

Dalry Secondary School



Dear School Community,

We are off and running again into a new session. Over the summer, the weather was largely kind to us and I hope that you and your family were able to enjoy the holiday period. Unfortunately, we have returned to school still facing the spectre of Covid-19 affecting how we are able to do business in school. The Covid19 pandemic meant that session 2020-2021 again ended without the usual celebrations and opportunities to bid farewell to the S4 pupils who missed much of the traditional end to their time at school.

Fortunately, however, we were able to have a version of the S4 last assembly and leaving ceremony. We were able to enjoy live music provided by our pupil group even though this had to be from outside the main assembly hall building. Thank you to Mrs St Joseph for organising the excellent musical input from our young people and for the careful Covid safe preparations. Mr Murray was able to treat us all to the annual photographs looking back over the years of the S4 pupils in earlier secondary years and at times further back into their years at Dalry primary school. The theme chosen for this year's S4 photographic presentation was 'Heroes'. These photographs are always a source of fun and some embarrassed laughing from the S4 pupils but I am sure they will look back on them with fond memories. All of our S4 heroes have now moved on to their new missions beyond Dalry Secondary: some to Castle Douglas High School; some to college; and some to the world of work. We wish them all well.

We have been fortunate that all staff who completed session 2020-21 have returned fit and healthy for this new session. Congratulations are due to Miss Andrew, who, following her marriage in the summer has become Mrs Cook (very convenient name for a teacher of Home Economics). We are also pleased to report good news from the school office - Kirsty Kaye is on maternity leave having given birth on 8th September to a baby boy called Theo George.

Until Kirsty is ready to return to school the office will be staffed as follows:

Until the October Holidays

Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays - Sarah White

Tuesdays and Fridays - Wendy Lindley

After the October holidays

Mon, Wed, Thu and Fri - Sarah White - mornings

Interviews are taking place on 5th Oct to appoint a person to fill two days. Then the office will be staffed by Sarah for 3 days and a new appointment for 2 days.

Thankfully, the good summer weather has continued throughout the term and this has afforded us the opportunity to get out and about in the local area as part of our Wider Achievement Activities (WAA). During this time our main aims are to provide different experiences for our learners and also to help our learners recognise the skills they are developing that will be important in the world of work when they leave school. This term's activities are Creative Writing, Music Technology and Green Engineering.



I wanted to take the opportunity to remind you of the arrangements for supporting pupils in school:

Contact the pupil Support Team:

For pastoral issues, careers advice or to raise a general concern regarding an issue with your child's learning, please telephone 01644 430259 or use the e-mail address below for your child's Pupil Support Teacher

Mrs Mary Acheson (Goodwin House)	gw08achesonmary@ea.dumgal.sch.uk
Mr Liam Fleming (Mulloch House)	gw17flemingliam@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Returning to the subject that has been at the forefront of all of our lives for the past 18 months or so, Covid-19. The same control measures that were in place before the summer holiday will remain in place until we are given further information from the Scottish Government. For young people this means that they must wear a face covering when in class or when moving around the building. We also continue to encourage young people to be outside of the building during interval and lunchtime as they are much safer from the potential to catch or pass on the virus when they are outside.

We have not published a calendar of events such as parent evenings or school dances as we are not yet able to hold these events. We would normally have a parent evening for all parents this term, unfortunately, that has not been possible. Hopefully, the number of cases in Dumfries and Galloway will start to fall so that more restrictions can be lifted and a more normal experience for the school community resumed. It is to the young people's credit that, while many aspects of school are so different, they have been able to return to learning and are settling in well to the routines of school.

For parents of our new S1 pupils

Introduction to Skills Development Scotland (SDS) for parents and carers of S1 pupils Wednesday 29 September 2021 at 6.30pm

Want to know more about SDS career information, advice and guidance support for your young person throughout their time at school? Join our careers advisers Lesley and Gordon to hear about SDS, the role of SDS careers advisers in schools and information to support career planning. The online session will also introduce our careers web service [My World of Work](#), which has a dedicated area for parents and carers.

Parents and carers can register for the session [here](#).

If your child feels unwell during the school day

Pupils who feel unwell during the school day should report to the School Office. Please note that a young person who is not feeling well should not use their mobile phone to contact home directly requesting to come home. When a young person reports to the school office feeling unwell, a member of the pupil support team or a member of senior management will talk with the young person to try to determine the best and most helpful action to take. Should it be necessary to send your child home, you will be contacted to arrange this. In this connection, you will be asked to inform us how to contact you in an emergency or whom we should contact if you are not available.

Safe and responsible use of technology, Bring Your Own Device, Digital Image Policy; Safe and responsible use of mobile phones in school.

The four policies listed above are discussed with young people in personal social education lessons and ICT lessons. It is then usual for these policies to be sent home in paper format for parents to read with their child. Parent and pupil are then asked to sign that they have read the policies and will adhere to the safe and responsible messages within each policy. With the Covid-19 need to avoid sending paper home and to avoid handling paper that has been returned to the school, we would like to bring this process into the 21st century by emailing you a link that will allow you to read the policies and acknowledge them on-line. Please look out over the next few weeks for an email asking you to participate in this process.

School Improvement Plan

One aspect of our school improvement plan is to complete work that was delayed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The school inspection for Dalry Secondary School, published in March 2020, and the inspection of Castle Douglas High School, published in May 2019, recommended that we take a close look at our learning and teaching policy with a focus on developing a shared and common understanding of what a good lesson looks like in Dalry Secondary School and Castle Douglas High School. As this aspect of our improvement plan restarts, we want to take account of the views of staff, pupils and parents/carers. To that end, I want to ask you to look out for opportunities to provide your input as parents/carers into shaping this policy.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

2022 will see the platinum jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. To celebrate the platinum jubilee there will be a long weekend holiday from Thursday 2nd June through to Sunday 5th June 2022. In order to achieve this holiday the education calendar for Dumfries and Galloway has been changed. The pupil school year has been given one extra day of holiday, allocated to the 2nd of June. To achieve the second day of holiday on the 3rd of June one day has been removed from the Christmas 2021 holiday. **Pupils will now return to school on Friday 7th January 2022.**

It has been a busy and productive start to this new session. Our new S1 pupils have settled into the different routines of the secondary school. Senior pupils are progressing well with their National Qualification courses and working in hope towards a normal SQA diet of exams in the summer of 2022. The Scottish Government has provided updated advice about Covid-19 restrictions in schools. While there has been some change to the advice around the identification of close contacts in classrooms there has been no change to the basic messages of wear a face covering, sanitise your hands and maintain social distancing where possible. This advice is now in place until at least the 25th of October. If there are any changes beyond that date, information will be circulated.

I am sure all of our young people will maintain their good efforts for the rest of this term, enjoy a well-deserved October break and return after the holiday ready for the winter term up to Christmas.

School Blog and website

Keep up to date with what's been happening in school via

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/dalrysecondary/>

www.dalrysecondary.info

Dalry Secondary School, Kirkland Street, St John's Town of Dalry, Castle Douglas, DG7 3UX

01644 430259

gw08officedalry@ea.dumgal.sch.uk