



Dalry Secondary School

Parent Council Meeting 12th May 2022

Headteacher's Report



School improvement plan update

Dalry Secondary has continued to make progress with our improvement plan which has addressed the recommendations made by our HMIE inspection published in May 2020. Covid-19 has had an impact on the rate that progress could be made but generally we have overtaken each of the recommendations made in our report. Learning conversations have improved and are taking place across all curricular areas to ensure all young people understand themselves as learners and the progress they are making in each subject. Parent evenings have been a missing link to reporting pupil progress but hopefully now that we are again able to hold parent evenings we will again see this important part of the school/home partnership re-establish.

There will be a parent evening for S1-S3 on the 26th May.

Our priorities for moving forward will be priorities shared with CDHS and they will centre around nurture, professional learning, meeting pupil needs at all levels and restarting systematic quality assurance processes.

Post Covid

Young people are again doing well in the school environment and to a great extent have put the disruption of covid behind them. We are beginning to see the restrictions that we have lived with for so long being relaxed and as a consequence more of the normal school activities have begun to take place. In the spring newsletter I mentioned the success of our young basketball players; the trip to Millport was a great success and most recently the S2 and S3 pupils were able to have a day of outdoor activities at the Galloway activity centre. The activities included archery, laser tag, the giant swing, paddle boarding, windsurfing, sailing and kayaking. The pupils had a great time and as always were a credit to their school and families. The whole school are heading to Kirkcudbright at the end of June to visit the Galloway Viking hoard and the dark skies planetarium. There is a joint CDHS/Dalry theatre trip to London planned for June 2023 in which the current S2 pupils will be invited to participate. They will be just about to start into S4 when the trip takes place so it will be a really positive way to start their S4 year.

SQA Exams

It has been great to see the young people able to take their SQA exams this session, helping to make the session feel much more normal. The young people were well prepared by their teachers and so we all hope that they achieve the success that their efforts and revision deserve.

Staffing

Mr Michael Collins, teacher of mathematics, will retire at the end of this session following a successful teaching career. We all wish Michael the very best for his retirement and hope he enjoys many years of well-earned rest and relaxation. We will be joined in August 2022 by Mr Iain Stewart as a full time maths teacher. Iain is currently teaching at Dumfries High School and we look forward to him joining us at both Dalry Secondary and at CDHS.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

To celebrate the platinum jubilee there will be a long weekend holiday from Thursday 2nd June through to Sunday 5th June 2022.

S4 Issues in Dalry Secondary

At the meeting two parents spoke about the impact of decisions made for the S4 curriculum and how it had affected their child. There was a deal of discussion where the following rationale was discussed:

Parent/pupil decisions have impacted the numbers in our current S3. The number of young people in S3 who intend to continue their education into S4 at Dalry has fallen to an extremely low level. This led to questions around the quality of each young person's educational experience and how well that experience will prepare each individual for a post school destination. We know that our young people are successful learners but does constantly working with the same small group offer the opportunity to develop into a confident individual, effective contributor, responsible citizen? As the numbers entering S4 get smaller, so the range of National Qualifications that can run gets smaller. There is an impact on the young people who do not get to study the subjects in which they are most interested. There is an impact on the teachers when no-one or too few pupils choose their subject. This year we offered to move all of the young people to CDHS at the end of their S3 year to be sure that they would have access to a full range of curricular options. Five young people have chosen to remain at Dalry for their S4 year. They will all follow the same curriculum as it is not educationally viable to run classes with one or two pupils. As we move into next session we will have to look at how we can best improve the quality of the experience for young people in the new S3 as they prepare to embark on National Qualifications.