



James Gillespie's
High School
Handbook
2018 - 2019



Welcome/Failte

Thank you for visiting our website and, especially, this new – and online – Handbook, which tells you all about our school and the education your child will enjoy here.

James Gillespie's High School, founded in 1803, sits in the heart of beautiful Edinburgh and our catchment-area includes many of its glories – Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile, most of the University, the National Gallery and even the Scottish Parliament. For over forty years we have been a successful, culturally diverse comprehensive, educating boys and girls from aged 11 to 18 years of age. Our students describe us a great school, visitors regularly comment on their ease and friendliness and we have very many distinguished former pupils.

As well as an outstanding academic record, we are proud of all the extra-curricular programme of activities on offer. Gillespie's has a particularly strong tradition in music and the performing arts and we besides provide Gaelic-Medium Education from First Year onwards. Our aim at Gillespie's is to encourage each student to be self-confident, inquiring, tolerant, positive, well-rounded, independent – young men and women who will understand and cherish a rich and varied world. In an atmosphere of diligence, tolerance and mutual respect, we aim to send forth secure, confident students – new citizens ready and able to enrich our society. In all this we are supported not just by our dedicated staff – striving every day to help every pupil reach their potential – but in ongoing partnership with our parents, carers and the local community. This website is central to that relationship and our parents – you – vital to ensuring all our pupils are challenged, successful and happy.



Our vision and values as a school community

The school motto, 'Fidelis et Fortis,' was adopted in 1927 and means 'faithful and brave.'

For over twenty years, we have lived by an underpinning principle – 'We respect and care for each other and value the diversity which exists among people.'

Our **vision** is to provide a curriculum which enables all learners at James Gillespie's High School to achieve their potential. We aim for excellence in learning and teaching and expect all learners to be actively engaged in their own learning. We recognise that learning is a lifelong process and is one to which we, as a school community, make a significant and lasting contribution.

Our school **values**, which demonstrate what is important to us as a school, are:

1. Respect
2. Equality
3. Inclusion
4. Honesty
5. High expectations/aspirations

Our school is proud of and celebrates the diversity of all of our people and their talents.



If you would like to know more about James Gillespie's High School – or arrange a visit – simply contact the school office. And thank you, again, for your interest in Gillespie's.

Donald J Macdonald BSc. MBA SQH

Head Teacher

A Foreword from the Director of Children and Families

Session 2018- 2019

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.

We are committed to working closely with parents as equal partners in your child's education, in the life of your child's school and in city-wide developments in education.

Parental involvement in the decision making process and in performance monitoring are an integral part of school life. We look forward to developing that partnership with your support.

I am pleased you are taking an interest in James Gillespie's High School for session 2018 -19 and hope that this document will provide you with the information you need concerning your child's school. If you have any queries regarding the contents please contact the Head Teacher in the first instance who will be happy to offer any clarification you may need.

Alistair Gaw

Executive Director of Communities and Families



Head Teacher **Mr. Donald J. Macdonald, BSc. MBA SQH**

Lauderdale Street, Edinburgh, EH9 1DD

0131 447 1900

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admin@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk

About the school

Stages of Education provided for	Secondary
Present Roll	1,255
Denominational Status	Non-denominational
Gaelic Medium Education	JGHS provides GME for pupils of secondary school age in Edinburgh

Organisation of the School Day

Start Time	08:40 Monday – Friday
Morning Break	10:40 to 11:05 Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:50 to 11:05 Tuesday/Thursday
Lunch Time	13:05 to 13:45 Monday - Thursday
Finish Time	15:40 Monday – Thursday (12:55 Friday)



School Calendar - Session 2018-2019 (Our calendar on the school website has more details of school events)

School term dates 2018/19

Autumn

Term starts Wednesday 15 August 2018

Mid-term holidays

- Monday 17 September 2018, Autumn holiday
- Monday 15 October - Monday 22 October 2018, mid-term break

Term ends Friday 21 December 2018

Christmas holidays

Monday 24 December 2018 - Tuesday 8 January 2019

Spring

Term starts Wednesday 9 January 2019

Mid-term holidays

- Monday 11 February - Friday 15 February 2019, mid-term break

Term ends Friday 5 April 2019

Easter holidays

Monday 8 April 2019 - Monday 22 April 2019

Summer

Term starts Tuesday 23 April 2019

Mid-term holidays

- Monday 6 May 2019, May Day
- Tuesday 7 May 2019, staff only day
- Monday 20 May 2019, Victoria Day

Term ends Friday 28 June 2019



Our history

James Gillespie, a genial and very rich Edinburgh snuff and tobacco merchant, was born in Broughton in 1726. A plaque on the wall at 231 High Street shows where his shop used to be and his shop-sign - a small barrel marked 'tobacco' in gilt letters, with a boy beside it smoking a long pipe – can be seen at Huntly House in the Canongate. The big snuff jar from his shop is at Lady Stair's House near the Lawnmarket, and out at Colinton is his old mansion, Spylaw House, where he latterly lived and in front of the mill (powered by the Water of Leith) that ground his sought-after snuff. On the other side of Colinton, at St Cuthbert's Parish Church, can be seen his tomb, with the inscription adding that he left part of his vast fortune for the establishment of 'a free school for the education of poor boys'.

In 1803, as a result of the legacy of James Gillespie, a school for sixty-five pupils and one master was opened in Bruntsfield Place. It was administered by the Merchant Company of Edinburgh and the first Head Teacher, Rev. John Robertson, served for forty-two years, single-handedly and on an annual salary of £65 - £1 per pupil.

In 1870 the school moved into a larger building where the Royal Blind Asylum now stands, at Gillespie Crescent – this had originally been erected as 'Gillespie's Hospital,' for residential accommodation (under the terms of his will) for old men and women. Girls were now admitted as well as boys, modest fees were now charged, and the school soon had over a thousand pupils.

In 1908 the Merchant Company handed responsibility for the school, including the building and most assets, to what was then the Edinburgh School Board. The Gillespie Crescent premises were in increasing disrepair and in 1914 staff and pupils moved into a handsome red-sandstone building at Warrender Park Terrace, overlooking Bruntsfield Links – originally built, some years earlier, for Boroughmuir High School.

The school's secondary department rapidly expanded and in 1929, largely from parental pressure, it became a 'Corporation Grammar School', admitting girls only. The former Warrender Park School, which had served as an annexe, became the wholly separate James Gillespie's Boys' School, for primary boys only.

As pressure grew on space, Edinburgh Corporation acquired Bruntsfield House and its grounds from the Warrender family but – not least because of the Second World War – plans to erect a new and still larger school were delayed for many years, though the girls' primary classes were transferred there near the end of the war.

Work on a new modern school at this site finally began in 1964 and the new campus – complete with swimming-pool, science classrooms and every Sixties convenience – was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in October 1966, serving thereafter as a selective secondary school for some eight hundred girls. The new buildings were grouped around the 16th-century manor of Bruntsfield House and many of the original trees were preserved, lending the campus a distinctive character rarely found in modern schools.

From August 1973 the school became an area-based co-educational comprehensive six-year high school, with the first boys entering that First Year intake. The transition was completed by August



1978, but overcrowding forced use for many years of the Darroch Annexe until the completion of a new teaching-block and a sports hall by the spring of 1991.

In 2008 it was finally decided to build a new school that would be appropriate for the 21st Century. Plans for a completely new school were duly drawn up and demolition and rebuild finally began in the autumn of 2013. Bruntsfield House, though – with its medieval charm and resident ghosts, the 'Green Lady' and the 'Phantom Carriage' - remain as its serene centre.

Gillespie's has had some eminent Head Teachers. They include the very first, Rev. John A Robertson, who taught single-handedly and heroically for a cool forty-two years and on an annual salary of £65; Thomas J Burnett, serving from 1916 to 1936; his successor, the formidable Miss May Andrew, who served till 1956 and retired with a CBE; and Dr Patricia Thomas, from 1975 to 1991. The current Head Teacher, Donald J Macdonald, took up post in January 2012. A Physics graduate from the University of Edinburgh, a native of North Uist and a fluent Gaelic speaker, was previously Head Teacher of Liberton High School.

In recent decades James Gillespie's has established the tradition of joyous 'Diversecity' concerts, annual tours of the Great War battlefields and deep ties with the Zwelibanzi High School in Umlazi township, Durban, South Africa. The schools also have annual exchange programmes in place with schools in Tenerife, France, Germany and Hong Kong. And we're proud now to be the 'reception secondary' for Taobh na Pairce, Edinburgh's first Gaelic-medium primary school.

Notable former pupils include a surprising number of actors and performers – Alistair Sim; Robert Cavanah; Michael Thomson and Grant Stott – the historical novelist Dorothy Dunnett and, most famous of all, Dame Muriel Spark, who by her death in 2006 was regarded as the greatest living British novelist. A 'Gillespie's Girl' from 1923 to 1935, she drew heavily on her schooldays for The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, subsequently adapted for stage and screen.

And all Gillespie's pupils taught at the Darroch Annexe – formerly Darroch Secondary School – during our rebuild years can besides claim to have attended the same academy as Sir Sean Connery.

Our Catchment Area

Please download a map here. Broadly, we cover central and south-central Edinburgh, between Princes Street and Blackford Hill, Arthur's Seat and Bruntsfield Place. Our feeder-primary schools are Bun-Sgoil Taobh Na Pairce; James Gillespie's; Preston Street; Royal Mile; Sciennes, and Tollcross

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20256/school_places/1377/find_your_catchment_school



Basics...

Organisation

James Gillespie's High School is led by the Head Teacher, Donald J MacDonald, supported by three Depute Head Teachers, ten Curriculum Leaders and a well-organised Pastoral Support team.

Our pupils are organised in five 'Key Adult Communities' named after locations that feature in the history of James Gillespie and the school he founded.

There are twelve, vertically integrated, Key Adult groups in each community.

Keeping in touch.

The school works hard to keep parents and carers informed about their children's progress. We have regular parents' evenings and teachers provide full annual and a further three interim reports. We may get directly in touch if we have any worries about your child's attainment or wellbeing. If you have any concerns about your child's performance or behaviour you should, in the first instance, contact their designated Support for Pupils Leader. They are;

Lauder Community	Ms. Leanne McQuade (Mon-Wed) & Ms. Elisa Kerr (Thu-Fri)
Roslin Community	Mr. Bryan McPhail
Spylaw Community	Mr. Bob Shankland
Thirlestane Community	Ms. Cait Pearce (Mon-Tue/Thu-Fri) & Mr. Richard Sievwright (Wed)
Warrender Community	Ms. Nikki Graham (Mon-Wed) & Ms. Lisa Wood (Thu-Fri)



Staff List 2017 - 2018

Senior Leadership Team

Anderson, David (Business Manager)
Macdonald, Donald J. (Head Teacher)
O'Brien, Deirdre (DHT) (Mon/Fri)
Porter, Ian (DHT)
Warden, Jeff (Acting DHT)
Westerman, Sally (DHT) (Tue-Thu)

Administration

Brucka Natalia (Receptionist)
Chisholm, Gillian (Clerical Assistant)
Kerr, Sharon (Clerical Assistant)
Leslie, Moira (Administration Officer)
McVay, Pamela (Welfare)
Robinson, Clair (Clerical Assistant)

Library

Brown, Sara (Mon-Tue)
Adenekan, Tomi (Wed-Fri)

School Support Assistants

Fraser, Ann
Marvin, Janine
Sinclair, Joanne
Summers, Laura

Service Support Officers

Double, Mark
Glancy, Alan (Senior SSO)
Zapata Vera, Jesus

Technicians

Adams, Deborah (Senior Science Technician)
Chan, Stephen (Workshop Technician)
Norton, Vera (Science)
Sullivan, Gary (IT Support)
Zia, Kosar (Science)

Contemporary & Moral Studies

Business Studies

Forrester, Jacqueline
Wilson, Carol

Modern Studies

Garrett, Caitlin
Inglis (Laura-Jane) (Mon-Tue/Thu-Fri)
Halliday, Laura (Curriculum Leader)

Religious & Moral Education & Psychology

Fraser, Claire
Jennings, John
Smith, Megan

Design & ICT

Art & Design

Christie, Stella (Mon-Tue/Thu-Fri)
Molleson, Iona (Tue-Fri)
Troon, Stephanie (Mon-Wed)
Wood, Jane

Computing

Brown, Kathryn
Roderick, Carl

Design Technology

Adam, David
Bayne, David (Wed)
Corson, Steve (Curriculum Leader)
Digance, Andrew

English & Literacy

Bainbridge, Sarah (Mon-Wed)
Barrett, Jeanne (Wed-Fri)
Connell, Emily
Crosbie, Allan (Curriculum Leader)
Fairhurst, Julie (Mon-Tue)
Kirkwood, Fia
McGough, Sarah
Sawers, Susie
Cortes, Marianne
Roskilly, Marcus
Watt, Craig
Wood, Lisa (Wed)

Health & Wellbeing

Food & Health Technology

Briggs, Allison
Osborne-Smith, Fiona (Mon-Thu)

Physical Education

Carruthers, Angus
Carstairs, Frank
Ewing, Chelsea
Eyre, Jane
Morgan, Nicki
Newall, Graeme (Curriculum Leader)
Sievwright, Richard (Mon-Tue/Thu-Fri)



Staff List 2017 – 2018 Continued

Mathematics & Numeracy

Aitken, Donna
Cummings, Paul
Dolan, Ashling
Ebead, Ahmed
Fyfe, Joanne (Mon-Wed)
Grant, Eilidh
Haldane, Elaine
Lewis, Ben (Curriculum Leader)
Morrison, Alistair

Modern Languages

Alexander, Michael
Edwards, Emma
Galvez-Castells, Tania
Hudson, Allison
Irvine, Ryan (Curriculum Leader)
Neithercut, Roddy
Pica, Hollie (Mon-Thu)
Ponte, Nicolas
Reilly, Ruth
Saqib, Sajida (Mon/Tue/Fri)
Walker, Brooke

Performing Arts

Drama & Media

Conroy, Michele (Mon-Wed/Fri)
Hardie, Malcolm
Sulleyman, Zee (Mon-Thu)

Music

McMorran, Tassie (CL) (Mon/Fri)
McMorran, Tassie (Tue-Thu)
O'Brien, Deirdre (CL) (Tue-Thu)
Shields, Lisa
Webster, David (Wed-Fri)

Science

Biology

Allan-Brown, Emma (Mon-Wed)
Hillier, Katherine (Probationer)
McKenna, Jennifer
O'Connor, Mary
Oudney, Laura
Stewart, Laura (Curriculum Leader)

Science

Chemistry

Bracewell, Michael
Dickinson, Debbie
McCartan, Sarah
Wallace, Kirsty

Physics

Coltart, Iain (Curriculum Leader)
Lyll, Anne
Russell, Alan
Smith, Paul

Social Sciences

Geography

Harvey-Jamieson, Rosie (not Thu pm)
MacLaughland, Adam
Matheson, Kerry-Anne (Tue-Thu)
Stewart, Chris

History

Carruthers, Nicola (Mon-Thu)
Carson, Brian (Tue-Thu)
Kennedy, Ashleigh (Curriculum Leader)

Support for Learning

Andrews, Robin (Thu-Fri)
Balfour, Jude
Campbell, Ann
Cockcroft, Rob (SfL Leader) (Mon-Thu)
Fallon, Leesa (Mon-Wed)
Gendreau, Emily (EAL - Tue)
Gray, Sybil
Lee, Gillian
Oatman, Fiona
Robinson, Karen
Thomas, Frances

Support for Pupils & PSE

Graham, Nikki (Mon-Wed)
Kerr, Elisa (Thu-Fri)
McPhail, Bryan
McQuade, Leanne (Mon-Wed)
Pearce, Cait (Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri)
Shankland, Bob
Sievwright, Richard (Acting)(Wed)
Wood, Lisa (Thu-Fri)



Registration and enrolment

The date for registration of new school entrants is advertised in the local press and on the council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk. Registration for Primary One and First Year Secondary takes place in November each year. Pupils should be registered in only one school for their catchment area. Parents will be provided with information about the school, when they register their child.

Parents who want to send their child to a school other than the catchment school must make a placing request. Parents now make placing requests for non-catchment schools using a new online form (see www.Edinburgh.gov.uk/Schoolplaces).

Parents of pupils who have moved into the catchment area or, who wish their child to transfer to the school, should contact the school office for information.

Transition from your child's primary school

We do everything we can to make the change from your local primary to a large secondary school as easy as possible for your child. Transition events take place mainly through P7. Typically, they include:

- Visits by a targeted groups of P7 pupils
- A Parents' Meeting in June of P7
- A 3 day visit in June of P7
- A Health and Wellbeing day for all P7s in June
- Modern Languages classes in Gaelic, Spanish and French Transition
- A performing Arts concert event at the High School for P1-7
- Involvement of High School students as mentors for P7s

Gillespie's staff liaise closely with primary teachers, and subject teachers as well as guidance staff will visit the primary schools to meet pupils and staff. Special attention is paid to learners who are considered vulnerable. They may be included in a summer transition programme, which is designed to offer additional support to pupils in anticipation of starting at Secondary.

The extended Pupil Support Team at James Gillespie's High School starts work almost a year before your child starts at high school to ensure a smooth transition. It includes staff from the Support for Learning and Support for Pupils departments, a Pupil Support Assistant and a Depute Head Teacher with overall responsibility for the process.

In September each year we hold a P7 Open Event to which all parents and pupils intending to join us are invited. In December we begin to organise transition meetings for pupils with additional support needs. Pupils are then identified by our primary colleagues who may benefit from additional support offered by the Transition Support Group, which runs for a small number of pupils in the last term of primary. This group is run by members of our Pupil Support Team and colleagues from Canongate



Youth Project. During the session Pupil Support Leaders visit primary schools to discuss pastoral information.

In June our trained S6 Befrienders visit the primary schools with our Pupil Support Team staff prior to the 3 day visit to answer questions and help settle any nerves.

If you have any questions regarding the process please contact Mr. Ian Porter, Depute Head Teacher, in the first instance.

A particular, early treat for First Year pupils is our Hallowe'en Party, making joyous use of the spooky possibilities of Bruntsfield House and organised largely by Sixth Year students. It's been a tradition for over forty years.

My child is going to 'Big School'! – things to remember

Moving from Primary to Secondary school is a big change – and not just for the children. For parents and guardians, the experience of your child starting Secondary school can be quite a surprise. So some parents of students who are at James Gillespie's High School have put together these thoughts about *'things I'd wish I'd known when my child started in S1'* – we hope they're useful!

Contact with the school

You may feel much less 'in touch' with what your child is doing at school. At Primary, you might well have been able to drop them off at the school door, chat with other parents, and perhaps see their teacher quickly at the beginning of the day. Secondary school is very different, and it can feel quite strange to move from the intimate involvement of Primary years to a more distant relationship in Secondary school.

This is partly because the school is so much bigger, and your child will have many teachers rather than just one or two. But it also reflects how children themselves often want a bit more independence as they start Secondary school: it's an important stage in growing up.

Of course, this doesn't mean that James Gillespie's High School is any less interested in your child, or that you cannot communicate with the school and your child's teachers. On (Date tbc), at 7 Pm, the school will be running an S1 Parents' Social Evening for; among other things, a chance to meet the school's Senior Leadership Team and your Child's Support for Pupils' Teacher.

In October (issue date, date tbc) you will get a progress report about how your child is getting on. This will be followed by two Parent Consultation Evenings (dates tbc), where you can talk to your child's subject teachers. This event is a good place to talk about any issues around how your child is 'settling in', such as homework or their attitude to school. A second tracking report will be issued in January (issue date, tbc) and full, final report in May (issue date, date tbc).

If at any time you feel you need to talk to someone about how your child is getting on, you can always get in touch with staff through your child's Support for Pupils' teacher (formerly known as guidance teacher), by email or by phoning the school.



What about exams?

It can be difficult to find information on the work programme that Secondary school pupils follow. The Scottish Qualifications Authority, which runs the system of National and Higher Grades and is developing the new 'Curriculum for Excellence', has a website at www.sqa.org.uk, but it does not offer a clear, simple guide to what happens when, nor is it easy to find a straightforward explanation of the structure of secondary level qualifications. Here's an outline of what you can expect, based on what we've learned:

In **S1 and S2**, your child will still be follow the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes, building on the 5-14 curriculum that they began in Primary school. Their school day will now be divided into lessons in different subjects, but they do not need to make any choices about what to study. There are no exams to think about, and work in S1 and S2 does not form part of any continuous assessment for external exams and qualifications.

In the **second term of S2**, students choose the subjects they want to study in years 3 and 4. The school will give them clear information about how to do this at the time, and there will be a series of parent consultation evenings at which you can discuss with your child's teachers what choices would be best. Your child will also probably have some strong ideas of their own!

In the **third term of S2**, just for the last month, children start on their new curriculum that they will follow throughout S3 and S4. Exams come at the end of S4.

If you'd like more information about the various qualifications students can take at the school, there's a summary on the Parent Council's website at <http://jghscouncil.btck.co.uk> - look in the 'Links' section.

Workload

The type and amount of homework that students get will probably also seem very different from Primary school. This again reflects the fact that they are studying many different subjects, with many different teachers. They are likely to have much more varied tasks than might have been the case in Primary.

More information

If you would like more information about any aspect of starting Secondary school, the school or members of the School Council are happy to help.

You can contact your child's teacher in the Support for Pupils Department for any advice during this transition stage:

Lauder Community	Ms. McQuade/Ms. Kerr
Roslin Community	Mr. McPhail
Spylaw Community	Mr. Shankland
Thirlestane Community	Ms. Pearce/Mr. Sievwright
Warrender Community	Ms. Graham/Ms. Wood

Contact the school by telephone: call 0131 447 1900 and ask for a message to be left for your Support for Pupils contact, or email: admin@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk, putting the name of the Support for Pupils teacher for whom the message is intended in the subject line.



The School Council represents the parents and guardians of all pupils, and aims to improve the school by supporting teachers, supporting parents, organising events, and discussing any issues that concern the life of the school. It meets on the first Tuesday of every month, and meetings are open to every member of the school community. Find out more details on the School Parent Council's website at <http://jghscouncil.btck.co.uk> or leave a message for the School Council with the School Office.

If you want to have just an informal chat with other parents, including over the summer holidays, do get in touch. An S1 network group can be brought together if there is an interest.

The importance of turning up! – and the law

If your child is absent from school for any reason, please telephone us immediately – 0131 447 1900 – and leave a voice-message. This should of course include your name, your child's name, their registration-class, what is wrong and when you hope your child will be back.

In common with other Edinburgh schools, we use a system called Absence Call. If a pupil has not registered, and the school has not received a call first thing in the morning explaining why, you will receive a text message informing them of your child's absence. Please respond immediately to the school, letting us know why your child is not at school.

Parents of a child of school age are **obliged by law** to make sure that their child is educated, and we as a school are **responsible in law** for your child's whereabouts and safety during school hours.

Absence from school is recorded as authorised – understood and approved by the school - or as unauthorised and with no explanation by the parent... **truancy**.

Again, **let the school know as soon as possible if your child is likely to be off for some time**, and given a note to bring when they come back, explaining they were off. If there is no explanation from a child's parents, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised.

Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time: this disrupts your child's education and reduces learning time. Mr Macdonald can approve absence from school for a family holiday in certain extreme situations, for example, in traumatic domestic circumstances where the holiday would improve the cohesion and wellbeing of the family. Please discuss your plans with your child's Support for Pupils Leader before the holiday. If the school does not give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The Head Teacher can authorise a holiday if you can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by the Head Teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

Any requests for extended absence over two weeks will be referred to the Senior Education Manager: Inclusion who will decide if it will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised leave.

Parents from minority ethnic religious communities **may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to celebrate recognised religious events**. Absence approved on this basis



is regarded as authorised absence. Extended leave can also be granted on request for families returning to their country of origin for cultural or care reasons.

A supportive approach is taken to unexplained absence. **However the children and families department has legal powers to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or – if necessary - refer pupils to the Reporter to the Children’s Panel.**

Our school uniform policy

The James Gillespie’s High School uniform is only worn on formal occasions – such as school concerts or certain excursions - and consists of:

- White collared shirt
- School tie
- Black trousers or black skirt
- Black shoes

On all other occasions, pupils are expected to dress decently, appropriately and comfortably. Clothing that is considered inappropriate includes items that may harm an individual, cause offence to others, or risk harassment and teasing. In all such cases the school will discuss the matter with the pupil(s) concerned and will involve parents as appropriate.

Offensive clothing such as T-shirts or other items painted with obscene language or illustrations are not permitted. Football colours are forbidden – they cause obvious tension - and underwear should not be exposed.

In practical areas such as Physical Education, Sciences, Home Economics and Technical subjects, all pupils must adhere to the relevant Health and Safety guidelines.

The appropriate clothing and footwear for PE is a T-shirt, shorts and gym shoes with non-marking soles. These are necessary for health and safety reasons and your co-operation is requested to ensure that pupils are equipped to participate in the PE lessons.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled, particularly ties, sweat shirts and PE equipment which are often forgotten or misplaced.

Please help us by ensuring that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive belongings or items of clothing to school. **The school does not carry insurance for pupils’ personal belongings.**

If you have any queries regarding the school’s dress code, please contact the school office.



Footwear and clothing grants

Grants for footwear and clothing for children are available to parents receiving:

- Child Tax Credit, but not working tax credit, with an annual income of less than £ 15,860
- income support
- jobseekers allowance[income-based]
- support under Par V1 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- income related element of Employment and Support Allowance

Information on free school meals and clothing grants is available on the www.edinburgh.gov.uk website. Applications for free school meals and clothing grants can be made by contacting Grants, Awards and Placements, Business Centre 1:1 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG.

School meals

Menus offer healthy and tasty meal options while reflecting the Scottish Government food and drink legal requirements for school lunches. Special diets and allergies are usually accommodated subject to consultation with parent/guardian and catering services.

Meal prices are reviewed annually. Please contact the School to be advised of the current price.

Some families may be eligible for free school meals. Application forms are available from the school office. The forms have to be completed by the parent along with supporting documentation as detailed on the application form. An application is required for every school session.

Payment for school lunches is by cash, by PIN or by swipe card. Packed lunches can be eaten in the Dining Centre. There are outside grassed and seated areas where pupils may choose to eat and socialise in dry weather.

Travel to and from school

There are three school gates: one at Lauderdale Street, one at Warrender Park Road and a vehicular entrance from Whitehouse Loan.

When dropping off your child for school or, later, picking him or her up, please do not park near the gates, or anywhere that causes an obstruction or restricts the view of the school crossing patrol.



In the school grounds... and your child's safety

Pupils are encouraged to arrive in good time for school and to use the spaces accessible to pupils. During breaks and lunchtimes the dining area is supervised by staff. Outwith these times, staff and senior pupils will be present around the school.

Before school begins supervision is limited. Pupils are welcome to use the seating areas around the school or, in inclement weather, may also use the indoor social areas.

During intervals our support-staff supervise children who are feeling ill or vulnerable. Throughout the day there is always access to the building and the children know this.

The safety and security of pupils and staff when attending or working in a school is very important to us. We use a number of security measures including a visitors' book, badges and escorts, while visitors are within the school buildings. All visitors must report first, and at once, to Reception and the office staff can make the necessary arrangements.

All pupils are expected to dress appropriately for an unpredictable Scottish climate. In the event of very wet or very cold weather outwith class times pupils may access the ground floor communal areas in any of the buildings. Access to indoor spaces is currently under review and will be updated as the accommodation evolves in the next few years.

Council has published an Equality Scheme, which can be viewed on the council's website. This outlines the duties which the Council is required to undertake to tackle discrimination, prevent harassment and ensure our work promotes equality. The Council is committed to eliminating discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, transgender status or pregnancy/maternity.

"Within the general policy laid down by The City of Edinburgh Council, the Children & Families Department has prepared and has continuing development of, safety policy statements for all areas of its responsibility in accordance with the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#). School staff are fully instructed in their responsibilities in this respect, and safety regulations apply to all aspects of school life, both on and off the premises. It is expected that pupils will behave responsibly and comply with all safety requirements. The support of parents/carers in promoting good practice in health and safety matters is of great importance to the school".

James Gillespie's High School is totally committed to ensuring a culture that promotes equality and welcomes diversity.

The school has, among its students, young people from a rich variety of different cultures and countries. Multicultural education permeates all our work and buildings. Respect, tolerance and appreciation of different cultures, faiths and outlooks are central to the life of the school.



Time is devoted to this in a variety of subjects and we will not tolerate racist, bigoted, sectarian or homophobic behaviour.

Our school community includes students born or rooted in many different nations and their presence enhances the life of James Gillespie's High School. We have for many years had a firm anti-racist policy and we work vigilantly to ensure the equality and happiness of all our pupils.

Within the Personal and Social Education curriculum, our sexual health and relationships education lessons are conducted in a sensitive manner and do not attempt to judge individual children and young people or demand information of a personal nature from them. Classroom discussions are therefore general in nature.

Staff are clear that when they are teaching sexual health and relationships education lessons that information shared by children and young people during lessons relating to child protection issues cannot be regarded as confidential and that they have a duty of care to report this to the child protection officer within the school.

Unexpected closures

In the event of an emergency, such as a power cut or severe weather that prevents schools from opening in the morning or results in an early closure, we use every means to let parents know.

Where possible the school will text parents.

In addition, announcements will be made on Radio Forth (Forth 1 and Forth 2) and via the Council's corporate Twitter account www.twitter.com/Edinburgh_CC and Facebook Page www.facebook.com/edinburghcouncil. If several schools are affected, or the situation is likely to be prolonged, then the Council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk will also be used.

When the school has to close during the day, pupils in S5 and S6 will be released immediately. In years S1-4 inclusive, contact must be made with a parent before a pupil will be allowed to leave school. Pupil safety will remain a priority at all times.

Our policy on mobile phones

The increasing benefits of mobile phones and other digital devices are recognised. Many young people and their parents regard them as an essential means of communication. Pupils are expected to use personal digital devices responsibly and sensibly and to follow the instructions of staff. In some classrooms, pupils, under the direction of the teacher, may be allowed to use his/her device as part of the lesson. It should be noted that 'phones and other digital devices are brought into school at the owner's risk. **The school does not have insurance for such items.**



Our policy on photographs

In an age that rightly takes child protection seriously we have detailed policies on when and how our pupils may be photographed or videoed, which may be read here.

http://www.jghs.edin.sch.uk/parents/maildrop_materials/Information%20about%20photographing%20your%20child.pdf

Great care is taken when posting images of school activities on our website that these are of low-resolution and cannot be downloaded.

All our pupils are instructed not to post images of each other on social-networking sites (such as Facebook, Tumblr or Instagram) without first asking their friend for permission.

It is a criminal offence to make an indecent image of any child, defined as a person under eighteen. We would deal robustly with such an incident between Gillespie's pupils.

Our policy on the employment of children outwith school hours

We feel that certain jobs for young people, especially in early secondary, may drain them of the energy and attention necessary to do their best at school. Children under statutory school leaving age can only be employed in terms of current law and by-laws. Children under thirteen are not allowed to work at all – for instance, doing a paper-round – and for those over thirteen there are strict limits on the hours they can work and the sort of jobs they can do. Parents and employers must both complete an application form for an employment-permit before such employment begins. We ask that you very carefully consider if the given job is appropriate for your child's age, their alertness for school, and his ability effectively to study or to do their homework. We believe that part-time employment must be very limited if they are to make the most of their years at James Gillespie's.

How we support children who are learning English

The Children & Families Department provides a support service of teachers of English as an additional language. The teachers visit schools to work with those bilingual pupils who require assistance in developing English language skills.



Many Edinburgh schools have pupils whose first or home language is not English. Over 90 languages are currently spoken in our schools, including those from established communities such as Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Cantonese and more recently-arrived languages such as Arabic, Mandarin and Polish.

At James Gillespie's High School we are proud of the fact that 43 official languages are currently spoken in School. We value this diversity and take opportunities to celebrate our differences.

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) service can help these pupils. They may be:

- Beginners
- Those at the early stages of acquiring English
- Those who speak English more fluently but who still need additional support to achieve their academic potential

They also work with:

- Teachers
- Professionals from other agencies
- Parents of bilingual pupils
- Local community groups

EAL Teachers work in nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, supporting bilingual pupils in liaison with their teachers

Additional English language classes are offered to some secondary pupils on a part time basis. A small team of Bilingual Support Assistants work with early stage learners in schools. They are fluent in English and one of the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi and Urdu. They can also help parents and schools to build effective partnerships. They can give advice and support on:



- Assessment, resources and teaching strategies
- Linguistic and cultural matters
- Inclusion, achievement and race equality
- Professional development of school staff
- Arrangements for external/alternative examinations
- Contacts with local community services, such as language classes for adults, interpreting services, community support groups and others

For more information please see their website: www.ealedinburgh.org.uk

Accessing the service

To find out about more or make contact with the EAL teacher in any school, please contact the School Office, or the EAL Service directly on 0131 469 2890. Alternatively you may write to;

English as an Additional Language (EAL),
Children and Families,
Business Centre 1.03,
East Neighbourhood Centre,
101 Niddrie Mains Road,
Edinburgh,
EH16 4DS.

Email: cf.englishadditionallanguage@ea.edin.sch.uk

A word about Gaelic (Facal mu Ghàidhlig)

James Gillespie's High School has for some years been Edinburgh's reception-secondary for primary pupils who have been taught in the medium of Scottish Gaelic – in the early years at classes in Tollcross Primary School. There are Gaelic parent and toddler groups across the city, and our Gaelic-speaking parents are among the most engaged and committed in the Gillespie's community.

Bun Sgoil Taobh na Pairce, Edinburgh's first dedicated Gaelic nursery and primary school was opened in August 2013, in Bonnington, Leith. Pupils choosing GME do not need to have prior knowledge of Gaelic. Neither is it necessary for either parent to speak Gaelic. Pupils from Bun Sgoil Taobh na Pairce transfer to James Gillespie's High School for their secondary education.

At Gillespie's, subject to staffing constraints, several subjects are taught through the medium of Gaelic in S1 and S2. **Throughout S3-S6 pupils can choose from the full range of SQA certificated courses, taught in Gaelic.**

Pupils who wish to study Gaelic who are neither transferring from Bun Sgoil Taobh na Pairce nor resident in Gillespie's catchment area may apply to enrol at Gillespie's or may attend for some specific classes.



Let us know what you think

We hope that you will be completely satisfied about your child's education and we always welcome feedback on our services from parents and pupils – whether it is compliments, suggestions, worries or complaints.

So feel free at any time to write, email, telephone or make an appointment to see someone. All feedback is welcome and keeps us in touch.

If, in particular, you have a complaint about the school, please let us know directly. It is better that any problem is shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than allowed to spoil the relationship between family and the school. **There will be no negative consequences from making a complaint** and we will deal with the issue as confidentially as possible.

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

- **Please make any complaints initially to the Head Teacher, Mr Donald J Macdonald.** This makes sure that the school knows what is going on and has an opportunity to respond and resolve the issue.
- **We will try to respond as quickly as possible, but often issues are complex and we need time to investigate.**
- **If you are still unhappy with the service or with our response then you will have the right to take the matter further and contact Advice and Conciliation [0131 469 3233]**
- **If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Our reply will include the contact details.**

Keeping pupils well

Our School Health Service

A team of specialist Health Service and Children and Families Department staff work together to provide a service throughout your child's years at primary and secondary school. A planned programme is put into place to make sure that they benefit as much as possible from all that school has to offer, and to help prepare for life after leaving school. The School Health Service is part of the Community Child Health Service and has direct links with those who carry out health checks on children before they start school.

Many different services are provided. The staff involved make every effort to work closely with parents/carers and with others who are caring for your child, both at school and in other branches of the Health Service. Some of the services, e.g. testing for vision, hearing or speech, are provided to all children on a routine basis to discover which children may need further tests. Parents/carers are not necessarily notified at the time of these screening tests and any parent who does not want a child to be included should notify the school at the beginning of the session. Naturally, if treatment is thought to be required the child's parents/carers will be informed and consent requested. The issue of maintaining confidentiality is taken seriously by the School Health Team at all times.



Some of the staff concerned and the parts they play are as follows:-

School Nurses are involved with health promotion and education, prevention of ill health, immunisation, health surveillance and screening.

The **School Doctor** is made aware of any possible problems and parents/carers and the family doctor is informed if any further action is considered necessary.

The School Nurse may be helped by a Health Assistant. The School Nurse acts as an important link between home and school. She visits the school and liaises with the teachers to find out whether any pupil has a health need that requires to be addressed. The School Nurse can link with other members of the health team, in the community or in hospital, concerned with a child's health.

The School Nurse reviews the notes of all children in Primary 1, 4, 7 and Senior 3 as well as those of all new entrants.

An information booklet about the School Health Service is issued to all Primary 1 pupils and any new pupils coming from outwith the Edinburgh area.

Parents/carers are also asked to complete a health questionnaire about their child at Primary 1, 7 and Senior 3 and asked if they would like their child to have a medical consultation with the School Doctor.

The School Doctor may ask for your consent to examine your child if his/her medical records are incomplete or if the doctor particularly wishes to check on his/her progress. You will be invited to be present at any medical examination and kept informed if the School Doctor wishes to see your child again, or thinks that he/she should be seen by the family doctor or a specialist in paediatrics. You can, if you wish, arrange for your family doctor to undertake the examinations instead of the School Doctor, but you may be charged a fee for this. In secondary schools the School Doctor may consider whether any special information should be provided for the Careers Service.

The School Doctor or Nurse will be pleased to see you and your child at a mutually convenient time if you are concerned about his/her health or general progress at school.

With your consent, the School Health Service Staff also carry out immunisations to protect against various diseases.

The Audiometric Team normally checks children's hearing on a number of occasions before the age of 13/14 years. The School Health Team will be told if your child seems to have a hearing problem and they will inform parents/carers and GPs as necessary.

The Speech and Language Therapist can provide assessment and, if necessary, treatment if you, a teacher or the School Doctor feels that your child may have a speech or language problem.

Any enquiries concerning the provision of dental services should be made to:

The Director of the Community Dental Service, 16 Duncan Street, Edinburgh, EH9 1SR (Tel. 0131 667-7114).

We hope that the School Health Service can, together with yourselves, contribute to your child's overall well-being and development. Please do not hesitate to arrange through the Head Teacher to see the School Doctor or School Nurse should you require any further information".

Ugh – lice...

Head lice are spread through head to head contact at home, while playing or in school. If it is any consolation, they prefer very clean heads.

Regular wet combing of your child's hair using a head lice detection comb is the best way to catch this possible problem at an early stage.



The only way to be sure that your child has head lice is to find a live louse. If you find live lice, get the correct lotion from your doctor, health visitor or pharmacist. Shampoos and other treatments are not effective.

One treatment is two applications of the treatment lotion, seven days apart. If this is not followed then re-infection is likely.

Advise family members and close friends that your child has head lice and that they should check their own hair. Only treat if live lice are found. Don't be shy about advising others of this possible problem because you would likely tell family and friends about other infections which might affect them.

Regular wet combing of your child's hair with the head lice detector comb is the best protection as it allows you to detect the condition and treat it speedily.

Medicine administration

A School Health Care Plan (SHCP) is required for all pupils who require emergency medication or who have a complex, chronic condition that requires more in-depth planning and support. Pupils with severe allergies, Epilepsy, Diabetes and Cystic Fibrosis who require a SHCP, will have the completion of their plan facilitated by the appropriate clinic specialist nurse/consultant at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh or by the school nurse team. If your child requires regular medication in school please discuss this further with their Pupil Support Leader via the school office or contact our Welfare Assistant – Pamela McVay.

Welfare Office

This is situated on the ground floor of Bruntsfield House.

Pupils who feel ill can attend for attention here during school hours. Medication can be stored in welfare on request and completion of the appropriate forms, some of which are now available on the website. Health care plans and medication-storage advice, for other conditions such as allergies, asthma and diabetes, can be obtained by contacting the welfare office directly.

When your child has a medical appointment during school hours, we ask them to bring in the notifying letter and appointment card to show their registration teacher before this brief absence.

The Welfare Office is also in charge of the lockers for your child's effects and issues the keys each term. A form must be filled in and a small deposit paid.

The Welfare Office also take charge of lost property. We hold a monthly reclaim, at the morning interval, on the last Friday of each month.

Jags!

At Gillespie's we organise the standard immunisation and vaccinations for teenage children – for instance, the BCG jab against tuberculosis, or the HPV injection for girls. Parents are fully informed, and consent obtained, in every instance.



When a child is allowed to leave school

Statutory minimum leaving-dates are as follows.

A student whose 16th birthday falls on or after 1st March and before 1st October may leave school on 31st May.

A student whose 16th birthday falls on or after 1st October and before 1st March may leave school on the first day of the Christmas holiday.

Most students who chose to leave school in Fourth Year do so on the statutory leaving date of 31st May.

Others are unable to leave until the Christmas holiday of their Fifth Year. **There are only two leaving dates per session – 31st May and the last day of the Christmas term. Students may not legally leave school even if they have an employment offer before these dates.**

Since the late 1970s James Gillespie's has worked hard to organise special classes and courses, of an informal nature and in an atmosphere of mutual respect, for disengaged or frustrated 'December leavers.'

Other School Policies

School policies on a range of matters are accessible elsewhere on the school's website: this is the most useful link for parents - <http://www.jamesgillespies.co.uk>

How you, as a parent, can help us!

Parental involvement is very important – it really helps children do better.

This section contains information about how parents can be involved in supporting learning at home as part of a home – school partnership. You can also find out more about the ethos of our school, our values and aspirations. We explain besides how we celebrate pupil success, and outline our various links we have with 'partner organisations' and the wider local, national and international community.

We also tell you about our Parent Teacher Associations, Parents Association and the Parent Council, - and how you can contact them, become involved yourself in the life and work of the school. Your children besides can take advantage of the Pupils Council.



Our vision and values as a school community

The school motto, 'Fidelis et Fortis,' was adopted in 1927 and means 'faithful and brave.'

For over twenty years, we have lived by an underpinning principle – 'We respect and care for each other and value the diversity which exists among people.'

Our **vision** is to provide a curriculum which enables all learners at James Gillespie's High School to achieve their potential. We aim for excellence in learning and teaching and expect all learners to be actively engaged in their own learning. We recognise that learning is a lifelong process and is one to which we, as a school community, make a significant and lasting contribution.

Our school **values**, which demonstrate what is important to us as a school, are:

6. Respect
7. Equality
8. Inclusion
9. Honesty
10. High expectations/aspirations

Our school is proud of and celebrates the diversity of all of our people and their talents.

We are committed to supporting the development of the whole pupil and as a result, wish to encourage their development in spiritual, moral, social and cultural terms.

These key human aspects of learning are supported through the following arrangements by:-

- Creating a school ethos which, in every way possible, gives value to these aspects of development, especially by providing an overall atmosphere that is both caring and challenging and which provides opportunities for the development of personal responsibility.
- Promoting social and moral learning through the way in which disciplinary issues are handled.
- Ensuring that staff and adults within the school provide positive models for pupils.
- Arranging regular gatherings of the school as a community and using such occasions to encourage and reinforce the values on which the school is based.
- Enriching the curriculum in all appropriate areas with an emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Providing opportunities within the curriculum to advance personal and social development.
- Providing a programme of religious education in which consideration will be given to responses to basic questions relating to the meaning, value and purpose of human life.
- Providing a programme of moral education.
- Taking every appropriate opportunity to acknowledge, value and appreciate the various cultures and heritages of the pupils and to encourage them to appreciate and value the cultures and heritages of others.



Promoting positive behaviour

We wish to encourage a partnership with you to ensure the best possible standards of pupil behaviour. We take every opportunity to promote the successes of our pupils both within and outwith the school. Our school community thrives on learning of and celebrating each other's successes.

‘If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail.’
(Winston Churchill)

Our anti-bullying policy

Whilst many believe that children who bully must be punished for their behaviour, it is widely accepted that this type of response is often ineffective, possibly dangerous, breeds resentment and can make the situation worse.

Punishment can make a person resentful instead of reflective. Children who bully must be given the opportunity to hear about and face up to the pain, hurt, distress and anger they have caused to others. Punishment does not help to restore relationships and can result in further retaliation.

Whilst appropriate action will be taken by the school, it is also important that all parents involved work with the school to resolve the problems in the best interests of their child or young person.

Our school policy is available on the school website.

Mums and Dads welcome!

Children whose parents are actively involved and interested in their child's education invariably do best at school. Parents, therefore, are strongly encouraged to immerse themselves in the life of the school.



Opportunities for parental involvement in school include:

- Parent consultation evenings
- Parents' events group
- Parent Council
- Fundraising groups
- Working Groups
- James Gillespie's HS Trust
- Organising extra-curricular activities and
- Joining us on school excursions

Parental consultation

We offer opportunities for you to discuss your child's progress with teachers through arranged meetings. You will be advised when these meetings take place. Over and above these set meetings, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to ask for information or for an interview. Please see section two of this handbook for more details on home / school partnership.

The Parent Council

Parent Councils are the formal representative body for parents / carers with children attending school. Parent Councils are different in each school to enable them to meet the needs of parents / carers locally.

Parents are welcomed to be:

- involved with their child's education and learning;
- be active participants in the life of the school; and
- express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with their children's schools.

All parents / carers are automatically members of the Parent Forum at their child's school. As a member of the Parent Forum all parents can expect to –

- receive information about the school and its activities;
- hear about what partnership with parents means in our school;
- be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you;
- identify issues you want the parent council, to work on with the school;
- be asked your opinion by the parent council on issues relating to the school and the education



it provides;

- work in partnership with staff; and
- enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way possible.

The Parent Forum decides how their representatives on the Parent Council are chosen and how the Parent Council operates. Parents / carers are encouraged to volunteer or put themselves forward to be chosen as representatives of the Parent Council if they wish.

The main aims of the Parent Council are:

- To support the school in its work with pupils
- To represent the views of parents
- To promote contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
- To report to the Parent Forum
- To be involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.
- To raise funds for the school for the benefit of pupils (in some schools the PTA/PA fulfils this role).

Contact details for the school Parent Council are shown on the school website.

For more information on parental involvement or to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk.

The Parent Council is mainly responsible for arranging events for parents and raising funds for the school. Volunteers are welcome - please contact the Parent Council if you want to join in.

The Scottish Parent Teacher Council is the national organisation for PTAs and PAs in Scotland, Parent Councils can join too, and it runs an independent helpline service for all parents.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland has been set up to give Parent Councils and parents an opportunity to discuss and raise educational issues of mutual interest or concerns at a national level.

The Pupil Voice

James Gillespie's High School has an active Pupil Voice, led by 10 Sixth Year students, which meets weekly to discuss issues raised and find solutions as well as initiating fundraising and charity events. They in turn meet with a Deputy Head weekly to progress and communicate ideas and issues. Most recently, discussions have included:

- S6 common room and study areas
- Emotional and wellbeing issues
- Learning surveys



- Fund-raising initiatives
- Consultation about aspects of the new school
- Assembly presentations
- Fundraising to support Syrian refugees.



What we teach

Here we explain how education is planned and delivered in James Gillespie's High School, including the range of subjects and subject-areas your child will study. We introduce you to the new 'Curriculum for Excellence' and outline how pupils develop skills for learning, life and work, including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in and out of the classroom. Nor do we forget to talk about homework!

We also include details on sports and outdoor activities available to pupils and the range of facilities available within the school.

And we talk about the sensitive things: lessons, for instance about the facts of life, sexual health, relationships, parenthood, drugs and addiction awareness, religious education, religious observance and your rights as a parent.

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.

'Glow,' Scotland's unique, world-leading, online network supports learners and teachers and plans are already in place for parents across the country to have access to Glow. Ask the school about it and a user-name and password will be provided.

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 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 children to 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 and evolving ways of assessing progress and ensuring children achieve their potential. And there are now new qualifications for literacy and numeracy. Highers and Advanced Highers continually evolve 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's 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 citizens, building on Scotland's reputation for innovation and excellent education.

Curriculum rationale and structure

Broad General Education

The period of education from pre-school to the end of S3 (S2 in the case of Gillespie's) has the particular purpose of providing each young person in Scotland with a broad general education. All learners are entitled to experience a Broad General Education which will include all of the experiences and outcomes across all curriculum areas up to and including the third level, as far as this is consistent with their learning needs and prior achievements.

The curriculum at this stage of learning is structured around 8 Curricular Areas:

1. Expressive Arts
2. Health & Wellbeing
3. Languages (English & Modern Languages) & Literacy
4. Mathematics & Numeracy
5. Religious & Moral Education
6. Sciences
7. Social Studies
8. Technologies

S1 to S3 (Includes the Broad General Education)

The **S1 curriculum** offers a broad range of subjects covering all curricular areas.

Numbers shown are periods per week. (Approximately 1 hour in length)

S1

Subject area	Periods per week	Curricular Area
English	4	Languages and Literacy
Maths	4	Mathematics and Numeracy
Modern Languages	3	Languages and Literacy
History	1	Social Studies
Geography	1	Social Studies
Modern Studies	1	Social Studies



Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS)	1	Religious and Moral Education
Physical Education	2	Health and Wellbeing
Personal and Social Education (PSE)	1	Health and Wellbeing
Sciences	3	Sciences
Craft, Design and Technology (CDT)	1.5	Technologies
Information, Communication and Technology (ICT)	1	Technologies
Art and Design	1	Expressive Arts
Music	1	Expressive Arts
Drama/Media	1	Expressive Arts
Food and Health Technology (FHT)	1.5	Health and Wellbeing



Courses are planned around the Experiences and Outcomes and choice is introduced mainly through learning outcomes and sometimes within subject topics. Interdisciplinary learning takes place across subjects and through focus projects such as Museum Project, Health and Wellbeing (HWB) project, Gaelic Film, Sciences and Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS), and in the S1 outdoor residential experience. Literacy, Numeracy, and HWB increasingly permeate all subjects and are the responsibility of every teacher.

S2 Curriculum

In S2, learners continue with a broad subject base.

Subject area	Periods per week	Curricular Area
English	4	Languages and Literacy
Maths	4	Mathematics and Numeracy
Modern Languages	3	Languages and Literacy
History	1	Social Studies
Geography	1	Social Studies
Modern Studies	1	Social Studies
Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS)	1	Religious and Moral Education
Physical Education	2	Health and Wellbeing
Personal and Social Education (PSE)	1	Health and Wellbeing
Sciences	3	Sciences
Craft, Design and Technology (CDT)	1	Technologies
Computing Science	1	Technologies
Business Studies	1	Social Studies
Art and Design	1	Expressive Arts
Music	1	Expressive Arts
Drama/Media	1	Expressive Arts
Food and Health Technology (FHT)	1	Health and Wellbeing



It is expected that all learners will have covered the significant aspects of each subject by the end of S2. Teachers are expected to have covered the content-based, subject-specific Experiences and Outcomes in each subject at level 3 by the end of S2.

At this stage, some specialisation takes place and pupils choose subjects to take forward into S3. This allows them to pursue interests and personal preferences. All pupils are entitled to continue with the study of subjects from each curricular area and we strongly encourage pupils to choose from each of the 8 curricular areas. However, in order to cater for the needs of individuals, we do allow pupils to specialise further if everyone (pupil, parents and teachers) is agreed that this is the correct decision for this individual.

English, Maths, PE, RMPS, PSE, and a Modern Language are compulsory throughout S3 and S4 for all learners, unless a learner has specific needs which are best addressed by following an alternative route (e.g. Support for Learning to enhance Literacy, Numeracy and provision of vocational learning opportunities such as 'Skillforce'). In addition, learners select 5 other subjects.

S3 curriculum

In S3 and S4 learners specialise further according to choice and aspiration. Some subjects (Maths, English and a Language are compulsory).

Subject	Periods per Week
English	3 periods
Maths	3 periods
Modern Languages (One or more from French, German, Gaelic, Gaidhlig, Urdu, Mandarin and Spanish)	3 periods
Sciences (One or more from Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics)	3 periods
History	Curricular Choice areas (3 periods allocated to each)
Geography	
Modern Studies	
Psychology	
RMPS	
Design and Manufacture	
Graphic Communication	
Practical Woodworking	
Business Management	
Art	



Music	Availability may vary from year to year
Drama	
Physical Education (PE)	
Skillforce	
Food and Health Technology (FHT)	
Computing Science	
RMPS	1 period
Physical Education (Core)	2 periods
Personal and Social Education (PSE)	1 period

In S3, programmes of work are planned around the Experiences and Outcomes of level 4, with some pupils consolidating work at level 3 and most pupils stretching into work at National 4 and 5 levels. Work which will form useful preparation in terms of content, skills and methods of assessment for the Nationals is undertaken as part of level 4 and National 5 level work. Where appropriate pupils undertake assessments for the National qualifications during S3.

Learner Reviews

In February/March of S3, there is a learners' review at which stage a planning discussion will be held involving parents and pupils for those young people for whom 8 subjects is deemed to be inappropriate.

Senior Phase (S4, 5 and 6)

All young people in Scotland have an entitlement to a senior phase of education which:

- Provides specialisation, depth and rigour
- Prepares them for achieving qualifications to the highest level of which they are capable
- Continues to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- Continues to provide a range of activities which develop the four capacities (Confident individuals, Successful Learners, Responsible citizens and Effective Contributors).
- Supports them to achieve a positive and sustained destination

In planning our Senior Phase we also take account of our context as a very high attaining and achieving school. Attainment levels are consistently well above national and city averages at every stage and the stay-on rate post 16 is very high, with around three quarters of our S1 intake going on to study in Further and Higher Education. It is essential that we continue to support these high aspirations.



In summary, in S4, pupils may take

- 8 courses at SCQF(*) 3, 4 or 5;
- 5, 6 or 7 courses at these levels with additional vocationally orientated options.
(* *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)*)

We shall always endeavour to provide a learning experience suited to the needs of individual learners. The range of subjects on offer will be influenced by the choices our pupils make and the resources available to us.

During S4, pupils are encouraged to undertake a week of work experience at a location of their choice. Guidance staff will advise and support pupils through this process. S5 and S6 pupils may augment their studies by undertaking a longer work experience placement.

The range of courses on offer to pupils in the Senior Phase has recently been extended to include:

- Community Sports Leadership Award (CSLA)
- Jobs and Enterprise Training (Jet)
- 'Steps to Work' training
- Personal Finance
- Psychology
- Hospitality
- Skillforce and
- College options

In addition, we also share some classes with other secondary schools in Edinburgh.

At the end of S4 pupils will select 5 courses for S5. At this stage they will be able to choose courses up to and including courses at SCQF level 6 (Higher). In S5, we expect all learners to have a full timetable.

As pupils move into S6, a further review of learning takes place in order to consider pathways which will support them into a positive post school destination. In S6, pupils may choose to have between 3 and 5 courses. S6 pupils are expected to become involved in a combination of both community and leadership projects. Each year a group of staff and 70-100 students and parents from JGHS visits South Africa. Whilst there they work with a number of pupils from a variety of different schools.

Throughout the year many S6 students also engage in fund raising and peer support activities for younger pupils.

National Assessments

From May 2014 new 'Curriculum for Excellence' assessments for National 3, National 4 (replacing General and Intermediate 1) and National 5 (replacing Credit and Intermediate 2) were launched. At the end of S4, pupils will be assessed in up to 8 subjects. It is anticipated that the vast majority of JGHS pupils will be presented for National 5 which leads directly to Highers (National 6) in S5.



Assessment at Nationals 3 and 4 are internally assessed, whilst assessments at National 5 are external and are taken as examinations in May and June in the latter stages of S4. (Further details of the revised Curriculum Assessments can be found on the SQA website).

The Whole Curriculum

In addition to the formal curriculum outlined above, the value of other educational experiences is recognised. Provision in JGHS seeks to address the four contexts of learning.

1 Curriculum areas, subjects and courses

The formal curriculum described above.

2 The Ethos and life of the school as a community

Learners are expected to contribute to the school community at every stage of their schooling.

Shared school values are communicated and promoted through Assemblies, through Personal and Social Education programmes and especially how we all go about our daily business. Learners are encouraged to contribute to the life and work of the school community by participating in the pupil councils, committees, volunteering as Prefects, Befrienders or South Africa charity work. Charity fundraisers usually involve the whole school and are organised by S6 students supported by identified staff and the student run charity group BENE. Clubs such as Eco schools help to promote social responsibility and many pupils participate in clubs and activities. Senior students support events such as parents' evenings and represent the school in a variety of ways over the course of the year. Some pupils take on official responsibilities such as Sports ambassadors, Sports captains, Heads of committees and Heads of Student Council.

3 Interdisciplinary Learning

Interdisciplinary learning approaches are used to connect learning across subject areas and relate this to school and wider social contexts. A range of Interdisciplinary projects exist from S1 to S3.

S1 S1 have a health unit involving PE, Food Technology, Sciences and Maths, and ICT. There is also a combined Scots unit between English and Drama. In S1 there is also a combined Geography and Chemistry project around the Motherwell chemical spill. Science and RMPS have developed a successful link where both work on the science and ethics of cloning. There are also interdisciplinary learning activities between ICT and Sciences and between ICT and Geography.

S2 In S2 there is Gaelic and Media interdisciplinary collaboration where a Gaelic film is written and produced which has led to some fantastic outcomes and awards. Media is also involved with English in the writing of and producing of plays. A further media unit between music and media sees music being composed by classes for trailers they are writing in Media. Similar collaboration is being planned with History. A further collaboration exists between English and Art for a Museum project where all S2 young people study various artists in Art and then write linked poetry. This has led to some excellent creativity.

S3 pupils in Music and Modern Languages and Modern Studies combine to create a rap around the theme of Plight of the child soldier. This is followed by a performance.



Currently there are plans to develop a citizenship project around outside speakers and involving several departments.

4 Opportunities for Personal Achievement

Throughout the year, we offer a wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities and clubs, including 30 sport clubs over 20 different teams, several concerts with bands and orchestra, a pipe band and choirs. There are many creative opportunities in film, music and drama and debating and a fantastic Diversecity Show. We have an active Duke of Edinburgh Programme which begins in S3 with Bronze and continues through to S6 where students may achieve Gold. There are many trips and residential excursions at home and abroad, as well as participation in competitions and other challenges. Our senior pupils participate in the John Byrne award and Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) in support of local charities. Leadership and enterprise is encouraged throughout the school. There are many opportunities to perform and represent the school in a variety of contexts at every stage and our young people are encouraged to become involved in the rich opportunities the school offers.

We work with a variety of partner agencies to broaden and enrich the activities and experiences on offer to pupils.

Learning and Teaching

The curriculum can only be successful if it is delivered through excellent learning and teaching and this is at the heart of our curriculum. Staff in JGHS are constantly evaluating the learning experience which is provided in order to improve it and incorporate new and innovative ways of engaging and supporting learners. A wide range of teaching strategies are employed in lessons: assessment for learning techniques, direct teaching, peer work, group work, individual work, use of text, practical work, use of ICT, taking learning out of the classroom and bringing experts into the classroom, all of which are designed to actively engage pupils in their own learning. Observation, Learning communities, survey, data and feedback are all considered in improving the learning experiences and staff readily engage with continuous professional development in order to enhance their practices. Resources are regularly reviewed and enhanced as opportunities permit and circumstances evolve.

The Future

Our curriculum is under constant review and we are always keen to learn from evolving best practice. Our longer term plan may involve diversifying routes into the Senior Phase to allow pupils to choose courses at different levels and with different time allocations (full width and half width columns). However, this will involve significant changes to courses and to our school day.

Staff, pupils and parents will be consulted throughout the next few sessions and changes will be made that build on and enhance current provision.

Please contact the Head Teacher if you would like any further information about the curriculum within our school.



Active Learning

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises the value of an active learning approach. In the early years, children will have a range of learning experiences that include planned and purposeful play and stimulating learning which engages and challenges children's thinking using real life and imaginary situations. As children progress through school they continue to be involved in active learning experiences which are engaging and give them ownership of their own learning.

Planning children's and young People's Learning

Teachers recognise that young people learn best when they are engaged, enthusiastic and interested in what they learn and this is greatly enhanced if they have choice: Choice in what they learn, how they will learn and how they will demonstrate their learning. To that end pupils decide to learn a skill through a choice of topics; they may choose to research a subject through internet, library materials, interviews etc.; they may present their learning through essays, group presentation, talks, power points and mind map exercises. Students are involved at all stages and subjects in planning long and short term work and projects and are encouraged to evaluate their own and peer work and give regular feedback on their learning through focus groups and questionnaires .

Parents are given regular tracking reports and there is a calendar of parents' nights to share individual progress and parents' evenings at key transition points to discuss information about staying on at school, going to college and university, work experience and volunteering. Parents are consulted on a range of matters throughout the session. This is done through a variety of means, including newsletters, questionnaires, text links to web based documents and discussion at the parents' Council.

Teachers in nursery, primary and secondary schools share their learning intentions with pupils, parents and carers. This takes place on a day-to-day basis, by agreeing the aims of an individual piece of work.

Longer-term planning also takes place in a variety of forms.

Homework

Pupils are regularly given homework to support their learning and to encourage them to become more organised, independent and reflective in their learning. Homework tasks will be given where a teacher feels a particular child or group of children may benefit from it.

The home study will be organised according to the stage and ability of the child, it can arise from all curricular areas, and it may include reading, written, oral, research or practical activities. The tasks set are intended to be interesting, worthwhile and challenging for the child and will focus on skills as well as knowledge.

Parents are encouraged to help pupils with their homework as a means of keeping them up to date with the work of the class and the child's progress and to promote partnership between the school and parents. Homework provides an opportunity to consolidate what has been learned in class, and



makes you aware of what your child is learning and provides you with a useful discussion starter and it's a vital part of your child's education.

We issue every pupil in S1-S3 each session, with a Pupil Planner – in which they are to note and organise their homework and every aspect of school life, and they are expected to spend the following **minimum** time on the subjects listed for each school day. Homework is not set for years one to three during holidays.

First Year/Second Year – one hour

Third Year/Fourth Year – one and a half hours

Fifth Year/Sixth Year – two hours

If homework is not set, pupils are expected to reflect on their day's learning, to revise and read their subjects as timetabled.

Homework is essential to the education of every pupil. Parents are informed if set homework is persistently neglected. From Second Year onwards pupils following certificate courses must be prepared to study regularly and conscientiously throughout the course. Higher and Advanced Higher Level courses are especially demanding and success requires considerable effort.

Religious and Moral Education – and religious observance

Religious and Moral Education classes are **non-denominational** and study a wide range of world religions and personal beliefs. In later years our pupils have an opportunity to discuss topical subjects such as racism or multi-cultural issues. Classes are compulsory but parents do have a statutory right to withdraw their child and should write to the Head Teacher giving their reason.

From the autumn of 2014 a varied 'Time for Reflection' programme, in line with statutory obligations and the context of the school, was introduced. We all, through life, will attend weddings, funerals and memorial services, and learning how to conduct oneself on such occasions is a useful part of a child's education.

Nevertheless parents – again - have a right in law to withdraw their child from such events. You should contact the Head Teacher, in writing, and alternative arrangements will be made for your child. In such circumstances students may be told to join another class or to undertake private study.

Legally, at the age of sixteen parents cease to give direction; instead they offer guidance to their children. This means that the rights and responsibilities transfer to the pupil.



Extra-Curricular activities

There is a range of extracurricular activities available for pupils during lunchtime and after school. Parents will be informed about these by the school. In addition to in-school activities, classes also make varied and regular educational visits and field studies. These visits are linked to pupils' class work.

For more information see <http://www.jghs.edin.sch.uk/ExtraCurric.html>.

An 'Active School'

Child obesity is a growing concern in Scotland. The fundamental aim of the 'Active Schools' programme is to give school-aged children the tools, motivation and the opportunities to be more physically active throughout their school years and into adulthood. These opportunities are available before, during and after school, as well as in the wider community. For further information contact the Active Schools Coordinator by phoning or emailing the school.

Assessment

As pupils progress through our school, teachers use a range of assessment strategies, including Assessment for Learning strategies as well as setting tests. Pupils are also involved in assessing their own progress and developing their next steps.

We recognise that all pupils do not develop and progress at the same rate and, therefore, we use both group and individual methods to ensure that all pupils are given appropriate instruction and the opportunity to succeed. Please contact the school as soon as possible if you have any concerns about your child's progress.

Pupil Profile

S3 students will all complete pupil profiles where they capture all their achievements and attainment in all areas from S1 to S3. This will help them to take pride in their achievements and self-evaluate their progress.

Pastoral Care

This section gives information about how pupils' additional support needs will be identified and addressed and the types of specialist services provided within our school. We have two dedicated departments: Support for Learning – to help children with particular educational needs; and Support for Pupils, broadly similar to the 'Guidance' system of old, but much better.



Getting It Right for Every Child

Taking care of our children helps us ensure they live the best and happiest lives. It gives them the potential to grow up ready to succeed and play their part in society.

At James Gillespie's we follow the *Getting It Right For Every Child in Edinburgh* guidelines to give the right help to children, young people and families, when they need it from a joined up multi agency team.

Getting It Right For Every Child aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It promotes a shared approach that:

- builds solutions with and around children and families
- enables children to get the help they need when they need it
- supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice
- involves working together to make things better

Getting It Right For Every Child is the foundation for work with all children and young people, including adult services where parents are involved. It builds on universal health and education services, and is embedded in the developing early years and youth frameworks. Developments in the universal services of health and education, such as Better Health Better Care and Curriculum for Excellence, are identifying what needs to be done in those particular areas to improve outcomes for children.

Protecting children and young people

We place a high priority on the well-being and safety of our pupils. To this end we have in place a personal safety programme to give pupils knowledge and life skills to keep them safe from all form of abuse. **Where we suspect that a child may have been abused, we must follow Edinburgh and the Lothian's Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures. These set out the specific duties and responsibilities towards the child and their parents/carers.**

Support for Learning

Support for Learning is the modern and highly skilled system in Scotland for helping school pupils with special needs. It should be stressed that many such students are of high intelligence, but may feel burdened by such conditions as dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD/HAD and Asperger's Syndrome. We besides help children with known learning difficulties or, as necessary, where education has been greatly disrupted by illness or family trauma

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 Edinburgh Council website at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/InOnTheAct



Our trained staff

Rob Cockcroft – Support for Learning Leader
Ann Campbell – Support for Learning Teacher
Leesa Fallon – Support for Learning Teacher
Robin Andrews – Support for Learning Teacher
Jude Balfour – Pupil Support Assistant
Sybil Gray - Pupil Support Assistant
Amanda Killen - Pupil Support Assistant
Eloise Johnston - Pupil Support Assistant
Gillian Lee - Pupil Support Assistant
Fiona Oatman - Pupil Support Assistant
Karen Robinson - Pupil Support Assistant
Frances Thomas - Pupil Support Assistant

We all agree children deserve education of the highest quality and, at James Gillespie's High School, we firmly – and effectively include all pupils in the full life of the school. However, some pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN) will need extra support to help them with the curriculum and get the most out of their time here. The Support for Learning department helps all such pupils, their teachers and parents by

- working closely with our associated primary schools to ensure the smooth transition of pupils with ASN to the High School
- gathering up to date information and strategies about pupils with ASN which are shared with all staff through the “rainbow folders” and the “On The Button” computer system
- running tutorial classes for pupils with more significant needs to support them with their studies
- running catch-up reading classes in S1 and S2 for pupils with weak literacy skills
- organising the Paired Reading programme in S1 to encourage reading for pupils with weaker literacy skills
- co-ordinating the team of Pupil Support Assistants to ensure pupils with ASN are supported effectively in class
- working cooperatively in classes and in consultation with subject teachers to help make the curriculum accessible for all pupils
- running the Break and Lunchtime Club to support vulnerable pupils at these times
- administering the SQA special exam arrangements for those with specific learning difficulties
- working with parents, pupils, external agencies and teachers to write and update Additional Support Plans (ASPs) and Individual Educational Plans (IEP)
- running the “Nurture Group” to support vulnerable pupils in S1 and S2
- working with colleges, universities and employers to support transition from school to further education or employment.

Parents who have any concerns or questions about a vulnerable child's learning are encouraged to



contact Mr Rob Cockcroft, the Support for Learning Leader.

We work with other agencies and professionals – for example, Social Work Services, Educational Psychology Service, National Health Service and you the parent to make decisions with regards to the best possible education to meet the needs of your child within the resources available.

Parents, carers and children with additional support needs can also find independent advice and support through:

- Enquire: www.enquire.org.uk, 0845 123 2303
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, www.siaa.org.uk, 0131 260 5380
- Take Note: National Advocacy Service for Additional Support Needs (Barnados in association with the Scottish Child Law Centre) www.sclc.org.uk, 0131 667 6633.

Support for Pupils

Once, rather patronisingly, called 'Guidance,' and decades ago too often provided by staff without special training, Pupil Support now serves all our students and is there for counsel, encouragement, advice and help in any aspect of their lives.

The Pupil Support structure consists of our five Key Adult Communities – and the Support for Pupils Teacher for your son/daughter can be identified from their Key Adult Community as follows:

Community	Staff	E-mail
Lauder	Ms. McQuade & Ms. Kerr	Leanne.McQuade@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk Elisa.Kerr@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk
Roslin	Mr. McPhail	Bryan.McPhail@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk
Spylaw	Mr. Shankland	Robert.Shankland@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk
Thirlestane	Ms. Pearce & Mr. Sievwright	Cait.Pearce@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk Richard.Sievwright@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk
Warrender	Ms. Graham	Nikki.Graham@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk ; Lisa.Wood@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk

Our Pupil Support Department works hard

- to ensure that each pupil knows and is known personally and in some depth by a least one member of staff.
- to help the pupil be aware of his/her own development and to accept responsibility for it.
- to identify and respond quickly to the specific needs of the individual.
- to foster the development of good relations between teachers and pupils.



- to work well with the home in all aspects of pupil development.
- to liaise with support and welfare services
- to systematise and make effective the recording and communication of information relevant to the welfare of individual pupils.

We have a responsibility to provide each pupil with personal, curricular and vocational guidance and to look after their progress and welfare. But, as part of a wider school, we believe all teachers at Gillespie's have a major role to play in the support and personal development of pupils.

Pupil Support staff aim to ensure that each pupil is known well by his/her Pupil Support Leader and feels secure and safe in James Gillespie's High School. The relationship starts during the transition from Primary and Secondary school and is fostered by individual interviews, the teaching of Personal and Social Education and regular visits to register classes.

The Pupil Support Leader is someone for whom the pupil can turn when in need of personal, social or curricular support and is an important link between home and school for parents.

We have two specific-teaching roles: Personal and Social Education (PSE) classes, and careers advice/work experience co-ordination.

Personal and Social Education

Personal and Social Education is a fundamental aspect of the education of the whole child. It is essentially concerned with the development of life skills. All aspects of a child's experience at home in school and out with school contribute to personal and social development. Pupil Support staff are seen as crucial to the delivery of the PSE Programme. They take all their classes for PSE although other specialist teachers are also involved.

Curricular and Vocational Pupil Support

Careers advice and work experience are well managed and co-ordinated. The importance of transition points P7-S1, S2-S3, S4-S5 is understood and procedures are clear, processes sensitive. One to one interviews and progress monitoring are essential tools and good communication with staff is seen as essential.

Pupil Support Leaders work closely with our Careers Advisor from Skills Development Scotland to ensure students receive up to date information and advice. Our service level agreement is regularly revised to be responsive to school and individual needs.

Monitoring progress and attainment

The monitoring of student progress and attainment is a whole-school responsibility. Review and assessment arrangements are used where appropriate within subjects, in mentoring, and in PSE. The Pupil Support Department is responsible for this and we use one-on-one interviews, cause for concern enquiries, daily achievement sheets, target-setting etc.

Where are we?

There are Pupil Support Bases located in Bruntfield House.



How can you get hold of us?

There are post boxes available for your child to leave a message if staff are teaching or in meetings.

If you have a particular worry about your child, please make an appointment to see his or her Pupil Support Leader. We can be contacted by telephone (0131 447 1900) or through the e-mail links above. You should receive a response within three working days. Some queries will take longer to be investigated/resolved but you will be told quickly if this is the case.

The Pupil Support Department strives for excellence in our work across the school. We would welcome your thoughts and suggestions for improvements on any matter relating to our policies, procedures and general roles.

Sensitive subjects... and parents' rights

Personal and Social Education will include age-appropriate classes on, for instance, drugs and alcohol awareness, sex education and relationships. Most parents are happy to let their child take part in the school's programmes. However, in some exceptional circumstances a parent may take the view that this is an aspect of their child's education that they prefer to deal with only at home.

Any parent considering withdrawing their child must first contact the school. Both the parent and the school must take into account the child's views given the child's statutory right to education. The right to withdraw a child applies only to specific programmes of sex education. It is not possible to withdraw a child from lessons across the curriculum, as this would prevent a child receiving an adequate and efficient education.

Legally, at the age of 16 parents cease to give direction; instead they offer guidance to their children. This means that the rights and responsibilities transfer to the pupil.

Edinburgh City Council regulations for school admission or transfer

This section also gives information about transition. There are also details about making a placing request to another school.

The extended Pupil Support Team at James Gillespie's High School start work almost a year before your child starts at high school to ensure a smooth transition. This team comprises staff from Support for Learning and Support for Pupils, a Pupil Support Assistant and a Depute Head Teacher with overall responsibility for the process.

In September we hold a P7 Open Event to which all pupils in catchment are invited. In December we begin to organise transition meetings for pupils with additional support needs. Pupils are then



identified by our primary colleagues who may benefit from additional support offered by the Transition Support Group, which runs for a small number of pupils in the last term of primary. This group is run by members of our Pupil Support Team and colleagues from Canongate Youth Project. During the next term Pupil Support Leaders visit primary schools to discuss pastoral information.

If you have any questions regarding the process please contact Mr. Ian Porter, Depute Head Teacher, in the first instance.

Placing Requests

As a parent, you have the right to make a Placing Request for your child(ren) to be educated in a school other than the local school.

If you would prefer that your child start P1 or S1 at another school instead of one of the catchment schools, you have to make a placing request. You can apply on line from mid November. This should be done by 24 December. If you apply for a place after 28 February there is no guarantee that a catchment place will be available.

All parents have the right to make a request for a place for their child in another school. The Council must grant these requests where possible. When there are more places available in a school than there are placing requests for that school, and then all the requests are usually granted. If the school you specify has more requests than available places, then each case is examined individually. Whatever you write on your application form is taken into account, so it is important that you include relevant details on the form.

You should also note that a successful Placing Request for one child does not guarantee a successful one for another child. It may be, therefore, that a parent could end up with children at different schools.

All children must also be enrolled at the catchment area school on the appropriate Enrolment Form whilst awaiting the outcome of their Placing Request Application.

Transport for Placing Requests

If a Placing Request is successful, parents will be responsible for the safety and transportation costs of their child to and from their chosen school.



Section Five – School Improvement

The section gives you an overview of the main achievements of the school within the last 12 months and performance information relating to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Raising Attainment

Monitoring performance and using the resulting information to secure improvement is an important part of the work of Head Teachers, school staff and officers within Children and Families.

Standards and Quality Report

Every year each school publishes a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school's major achievements.

The latest version can be accessed on the school's website and is updated by 30 September in each session.

School Improvement Plan

The latest version can be accessed on the school's website and is updated by 1 September in each session.

Transferring Educational Data about Pupils

The Scottish Government – Education and Training has asked that the undernoted advice be included in our school brochures.

Education authorities and the Scottish Government collected data about pupils on paper forms for many years. We now work together with schools to transfer data electronically through the ScotXed programme. Thus the Scottish Government has two functions: acting as a 'hub' for supporting data exchange within the education system in Scotland and the analysis of data for statistical purposes within the Scottish Government itself.

What pupil data are collected and transferred?

Data on each pupil is collected by schools, local authorities and the Scottish Government.

The data collected and transferred covers areas such as date of birth, Scottish Candidate Number (SCN), postcode, registration for free-school meals, whether a pupil is looked after by his/her local authority, additional support needs including disability and English as an Additional Language (EAL), and attendance, absence and exclusions from school. The SCN acts as the unique pupil identifier. Pupil names and addresses are not passed to the Scottish Government. Your postcode is the only part of your address that is transferred for statistical purposes, and postcodes are grouped to identify



'localities' rather than specific addresses. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be published by the Scottish Government.

Providing national identity and ethnic background data is entirely voluntary. You can choose the 'not disclosed' option if you do not want to provide this data. However, we hope that the explanations contained in this message and on the ScotXed website will help you understand the importance of providing the data.

Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, the Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better.

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This message can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of the use of pupil data can be found on the ScotXed website (www.scotxed.net).

The Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, we will make individual data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, we will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of the Scottish Government, which will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with colleagues within and outwith the Scottish Government.

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Senior Statistician, scotxed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 1B, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, braille and large print.

Websites

You may find the following links useful.

- www.edinburgh.gov.uk- contains information for parents and information on Edinburgh schools.
- <http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk>- parents can find out about everything from school term dates to exam results. This site also offers information for pre-5 and post school. It also lists relevant publications for parents and provides hyper-links to other useful organisations.
- www.hmie.gov.uk - parents can access school and local authority inspection reports and find out more about the work of Education Scotland.
- <http://www.scottishschoolsonline.gov.uk> - parents can find out about individual schools. They can choose a school and select what type of information they need such as Education Scotland reports, exam results, stay on rates and free school meal entitlement.
- <http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx> - contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying.
- <http://www.respectme.org.uk/> - Scotland's anti-bullying service. Contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying
- <http://www.educationscotland.org.uk/> - provides information and advice for parents as well as support and resources for education in Scotland
- <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/> - contains information for everyone on equality laws within the government and local authorities.

Glossary

CFE - Curriculum for Excellence

ASN – Additional Support Needs

EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance

ASL – Additional Support for Learning

SQA – Scottish Qualifications Authority

FOI – Freedom of Information

HT/PT – Head Teacher/Principal Teacher

CLD – Community Learning and Development

GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child



Parent feedback

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the questionnaire on this page. Your feedback will help us improve the hand book next year.

Tell us what you think

Your feedback will help us to improve our handbook.

Did you find

Please tick

- | | | |
|---|-------------|------------|
| 1. the handbook useful? | ?Yes | ?No |
| 2. the information you expected? | ?Yes | ?No |
| 3. the handbook easy to use? | ?Yes | ?No |

Please tell us how we can improve the handbook next year.

Name of school: James Gillespie's High School

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire. Your views are appreciated. Please return this questionnaire to:

The Head Teacher, James Gillespie's High School, Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh, EH9 1DD.

Throughout this handbook the term 'parent' has the meaning attributed in the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. This includes grandparents, carer or anyone else who has parental responsibility for the child.

I hope you find all of the above information helpful and self-explanatory. If you have any queries about any of the information contained in this handbook, or indeed about any aspect of our school, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Donald J. Macdonald
Head Teacher



Edinburgh City Council

Children and Families Vision

Our vision is for all children and young people in Edinburgh to enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential.

We believe that children and young people do best when:

- they are able to live safely and happily within their own families with the right kind of support as needed
- they attend first class, inclusive schools and early years settings which meet their needs

We will do all we can to strengthen support for families, schools and communities to meet their children's needs.

Our mission is to place children, young people and families at the heart of our service and provide support when it is needed throughout childhood and the transition to adulthood.

The information in this school handbook is considered to be correct at the time of publication (November 2017), however, it is possible that there may be some inaccuracy by the start of the school term in August 2018.