



Parent/Carer Update 6 September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

This week has been another busy but productive week. I am delighted to share our parent-friendly version of our school improvement plan, which is included with this update. We are working through our priorities strategically and are currently evaluating our learners' experiences through learning walks and faculty reviews and we are also revising our approaches to learning in the BGE (S1-3) curriculum.

Our S1 pupils have made a good start. Our S2/3 pupils are settled and our senior phase pupils are working well in their chosen courses, as well as supporting younger pupils through various leadership roles in the school. There is a lot to be optimistic about.

On a slightly less positive note, our school was subjected to a significant amount of vandalism on Wednesday night. Five windows were broken and there was graffiti on our entrance door and area. This is devastating for our community, as we take such pride in our building. This is a police incident and I would ask that you and your children refrain from speculation on social media. I am thankful that pupils at Dumfries Academy are equally appalled by the damage to their school by vandals. This shows their own sense of pride and gratitude for the work that our team carries out to preserve our building.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 9 September - Annual Data Checks being issued

Tuesday 10 September - Senior Phase Information Evening, Main Hall, 6.00 PM,

Wednesday 11 September - Parent Council AGM, G4, 5.30 PM; S1 Trip Information Evening, Main Hall, 6.00 PM; S1 Family Football Event, Games Hall, 6.30 PM

Save the Date

Maths Week Scotland Wednesday 25 September – Tuesday 1 October

Tuesday 24 September - History Trip to Bannockburn and Stirling

Wednesday 25- Friday 27 September – S1 Trip to Broomlee

Thursday 26 September - Regional Maths Challenge

Friday 27 September – 2nd Generation Holocaust Assembly

Tuesday 2 October – Senior Awards Night

Annual Data Checks

On Monday 9 September we will be issuing our annual data check forms to pupils. Please check the forms provided to confirm that all personal details and records are up to date, and return to your child's Tutor as soon as possible. Alternatively, if you have downloaded the [parentsportal.scot](#) app, you can carry out this check quickly and simply on this portal. You should have received an e mail prompting you to do so.



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Keeping the Promise

I am delighted to announce that we are one of the first schools in Dumfries and Galloway to have achieved the Keeping the Promise Award. This award recognises staff training to ensure young people who are care experienced are understood, supported and encouraged to engage with school and achieve. Well done to all of our staff who completed professional learning and who work extensively to remove barriers for young people.

SQA Exam Timetable 2025

The 2025 SQA Exam Calendar has been published. Please find a copy embedded below so that you and your child can plan ahead for next year's diet. Please remember that you should not plan family holidays or events that may cause your child to be absent from an exam. Pupils absent for this reason are not eligible for absentee consideration.



Nq 2025 Exam
Timetable (2).pdf

Breakfast Bar/Universal Support

Our breakfast bar has gone from strength to strength. Our S1 pupils are enjoying the positive start to the day and our S6 pupils are enjoying serving them breakfast and helping them settle in. Breakfast bar is open to any pupil and member of staff from 8.15 AM to 8.50 AM every morning. There is no charge.

We are also delighted that pupils are using our equity boxes in Minerva. These boxes contain items such as tights, socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, sanitary products, toiletries and stationery. Pupils can take whatever they need to support wellbeing and learning. Again, there is no charge.

Recognising Good Service and Support

It is lovely to receive compliments from parents/carers who feel that their children have been well-supported and cared for at Dumfries Academy. It is always good to hear what is going well, so please remember to let us know via the link below. All compliments are shared with staff concerned.

<https://forms.office.com/e/HMcANQqJn1>

School Uniform

I must compliment all pupils who adhere to our school uniform policy. In particular, I want to congratulate our new S1s who have embraced the policy and made a fantastic start in relation to school uniform standards. Well done to our pupils and families for showing that they are proud to wear our uniform and be identified as a Dumfries Academy pupil.



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S1 pupils have received a complimentary school tie. Our new S4 pupils are required to buy a senior tie from the school office. Ties are priced at £6.50. We would ask that all new S4 pupils are in possession of a senior tie.

We would be delighted if school leavers wish to donate uniform items such as school ties and blazers, as we can then recycle them and reduce costs for parents/carers. Please hand in any pre-loved items to our school office.

A reminder that school uniform should be worn at all times in school. Pupils should wear a shirt, blazer, tie, appropriate school trousers, skirt or black jeans and black shoes or trainers.

Leggings, football/gym/cycling shorts and jogging bottoms are not part of school uniform. School-style shorts may be worn in warm weather. Please bear these guidelines in mind when buying new uniform for your child.

Social Areas

S1 – Café (indoor), rear of school (outdoor)

S2 – Café (indoor), front of link corridor (outdoor), **town centre for lunch time only**

S3 – Main Hall (indoor), front of main building (outdoor), **town centre for lunch time only**

S4 – Main Hall (indoor), front of main building (outdoor), **town centre for break/lunch**

S5 – Minerva (Indoor), front of Minerva (outdoor), **town centre for break/lunch**

S6 – Minerva (indoor), front of Minerva (outdoor), **town centre for break/lunch**

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.

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, Parent Portal, social areas, health and safety and other key school information

Joanne Dillon

Headteacher

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

PRIORITY ONE

Improve pupils' experiences in S1-3 curriculum to allow them to develop meta-skills

IMPACT

Pupils enjoy school, reflect on their progress and are better prepared for life, learning and work



PRIORITY THREE

Improve pupils' average attendance so that they improve their wellbeing and chances of success

IMPACT

Pupils whose average attendance is over 90% attain more qualifications and have better mental wellbeing



PRIORITY TWO

Improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills so that they have better life chances

IMPACT

Pupils are more likely to access a broader curriculum and achieve a positive destination on leaving school



PRIORITY FOUR

Develop a shared understanding of our vision, values and aims to build a school community we can be proud of

IMPACT

Pupils and their families engage with school life, are better informed, feel included and celebrate achievement