



Parent/Carer Update 21 November 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Our S3 Assessments have gone well, and we have been impressed with how well our pupils have approached them. S3 is an important year in helping pupils prepare for senior phase exams and enabling better pathways to a positive destination in the future. S3 overall attendance has improved slightly over the last few weeks, and I hope this trend continues.

We have seen success in several sporting events and pupils have enjoyed trips to the Canine Rescue Centre, etc. We also undertook a self-evaluation exercise to look at how we support wellbeing, equality and inclusion. We invited 3 leaders from other schools to look at our practice along with us. This was a very successful exercise. Our pupils, parents and staff involved were excellent ambassadors for the school and I cannot thank them enough for sharing their views and opinions. The review team was impressed with our practice, and I will share key findings from the exercise with our community in due course.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 24 November – S1 Big Dog Book Event (Periods 6 & 7)

Tuesday 25 November – Flu Vaccinations (all day)

Wednesday 26 November – N5 Prelims begin (pupils have been issued with individual timetables)

Friday 28 November – School photographer (catch-ups)

Save the date

Wednesday 3 December – S3 Subject Reports Issued

Thursday 4 December – Family Cooking Event

Tuesday 10 December – S3 Parents Evening (with subject teachers), 4 PM – 6.30 PM

Thursday 11 December – Higher History Trip to Glasgow

Monday 15 December – Junior Christmas Dance (7-9PM)

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

School Calendar

Each week we try to give an overview of what's on in school. It is impossible to capture all events, as some happen at short notice due to requests for times from other agencies or partners. We usually list sporting fixture that are planned. Please note that parents/carers are welcome to attend home and away fixtures. Times stated are when pupils depart and return (approximately). For more information about these events, please feel free to contact the school office. I will list these separately from next term to make it clearer who is involved and where these take place.

School trips are usually listed as a prompt to parents/carers of any start and finish times for the purpose of dropping off or collecting children.

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Any school assemblies that are noted are to merely inform parents of the topics covered. Parents/carers do not attend school assemblies.

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/>

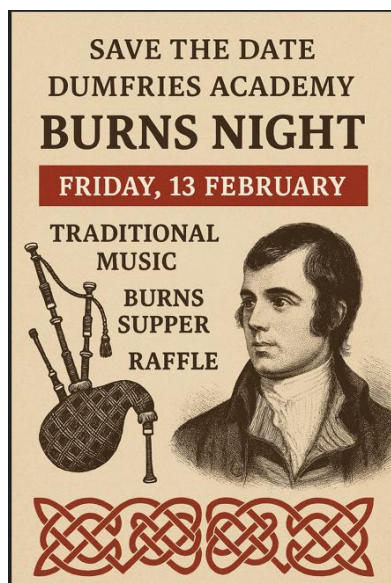
Parent Council

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.





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Attendance

I would ask you to support the school by ensuring your child's attendance does not fall below our expected levels. As you know, good attendance is a very significant factor improving chances of success in SQA courses. At the moment, our overall average attendance is 87%. Our S1 & S5 pupils are doing really well and are above 90%. However, S2,3 and 4 have dipped below this minimum target. This means many pupils are at risk of underperforming. Good attendance and timekeeping are vital for success.

We realise that there are times when illness and injury prevent pupils attending school and understand that they may need to rest and recover.

We would also like to remind families that term-time holidays are unauthorised absences.

Pupils who achieve 90% attendance or higher are recognised through our sms messaging system.

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.

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.

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.

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