

Dumfries Academy

Parent Update 1 September 2023



Dear Parent/Carer

This last week has seen some warm weather. Where possible, rooms and social areas are well-ventilated. Water-coolers are positioned in social areas around the school. Please ensure your child brings a reusable water bottle if he/she wishes to drink water through the school day. Pupils are permitted to drink water in classes. They are not permitted to drink hot drinks, juices or fizzy drinks during learning in classrooms. We advise against fizzy drinks and energy drinks during lunch and break times, as research suggest that such drinks do not support health and wellbeing.

As always, we try to exercise discretion on the wearing of school uniform if temperatures rise or fall to uncomfortable levels. Given that it also rained on Thursday, it is sensible for pupils to come prepared for changes in the weather.

Whilst we allow pupils to remove blazers and ties (if necessary), we still require them to wear school uniform. Pupils should wear white shirts/blouses, trousers/skirts/black shorts (of appropriate length and school-style). Tight-fitting sports' shorts/hot-pants are not permitted.

Rights Respecting Schools

We are very proud to have received recognition for work done by Miss McGuire and her Rights Respecting Schools' Group. We are now a Rights Committed S=School and have received the RRS Bronze Award. We are now working towards our Silver Award.

Well done to everyone!

Dates for the Diary

Monday 11 September – Senior Netball Festival, all day, KGV Sports Complex

Save the Date

Parent Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 September, 6.30 PM, room G4.

Senior Awards Ceremony – Wednesday 27 September, 6.30 PM, Main Hall

P7 Transition Evening on Tuesday 10 Oct, 6.30 PM, Main Hall

Senior Dance – Thursday 14 December, 7.30 PM to 10.30 PM, Main Hall

(Please note there was an error in the key dates calendar that said the senior dance was on 15 Dec)

Junior Dance – Wednesday 20 December, 7.00 PM to 9.30 PM, Main Hall

Pupil Leadership Team

Our pupil leadership team is organising a Race Night/Games Night for S1 pupils and their families on Wednesday 20 September 2023 at 6.00 PM in the Main Hall.

Please come along to meet other families and have a very enjoyable evening. If you would like to donate a prize for our raffle, please hand in any items to the school office.

Parent Council

Our Parent Council AGM took place on Wednesday 6 September at 6.30 PM in room G4. Minutes of the meeting will be shared soon. All office bearers have been appointed for session 2023-24 and we are delighted to continue increasing the membership of the parent council.

SQA Exam Timetable 2024

Last week we shared the SQA 2024 Timetable with parents/carers and pupils. We have since been advised by SQA that there are errors in the timetable and that it is currently being amended. The errors related to Geography and Chemistry examinations.

Please discard previous timetable. As soon as the SQA has published a new version, we will issue this to parents/carers and pupils.

Reporting

As a result of consultation and feedback from stakeholders, we have decided to make some changes to the way we report pupil progress.

Pupils in S1-3 will now receive 3 tracking reports per year and pupils in S4-6 will receive 4 tracking reports per year.

These shorter, more regular reports should be clearer and allow more scope for reflection by pupils and parents/carers. As we will be indicating any progress concerns with the reports, this means we will no longer be sending out progress concern letters. Feedback suggested these letters were not always helpful. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to telephone relevant staff for more information when their child is not making expected progress.

As we develop our use of Satchel One, pupils and their parents/carers will receive ongoing feedback on progress, behaviour and achievement.

We are also looking to include certificated recognition of achievement with reports, linked to our school values, as we progress our new reporting system.

School Term Dates

School holiday dates for next session can be found via the link below:

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates>

When planning family holidays, please note the unusually early Easter holiday, which begins on **Saturday 23 March 2024** and the start date for the Summer holiday, which is **Tuesday 2 July 2024**.

Please also note SQA exams run from **Monday 22 April 2024 to Thursday 30 May**. Study Leave dates will be confirmed shortly. Pupils should not go on family holidays, which may lead to them missing exams, as they will not be eligible for absentee consideration under these circumstances.

Health and Safety

A reminder that there will be a Fire Drill and Safe Inside Together (Lockdown) Drill early this term. Pupils will be briefed on procedures in advance.

All previous updates will be archived on our new website, which is due to be launched shortly. You will be able to find reminders about school uniform, social areas, health and safety and other key school information

Joanne Dillon

Headteacher