



Head Teacher: Barry Graham

13th February 2014

Changes to the Curriculum – Current S4 and S5

Dear parent/guardian

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

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

Although there are no major changes to the curriculum for pupils currently in S4 or S5, for information I have provided an overview of the number of courses which pupils will study in the table below:

YEAR GROUP	CfE COURSE	OPTION CHOICE
S4	5 COURSES	Option choice after S4 prelim exams
S5	5 COURSES Free choice + Elective	Option choice after S5 prelim exams
S6	4 or 5 COURSES Free choice + Elective + Skills	

Further details

Electives

Electives are optional courses which will run for 2 periods per week.

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

Skills

Skills classes are going to start in session 2015/16 and will meet 1 period per week and look at Skills for Life, Learning and Work, incorporating leadership and employability.



Wallace Hall Academy

Working together to achieve more

Thornhill, Dumfriesshire DG3 5D5

Telephone: 01848 332120

Fax: 01848 332564

e-mail: woffice358@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

website: wallacehall.co.uk

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S5 – Pupils will study five subjects, which could be at National 4, National 5 or Higher level. There will also be a choice of vocational courses, college link programmes and HNC courses on offer. Some pupils will be continuing into the 2nd year of 2 year higher courses. A wide range of 1 year higher courses will also be available. At the end of S5 pupils will choose options for S6.

S6 – Pupils can choose up to five courses to study. These will be at Advanced Higher level, Higher level, National 5, National 4 or HNC level. There will also be the option to study Open University modules or Scottish Baccalaureate awards as well as any of the vocational courses offered in S5. Some pupils will be continuing into the 2nd year of 2 year higher courses. A wide range of 1 year higher courses will also be available. Pupils will also choose an S6 Committee which they will join for the duration of S6. These committees include Charity, Social, Year Book, Young Enterprise and Publicity.

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

Other changes

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

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

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

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

Cairn – Mr John Blair
Scaur – Mrs Yvonne Gall
Nith – Mrs Lesley Wilson

Yours sincerely

John Blair
Depute Head Teacher



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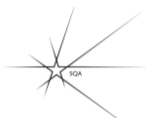
e-mail: woffice358@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

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The Scottish Education Awards – Enterprise & Employability 2011
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