



Graeme High School

Session 2022-23



School Handbook

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A Foreword from the Director of Children's Services

Session 2022-2023

This handbook contains a range of information about your child's school which will be of interest to you and your child. It offers an insight into the life and ethos of the school and also offers advice and assistance which you may find helpful in supporting and getting involved in your child's education.

Falkirk Council is keen to work with parents, not only to allow you a greater opportunity to contribute to your child's education, but also to encourage you to play a greater role in the life of the school as a whole. We offer a number of opportunities when you will be able to make your voice heard in relation to your own child's education, your local school, and Children's Services as a whole.

Throughout each school year there will be opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. There will also be Council-wide events for parents organised by Children's Services. These events are spread across the school year and each focuses on a particular theme. The events are open to all parents and they are also attended, wherever possible, by the Education Portfolio Holder as well as members of the Service's Management Team. Each session offers parents an opportunity to ask questions about aspects of their child's education. Dates for these events will be issued by your child's school and we hope you will be able to come along and hear about, and contribute to, our plans for Education in Falkirk.

We are pleased to introduce this handbook for this session and trust it will provide you with all the relevant information you may need concerning your child's school. If you have any queries regarding the contents of the handbook please contact the Head Teacher of your child's school in the first instance who will be happy to offer any clarification required.

Robert Naylor

Directors of Children's Services

Falkirk Council

DISCLAIMER

The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of publication (August/June 2022, however, it is possible, particularly as the result of the COVID19 pandemic, that there may be some changes/inaccuracy by the start of the school term in August 2022.

A WORD FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

Dear Parent /Carer,

A very warm sincere welcome to Graeme High School. We regard you as important partners in the work of the school and as vital members of the Graeme High Team. As a parent/ carer you will always be welcome in the school and we will make every effort to involve you in your child's education and in our school community.

We have compiled this guide to give you the basic information that you will need as your child makes that important move from primary to secondary school. It covers every aspect of life at Graeme High, and I hope that you will enjoy reading it and that you will find it useful.

Graeme High encourages its pupils to be all that they can be, whether this is in subject classrooms, the sports field or in the many extra-curricular activities offered at our school.

Graeme High is very fortunate indeed in having a highly talented and committed staff, both teachers and support staff, who strive to offer each pupil the highest standard of education and development.

We make every effort to meet the needs and aspirations of all pupils in a safe, caring and stimulating environment where pupils feel happy and ready to give of their best.

Once you have read this guide, I hope you will begin to feel a part of the Graeme High School community. Please do not hesitate to contact me personally if you require further information.

I am sure your child will enjoy Graeme High; the staff and I certainly do, and I very much look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Kristy Rennie

Headteacher

STAFF

The school management team currently comprises the Headteacher and 4 Depute Head Teachers (D.H.T.) and a Resources & Administration Manager.

Head Teacher: Mrs Kristy Rennie

Depute Head Teacher:	Mrs Sinead McLeod	Depute Head (Acting)	Morrison House
	Mr Stephen Beath	Depute Head	Lockhart House
	Miss Elaine Peat	Depute Head (Acting)	Steele House
	Mr Andrew Buchanan	Depute Head	Thomson House

Resources Manager: Mrs Eira Walls

Each Depute Head Teacher is responsible for a House. Our four Houses: Lockhart, Steele, Thomson and Morrison which take their names from former Rectors of the school.

The Personal Support Team consists of four Depute House Heads, known to the pupils as their 'DHH'. Each are responsible for maintaining an overview of each young person in their House throughout their time at Graeme High School.

Our PT ASN has responsibility and overall management of coordinating learning support for pupils and works alongside our PT Inclusion to help meet pupils needs. Our PT Inclusion has the overview and management of our nurture base.

Each house is also supported by two curricular Principal Teachers and a team of House tutors who remain with pupils throughout their time at Graeme High School.

	Lockhart	Morrison	Steele	Thomson
Pastoral PTs	Roz Dunning	Jennifer Fail	Kyle Haldane (Acting)	Amanda Ballantyne
PT Inclusion	Lynsay Guthrie			
PT ASN		Adrienne Galletly		
Curricular PTs	Kevin Kennedy	Caroline Harper	Andrew Kennedy	Alastair McLay (Acting)
	David McLeod	Adrienne Galletly	Michele Phee	Lorna Lyon

Find a full staffing list on our school website.

SCHOOL DAY

The school operates the following timings of the day:

There is a **warning bell at 8.45am each day** to prompt pupils to either enter the building or to gather at their allocated meeting spots.

	Mon, Wed, Fri		Tue, Thur
Period 1	8.50am—9.40am	Period 1	8.50am—9.40am
Period 2	9.40am—10.30am	Period 2	9.40am—10.40am
Interval	10.30am—10.40am	Interval	10.30am—10.40am
Period 3	10.40am—11.30pm	Period 3	10.40am—11.30pm
Period 4	11.30pm-12.20pm	Period 4	11.30am—12.20pm
Lunch	12.20pm—1.00pm	Lunch	12.20pm—1.00m
Period 5	1.00pm— 1.50pm	Period 5	1.00pm— 1.50pm
Period 6	1.50pm—2.40pm	Period 6	1.50pm—2.40pm
		Period 7	2.40pm—3.30pm

To ensure pupils are able to enter the building calmly, each year group has a designated entry point to the school and are greeted into the school by our Senior Leadership Team and our school

S1 pupils gather at the trees and picnic benches located at the entrance to main school office where they are welcomed and brought into the school each morning by members of our Senior Leadership Team.

S2/S3 pupils enter through the doors beside the assembly hall when instructed to do so by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Seniors enter through the social space door located beside the games hall.

INTERVAL AND LUNCH

Pupils have a ten minute comfort break from 10.30am until 10.40am however, at this time, the canteen is not serving food at that time therefore pupils are advised to bring a snack for their morning break.

Our normal school canteen lunch service will continue to offer a selection of hot meals , sandwiches , drinks and snacks which pupils can pay for by loading money onto their school lunch card. If in receipt of free school meals, money will automatically be uploaded each day.

Please note that S1 pupils are not permitted to leave the school grounds at break or lunch.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

On days when there are planned early closures parents will normally receive at least three days advance warning by means of a letter delivered by their children or via group call text/email.

In the event of emergency early closures (e.g. caused by bad weather, fire or a failure of the heating system) the children will be given the choice of going home (if buses have been arranged), staying in school under supervision until the normal closing time or going home to a friend's house.

Under these circumstances no advance warning can be given so we would ask parents to instruct their children what to do should such an emergency occur and in particular to arrange alternative shelter should the family home not be available.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

It is the responsibility of parents of a child of school age to make sure that their child is educated. Most do this by sending their child to school regularly. Attendance is recorded twice a day, morning and afternoon.

Absence from school is recorded as authorised, that is approved by the education authority, or as unauthorised, that is unexplained by the parent (truancy). Please let the school know by phone if your child is likely to be absent. If there is no explanation from a child's parents / carers, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised. All pupils returning from absence must provide an explanation, indicating the period of absence and reason. Parents can do this by either replying to Groupcall text messages, emailing the school office/attendance officer or telephoning the school attendance line.

Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time as this disrupts your child's education and reduces learning time. All term-time holidays should be regarded as unauthorised unless they meet the following criteria:

- where it is important to the well-being and cohesion of the family (including extended family);
- due to serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events; or
- Where a parent's/carer's employment is of a nature where school holiday leave cannot be accommodated (e.g. armed forces or emergency services).

The Head Teacher makes the decision as to whether or not a term-time holiday meets the above criteria.

Parents/carers requesting a holiday on this basis should submit a request to their child's Depute Head of House by phone, email or letter, before the holiday takes place.

Absences may also be permitted to allow pupils to participate in religious or cultural activities, including travelling to their or their parents'/carers' country of origin.

A supportive approach is taken to unexplained absence. However the education authority has legal powers to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or refer pupils to the Reporter to the Children's Panel, if necessary. House teams monitor attendance on a monthly basis. Where attendance of a pupil causes concern and/ or is seen to deteriorate, the Depute House Head will make contact with parents/ carers to seek support for improvement. We also have a School attendance Officer who works with Depute Heads of House to liaise with home about attendance.

LATE COMING

All pupils are expected to attend school punctually each day, arrive prior to the warning bell at 8.45am. Pupils who arrive late will be issued with a lateslip by a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the school office. Persistent late coming is investigated by House staff and appropriate action taken.

If your child's attendance is impacted by COVID-19, speak to their Depute Head of House.

SCHOOL MEALS

Secondary Menus offer healthy and tasty meal options whilst reflecting the Scottish Government food and drink legal requirements for School Lunches. Special diets and allergies are usually accommodated subject to consultation with the parent/guardian and the regional dietician. Meal prices are reviewed annually. Please contact the school to be advised of the current price. Currently due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a limited menu within the school dining area.



Graeme High School is a health promoting school. We educate pupils in the positive benefits of healthy diet and exercise. Our canteen services are provided by an outside contractor “Chartwells” and pupils pay for what they choose. A range of main courses and desserts are normally provided each day as well as a variety of healthy options such as salad baguettes, pasta bar and fruit.

Pupils bringing packed lunches may eat them in the dining area.

Pupils who require a special diet should advise their Depute House Head.

The school cafeteria operates a cashless catering system. Each pupil will receive their own cashless catering card which can be topped up with credit at machine in the social area or dinning hall. Parents are advised that these machines only accept coins. Parents can also add money to their child’s lunch card by making an online payment, available through our school website. Please visit the Parent/Carer Zone, online payments section.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND CLOTHING GRANTS

Pupils who are entitled to free school meals will have their cards automatically topped up each day. It is vital that pupils bring their cards each day and take personal responsibility for looking after them. We may require to charge a fee for lost or damaged cards that require to be replaced.

Some families may be eligible to apply to Falkirk Council for free school meals and / or a payment towards the cost of footwear and clothing. The application process is detailed below.

Application Forms for Clothing Grant and Free School Meals including eligibility criteria are available from the school, Falkirk One Stop Shops, Registrars or can be downloaded from the Falkirk Council website – www.falkirk.gov.uk. The forms have to be completed by the parent / carer and evidence of income received may have to be provided. Please note that an application has to be made for each school year.

More information on school meals can be found on our school website.

TRANSPORT

In the afternoon, all school buses returning from Graeme High School load at the bus loading bays at the town center side of the school. For their own safety and that of others, pupils must promptly and carefully obey the instructions of the senior staff who supervise the bus queues from 2.40pm and 3.30pm depending on the school finish time.

The Authority provides free transport at the beginning and end of the school day for those pupils attending their local school where the distance between home and school, as measured by the shortest reasonable walking route, is three or more miles.

Application forms are available from our school office, and completed forms should be returned to: Falkirk Council

Transport Planning Unit

Abbotsford House

David's Loan

Falkirk

FK2 7YR

Lost bus passes must be replaced by parents /carers who should contact the school Transport Helpline on 01324 504966/ 01324 504724.

Please note that the school bus service is not managed by Graeme High School but is coordinated and contracted by Falkirk Council.

Pupils must obey the School Rules while travelling to and from school. Misbehaviour on school transport can cause a risk to the safety of all passengers being transported as well as other road users and pedestrians. All students must:

Remain seated when the vehicle is in motion and wear a seatbelt if one is available.

Never distract the driver, touch the vehicle door controls or interfere with any emergency equipment unless an emergency occurs.

In the event of misbehaviour, pupils may be banned from school transport, in which case parents will be responsible for getting them to/ from school.

**More information on school transport can be found on Falkirk's Council website:
http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/development/transport/school_transport.**

PUPIL DRESS

Pupils in Graeme High School are proud to wear the distinctive uniform of the school which has been chosen by the pupils.

Details of ordering/purchase/cost arrangements will be issued through our Associated Primaries – or alternatively by contacting the school office.

The uniform consists of:

- Optional black blazer with badge (and braid for prefects only)
- White shirt/blouse
- Black trousers or skirt
- School tie (tartan tie for pupil leaders)
- Black v neck jumper with tie visible and optional school badge—no hoodies, zippers or jumpers with logos are permitted.
- Black school shoes



The popular view is that the uniform is smart, of good quality and good value. Our uniform also helps to create a strong sense of identity within the school and allows easy identification of pupils who are part of our school community.

Physical Education

Pupils are also asked to have the following items for Physical Education:-

- White t-shirt or Inter-house t-shirt, dark shorts or sports leggings, trainers
- Swimming kit— dark swimsuit or dark shorts (above the knee), goggles, towel

Expectations

- Long hair tied back
- All jewellery removed
- No valuables brought to school on PE days
- Pupils with medical reasons for not fully participating should bring a note and a full change of PE kit. If your child is unable to get changed for any reason this should be included on the note.
- If you do not bring PE kit, a kit will be provided by the department to allow participation in the lesson. This will also apply if pupils bring a medical note but it fails to mention being unable to change.



COVID-19—ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to the changes in the normal school policy and processes already indicated in this handbook, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the following risk mitigations are in place to ensure that Graeme High School is a safe environment for all pupils and staff -

One-way System— We have a clear one-way system in operation at the start of the day, period changeovers, break time, lunch time and at the end of the day. The one-way system is not in operation at other times. This is clearly marked by both wall posters and floor signs.

Increased hand hygiene and cleaning—Sanitising gel is available at all entrance points to the school as well as in every classroom. Pupils are expected to sanitise their hands throughout the day. Pupils and teachers also ensure that desks, seats and other shared resources are cleaned before and after use using sanitising spray. Increased cleaning protocols and schedules are also in place, with increased cleaning throughout the day, especially of high touch areas. There is also a clear cleaning protocol in place in the event of a suspected or positive COVID-19 case.

Department specific activities —where there is a task or activity has been identified as posing a higher risk of transmission, departments are guided by national bodies and working groups to adopt additional risk mitigations. A separate risk assessment is also completed. Should the activity either be advised against, or we are unable to adopt the specific risk mitigations, the activity will either not take place or adapted.

Medically vulnerable—Where a pupil is identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable (known as shielding), they will have a separate risk assessment to allow them to attend school. Should Falkirk Council move into Tier 4 of Scottish Governments tier system, they should not attend school.

Suspected or positive cases -Should a pupil or member of staff have COVID-19 symptoms, there is a clear protocol in place to limit contact with others and allow them to leave school quickly and safely. We will work with the Health Protection Team to safely manage such a situation.

Blended learning— Should a pupil or group of pupils be absent due to self-isolation or a positive test, they should access classwork through Teams. This will also be the case should there be a local or national decision to have pupils access work at home for either part or all of the school week.

A full and robust risk assessment is in place for all aspects of school life during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see this for further details of the risk mitigations in place.

PUPIL ENROLMENT

MOVING FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL IN TO FIRST YEAR

The vast majority of our pupils join us in this way and we make every effort to ensure that their early experiences in school are happy ones.

We are in regular contact with Primary School staff to learn as much as possible about our new pupils before they join us.

Graeme High School staff, visit the pupils in their Primary Schools to continue the “getting to know you” process;

- Graeme High School staff attend meetings in the Primary Schools to meet with parents;
- Pupils and parents are given an opportunity to see around the school and to meet members of staff and senior pupils;
- First Year classes are arranged to ensure that no child is isolated from former classmates.

At the start of the new session, particular care is taken to help new First Year pupils settle in safely and find their way about.

Parents/Carers who wish to make a Placing Request for their child to attend a school other than their catchment area school, should do so by completing a Placing Request Form. Parents/Carers must however enrol their child at the catchment area school for their home address whilst awaiting the outcome of their Placing Request Application. Applications will be accepted from the 1st Thursday in December each year to 15 March the following year. Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome in writing by 30 April of that year.

Parents/carers should be aware that even if they are one of our catchment schools, a placing request must be made to come to Graeme High School if they live outwith our catchment area. You can check this at -

<https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/find-nearest-school.aspx>

PUPILS ENTERING THE SCHOOL AT OTHER TIMES OR STAGES

Parents who wish to visit the school and/or to enrol their child are asked to contact the school office who will arrange an appointment with the appropriate Depute Head. A placing request must be made if they live out with our catchment area.

Place requests are made online. Please visit <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/school-admissions/placing-requests.aspx>

COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Falkirk Council Education Service is keen that you should be completely satisfied about your child's education and we encourage feedback on our services from parents and pupils. We are interested in feedback of all kinds, whether it be compliments, suggestions or complaints.

If you want to register a comment of any type about the school you can do this by writing, e-mailing, telephoning or making an appointment to see the Headteacher (or one of her deputies). All feedback is welcome.

If you have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that concerns are shared openly and resolved quickly, rather than being allowed to damage the relationship between home and school. We will deal with the issue confidentially and as quickly as possible. If we have made a mistake we will apologise and try to put things right.

There are some things which you should take note of in relation to making a complaint:

- ◆ Parents must first consult the school regarding their concerns, the first point of contact is usually the child's deputy head of House. Although we try to respond as quickly as possible, issues can sometimes be complex and we will need time to investigate them.
- ◆ The Council's complaints handling procedure sets a time limit of six months from when the customer first knew of the problem, within which time we can be asked to consider the complaint, unless there are special circumstances for considering complaints beyond this time. The time limit will be applied with discretion.
- ◆ If your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at this first stage, it may be eligible for consideration at the next stage (by Education Services, Sealock House). Complaints will not be considered by Education Services unless all options have been exhausted by the school to resolve the matter.
- ◆ Complaints can be put in writing, on a complaint form, by telephone or e-mail to: Complaints Officer, Sealock House, Education Services, Falkirk Council, 2



Please contact your child's Deputy Head of House in the first instance if you are unhappy about something.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL

All Falkirk Council schools welcome parental involvement. Research has shown that when parents are involved children do better in school. During this pandemic however, parents will routinely not be allowed within the school building. In exceptional circumstances, parents meetings will be arranged if required in the school building, however we are undertaking both virtual and telephone meetings should a parent wish to discuss something.

Parents Meetings

Graeme High normally offers opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers through arranged meetings—we are working on virtual solutions to this at the moment. In addition to these set dates, parents are able to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for a meeting. An evening parents' consultation meeting is arranged for each year group during the session to enable parents to discuss with their child's teachers subject assessment, attitude to work and general progress. Parents receive a letter of invitation to parents' meetings when these are arranged and an appointment sheet. These letters and sheets are normally sent home to parents via pupils. A reminder is also sent out to parents' telephone. A list of all important dates in the school calendar is sent to parents each August. This will also appear each year on our website. It is extremely important that all parents/carers attend the consultation evening. This is a vital opportunity to review progress and to set targets for the year ahead. Staff are always well prepared for these occasions and a full attendance of parents encourages them in their work. It also lets pupils know that both parents and staff care deeply about their progress and their welfare. Additional information meetings are held for particular year groups to keep parents informed at key stages in their child's education. At all parents evenings, parents are able to feedback to the school via parental questionnaires and Senior Management Team members are also on-hand to assist with any questions, issues or concerns.

Pupil Reports

Full reports are issued each session, and Target setting update letters are sent out routinely throughout the year to keep parents informed of their child's progress. Pupils may have their report discussed with them by a member of the House team. Pupils will also get the opportunity to reflect on their progress through PSE lessons.



Letters to Parents

Regular newsletters containing items of information and topics of interest about school activities is produced. Each pupil is given a copy to take home. Furthermore, the school endeavours to contact by post or by telephone the parent of any child about whom particular concern is felt.

Contact with the School

Parents are always welcome to contact the school to discuss matter of concern. Your child has been placed in one of the four Houses of the school. We ask that you contact your child's Depute House Head in the first instance as she/he is the person with the closest link to your son or daughter and is therefore most likely to be able to help you with your enquiry or concern.

PARENT COUNCIL

Graeme High School has an active and vibrant Parent Council. Our parent council play an active role in our school improvement planning and play an important role in consultation, feedback, implementation and review of key school improvements and school policy.

The three essential ingredients for successful parent participation are:

1. Good information
2. Honest consultation
3. Effective participation

Here at Graeme High, being involved with our Parent Council is recognised as the best way to achieve this. The Parent Council has a responsibility to encourage the partnership between the school and parents and with the wider community.

All parents or carers are part of the Parent Forum which then elects the parent members of the Parent Council. If you are interested in becoming part of the Parent Council, please contact your child's Depute Head Teacher.

The Parent Council may be contacted in writing or by telephoning Graeme High School. The Council must report its activities to all parents at least once a year, which it does at the A.G.M. It also places inserts in the school's termly newsletter to parents.

Our Parent Council have an area on our school website. Here you will find further details about the current work of the Council, and agendas and minutes of meetings.

Please also visit:

<http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/school-life/parent-councils/>

VALUES AND MISSION STATEMENT

AIMS AND VALUES

As a school we look for every pupil who attends Graeme High School to **Aspire, Attain and Achieve**—our school aims, developed in collaboration with pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Our values reflect the views of our current pupils and their parents/carers. Staff, pupils and parents all had a significant input into these values.



MISSION STATEMENT

Our aim in Graeme High School is to develop the talents of each individual pupil as fully as possible within a pleasant and orderly environment.

Pupils are encouraged to set their own personal standards of excellence in all aspects of their lives— the academic, the practical, the sporting and in their social development.

Members of staff attempt to help our pupils achieve these standards by adopting levels of expectation which are both realistic and demanding. We aim to foster a sense of pride in achievement in each of our pupils.

We are also working towards becoming our Gold level Rights Respecting School.

Respect

Honesty

Responsibility

Determination

Excellence

Kindness



POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND REWARDS

REWARDS

Pupils at Graeme High School are divided into four houses. Throughout the year students earn their House points for taking part in interhouse activities. For example, every Friday at lunchtime pupils are welcomed and encouraged to take part in challenges facilitated by members of our pupil leadership team.



Pupils can earn CAP (Curriculum Achievement Points) through working hard in classes, doing well in assessments or contributing well to class activities. These points are awarded by class teachers in recognition of pupils who consistently work well in their class. These points are counted at the end of term and the top pupils are offered a place on our reward trips. Pupils can also achieve individual awards through participation in extra-curricular clubs, whole school events and Inter-house events when these are on.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIPS

Graeme High School is a restorative Community, where by interacting with each other in a positive manner, we continue to improve our school values and ethos. We resolve issues through our commitment to Restorative Practices. To maintain positive relationships, we use a 3 step restorative conversation process. Parents/carers, pupils and teachers are entitled to expect an atmosphere free from disruptive distractions and conditions of safety and calm. **Graeme High School also has a zero tolerance approach to pupils who carry weapons. It is this community's clear expectation that no pupil, under any circumstances, should be in possession of any weapon within school.** We have a robust plan in place if such a circumstance occurred. The sanctions which we employ in instances of misconduct range from a verbal rebuke and moving of seat, to exclusion from school for pupils guilty of serious or persistent behavior concerns. However, it is our experience that problems tend to be resolved quite easily when the school enjoys the whole-hearted, consistent support of parents/carers.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Curriculum for Excellence — Bringing learning to life and life to learning

Curriculum for Excellence has now been introduced across Scotland for all 3-18 year olds – wherever they learn. It aims to raise standards, prepare our children for a future they do not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world. Curriculum for Excellence is now fully implemented. Glow, Scotland's unique, online network supports learners and teachers and plans are being developed for parents across the country to have access to Glow.

Teachers and practitioners will share information to plan a child's 'learning journey' from 3-18, helping their progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond, ensuring each transition is smooth. They'll ensure children continue to work at a pace they can cope with and with challenge they can thrive on.

Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of knowledge and skills. Every child is entitled to a broad and deep general education, whatever their level and ability. Every single teacher and practitioner will be responsible for the development of literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing from Early Level through to Senior Phase. It develops skills for learning, life and work, bringing real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links knowledge in one subject area to another helping make connections in their learning. It develops skills which can enable children to think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions.

There are new ways of assessing progress and ensuring children achieve their potential. New qualifications at National 3, 4 and 5 are now embedded into our curriculum. Our well regarded Highers and Advanced Highers have been updated to take account of and support the new approaches to learning and teaching.

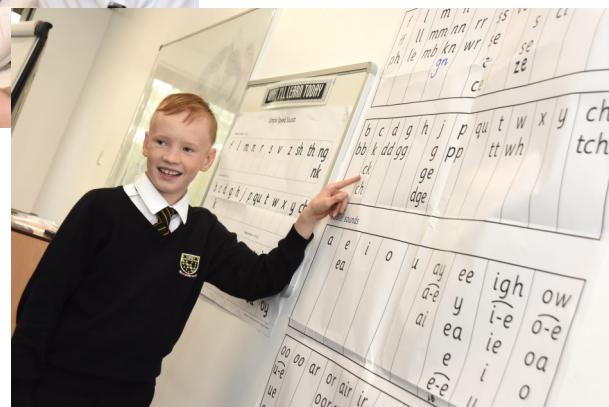
There is an entitlement to personal support to help young people fulfil their potential and make the most of their opportunities with additional support wherever that is needed. There will be a new emphasis by all staff on looking after our children's health and wellbeing – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure. Ultimately, Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve our children's life chances, to nurture successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible



OUR CURRICULUM—BROAD GENERAL

The curriculum in S1-3 is designed using the Experiences and Outcomes outlined in Curriculum for Excellence, and staff plan learning opportunities for students based on core principles. In S1-3, the curriculum is organised under the following areas:

- Literacy and English
- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Health and Wellbeing
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts



In S2 and S3, students have the opportunity to build personalisation and choice into their learning, and begin to form their individual learning pathway through the curriculum. This is possible through a variety of elective programmes which add depth to our curricular programmes.



Inter-disciplinary Learning

In S1-3 there are also a number of inter-disciplinary projects, where students have the opportunity to develop their learning across a number of subject areas. Effective interdisciplinary learning: can take the form of individual one-off projects or longer courses of study; is planned around clear purposes; is based upon experiences and outcomes drawn from different curriculum areas or subjects within them; ensures progression in skills and in knowledge and understanding; can provide opportunities for mixed stage learning which is interest-based.

OUR CURRICULUM—SENIOR PHASE

The senior phase covers S4-6. Pupils in S4 continue the subjects they studied in S3 through to the end of S4 and towards National 4 and National 5 qualifications. In S5 and S6, pupils choose subjects that they are most likely to be successful in and that link to their future career aspirations. A variety of pathways through this phase will be possible. One of our guiding principles has been to see pupils leave school with the best possible exit qualifications and ready to make a positive transition into further or higher education or the world of work.

Over the past few sessions we have enhanced our curriculum to include a variety of vocational offerings including, Care, Early Education and Childcare, Personal Development Award, Skills for Work Engineering, Beauty Academy and Bike Technician Academy as well as National Progression Awards. Through Forth Valley College, there are a number of Foundation Apprenticeships and HNCs on offer as well as a great number of Skills for Life courses.



Our Careers advisor, Pritpal Kalsi, assists pupils in developing future plans for learning, life and work. Students can make appointments through their Depute Head of House to discuss college and university courses, or to find out about modern apprenticeships, careers plans and employment opportunities.

More information on our curriculum can be found on our school website.

Current personalisation pathway forms are added each session.

HOME LEARNING

HOME LEARNING

Home Learning is an essential element in successful learning.

It allows efficient use of class time, skills to be reinforced and encourages pupils to develop habits of study, research and independence in learning. It can create time for higher order thinking and extend pupil understanding. Graeme High School is therefore committed to issuing regular home learning opportunities to enhance the learning experiences of our pupils.

Home Learning:

Improves understanding and learning of coursework and therefore raises attainment

Enhances independent learning skills and encourage regular, individual study skills

Provides opportunities for higher order thinking and skills

Develops self esteem through positive feedback

Provides parents with an opportunity to monitor the progress of their children

Encourages the development of effective study habits



Parents are partners in education and have a valuable role to play in supporting the school policies in this area. Specific advice about how to support your child in this area is available on our website.

The majority of curricular areas are now uploading learning and teaching content online through Microsoft Teams. This provides material and resources to support home learning.

SUPPORTED STUDY

Graeme High School endeavours to help pupils with their studies and homework in a number of ways. One of the most important of these is the supported study scheme. To support student learning, subject areas provide additional lunchtime and after-school support sessions to address areas of difficulty. Teachers make themselves available to help pupils with revision and preparation for national and prelim examination. These additional classes significantly help to increase the number of pupils reaching their learning targets.

More information on home learning and supported study opportunities are provided by subject teachers

ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM

A part of the week is devoted to areas such as Physical Education, Personal and Social Education and Religious and Moral Education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are expected to participate in physical education activities. If a pupil is injured or has an ailment affecting participation, he/she should bring a note to explain this. There are a range of activities undertaken in a PE lesson and it is often possible for a suitable alternative activity to be undertaken without aggravating the ailment.



RELIGIOUS & MORAL EDUCATION

All pupils from first year to fourth year experience Religious & Moral Education. This is concerned both with the study of religious beliefs and practices and also with the pupil's own search for meaning, value and purpose in life.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Acts of religious observance are characterised by the opportunities they afford pupils to reflect on their role in the world, their relationship with others and their personal beliefs. Such opportunities are provided by means of religious assemblies and services as well as by visits from various members of the clergy to individual classes at appropriate points throughout the session. Through our Equal Opportunities policy, opportunities are taken to ensure that all our pupils appreciate that we live in a multicultural society and also to emphasise that the contributions of all ethnic groups to that society are equally valued.

ASSEMBLY

Regular assemblies are held which enable pupils to share together and celebrate those things which we value. They also provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on moral concerns. These are opportunities within the cycle of assemblies to reflect on local and national issues as well as important school business. We also invite speakers to school assemblies to discuss the work of a broad range of caring and charitable organisations.

PSE

Throughout the school, Personal and Social Education is offered by Depute House Heads, teaching staff and invited outside speakers. Supported by contributions from other departments, the programme aims to support pupils with their education and give them opportunity to learn about and discuss issues relevant to their lives. The key areas explored in PSE are sexual health and relationships, substance misuse, course choice, career planning and health and wellbeing. The emphasis within the Personal and Social Education programme varies depending upon the age of the pupil.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

SPORTS

Graeme High School has excellent sports facilities. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sports activities which change based on the skills and interests of staff and pupils.

CLUBS

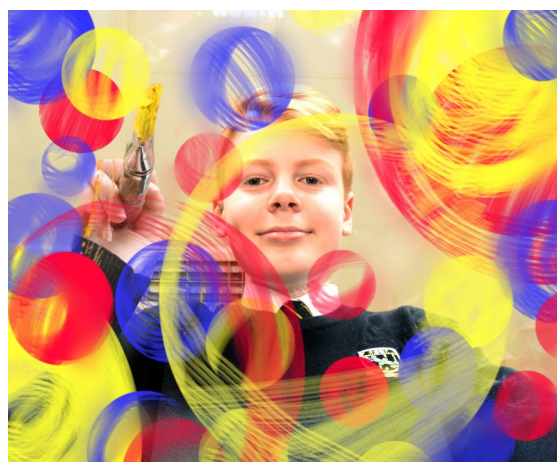
For those with interests beyond the sporting, a number of clubs are offered and are again geared towards the interests and skills of pupils and staff.

MUSIC

Pupils have the opportunity for tuition in the following instruments: Brass, Woodwind, Strings (upper and lower) Piano, Percussion, Recorders, Classical Guitar and Keyboards. The school has various groups and ensembles. Several members of these groups have been successful in gaining places in the local Youth Orchestra. Choirs ensure that all pupils with an interest in music have the chance to take part in extra curricular events, such as school concerts and other school productions, as well as external events.

TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Participation in trips and excursions, whether residential or non-residential, can do much to enrich and enhance the education experience of youngsters. Therefore the school seeks to provide as many opportunities as possible for pupils to enjoy this participation. During the past few years pupils from Graeme High School have had the opportunity to take part in a large number of excursions which have ranged from day trips to historical sites through Biology field trips and on to major expeditions to France and Italy.



Some of these opportunities are limited at the moment due to COVID-19. Normal delivery will continue after the pandemic.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Assessment can help teachers to find out how well pupils are learning, how efficiently lessons are being taught and how appropriate teaching materials are. Pupil work is assessed on a continuous basis. This means that class teachers build up information about pupil progress using a variety of methods.

As well as using tests, teachers use formative assessment strategies such as: using open ended questions, giving appropriate thinking time to answer, using traffic lights to identify difficulties. Learning intentions are shared at the beginning of each lesson and completed outcomes discussed at the end. Teachers also share the success criteria for each task. This means they explain how the work will be marked and what is expected of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and assess each other's work to provide support and help with understanding.

Parents have the opportunity to find out about their child's learning through a range of means –

- Parent Consultation Evenings
- Ongoing discussion with teachers
- Information Evenings
- Reports
- Target Setting Letters
- Folios of work
- Learning logs

It is important to note that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the means of delivering this, may change, utilising technology to offer virtual solutions.

Pupil Summary Reports are sent home to parents and you have an opportunity to comment on these. Our school calendar outlines key assessment and reporting deadlines for each year group. In addition, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for an appointment to consult with the Principal Teacher or Depute Head of House.

At the end of their broad general education, all students complete a learning profile which includes information on how pupils develop skills for learning, life and work, including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in and out of the classroom. This helps them to prepare a learning pathway for the Senior Phase. In the Senior Phase, students develop and maintain a further profile to assist them in making a successful transition from school into higher and further education, training and employment.

Key reporting and assessment dates are shown on our school calendar. This can be viewed on our school website.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

As with all local authority schools in Scotland, this school operates under the terms of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2009) and its accompanying Code of Practice. Further details of the policies and procedures can be found on the Falkirk Council website:

<http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/schools-education/additional-support-needs/>

Working with other agencies and professionals, for example, Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, National Health Service and parents, decisions are made jointly with parents, children and young people with regards to the best possible education to meet the needs of the child within the resources available.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

Pupils' additional support needs will be identified and addressed through the Getting It Right For Every Child processes. This involves close co-operation between the parent or carer, the child and the staff in school – they are the core part of the Team Around the Child. Others involved in your child's education and well-being will also be part of the Team, and will help to complete a rounded picture of assessment where appropriate. The Team will also draw up and review plans to meet the needs identified. Their activities are co-ordinated by the Named Person, who is responsible for ensuring plans are implemented and has an overall picture of the pupil's progress. You will be told who the Named Person is for your child when they start school—this will usually be your child's Depute Head of House. If you believe your child may have unrecognised additional support needs, your first point of contact should be your child's Depute Head of House.

The school makes provision for pupils with additional support needs throughout their education:

- each teacher differentiates the Curriculum for Excellence within their class to provide educational targets and objectives suited to their age and stage of development
- the school has experienced Additional Support Needs Teachers to co-ordinate and organise support for children
- the school can call on the time of a Support for Learning Assistant where required

In addition, the authority maintains other specialist provision to meet the needs of children experiencing severe and complex disabilities, sensory impairments, significant and those with complex social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This includes some provisions based in mainstream schools, and there is also a specialist team supporting bilingual and travelling pupils, those with long-term illnesses, and other children with significant additional support needs.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN EXAMINATIONS

By the end of S4	Percentage of the relevant S4 roll achieving:	2018	2019	2020
	English & Maths at level 3 or better	98	94	tbc
	5 or more awards at level 3 or better	95	90	97
	5 or more awards at level 4 or better	93	88	91
	5 or more awards at level 5 or better	53	51	60

By the end of S5	Percentage of the relevant S4 roll achieving:	2018	2019	2020
	1 or more awards at Higher A-C	54	52	56
	3 or more awards at Higher A-C	40	27	34
	5 or more awards at Higher A-C	15	12	16

By the end of S6	Percentage of the relevant S4 roll achieving:		2019	2020
	3 or more awards at Higher A-C	57	45	38
	5 or more awards at Higher A-C	22	32	27
	1 or more awards at Higher A-C	16	17	17

SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Total Number of Leavers	170	169	193
Higher Education (%)	34	34	35
Further Education (%)	17	23	18
Training (%)	5	2	3
Employment (%)	28	34	40
Not in employment, training or education (%)	14	3	3

SCHOOL PLANS

Graeme High School is committed to continually reflecting on their progress and we use key documents, such as the National Improvement Framework and How Good Is Our School, to measure this progress. This session we have a number of improvement initiatives looking to increase attainment for all, and closing the attainment gap between our most disadvantaged pupils and pupils from less deprived areas. Furthermore, we are developing strategies to increase and widen access for our pupils to both further and higher education, as well as supporting those pupils who are least likely to make a positive transition from school into education, employment or training.

More information on our achievements in the past year can be found within our annual Standards and Quality Report. This includes standards in relation to literacy, numeracy and health and well-being, and achievement.

USEFUL WEBSITES

The following websites provide a useful information for parents. Additional sites are highlighted on our school website:

Choosing a School: A Guide for Parents – information on choosing a school and the placing request system –

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/choosing-school-guide-parents-nov-16/>

Parentzone provide information and resource for parents and Parent Councils

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Information about how the curriculum is structured and curriculum planning –

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/About%20the%203-18%20curriculum>

Broad General Education in the Secondary School – A Guide for Parents and Carers

<https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/Broad%20general%20education>

Information on the Senior Phase

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/senior-phase>

Information on Skills for learning, life and work –

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/developing-the-young-workforce>

The Skills Development Scotland website 'My World of Work' offers a number of tools to support career planning –

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

Scottish Qualifications Authority provides information for teachers, parents, employers and young people on qualifications

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/>

Links to additional websites can be found in our Parent/ Carer Zone, within our school website.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A wide variety of additional information is available from our school website. Within the Parent/Carer Zone you will find extended information on many of the sections contained in this handbook, as well as details of school policies. There are also additional section sections on the following topics:

- Medical Care and School Health Service
- Insurance and personal property
- Lost property
- Data Protection Act
- Online enquiry form
- Parent Council area
- Study skills
- Pupil Health and Wellbeing including mental health

There is a wide variety of additional information of additional information available on our school website. Please inform us if there are additional areas you would like to read about here.