupils being humiliated or harmed because of their age, race, colour, language, nationality, ethnic origin, cultural and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, marital status and disability.

The Equality Act (2010)

The General Equality Duty was created by the Equality Act (2010) and replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties. The duty came into force in April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The school is committed to the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and as such we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between children and young people who share a characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between different groups.

The school will take cognisance of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Technical guidance for schools in Scotland' in the development of its policy and practice.

A copy of this document can be obtained from all schools in East Dunbartonshire Council, and from the Chief Education Officer who is based at The Marina, Strathkelvin Place, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow G66 1TJ. Tel: 0300 1234510.

Development of Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Cultural and Social Values

The school is committed to supporting the development of its pupils as whole people and as a result, wishes to encourage their development in spiritual, moral, social and cultural terms.



These key human aspects of learning are supported through the following arrangements by:-

- Creating a school ethos which, in every way possible, gives value to these aspects of development, especially by providing an overall atmosphere that is both caring and challenging and which provides opportunities for the development of personal responsibility.
 - Promoting social and moral learning through the way in which disciplinary issues are handled.
 - Ensuring that staff and adults within the school provide positive models for pupils.
 - Arranging regular gatherings of the school as a community and using such occasions to encourage and reinforce the values on which the school is based.
 - Enriching the curriculum in all appropriate areas with an emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Providing opportunities within the curriculum to advance personal and social development.
-
- Providing a programme of religious education in which consideration will be given to responses to basic questions relating to the meaning, value and purpose of human life.
 - Providing a programme of moral education.
 - Taking every appropriate opportunity to acknowledge, value and appreciate the various cultures and heritage of the pupils and to encourage them to appreciate and value the cultures and heritage of others.

East Dunbartonshire Council's Anti Weapon / Knife Crime Policy can be found at:-

<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwi6uZn2x5rfAhXN-KQKHWDMCjEQFjAAegQICRAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.snct.org.uk%2Flibrary%2F2438%2FAnti-weapon%2520and%2520knife%2520guidance%2520EDC%2520Final%2520June%252017.docx&usq=AOvVaw20SmMOGWewjRXAs63toing>



Section 3

In Merkland School we have a single overarching aim:

“to be the best we can be”

In Merkland School we aim to create a caring atmosphere in which each pupil will feel happy and secure throughout their school career. We recognise that all of our pupils are individuals and do not necessarily share the same abilities, encounter the same social problems or possess the same degree of awareness of self-esteem. We therefore have a responsibility to develop the social and personal as well as the cognitive potential of all our pupils and celebrate their achievements accordingly with certificates in classes, at assemblies and through our assessment and reporting procedures.

Merkland School consists of two departments, primary and secondary. Each department has a Depute Head responsible for the overall pastoral care of all the children and young people in their departments.

In addition each secondary class group is allocated a Guidance/Registration teacher. Classes meet with the Guidance Teacher each morning from 9:00 to 9:30.

A home school diary facilitates communication between guidance staff and parents. The guidance structure is overseen by both Depute Heads of P1 – S3 and S4 – S6. In the secondary department, where appropriate, guidance teachers will follow their guidance group onto the next school session. This provides consistency and promotes the development of good relationships between staff, pupils and parents.

Pastoral Care and Support for Pupils

We aim for our pupils to feel happy and secure in whatever activity they are taking part. All staff, teaching and non teaching, are encouraged to approach the care of our pupils in a positive way, reinforcing the philosophy and ethos of the school. The Staff are encouraged to supervise the pupils at all times within all areas of the school. Minor issues involving any child which arise within the classroom or in the playground are dealt with by the class teacher or the member of staff on duty. A child or young person's parents or guardians may be contacted by the Head Teacher or member of the management team if it is felt necessary to involve them in dealing with a particular concern or situation. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns or worries. We encourage parents to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters which may affect their child's work or behaviour in school. Parents should contact a member of the management team if urgent support is required.



Pupil Council

Our pupil council is made up of 1 pupil from each of our secondary registration classes and 2 members of staff. The council meets once a month.

Every year, pupils have the opportunity to campaign within their registration classes for a position on the council. All pupils are encouraged to put themselves forward for nomination to the pupil council and then give a short speech about why they think they should be chosen. Representatives are then chosen in a class vote by their peers to represent the class.

Pupils are encouraged to speak to their class representative if there are any issues or concerns.

All reps are expected to show exemplary attitude and behaviour, and be mature in their approach to representing the views of their year group.

The Pupil Council motto reads:

“The Merkland Pupil Council exists to help the staff and pupils of Merkland School listen to and understand the pupils’ views and ideas and thereby help to create change through taking into account these views whilst working with pupils in order to implement new ideas.”

Associated Primary, Secondary & Special Schools

As we are a “cross authority” provision we have links with many partnership schools and services. At present Merkland School has curricular and social links with the following associated Primary and secondary schools:

- Bishopbriggs LCR.
- Campsie View School.
- Castlehill LCR.
- Gartconner Primary.
- Holy Trinity Primary.
- Kirkintilloch High School.
- St Ninians’ High School.
- Primary Well Being Service.
- Secondary Well Being Service.
- Positive Achievements.
- Wester Cleddens ELR.

Merkland School has good links with local community churches and invites representatives from all faiths to lead services for primary and secondary departments during Christmas, Easter and special events such as leavers’ services.

Community Facilities

It is East Dunbartonshire Council Policy that school premises should be used out with school hours for the benefit of the community. A variety of organisations use the school in the evenings. These include the Rainbows and Scouts.



Requests for lets can be made to:

Community Learning and Development (School Letting Office)
East Dunbartonshire Council
Shared Services
The Marina
6 Strathkelvin Place
Kirkintilloch
GLASGOW
G66 1XT
Tel 0300 1234510 or email letting@eastdunbarton.gov.uk)

School Community Links

The school building is used to provide a play scheme during holiday periods for primary aged pupils with additional support needs.

Other partnerships which support our pupils are:

- Active Schools.
- Advance Construction.
- Ceartas Advocacy.
- EDLC Football coaches.
- Guala Closures.
- Local Shops.
- Positive Achievements.
- Tennis Aces.
- Whitehill Complex.

Further Information on other opportunities can be accessed with the school Twitter or by emailing the school office with a specific request.



Section 4

Curriculum for Excellence

Bringing learning to life and life to learning.

Curriculum for Excellence spans learning from 3-18 years. Its aims are to improve our children's life chances, to nurture successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens, building on Scotland's reputation for great education.

It develops skills for learning, life and work, bringing real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links knowledge in one subject area to another helping make connections in their learning. It develops skills which can enable children to think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of knowledge and skills. Every child is entitled to a broad and deep general education, whatever their level and ability. All teachers are responsible for the development of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

There is an entitlement to personal support to help young people fulfil their potential and make the most of their opportunities with additional support wherever that's needed. There will be a new emphasis by all staff on looking after our children's health and wellbeing – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure.

Promoting Wellbeing, Protecting and Safeguarding

The Scottish Government introduced **Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)** as a programme of change, reaching across all children and adult services in the public and voluntary sectors in Scotland, to achieve better futures for all of our children, young people and their families. It builds from universal health and education services and drives the developments that will improve outcomes for all children and young people. The Children and Young People's (Scotland) 2014 Act now provides a legal framework around these principles.

We want all our children and young people to be fully supported as they grow and develop into successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. We believe they should be: Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included. These are the eight indicators of wellbeing.

The Getting It Right approach is about how practitioners across all services for children and adults meet the needs of children and young people, working together where necessary to ensure they reach their full potential. It promotes a shared approach and accountability that:

* builds solutions with and around children, young people and families



- * enables children and young people to get the help they need when they need it
- * supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice
- * involves working better together to improve life chances for children, young people and families

To do this the Scottish Government has legislated that all children have a Named Person until the age of 18 who will coordinate services for them, should they require it. The Named Person for children in early year's settings is their Health Visitor and for those at school it is their Head or Depute Head Teacher. Young people under the age of 18 who have left school can access their Named Person via the Education Service.

Once a concern has been brought to their attention, the Named Person, needs to take action, help, or arrange for the right support in order to promote the child's development and wellbeing. Referring to the eight Wellbeing Indicators, they will need to ask these five questions:

- * What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
- * Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- * What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- * What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
- * What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

The Named Person also needs to help children and families feel confident they can raise concerns, talk about their worries to people who will listen and respect their point of view and work with them to sort things out. Above all, they will ensure that the child or young person's views are listened to and that the family (where appropriate) is kept informed.

To find out more about **Getting it Right** or to access the Named Person for your child, please inquire directly to the school office.

Primary Department

The class structure in the primary department is established at a 10-1 staff ratio. Class teachers differentiate the curriculum to meet the individual needs of their pupils. Programmes of personal and social development are of particular importance, with an emphasis on self help skills. Planned curricular outings provide opportunities for the practical development of social skills.

Within the weekly time table every primary pupil receives two hours physical education delivered by either the PE teachers or class teacher.

The primary curriculum also includes the types of activities which promote Enterprise in Education.



Secondary Department

The policy on class organisation in the Secondary department is the same as stated above, the maximum size of class grouping is 10 pupils.

Courses in S1, S2 and S3

S1 – S3 pupils follow a common course of subjects following the Curriculum for Excellence in line with the “Broad General Curriculum” guidelines and individualised according to the needs of each pupil.

S4, S5 and S6

S4, S5 and S6 are known as the Senior Phase within the School. Pupils follow SQA courses supplemented by National Qualifications Units and school based courses in other curricular areas appropriate to the needs of each individual young person. National 1, 2 and 3 courses are available for those pupils who are unable to meet the demands of an external examination.

Courses in S5 and S6

Senior Phase pupils are provided with an element of choice under the curriculum guidelines issued by the Scottish Government. It should be noted however that the range of course options depends on the pupil roll and staffing complement. In Merkland School, young people and parents are advised as to which subjects are most suitable in consultation with the pupils themselves; referring to the results obtained in national examinations and /or prior learning in S3.

At present in Merkland School all subject areas offer Units at National levels. Internal assessment takes place leading to SQA certification. Core skills i.e. Communication, Numeracy, Information Technology, Working with Others and Problem Solving are embedded throughout the courses on offer, allowing pupils to acquire credits to allow them to progress.

College links are set up in the senior phase to broaden the range of subjects available and to equip our pupils for life.

At the end of S4, when pupils reach the official school leaving age of 16 years, they can leave school and go on to a Further Education (FE) College or join a Preparation for Work Programme. Alternatively, they can stay on at school, continue with unit courses as part of the National Qualifications Programme or attend an FE College on a shared placement basis.

The World of Work

As part of the provision for young people preparing for adult life, we are constantly developing greater links with local industry and services. A significant aspect of this is the provision of work experience activities which in Merkland School are offered to the pupils in S5 and S6. The main aims of work experience are to further develop pupils’ work and inter-personal skills, and increase their self-confidence.

Enterprise in Education

Enterprise in Education is an important part of the educational experience of all young people. The opportunity of work, paid or unpaid, helps pupils gain knowledge and develop new skills, contributing to lifelong learning and personal growth. Enterprise in Education will continue to be developed for all pupils in the school. All pupils from Class 1 to S6 experience at least one enterprise activity each year.



School Minibus

Three school minibuses are available for any classes wishing to participating on educational visit or outing. They are regularly used for transporting pupils to and from sporting events, for swimming and for the short course programmes on Friday afternoons.

Skills Development Scotland

In Merkland School, pupils and their parents can access careers advice and information through the regular visits of the careers adviser. Support is tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and can involve one to one interviews or group works. The careers adviser also attends Transitional Planning meetings and Parents' Meetings in the school to offer information and advice. Out with school, they can be contacted at the local careers office.

Irene Travers

Skills Development Scotland

East Dunbartonshire Campus of Further and Higher Education

50 Southbank Road

Kirkintilloch

G66 1NH

Tel	0141 777 5860
Fax	0141 777 5878
Email	irenetravers@sds.co.uk
Website	myworldofwork.co.uk

Education for Global Citizenship

Citizenship has always been an important part of the ethos at Merkland School. We strive to create an environment where the basic values of fairness and respect for human dignity are developed in all pupils. Education for Citizenship therefore permeates the curriculum.

The school contributes to a number of fundraising activities and charities. The main ones being:

- Children in Need
- Comic Relief
- Luwero Fund
- Poppy Appeal
- MacMillan Cancer Support (World's biggest coffee morning).

Homework

Homework is seen by the school as a means of supplementing and consolidating the work of the class. Some aspects of school work by their nature do not require or lend themselves to homework but for those that do, homework exercises can include written work, reading, number work, solving problems, revising class work and research. The frequency of homework will depend on the individual pupil.



Sensitive Aspects of Learning

When pupils are to study sensitive aspects of learning such as sexual health, parenthood and drug awareness, parents and carers will be notified by mail to detail the content and scheduled time for the coursework. Parents can also phone the school with any concerns.

Religious Instruction and Observance

Religious and moral education will allow your child to explore the world's major religions as well as views that are non-religious.

Your child will think about the challenges presented by these beliefs and values and their place in the world. They will explore how religious and non-religious beliefs and values are expressed through traditions in religion, society and cultures. Your child will think about their own beliefs and values. It will support them to develop moral decision-making skills.

Your child will develop a better understanding of themselves, others and the wider world. Your child will develop their awareness that beliefs, values, practices and traditions are important to families, communities and society - locally and globally. They will develop a richer understanding of the world in which they live.

Parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious instruction and / or observance should contact the Head Teacher, in writing, and alternative arrangements will be made for your child.

Extra Curricular Activities

Many extra curricular activities are arranged throughout the year. These include lunchtime clubs as detailed below, sports fixtures such as football and cross country events and residential visits to outdoor education establishments in Scotland. There is also the opportunity to attend a ski trip in another country.

Certain activities will require parental consent to attend and for medication to be administered during residential stays. Parents will be informed of the details of all trips through letters and parental meetings. Learning outcomes, financial costs, behavioural expectations, supervision levels and accommodation will all be discussed during such meetings. In general, pupils will be allowed to bring their mobile phones on residential trips and will be allowed to use them at specified times during the day. During unspecified times, the phones will be kept by a member of staff in a locked room.

Lunchtime Clubs

- Art Club
- Common Room
- Football Club at Kirkintilloch Pitches (weather dependent)
- LGBT Club
- Mindfulness Club
- Table Tennis Club

We also have a Drama Club which operates once a week after school hours.



Section 5

Assessment

Liaising with and Involving Parents in their Child's Education

The Education Service is keen to ensure that it involves all parents appropriately and sensitively in their child's education. Under Education Law, "parents" include:

- Non-resident parents who are liable to maintain or have parental responsibilities in respect of a child;
- Carers who can be parents;
- Foster carers, relatives and friends who are caring for children under supervision arrangements;
- Close relatives, such as siblings or grandparents caring for children who are not "looked after and accommodated" by the local authority or are under home supervision (looked after) arrangements.

Everyone who is a "parent" (under Education Law) has the right to receive advice and information about their child's education and take part in activities.

The Education Service will treat all parents equally. The exception to this is where there is a court order limiting an individual's exercise of parental rights and responsibilities.

Schools collect information about a child's family circumstances on an annual basis. Where family circumstances change during a school session, it is important that parents inform their child's school of these changes.

Further information about how the Education Service seeks to work with parents is available in the publication *Schools, "Parents" and "Parental Responsibility": A briefing paper for schools and education support services under the management of East Dunbartonshire Council (2007)*.

This publication is available from schools or the Acting Chief Education Officer who can be contacted at:

East Dunbartonshire Council
The Marina
Strathkelvin Place
Kirkintilloch
Glasgow
G66 1TJ

Tel: 0300 123 4510

Email: greg.brember@eastdunbarton.gov.uk



Assessment is a means of obtaining information which allows teachers to make professional judgements about a pupil's learning. Teachers in Merkland School assess pupils in a variety of ways including observation, diagnostic assessment and national assessments. Merkland School places a great deal of emphasis on *Assessment is for Learning* approaches.

Pupils also have rights to assessment in relation to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. This could culminate in the opening of Coordinated Support Plans (CSP). A CSP is a legal document designed to bring together all agencies, additional to education, involved with the pupil to collaborate in the development and meeting of stated educational objectives.

In Merkland School we have developed new pupil friendly Individualised Education Plans. These are used to ensure pupils engage in and evaluated their learning.

During Parents' Evening and Reviews, parents will have the opportunity to discuss assessment profiles. Each year a parent's evening will be arranged for your child so that you can discuss your child's annual report in more detail with their teachers. These will normally be arranged at the end of the school day. Please note that the time for parents night can vary. However the school will inform parents by letter of exact timings. Details will also be available through the calendar on the school website.

Parents are also asked to attend one meeting each year discuss their child's progress. This meeting is chaired by one of our Depute Head Teachers and may be attended by representatives from Psychological Services, Speech and Language Therapy or Social Work. NHS representatives may also be invited if they are working closely with your child.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

In line with East Dunbartonshire Council policy of including every learner, a range of approaches are used at Merkland to support children and young people to **'be the best they can'**.

Individual pupil behaviour support plans will be written in collaboration with parents and revised regularly.



Section 6

Parents seeking a place for pupils in Merkland School will likely have been advised by another professional to visit the school. A visit can be easily arranged by telephoning the school or parents may wish to visit with the support of a professional who can arrange this on their behalf.

Registration and enrolment

The date for registration of new school entrants is advertised in all local Early Learning & Childcare Centres the local press and on the council's website www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk. It is normally in January each year. Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school, when they register their child. Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request. Parents of pupils who have moved into the catchment area or, who wish their child to transfer to the school, should contact the school office for information.

Before leaving an Early Learning & Childcare Centre, a transfer of information record for each child will be prepared by Early Year's staff to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of education for the child transferring to primary.

Primary School Admissions

When commencing Primary 1 education, your child will normally attend the local denominational or non-denominational Primary school (regardless of religion) and transfer from it, after Primary 7, to its associated Secondary school. Details of the catchment areas and boundaries can be obtained from the Education Office – Tel. 0300 1234510, or the relevant school.

Enrolment dates will be set by each school and the enrolment should be completed in January prior to the start of term in August. The authority will place adverts in the local press and nurseries advertising the date(s) for enrolment. Enrolment Forms should be completed on enrolment day at your catchment school. Parents are asked to bring the relevant birth certificate(s) and proof of residency when enrolling their child(ren).

You are still required to enrol your child(ren) at your catchment school even if you do not wish him/her to attend that school.

Enrolment timetables will also be available through the East Dunbartonshire Council website at www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk.

Children eligible for enrolment are those whose 5th birthday falls between 1st March and the end of February the following year.



Secondary School Admissions

Transfer Information will be issued to parents at the end of term one, in Primary seven.

If you wish your child to attend a secondary school other than the catchment denominational or non-denominational secondary school(s) for your home address, you will be required to make a Placing Request as detailed in the Placing Request section below.

You do not need to submit a Placing Request if you want your child to transfer from a non-denominational secondary school or vice-versa at the primary to secondary transfer stage, as long as the intended secondary school is still the catchment school for your home address. Parents of children who are planning to change from denominational to non-denominational or vice-versa between primary and secondary school should ensure that both the primary school and the intended secondary school know what is to happen.

Each year in the summer term, we arrange transition days for our primary pupils moving in to the secondary provision of our school. Pupils have to opportunity to experience a secondary education including meeting their new teachers and studying new subjects, moving from class to class period by period, attending the lunch hall at secondary times and joining the secondary playground. Pupils who are transitioning from other schools in the authority to Merkland School in S1 are also invited to join transition days. Parents are expected to support us to provide a successful transition experience by ensuring children are ready to be collected in the morning and for someone to be at home when they return. Parents and carers are also encouraged to discuss the experience with their child.

Merkland School staff have a wide range of experience when supporting children who have additional support needs. However parents of children who require assistance with managing their support needs during transition days are asked to please telephone the school to inform us of how we can best serve their child's needs.

Placing Requests

As a parent, you have the right to make a Placing Request for your child(ren) to be educated in a school other than the catchment school. Applications for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 Placing Requests to commence school in August will be accepted following the publication of an advert in the local press inviting applications in early December.

Every effort will be made to try to meet parental wishes, but you should note that it is not always possible to grant every Placing Request to a particular school. You should also note that a successful Placing Request for one child does not guarantee a successful one for another child. It may be, therefore, that a parent could end up with children at different schools.

Primary 1 children must also be enrolled at the catchment area school on the appropriate Enrolment Form whilst awaiting the outcome of their Placing Request Application. If the Placing Request is granted, the child's enrolment at the catchment school will automatically be withdrawn by the Education Office.



Placing Requests can only be approved when there are sufficient places remaining in the class after all catchment area children have enrolled and if staffing and accommodation at the school are able to meet the numbers of Placing Requests at that school. The Education Office can also reserve places in a class for future catchment pupils they expect to move into the area in the following school year.

If more Placing Requests are made for admission to a particular school than places available, these Requests will be prioritised according to East Dunbartonshire Council's Admissions Policy and requests accepted and refused accordingly.

Your Placing Request will be considered against a set of criteria which is set out in the Council's priorities for admission. Please refer to the Placing Request Application Form for more details.

Any Placing Requests received after the 15th March for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 will not be considered in the first round of Placing Requests. Parents / Carers will be notified of the outcome of their request within 2 months of receipt your Placing Request.

As soon as a decision has been made, you will be notified of the result. If your Placing Request is successful, you will be asked to contact the school to establish arrangements for enrolment.

Parents should note that in cases where your child is currently in attendance at a primary school as a result of a successful placing request, there will be the need for a further request to be made to transfer to the secondary school associated with the primary school. Parents should, however, be aware there is no guarantee that any such request will be successful and therefore contact should be made with your local secondary school to inform them of your intention to request a place in a school of your choice. Parents are requested to contact the education office to clarify this position if they are unsure.

Mid Session Transfers

You may make a Placing Request at any time during a school session. If your child is experiencing problems at school, you are advised to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher prior to making a Placing Request. Completing the Application Form does not guarantee a place for your child at your chosen school. Your Placing Request will only be granted if there are surplus places available at the school.

Transport for Placing Requests

If a Placing Request is successful, parents will be responsible for the safety and transportation costs of their child to and from their chosen school.



Section 7

Support for Pupils

Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs

East Dunbartonshire Council's policies, procedures and practices relating to children and young people with additional support needs are in line with the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 which place duties on education authorities and provide rights for parents of children with additional support needs and young people with additional support needs.

All children require support to help them learn. However there are some children and young people who need some extra support or support which is a bit different from the support provided for all children to make sure they benefit from school education. That support may come from education services but can also be provided by a NHS Board, Social Work, Skills Development Scotland, or independent and voluntary organisations. Children and young people in school who need extra support or a different sort of support from what is generally available have additional support needs.

These additional support needs can arise for lots of different reasons. The reasons why a child or young person may have additional support needs are too many to list here, however the following are examples:

That the child or young person:

- finds it difficult to behave in school;
- is hearing or visually impaired;
- has a particular health need;
- is living with parents who have a drug or alcohol dependency;
- has English as an additional language.

Some additional support needs may only last for a short period of time other additional support needs will be life long.

If you think your child may have additional support needs you should talk to your child's school or pre school provision about this.

All children and young people have their needs continuously assessed and reviewed. Your child's school will be able to show you their assessment of your child's needs and will send you copies of reports on how your child is progressing in school.

All schools and early years establishments in East Dunbartonshire look at children's needs through a process of staged intervention. This process allows teachers and others to

- identify those children who may need additional support;



- make plans to support those children identified;
- deliver the support the child requires; and
- regularly review the support provided.

In addition to the additional support which schools themselves can provide through individual planning or making specific resources available, schools can also request support from East Dunbartonshire Council's specialist educational support services. The Council can also provide individual children with special equipment and resources if necessary. Some children may also benefit from attending the special schools and specialist resources which East Dunbartonshire manages.

Parents have a very important role to play in their child's education and the views of parents and young people will always be taken account of in making decisions which affect the child or the young person. If your child requires additional support at school you can provide the school with important information about your child which will be helpful in making plans to support your child. Parents and young people will always be invited to participate in reviews of progress.

A small number of children and young people with additional support needs require a co-ordinated support plan (CSP). All of these children and young people will already have a plan provided for them in school which set out targets for their learning and timescales for achieving those targets. Parents, professionals and the child or young person can all be involved in regularly reviewing the plans. The CSP sets out the educational objectives for an individual which can only be achieved by services such as health or social work working together with education to support the child or young person i.e. where the support required must be co-ordinated.

If you have a concern that your child's additional support needs are not being met you should always, in the first instance, contact the school to arrange a time to discuss that concern. Every effort will be made by the school and the education authority to resolve your concern at that point. If you are not happy with the way the matter has been dealt with and you continue to have concerns you may be able to make use of one (or more) of the following:

- mediation
- independent adjudication
- the Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland to assist in reaching a satisfactory conclusion.

Further information is available at:-

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-learning/additional-support-needs>

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004/2009 places duties on local authorities to provide access to independent mediation for resolving disputes with parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs when or if they arise. East Dunbartonshire Council uses Resolve Scotland. For further information contact: 0131 313 8844 or go to www.resolve.org.uk



Merkland School supports children who have been assessed by East Dunbartonshire Council with having an additional support need. There is a very wide range of conditions that staff in the school are able to support.

Pupils may have a medically diagnosed genetic condition, be managing a physical disability, have been diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder or may be developmentally delayed. Placement at Merkland School would be preceded by a process of consultation between parents, the school, involved agencies such as Psychological Services, Speech and Language Therapy, Social Work Department and the authority's consultation group, GIRFEC group.

Merkland School aims to provide a mainstream primary and secondary experience for pupils at their academic level in smaller class sizes.

There are also link classes in a local mainstream primary and secondary school for pupils who are ready to learn, for part of the week, in a mainstream environment.

Support for Learning Services

East Dunbartonshire Council, in supporting inclusion in its schools, has a number of support for learning services.

These are:-

- Education Support Team which includes English as an Additional Language Learning Support (Secondary), Sensory-Hearing Impaired and Visual Impaired, Assistive Technology, Language and Communication Resources
- Wellbeing Support Service

The Services support pupils through:-

- Consultancy
- Continuing Professional Development
- Co-operative Teaching
- Curriculum Development
- Partnership Working

The named person for all pupils in Merkland School is our Head Teacher Kay Hunter who can be contacted by telephone or email through our school office. Our two Deputed Heads Jim Paterson (secondary) and Amanda Braid (primary) can also be contacted for information about your child's progress.

Supporting Families Service

The core purpose of this service is to provide support to families in developing their skills and confidence in their parenting and to provide services to children to enhance their development and learning. Examples of the services available include parenting workshops, individual support following the Triple P programme. Services also include a holiday play scheme provision for children and young people with additional support needs. If you wish to access any of the services please contact the team on 0300 1234510.



Protecting Children and Young People

East Dunbartonshire Council has issued Child Protection Procedures and Guidance which all staff must follow to promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm.

All adults must share the responsibility for promoting children's health and safety and ensuring, as far as possible, that all children are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Children cannot be expected to take full responsibility for keeping themselves safe. Professional staff must work together and in co-operation with families and carers to enable children to grow up in a warm, stimulating and safe environment.

Education staff are required to assist in the protection of children by:

- Creating and maintaining a positive and caring ethos
- Developing health and personal safety programmes
- Being observant of children's needs, views and concerns
- Reporting and recording concerns about the welfare or safety of children
- Monitoring and supporting children in co-operation with relevant professionals, parents and carers.

Education staff cannot keep secret any allegations or concerns about child abuse, even if a child or adult request this. Information or concerns that a child may be at risk of harm must be passed on in order to protect the child. Staff will treat the matter sensitively, and information will only be passed to those who need to know in order to protect and support the child.

If parents or others have concerns for any child, they can speak to the Head Teacher about this. They can also contact social work services and/or the police.

When a member of staff, a child or another individual provides information and the Head Teacher considers that there is a possibility that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the Head Teacher is required to immediately contact social work services to discuss the circumstances and agree the immediate action to be taken. School staff are then required to co-operate with any subsequent enquiries or support plans.

Every education establishment or service has copies of the East Dunbartonshire Council Child Protection Procedures and Guidance. These are available for reference from the Head Teacher.

Additional Support Needs

As with all local authority schools in Scotland, this school operates under the terms of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2009) and its accompanying Code of Practice. Further details of the policies and procedures can be found on the East Dunbartonshire Council website, and the school's Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator will be able to outline the support that can be offered in school.



Working with other agencies and professionals – for example, Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, National Health Service and parents – decisions are made with regards to the best possible education to meet the needs of the child within the resources available.

Parents, carers and children with additional support needs can also seek independent advice and support through:

Enquire: www.enquire.org.uk, 0845 123 2303

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, www.siaa.org.uk, 0131 260 5380

Take Note: National Advocacy Service for Additional Support Needs (Barnados in association with the Scottish Child Law Centre) www.sclc.org.uk, 0131 667 6633.

Autism Adviser

Every establishment has an Autism Adviser who is an established member of the school teaching team and who has been provided with training and ongoing support from a multi-agency team - led by an educational psychologist and a quality improvement officer. Every Autism Adviser is guided by a process of collaborative practitioner enquiry, which allows the school to develop the role of their Autism Adviser in response to the needs of their school context. Every Autism Adviser will be able to signpost colleagues to resources and sources of supports. While every establishment will use their Autism Adviser differently, the role of the Autism Adviser may include facilitating staff training within their school, supporting communication to parents/carers; planning for establishments' Autism Awareness Week; running a parents/carers' support group and supporting individual staff members using existing school structures (e.g. Pupil Support Group).

Specialist Support Service – teachers teaching in more than one school

The Additional Support for Learning Team makes provision for children and young people who have a range of additional support needs. The service comprises of teachers who work in the pre-5, special, primary and secondary sectors. Staff in the team work in partnership with staff in the establishments to plan and deliver an appropriate curriculum. The service also provides staff development and advice on resources.

The teams support the additional needs of:

- children with a significant hearing and or visual impairment;
- bilingual learners who are at early stages of learning spoken English;
- looked after and accommodated children and young people who are experiencing difficulties in school;
- children at early stages of primary school who have a developmental coordination disorder along with attention difficulties;
- young people who attend special provision units; and
- pre-5 children who have been identified as having significant support needs.

Pastoral Support

Each pupil in Merkland School has a registration teacher associated with their year group. All pupils attend registration periods each morning where staff focus on any pastoral issues which may have arisen.



Staff will manage many issues within the bounds of being a registration teacher. If further support is required staff can refer issues to one of our Depute Heads or to our Child Protection Coordinator.

During the day, if registration staff are unavailable, pupils can attend our “Duty Room” where a principal teacher is always present to manage any difficulties pupils may be having. Pupils are encouraged to return to class as soon as possible or, if unable, to complete their work for the period in the Duty Room. Pupils attendance at the Duty Room is recorded and analysed for any patterns which may be of concern.

All staff can make a referral to our Pupil Support Group for extra help for pupils. Pupils may have confided in them that they are struggling with an aspect of school, home or friendships.

At this point our Pupil Support Group would discuss any extra support we could offer. This could include learning support, counselling or the involvement of one of our link agencies.

Further information and support for parents of children and young people with ASN can be found at the following organisations identified under The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011:

- (a) Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as “Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning”, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527;
- (b) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- (c) Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO12741.”

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- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
- What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

The Named Person also needs to help children and families feel confident they can raise concerns, talk about their worries to people who will listen and respect their point of view and work with them to sort things out. Above all, they will ensure that the child or young person's views are listened to and that the family (where appropriate) is kept informed.

To find out more about *Getting it Right* or to access the Named Person for your child, please inquire directly to the school office.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, significant harm to the child. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Child protection" means protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. If a child's wellbeing is considered to be at risk, relevant information must always be shared. It is our public responsibility to protect children. Anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect should contact East Dunbartonshire Council Social Work Advice and Response on 0141-777 3000, or the Police. Each school has a designated Child Protection Coordinator, who will work with other professionals, children and where appropriate, families to safeguard children. The name of the Child Protection Coordinator should be displayed prominently within the school.



Section 8

School Improvement Planning

Raising Attainment

Monitoring performance and using the resulting information to secure improvement is an important part of the work of Head Teachers, school staff and officers within Education Services.

Standards and Quality Report

Every year each school publishes a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school's major achievements. This can be accessed on the school web site or a paper copy can be requested through the school office.

School Improvement Plan

Our school improvement plan can also be accessed on the school web site or a paper copy can be requested through the school office.

The ScotXed Programme

Education Authorities, the Scottish Government and its partners have, for many years, collected information about pupils on paper forms. The information is now transferred electronically through the ScotXed programme.

The following explanation has been provided directly by ScotXed:

Transferring Educational Data About Pupils

The Scottish Government and its partners collect and use information about pupils in schools (e.g. the number and characteristics of pupils, their attendance, absence and exclusions, their attainment and their destination when leaving school) to help to improve education across Scotland. This note explains why we need this information, how we use it and what we do to protect the information supplied to us.

Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the SQA and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland



Data policy

Information about pupils' education is collected through our statistical surveys in partnership between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the ScotXed Programme which aims to help schools and Local Authorities by supporting efficient collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. The Scottish Government then provides analysis of the data to support research, planning, management and monitoring of education services as well as to produce National Statistics publications.

Education data within Scottish Government is managed effectively by secure systems and is exploited as a valuable corporate resource, subject to confidentiality restraints. As part of its data policy, Scottish Government will not publish or make publicly available any information that allows individual pupils to be identified, nor will data be used by Scottish Government to take any actions in respect of individuals. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be made publicly available by Scottish Government.

The individual data about pupils in schools collected by Scottish Government through statistical surveys is used only for the statistical and research purposes for which it is collected.

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This note can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed>). Pupil names and addresses (other than postcode) are never collected in any ScotXed statistical survey.

Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, in order to help meet our aim of improving the life of young people in Scotland, we may make individual data available to partners such as the National Registers of Scotland to carry out research relating to the national population census and also to academic institutions and organisations to carry out additional research and statistical analysis which helps inform policy development and contributes to improving outcomes for Scotland's people. In order to carry out this research to support better decisions, policy making and practice, data may be linked to information from other sources.

Any sharing or linkage of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government, and will be consistent with our data policy and the National Data Linkage Guiding Principles. This will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing or linkage of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and outwith Scottish Government. At all times pupils' rights under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation will be ensured.



Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Head of Schools Analysis, Mick Wilson, at [**mick.wilson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk**](mailto:mick.wilson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to Education Analytical Services, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.



Section Nine

School Uniform

It is the policy of the Education Committee to encourage pupils to wear an acceptable form of school dress as determined by Head Teachers, Parent Councils and parents. In encouraging the wearing of school dress, account must be taken of any proposals to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race or gender. Any proposal will be the subject of widespread consultation with parents and pupils.

Parents are asked to co-operate with the school in encouraging the wearing of the school uniform.

Merkland School uniform is:

- Grey / black skirt or trousers,
- White shirt or polo shirt (embroidered polo shirts are available),
- Black sweatshirt / jumper or cardigan (embroidered are available),
- School tie.

Uniform items can be ordered from www.beschoolwear.co.uk. Ties must be purchased through the school office.

The uniform was agreed in consultation with parents, pupils, staff and the Parent Council. It incorporates a range of popular items of dress, e.g. sweatshirts, T-shirts.

Wearing school uniform contributes to a positive school ethos and helps avoid discrimination and reduces peer pressure to wear expensive designer clothing.

A school's reputation can also be enhanced in the local community by the wearing of school uniform and school security will be improved as it will be easier to identify intruders.

The appropriate clothing and footwear for PE is a T-shirt, shorts and gym shoes with non-marking soles. These are necessary for health and safety reasons and your co-operation is requested to ensure that pupils are equipped to participate in the PE lessons. – please note there is a requirement that all jewellery is removed prior to undertaking physical education activities.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled, particularly ties, sweat shirts and PE kit which are often lost. A protective apron or an old shirt should be worn for art and craft activities. Please help the school and the education authority by making sure that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive items of clothing to school.

Offensive clothing such as T-shirts or other items painted with obscene language or illustrations are not permitted. Football colours are also inappropriate as they can lead to incidents of rivalry.



Under no circumstances will pupils be deprived of any educational benefit as a result of not wearing uniform and, in particular, pupils will not be denied access to examinations as a result of not wearing school dress.

Parents are asked to assist by ensuring that valuable items and unnecessarily expensive items of clothing are not brought to school.

Parents/carers receiving income support or income based job seekers allowance or housing benefit or council tax rebate (not discount) or employment and support allowance (income related) will normally be entitled to monetary grants for footwear and clothing for their children. Parents who are in receipt of working tax credit and/or child tax credit may also be eligible, the Community Hubs and education office can provide more details. Approval of any requests for such grants made by parents in different circumstances is at the discretion of the Chief Education Officer. Information and application forms may be obtained from schools, the Community Hubs and the education office.

If you have any queries regarding the school's dress code, please contact the Head Teacher.

School Meals

We know that maintaining a healthy diet is linked to a happy and active lifestyle. By eating a school meal provided by East Dunbartonshire Council's School Meals Service your child is guaranteed a balanced nutritious meal to keep them healthy and alert throughout the school day.

The meals are freshly cooked on a daily basis by our skilled staff who care about food and your child's wellbeing. Our staff will help your child to make balanced choices. The meals meet the Scottish Government's nutritional regulations.

Any Special diets or allergies should be discussed with the school.

Free School Meals

Some families may be eligible for free school meals. Children of parents/carers receiving income support or income based job seekers allowance are entitled to a free midday meal. Children of parents who are in receipt of child tax credit or working tax credit and child tax credit or employment and support allowance (income related) or support under part IV of the immigration and asylum act 1999, may also be eligible. Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained from schools, the Community Hubs and the education office or www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk.

Only those children whose parents receive income support or income based job seekers allowance (and child tax credit were qualifying income criteria has been met) will be entitled to free milk. Milk may however, be available for purchase in the school during the lunch period.

All pupils in P1, P2 and P3 are entitled to free school meals.

Please do not apply for free school meals if your child(ren) is/are in P1, P2 or P3 as a meal will automatically be given.



Cashless Catering

Cashless Catering is now the means by which to pay for school meals. Each child will be provided with instructions and a code. Any questions or queries should be sent to cateringpayments@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

- For all pupils the cost is: £2.43 for a 2 course meal or £2.16 for a snack.

Packed lunches can be eaten in the dinner school.

Once pupils have finished their lunch they can go the playground where they will be supervised by staff until the start of the afternoon. Secondary pupils also have to option to attend one of the lunchtime clubs run by staff each day.

Please note that pupils are not allowed fizzy drinks and energy drinks containing high levels of sugar in school.

TRANSPORT

(a) General

It is a parents' responsibility to ensure their child arrives at school and returns home from school in a safe and responsible manner.

Primary Pupils

In order to assist parents in getting their child of school age to school safely and on time, the Education Authority has a policy of providing free transport to primary pupils who live one mile or more from their catchment primary school by the recognised shortest walking route.

Secondary Pupils

In order to assist parents in getting their child of school age to school safely and on time, the Education Authority has a policy of providing free transport to secondary pupils who live three miles or more from their catchment secondary school by the recognised shortest walking route. This policy is more generous than the law requires. This means that the provision of transport could be reviewed at any time. Parents who consider they are eligible should obtain an application form from the school or education office or www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk. These forms should be completed and returned before the end of February for those pupils beginning school in August to enable the appropriate arrangements to be made. Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year but may be subject to delay whilst arrangements are made.

Parents should note that no transport provision is made for home journeys for infants who may have a shorter day until September week end.

Children not collected by parents are supervised until the end of the normal school day.

Chief Education Officer has discretion in special circumstances to grant permission for pupils to travel in transport provided by the authority where spare places are available and no additional costs are incurred. This is known as concessionary travel and parents are required to submit concessionary travel



applications each year in the period June – July to ensure that consideration can be given to their request for concessionary transport for August.

Parents should obtain an application form from the education office or www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk.

(b) Pick up Points

Where free transport is provided it may be necessary for pupils to walk a certain distance to the vehicle pick-up points. Walking distance in total, including the distance from home to the pick-up point and from the drop-off point to the school in any one direction, will not exceed the authority's limits (see above paragraph). It is the parents responsibility to ensure their child arrives at the pick-up point on time. It is also the parent's responsibility to ensure the child behaves in a safe and acceptable manner while boarding, travelling and alighting from the vehicle. Misbehaviour could result in your child losing the right to free transport.

(c) Placing Request

The education authority does not provide transport for those pupils in receipt of a placing request other than in exceptional circumstances.

In the case of early entry requests, if the child is offered a place in his/her catchment area school, transport will be provided in accordance with the council policy stated above.

Please note that if your child is transported to school by taxi, arrangements for your child will be re-tendered annually by the authority. This means that your child may not get the same taxi company, driver or escort each year. Any issues with the taxi service for your child should be discussed with the school in the first instance. We may then refer it onto the department responsible for transport.

Adverse Weather Conditions

DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- In adverse weather conditions drivers **MUST** liaise with Head Teachers to ensure the safety of the children.
- In periods of snow and ice the driver must use his discretion to decide if a road is passable or not. He should endeavour to choose a route which gives the greatest number of children a reasonable chance of getting to school safely.
- At their own discretion drivers may abandon a morning journey and return all pupils already picked up to their homes and inform the relevant Head Teacher concerned. See bullet point below.*
- On homeward journeys pupils shall only be set down at their normal vehicle set down point. If there is a possibility that the vehicle will be unable to take the pupils to that point, contingency plans should be made with the Head Teacher.



- In the event that transport cannot continue due to blocked roads or any other obstruction, children will be instructed to stay in the vehicle until rescue can be organised.

STRATHCLYDE PARTNERSHIP FOR TRANSPORT/EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- SPT will contact a Senior Officer within EDC to advise of difficulties with transport.
- Senior Officer will contact Head Teacher/s.
- Head Teachers to contact parents, where possible by text message, (at peak times there may be delays due to volume across local authorities).
- * In the event of journey being abandoned, Head Teachers will advise the driver of any change to normal home address.
- At the beginning of every session, the school should update the contact details for all parents/guardians for pupils accessing school transport. This will allow school office staff to inform parents/guardians immediately of changes due to adverse weather.
- If the inclement weather is continuous, the school will update their website on a daily basis.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To ensure child/children are at designated pick up point (please note that in adverse weather this may differ from original point, Head Teacher will advise).
- If concerns regarding bus arrival, contact bus operator and/or school.
- Parents should ensure that they notify the school of any changes to their contact details.
- If they have not already done so, parents are advised to register for the text messaging alert system within their child's school.
- Where inclement weather is present and it is probable that the current pick up point is unlikely to be accessed, parents should take a common sense approach and their child/children should be taken or directed to the closest accessible pick up point within a reasonable distance.

Medical and Health Care

Information should be given on medical and dental inspections and on dental treatment. Parents should be given an indication of the procedures followed if a child takes ill at school. Parents should be made aware of the necessity to inform the school of any particular medical requirements and of arrangements to be made if a child has to be taken home.



Parents should provide the Head Teacher with sufficient information about their child's health care needs and treatment. Where necessary, this information should be updated annually or more frequently if there is a change in circumstances. Where there is concern about whether the school can meet the pupil's needs or where the parents' expectations appear unreasonable, the Head Teacher should seek advice from the school nurse or doctor and, if required, the Chief Education Officer.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

East Dunbartonshire Council will process your child's personal data in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation. The Council may share your child's personal data with other Council services and public agencies to support the delivery of services to promote the health, safety and well-being of children and young people.

Accessing your Child's Pupil Records

Parents have a legal right of access to their child's core education records, regardless of the age of their child. These are the records held within your child's Personal Pupil Record (PPR). Parents do not have a general right of access to all records that mention their child. To access your child's file, please apply in writing to the Head Teacher.

A child has a legal right of access to all records held about them. This includes records that may be held out with of the PPR. If a child is aged 12 or over and can show suitable maturity and understanding they may exercise this right of access through a request to the Head Teacher in writing. If your child is aged 11 or younger, or is not considered to have suitable maturity or understanding, then a parent may make an application on their child's behalf for access to all records. The table below summarises who may access what records through writing to the appropriate Head Teacher

AGE OF CHILD	CHILD'S LEGAL RIGHTS	PARENT'S LEGAL RIGHTS
Under 12	A child's parent or guardian may apply on the child's behalf for access to all records	Right of access to core education record (PPR)
12 and older	If able to show suitable maturity and understanding, the child may apply for access to all records	Right of access to core education record (PPR) No legal right to all records unless acting as child's representative because child is unable to show suitable maturity or understanding

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act gives individuals a statutory right to the unpublished "internal" information and records held by Scottish Public Authorities such as East Dunbartonshire Council and its schools. Individuals have already used this legislation to find out about policy, procedures and how particular decisions have been reached.



If you would like to use this legislation to access particular information please write to the Head Teacher, and subject to certain conditions and exemptions, you will receive a full response within twenty working days of receipt of the request.

Please note that you cannot access personal information on staff or pupils under this legislation. To access personal information about your own child, please see the section 28 on Accessing Your Child's Pupil Records.

Use of Photographs and Video Film Involving Pupils

On occasion, the school may seek permission from parents to photograph/video pupils for internal purposes within the school, for Council publicity materials and/or for press/media related activities. If a pupil's image is being used on any webpage or on a webcam, parents will be asked for express consent as this image has the capability of being viewed by any person with Internet access world wide.

Pupil photographs will be held with the school's Management Information System (SEEMIS), parents will be asked for consent.

School Campus No Smoking Policy

With the introduction of the Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Prohibition of Smoking in Certain Premises (Scotland) Regulations 2006, East Dunbartonshire Council now operates a no smoking policy across all authority's school campuses. Any person accessing the school must refrain from smoking in any of the school campus areas.

Pupil Use of Mobile Phones in School

There have been many concerns raised by Head Teachers, staff and parents about the extensive use of mobile phones by pupils and the associated risks of such use while in school.

The Education Committee of East Dunbartonshire Council as a result of these concerns, agreed that each school should have the power to set its own policy in relation to pupil use of mobile phones in school.

All establishments will incorporate the following points into their policy:

1. Schools will discourage, and will also advise parents to discourage, pupils from bringing mobile phones to schools.
2. Parents will be advised that East Dunbartonshire Council will not accept liability for the loss or damage of mobile phones which are brought into the school or school grounds by pupils.
3. If pupils bring mobile phones to school, the phones must remain switched off while the pupils are in class. Head Teachers will have the power to extend the switching off of mobile phones by pupils to the whole school building and also to the school grounds.
4. Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone outwith the policy of the school, the phone will be confiscated. When a phone is confiscated, a receipt will be passed to the pupil by the relevant member of staff, in order that the pupil can present the receipt at the end of the school day to uplift the phone.



5. If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the Head Teacher, depending on the circumstances, will decide on an appropriate discipline. In certain circumstances, the pupil may be referred to the Chief Education Officer. If images of other pupils or staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed

Childcare Information Service

The Childcare Information Service is a free service provided by East Dunbartonshire Council. It aims to provide parents with accurate details on childcare provision in a variety of settings e.g. out-of-school care groups, childminders, nurseries, playgroups, holiday playschemes and parent & toddler groups.

It also offers other advice including: choosing quality childcare, accessing help to pay for childcare and contact details regarding childcare organisations.

The Childcare Information Service, launched in May 2000, is a key element of East Dunbartonshire Council's Childcare Strategy which aims to develop, quality, accessible, affordable and flexible childcare across the East Dunbartonshire area.

To use this service please call the helpline number on 0300 123 4510, e-mail chis@eastdunbarton.gov.uk or log onto the service's website at www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk.

Appointment of Adults to Voluntary Child Care Positions

In order to meet a legal obligation under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 and as part of the policy in respect of child protection, the Council has introduced a policy to ensure that any individual who is appointed to a voluntary child care position is not fully listed on the Disqualified from Working with Children List.

This policy, which requires any adult appointed to a voluntary child care position, to undergo a criminal background check to ensure their suitability. The policy applies in particular to:

- parent volunteer helpers in schools who are considered to have regular contact with children and young people;
- parents and co-opted members of parent councils;
- parent members of local parent-teacher associations;
- elected members serving on committees relating to the development of children's services;
- any other individual working in a voluntary child care position within a service managed by East Dunbartonshire Council.

The policy builds on East Dunbartonshire Council's *Child Protection Interagency Guidance* (2002) which underpins all child protection work undertaken by local authority services. It also complements the Council's policy on the leasing of council premises to organisations which provide activities and services to children and young people.



Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

The Scottish Government has introduced the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Scheme to encourage access to, and participation in further and higher education. If you are 16 years of age or over before 30 September, you may be eligible for an EMA from the beginning of the school term. If you are 16 years of age between 1 October and February, you may be eligible for an EMA from January. This weekly allowance will be payable by East Dunbartonshire Council to students who attend a school managed by the Council, regardless of where they live. Application forms and further information can be obtained from the Head Teacher or Education Office, Tel: 0300 1234510 Ext 8947 or www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

