

Parent/Carer Update 29 November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

This week has been one of the busiest this term: Manchester City Trip, Flu immunisation programme, P7 Catch-Up Evening, school photographer, S1-3 Wellbeing Interviews. The latter interviews were conducted by Mr Leonard, Miss Barton and Mr Dillon. They really enjoyed speaking to almost all pupils in S1-S3 to seek their views on how they felt about school. Once all pupils' views have been gathered, we will share our findings with our community. It was pleasing to hear that almost all young people interviewed feel safe, have a trusted adult they can speak to and are enjoying school.

Our school values are important to us and this week we saw them in action in a variety of ways:



Compassion: Our pupils have told us that our staff are compassionate and supportive in the lead up to prelims by taking account of their individual anxieties and circumstances

Fairness: We had a P7 catch up evening for those who missed the last one and this allowed 25 families to have a fair chance to see the school and ask questions

Respect: We held S1-3 wellbeing interviews this week to gather people's views and respect their opinion

Ambition: Our National 5 pupils are working hard to study for prelims next week as they care about their learning, are ambitious and want to achieve.

Responsibility: Our S6 pupils took responsibility for P7 Evening and ongoing responsibility for breakfast bar every morning

These are just a few examples of how Dumfries Academy pupils are doing themselves and the school proud. Keep up the good work!

Dates for the Diary

Monday 2 December – Friday 13 December – National 5 Prelims

Monday 2 December - Rotary Christmas Party, 11.00 -2.30 PM, Cairndale Hotel

Wednesday 4 December - D& G Schools Engineering Competition, all day, DAGCOL; Joint Parent Council Meeting with Loreburn Primary re Refurbishment, 6.00 PM, G4

Thursday 4 December – The Industry Spotlight Talk on Media, English Dept, 10.00 AM -11.30 AM



Parent/Carer Update 29 November 2024

Save the date

Monday 9 December – Pupil Council Bake Sale, Morning Break, Minerva

Thursday 12 December, School Christmas Lunch

Saturday 14 December, Coffee and Carols 10 AM-2PM (poster attached)

Tuesday 17 December, Junior Christmas Dance

Wednesday 18 December, S1-3 Tracking Reports issued; S3 Parents Meetings

Thursday 19 December, S1 Science Trip to Glasgow, Senior Christmas Dance

Friday 20 December, Christmas Services (St George's Church); last day of term; non-uniform day

Winter Weather

Please see link below for a reminder on winter weather arrangements for our school.

[Winter Weather – Dumfries Academy](#)

School Toilets - Update

Some repairs have been carried out in the Boys' Minerva toilets and the Girls' basement toilets. Further work is to be completed on the remaining girls and boys toilets. Once complete, I will share an update on what has been achieved to make these more usable spaces for our pupils.

Parent Council

Our Parent Council and Loreburn Parent Council are meeting with representatives from the school estates team on 4 December at 6 PM in G4. We hope that the team will be able to answer questions about our plans and timelines for school refurbishment. Any parent is most welcome to come along and find out more. The school is being refurbished and funds have been committed to this project. Your views and questions would be most appreciated.

Mobile Device Policy

As of Monday 3 December, we are relaunching our mobile device policy. Assemblies have been delivered to all year groups with the exception of S4 (due to S3 exams and prelims next week) regarding changes to our policy. We aim to share with S4 pupils next week. The revised policy was shared with our Parent Council earlier this month. Please note that we will initially run the policy as a pilot for the remainder of this term and revisit in January 2025.

33 students across S1-3 were sampled earlier this week to record their screen time (on mobile devices) from 18-25 November. The highest daily average screen time for an individual student was 10 hours and 43 minutes. The lowest was 2 hours and 40 minutes. S3 students had the highest daily screen time of 7 hours and 47 minutes. S2 had an average daily screen time of 5 hours and 56 minutes. S1 had an average daily screen time of 6 hours and 39 minutes.



Parent/Carer Update 29 November 2024

We welcome your views on our on revised policy and would appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey below.

<https://forms.office.com/e/RMV4nN9Bcn?origin=lpLink>



Updates to our policy will be shared via our weekly parental update from Mrs Dillon, our parent portal, and our school Facebook page.

The full policy can be accessed in the PDF file attached.

Breakfast Bar

We served Scottish Breakfasts for our St Andrew's themed breakfast on Friday 29 November. Our next themed breakfast is on Friday 20 December (Christmas hot chocolate)

Equity Boxes

As the winter weather creeps in, we want to remind you that we provide socks and tights free of charge in our equity boxes. We also provide toothpaste, toothbrushes, toiletries, stationery, sanitary products and shoe laces. Pupils may take what they need.

School Café

All S1 pupils must remain on site at lunch time. They may bring a packed lunch or use our school café. The school café provides an excellent choice of hot and cold foods. We have become aware that not all pupils are purchasing lunch from the café. Given that they are not permitted to be off-site, we are concerned that they may not be eating lunch. Please advise your child that he/she must remain on site and use the school café.

Should you feel you require any financial assistance with school meals or clothing, you can contact us at the school for advice or use the link below to see if you are eligible for assistance:

[Free school meals | Dumfries and Galloway Council](#)



Parent/Carer Update 29 November 2024

School Uniform

The standard of school uniform is satisfactory but could be better. We are one of very few schools that has provided ties free of charge to ensure that every pupil has a tie at the start of S1 and S4. I would ask for your support in ensuring that your child wears a school shirt, tie, appropriate skirt/trousers and black footwear to school every day. School blazers should also be worn and are particularly needed as an extra layer under an outdoor jacket as we see the colder weather creeping in.

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