



## Welcome to the Junior School

My colleagues and I are very pleased to welcome you to the Junior School. We believe it to be a very happy, nurturing place where children can excel. We place great emphasis on effort and kindness.

Our curriculum is broad yet also promotes real depth of learning. As well as a rigorous approach to the teaching of English and Mathematics, our Junior School class teachers teach Health & Wellbeing, the Social Subjects and assist our Science Coordinator with the teaching of Science. We have subject specialist teaching for Art, Music, Drama, PE, Sport, Modern Languages and Computing. In addition, our unique, highly qualified Learning Enhancement team delivers weekly lessons in Philosophy, Diversity, Equity, Teambuilding, Resilience and Mindfulness from Nursery to P7. To assist the children there is a whole school Support for Learning Department and an Able Child coordinator.

Throughout our teaching and learning, the aim is to reach every individual child's needs and play to their certain strengths. Hugely talented teachers, whose pastoral gifts are outstanding, inspire the children in their learning and ensure they flourish happily at George Heriot's.

The exciting core curriculum is enhanced by numerous activities within and beyond the classroom – residential trips, outdoor learning opportunities, over seventy Junior School clubs and a great many sporting, dramatic and musical events.

All of the above, plus our focus on kindness, mindset and responsibility, makes George Heriot's Junior School a refreshing and inspiring environment in which to encourage happiness, confidence and a love of learning.

We hope you enjoy your visit today.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alastair G. Morrison'.

**Mr Alastair G. Morrison**  
**Head of Junior School**

## **Junior School curriculum**

At George Heriot's School, we maintain our tradition of high academic achievement while incorporating many of the strengths of 'A Curriculum for Excellence'.

The curriculum in the Junior School is managed by the Deputy Head of Junior School. This ensures continuity and progression in learning from Nursery to P7. Regular meetings between the Deputy Head of Junior School and Deputies in the Senior School facilitate the transition from Junior School to Senior School.

The Junior School consists of three chronological stages: Early Years (Nursery – P2), Middle Primary (P3-P5) and Upper Primary (P6-P7). Each section is led by a Junior School Depute who reports to the Deputy Head on curricular matters. Each Depute is responsible for the delivery and quality assurance of the curriculum within each stage. This tight structure ensures that the curriculum and its delivery are of the highest quality. Years of experience in curriculum design have resulted in our strong, balanced programme. However, we are constantly striving to improve all aspects of Junior School education and therefore frequently make changes and introduce new courses.

## **The Learning Enhancement Department**

The Learning Enhancement Department (LE) consists of a team of fully qualified, experienced Primary teachers who do not have class teacher responsibility. This department is unique to Heriot's and, since 1999, has had a huge impact on our children's learning and wellbeing.

The LE Staff deliver a wide-ranging programme focusing on how to learn rather than what to learn. Programmes are delivered to all pupils from Nursery to P7 in Resilience, Emotional Intelligence, Philosophical Enquiry, Thinking Skills and Diversity. We believe that the subjects taught in this department build confidence and aid lifelong learning. The Learning Enhancement staff also team teach with Junior School class teachers, focusing on a variety of small groups of children at different times. This enables us to truly meet the needs of all pupils. Our Science Coordinator and Able Child Coordinator are based in the Learning Enhancement Department.

## **Outdoor Learning**

The learning experiences of pupils at all ages are greatly enhanced by experiences out of doors, making use of the extensive grounds, wildlife garden, firepit and wider environment. Our dedicated Outdoor Learning Coordinator liaises with Junior School Staff to arrange trips and visits that serve the topics being studied in each year. The children gain richly from these experiences, socially, as much as academically.

## **Early Years**

(Nursery, P1 and P2)

Our Nursery operates a key worker system with each key worker being responsible for his/her group of eight children. Staff plan activities and experiences which recognise the importance of emotional, personal and social development, the acquisition of literacy and numeracy, the contribution of creative and physical skills and an ever-increasing knowledge of the immediate environment and wider world. Physical Education and Music are taught by specialist teachers. Our Support for Learning Department also work with pupils as part of the Early Learning Skills programme.

While most of our Nursery pupils proceed to Primary 1, entry to the School is not automatic. All Nursery children sit the School's Primary 1 Entrance Assessment in January.

Pupils in P1 and P2 are cared for by their class teacher and benefit from specialist teaching in Physical Education and Music. Pupils also have input from our Support for Learning Department, our Early Years Practitioners, our Science Coordinator, Able Pupil Coordinator, S6 pupils and our Learning Enhancement staff.

## Middle Primary

(P3, P4 and P5)

The Middle Primary curriculum builds on the experiences the children have had in earlier years. Investigative skills and pupil leadership play an increasingly important role. Pupils study History and Geography through a topic-based approach. This cross-curricular approach, involving, for example, Drama or Computing Science, leads to increased understanding and confidence. Science is taught as a discrete subject with input from our Science Coordinator. Our Primary 4 pupils enjoy the challenge of participating in the Young Engineers Competition. Our English Language programme provides a balance between the technical aspects of language and literacy and the wider, vitally important, skills of comprehension and communication. From Primary 4, Mathematics is taught in sets and there is a focus not only on knowledge and understanding but also on the relevance of Mathematics in the wider world. Specialist teaching is increased in Middle Primary to include Art, Drama and Cultural Awareness (a precursor to Modern Foreign Language courses).

Residential experiences are introduced in P4 and are an important part of the children's education. In P5, pupils participate in Games at Goldenacre on Mondays and Saturdays.

## Upper Primary

(P6 and P7)

In Upper Primary, the children are encouraged to become increasingly independent and this prepares them thoroughly for the transition to Senior School. Pupils take more responsibility for the organisation of their homework and independent work. Mathematics continues to be taught in sets and the pace of learning is increased. Our English Language programme includes novel studies, a variety of writing for different purposes, comprehension, debates and presentation skills – all of which encompass skills vital to lifelong learning. Specialist input expands to include Modern Languages and Computing. Science continues to be taught as a discrete subject with pupils in Primary 7 conducting individual investigations which they showcase during a Science Fair. History and Geography are covered through Social Studies topics such as The Victorians, World War 2, China and Scottish Landscapes. This allows for more in-depth concentration on skills, knowledge and understanding.

Primary 6 and 7 pupils participate in Games at Goldenacre on Mondays, and on Saturdays (optional).

All of this serves to engender a positive attitude to learning which stands pupils in good stead as they progress through Senior School and beyond.

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We asked our new Primary Seven pupils to tell us how they found their first few weeks:

*"Everyone here is so nice and cheerful. At first I was scared I would not fit in but anyone can fit in here and it's really easy to make friends."*

*"Everyone includes you in their game or group."*

*"You can get your work done without anyone disturbing you. We call ourselves family and help each other out."*

*"I would really recommend going to Heriot's because it is a nice school, and the students and staff always welcome newcomers."*

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# George Heriot's School

Founded 1628