



Parent/Carer Update 5 December 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Our National 5 Prelims have almost finished, and we have been impressed with how our pupils have approached them. These prelims are important in helping pupils prepare for SQA exams and enabling better pathways to a positive destination in the future. Those who have missed prelims will have the opportunity to sit missed exams on Tuesday 9 December after school in the Main Hall. Pupils who miss exams without valid medical exemptions are not awarded a grade and this will affect their SQA estimate. Similarly, those who are late are not permitted to enter the exam, in accordance with SQA guidelines.

We had a lovely family cooking event on Thursday evening. Thanks, once again, to Miss Hay and Miss Hyslop for giving up their time to host this. Families made soup and a sponge and were able to take the recipes home to try these out in their own kitchens.

Our Heads of Year have also been sharing examples at their assemblies of pupils who have gone above and beyond to show acts of kindness, been respectful and have excellent engagement with learning, as well as very good attendance. Well done to all who have been recognised.

Below are some dates for the diary. We have a very full schedule of events in the lead up to Christmas. We are grateful to all staff, pupils and partners for all the voluntary work they do to make these a success.

Dates for the Diary

Wednesday 10 December – S3 Parents Evening (with subject teachers), 4 PM – 6.30 PM; School Photographer (re-scheduled)

Thursday 11 December – S2 Options Interviews, all day; School Christmas Lunch (Meal Deal Price); Higher History Trip to Glasgow

Friday 12 December – S2 Options Interviews, all day

Save the date

Monday 15 December – Lifeskills Trip to RBC Film Theatre; Junior Christmas Dance (7-9PM)

Tuesday 16 - S2 Enterprise and Work classes sale of Christmas goods, Morning Break

Wednesday 17 December – Senior Christmas Dance (7.30-10.30PM)

Friday 19 December – Non-uniform Day (Christmas theme); Hot Choc Friday, 8.15 -8.51, Minerva; Junior Christmas Assembly; Senior Christmas Assembly; Tutor Time Christmas Events

Non-uniform Day

There will be a non-uniform day on Friday 19 December. Pupils are encouraged to wear something Christmassy. Please do not feel the need to purchase something extra.



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Christmas earrings, socks, Santa hats, red and green colours are some suggestions. Please note that football tops/items are not permitted.

We are collecting items for local foodbanks. Any donations would be much appreciated – especially at this time of year. You can donate packets, tins, toiletries and any other non-perishable items. All items to be dropped off in Minerva before 8.51 on Friday 19th.

Pupils Late to School

We are currently looking at strategies to reduce latecoming. A reminder that period 1 begins at 8.50 AM. Please ensure your child arrives in school on time. Latecoming is disruptive and has an impact on your child's learning, as well as the learning of others that are interrupted as a result.

From 6 January parents/carers of any pupil who is late in the morning (without valid reason) will receive an SMS message advising that their child will receive an after-school detention.

There will be a focus on each year group each week. As S3 has the highest rate of latecoming and absence, we will begin with that group on Tuesday 6 January. The focus will be as follows:

S3 – Week beginning 5 January

S2 – Week beginning 12 January

S4 – Week beginning 19 January

S1/S5/6 – Week beginning 26 January

Well done to our S5 pupils, who have the best attendance rate of all year groups. We are delighted that pupils recognise the link between attendance and achievement in school.

Please note that thresholds for attendance and latecoming must be met if your child wishes to participate in extra-curricular events and trips. If pupils are missing school (unless for valid reasons), we cannot permit them to miss even more learning by participating in events/activities which are not part of the usual school day.

We understand that some young people have been subject to winter illnesses and take account of any short or long-term health issues.

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Winter Weather

We have seen a change in the weather recently, which could bring about more severe winter weather in the coming weeks and months. Our winter weather guidance can be found at the link below. This contains information on how we communicate school closure to parents in the event we have to take that action at any point (this rarely happens). It also contains advice on ensuring your child is dressed appropriately for school in cold/wet weather.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/dumfriesacademy/winter-weather/>

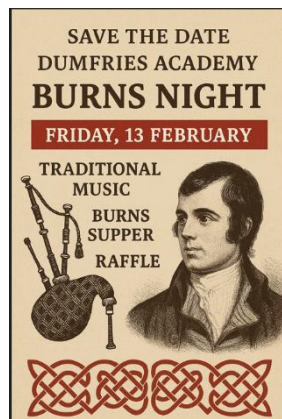
Parent Council

Our Parent Council Minutes and accounts can be found on our school website at the link below.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/dumfriesacademy/parent-zone/parent-council/>

The next meeting of our Parent Council takes place on **Wednesday 7 January at 6 PM.**

We are planning a **Burns Night on Friday 13th February at 6 .00 PM** and would ask that you save the date. We will be publicising this on our social media feeds shortly. Tickets will be on sale early in the new year and it promises to be a great family night out.



Uniform Consultation

Please note that any new policy will not come into effect until session 2026-2027. We will allow time to phase out any items that may not be part of the new guidelines.



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Initially, we have sourced maroon hoodies and cardigans and will work with our supplier to make these and sweatshirts available. We will also look to price unbranded items from local suppliers and hope to have samples to later this term.

We are considering the place for blazers in the senior school and as an option in BGE. For instance, our S6 pupils want to raise the question of whether blazers should be compulsory for Head Persons and Prefects. Blazers will be part of further discussion this term before finalising the guidelines to come into effect for session 2026-2027.

Joanne Dillon

Headteacher