



## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

**Q.** Will I be able to visit Dumfries Academy with my child before making a decision about enrolment?

**A.** In normal circumstances, we would encourage this. Under current health and safety arrangements, we are not able to allow visits. However, if you telephone our school office (01387274350), Mr Dillon will call you back to advise of how we can support you and whether you may be able to visit once regulations are relaxed.

**Q.** If I don't live in Dumfries Academy catchment, will my child be able to get a place at Dumfries Academy?

**A.** Yes. You simply indicate on the PP1 form (issued by your primary school) that you do not wish to take up a place at your catchment school and request a place at Dumfries Academy. We accept many children from outwith our catchment.

**Q.** How are classes made up in S1?

**A.** S1 pupils are put into a Tutor Group of no more than 20 pupils. They stay with that class for practical subjects (Technical, ICT, HE, Music, etc.) but may have a slightly different class composition for non-practical subjects (Modern Languages, Social Subjects, etc.). Our Pupil Support staff will visit your child's primary school, meet your child and his/her teacher, to gather information that will help us decide how best to group children in classes.

**Q.** Are classes set according to ability in S1?

**A.** The vast majority of classes are mixed. Pupils can be set in Maths and this is usually done after the October Break. This gives the Maths department time to look at your child's work and assessments first and then the pupils are grouped according to ability. There is scope for them to move between classes if they seem to be misplaced.

**Q.** What is the role of my child's Tutor?

**A.** Your child's Tutor will meet your child every morning and will be the main daily contact for your child. He/she will register your child, share key messages, oversee your child's wellbeing and will be someone your child can talk to.

**Q.** What support is available for children with additional needs?

**A.** There is information on our Additional Support for Learning Department in our handbook and on this webpage. We have an excellent team of staff who provide support in class, in small groups and one-to-one. We have a very good reputation for supporting young people who need help with assessments, who have dyslexia and who need a more personalised curriculum.

**Q.** What are the arrangements for lunch time for my child?

**A.** All S1 pupils stay on site at lunch. We have an excellent school café. Your child can buy a very reasonably priced meal deal for around £2. The café serves hot meals, deli food, salad bar, wraps, pasta, etc. Money can be prepaid onto your child's Young Scot card via the council link or they can use cash. This is also their social area at lunch and break. We also have a secure outdoor space, with seating, at the rear of the school.

**Q.** What is the school uniform policy?

**A.** You will receive a copy of our policy well in advance of your child starting at Dumfries Academy. Blazers are compulsory for all years. A fitting evening is arranged in May or blazers can be purchased online. They cost just over £30 and are very durable and washable. All other items can be purchased from any uniform supplier: black trousers/skirt, white shirt/blouse, black shoes/trainers. Ties are gifted to new S1 pupils but can also be bought from the school office for £6.50.

**Q.** When does the school day start and finish?

**A.** School starts at 8.51am and finishes at 3.15pm. Pupils have lunch from 1.05pm till 1.45pm. There is a morning break from 10.30am till 10.50am. Pupils can come into school from 8.00am and can access the café if they wish to purchase breakfast.

**Q.** What extra-curricular activities are available for my child?

**A.** We run many clubs after school and at lunch time. These range from debating to cycling. We usually hold an extra-curricular fair in September, where your child can see what's on offer, speak to staff and pupils who already take part and then join in if they wish. Your child can also participate in School of Netball or School of Football, an extra 2 periods of PE on these activities, which supports a physical and mental wellbeing programme.

**Q.** Will my child be able to participate in school trips?

**A.** Yes. We have lots of trips available. Again, you can find out more about these in our handbook. We usually plan three years ahead, as our aim is to help parents/carers plan for what trips their child might attend. We set up payment plans for parent/carers that support individual circumstances. We are also able to point parents/carers in the right direction to obtain any financial assistance.

**Q.** Will my child be able to attend a homework club/study in school?

**A.** Yes. We have homework clubs run by senior pupils and we have many study/revision clubs for senior school run by staff. Your child is welcome to use our library and ICT facilities after school.

**Q.** What is the school's policy on bullying?

**A.** We have a policy that is in line with the local authority policy. This is based on positive relationships and respect. Our mantra is **Ready, Respectful, Safe**. We have recently been part of a pilot that is worked on a new anti-bullying initiative and we have sought the views of parents, pupils and staff. We will not tolerate bullying and we work hard to ensure that young people feel safe in school.

**Q.** What facilities does the school have?

**A.** Again, information on the school is contained in our school handbook. However, we are fortunate to have a wonderfully historic school building that was built to last! Our classrooms are big and well fitted out. We have several ICT suites and some have up to 30 PCs in them. We encourage young people to bring devices to school to enhance learning but we also have a considerable number of portable devices and lap tops for use. We have a very modern Home Economics Department, a large space for music (with several practice rooms), a well-equipped Science Department, large rooms for practical work in Technologies and access to lots of community spaces for sport and leisure.

**Q.** What is the bridge? How is it linked to Dumfries Academy?

**A.** The bridge is a state of the art learning facility. Dumfries Academy was instrumental in planning how it could be used by pupils across Dumfries. We have an overview of all of the classes that are delivered there and we make the most use of it. At the moment, it is mainly used by pupils in S4-6 but we are increasing use by younger pupils. It is exceptionally well-equipped for creative subjects, sciences and technologies and we will continue to offer more opportunities for pupils to learn there on a day to day basis.

**Q.** Why should I choose Dumfries Academy?

**A.** Dumfries Academy staff care deeply about all children. We have a team of excellent staff (teaching and support). Our most recent inspection was 8 years ago but we were considered to be Good/Very Good in all indicators. This was an excellent report compared to most schools across Scotland. In particular, our attainment was rated as Very Good. Few schools achieve this! Your child will be encouraged to be ambitious and will be supported to achieve to the best of his/her ability. However, more importantly, your child will be supported by a caring team, who want to make school safe, fun, friendly and a place where he/she will thrive. We want your child to leave with happy memories, to have his/her skills recognised formally and informally and to achieve a positive destination after school. We would be delighted to welcome your child at Dumfries Academy.

Please feel free to contact the school for further information:

Telephone: 01387 274350

E Mail: [gw08officedumfriesac.ea.dumgal.sch.uk](mailto:gw08officedumfriesac.ea.dumgal.sch.uk)

School App for Parents (Just select Dumfries Academy in drop-down menu)

Facebook: Dumfries Academy Events

Twitter: @dumfriesacademy

Website: [www.dumfriesacademy.org](http://www.dumfriesacademy.org)