



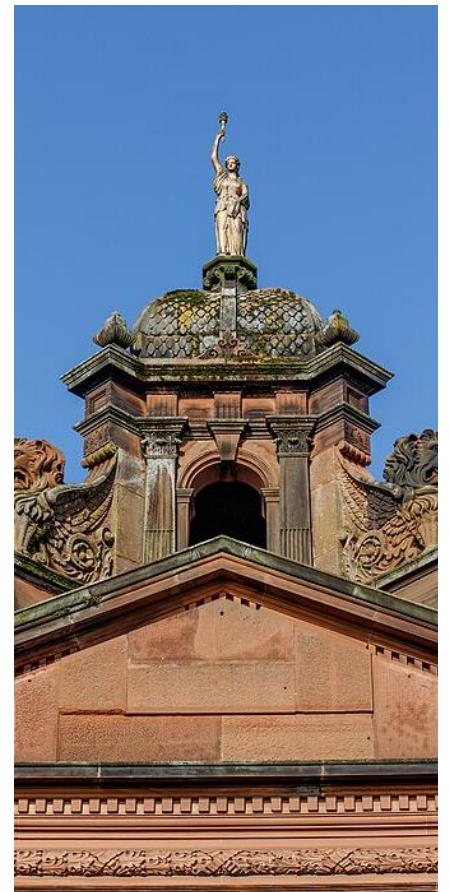
Welcome to

# Dumfries Academy



## Handbook

2026 - 2027



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# Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer



Our schools across Dumfries and Galloway have high expectations and high aspirations for pupils and staff. Like you, we want the best possible future for your child. We know that children do better at school and go on to achieve more in life when families and schools work together. We want to make sure that you, as parents and carers, feel involved in your child's learning, feel welcome and listened to in our schools. We have a shared interest in your child being happy, confident, and successful in school.

To help children reach their potential we focus on removing barriers to learning; meeting the needs of children and upholding their rights underpin all we do.

This year we know that the increased cost of living will mean that many families have money worries - school should not add to those. There should be no costs involved in the school day which are a barrier to your child joining in. This handbook gives important information on the benefits you may be entitled to and how we can help you apply for free meals, free transport, free childcare, clothing grants and allowances, and to make sure you have the right financial advice.

This handbook sets out the responsibilities I have, as Director, for your child's education. While we have core values and shared ambitions, our schools put this into practice slightly differently to meet the needs of the local community. Your schools Headteacher will publish their own handbook to provide information which is on specific to your school.

I hope this information is helpful in setting out how we can work together to benefit your child's learning and make sure they have the best possible experience at school. Our schools are welcoming places at the heart of our communities and always want to hear from you about how we can do more to support you, so please talk to us. There are many useful contact numbers in this handbook or you can contact me on [DirectorSkillsEducationLearning@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:DirectorSkillsEducationLearning@dumgal.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely  
Dr Gillian Brydson  
Director Skills, Education and Learning

**More Information on Education and Learning Directorate is available at**  
[www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/schools)

**Dumfries and Galloway Council  
Education and Learning Directorate  
Militia House, English Street  
DG1 2HR Call 030 33 33 3000  
or visit**  
<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15379/Contact-us>

Dear Parent/Carer



I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as Headteacher of Dumfries Academy. I am honoured and privileged to be leading such a great school.

This handbook aims to help you and your child understand our school better and highlights the vast array of experiences we have to offer.

I believe we provide very good experiences for our young people at Dumfries Academy. Our pupils' performances are consistently in line with, or above, local averages in all measures relating to SQA attainment and we ensure that we encourage all young people to aim high. We provide a rich and varied curriculum that allows young people in our school to develop skills, talents and abilities that are essential for life, learning and work. In doing so, we work in partnership with you, as parents/carers, our young people and our local community to help our pupils to experience high quality learning and teaching. We are constantly working in partnership with others, including our cluster primaries, to make sure that our learners' experiences build upon their prior learning and are based around meaningful contexts. We endeavour to make learning fun and challenging and our wide variety of outdoor learning experiences, including excursions and residential trips, further enriches pupils' experiences.

The partnership between home and school is crucial in helping young people to be successful. There are many ways for parents to support our school. My aim is inform all parents/carers regularly about the life and work of the school through various methods, including this handbook and the school website, but also through the various information evenings and events that we run. We understand that Curriculum for Excellence terms are not always parent-friendly and aim to work closely with our Parent Council to provide you with information that is "jargon-free" and explains simply what your child's learning journey looks like at Dumfries Academy.

At Dumfries Academy our aims, values and vision are centred on supporting young people to become confident, successful, included and responsible. Our school motto (steeped in history and tradition) is "Doctrina Promovet". This translates as Learning Promotes. I believe the philosophy behind this is undeniable. Successful learning is a means to unlocking each individual's unique talents and abilities, enabling them to use those to promote better opportunities in life, learning and work.

I look forward to working with you and your son/daughter and would like to reassure you that you can contact me at any time to discuss any aspect of your child's education.

Yours sincerely  
Joanne Dillon  
Mrs Joanne Dillon

# OUR VISION, VALUES AND AIMS



**OUR VISION**  
**Learning together**  
**for a better future**  
*- Doctrina Promovet*

## Aim 1



Our school is a safe, nurturing environment for all

## Aim 2



Our pupils care about their learning and want to achieve

## Aim 3



Our pupils develop skills for life, learning and work

## Aim 4



With others, our school creates a community we can be proud of

## OUR VALUES



# School Information

## CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joanne Dillon
<b>School Address</b>	Academy Street, Dumfries, DG1 1DD
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01387 274350
<b>Absence Line</b>	01387 274356
<b>Email</b>	gw08officedumfriesac@ea.dumgal.sch.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.dumfriesacademy.org
<b>Facebook</b>	Dumfries Academy Events
<b>Denomination status</b>	Non-denominational
<b>Current School Roll</b>	550

### The School Day

A seven period day is in operation (five in the morning and two in the afternoon)

### Arrangements for Social Times

Arrangements for morning break and lunch time are as follows:

- S1 – Café (indoor), rear of school to Tower Block (outdoor)
- S2 – Café (indoor), in front of link corridor (outdoor)
- S3/4 – Main Hall (indoor), front of Main Building (outdoor)
- S5/6 Minerva (indoor), front of Minerva (outdoor)

### Attendance

If your child is absent from/late to school for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to inform us at the earliest possible opportunity, by telephoning the absence line below.

**Pupil Absence Line – 01387 274356**

## School Uniform / Dress Policy

**School Blazer (Compulsory)**  
**School Tie (Compulsory)**  
**Maroon or Black V-neck pullover /cardigan (optional)**  
**White shirt/blouse (Compulsory)**  
**Black trousers/skirt (Compulsory)**  
**Black footwear (Compulsory)**



## MONDAY – FRIDAY

<b>Period 1</b>	<b>08:50 - 09:35</b>
<b>Period 2</b>	<b>09:35 - 10:20</b>
<b>Check In</b>	<b>10:20 - 10:35</b>
<b>Break</b>	<b>10:35 - 10:50</b>
<b>Period 3</b>	<b>10:50 - 11:35</b>
<b>Period 4</b>	<b>11:35 - 12:20</b>
<b>Period 5</b>	<b>12:20 - 13:05</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>13:05 - 13:50</b>
<b>Period 6</b>	<b>13:50 - 14:35</b>
<b>Period 7</b>	<b>14:35 - 15:20</b>

## School Holiday Dates

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15239/School-term-and-holiday-dates>

# Staff Information

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Mrs J Dillon Rector  
Mr D Dillon Depute Rector (S1/2/6)  
Dr J Gordon Depute Rector (S2/3/4)  
Mrs L Black School Support Manager

## PRINCIPAL TEACHERS (PUPIL SUPPORT)

Miss P Torrance Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support (S1)  
Mr D Barton Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support (S2)  
Mrs C Wilson Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support (S3)  
Mr F Scott Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support (S4)  
Mr G Leonard Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support (S5/6)  
Mrs C Hurley Principal Teacher  
Pupil Support - Additional  
Support for Learning

## Ms M Kell - PT FACULTY (LANGUAGE AND LITERACY)

### English

Mrs J Dillon  
Dr J Gordon  
Ms M Kell - *Principal Teacher*  
Mr G Leonard  
Mr S Powell  
Mr C Scade  
Mrs L Paterson-Urquhart  
Miss K Cumberland

### Modern Languages

Miss J Kerr  
Mrs C Wilson

### Drama

Miss K Cumberland  
Miss P Torrance

### English as an Additional Language

Mrs C Seedhouse  
Mrs K Ghani

## Mr S Wilson - PT FACULTY (MATHEMATICS, NUMERACY AND TECHNOLOGIES)

### Mathematics and Numeracy

Mrs E Inglis  
Mr R McWilliam  
Mr S Moylett  
Mrs D Turska  
Mr S Wilson – *Principal Teacher*

### Business Education

Mrs A McQuarrie  
Mrs N Wilson

### Craft, Design and Technology

Mr M Rosie  
Mr B Taylor

### Art and Design

Mx C Barthram  
Mr D Proudfoot  
Mr B Taylor

### Computing Science

Mr S Wilson – *Principal Teacher*

## Mr L Mika - PT FACULTY (SOCIAL SUBJECTS)

### Geography

Miss I McGuire

### History/RME

Miss E Anderson  
Mr L Mika - *Principal Teacher*  
Mr W McGair (SWEIC)

### Modern Studies

Mrs K Spence

# Staff Information

## **Mr C Grierson - PT FACULTY (SCIENCE)**

### **Biology**

Miss D Barton

Mr C Grierson - *Principal Teacher*

Miss K Harrison

### **Chemistry**

Miss E Desai (maternity leave)

### **Physics**

Mrs Z Murray

## **Miss I Haile - PT FACULTY (HEALTH AND WELLBEING)**

### **Home Economics**

Miss E Hay

Miss M Howat

### **Physical Education**

Mr D Dillon

Mr R Douglas

Miss I Haile - *Principal Teacher*

Mr W Nicholson

Mr F Scott – *Acting Principal Teacher*

Nurture

### **Music**

Miss L Caldwell

## **Mrs C Hurley - PT PUPIL SUPPORT (ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING)**

Mrs C Hurley

Miss J Walsh

### **Classroom Assistants**

Mrs F Cameron

Mrs S Donnelly

Miss K Gilbert

Miss N Kerr-Young

Mrs D McDonald

Miss H Nichol

Mr A Nelson

Mrs A Wallace

Mrs C Fraser

Miss A MacKellar

### **Nurture/Hub**

Mr C Johnstone

## **Care Experienced Officer**

Ms H Stevenson

## **Home Link**

Ms L Dunbar

## **Admin Team**

Mrs A McCormick

Mrs C Farish

Mrs M Jarvie

Mrs G Rippingale

Miss J Irving

## **Careers Advisors**

Mr J MacColl

## **Youth Information Worker**

Mr B Hughes

## **School Nurse**

Mrs T Mills

## **School Police Officer**

PC H McKerlie

## **Technicians**

Mr G Edgar

Mr J Forlow

## **Facilities Assistants**

Mr G Beveridge

Mr P Jardine

Mr W McMillan

## **Miss I Haile - PT FACULTY (HEALTH AND WELLBEING)**

### **Home Economics**

Miss E Hay

Miss M Howat

### **Physical Education**

Mr D Dillon

Mr R Douglas

Miss I Haile - *Principal Teacher*

Mr W Nicholson

Mr F Scott – *Acting Principal Teacher*

Nurture

# Staff Information

## **Mrs C Hurley - PT PUPIL SUPPORT (ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING)**

Mrs C Hurley  
Miss J Walsh

## **Classroom Assistants**

Mrs F Cameron  
Mrs S Donnelly  
Miss K Gilbert  
Miss N Kerr-Young  
Mrs D McDonald  
Miss H Nichol  
Mr A Nelson  
Mrs A Wallace  
Mrs C Fraser  
Miss A MacKellar

## **Nurture/Hub**

Mr C Johnstone  
Mr F Scott – *Acting Principal Teacher*

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## **Youth Information Worker**

Mr B Hughes

## **School Nurse**

Mrs T Mills

## **School Police Officer**

PC H McKerlie

## **Technicians**

Mr G Edgar  
Mr J Forlow

## **Facilities Assistants**

Mr G Beveridge  
Mr P Jardine  
Mr W McMillan

Dumfries Academy has established very good links with its six cluster primary schools and we have developed a programme of activities which starts with pupils in Primary 6. This programme is designed to help make the transition from Primary to Secondary School less daunting for pupils.

This culminates in three induction days in June when pupils come to Dumfries Academy and participate in a normal school timetable.

Our five cluster schools are:



1. Loreburn
2. Troqueer
3. Laurieknowe
4. St Michaels
5. New Abbey

**Troqueer School**



Please visit the link below for our P7 Transition guide to joining Dumfries Academy

<http://dumfriesacademy.org/content.php?page=P7%20Transition%20Information>



# The Learning Experience

We give careful consideration to placing pupils in classes that are mixed by gender and ability. In S1, pupils will be allocated to a Tutor Group (and House Group) and they will be taught most courses along with this same group. Our average class size in S1 and S2 is fewer than 20 pupils, except for Social Studies and Modern Languages. In all classes, teachers make sure that the pace of lessons, the methods used and the resources meet the needs of all pupils. Additional Support staff are present in a lot of S1 lessons to help support pupils where required, whether they need extension work or consolidation work, or just reassurance.

At the end of S2 and S3 pupils will make choices about which courses they would like to follow. This means they may find that they have different grouping for each course and class sizes could vary from 15 to 33 pupils. They will, however, remain in the same Tutor Group throughout their school career.

## Homework

Homework is an extension of classroom learning that reinforces knowledge, deepens understanding, and promotes independent study skills. At Dumfries Academy we take a structured, purposeful, and equitable approach to issuing homework which allows staff and pupils to balance workload and wellbeing. All homework will be issued via Satchel One on a four-week rolling schedule which means young people should be set homework by all their subjects at least once a month.



The benefits of homework for Young People:

1. Reinforcement of Learning – Homework helps consolidate classroom learning, improving retention and understanding.
2. Development of Independent Learning – Regular homework fosters self-discipline, time management, and personal responsibility.
3. Preparation for Assessment – Homework provides opportunities to practice exam-style questions/skills and apply skills in new contexts.
4. Parental Engagement – It allows families to be involved in their child's learning and progress.

The benefits of homework for Teachers:

1. Monitoring Progress – Homework offers insight into pupil understanding beyond the classroom.
2. Identifying Misconceptions – It highlights areas of confusion to be addressed in future lessons.
3. Informing Planning – Responses help tailor teaching to meet learners' needs more effectively.
4. Tracking Engagement – Regular homework provides a measurable indicator of learner effort and participation.

# The Learning Experience

## Curriculum for Excellence – S1 to S3

### Broad General Education

Curriculum for Excellence brings learning to life in the way education is delivered for pupils in S1 to S3. It takes a fresh approach to what, how and where young people learn. It aims to raise standards, improve knowledge and develop skills, closing the gap between the lowest and highest performers. Ultimately it aims to nurture young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

In S1 and S2 pupils experience a broad general education covering the following curricular areas.

- Expressive Arts (Art, Drama and Music).
- Health and Wellbeing (Home Economics and Physical Education).
- Languages (English, French and Spanish).
- Mathematics.
- Religious and Moral Education.
- Science.
- Social Subjects (Geography, History and Modern Studies).
- Technology.

### COURSES IN S3

Pupils will follow a similar curriculum to that which they experienced in S1 and S2 but will also be able to personalise their learning by choosing to specialise in some curricular areas midway through S3, as well as still continuing with the core curricular areas.

## Curriculum for S4-S6

### Senior Phase

In S4-6 pupils will choose a range of subjects according to their needs, abilities and interests. Virtually all subjects are certificated in the senior phase. It is expected most pupils will embark on subjects at National 3, 4 and 5, Higher and Advanced Higher during S4-6.

Pupils in S4 will study English and Mathematics courses and 5 other National courses.

S5 pupils will study five courses at either National or Higher level.

S6 pupils will study between three and five courses at National, Higher or Advanced Higher level. The majority of subjects at National 3, 4, 5 and Higher will run over one year.

We also work in partnership with other schools to offer network classes in the Senior Phase.

As well as the traditional subjects offered, we offer a range of vocational courses at times in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway College.

# The Learning Experience

These courses are run in our own school with staff from the Colleges using our facilities for teaching or by our own teaching staff. These subjects can pave the way for further study and progression at the Colleges.

Although most pupils will embark on subjects that will lead to certification, there are also opportunities for pupils, particularly in S6, to become involved in activities which recognise wider achievement. Some of our young people participate in the YASS (Young Applicants in Schools Scheme), Saltire Awards, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, more regular work experience, Leadership of School Committees or Young Enterprise.

These opportunities provide pupils with the skills and experiences that are both valuable for life but also help boost their CV when applying for work, college or university courses.

There will also be a core element to the curriculum that all pupils will study covering Personal and Social Education with a strong focus on health and wellbeing and preparing pupils for leaving school and moving on to positive and sustained destinations.

## Making Choices

Pupils make choices about the subjects or courses that they wish to study as they progress towards formal qualifications.

The following diagram shows how pupils progress through the Senior Phase qualifications pathway. This can vary, depending on resourcing.

Subject	SCQF Level 4	SCQF Level 5	SCQF Level 6	History			
Accounting							
Administration and IT							
Animal Care							
Applications of Mathematics							
Applied Science							
Art and Design							
Automotive Skills							
Biology							
Business Management							
Chemistry							
Childhood Practice							
Classical Studies							
Computing Science							
Construction Crafts							
Creative and Digital Media (FA)							
Creative Industries							
Cyber Security							
Data Science							
Design and Manufacture							
Digital Media Animation							
Drama							
Early Education and Childcare							
Electrical Engineering							
Engineering							
Engineering Science							
English							
Food and Drink Technologies							
French							
Geography							
Graphic Communication							
Health and Food Technology							
Health and Social Care							
Horticulture							
Human Biology							
Introduction to E-sports							
Laboratory Science							
Make Up, Hair and Beauty Skills							
Mathematics							
Media Studies							
Mental Health and Well-being							
Modern Agriculture							
Modern Studies							
Music							
Music Technology							
Photography							
Physical Education							
Physics							
Play in a Sports Environment							
Politics							
Practical Cake Craft							
Practical Cookery							
Practical Woodworking							
Professional Cookery							
Psychology							
Renewable Energy Practical Skills							
RMPS							
Social Services: Children and Young People							
Sociology							
Spanish							
Sport and Recreation							
Sports Leadership							
Travel and Tourism							
Web Design							

# Reporting and Assessment

Pupils are assessed continually in class in a variety of ways. These can be in the form of class tests and assessments, practical performance and prelim examinations. However, we firmly believe that assessment of learning is on-going and pupils should be involved in assessing their own strengths and areas for development. This enables them to work with their teachers to set targets for learning.

Under Curriculum for Excellence, most pupils are broadly expected to achieve the following levels as outlined below:

- Second – by end of Primary 7.
- Third – by end of S1/S2.
- Fourth – by end of S3. Fourth level broadly equates to SCQF Level 4 (National 4).
- Senior – in S4 to S6

Parents will receive 3 or 4 reports containing information on their child's progress.

Reports will be issued as follows:

S1 – Sep, Nov, Mar, Apr

S2 – Sep, Nov, Feb

S3 – Sep, Dec

S4 - Oct, Jan, Mar

S5-6 – Oct, Feb, Mar

Parents Evenings will be as below:

S1 – April

S2 – February

S3 – December

S4 – January

S5-6 - February

Any questions arising from reports can be raised with staff at Parents' Evenings or by appointment with your child's Pupil Support Teacher.

LEVEL	STAGE
<b>Early</b>	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
<b>First</b>	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
<b>Second</b>	To the end of P7, but earliest or later for some.
<b>Third and Fourth</b>	S1 – S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes <b>will not include all</b> of the fourth level outcomes.

## GIRFEC



Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is an approach from The Scottish Government that sets out how schools and other services should work with children and their families. GIRFEC is all about ensuring that children get the help they need when they need it – the right help at the right time. For you and your child, GIRFEC means that: You are the expert on your child and what you think matters. Getting it right for every child means that the school will always seek to involve you, to listen to your opinions and take them seriously.

Every child will have a person in the school that is there to provide pastoral support. At Dumfries Academy this is your child's Pupil Support Teacher. If you or your child need any advice or any support, the Pupil Support Teacher is your first point of contact and will make sure you get the help or advice that you need. Having a Pupil Support Teacher means that if there is anything that could affect your child's wellbeing, he or she will receive support as quickly as possible so that problems do not develop. For more information on getting it right for every child email [GIRFEC@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:GIRFEC@dumgal.gov.uk) or visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec) to see the Dumfries and Galloway services plan.

### Our Pupil Support Team

Your child will be allocated a Pupil Support Teacher who will be responsible for personal, curricular and vocational guidance. Your child's Pupil Support teacher should be your main contact. Your child usually has the same Pupil Support Teacher from throughout their time in school.

Our Pupil Support Principal Teachers are:

- Mrs C Wilson – S3
- Miss P Torrance – S1
- Mr F Scott – S4
- Mr Geoff Leonard – S5 and S6
- Miss D Barton – S2
- Mrs C Hurley – Additional Support for Learning

### Additional Support for Learning

At Dumfries Academy we support all children with additional needs in a variety of different ways: in classes, identified groups or on an individualised basis. This commitment to meeting the needs of all children is based on the requirements of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 amended in 2009.

#### What is Additional Support for Learning (ASL)?

If your child has a barrier to learning they can be said to have 'Additional Support Needs'. Children may need additional support for a variety of reasons, and this support may be short or long-term. Ms Papworth, our Principal Teacher of ASN/Nurture will be happy to answer any questions you might have. Alternatively, more information on ASN can be found at the link below: <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16163/Additional-support-for-learning>.

### Child Protection

All children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children and young people live safely and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway is that they should be: safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible and included. Schools and frontline education and child care services will play an important role in ensuring all children and young people are safe and well. The school's procedures for reporting a child protection concern can be found at the link below:

<http://dumfriesacademy.org/content.php?page=Child%20Protection>

Further information can also be found at

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16640/Support-for-children-and-families](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16640/Support-for-children-and-families)

# Support for all and Inclusion

The Directorate of Education and Learning Respect for All Guidelines (2018) for Schools incorporates revised national anti-bullying guidelines (Scottish Government 2017) that underpins our Schools Policy.

Our Bullying and Equalities Policy can be accessed via the link below:

<http://dumfriesacademy.org/content.php?page=Bullying%20and%20Equalities>

We also acknowledge The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Children's rights are now embedded in Scottish legislation with the promotion and upholding of the rights of children and young people and states that all education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. Children's voices should be heard, and their wishes respected without discrimination of any kind.

The Equality Act 2010 that places a duty on schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 put legislation in place to prevent direct or indirect discrimination against persons due to their:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex (Gender)
- Gender reassignment (Transgender)
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Dumfries and Galloway Council's priorities also place every child's wellbeing at the centre. In schools we do this by adhering to the principles of GIRFEC.

Dumfries Academy is the proud recipient of LGBT+ Gold Award and is the only school in Dumfries and Galloway to have achieved this. We are currently working towards re-accreditation.



We are also holders of the Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award.



# Support for all and Inclusion

## Nurture

This is a programme developed to help ensure secure and positive transitions from Primary school.

Lessons take place in “The Hub” (T14) and are timetabled during the Responsibility of All S1 lessons. There are three lessons a week. We also provide breakfast from 8.00am each morning and a lunch club. The lessons are based on the literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes. Lessons are structured to help give pupils the skills to do well at school, make friends and deal more confidently and calmly with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.



Classroom activities are based on the six principles of Nurture:

1. Children’s learning is understood developmentally.
  - We respond to the child not in terms of expectations about “attainment levels”, but in terms of the child’s current developmental progress.
2. The classroom offers a safe base
  - Environment is welcoming, safe, structured and predictable.
  - Boundaries are set and delivered clearly, fairly and with sensitivity.
  - Adults are reliable and consistent in their approach.
3. The importance of nurture for the development of self-esteem.
  - Engage in reciprocal shared activities e.g., play, meals, reading, talking about events and feelings.
  - Value the children as individuals by noticing and giving positive attention.
4. Language is a vital means of communication.
  - Language puts feelings into words. Children are helped to understand and “name” how they feel.
  - Importance of non-verbal communication.
  - Provide informal opportunities for talking and sharing e.g., welcoming the children into the group, having breakfast together, etc.
5. All behaviour is communication.
  - Given what I know about this child and their development what is this child trying to tell me?
  - Understanding what a child is communicating through behaviour helps staff to respond in a firm but non-punitive way.
  - If the child can sense that their feelings are understood this can help to diffuse difficult situations.
  - Restorative approaches.
6. The importance of transition in children’s lives.
  - Awareness of the numerous transitions the child makes.
  - Changes in routine need to be carefully managed with preparation and support.

Pupils who attend Hub lessons are also offered the support of a senior mentor. S6 pupils work with their mentees in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. They help build positive relationships, improve pupils’ communication, concentration and organisational skills.

# Health and Wellbeing

## Health and Wellbeing Education

### Physical Education

All pupils from S1 to S6 are entitled to two periods of physical education per week to support their physical wellbeing in line with Scottish Government recommendations.

### Social, Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Pupils in S1 – S3 and S5 receive Personal, Health and Social Education (PSHE) lessons delivered during assemblies, tutor time and a weekly Health and Wellbeing period. S4 and S6 pupils receive PSHE through assemblies and workshops throughout the year, often with input from specialist partner agencies.

PSHE lessons offer universal support designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to make responsible choices and thrive both in and out of school. Our PHSE curriculum is developed in line with Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and has a clear focus on emotional literacy, social skills, positive mental health and resilience development. This empowers young people to understand themselves holistically to combat stress, pressure and influences that may cause them harm. Young people are regularly consulted on the content of the PSHE curriculum to ensure it consistently meets their needs.

<b>S1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dreams and Goals – including online safety</li> <li>• Healthy Relationships</li> <li>• Healthy Me – including alcohol and drugs, first aid</li> <li>• Changing Me – including sexual health and relationships, LGBT awareness</li> </ul>
<b>S2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being me in my world – including personal identity and peer approval</li> <li>• Celebrating Difference – including bullying and discrimination</li> <li>• Dreams and Goals – including personal strengths and mental health</li> <li>• Health Me – including teenage brain development and mental health first aid</li> <li>• Healthy Relationships – including assertiveness, contraception and exposure to pornography</li> <li>• Changing Me – including body image and self-expression</li> <li>• Sun safety</li> </ul>
<b>S3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being Me in my World – including Alcohol abuse, CPR and the impact of social media</li> <li>• Celebrating difference – including equality and multiculturalism</li> <li>• Dreams and Goals – including health goals and work/life balance</li> <li>• Healthy me – including sexual health and sexually transmitted diseases</li> <li>• Healthy Relationships – including romantic relationships and love and loss</li> <li>• Changing me – including managing change and decision-making, identifying risk and managing safety.</li> </ul>

## PHSE Programme S5/S6

In S5 the focus is on independent learning and preparation for the world of work and/or further study after leaving school.

<b>S5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being Me in My World – including transitioning to adulthood, relationships and the law, online activity and the law</li><li>• Dreams and Goals – including money and debt, jobs and skills, and Tracking and Monitoring of attainment</li><li>• Healthy Me – including self-worth, safe sexual and relationships, pregnancy and choice</li><li>• Relationships – including intimate relationships, sexuality and power in relationships</li></ul>
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### Career Choices

Careers advice and education is provided to all year groups through our PSHE programme. As they progress into the senior phase pupils can meet individually with our Skills Development Scotland Careers Advisor. Pupils also can also discuss career choices with their Tutor and Head of Year.



The Careers' Advisor is present in school on a weekly basis to meet with pupils and offer information, advice and guidance related to qualifications, careers and further study. They are also available to meet with parents at Parent's Evenings via prior appointment. Parental appointments can be made by contacting the pupil's Head of Year or the Careers' Officer directly. Pupils can access the Careers' Officer informally by attending the weekly lunchtime drop-in session.

All pupils in S4 receive two Careers focused workshops delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) - Career Management Skills and the SDS My World of Work Career Management Skills online module. This input ensures young people can take control of their future by strengthening their understanding of self, strengths, horizons and networks. The My World of Work website provides a wealth of information on careers and education, and pupils are encouraged to access this website as part of career planning.

## 16+ Learning Choices

16+ Learning Choices is a Scottish Government commitment to giving every young person an entitlement to learning at least until age 18. It is part of the Curriculum for Excellence.

The three key aspects are:

- The right learning provision must be in place – a range of options, including staying on at school, entering further or higher education, participating in the national training programmes, or taking part in personal and social development opportunities offered through community learning and development, must be available to each young person.
- The right financial support must be available to ensure that young people make choices based on the most appropriate learning for them, rather than on the amount of money offered.
- The right information, advice and guidance must be available to make sure that young people know what opportunities are on offer, how those fit with their own needs and ambitions, and how they will progress. Every young person leaving school at their earliest opportunity is entitled to further learning opportunities to help them develop skills for their future.



## Developing the Young Workforce

Miss Barton is our DYW coordinator in school. She works closely with our teaching staff, employability partners and careers advisors to ensure that we are providing the right support to develop skills for work and to ensure young people achieve a positive destination upon leaving school. This is an entitlement for all young people and there are many opportunities for school leavers to help them find employment, training and support.

Please see link below for further information relating to this Youth Guarantee Offer:

<https://youngpersonsguarantee.scot/>



# Extra-Curricular Activities

As well as curricular programmes to support physical and emotional health and wellbeing, pupils are encouraged to take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer in school. We have many lunchtime and after school clubs that pupils can join to make new friends and develop new skills. These are run by staff, at no cost to the pupils.

Please see link below to our Extra-Curricular Booklet.

<http://www.dumfriesacademy.org/pdfM1636019180pdf6183abecda5c8.pdf>



## School Trips/Excursions

As well as our extra-curricular clubs, pupils can also benefit from a wide range of trips and excursions on offer in school. These include day trips to various shows and events, weekend trips and longer foreign excursions. These trips are linked to the curriculum but also help cover the Health and Wellbeing and wider experience agenda as part of Curriculum for Excellence.

Some of these are:

- S1 to S3 - Day trips to the cinema, Theatre, Museums, galleries, theme parks, ecological sites, as well as residential trips within the UK, e.g. Broomlea, Belfast, London.
- S4 to S6 - International trips to the Battlefields of WW1 in Belgium and France, Camps International Trip to Kenya, Modern Languages trip to Barcelona, Social Subjects trips to Greece etc.



Edinburgh Zoo



WW1 Battlefields



S1 trip to Broomlea

# Parental Engagement

## The Parent Forum

Every parent who has a child at our school is a member of the Parent Forum. The parent council is a group of parents who have chosen to represent the parent forum. As a member of the Parent Forum, each parent can expect to:

- Receive information about the school and its activities
- Hear about what partnership with parents means in our school
- Be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you
- Identify issues you want the parent council to work on with the school
- Be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and education it provides
- Work in partnership with staff
- Enjoy taking part in school life in whatever way possible

## The Parent Council

The type of things the parent council may get involved in include:

- Supporting the work of the school
- Gathering and representing parents' views to the Headteacher, Education Authority and Education Scotland
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils and the local community
- Fundraising and organising events
- Reporting to the parent forum
- Being involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.

### Parent Council Office Bearers

Liza Vinnie – Chairperson  
Melanie McEwen – Vice Chairperson/Secretary  
Lucille Tiberghien-Giriat – Treasurer

The Parent Council can be contacted in the following ways:

[dumfriesacademyparentcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:dumfriesacademyparentcouncil@gmail.com)

Facebook – Dumfries Academy Parent Council

You can find out more about Parent Councils and parental engagement from the following links:

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/>

Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) - Dumfries and Galloway Council ([dumgal.gov.uk](http://dumgal.gov.uk))

<https://connect.scot>

Parent Voice is crucial in helping the school develop and implement its School Improvement Plan.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025 - 2026



### PRIORITY ONE

Create a more varied curriculum in S1-3 that allows pupils to develop and reflect on skills that are important for life, learning and work: develop and implement our learning together programmes

#### IMPACT

Pupils reflect on their skills, make better progress in their learning and achieve recognised Skills for Work qualifications

### PRIORITY TWO

Improve progress and raise attainment in literacy and numeracy for all pupils in S1-6 so that we close our attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged by an average of 10%

#### IMPACT

Pupils have the core skills needed to improve chances of attaining a positive destination, leading to a better future for them

### PRIORITY THREE

Improve consistency within all lessons so that almost all pupils recognise and act on teacher feedback and are being asked to make high quality contributions, through challenging questions and increased responsibility

#### IMPACT

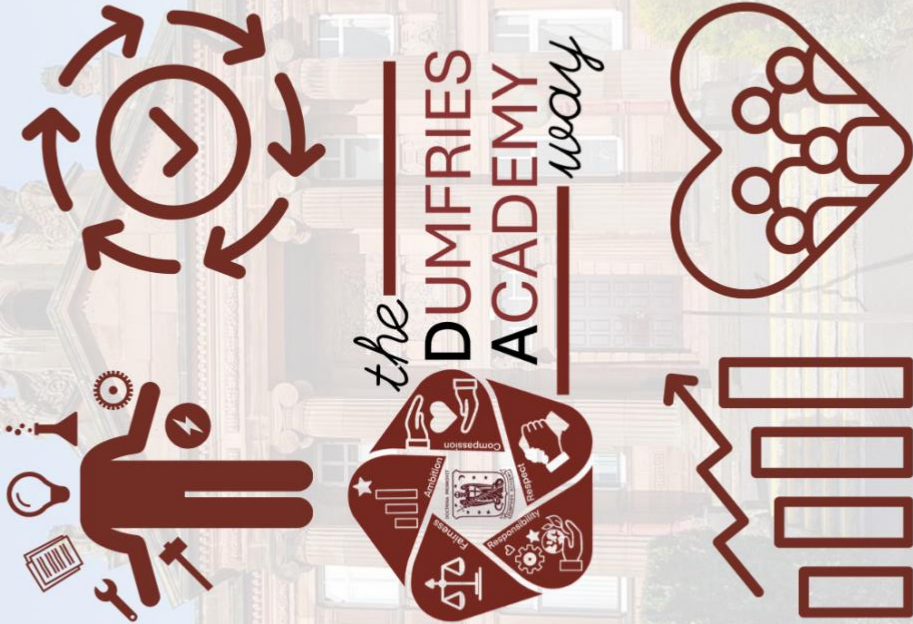
Pupils recognise and act on feedback from teachers and this leads to improved outcomes and attainment for all pupils

### PRIORITY FOUR

Improve wellbeing support for our pupils, staff and families so that we can build a community based on our school values

#### IMPACT

Pupils and their families are well informed, feel included, celebrate our progress and achievements and are able to make more contributions to our school community



# Useful Links

Staff, parents and pupils can access key policies and support for pupils in Dumfries and Galloway at [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk). Parents can also access more information by visiting the school's website [www.dumfiresacademy.org](http://www.dumfiresacademy.org).

We would also suggest that parents are aware of the following local and national websites to support parents/carers and children and young people on their journey through school life.

## Curriculum and Learning

### ***Broad General Education S1-3***

<https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/about-curriculum-for-excellence/curriculum-stages/broad-general-education/>

### ***Senior Phase (S4-6) and Beyond***

<https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/about-curriculum-for-excellence/curriculum-stages/senior-phase-and-beyond/>

## Assessment and Qualifications

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/84154.html>

## Careers Advice/Employment

[dgyppg@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:dgyppg@dumgal.gov.uk)

<https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

## Pupil Voice/Rights

<https://myrightsmysay.scot/>

[www.youthlinkscotland.org](http://www.youthlinkscotland.org)

<https://syp.org.uk/>

## Support/Rights for Pupils with Additional Needs

<https://enquire.org.uk/>

[www.dgvoice.co.uk](http://www.dgvoice.co.uk)

[www.callscotland.org.uk](http://www.callscotland.org.uk)

[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

The above list covers some of the areas that may be useful over and above those sites that are referenced to support Parental Engagement on page 19