



George Heriot's School

Founded 1628

Welcome to the Junior School

My colleagues and I are very pleased to welcome you to the Junior School. We and the pupils are proud of how very happy and nurturing a place it is, in which children can excel confidently. 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. Subject specialist teaching for Art, Music, Drama, PE, Sport, Modern Languages and Computing is phased in from P3 to P6. In addition, our unique, highly qualified Learning Enhancement team delivers to the entire Junior School (Nursery to P7) weekly lessons in Philosophy, Resilience, Mindfulness, Teambuilding and the recently introduced Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. To assist the children with any learning difficulties, 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. Indeed, the inspiration of the class teaching and the pastoral care are the aspects most highly valued by the parent body.

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

All of the above, alongside 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.

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'. As a Gold Rights Respecting School, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpins our approaches to the curriculum and encourages our pupils to be leaders of their learning in a respectful and kind manner.

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 Deputy who reports to the Deputy Head on curricular matters. Each Deputy 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.

JS Philosophy Trail

Our new Philosophy Trail uses our school grounds and encourages us to be caring, collaborative, creative and critical thinkers whilst embracing our senses. There are images, sounds and smells to explore, all linked to questions to encourage all members of the Heriot's community to think deeply! The trail can be completed in any order and not all sections need to be completed – you can pop along and just try out one or two! The Learning Enhancement team are excited to help you to engage in some Philosophy whilst you visit Heriot's.

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. Inquiry 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.

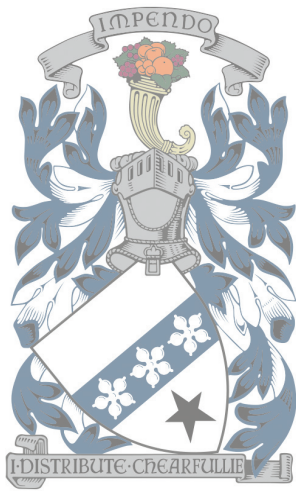
Primary 6 and 7 pupils participate in Games at Goldenacre on Tuesdays (P6) and Wednesdays (P7), and on Saturdays (optional).

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.

“At first, I found starting at Heriot's nerve wracking, but I've grown and love it so much. They've made me work hard and always try my best. The most important thing is the people - the people here are so kind and that's what matters”

“An amazing, incredible school - everybody is so kind, it's like a mini community. I am so proud to be here”

“Everyone is so friendly and welcoming; you feel a part of the school from your first day”



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