



Wallace Hall 2-18, Station Road, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, DG3 5DS

Tel: 01848 332120 (Main Office)/Tel: 01848 332140 (Primary Office)

Email: gw08officewallace@ea.dumgal.sch.uk (Academy)

Email: gw08officewallacehal@ea.dumgal.sch.uk (Primary)

Website: www.wallacehall.co.uk Facebook: Wallace Hall Academy, Primary and ELC

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WallaceHallSch> Instagram (WHA only): wallacehallsch



Wallace Hall Academy, Primary and ELC

"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

Head Teacher: Barry Graham

September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to welcome everybody back after the summer break and hope the holidays were enjoyable. Although there is no more official testing for Covid, the virus is still with us and we need to be vigilant. Therefore, if your child(ren) show any signs of a respiratory infection, please treat this like any other illness and they should stay at home until they feel well enough to return to school. I am hoping that this will be a much more normal year but this is not certain.

A special welcome to our new S1 pupils and all new pupils that have joined in other year groups and I hope they have enjoyed their first couple of weeks at Wallace Hall Academy. We look forward to working with you and your family over the coming years.

How we communicate

This year again we have taken the generic information out of this letter and the other termly letters and transferred the information into a booklet which you can keep for the year. This will be sent out separately. We hope that this will be an easy reference guide for you and that you will find it useful. The termly letters from now on will only refer to subjects relevant to that term.

Could we please ask, as part of our Safeguarding Procedures, if your child/children are leaving for an appointment, that you inform the school office by telephone or email.

We wrote to parents at the beginning of term about the expanded use of Satchel One to communicate information about pupil achievements, behaviour, homework tasks and assessments. If you require any further information or support with this, please contact the School Office.

Staffing

A number of staff have retired in the last few months. This includes Sarah Dalglish, Margaret Davies, Carol Graham, Diane Jarvie and Caroline Menzies. We would like to thank all of these staff for the time and effort they have put in at Wallace Hall Academy and we wish them well in their retirements.

We would also like to welcome the following new staff to Wallace Hall Academy, Sharon Gibson, Rebecca Haugen, Anna Kane, Georgia Marshall, Debbie Milligan and Megan Murray.

SQA Results

As Head Teacher, I was very pleased with another set of excellent SQA exam results for the pupils from Wallace Hall Academy. The hard work shown by pupils, teachers and support staff along with the encouragement and support from our parents and carers led to a wide range of achievements for our pupils. I have provided a summary of the SQA exam results in the tables below for your information.

Winner of

Silver Rights Respecting Schools Awareness Award 2023

D&G Rural Award Smarter Scotland

The SQA Star Award

Lantra School Project Award – 2013/2018/2020/2022

Scottish Education Award – Enterprise and Employability

World Teamwork Award Winners – World Robotics Festival

First Lego League Robotics Scottish/UK & Ireland Champions

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S4 – type of Qualification	2024 S4 Results for WHA	2024 S4 Results for D&G
2 or more National 5s	86%	68%
4 or more National 5s	60%	47%
6 or more National 5s	48%	29%

S5 – Type of Qualification	2024 S5 Results for WHA	2024 S5 Results for D&G
1 or more Highers	77%	53%
3 or more Highers	62%	32%
5 or more Highers	30%	14%

S6 – Type of Qualifications	2024 S6 Results for WHA	2024 S6 Results for D&G
1 or more Advanced Highers	31%	16%
2 or more Advanced Highers	18%	5%
5 or more Highers during S5 & S6	39%	24%

Parent Council

Our next Parent Council meeting of this academic session will be on Monday, 16th September at 7.00pm in the Academy Library. The Parent Council are always looking for new members, if you are interested in becoming a part of the Parent Council or any of our Sub-Committees, then the AGM is the perfect time to join us. To register your attendance and to receive the Agenda and any other relevant documents for this and subsequent meetings please email wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com. Further information and future meeting dates will be circulated to parents/carers as soon as they become available.

All parents/carers are welcome to participate in the meetings and more information including agendas, previous minutes and our Information Booklet can be found on the school website: www.wallacehall.co.uk. If you would like to contact the Chair of the Parent Council, please email: wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com.

S4-S6 Options

All pupil course options are now finalised. It is essential that every pupil attends all their classes and catches up on any work they may have missed due to course changes. To help in this process, staff will be doing a final check to ensure pupils are entered at the appropriate level following their examination results. It is now expected that all pupils will complete any course they have started and that they will not be requesting changes.

Annual Data Checks

The annual data check forms have been issued to pupils during their Health and Wellbeing classes. Please can you complete and return this form as soon as possible to the school office to allow any changes to be made to our database. It is important that details such as parental contact information and medical conditions are kept up to date. Also in the envelope is a local trip/sporting fixture permission form and for some, a request for photo permissions and parental email if we do not already have these details.

University Open Days

Over the coming months some of our senior students will be applying to study courses at university. With many higher education establishments to choose from, we encourage our young people to explore their options by attending university open days. You can find links to many of the Scottish university webpages from the Pupil Area on the Wallace Hall Academy website and within the Career and Future Planning Team which was created for senior pupils. These web pages display pertinent information on open days. Further information regarding universities and open days can be found on www.ucas.ac.uk and www.opendays.com.

School Photographer

The school photographer will be in Wallace Hall for over various dates in Term 2 details of which are listed below, photographs will be taken are as follows;

Primary Individual and Family	Tuesday 12 th November
Secondary Pupils with Primary Siblings	Tuesday 12 th November
Secondary Individual and Family	Thursday 28 th November
Catch-up Session (All Stages)	Thursday 5 th December

School Clubs and Extra Curricular Activities

School clubs and extra-curricular activities play a very important part in providing opportunities for achievement for our youngsters and we encourage pupils to take part in these. This session we are aiming to offer as many activities as possible and an updated programme will be available to all our young people and families in September. Our extra-curricular programme provides excellent opportunities for our learners, improving both their mental and physical health.

Wallace Hall Electives Programme

Every week S3 pupils and every two weeks S5 and S6 pupils take part in an Elective period. Elective periods are designed to give our pupils some wider experiences outside their usual timetabled classes. Pupils find our Electives really rewarding and they develop a number of new transferrable skills that will benefit them in the future. This year our Electives are as follows:

S3 Electives are: Cake Craft, Duke of Edinburgh, Fitness & Performance Development and PC Passport;

S5 Electives are: Rights Respecting Schools, Equalities, Eco-Committee, School Show Production and Web Design;

S6 Electives are Charities Committee, Eco-Committee, Library Committee, Pupil Support, Social Committee, Yearbook Committee and Web Design.

HPV and other Vaccines

We are still receiving guidance on this year's vaccination programme which will include S3 teenage boosters, seasonal flu, S6 catch-ups and S1-S6 MMR. We will send information home when this programme has been finalised.

The School Improvement Plan

Our School Improvement Plan (SIP) sets out our strategic priorities for the year ahead. I have attached an overview of our SIP for your information – please see Appendix A.

Health and Wellbeing Update August

We have made some exciting changes to the way in which HWB is delivered this year. Each term, pupils will cover four HWB topics, spending two lessons on each topic. Teachers have been assigned to a topic per term and will deliver the two lessons to every class within the year group. This will mean that, once a topic has been covered, pupils will move onto a new topic, and a different teacher will attend the class to deliver this. We are piloting this model as we believe that it will have a positive impact on learning and teaching.

S1 - Healthy Lifestyles, Positive Relationships, Rights Respecting Schools, Organisation

S2 - Puberty, My World of Work, Respecting Diversity, Rights Respecting Schools

S3 - Growth Mind-set, Employability Unit 1, Alcohol, Consent and Pornography

S4 - My Positive Self, Employability Unit 2, LGBT Equality, Global Citizenship

S5 - Mental Health, Alcohol, Consent and Sexual Violence

S6 - UCAS/College Applications, HWB Ambassador training, HWB lesson delivery

Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme

Our Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme is being offered as part of our Electives programme this year and we have had a very healthy uptake from our S3 pupils.

Last year's cohort have been prepared for expeditions and have been issued with their logins to complete their online tracking of their Volunteering, Skill and Physical sections before undertaking their expeditions. We would appreciate if they have completed at least 2 of their online sections before this. A drop-in session will run with Mr McKenna by appointment at lunchtimes to assist S3 – S4 candidates with completion of this.

The School Calendar

Please find attached (Appendix B) a copy of the school calendar.

School Trips

All school trips will adhere to government guidance with the level of risk monitored on an individual basis before the trip goes ahead. Information will be communicated to relevant parents/carers prior to any trip taking place.

Parking outside the School

Can I remind you that vehicles should not be parked in the disabled spaces or in the drop-off/pick-up area outside the primary school? We would appreciate your co-operation in using the main school car park unless you or your child is disabled and has an official disability badge displayed inside the front windscreen of the vehicle.

Parents who are making use of this area should ensure that it is used just to drop off students during the school day. If you are collecting a young person or need to wait at the school for any reason please use the main car park only.

The drop-off area should not be used at all between 8.30am and 9.15am and 3pm and 4pm, as per the signage in the bay, this area is for buses and disabled badge holders only at these times.

Instrumental Music Instruction 2024-2025

Dumfries and Galloway Instrumental Service offer pupils from primary 5 onwards the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Tuition is delivered by music instructors in the following disciplines: strings, brass, woodwind, guitar and percussion. All lessons are delivered on a group basis online through Microsoft Teams or in person, dependant on timetabling. Secondary pupils have their lessons delivered on a rota basis during the

school day to ensure they don't regularly miss any one subject. Lessons follow a structured course of study which is suited to the pupil's abilities as well as SQA, local authority and school requirements.

Lessons for the 23/24 academic year are funded by the Scottish Government. The IMS is able to loan orchestral instruments to pupils free of charge. Guitars and percussion instruments are not available for loan. However, they are normally available to use in school.

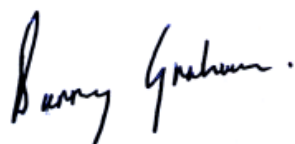
Applications are now open and can be accessed on the following link: <https://dumgal.gov.uk/article/19027/Instrumental-Music-Tuition>

Pupils will receive a letter confirming if their application has been successful or if they have been placed on a waiting list

SAVE THE DATE!!

Wallace Hall Academy's production of Beauty and the Beast is taking place on the 8th, 9th and 10th October. A wonderful group of budding actors, singers and musicians are involved. Tickets will be on sale soon. We look forward to seeing you there!

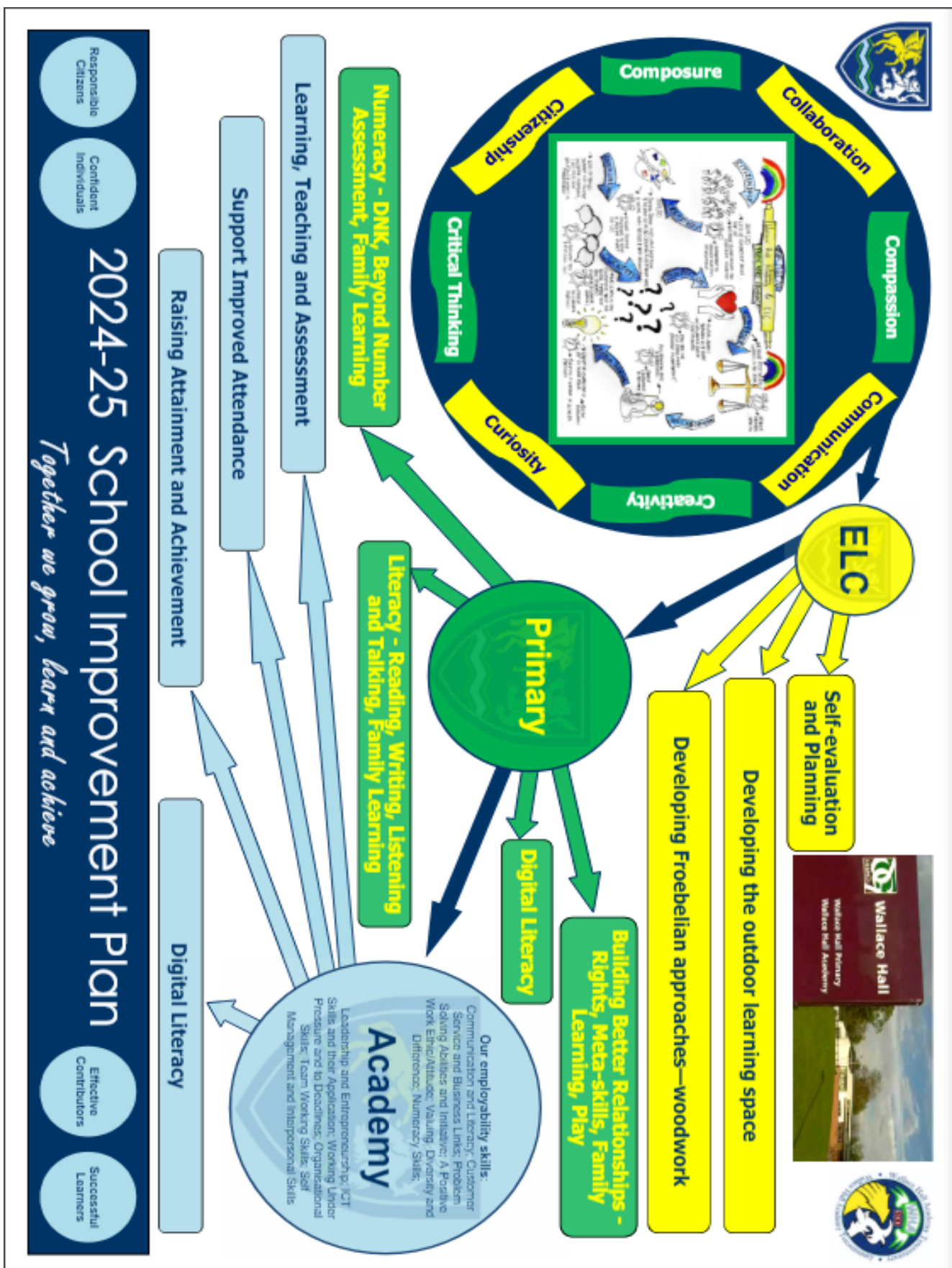
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry Graham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a trailing dot at the end.

B Graham

Head Teacher

APPENDIX A
School Improvement Plan 2024-2025



APPENDIX B
School Calendar 2024-2025

Term 1

Date	Event
4 th October 24	Senior Phase Educational Physics Excursion to Alton Towers
8 th October – 10 th October 24	School Show – Beauty and the Beast
14 th October – 25 th October 24	October School Holiday

Term 2

12 th November 24	School Photographer (Primary and their Secondary Siblings)
13 th November 24	Flu Vaccines
w/c 18 th November 24	S4/5/6 Reports
27 th November 24	S4/5/6 Parents Night
28 th November 24	School Photographer (Secondary Individual & Family)
5 th December 24	Catch-up date for School Photographer
6 th December 24	S1 Theatre Trip
w/c 9 th December 24	S2 Reports
13 th December 24	Senior Christmas Dance
16 th December 24	S3/S4 Christmas Dance
18 th December 24	S1/S2 Christmas Dance
23 rd December 24 – 6 th January 25	Christmas Holiday (pupils return Tues 7 th)

Term 3

6 th January 25	INSET day – staff only
7 th January -31 st January 25	Prelims
14 th January 25	S2 Parents Evening
20 th January 25	S3 Reports
30 th January 25	S3 Parents Evening
2 nd February – 8 th February 25	Ski Trip
6 th February 25	Teen Booster
w/c 10 th February 25	S4/5/6 Reports
19 th February – 21 st February 25	Mid Term Holiday – pupils only
19 th February – 20 th February 25	INSET days – staff only
25 th February 25	S4/5/6 Parents Evening
6 th March 25	HPV Vaccines
w/c 17 th March 25	S2 Tracking Reports
31 st March – 11 th April 25	Easter Holiday

Term 4

18 th April and 21 st April 25	Easter Weekend
w/c 28 th May 25	S1 Reports
5 th May 25	May Day Holiday
7 th May 25	S1 Parents Evening
w/c 19 th May 25	S3 Tracking reports
7 th June -12 th June 25	S4/5 Battlefields Trip
03 rd July 25	Last day of Term

Future Trips

Annual residential trip for S2 students during May to go to Liverpool at approximate cost of £250 each. The school plan to run these trips for the next 3 years.

Drama Trip for S1 in December 24 at cost of approx. £20

S3 Ski Trip in Feb 2026 at a cost of £1200 payable over 16 months.

Alton Towers trip for S4/5* *(Nat 4/5 Physics and Biology) Oct 24. Cost approx. £50

WW1 Battlefields trip for S4/5 in June 25 at cost of approx. £600

Drama Theatre trip for S5/6 in Aug/Sep 24, cost approx. £20

S6 Leavers trip April 25, cost approx. £25

S6 Summer Ball June 25, cost approx. £40

There is a plan to run another Iceland trip in 2026 for S1/S2 students

Various local trips will be organised throughout the year within departments at minimal cost to parents/carers.