



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2026

I would like to welcome everyone back to the final term of this school year. The final countdown is now underway as we prepare to move to our new school building in early June. There is a lot to do and it will be an incredibly busy term for everyone involved. We will continue to share information about the transition to the new facility as we receive it to ensure everything goes as smoothly as possible.

Please take a few minutes to read through this newsletter which will hopefully give some useful information about the term ahead.

Staffing Update

Lizzie Smithard, who is currently employed at Dumfries High School as a teacher of History and Modern Studies, has been successful in securing the position of Principal Teacher Additional Support Needs (ASN) within our school on a permanent basis. Lizzie will take up her position as of Monday 1 June.

Stewart Solley continues to provide cover in Music during Holly Turner's maternity leave until the summer holiday.

Ailsa Little will return to her substantive post at Dumfries Academy as of June. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ailsa for the significant contribution she has made in the short period of time she has been with us.

S4/5/6 Qualifications Scotland Exams 2026

Qualifications Scotland (previously known as SQA) exams for all pupils undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Qualifications start on Wednesday 22 April. All pupils have been issued with individualised exam timetables detailing all of the required information. We wish all of our senior pupils good luck with their exams.

Exam leave officially begins for senior pupils on Monday 27 April. The whole-school timetable will change on Friday 5 June following the move to the new school building. All year groups will move forward as pupils begin new courses and subjects of study.

Details of 'Masterclasses' to support senior pupils just prior to each Qualifications Scotland exam are attached to this email. Please encourage your child to attend.

All senior pupils must be in full school uniform when in school during exam leave; this is the case whether undertaking an exam, attending a masterclass or for general study.

S3 Exams

S3 pupils will also be starting a nine-day period of exams as from Tuesday 5 May; exam timetables are in the process of being compiled and will be issued to pupils soon. Pupils will undertake exams in subjects that they are continuing to study next year throughout S4. The experience of completing these exams will help to prepare the pupils for the S4 prelims in January of next year. It will also prove to be a useful benchmark to assess pupil progress at this point in time. It goes without saying that third year pupils should approach these exams in a focused, positive and mature manner to ensure they attain as highly as they possibly can.

Transition to New School Building

Only a few weeks remain until the move to our new £53M school facility. This is an incredibly exciting time for everyone associated with the Dumfries High School community. It was December 2019 when the Scottish Government funding announcement was made that has allowed our new school to come to fruition; we can all now look forward to all of the experiences that a new state-of-the-art facility will bring.

Friday 29 May is a planned inset day and as such, no pupils will be in school. Monday 1 June until Thursday 4 June during the following week, have been granted as additional closure days to assist with the move to the new building. Pupils will not be in school during these days; all pupils should however, return to school on Friday 5 June when our new academic timetable for session 2026/2027 will begin.

To help pupils with the transition to the new building, it is our intention to organise some short visits to the new school in advance of Friday 5 June. A short video demonstrating a guide around the new school and a map to assist pupils, will also be produced to ease any worries or concerns that pupils may have about navigating their way around.

Breakfast Club

As previously communicated, Dumfries High School continues to run a breakfast club each morning between 8am and 8.45am. The breakfast club takes place in the Home Economics department.

To help support those families most in need, the breakfast club will be available to access by the young people who may not be able to secure a healthy breakfast before they leave home each morning. Cereals, toast, hot and cold drinks will be available at no cost to any pupil who attends.

S1 Bag Packing – Galloway Activity Centre (GAC) Fundraising

Our current S1 year group travelled to Galloway Activity Centre (GAC) back in September last year and the cost of bus transport was supported by fundraising activities undertaken by current S2 pupils.

Therefore, our current year group are helping to 'pay it forward' by trying to raise as much money as possible to help contribute towards the cost of buses for our new S1 cohort who will be joining us in August.

The initial bag packing event recently held at Lockerbie Road Tesco raised a fantastic £1126.32. A further S1 bag packing fundraising event has been organised to be held in Morrison's Supermarket between 10am and 2pm on Saturday 16 May. If you can, please show your support for our young volunteers as they give their time to help others.

Guid Nychburris Celebrations 2026

As part of the Guid Nychburris celebrations this year, Lori Sturrock, S4 at Dumfries High School will perform the role of Senior Attendant to the Queen of the South. We wish Lori well as she represents Dumfries High School and our wider community as part of the Guid Nychburris celebrations on Saturday 20 June.

May Day Holiday

Please note that Monday 4 May will be a holiday for all pupils and staff.

P7 Induction Days

Primary 7 induction days for our new S1 cohort who will be attending Dumfries High School after the summer break will be taking place in late June. We will be welcoming many pupils from a number of different schools to life at Dumfries High School on Wednesday 24, Thursday 25 and Friday 26 June. We look forward to seeing them here in school.

Uniform

When S4/5/6 pupils are on study leave completing Qualifications Scotland exams, there will be an increased focus on the standard of uniform amongst our S1/2/3 pupils.

Dumfries High School uniform consists of black shoes, black trousers/skirt, white shirt, black v-neck jumper/cardigan, school blazer and a school tie. The vast majority of our pupils look incredibly smart and wear the uniform with pride. Jeans, hoodies and tracksuit tops are not part of school uniform and therefore pupils should not wear these to school. As always, your support with this is greatly appreciated.

House Assemblies

S1/2/3 year groups will continue to attend House Assemblies this term during the Qualifications Scotland exam period. Assemblies each week will focus on different elements of Health and Wellbeing as part of the wider school curriculum.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

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 Lead for Mental Health, Mr Campbell, 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.

Parent Council Meeting – Tuesday 12 May

The next meeting of the Parent Council will take place in the main school library on Tuesday 12 May at 6pm. Please contact the Parent Council Chair, Dr Glidden Chalmers: dumfrieshighschoolpc@gmail.com for further details.

Health and Wellbeing Padlet – School Website

Our school website now contains a [HWB Padlet](#) which will be updated each term. This will allow you to keep up-to-date with all aspects of health and wellbeing at Dumfries High School. In the 'padlet' you will find;

- Information on the HWB (PSE) Programme
- Signposting to contacts for support in Dumfries High School
- Signposting to sources of support for self help
- Details of the Dumfries High School Mental Health First Aid provision
- Photographs and details of pupil participation and achievement in Health and Wellbeing lessons and activities.
- Details of our external partners in curriculum delivery

Please take some time to look through this valuable resource.

S1 Reports

A full report for all pupils in S1 will be issued on Friday 8 May. Once reports have been issued, please do not hesitate to contact the school if there is anything you would like to discuss in more detail.

School Meals

Please note that the cost of a school meal deal has increased to £2.40 as from 1 April 2026.

Sports Day

Athletics heats for all pupils in S1 will take place on Monday 25 May with S2/3 heats taking place on Tuesday 26 May. Sports Day Finals will take place on Tuesday 9 June.

Dumfries and Galloway Schools Regional Athletics Championships will take place here at Dumfries High School on Tuesday 16 June.

Child Protection Concerns

I would like to take the opportunity once again 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.

Sixth Year Senior Prom

Please note that the S6 Prom this year will take place at Hetland Hall on Friday 5 June. Final arrangements are currently being made for this event.

Free School Meals/Clothing Grants

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>.

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 gw11holmesdebbie @ea.dumgal.sch.uk	Fiona Bryce gw09brycefiona2 @ea.dumgal.sch.uk	Jan Kilmurry gw08kilmurryjan01 @ea.dumgal.sch.uk
Depute Headteacher	Billy Davidson gw08davidsonwilliam @ea.dumgal.sch.uk	Daniella Hogg gw11hoggdaniella @ea.dumgal.sch.uk	Claire Harrison gw08harrisonclaire@ ea.dumgal.sch.uk

S1 Paris Trip 2026

An important Parent Information Evening for the S1 Paris Trip 2026 will be held on Wednesday 22 April 2026 at 6pm in the Main Hall. A specific letter inviting you, and sharing other relevant information for the trip, was sent home by Miss Wilson prior to the Easter holiday. This trip takes during week commencing Monday 18 May.

S3 Berlin Trip 2026

This trip also takes place during week commencing Monday 18 May.

S2 Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Scotland 2026

All S2 students are taking part in this valuable experience as part of the S2 Business course. Students work hard raising awareness for a variety of social issues and charities that they are passionate about. In groups, students make presentations to try and win £3000 from the Wood Foundation and Holywood Trust for various charities. The Grand Final will be held on Wednesday 6 May 2026, with a finalist group from each registration class. In front of a packed hall of students, invited guests, parents/carers and representatives from the charities, the groups of students will share their presentations and one of the groups will hand a cheque for £3000 to their charity. We are looking forward to seeing the excellent work, both in and out of school, that this year's second year cohort have been involved in.

Punctuality

Our school day begins at **8.50am** and pupils should ensure they are in their period one class by this time. A 'warning bell' will ring at 8.45am. Please ensure your child is in school no later than 8.50am; any pupil arriving after this time will be late for important learning.

Junior Prizegiving (S1/2/3)

This event will take place on Thursday 18 June at 7pm in the main hall of our new school building. Further information will follow about this evening.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 16 April 2026	S3 Berlin Trip Parent/Carer Information Evening (6pm)
Wednesday 22 April 2026	Qualifications Scotland Exam Diet Begins (S4/5/6)
Monday 4 May 2026	May Day Holiday
Tuesday 5 May 2026 – Friday 15 May 2026	S3 Exam Period
Wednesday 6 May 2026	S2 Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Final (Periods 4/5)
Friday 8 May 2026	S1 Reports Issued
Tuesday 12 May 2026	Parent Council Meeting (6pm)
Sunday 17 May 2026 – Friday 22 May 2026	S1 Paris Trip
Monday 18 May 2026 – Friday 22 May 2026	S3 Berlin Trip
Monday 25 May 2026	S1 Sports Heats
Tuesday 26 May 2026	S2/3 Sports Heats
Thursday 28 May 2026	S2/3 Tracking Reports Issued
Friday 29 May 2026	Inset Day (No pupils in school)
Monday 1 June 2026 – Thursday 4 June 2026	Additional Closure Days to Support School Move
Friday 5 June 2026	New Timetable Begins – Pupils return to School
Friday 5 June 2026	S6 Prom (Hetland Hall)
Tuesday 9 June 2026	Whole School Sports Day
Tuesday 16 June 2026	School's Regional Athletic Championships
Thursday 18 June 2026	S1/2/3 Junior Prizegiving
Wednesday 24 June 2026 – Friday 26 June 2026	P7 Induction Days
Wednesday 1 July 2026	End of Term

Kind regards

