



## NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2022

With the new term upon us, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and trust that you have all had a restful and enjoyable festive holiday. The fight against Covid-19 continues and as we begin the new year, it is important that we all do our bit to ensure we are looking after ourselves and each other during these difficult and uncertain times.

This newsletter gives a reminder of measures that remain in place within school in addition to some updated guidance. Please take a few minutes to read this and also the additional information which relates to other aspects of school life this term.

### Covid-19 Mitigations in School

Lateral Flow testing – pupils should continue with their twice weekly testing regime, remembering to report the results even when they are negative. This means that our Public Health colleagues have the best possible information to understand the prevalence of Covid-19 in our community, and, for those with positive results, so the correct advice can be given to those in close contact, to prevent onward spread of the virus. Testing kits can be collected from the main office.

Wearing of Masks - unless exempt, all pupils should wear a mask or face covering when in the school building. Please ensure your child comes to school with a mask or face covering every day. Prior to the Christmas holiday, our main office were issuing close to 200 masks per day; this is unsustainable.

Hand Sanitising - all pupils should continue to sanitise their hands upon entering the school building each and every time. It is important that pupils do this even if no staff member is present to remind them to carry this out. Pupils can bring their own hand sanitiser if they prefer.

Desk Wipes - pupils will continue to be asked to wipe desks at the beginning and end of each lesson. Wipes will be provided by each class teacher.

### Self Isolation For Pupils

Following the update from the First Minister on 5 January, guidance has been updated to reflect when pupils need to isolate:

Close contacts who are aged under 18 years and 4 months, can take daily LFD tests for 7 days instead of isolation - provided the tests are negative and they remain without symptoms.

Positive cases are advised to self-isolate for 10 days. However, if the individual returns two consecutive negative LFD tests from day 6 (taken at least 24 hours apart) then the individual can end isolation.

### 12–15 Year Old Vaccinations

The 12–15 year old second dose vaccination programme has now been confirmed by the Joint Council for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and will be delivered in schools across Dumfries and Galloway during January and February 2022. Parental consent is required and forms will be sent out nearer the time.

### 16+ Year Old Vaccinations

Any pupil aged 16 or above who has yet to make an appointment for a first COVID-19 vaccination, or who has yet to receive a second more than eight weeks from their first, is encouraged to contact the local helpline by calling 01387 403090 between 9am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, email [dg.covidenquiries@nhs.scot](mailto:dg.covidenquiries@nhs.scot)

### Foodbank Donations

A huge thanks to all parents/carers, pupils and staff for the incredible generosity and consideration shown just prior to Christmas as part of our annual foodbank collection. Your help and support ensured over 2000 items were gratefully received by The Trussell Trust to help local families over the festive period.

### **S4/5/6 Prelims**

Prelim exams for senior pupils begin on Friday 14 January and run until Thursday 27 January. Prelim timetables were issued prior to the Christmas holiday; these are also included on the school website. Reports and Parents' Evening will take place soon thereafter as will Option interviews for S4/5 pupils.

It is important that all pupils in S4/5/6 continue to adopt a positive attitude towards their studies and revision to ensure success in the prelim exams and beyond. Performance in the prelim and subsequent results may determine presentation levels for the final SQA exams later this year and as such it is vital that all pupils prepare in the best possible way to ensure success.

Study support sessions in all subjects continue to be offered to pupils throughout the week. Please encourage your child to attend these sessions to assist with their learning in preparation for both the prelim exams and the final SQA exams in April/May. Details of study support sessions are also listed on the school website.

### **S3 Reports**

Following the completion of reports for pupils in third year, these were emailed to parents/carers last Friday 7 January. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss any aspect of your child's report.

### **Parents' Evening/Options Interviews**

With ongoing restrictions likely to remain in place for some time, Parents' Evening and Option Interviews will take place but in a different format. Once details have been finalised, we will communicate to ensure we can work together to maximise parent/carer attendance to best support our young people.

### **Dumfries & Galloway College Applications 2022**

Applications for full-time courses for session 2022/2023 will open on Tuesday 18 January. This will be followed up by a virtual open week from Monday 24 January where pupils can find out more information on their chosen course, speak with subject specialists, find out what supports on offer and how college can get you one step ahead.

Applications are online. An application guide is being drafted that will be available soon. All information will be available at: [www.dumgal.ac.uk](http://www.dumgal.ac.uk)

House Heads will be available to support pupils in S4/5/6 wishing to complete applications. Next Wednesday 19 January, one-to-one support will be available to pupils in school to assist with the completion of online applications to Dumfries and Galloway College.

### **Barony Campus (SRUC) Applications 2022**

To apply for an HNC, HND or degree level course (full time study) applications need to be submitted via [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) ideally by the UCAS equal consideration deadline of Wednesday 26 January 2022. Applications will remain open after this date until 30 June as long as places are available but applications received by the January deadline will receive first consideration. The course may close to new applications earlier than 30 June if the course becomes full. UCAS closes on 30 June to all new applications so applicants would need to apply in Clearing after this date.

To apply for an HNC, HND or degree level course (part-time study) or courses below HNC level-applications should be submitted via the website [Home | SRUC](http://Home | SRUC) Applications will remain open for these courses until term starts unless closed due to being full.

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) are running online Open Days in February for all subjects - you will find the dates and times detailed on the website at [www.sruc.ac.uk/opendays](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/opendays) where you can also register for events.

### **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)**

At this point of the term, many senior pupils will be considering their options for later in the year. Zoe Winpenny, our school Career Advisor can offer a face-to-face meeting to provide career information, advice and guidance if required. Many of our senior pupils and parents/carers may require specialist help to finalise future career paths. Please use the following contact details and websites which I hope you find useful:

- Telephone: 01387 – 272500
- Email: [zoe.winpenny@sds.co.uk](mailto:zoe.winpenny@sds.co.uk)
- [myworldofwork.co.uk](http://myworldofwork.co.uk)
- [mykidscareer.com](http://mykidscareer.com)

## **Child Protection Issues**

In response to the Pupil Support survey issued to S1/2/3 parents/carers last term, I would like to take the opportunity to ensure that our community is aware of the fact that Mrs Daniella Hogg (Depute) is the main point of contact within Dumfries High School should a child protection concern ever exist.

## **Staffing Update**

Mr Andrew Smith (Maths) started at Dumfries High School just prior the Christmas break.

Mr Andy Campbell (Business Education) has returned to Dumfries High School following a period of absence during term 2.

Miss Lauren McWhirter (Home Economics) has returned on a part-time basis following her recent maternity leave.

Mrs Andrea Connor, Mrs Karen Tait, Mrs Candice Park and Mrs Claire Bartsch have all joined the team as part of the main office at Dumfries High School.

## **Mental Health First Aid**

The MHFA is Dumfries High School's Mental Health First Aid service, aimed at promoting positive mental health in the school community. Please be aware of the support that is available to pupils in relation to any mental health issues, including stress, feelings of uncertainty, anxiousness or low mood. Pupils can contact our fully-trained team using the 'get help' button on the home-page of the school website.

Filling in the referral form will result in our Head of Mental Health, Miss MacPherson, contacting a pupil within 24 hours to arrange a session with one of our trained members of staff. They will be able to offer support and signpost a pupil to the appropriate services and resources.

## **Pupil Attendance**

Maximising attendance at school is important to ensure that pupils progress in their learning. However, on occasion a pupil may be absent from school for a variety of reasons. As a school, it is important that our records are as up-to-date as possible.

When your child is absent or late, you must phone the absence line – 01387 702799 before 9.15am recording your child's name, registration class and reason for the absence or lateness. If you do not do this, you will receive a groupcall, prompting you to make contact with us to explain the absence or lateness. Any unexplained absence thereafter will be recorded as an unauthorised absence on your child's record.

## **Free Bus Travel**

All 5-21 year olds resident in Scotland are eligible from 31 January 2022 for Young Persons' Free Bus Travel, using a National Entitlement Card with the free bus travel product on it. Without this, they will be unable to travel for free on bus services in Scotland.

If you are a parent or guardian of a 5-15 year old then you must apply on their behalf. This will allow you to continue to exercise responsibility over their wellbeing and safety. Remember that free bus travel is available nationwide. This means your child can travel across Scotland, so please take care when making the decision about applying for them.

Cardholders with the free bus travel product on it will be able to access free bus travel on registered bus services across Scotland including a very limited number of local cross-border services from the south of Scotland into northern England.

More information can be accessed using the following link: <https://getyournec.scot/nec/?opt=NEC-Card/301>

## **DHS Rugby Strips**

Dumfries High School pupils have this year started to play competitive rugby matches against other local schools for the first time in a number of years.

Unfortunately, the strips we have are incredibly old and as a result are losing colour and are completely out of shape. I would like to purchase new strips for the players to ensure they have appropriate kit to represent the school with pride and passion when they play rugby.

A squad set of new rugby strips will cost approximately £700. Enquiries are being made with Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) and Sport Scotland to help secure funding, but there is no guarantee that funds will be forthcoming. If any parent/carer working with a business or organisation would be interested in making a donation or sponsoring the purchase of new rugby strips, please contact me directly ([gw08cubbonphilip@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08cubbonphilip@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)).

### Parent Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Parent Council will take place on Wednesday 12 January at 6pm. This will be an online 'Zoom' meeting. If you would like to take part in this meeting, please contact the Parent Council Chair Lorrie Kyle: [lorriekyle@btconnect.com](mailto: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.

### School Contacts

During this period of uncertainty, it is important more than ever that parents/carers and pupils are able to keep in contact with staff at Dumfries High School. Various contact details are listed below to support families during this time:

Head of House Buccleuch – Miss Holmes – [gw11holmesdebbie@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw11holmesdebbie@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Head of House Caerlaverlock – Miss Bryce – [gw09brycefiona2@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw09brycefiona2@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Head of House Devorgilla – Ms Kilmurry – [gw08kilmurryjan01@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08kilmurryjan01@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Child Protection Coordinator – Mrs Hogg – [gw11hoggdaniella@ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw11hoggdaniella@ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

Additional contacts if required: Childline – 0800 1111 Social Work – 030 33 33 3000

### Dates for the Diary

Friday 7 January 2022	S3 Reports Issued
Friday 17 January – Thursday 27 January 2022	S4/5/6 Prelim Exams
Monday 14 – Wednesday 16 February 2022	Pupil Holiday (Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 Inset)
Thursday 17 February 2022	S4/5/6 Reports Issued
Tuesday 22 February 2022	S4 Parents' Evening*
Monday 28 February 2022	S5/6 Parents' Evening*
Wednesday 9 March 2022	S3 Parents' Evening*
Tuesday 15 March 2022	S2 Parents' Evening*
Friday 1 April 2022	End of Term – Easter Holiday
Tuesday 19 April 2022	New Term Begins
Monday 2 May 2022	May Day Holiday
Friday 13 May 2022	S1 Reports Issued
Wednesday 18 May 2022	S1 Parents' Evening*
Thursday 2 and Friday 3 June 2022	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Holiday
Friday 1 July 2022	End of Term
*Parents' Evening details to be confirmed	

Please get in touch with the school if you have any queries at all as we start the new term. By working together we can continue to support our young people during this challenging time. On behalf of the staff at Dumfries High School, I would like once again to extend the very best of wishes to every pupil and parent/carer within our community.

Take care and stay safe

