

Learning Enhancement



George
Heriot's
School

Founded 1628

What is Learning Enhancement?

Learning Enhancement (LE) is unique to George Heriot's School. Introduced in 1999, it has a huge impact on children's learning and wellbeing and, in 2019 was formally recognized by SAPERE as gold standard.

The LE team of experienced Primary teachers has devised a curriculum for pupils from Nursery to Primary 7 comprising activities based on **Resilience, Emotional Intelligence, Philosophical Enquiry** and **Thinking Skills**. The programme is in line with the *Curriculum for Excellence*, while wellbeing indicators ensure activities are child centred and skills based. LE teachers also take classes to give Class Teachers one-to-one time with pupils. This 'conferencing' is key to support individual wellbeing and academic progress.

Resilience

The Resilience programme helps pupils understand emotions, form positive relationships, develop an optimistic mindset and solve conflict. Lessons are tailored to the age and stage of the child and incorporate mindfulness and self-care techniques in preparation for later life.

Early Years

In Nursery, pupils learn to identify and relate to feelings and emotions. Children engage in magical journey activities to learn about their brain, including a 'Good Mood Hunt'.

In Primary 1 and 2, children learn why emotions are important, through games, stories and relaxation exercises.

Middle Primary

In Primary 3, pupils explore strategies to resolve conflict with friends. With support, pupils are encouraged to manage themselves and their relationships.

Pupils at George Heriot's are taught to be aware of their 'inner voice', of the world around them, and to look on the bright side of situations. An introduction to Mindfulness in Primary 4 develops these key life skills.

Upper Primary

Pupils investigate strategies for achieving success and overcoming challenges. They consider the value of making mistakes and taking risks towards achieving personal goals.

In Primary 7, pupils are taught how hormones affect behaviour and begin to understand the concept of 'self-care'.



"Philosophy teaches you how to live your life and prepare for the future."

Primary 7 pupil

Mindfulness

Resilience lessons open with a Mindfulness exercise and in Primaries 4, 6 and 7, children develop a deeper understanding of Mindfulness:

Emotional

Mindfulness teaches pupils how to control emotions. Pupils learn to deal with negative emotions and thoughts, in turn reducing stress, anxiety and improving self-awareness.

Academic

Mindfulness sessions have been shown to increase focus and attention. They also help pupils to deal with exam pressure and improve sporting performance.

Physical

Mindfulness helps a child's sleep patterns and assists with pain management.

Social Skills

Through Mindfulness, pupils develop increased empathy and understanding of others. Pupils can manage their behaviour better - key to this is an ability to 'respond rather than react.'

"My Junior School Philosophy lessons taught me how to review and evaluate theories and ideas respectfully, a skill which I use in Higher Philosophy."

S5 pupil

Philosophy

Heriot's is the only school in Scotland with a Gold Award for teaching Philosophy using P4C, awarded by SAPERE.

The award acknowledges the fully embedded P4C reflected in the school ethos, curriculum and teaching. As a national leader, teachers from across the UK come to George Heriot's to train to teach Philosophy.

Research has shown that Philosophy lessons can have a lasting effect on a child's academic progress and ability to think critically and creatively. Philosophy is taught as a subject in Junior School, with many pupils continuing to study Philosophy to Advanced Higher level in S6.

Participation in Philosophical enquiry encourages inclusion, giving pupils the opportunity to talk to one another in a mutually respectful way. In turn this generates greater confidence across other curriculum areas, improves reasoning skills and the ability to think 'outside the box'.

Philosophy:

- improves literacy and language skills, encouraging children to develop articulacy and self-expression.
- improves concentration and thinking skills, particularly critical thinking
- encourages children to work collaboratively, with group work and reasoning
- promotes respect for self and others
- encourages reflection on issues of justice and truth
- offers time for personal reflection, preparing pupils for adult life.

"Philosophy helps me to widen my thinking, make past connections, link my ideas to others and reach a new perspective."

Primary 7 pupil

Developing thinking skills is a natural by product of learning Philosophy, using the P4C framework of Care, Collaboration, Creativity and Critical Thought.

Parent workshops

We welcome parents to Learning Enhancement to participate in parent workshops on Philosophy, Mindfulness and Resilience.

Parents can take part in lessons similar to those of their children and thus support them in the home.

"Jad loves the 'because' exercise in Philosophy; he turned it into a daily curiosity – exactly what Philosophy should be!"

Parent

For information visit www.george-heriots.com or contact the Admissions Office on **0131 221 6709**.