



Head Teacher: Barry Graham

13th February 2014

Changes to the Curriculum – Current S2 and S3

Dear parent/guardian

As you know, the Scottish Government recently decided that our focus for pupils in S1 – S3 should be on a broad general education rather than on national exam courses. Across Scotland it has been agreed that all external qualifications will now be sat in the senior phase of education, S4 – S6.

This change in emphasis has given us an opportunity to enhance our curriculum so as to enrich the learning of all our pupils. By building on the school's existing strengths and successes, and following discussions with staff, pupils, parents and representatives of Education Scotland, we have created a new curricular plan which we will phase in, beginning with pupils in our present S1.

I have provided an overview of the number of courses which pupils currently in S2 or S3 will study in the table below:

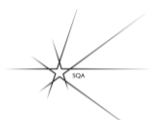
YEAR GROUP	CfE COURSE	CHOICE
S2	8 COURSES	Personalisation and choice within subject choices
S3	8 COURSES Continuation of courses selected in S2 + Elective	Personalisation and choice in electives
S4	8 COURSES Continuation of courses selected in S2 + Elective	Option choice after S4 prelim exams
S5	5 COURSES Free choice + Elective + Skills	Option choice after S5 prelim exams
S6	4 or 5 COURSES Free choice + Elective + Skills	

Further details

Electives

Electives are optional courses which will run for 1 ½ periods per week.

Similar to the modules which have run successfully in the senior school for several years, electives will eventually be offered to pupils in all year groups. Electives are an innovative way to encourage pupils to work and learn together. Pupils will be able to choose from a range of electives on offer, from yoga to learning an additional language. These courses are designed by staff to be enjoyable while enhancing skills, knowledge and self-confidence.





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Skills

Skills classes are going to meet 1 period per week and look at Skills for Life, Learning and Work, incorporating leadership and employability.

S2 – Current S2 pupils will continue this year with their choice of subjects from the end of S1. There will be opportunities for pupils to be involved in Interdisciplinary Learning.

S3 – Pupils will continue studying the 8 subjects which they chose at the end of S1. They will also be able to choose an elective to study in addition to these subjects. Pupils will be able to change electives at various stages throughout the year. There will also be opportunities for pupils to take part in Interdisciplinary Learning.

S4 – This is the beginning of the Senior Phase, during which pupils work towards their National Qualifications. These subjects can be studied at the following levels: National 3 (equivalent to Access 3/Foundation Level), National 4 (equivalent to Intermediate 1/General Level) or National 5 (equivalent to Intermediate 2/Credit level). There will be an opportunity for pupils to study each of their courses at the level above that which they are currently studying during S4 to give them a better insight in to whether they would like to continue each subject into S5. There will be option choice at the end of S4 when pupils will select five subjects to study in S5.

S5 – Pupils will study five subjects, which could be at National 4, National 5 or Higher level. There will also be a choice of vocational courses, college link programmes and HNC courses on offer. At the end of S5 pupils will choose options for S6.

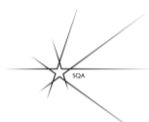
S6 – Pupils can choose up to five courses to study. These will be at Advanced Higher level, Higher level, National 5, National 4 or HNC level. There will also be the option to study Open University modules or Scottish Baccalaureate awards as well as any of the vocational courses offered in S5.

Throughout the Senior Phase, pupils will continue to study Religious and Moral Education, PE and Personal and Social Education. Pupils will also be encouraged to undertake a work experience placement during this phase.

Other changes

From June, the school day will continue to run from 9.15 – 3.50, but we are making a slight alteration to the internal school day. Mentor time in the morning will now last for 30 minutes (instead of 25min) and all other periods will last for 50 minutes. In response to feedback from pupils, we are also changing the structure of mentor time. Each week there will now be:

- 1 period for House Assembly
- 2 periods for mentoring
- 2 periods for PSE – which will incorporate the use of teaching techniques to enhance Emotional Intelligence within the school.





Wallace Hall Academy

Working together to achieve more

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Further information on our rationale behind our new curricular structure can be found on the school website (www.wallacehall.co.uk) under Parents Information/Important Documents.

If you have any further questions regarding our new curriculum structure please do not hesitate to contact the DHT for your son/daughter.

Cairn – Mr John Blair

Scaur – Mrs Yvonne Gall

Nith – Mrs Lesley Wilson

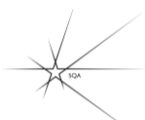
Yours sincerely

John Blair

Depute Head Teacher

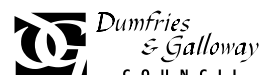


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