



Dear Parent/Carer

This week our S3 pupils won the D & G Schools Engineering Challenge at the bridge. This is a fantastic achievement. Our S4-6 pupils had a wonderful time at our Senior Dance. Our S1 pupils enjoyed a visit to the U20 World Ice Hockey Championships at Dumfries Ice Bowl. Pupils studying Media visited Sky Studios in Livingston and we welcomed families to our S4-6 Parents' Meetings. Our senior pupils also visited the bridge to explore options for their future and find out more about further and higher education, as well as training and employment. It really has been a very busy time and I am very proud of the way that young people are engaging with all of the opportunities we provide, as well as the tremendous support given by our staff.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 18 December - Breakfast Bar, Minerva, 8.30 AM – 8.50 AM

Tuesday- 19 December - Breakfast Bar, Minerva, 8.30 AM – 8.50 AM

Wednesday 20 December – Breakfast Bar, Minerva, 8.30 AM – 8.50 AM;

S3 Tracking Reports Issued; Junior Christmas Dance, Main Hall, 7.00 PM -9.30 PM

Thursday 21 December – Breakfast Bar, Minerva, 8.30 AM – 8.50 AM;

S1 Trip to Glasgow Science Centre, 8.30 AM – 4 .00 PM

Friday 22 December – Breakfast Bar, Minerva, 8.30 AM – 9.00 AM AM, Christmas Themed Non-Uniform Day, Donations in aid of Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY); Netball Christmas Hamper Raffle, Morning Break; Tutor Quiz in Tutor Groups, Periods 6 and 7

School Holidays begin Friday 22 December, 3.15 PM

School resumes for pupils on Tuesday 9 January at 8.51 AM (Breakfast Bar in Minerva for all pupils from 8.30 AM).

Breakfast in School

Breakfast will now be available for all pupils every morning from Monday-Friday in school, starting on Monday 18 December. Our Breakfast Bar provision is open from 8.30 AM each morning. We are now being supplied with food by Magic Breakfasts, and are able to provide cereals, bagels, crumpets, toast, hot and cold drinks.

Next Friday we are extending breakfast to 9.00 AM and will be providing speciality hot chocolate as an extra Christmas treat. Please encourage your child to come along.

Young Enterprise

Our Young Enterprise Group, Extravalava, will be selling bracelets at its stall in Dumfries High Street this Saturday again. Please pay them a visit and buy the very "on-trend" bracelets as stocking fillers or gifts. They are very reasonably priced. Pictures can be viewed on their Facebook Page.



Christmas Assemblies

Our Junior Christmas Service takes place 11.15 AM, and our Senior Christmas Service takes place at 12.15 PM, on Friday 22 December in St George's Church.

A reminder to complete the form below if you wish your child to opt out of these assemblies, Please only complete if you **do not** wish your child to attend. It is expected that your child will attend Christmas and Easter assemblies unless you have completed the form below to advise us otherwise.

<https://forms.office.com/e/JA84Rs0U19>

Respectful Relationships/Mobile Phone Use

We will be sending out a summary of the principles of our policy Respectful Behaviour Policy to parents/carers in January. Please note that we will also be revisiting our Mobile Device Policy as part of improving learning and behaviour in classes. This means that pupils not complying with policy will have phones removed and sent to the school office for safekeeping, Parents/carers will be informed of infringements. There has been much research to show that misuse of mobile devices have a detrimental effect on learning. We are also finding that junior pupils, in particular, are contacting parents/carers during lessons. As phones will not be permitted to be used in these classes, this means any child using phones in this way will have their phone removed.

Winter Weather Arrangements

These arrangements can now be found on our school website.

Social Areas

Please remind your child of the following arrangements for social areas:

- S1 - Cafe (indoor); rear of school (outdoor)
- S2 - Cafe (indoor); front of link corridor (outdoor)
- S3 - Main Hall (indoor); front of main building (outdoor)
- S4 - Main Hall (indoor); front of main building (outdoor)
- S5 - Minerva (indoor); front of Minerva building (outdoor)
- S6 - Minerva (indoor); front of Minerva building (outdoor)

- S1 on site at both break and lunch
- S2 -3 on site at break, but allowed off at lunch
- S4 -6 allowed off site at break and lunch

We are seeing an increasing number S1 pupils going off site at lunch and S1-3 pupils going off site at morning break. This is not permitted.



Meeting with Staff

A reminder that parents/carers who wish to meet with a member of staff to discuss matters regarding their child's welfare or progress should telephone the school office to make an appointment. We are seeing an increasing number of parents/carers arriving in school requesting to see staff immediately. Whilst we are delighted to welcome parents/carers to the school, the nature of the working day for staff means that unarranged meetings are usually not possible.

Save the Date

S4-6 Prelims – Monday 15 January – Friday 19 January (1st diet)

Burns Supper – Friday 26 January (details to follow)

S4-6 Prelims – Monday 19 February – Friday 23 February (2nd diet)

Attendance

A reminder to report pupil absences via the pupil absence line below. You should state the pupil's name, Tutor Group, reason for absence and expected duration of absence.

Pupil Absence Line: 01387 274356

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

Lost Property

We have a huge amount of lost property which will be donated to clothing banks on 22/12/23. Please ensure any lost items are collected prior to this.

Joanne Dillon

Headteacher