

Wallace High School

Curriculum Guide for Parents

*“The modern Scottish curriculum is defined as the **totality of all that is planned** for young people...”*



Introduction

There have been significant changes to the Scottish curriculum in recent years. This is, in large part, due to the need to make our education system relevant to the constantly evolving demands of the 21st century. Change is, necessarily, the law of life in education, as it is in many aspects of society and the wider workplace. We must constantly strive to improve the education we provide for our young people and to adapt to an increasingly diverse, globalised world.

This document is an attempt to help inform parents of what the curriculum looks and feels like as your children progress through it in Wallace High School. It also, crucially, provides a rationale for why we do what we do. There are many aspects of schooling that parents will recognise from their own experiences. This is because core moral values and the importance of excellent standards of teaching remain at the heart of what we strive to provide. A classroom where deep and engaging learning is taking place is still one you will recognise from the best days of your own school experience.

The modern Scottish curriculum, however, provides greater breadth than we have ever seen in Scottish schools and aims to engage young people with a genuinely personalised experience. In expressing the curriculum as the ‘totality of all that is planned’, this extends it beyond the classroom and into the rich suite of activities that take place as part of a youngster’s wider experiences. These all combine to contribute to the *formation of character* that is essential to success, happiness and making a positive contribution to the world in later life. If our youngsters do not do this; then who will?

Mr S Pennock, Head Teacher

The Journey

Broad General Education (S1-3)

Pupils explore the full breadth of the curriculum, with increasing opportunities for personalisation and choice and a strong focus on over-arching skills in Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing and Employability.

The Senior Phase (S4-6)

From S4, pupils specialise to study for SQA qualifications in Nationals (available at levels 1-5; commonly 3-5) as well as wider units and awards. Newly adapted CfE Highers and Advanced Highers are available for pupils in S5/6.



“To build a better world we need...a society that provides opportunities for all.”

Malcolm Gladwell: *Outliers* (2008)

Values lie at the heart of our curriculum...

With the evolution of Curriculum for Excellence there is a welcome, explicit emphasis on values and moral purpose being instilled in young people across the curriculum. In our Broad General Education (S1-3) and in our Senior Phase (S4-6) we are not simply providing young people with knowledge and skills in the individual subjects we teach. This remains very important, but we are also trying to develop **four capacities** that will help young people to use their education to make a positive contribution to society beyond school.

The **four capacities** embody what we wish young people to gain from the totality of their education. We aim to provide a curriculum that will help our young people to become:

Successful learners

Confident individuals

Responsible citizens

Effective contributors

At each stage of their education, therefore, young people should be developing key knowledge and skills, as well as considering how *best* to use these for the greater good in the world beyond Wallace High.



At Wallace High School, throughout the curriculum, we focus on:

Attitude

Effort

Values & Relationships

Collective Ethos

These are essential to creating a positive culture of *shared expectations*.



Haim Ginott was a child psychologist and author. In his book *Teacher and Child* he quotes a letter from a high school Principal that was sent to teachers at the start of each academic year. It remains relevant today in emphasising that we want young people to gain a wealth of knowledge and skills through the curriculum that they use for good; not negative ends.

A strong sense of moral purpose ...

"I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no person should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians; infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot by high school and college graduates. So, I am suspicious of education.

My request is:

Help your children become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths or educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human."

The structure of the curriculum...

As indicated on our previous pages, the curriculum is, broadly, structured into the **Broad General Education (BGE)** from S1-3 and the **Senior Phase** from S4-6. The skills, knowledge and experiences of the BGE are designed to prepare pupils for exam success in Nationals and Highers in the Senior Phase and to access positive destinations beyond school. What we have tried to capture below, however, is that there is much going on within these broad structures.

Our **Broad General Education** period allocation for individual subjects is outlined fully in the table on page 5. The curriculum as a whole is organised to ensure that young people gain experiences across eight core curriculum areas:

Expressive Arts

Health and Wellbeing

Languages

Mathematics

Religious and Moral Education

Sciences

Social Studies

Technologies

This is complemented by the fact that pupils are developing skills and knowledge across the curriculum in the following over-arching areas. These are the responsibility of *all subjects*: **literacy; numeracy; health and wellbeing; employability (Developing the Young Workforce); enterprise; citizenship; sustainable development; international education; and creativity.**

Inter-disciplinary learning within classes and in cross-curricular projects helps young people develop



knowledge and skills in these core, over-arching areas.

The curriculum in the Broad General Education at Wallace High has been designed with the following core principles in mind:

Challenge and enjoyment – we attempt to utilise a range of teaching approaches and resources to engage *all* learners and to provide appropriate challenge at each stage of their learning.

Breadth – all pupils retain a breadth of learning across the eight curriculum areas throughout S1-3.

Progression – courses and experiences are designed to build progressively and become more challenging throughout S1-3 in order to adequately prepare pupils with knowledge and skills required for Nationals in S4.

Depth – depth of knowledge very much matters and BGE experiences are constantly being reviewed with a view to success in senior years and beyond. Each curriculum area has **Significant Aspects of Learning** that ensure a focus on key knowledge and skills.

Personalisation and choice – this is offered in a variety of ways within subjects, such as through project topic choices etc.; choice of ‘mini-options’ in S3; and personalised curricular experiences such as School of Sport extraction etc.

Continued from page 3

Coherence – there is a strong focus on the curriculum coherently combining to develop core, over-arching skills in key areas such as literacy; numeracy; health and wellbeing; and employability. This emphasis is enhanced by planned inter-disciplinary learning, such as through our Science Crest Award in S2 and our Social Subjects People and Society and RMPS Belief and Values awards in S3, to name but a few examples.

Relevance – there is a much stronger focus than ever before on real contexts for learning so that youngsters recognise the relevance of what they are learning to *their* lives and how this might be applied meaningfully in the world that they inhabit day-to-day.

Throughout their education, all young people receive a broad suite of **health and wellbeing** and **moral education** inputs through: core curricular classes (notably in PE, HE, RMPS and Life Skills); visiting speakers and partner specialists; assembly programmes; and focus days, such as our Senior Induction events.

From S1-6 we **track and monitor** progress to ensure progression. Every child receives at least three personalised parental reporting communications throughout the year (Interim and Final written reports and a Parents' Evening interview) as well as Information Evening inputs at all key stages. We internally monitor progress across departments and have key mentoring programmes to intervene and support pupils when required. Our Awards Ceremonies and termly Wider Achievement Assemblies help to celebrate success and progress.

From **S4-6**, our **Senior Phase** is where pupils sit their first **SQA exams** and achieve key qualifications. Subjects are commonly allocated **4 periods** in **S4** and **6 periods** in **S5/6**. The SCQF Framework on page 6 illustrates how pupils progress through levels within and beyond school and helps parents equate previous qualification levels with new ones. In brief summary, our **Senior Phase** is structured as follows:

S4: Pupils sit their first SQA qualifications. Pupils will study **up to seven National Qualification** subjects (most commonly at National 3-5 level). There are a number of personalised combinations available, including college options, work experience and individual unit awards.

S5: Pupils study **up to five courses**, up to **Higher level**. As above, this includes college, work experience and unit award options for some.

S6: Pupils study **up to five courses**, up to **Advanced Higher level**. S6 pupils are encouraged to take at least one column of 'service' options to contribute to their wider development and to support UCAS etc.



Bringing the curriculum to life...

The curriculum in our school is much more than that which happens within individual classrooms. We attempt to provide a rich range of activities and experiences beyond the confines of the classroom and school day that enhance a young person's education and contribute to the *totality* of their experience. Some examples of this include:

A range of excursions throughout the year, across curricular areas and stages. This includes local and foreign trip experiences, from the Scottish Parliament to languages trips to France and Spain, and even as far as Florida for our basketball excursion.

A variety of clubs and activities out-with class times – morning, lunch and after-school opt-in activities in a whole range of areas from sport and music to fashion and drama...

Key partnerships that facilitate a number of personalised curricular options:

School of Sport specialised coaching from the SFA, SRU, Basketball Scotland, Scottish Swimming and Active Stirling.

Music specialisation through our council tutor team and Big Noise.

Prudential business partnership through **SBC**.

Go4Set and STEM Science projects, our school show, Schools Shakespeare Festival, Maths challenges, ECO group, debating, design clubs...

Period Allocations for Broad General Education Subjects (2015/16)

CfE Area	Subject	Periods	Periods	Periods	Total	Notes
		S1	S2	S3	S1-3	
Languages	English	4	5	5	14	Includes elements of Expressive Arts: Drama/ Gaelic by extraction
Mathematics	Mathematics	4	4	5	13	
Technologies	Business/ ICT	1	1	2	4	Includes elements of Social Studies: Business/ Choice of Business or ICT for 2 periods as specialist subject in S3 – see below
Sciences	Science	4	4	3	11	Subject specialist input by rotation in S3
Social Studies	Social Studies	3	4	3	10	Includes elements of Sciences: Geography/ subject specialist input S3
Languages	Modern Languages	3	3	3	9	
Religious & Moral Ed.	RMPS	1	1	2	4	
Health & Wellbeing	Life Skills	1	1	0	2	Supplemented by faculty inputs, assemblies & guest speakers
Health & Wellbeing	PE	2	3	3	8	Includes elements of Expressive Arts: Dance/ School of Sport by extraction
Health & Wellbeing	Home Economics	1	1	2	4	Includes elements of Technologies
Expressive Arts	Music	2	1	2	5	
Expressive Arts	Art & Design	2	1	2	5	
Technologies	Design and Engineering	2	1	2	5	
Total		30	30	30	90	

**ICT/
BUSINESS/ HE/
MUSIC/ART/
DESIGN &
ENG:**

**Choice of 3 x
subjects in S3.**

**All with 2
periods.**

**6 periods in
total for
personal-
isation and
choice pre -
Senior Phase
options.**

Supporting learners throughout the curriculum...

At Wallace High School we work very hard to ensure that the individual needs of young people are supported throughout their curricular journey.

Pupil Support: Every year group has a Pupil Support PT who oversees the pastoral wellbeing of youngsters throughout their education. This involves liaison with Tutor Group teachers, class teachers, parents and support specialists on your child's progress and wellbeing.

Learning Support: Our dedicated Learning Support specialists provide individualised support across the curriculum for youngsters on Staged Intervention.

Flexible Support Base: Our FSB team work with youngsters who require behavior and social/emotional support in order to access the curriculum and achieve.



Ochil House

Our specialist team in Ochil House work on providing a rich and engaging curriculum for young people with severe and complex needs from S1-6.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.



SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	SVQs/MAs
12	Some SQA qualifications are changing between 2013-2016. See www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner		Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11			Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Professional Apprenticeship SVQ 5
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Professional Apprenticeship
9			Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4
8		Higher National Diploma	Diploma Of Higher Education	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3
6	Higher			Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3
5	National 5 Intermediate 2			Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 2
4	National 4 Intermediate 1	National Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ 1
3	National 3 Access 3			
2	National 2 Access 2			
1	National 1 Access 1			