



NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2022

With the first full week of the new term now behind us, I would like to say a big welcome back to everyone and extend a particularly warm welcome to all of the pupils and parents/carers of our new S1 cohort. It is great to see all of our young people back in school after the summer break.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a huge thanks to all parents/carers, families and friends for the amazing efforts you have made to ensure that our pupils have returned to school looking as smart as they do wearing their Dumfries High School uniform. As you know, we have very clear expectations in terms of uniform and it is your help and support that ensures our pupils maintain such high standards each year.

As always, it is important that we work together to support and challenge our learners as they work towards their individual targets this year. Regardless of whichever year group your child is in, each and every pupil should remain focused, committed, work hard and be enthusiastic about their learning at all times; this will go a long to helping them attain and achieve this year.

SQA Exam Results 2022

Senior pupils received their SQA exam results on Tuesday 9 August. Dumfries High School pupils have, this year produced exceptional results across fourth, fifth and sixth year; results in all measures continue to improve and we must now build upon this for the year ahead.

Fourth Year Exam Data - Percentage of Pupils (of S4 roll) Attaining 5, 6 or 7 National 5 Qualifications

Year	Dumfries High School	D&G Average
2022	58%	42%
2021	62%	44%
2020	46%	48%
2019	42%	39%
2018	36%	38%

- 81 S4 pupils (58% of year group) attained 5, 6 or 7 National 5 qualifications
- An increase of 22% points in S4 attainment over the last five years
- S4 attainment in 2022 is higher than the Dumfries and Galloway average by 16% points

Fifth Year Exam Data - Percentage of Pupils (of S4 roll) Attaining 5 Higher Qualifications

Year	Dumfries High School	D&G Average
2022	26%	13%
2021	20%	15%
2020	14%	16%
2019	13%	13%
2018	11%	16%

- 13 pupils achieved 5As in S5 in 2022; 34 pupils attained five Highers in S5 in 2022
- An increase of 15% points in S5 attainment in the last five years
- S5 attainment in 2022 is double the Dumfries and Galloway average

There are many individual stories that lie behind the overall exam results and I would like to congratulate pupils on their achievements. I would also like to express my thanks to Dumfries High School staff for the commitment and support provided throughout the year to all pupils and also to the parents and carers whose support plays a pivotal role in ensuring students are fully prepared. It is important that our new S4/5/6 year groups focus on the year ahead allowing further exam success.

Staff Update

A number of new staff come to Dumfries High School this year and I would like to extend a warm welcome to them all as they join our team.

Lauren Wilson (English) has been appointed as Principle Teacher of English, Literacy and Modern Languages on a temporary basis as Claire Harrison undertakes the Acting Depute Headteacher position.

Michael Griffin joins the Music department as a permanent member of staff.

Lauren Lee (Social Subjects) and Sophie Swan (Maths) both join the Dumfries High School team as probationer teachers for a period of one year.

We also welcome Sandra Giner (Modern Languages) to Dumfries High School to provide cover for Nikki Blackwell during her maternity leave.

Emma McEwan joins the main office team and will provide support to the Pupil Support team.

Louisa Vann-Wakelin, Paula Kirkpatrick, Fiona Grubb, Giovanni Bissoni and Nina McLeod all join the Removing Barriers to Learning (RBL) team as classroom assistants to help support our young people across the school.

Latecoming

Our school day begins at 8.50am and pupils should ensure they are in registration by this time. Morning registration finishes at 9am each day and during this important information and announcements will be shared with pupils. This is also a time for pupils to focus and prepare themselves for the lessons they are about to attend. Please ensure your child is in school no later than 8.50am to attend morning registration.

DHS 'House' Contacts

All pupils at Dumfries High School belong to a 'House' - Buccleuch, Caerlaverock or Devorgilla. If you have any concerns or queries the following people are the relevant contacts:

	Buccleuch	Caerlaverock	Devorgilla
Pupil Support	Debbie Holmes	Fiona Bryce	Jan Kilmurry
Depute Headteacher	Billy Davidson	Daniella Hogg	Claire Harrison

School Improvement Plan Priorities

Each year every school has to create an improvement plan which identifies areas that the school will focus on for the year ahead. The priorities for Dumfries High School this year are as follows: (i) learning and teaching (ii) Broad General Experience (BGE) pupil experiences (iii) improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Although these are fairly wide-ranging aspects of improvement, they will be broken down into many different areas that will remain a focus throughout the year. These targets are building upon the feedback and responses received as part of the surveys completed before the summer break.

How to Pass Evening – Fourth Year

Our S4 'How to Pass Evening' this year takes place at 6.30pm on **Thursday 15 September**. This event is specifically designed to give information to parents/carers of all pupils in fourth year about the courses that they are studying this year and importantly, how you can support your child with their learning at home.

This is an extremely important evening in the school calendar and goes a long way to ensuring each and every pupil in S4 can achieve success in the final exams next May. All parents/carers and pupils in S4 should attend this event. Further information will be issued in due course, but please make a note of the date to ensure you can attend.

Stepping up to Higher Evening – Fifth Year

To support our fifth year learners undertaking five-Highers, this year we have organised for all pupils to work with an organisation called 'Tree of Knowledge' during an interactive session on **Monday 7 November**. Workshops that pupils attend will help to combat the stresses that study in S5 can bring. Managing workload, prioritisation, target setting, focus and motivation will all be addressed to help pupils cope with the demands that the year ahead can bring.

In addition to this, a parent/carer information session has also been arranged for the same evening on Monday 7 November. This is for the S5 parents/carers of pupils undertaking five-Highers this year and your attendance at this event will go a long way to helping us work together to support our fifth year learners. Further information will follow.

S4/5/6 October Assessment Week (Monday 10 October – Friday 14 October 2022)

As with recent years, all fourth, fifth and sixth year pupils studying National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses will undertake a series of subject assessments during week commencing Monday 4 October. A detailed programme of study leading up to this assessment period is crucial to ensure that pupils perform as best they can.

This is an important week of assessments which will help to determine pupil progress at that point. Importantly, it can also help to identify areas of improvement that pupils can address before the prelim exams in January 2023. Please discuss thorough preparation for the October assessment week with your son/daughter and ensure a structured revision schedule is in place.

S4/5/6 Prelim Exams (January 2023)

Prelim examinations for pupils in S4/5/6 will begin on Monday 16 January 2023 and finish on Friday 27 January 2023. Prelim performance is an absolutely vital element to help ensure that all senior phase pupils achieve the best possible outcomes in every course this year. Parents/carers have a crucial role to play within this and once again I would ask for your help to ensure that your child has a programme of study in place at home for the term between October and Christmas.

Behaviour/Standards

The standards and expectations that we have of our pupils have been addressed recently during House assemblies. School should be a place of fun and enjoyment as well as a place of learning. Punctuality, uniform, exemplary behaviour at all times in and around the school, litter, homework and being prepared for classes are among some of the areas addressed with pupils ensuring they are clear about the expectations we have of them. High standards in these areas will allow all pupils to engage and focus fully on learning activities without disruption. Pupils who make choices not to work towards meeting such standards will be dealt with appropriately and parents/carers contacted.

Data Capture Forms

It is important that all information we hold in school relating to each individual pupil is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Data Capture Forms and various consent forms were sent home recently. Any outstanding forms should be returned to the school office by the end of this week.

Website

Our school website continues to be updated on a regular basis. This is an important source of information and communication with parents/carers, pupils and the wider DHS community. The website will continue to be updated regularly. Your suggestions as to how further improvements could be made to the website would be most welcome; please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Free School Meals/Clothing Grants/EMA

Forms for parents/carers wishing to apply for free school meals and/or a clothing grant can be collected from the main school office. An electronic version is also available on our website or at the following address: <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15246/School-clothing-grants>.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) forms and guidance notes are also available at the main office. In relation to EMA, a fresh application must be made each academic year and submitted with all documentation needed to complete the assessment.

Wider Achievement

As a school, we are very keen to be kept informed of pupil successes both in and out of school in order that we can share and celebrate this with staff, other pupils and the wider Dumfries High School community. If your son/daughter has undertaken a particular challenge, completed something amazing or had success in an activity outwith school, please get in touch and let us know. Please follow all of the experiences and successes of our pupils on the school Facebook page.

Extra-Curricular Sports Clubs

Pupils in all year groups have this week had the opportunity to sign up for a range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Activities take place between 3.15pm – 4.15pm, Monday to Thursday. Please encourage your child to take up the fantastic opportunity. Details are as follows

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Football (S1-S2)	Badminton	Netball	Basketball
Girls Football		Rugby (3.30pm – 4.30pm)	Gymnastics

Parent Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Parent Council will take place in the main school library on Tuesday 13 September at 6pm. If you would like to take part in this meeting, please contact the Parent Council Chair Lorrie Kyle: lorriekyle@btconnect.com or 07859939895. A strong Parent Council can have a huge impact upon a school community and we are keen that as many new members join and support the work of the group. Meetings usually last no longer than an hour and it would be fantastic to have more parents/carers as part of the group. I would particularly appeal to new S1 parents/carers to consider joining the DHS Parent Council.

New School Build for Dumfries High School – Dumfries Learning Town (DLT)

As you will aware, our new school build project continues to gather pace. The new Dumfries High School building is scheduled to open for pupils in June 2025 at the earliest. As part of the process, a Public Consultation Event will be held in the main hall at Dumfries High school on **Wednesday 2 November** between 2pm and 7pm. This will be opportunity to view plans and designs for our new building at that point in time and engage in discussions with architects and planners.

Mobile Phones/Headphones

Mobile phones and/or Headphones should be not visible or used by pupils in corridors when at school. They should also not be used by pupils in a classroom setting unless instructed to do so by a staff member; on occasion they may be used to aid learning and teaching. When pupils are using mobile phones for personal use they are not engaged in learning and this can cause distractions, disruption and sometimes danger for themselves and others. All pupils have been reminded of this. Pupils may be asked to hand their mobile phone to a member of staff if they fail to follow this clear instruction.

School Photographs

Martin McNae will be in Dumfries High School on Monday 26 September and Tuesday 27 September to take school photographs for pupils in all year groups. Family photographs will also be taken for those that indicate a request for this; an email link will be sent in advance to determine this. Martin will also be in school on the morning of Wednesday 5 October to catch up with any pupil who is absent when pictures are taken on the two original dates.

Dates for the Diary

Wednesday 31 August	S1 Parents' Information Evening – 6.30pm in Main Hall
Monday 5 September	S1 Buccleuch Trip – Galloway Activity Centre
Tuesday 6 September	S1 Caerlaverock Trip – Galloway Activity Centre
Wednesday 7 September	S1 Devorgilla Trip – Galloway Activity Centre
Thursday 8 September	S2 Parents' Information Evening – 6.30pm in Main Hall
Thursday 15 September	S4 How to Pass Evening – 6.30pm in Main Hall
Thursday 22 September	Senior Prizegiving – 7.30pm
Monday 26 & Tuesday 27 September	School Photographs
Friday 7 October	S1/2/3 Tracking Reports issued
Monday 10 October – Friday 14 October	S4/5/6 October Assessment Week
Friday 14 October	End of Term
Monday 31 October	New Term begins
Monday 7 November	S5 Stepping up to Higher Evening – 6.30pm in Main Hall
Thursday 17 November	DHS Christmas Fayre (6pm – 8pm)
Friday 18 November	S4/5/6 Interim Reports issued
Friday 16 December	S1/2/3 Tracking Reports issued
Friday 20 December	End of Term

It has been a very positive start to the new academic year. With your help and support, we can continue to work together to ensure our learners have a successful and enjoyable year.

On behalf of all staff at Dumfries High School, I would like to thank you for your continued support.

